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Order
Field 754

STAFF OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Date.
1912

October

States that it has been represented that one extra Asst Engineer will be required next year. Has not yet formed an opinion as to the necessity. Explains grounds on which application is made and forwards proposal for consideration.

Previous Paper.

20887

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*I really do not understand his
but Bulfinch states ^{in para 2} that he has ^{not} as yet
had an opportunity of forming an
opinion as to the advisability of the
addition proposed, and then proceeds
in paras 4-6 to give a number of
reasons why the addition is equally
required.*

Wants for first 4/4 to S/S's cap

disp of 20887 on 20887

WAS

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Subsequent Paper

20887

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
 NAIROBI,
 BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE

October 25th 1912.

No. 754



Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that it has been represented to me that one extra Assistant Engineer will be required next year for the Staff of the Public Works Department, in order to allow of there being an unattached man, not employed at any of the five branch offices of the Department, available for duty in the Head Office at Nairobi.

2. I have not as yet had opportunity of forming an opinion as to the advisability or otherwise of the addition proposed, but will submit my recommendations in due course when replying to your Confidential despatch of 30th July. In the meantime I forward the proposal for your consideration.

3. I would observe at once that the present proposal has no connection with any of the recommendations submitted in Mr. Bowring's Confidential despatch No. 56 of the 7th June, but is now put forward as a definite request for the first time.

4. The Director of Public Works states that the
 Head

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LEWIS HARCOURT, P.O., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

(2)

Head Office is being carried on with too narrow a margin of staff, the result of which is to render the inspection of works more and more difficult to effect year by year, and that the increase in the volume of business which passes through the Head Office has been very marked during the last five years.

5. I am informed that in 1907 there were three officers permanently stationed at Nairobi, while subsequently, for a period of about two years, the services of an unattached Engineer were at the exclusive disposal of the Director of Public Works for any urgent demand made by Government or the Public, which called for Head Office attention or investigation. At the present moment, when the Department has greatly enhanced responsibilities in connection with Loan Projects the Director of Public Works is carrying on the duties of his office with only one Assistant. The absence of either on tour or through illness leaves the other with an amount of work with which it is not possible for him to cope successfully, and arrears accumulate rapidly. At one period of last financial year, when the Director of Public Works was called away on an unexpected tour of five weeks duration, his duties at Headquarters devolved upon the Deputy Director, who was also carrying on single-handed those of the Chief Accountant, who was then on leave, in addition to his own. If the Deputy Director had failed in health, there would have been no one in the Department who had any acquaintance with

Head

(3)

Head Office practice. As it is, a waste of money is still resulting from the existing situation. Some things had to be left undone, and amongst them the annual indents on the Crown Agents for stores were delayed. The latter are now depleted to an extent which has not occurred for years, and local purchases at enhanced prices have to be made to keep work in progress.

The proposal now put forward by the Director would mean the reversion to the old arrangement of three men, not two, at the Head Office.

6. Another consideration is that under the present system none of the Engineers of the Department have had opportunities of learning Head Office routine and methods, with which in the opinion of the Director it is eminently desirable that they should be acquainted, not only as adding to their own experience, but also in the interests of the Department. With the addition of one extra man, it would be possible for all Engineers to be taken into the Head Office in rotation for periods of 6 or 12 months. In this way a Staff would finally be evolved well acquainted with the workings of an Engineering Department both on its administrative and executive sides, and such a situation as has been described in the preceding paragraph would be unlikely to recur.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

A. Conway Brevet.

GOVERNOR.