

EAST AFR. PROT
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Recd
REC'D 28 MAR 1920

347

THEY, SIR E.

1920
MARCH

NATIVE LABOUR

Previous Paper.
- 4040

Would be glad to meet representatives of Aborigines Protection Society to explain policy of Prot. Govt as set out.

Copy for Sir E. Northy following.

I have drafted to Soc's
suggesting their communicating
with Sir E. Northy as to
policy, ^{have} ~~have~~ ~~been~~ ~~set~~
out to Northy accordingly.
889

Copy comm. for. Cont. 16 June 20

See Co. 120 20720

Subsequent Paper.
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E.A.P. Native Labour.

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313

77, CARLISLE MANSIONS,
WESTMINSTER,
MAF.

26th March 1920.

S. W.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 12040/1920 of the 19th inst. enclosing copy of letter from the Aborigines Protection Society with regard to Native Labour in the East Africa Protectorate.

2. I shall be very glad to meet representatives of the Society at any convenient time, in fact, I should welcome an opportunity of explaining to them exactly what the Policy of the Protectorate Government is, and what is being done, in connection with Native Labour.

3. I will now take the points brought forward in the Society in detail.

a) The Society quotes former Secretaries of State - "That labour secured by force for private profit amounts to Slavery" etc.

Not only is the word "force" nowhere used in the Circular complained of, but as a safeguard, the express qualification "lawful" was inserted.

Force is unlawful and directly contrary to the Government's policy with regard to labour for private concerns.

b) Chiefs are instructed to cooperate in inducing natives to lead a less vicious life. It is only those Headmen who prove inimical to the wishes of the Government who are to be reported. They are Government servants and must carry out the Government's policy.

(c) I ~~can~~ cannot understand why the Committee of the Society should regard with special concern any facilities given to employers to get into touch with labour. On the contrary, I consider that it is a great advantage to both employers and possibly employees that they should be brought together in every convenient way: nature of work, wages & food, situation of place of employment, and all such details can be explained & and discussed before engagements are entered into: this is greatly to the native's benefit, and much better than the customary system of engagement through paid recruiters.

(d) I can see no objection to natives of the mandated Tanganyika Territory working in the neighbouring British Protectorates. There are about seven million splendid natives in the mandated country, lately German East Africa, many of them accustomed, and even anxious to work for Europeans. At present the policy of the Officer administering that Territory is not to allow recruiting of labour to work in the contiguous Protectorates, but I sincerely hope this policy will be modified.

(e) The whole matter is one of Imperial Policy. ~~the~~ The British Empire wishes to develop these Territories on progressive lines

77, CARLISLE MANSIONS,

WESTMINSTER.

(Continued) The Imperial Government has^{been} encouraged white settlement, and the production of the raw materials East Africa can provide: the white settlement was wrong, and the idea of increased production is futile, unless we are to do all in our power to bring the native to the labour market and teach him to work, his work under good European supervision, and with proper training, is many times more productive than it is when left to his own methods, and he improves, physically and mentally, very quickly, with regular work and healthy exercise. Left to his own resources he does little work: he makes his women and children do it for him: very little effort in turning up the rich soil provides him with sufficient food. Left alone the majority of adult men in the native Reserves live a miserable life of idleness, drunkenness and vice: encouraged and taught to work, he soon sees the advantage of earning money, lives better, becomes more intelligent, and dresses himself more decently.

For the good of the Empire which requires our raw materials - for the good of the Protectorates which must advance along progressive lines, and for the good of the native whom we protect I am convinced that we do all that is just and legally possible to encourage and induce the native to come out and work.

In conclusion, when I took over the
 Government of the Protectorate there was no
 declared Native Policy: the status of the Chief
 Native Commissioners, and the precise duties of
 his Department lacked definition. After nine
 months of careful study in consultation with
 Mr John Ainsworth, I propounded a Policy, the
 publication of which has met with universal
 acclamation from Civil Servants and others alike,
 and, except in one respect, the approval of the
 leading Missionaries. My declaration of Policy
 should be read with the Circular signed by
 Mr. Ainsworth: they were published together and
 I take full responsibility for both. The whole
 tone and intention of the Circular has been
 misunderstood, by people who, not having
 studied the problem on the spot, cannot
 appreciate the situation as I see it, but
 are ever ready to rush in and criticise.

So far from advocating a method by which
 natives are to be forced to work for unpopular
 employers in a state of semi-slavery, I intend
 to induce the native, for his own advancement,
 to work instead of idling. There is no idea
 of inducing particular natives to work for
 particular masters unless they wish to. The
 road employer must meet his man, before
 he can hope to get, much less keep, labour.

