

1937

38297

CO 533/485
KENYA

38297

SECRETARIAT STAFFVACANCY FOR CHIEF NATIVE COMMISSIONER

Previous

M.F.

23/23/34

Subsequent

1938

297

22/137

297

22/137

Sir C. Bottomley

12-11

Sir C. Bottomley

15/11

Sir C. Bottomley

16/11

R. 297

23/4

80

10/12

298

11/12

297

6/12

307

17/12

M. S. S. S.

7

297

His wife died
2 or 3 days
ago. and

Miss Perham of Oxford asked to see me yesterday about the successor to Montgomery as Chief Native Commissioner in Kenya. She understands that owing to his wife's health Montgomery wishes to retire shortly. She rightly regards this as a pivotal appointment and feels strongly that there is no one in Kenya who can adequately fill the bill. She realises too that transfers from West Africa to jobs like this create suspicion and difficulty in Kenya, and she hopes that I will not rule out consideration of someone from the Sudan service, for which she has a high regard. I know that the Sudan Service has many of the type of public school man who can handle our Kenya politicians without any social or other inferiority complex and I do not reject the idea at all.

Of course she is critical of the Kenya Native Commissioners in comparison with Tanganyika Territory, Uganda and Nigeria, and feels that they are not sufficient in touch with their natives, relying too much on Swahili and interpreters.

She made another point, viz, that owing to personal poverty the few unofficial members of Legislative Council in Kenya selected to represent native interests can ^{cannot} afford to travel in the reserves, and that they do not know much of what is going on particularly in the native mind. Is a travelling allowance possible on occasions?

I know that Lord Hailey feels that our officials' contact with native administration etc. in Kenya is not as good as elsewhere - except in Northern Rhodesia of which he is critical.

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I have long had a feeling that one of the troubles in Kenya is that no unofficial members of the Legislative Council and many of the officials have little or no intimate or real knowledge of native life and problems in the reserves.

Certainly the selection of Montgomery's successor is very important and we ought not to be guided solely by the Governor's recommendation or by limitation to our own service.

8.10.37.

I understand from Sir A. Wade that before Mr. Montgomery left Kenya, thinking that his wife's incurable illness would be long, he placed his resignation in the Governor's hands. Sir R. B. Peppham, however, refused to accept it then & there. Mr. Montgomery died this week & it now seems probable that Mr. Montgomery will return to duty. We ought at any rate to know ~~the~~ very soon what he intends to do.

If we have to fill the post of C.M.C.

He has now
definitely
decided to
retire

and
→

I do not doubt that we could get a good man from the Sudan, but I wonder whether the obstacles in the way of transferring a really good man from Nigeria are insuperable. It would be a sad confession of weakness if we had to go outside the Colonial Service to fill a post of this kind. In some ways I should have thought that a transfer from W. Africa might create less suspicion than from the neighbouring territories of T. T. & Uganda.

My own belief is that the main reason why Adminⁿ Officers in Kenya know less about the natives than in neighbouring territories or in W. Africa is that they are moved about so frequently that they ^{seldom} ~~usually~~ get to know ~~even~~ any one area or group of people really well.

The point about travelling allowances for the members of Leg. Co. who represent native interests is rather for you than for me. Would there be any difficulty about persuading Leg. Co. to vote the money?

S.J.F.
9.10.37

On this last point Mr. Flood thinks, and I agree, that as there is ^{already a} substantial vote for the ~~passage~~ ^{travelling} expenses of Legislative Councillors in attending meetings, there will probably be no serious objection to an increase to cover this special proposal. There might be, and the Governor should be left to judge. It is a question whether the members representing native interests would learn very much from their tours. The language difficulty would prevent them from getting a close personal knowledge of local problems, and they would largely be dependent on District Officers. But the point might certainly be put to the Governor.

What Sir J. Tomlinson says about frequent moves preventing the District Officers from getting a close knowledge of their people applies specially to the matter of the local language. It was Major Clarence Buxton who told me that he had learned four languages

languages in five years and was now beginning a fifth with, he admitted, reduced enthusiasm.

Neither Sir A. Wade nor we think that Mr. Montgomery will retire now. When the time comes for selecting a successor, we shall have to remember that it is not merely a Chief Native Commissioner, but a Secretary for Native Affairs under the Pim scheme we have to look for. That, I think, increases the desirability of choosing a man who knows the country and its problems, if we can find one. I am not sure that we cannot. I should not recommend Mr. La Fontaine or Mr. Fazan, while Mr. Glenday is too much of a specialist on frontier work. Mr. Hosking, however, whose name has been suggested by Lord Francis Scott, has an excellent record and gets on well with both Europeans and Africans.

