

1923

KENYA

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39941
RE
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FROM
Govs. Depy. Northwest 1037

DATE
4th. July 1923

FOR CIRCULATION -

SUBJECT

Mr.
Mr.
Mr.
Asst. U.S. of S.

Administration of the Masai
Abolition of App of
Paramount Chief

W. H. Reed
10/9/23

Perm. U.S. of S.
Part U.S. of S. 17.9.23
Secretary of State.

Recommends - owing to
unreliability of Leggi Old Kenana

Previous Paper

MINUTES

SoD
41354
18

There is no reason to postpone this
discussion with Mr. [unclear],
I think, as the matter is really
quite clear.

Mr. [unclear], also died in
about 1890, a Kenana, his
son, [unclear], was "Laird"
of the Masai - i.e. medicine
man of the 1st grade. They
acquired such influence over
all sections of the Masai
that the position of Laird came
to be regarded by European
officials not merely cognate
of the fact, as you know
with that of Paramount
Chief. When the Govt.
appointed Kenana as
"Paramount Chief" on
his death when they
appointed his son Leggi

10/9/23
10/9/23

Subsequent Paper

MINUTES.

MINUTES NOT TO BE WRITTEN
ON THIS SIDE.

→ Paramount Chief
the Govt. were in fact
acting on a mis-
understanding of the
normal Masai tribal
history & tradition.

Seggi, the eldest son of
Lemana, is in fact
chief of the Laisan
Gilale "Laisan" or
medicine-men, who
belong to the Sighiani
group (Engidongi Division)
of the Masai. These
live near Ngong Hills
& En Doineyo Harat.

When Lemana died
(March 1971) Seggi was
about 13 years old.
He was unanimously
chosen as "Laisan"
The Govt. made him
"Paramount Chief" &
2 reports were prepared
for the Govt. being,
Legalistika & Ngara.
When Seggi came to
age & tried to assume
the duties of Paramount
Chief, he was given

every opportunity but
proved a failure. He was
filled quite unreliable, and
lacking in energy, physical
moral courage; his adv.
duties bored him & he
looked to the Govt. to do
everything for him.

The Sighiani ~~group~~
to whom he belongs acknowledge
him as their chief; but
they are a small section
of the Masai (probably
some 2000 or 1500). The
Pulko (the most important
Division in the Western & the
most troublesome) have
treated him with open
contempt, while the
Doita Lina & other Divisions
have not recognized him at
all.

The Govt. now propose
on the recommendation
of the Masai General
Council to revert to
normal Masai
practice by abolishing
the post of Paramount
Chief & putting Seggi
(where he sits) as chief

The Eng. is not charging him
like any similar section chief.

The Masai General Council,
it may be mentioned, was
formed in 1918. It is
composed of elders who are
representatives of all the Masai.
It is a permanent Council
to discuss the affairs of the
tribe & matters arising
out of the 1911 Masai
Agreement.

There can thus be no
doubt, I think, of the
proposed action causing
wrest among the Masai
(see Co. Disp. 11.12.18 on
page 41324/18 P. 1).

The fact that Leggi was
recommended by the Govt.
for a medal of 1918 for
his services in the
war services was not
a factor in the matter. As
Parliament (which he was
in the easy position of
addressing this honour
irrespective of merit. The
recommendation & description
of services need not be set
out

out here; but making 107
between - or even on - the
line, the decision of the
Parliament Chief compare
v. unfavourably with the
say, of Kagalisha (a Masai)
or Sereker (Chief of the Locals)

? all. Receipt - only
that provided the Govt.
on his return to the Colony
concerns, by approval
of the action recommended
by the Masai General
Council endorsed by
the Govt. being taken

all
16.4.23

I consider this a clear case,
but, as Mr. Bennett is on his
way home & a great deal
of interest is being taken at
present in native affairs in
Kenya, I think that it will
be well to discuss matters
with him before replying as
proposed.

I think that the papers will
naturally be seen by higher
authority before the despatch, but
the Masai question has attracted
considerable attention & the best
P.D.O. at Mill
to J.S. 14/8/23

W. Kennedy
all
17.4.23

Wait
Mr. [unclear] [unclear]
to [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
Friday. I need [unclear] the
[unclear] & my [unclear].
[unclear] [unclear] to add -
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] of
the [unclear] [unclear].

? Now take action
as in my [unclear]
of [unclear]

act

3.9.53

9.23

KENYA.
No. 1037.



GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
KENYA.
4th July, 1923.

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10 AUG 23

My Lord Duke,

So5
41354
10

I have the honour to refer to Mr. Walter Long's despatch No. 899 of the 11th December, 1918.

So5
29521
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2. Since that date Seggi Ole Lenana has been given a further trial as Paramount Chief, with the result that I can only confirm the recommendations made in Sir Charles Bowring's despatch No. 218 of the 28th March, 1918. During this period Seggi's influence with his tribe has, if possible, decreased and throughout the recent unrest he was totally powerless to give any assistance whatever to the Government, even by restraining those witch doctors of his own clan without whose countenance the up-rising would not have occurred.

3. Accordingly the Officer in Charge of the Masai Reserve was instructed to lay the question before the Masai General Council who have recommended that the office of Paramount Chief be abolished and that Seggi be placed on the same rate of pay as chiefs of other sections in his capacity as head of the Engidongi Clan.

4. Should Your Grace desire further details I would suggest that Mr. R.W. Hemsted, O.B.E., who recently called for leave in England be consulted. I trust

that

GRACE

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, K.G., P.C., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

that I shall receive an intimation of Your Grace's approval in due course.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's most devoted
and most obedient servant,

J. A. Ker

GOVERNOR'S DEPUTY.

D

3996 (Kerry) 110
D.H.

S.O. for my signature
recd

DRAFT.

C. D.
R 17 AUG
D 17

R. W. [unclear] by [unclear]

17 Aug 23

MINUTE

for [unclear]

Could you please
call here & see me

Mr.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr. [unclear]

Sir G. Grindle.

Sir H. Bond.

Sir J. Macintosh Bart

Mr. Omsley-Care.

Duke of Devonshire.

Ch

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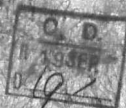
Ole [unclear]

now become chief of the
Engidangi clan.

~~any meeting about~~
11.30 will do, if that
is convenient to you.

Sir Kenya
29/9/23

111



20 Sept 1923

DRAFT

Kenya
No. 1570

General Council
MINUTE

Mr. Jewell 18.9.23

Mr. Jeffries 18/9

Mr. Bottomley 18/9

Mr. Davis.

Sir G. Grindle.

Sir H. Read.

Sr. J. Macdormon Smith.

Mr. Ormsby-Gore.

Duke of Devonshire.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Sir Charles Baring's despatch No. 1087 of the 4th of July, in which it is stated that the Masai General Council have recommended that the office of Paramount Chief should be abolished & that Sagge Ole Lenana should be

placed on the same rate of
pay as chief of the section
as head of the Engidangi Clan.

2. Provided that you
concur, I approve of the
action recommended by the
Masoi General Council, as
endorsed by the Acting Surveyor,
being taken.

Closed DEVO... ..