(overhead) The Bishops and Leading Missionaries
 published a letter on my memorandum, which
 commenced as follows - "With the main purpose
 of the memorandum, the prevention of idleness,
 and the meeting by all legitimate means, of the
 demand for necessary labour, we are in entire
 accord: labour must be forthcoming if the
 country is to be developed as it should." This
 letter went on to object to the use of Chiefs as
 a means of inducing natives to work, on the ground
 that Chiefs might use their powers unfairly,
 and fully alive to the possibility of Chiefs and
 headmen misusing their powers if proper supervision
 is not exercised. All possible steps are being taken
 of administration officers to ensure that individual
 natives are not victimized by arbitrary or illegal
 action on the part of the Chiefs. Moreover, natives
 throughout the Protectorate now know the power
 of the Courts of British Justice, and would not
 hesitate to appeal to them, if aggrieved with the
 ready assistance of firms of European Solicitors.
 Abuse of authority will thus speedily come to light.
 I have the honour to be
 your most obedient servant
 Edward Northey.

Josiah E. A. I.

Secretary
 for the Colonies
 May 8 1901

Downing Street,

13 April, 1920.

DRAFT.

Secretary,

ANTI-SLAVERY AND ABORIGINES
PROTECTION SOCIETY.

MINUTE.

Sir,

Mr. Bottomley, 12.4.20
(12040)

- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr. Grindle.
- Sir H. Lambton.
- Sir H. Read.
- Sir G. B. Alder.
- A. Amery.
- Lord Milner.

With ref. to the letter from this Department of the 19th of March, I am etc. to inform you that he has been in communication with Major-General Sir Edward Northey on your representations with regard to native labour in the E.A.P., and that Sir E. Northey suggests that he should take some convenient opportunity of meeting representatives of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society in order to explain to them the policy of the Protectorate Government in this matter.

3. I am to suggest that you should communicate direct with Sir E. Northey at 77 Carlisle Mansions, Westminster, S.W.1. with a view to arranging a meeting with him.

Copy to Mr. Bottomley 20

I am, etc.,

Its.

N/16314 Ead

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DRAFT. Ead Confidential

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for

16 June 1870

MINUTE.

for

Mr. [unclear] 14/6/70
Mr. [unclear] 14/6/70
Mr.

- Mr. Grindle.
- Sir H. Lambert.
- Sir H. Read.
- Sir G. Pidd.
- Col. Amory.
- Lord Milner.

Respectfully to [unclear]

W. [unclear] for your information,

The accompanying copy

of correspondence with

the Anti-Slavery

& Aborigines Protection

Society & with

the General for [unclear]

nothing on the

subject of [unclear]

Slavery - Mr. [unclear]
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East Africa Protectorate Native Labour.

356

77, Carlisle Mansions,
Westminster, S.W.

23rd April, 1920

My dear Bottomley,

To help Colonel Amery in answering questions as to Native Policy, I don't think I can amplify my letter of 26th March. I spent two hours this afternoon with the Committee of the Anti Slavery Society; not one of these gentlemen knew anything about the East African native at first hand, and they were therefore unable to grasp the situation, or sympathise with me: their spokesman a Mr. Roberts I believe, acknowledged that his arguments represented his own views which might or might not be endorsed by the Society. The chief trouble is the dread that native Chiefs will abuse their authority, and that bad European Masters will obtain labour by force through Administrative officers. Mr. Roberts had never heard of the Master and Servants Ordinance, and had no idea of its provisions for the protection of the native employée. They did not know that native headmen are the paid servants of the Government and are therefore bound to carry out the Government Policy of encouragement of idle natives to come out and work.

As regards my writing a despatch explaining my Native Policy and the Circular in question, it must be realised that it was not actually published till after I left for home, but as soon as I got the copy of the publication I brought it to you.

I will come and discuss the matter with you tomorrow morning in hopes of clearing up any doubtful points for Colonel Amery.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) EDWARD MORTIMER

26th March, 1920

357

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3. I will now take the points brought forward by the Society - in detail.

(a) The Society quotes former Secretaries of State - "That labour secured by force for private profit amounts to slavery" - etc.

Not only is the word "force" nowhere used in the Circular complained of, but, in fact, the express qualification "lawful" was inserted.

Force is unlawful and directly contrary to the Government's policy with respect to labour for private concerns.

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production is futile, unless we are to do all in our power to bring the native to the labour market and teach him to work; his work under good European supervision, and with proper training, is many times more productive than it is when left to his own methods, and he improves, physically and mentally, very quickly, with regular work and hearty exercise: left to his own resources he does little work: he makes his women and children do it for him: very little effort in turning up the rich soil provides him with sufficient food: left alone, the majority of adult men in the native Reserves live a miserable life of idleness, drunkenness and vice: encouraged and taught to work, he soon sees the advantage of earning money, lives better, becomes more intelligent, and dresses himself more decently.

For the good of the Empire which requires our raw materials - for the good of the Protectorate which must advance along progressive lines, and for the good of the native whom we protect, I am convinced that we must do all that is justly and legally possible to encourage and induce the idle native to come out and work.

