

1925

KENYA

133

5869

Rec'd
Re 6 FEB 25

Date

8th January, 1925.

REVENUE COMMISSION, COMPTROLLER

REGULATION --

Mr. *Bottomley*

Mr.

Mr.

Asst. U.S. of A.

Pres. U.S. of A.

Pres. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State

NATIVE LABOUR.

This copy of a Confidential Circular which is being issued by Chief Native Commissioner to encourage native labour to come out voluntarily for all work of public utility, but he remains convinced of the necessity for some measure of compulsion.

Previous Paper

MINUTES

Copy 3525/16

The circular is carefully worded, and employing labour for railway construction has been mentioned.

*Bottomley
JHC*

The question is how the circular will hold (1) if the draft of 5.9 is published as the 1509 (copy) advised. I think it will stand criticism, but if, as is the case, the Headman reports that it will be under the direct effect of the encouragement, will probably also have a similar effect in practice.

Subsequent Paper

*(Confidentially
Cabinet)*

C 5412/15

100 AC 4399/25

We must have the experience
to prove itself.

G.S. 9.2.25

12/7/25

I think this circular was needed
& is unexceptionable. We might
ask by despatch in due course
has the circular has been
received & responded to @
by Administrative Officer - A
by headman.

at once

W.S.

9.2.25

KENYA

No. 4.



5869

6 FEB 25

134

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
KENYA.

CONFIDENTIAL

8th January, 1925.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to Kenya despatch No. 1580 of 15th December, and to transmit herewith for your information, a copy of a Confidential Circular which is being issued by the Chief Native Commissioner with my approval.

2. This Circular is of course not directed to secure or suggest compulsory labour, but is directed to encourage native labour to come out voluntarily for all work of public utility and, in a secondary degree, for the economic and agricultural development of this country.

It is only intended to make clear to the natives the present difficulties suffered in all directions in this country on account of shortage of labour, the effect that any set back in progress must have on the natives themselves, and to impress on them what is meant by a dual policy of increased agricultural and economic output both in and outside the Reserves.

3. While I am hopeful that an appreciation of the position as it affects the country will encourage the natives to come out for work, I am convinced of the absolute necessity for the adoption

RIGHT HONOURABLE

on

HERBERT COLONEL L.C.M.S. AMERY, P.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET, LONDON S.W.

on a limited scale and for a limited time of some measures of compulsion, as explained in my despatch above referred to in respect of Railway and other public works.

4. Over 50% of the new railways at present sanctioned will pass through Native Reserves and will be of immense advantage to the native population; and I have, therefore, the less hesitation in calling upon them to assist in Railway construction work. Moreover, delay in the construction is already most seriously affecting the transport of the Uganda Cotton Crop which is expected to be very heavy; and unless action is taken, the position of next year's crop promises to be much worse. Such delays are likely to have a very prejudicial effect on British markets.

5. I have reason to believe that the East African Commission were impressed by the real need for agricultural development, for the success of which the provision of cheap transport of great capacity is a primary condition.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

R. W. Compton

G O V E R N O R.

A:33/5/10

NATIVE AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
P.O. Box 322,
Nairobi,
22nd December, 1924.

CIRCULAR No. 49 - Confidential.

To All Senior Commissioners
(with sufficient copies for District Commissioners)
and Resident Commissioners.

CONDITIONS FOR NATIVE LABOUR OUTSIDE THE RESERVES.

1. It is considered probable that, among the contributory causes to the present shortage of native labour both for economic development outside the reserves and for works of public utility, there is a misconception in the native mind, particularly on the part of official Headmen, as to what the wishes of Government are in the matter.

2. The Governor desires any misunderstandings on the matter to be removed without delay, and directs that barazas be held at the earliest convenient date, by Administrative Officers in every location, at which the following points should be explained in detail. Full notice of these barazas should be given in order that the dual policy of Government as set forth in Paragraphs 5 and 6 below may be understood by the people as well as the Chiefs.

3. In the first place it should be made clear that, while Government intends to pursue and develop its policy of stimulating economic production in native reserves, it is not, and never was, the intention that this policy should be regarded as an indication that natives who are willing to enter into employment outside the reserves should be discouraged from doing so.

4. Natives should be reminded further that there is an urgent demand for labour on farms at certain seasons of the year, especially for harvesting; and that if the labour is not forthcoming at these critical periods it means that farmers must incur heavy losses, with the inevitable consequence that they will not be in a position to employ and pay large numbers of natives at other periods, and a steady source of income on which the native population greatly depends for its cash requirements will thus be seriously diminished. Government hopes that the native population will co-operate in this matter.

5. His Excellency desires that you will impress upon Headmen and people alike that the policy of Government in this connection is a dual policy, namely:- both economic development by natives in the reserves and general development of the Country as a whole.

6. To emphasise this policy the following points should be explained:-

- (a) It is to the general advantage of the Colony that all able-bodied men should assist in its development, whether by economic production on their own land or by work on railways, other works of public utility, or in the interests of agricultural development.
- (b) That Government wishes all Administrative officers and Native official headmen to facilitate the voluntary flow of labour to railways, public works or works of other economic importance, and desires that no unnecessary restriction should be placed in the way of any native who desires to leave his reserve either to re-engage with a known employer, or in search of new work.
- (c) That in the first place young unmarried men desiring to take employment outside the reserves as casual or contract labour should be encouraged to do so. It is considered that native production within the reserves can be most suitably carried on by married men with families.
- (d) That, nevertheless, married men willing to engage as resident native labour or to go out from time to time as casual labourers should be given every opportunity to do so.

7. Government is aware that Administrative officers have in the ordinary course made themselves fully acquainted with general conditions as to housing, feeding, medical and educational attention, etc., of native labour on non-native estates in their areas, but it is particularly anxious that there should be no doubt that labour which voluntarily offers itself is properly looked after. Government therefore will require all its officers to give particular attention to this important aspect of the question.

G. V. MAXWELL

Chief Native Commissioner.

Gov / 5869 / Kenya

July

Nov
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13 Feb 1953

DRAFT.

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Confid
O.A.S
MINUTE.

- Mr. Callaghan
- Mr. Nathan
- Mr. ...
- Sir J. Shackleton
- Sir C. Daps
- Sir G. Grindle
- Sir J. Masterton Smith
- Mr. ...
- Mr. ...
- Mr. ...

(for review)

Sir,
I have the honor to

acknowledge the receipt of Sir R.
Coydron's confid. despatch

No. 4 of the 8th of January

enclosing a copy of a

confidential circular

regarding conditions for

visitors to be outside

the reserves.

I shall be glad to

learn in due course what the
response to the circular has
been and whether administrative
affairs and business have succeeded
in making the people realize
clearly the Government's wishes.

(Signed) L. S. AMERY.