

1925

KENYA

C. O.
12687

18 MAR 25

Date

Leggett, Mrs S

16 March 25

REGISTRATION -

Conditions in the Teita Reserve

U.S. of S.

W. S. Stephens

Sends copy of letter from Major Leggett (Voi) alleging insufficient medical supervision resulting in abnormally high infantile mortality.

U.S. of S.

U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

Previous Paper

MINUTES

Both in the Report and in the Estimates, in the Dept of Health the Commission there is reference to the need for more medical assistance in the Reserve. We have heard that there is a Commission but no definite report. Progress should be made by the beginning of their next report of getting facts sorted.

We cannot see this thing, as I said, of course, and this is to be done pretty soon

Handwritten notes on the left margin: "copy, and let S. B. Deane on 25 MAR 1925 - 184"

Subsequent Paper

that while I know that the
hundreds Dept. are keen on extra
medical assistance in the Navy, & it
may help him to know that
wishes to which the authorities have
within the ~~the~~ greatest measure

Dr. H. Lyttle to be told should &
told that we are keeping close watch
on this matter of medical assistance
in the Navy, & in particular hospital,
but that we are sure that, on either
the capacity of the staff available,
which can ^{only} be added to gradually,
the work just in progress to make an
improvement.

[I would like to refer to Railway
medical service, but there ought to be
no overlapping of duties.]

Wed. 19.3.25
O.S. 1925

Dr. H. Lyttle for my signature
at once
W. J. 20.3

M. LEGGETT.

TELEPHONE:

35. CRUTCHED FRIARS.

TELEGRAMS:

LONDON, LONDON.

CABLES:

LONDON, LONDON.

LONDON HOUSE,

35. CRUTCHED FRIARS.

LONDON, E.C.3. March 16th. 191

C.O.
12687

18 MAR 25

Dear Omsby Gere,

I am sure that you will not mind my present action in sending on to you, directly and, of course, informally, the attached copy of a private letter received by me in this morning's mail from Major Stanley Layzell, dated Voi, Kenya Colony, 18th. February.

I think that you met Major Layzell during your trip. He has been Manager of my Company's sisal estates at Voi for the last ten years and more. But what is more important is that he is admitted by all to have an unrivalled knowledge of the Teita Reserve and of the other natives in the districts lying between the main Kenya Railway and Kili-manjaro. This knowledge brought him to the position of Director of Intelligence on the Head Quarter Staff in the East African Campaign. One after another of the District Commissioners at Voi relies upon Major Layzell's help and information, and advice, on native questions, and he is the J.P. for the District.

Layzell has again and again reported to me in detail on the shocking apathy of the Nairobi Government Department *towards the natives in the Teita all districts* towards the natives in the Teita all districts, especially in the medical and educational connection.

The natives in this District are on the highest scale of Hut and Poll Tax, and it is a fact that they receive in return practically nothing, at any rate, in these vital regards. All that they get is the Pax Britannica.

I believe that the Teita tribe, never a large body, is about the clearest illustration that exists in Kenya of decreasing tribal population, and Layzell's present letter throws a clear light on the reasons - infant mortality and the total absence of medical services.

You know that I deplore, as much as you do, the exaggerations, and the method of presentment of the native case, as set out in Leys' book. But it is difficult to avoid some impatience when one reads of £5,000 voted by the local State income to pay for the Kenya Show at Wembley (monopolised practically by European farm and plantation interests) and £5,000 to £6,000 a year for a Kenya Trade and Information Bureau in London (also admittedly nearly wholly for European interests) and then to find that vitally necessary medical staff costing, say, £500 per annum apiece, cannot be provided for the native population that pays - directly and indirectly - about 80 per cent of the tax revenue of the Colony.

Anyway, I hope you will agree that to send on Layzell's letter to you is really a duty.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

Major The Hon. W. Omsby-Cora, M.P.,
Colonial Office, S.W. 1.

Humphrey Leys

VOI.

SCL/22/28.

18th. February 1925.

Dear Sir Humphrey,

I should be very glad if you will take the following matter up with Major Ormsby-Gore, if you have an opportunity.

When the Voi Taveta Line closed down, there was a Sub. Asst. Surgeon at Voi. He was removed, as there was supposed to be not sufficient work for him to do as there was also a shortage in the Medical Dept., it was thought that his services could be better utilised elsewhere.

I did my best to get a man appointed here both through the Medical Dept., the Administration, and through the then Legislative Council Member for the Coast, and also the Legislative Council Member from Mombasa.

It was finally decided to send a man here and he arrived 6 months ago. One of the levers used to get him here was that with the increased work on the Railway, the latter would also benefit.

What is happening now is that the Sub. Assistant Surgeon is never in Voi but spends his time attending mostly Indian employees on the Railway anywhere between Mombasa and Nairobi. He has a large native Hospital here, and whilst he is away on these cases his patients are left to the tender mercies of a native dresser.

This reached such an absurd state of affairs that the District Commissioner asked for a definition of this man's duties, whether the District was his first care or the Railway, the attached letter leaves no doubt on that point.

