

EAST AFR. PROT.  
GERMAN E. AFRICA  
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SEP 10 SEP 12

Sign Office  
Date.  
1912  
Sept.  
Previous Paper.

German E. Africa  
labours difficulties of British Rubber Companies

Sends copy corres. with Rubber growers Assoc  
acting on behalf of various Rubber Companies  
reop. inadequate supply of labours in German E. Africa  
& demand for intervention by F.O.

Sir G. Fiddes.

Interesting.

Put by?

H. R.

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P.P. 11

E 12.9

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Subsequent Paper

RECEIVED 10 SEP 12

In any further communication on this subject, please quote

No. 35763/1912

The Under-Secretary of State,  
Foreign Office,  
London.

The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents  
his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for the  
Colonies and, by direction of the Secretary of  
State, transmits herewith copy of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,

September 9, 1912.

Reference to previous letter:

Description of Inclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
East Africa Rubber Plantation Co. etc Aug. 22 To do. Sept. 4.	Labour difficulties of rubber companies in German East Africa.

RUBBER GROWERS ASSOCIATION, LONDON.

28615

1, OXFORD COURT, REGD 10 SEP 12  
 CANNON STREET,  
 LONDON, E.C.  
 22nd August, 1912.

Sir:-

The undersigned British Companies, who are Members of the Rubber Growers' Association (Incorporated) and who possess estates in German East Africa, desire to respectfully ask the favour of your attention to the following statement of facts relating to the British interests which they represent.

1. Since the summer of 1909, as the result of representations made to, and particulars laid before British Financiers and others interested in the cultivation of rubber and other tropical products, by German Financiers and Planters owning estates in German East Africa, a number of large and important Estates in that Colony were acquired by British groups, and British Companies were subsequently formed to work them.

2. The difficulties which have since been experienced in obtaining labourers at reasonable rates and in sufficient numbers were not fully demonstrated at that

time

Right Honourable

Sir Edward Grey, Bart., K.G.,

&amp;c., &amp;c., &amp;c.

time.

3. During the last three years these difficulties have become greater, so that work on the plantations cannot be satisfactorily carried on.

4. In the opinion of the signatories all their efforts towards the improvement of the conditions under which labour is recruited and obtained appear so far to have failed.

5. German East Africa is essentially a rich tropical agricultural country requiring for the success of its planting industry a sufficient labour force.

6. It is our opinion that the conditions under which labour is recruited could be greatly improved.

7. The necessary construction of railways in German East Africa has caused such supply of labour as has been available to be largely drawn upon, with a resultant decrease in the supply available to planters.

8. The Government have now decreed that labourers recruited in the Hinterland districts (the main sources of supply) must be conveyed to their destination by railway, thereby in many instances increasing the burden and expense on the planting Companies.

9. The large initial cost of delivering a labourer on an Estate in the Usambara district, where most of the British interests have been acquired, now anything from £2 to £3 per head, is incommensurate with the short period of contract allowed between employers and employed

10. The expense to the signatories in obtaining labour has been steadily increasing, and they are of opinion that unless some preventative measures are taken, such increase is likely to continue.

11. Ceara Rubber is inferior both in yield and longevity to the Hevea species which is a market competitor of Ceara Rubber, Hevea is cultivated on the plantations of Ceylon and the Middle East, but cannot be grown in East Africa. Unless the Ceara Estates of German East Africa are worked with the greatest care and economy this species, under the conditions in which it is grown in German East Africa, will not be able to compete with Hevea in the markets of the world. The rates of pay in German East Africa are much higher than those ruling in the neighbouring district of British East Africa, and having regard to the increased and probably increasing expenditure the signatory Companies are  
of

of opinion that it is only a question of time before the successful cultivation of their estates may be jeopardized and capital amounting to over three-quarters of a million sterling seriously imperilled.

12. In view of the foregoing statement we respectfully ask that you will cause the following representations to be communicated to the Imperial German Secretary of State for the Colonies with such recommendations for their early and favourable consideration as it may please you to make.

13. That steps should be taken to control and license recruiters and to place a legal limit on their charges to planters; that only recognised and licensed recruiters should be allowed to recruit labour, and that licenses should only be granted to men of sound credentials and financial backing, approved by Government.

14. That the fees charged by recruiters to estates should be strictly scheduled at a reasonable rate per head.

15. That planters should be at liberty to bring labourers to their estates by the cheapest and most expeditious route and not be compelled to adopt fixed routes.

routes whether by the railways or otherwise.

16. That if the Government consider that the control of labour should be centralized, we suggest that as an alternative to recruiters licensed and paid on a capitation basis, the Government should appoint its own recruiters, and charge each Estate a fixed and reasonable rate per head for all labour procured.

17. That all labourers recruited by the licensed recruiters should be consigned to the estates, which would receive their due proportion of labourers on an equitable basis to be determined.

18. That the period of labour contracts with the men should be for a term of not less than 500 working days, and that all labourers in good health should be compelled to work a minimum of four days a week.

19. That the importation of the female members of labourers' families be encouraged as conducing to the greater contentment of the labourers and possibly the eventual employment of females as in other tropical countries.

In conclusion we beg to express the hope that, in view of the importance and urgency of the matter, it  
may

may receive the favour of your early and most especial attention.

We are &c.,

(Signed) The East African Rubber Plantation  
Company, Limited.

Kamma Rubber Estate, Limited.

Kifulu Rubber Estates Limited.

The Lewa Rubber Estates Limited.

The Manihot Rubber Plantations Ltd.

Mkumbi Rubber Plantations Limited.

Mombo Rubber Plantation Limited.

Muhesa Rubber Plantations Limited..



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FOREIGN OFFICE,  
September 4 1912.

Gentlemen:-

I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 22nd. ultimo, in which you draw attention to the inadequate supply of labour in German East Africa.

After full consideration of the circumstances which you describe Sir E. Grey regrets that they are not such as would warrant his intervention.

If your Companies have any legitimate subjects of complaint against the Government of the Protectorate as to the way in which the laws are administered, - as distinguished from the laws themselves, - this Department or His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Dar-es-Salam, to whose recent appointment for the protection of British interests in German East Africa I am to draw attention, will of course be ready to consider

East African Rubber

Plantation Company Limited,

&c., &c., &c.

c/o The Rubber Growers' Association,

1, Oxford Court,

Cannon Street, E.C.

consider them.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

(SIGNED) LOUIS MALLET.

consider them.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

(SIGNED) LOUIS MALLET.