As regards getting a man from Nigeria, (an administrator preferably from the Southern Province who has a good deal of experience in the Secretariat), we might find an excellent man, but the question is whether the prejudice against a West African among the unofficials in Kenya would be so great as to militate against his usefulness. I think it might.

As regards the Sudan, the first step would be to put our problem to Sir S. Symes unofficially, and ask for his views. We could do this, and also discuss the possible vacancy and the other points with Sir R. ^{Brooke} Popham, without waiting till we know which way Mr. Montgomery will decide.

W.S.

11.10.1937

P.F.O.

Sec. of State

(1) as to a successor to Mr. Montgomery (i.e. Sec. for Native Affairs), it looks as though Mr. Hacking ought to be given special consideration. I should not like to accept without question Miss Paken's general condemnation of Kenya officials, which I do not believe would be justified. Would it not be well to begin in the usual way - by asking the Govt. for name or names of Kenya officers to be considered with others? We may be sure that if Sir R. Brooke-Popham wants us to go outside Kenya for a man, he will say so.

(2) as to the allowance question, it might be best for Sir C. Stansfeld to talk this up semi-officially with the Governor?

and

12.10.37

I saw Mr. Montgomery who told me he is about to leave and after several times to reside as an individual in Kenya & disposes the hope that one day he for will not join a "Lords" instead of the "Middlers". As to the latter he has done his best to get them to visit the reserves and repeated that they felt unable to afford the time & money to do so. He admits that they get their knowledge of habits entirely second hand from other "Middlers" or "Middling boys" and are not very fulfilling their own little private efficiency.

I confess I would like someone from outside Kenya with experience of native administration etc. in either Tanganyika, Nigeria or the Sudan. I suppose it is a

right and proper
to commit the job
but I would put it
to him that in default
of a very strong desire
in this part for a particular
local man I think this
is an opportunity to bring
in new blood.

I know that the
Native Language question
is serious but every
effort should be made
to get more officers to
speak at least Kikuyu
and/or one of the Kairu
languages which are
spoken by many tens
of thousands.

Better put these points
before him to the Gov as
in the Boltonley.

Woly 13.10.37

seen
and
13.10.37
with 14.10.

It should not have
been much
in imagination to
tip the holding
Woly
17/3

1. To Sir R. Brooke-Popham (5/6) - C/o - 20.10.37

2. Sir Robert Brooke-Popham (5/6) - 2.11.37
Gives reasons why he requests that the appointment of a
successor to Montgomery be held over -
Woly not answered

Woly Confy.

I sent on Sir R. Brooke Popham's
letter without the 18. If they had
been answered I feel sure that Sir C
Robinson would have looked the S. H.
to see it. I don't know who the
best star can be.

Woly
12.11.37

Let me know his proposal in
due course.

Woly 15.11.37

I attach copy of my reply
Woly 16.11

3. To Sir R. Brooke-Popham (2 copies) 16 Nov. 37

DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE

R20/2
R290/1,3

Orig. regd. on 8261 EA. 4. N. Rhodesia — TEL. 208 Conf. — 6.12.37
(of Lockhart)
Assumes there is no question of the other officers for whom
Sir A. Pin recommended salary of £1,750 being paid full
salary from the outset.

5. To Kenya — TEL. 206 (Conf.) — 9.12.37

Original of 8261 EA
original on 8261 EA.
Affix stamp on 6. Kenya — TEL. 209 Conf. — 13.12.37
(S. Amad.) Agrees that post of Sec for Native Affairs
should be on same salary scale & states that he will
be addressing S. of S. shortly submitting rec. for filling of
that post.

? Put by awaiting Gov's recommendations

Clarke White
17/12

Yes. Action as regards Mr. Lockhart
is being taken on his part.

J.P. Rennie
17/12
as above

Copies of 8261 EA
file required for

18-25.

**Telegram from the Governor Kenya to the Secretary of State
for the Colonies**

Dated 13th December, 1937. Received at 11.34 am. 13th Decr.

No.209 confidential. Your telegram No.206 PIM's
recommendations. I agree. Proposal for the reorganisation
of the central Government on the general lines of PIM's
recommendations but with considerable modifications of
detail have been formulated and will shortly be considered
by the Executive Council. In addressing you on these
proposals I shall at the same time submit recommendations for
filling the post of Secretary Native Affairs by Kenya Officer