The point I wish to raise is this, from 1st. November to 7th. February there have been 100 deaths among children in the Reserve, and they have received absolutely no medical

attention, last year there was an outbreak of plague in the Hills and the Medical Authorities sent a Medical Officer down to make enquiries; in his report asked to remain owing to the tremendous amount of work to be done, he was not allowed to remain but sent to Kayironda.

The Wateita paid last year Shs.148596 over 27000 in Hut Tax, part of which goes to the Medical vote, and for this they have received nothing, except voluntary help from the Missions and the employers of labour.

The Medical Department have now sent a Medical Officer down to make enquiries into this infantile mortality but only after there has been a heavy death rate. Labour is required badly everywhere and the native is naturally not going to turn out with his children sick and dying, also he is naturally anxious to know to what use the money he pays in taxes is put to. The same applies to the Europeans who also want to know how the Medical vote is utilised, if a big scattered District like this cannot have proper medical attendance.

As the Uganda Railway is now a separate branch of the Service, and its profits do not go to the common exchequer, I suggest that they should have their own medical branch, the line to be divided into 3 sections with a medical officer and hospital or dispensary coach working on each section. I also suggest that a European Medical Officer be stationed at Vei for work purely and simply in this District. The present state of affairs is really a scandal and some steps must be taken to see that the Natives of the District get proper medical attention.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) Stanley C. Laysell.

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Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) Stanley C. Laysell.

COPY.

P.O. Box 641.
Telephone No. 420.

No. 14/274/26.

95

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.
HEAD OFFICES.

Nairobi, 15th. February 1926.

The Senior Commissioner,

Nairobi.

Re Teita District; Infantile Mortality
Ref. your No. 192/43/3 of 9.12.25.

It is hoped that it may be possible to detail a Medical Officer to investigate the undue infantile mortality reported from the Teita District.

With regard to the duties of the Sub-Assistant Surgeon at Voi, this officer was posted there specially for the purpose of the Uganda Railway Staff; it was recognised that he would also be of assistance in treating such sick from the Reserve as could be brought into Voi Hospital, but itinerant work in the Reserve is not considered part of his duty. Apart from the particular claims of the Railway in this case, it is not the general policy of this Department to entrust the responsible work of a medical safari in a Native Reserve to Sub-Assistant Surgeons.

The need for investigation of the conditions in Teita District is well understood in this Office, it is only an outbreak of smallpox at Mombasa that is delaying the work being undertaken.

For

Sd. C.J. Wilson,
Principal Medical Officer.

The D.C.

Voi,

Please note this definition of Medical policy.

Sd. F. Trail,

S.C.

Nairobi, 16.2.26.

For Private information only,
as it is a copy of an official letter.
(Sd.) S.C.L.

Mr. Strachan 25.3
Mr. Boland 23

72 687
Kanga

96

Strachan 23
Sir J. Strachan
Sir C. Davis

G. Grindle
Lambert
J. Macdonald Smith
Ormsby-Gore
Amery

C. D.
R 24 MAR 1925
D

~~24~~

CD

DRAFT.

25 March 1925

Dear Sir,
Dear Denham
C.M.G.

I enclose for your private information a copy of a letter which Mr. Ormsby-Gore has received from Sir Humphrey Leggett about the infant mortality in the Taita Reserve and the need for more medical attention there.

I know quite well that you and the Medical Dept are keen on getting extra medical assistance in the Reserve — Mr. Ormsby-Gore has reasoned Leggett as to this — but ~~perhaps~~ it may help you to know that it is a matter to which the authorities will attach the greatest importance. I have not edited the papers in any way.

4 copies placed in
not retained
2nd second envelope
is 24.3.25. for it is
Mr. Leggett's letter (the
summarized para on
with 14.3.25. letter
19.3.25. reply) should be
inserted

25.3.25

the communication of the President

apt letter to Major Layzell

does not bring trouble upon you.

yours sincerely,

Signed W. G. BOTTOMLEY.

Mr. Whitehead 23, 2

Mr. B. Rowley 13

fit h 26/Keaga

Quarto, S.O. for Mr. Dunlop - Fore Signal

Mr. Simpson 23

Mr. J. Shawburgh

Mr. O. Davis.

Mr. G. Grindle.

Mr. H. Lambert
Mr. Macdonald-Smith.

Mr. Ormsby-Gore. at 24-7-23

Mr. Amery.

Great

31st March 1925

DRAFT.

Mr. Humphrey

all S.O.

Dear Layzell,

Many thanks for your letter enclosing the interesting communication from Major Layzell about the Teika Reserve.

I was ~~very~~ ^{much} interested to read what he says, as we are keeping close watch on this matter of medical assistance in the Reserve and infant mortality. ^{This is of the highest importance} ~~and must remain the sort of a doctor at Voi ~~the~~ ~~discovered~~ a ~~great~~ measure of success ~~can~~ ~~was~~ ~~possible~~,~~ but I am sure that within the capacity of the staff available, ~~at least~~

in union

which can only be added to

gradually, the local Government

are anxious to make

improvement.

Yours sincerely

W. Shurby Gore