(1) The Society particularly criticise our suggestions as to the encouragement of women and children to work: but the methods of such employment and the intention of the Circular in this respect are not understood.

It is urged* that where farms are situated in the vicinity of a native area, women and children should be encouraged to go out for such labour as they can perform". This labour, in almost every case, means coffee-picking, paid by results of piece work

work - popular among the women, who earn good wages by light work in a morning, or afternoon. It does not take them away for many hours from their adjacent homes.

There can be no more objection to it than there is to the encouragement of English women and children to go hop-picking - indeed less - for the Kikuyu women, or whoever the natives may be, go in large parties, of women and children, and beyond the farm manager or over-seer, they are not mixed up with a lot of strange men and have no temptation to immorality they return home at night.

4. In conclusion. When I took over the Government of the Protectorate, there was no declared Native Policy: the status of the Chief Native Commissioner, and the precise duties of his Department lacked definition. After nine months of careful study in consultation with Mr. John Ainsworth, I propounded a Policy, the publication of which has met with universal acclamation from Civil Servant and settler alike, and, except in one respect, the approval of the leading Missionaries. My declaration of Policy should be read with the Circular signed by Mr. Ainsworth: they were published together, and I take full responsibility for both. The whole tone and intention of the Circular has been misunderstood by people who, not having studied the problem on the spot, cannot appreciate the situation as I see it, but are ever ready to rush in and criticise.

So far from advocating a method by which natives are

are to be forced to work for unpopular employers in a state of semi-slavery, I intend to induce the native for his own advancement to work for a fair wage where he likes instead of idling. There is no idea of inducing particular natives to work for particular masters unless they wish to; the bad employer must mend his ways before he can hope to get, much less keep, labour.

The Bishops and leading Missionaries published a letter on my memorandum, which commenced as follows: "With the main purpose of the memorandum, the prevention of idleness, and the meeting by all legitimate means, of the demand for necessary labour, we are in entire accord; labour must be forthcoming if the country is to be developed as it should" This letter went on to object to the use of Chiefs as a means of inducing natives to work, on the ground that Chiefs might use their powers unfairly.

I am fully alive to the possibility of Chiefs and Headmen misusing their powers if proper supervision is not exercised. All possible steps are being taken by administrative officers to ensure that individual natives are not victimised by arbitrary or illegal action on the part of the Chiefs. Moreover natives throughout the Protectorate now know the power of the Courts of British Justice, and would not hesitate to appeal to them, if aggrieved, with the ready assistance of firms of European Solicitors. Abuse of authority, will thus quickly come to light.

I have, etc.

(Sgd.) ELWARI NORTHEY,

Governor, E.A.F.

SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES.

DOWNING STREET, S.W.1.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE NATIVE LABOUR

362

77, Carlisle Mansions,

Westminster, S.W.

23rd April 1920

My dear Bottomley,

To help Colonel Amery in answering questions as to Native Policy, I don't think I can amplify my letter of 26th March. I spent two hours this afternoon with the Committee of the Anti Slavery Society; not one of these gentlemen knew anything about the East African natives first hand, and they were therefore unable to grasp the situation, or sympathise with me: their spokesman a Mr. Roberts I believe, acknowledged that his arguments represented his own views which might or might not be endorsed by the Society. Their chief trouble is the dread that native Chiefs will abuse their authority, and that had European Masters will obtain labour by force through Administrative officers. Mr. Roberts had never heard of the Master and Servants Ordinance, and had no idea of its provisions for the protection of the native employée. They did not know that native headmen are the paid servants of the Government and are therefore bound to carry out the Government Policy of encouragement of idle natives to come out and work.

As regards my writing no despatch explaining my native Policy and the Circular in question, it must be realised that it was not actually published till after I left for home, but as soon as I got the copy of the publication I brought it to you.

I will come and discuss the matter with you tomorrow morning in hopes of clearing up any doubtful points for Colonel Amery.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) EDWARD NORTHEY

Please tell Colonel Amery that as a result of my talk with the A.S. and A.P. Society Committee I do not think I have been able to convince these gentlemen that there is no possible danger in the carrying out of the instructions contained in the "Ainsworth Circular": none of the gentlemen to whom I talked had ever been in Africa, and they appeared to me to be cranks who do not really understand the subject under discussion, narrow-minded and bigoted, and therefore not likely to be convinced: but I have since heard from them thanking me for seeing them and giving them all the information and explanation, including a copy of the Masters and Servants Ordinance. They appear to be satisfied with Colonel Amery's statement in the debate on the Colonial Office Vote in the House of Commons, but they will undoubtedly press for the issue of a further circular to Native Commissioners.

X

X

X

(sgd) EDWARD NORTHEY

23rd April 1920.

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wishes for all Amoy

Yours sincerely
Edward Mundy