

JKR

EAST AFR. PROJ
35263

C.O
35263
11 02 13

Magadi Soda Co.
Lt.

Magadi Scheme - Labour Supply

1913

10 Oct.

Refers to difficulty in obtaining some skilled labour. Inquires whether there would be any objection to using Indian indentured labour for at least three years on terms to be specified. Encloses report from Co. local M.C.

See previous Paper.

26611

~~Mr. Fiddle~~ / 6 }
Mr. G. Fiddle }

See J.O. 20846/13 in time. It appears

that the main difficulty is the way of getting indentured labour from India - the objection which exists to the whole system in India (see para 4 of the first of India's desps. of the 17th of April / 13).

Apart from this I do not think that the Indian part. who feel disposed to put themselves out of the way for the E.A.P. in view of the ~~unpleasant~~ hostile attitude of the white section in the part. towards the Indians in the part.
Perhaps the Indians may desire to

Copy to Mr. for Conf. 22 Oct 1913

See subsequent Paper.

find another outlet for their labourers
who will be shortly returning from Panama

If any labourer is to be imported
from outside, the W.I. natives would
appear to be on the whole the best
solution. but I expect that we shall
find that he is too expensive & that the Co^y will
have to make the best they can of
the local supply. ^{the S. A. P. & the D. O.}
Send copy of this ^{without me} ^{& say that it is proposed}
with ref^{erence} to ^{that} ^{Mr. Harcourt has found}
to diff. the Co^y

reason to think that it will be
impossible to obtain indentured
labour from India & that strain in their ^{circles}
there is nothing more to be done in the matter.
~~that is all that can be done~~
further? - & send an ad interim note
to the Co^y ?

J.R.
15/2/13

apart from other objections, India will not allow
indentured labourers to be taken for any country
which does not allow them to acquire land.

It is commonly thought that there will
be a surplus of labour in Barbados after
the returned labourers from Panama leave
their money - probably also in
Jamaica. It is better that these men
should go to the S. A. P. than that they
should drift to Central & South America
as far too many W.I. do. The Company
would have to get the consent of the
local govts. & comply with their
emigration laws. They could make
contracts, but could not take the
men under indenture contracts.

To get them, they would have to send a
responsible person to the colony - some one who
could satisfy the govts., & answer the labourers
questions from his own knowledge. The men
would not go to settle & would have to be
provided with return passages.

The Bahamas would be another possible source of
supply, but only if the Co. took enough at
one time to make it pay to have special
stepping facilities. 291

G.E. 16. 10. 13.

I would like to see some list the S. A. P.
is not prepared to ask the sanction of the
India govts. to a scheme of indentured labour
for the East.

Mr. Reed might mention the proposed
people the possibilities of W.I. labour they
must judge for themselves whether the idea is
worth taking up.

No. 16. 10. 13

The Company is not likely to pay Panama
rates to West Indians.

Atorck
16/10/13

THE MAGADI SODA COMPANY, LIMITED.

M. SAMUEL & CO. MANAGERS

MAGADI LONDON
LONDON WALL 1883

P

A/D

W. H. H. H.
10th October 1913

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office, S.W.

35203

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10 13

Sir,

We have felt for some little time that the question of semi-skilled labour for our works at Magadi is going to cause us no little difficulty.

In the early part of July Mr Symonds raised the question of importing Chinese labour, but was informed that the authorities were not likely to look favourably upon this suggestion.

In this connection we now beg to submit a letter from our Medical Officer Dr Nicholls, who has been able to study local labour conditions in British East Africa for the last few months, and who moreover has had opportunities of studying the question of East Indian labour in St Lucia during his service as Government Medical Officer in that Island.

We gather from the Report of the Committee on Emigration from India to the Crown Colonies and Protectorates (C D 5192) that any scheme of recruiting Indentured labour containing a repatriation clause would perhaps not be received in a favourable light, but we desire to know whether we should be allowed to use indentured labour, taking such labour for say three years, with a clause that at the end of the labourer's contract either his passage money to India would be paid, provided he sailed for India at once, or that he were free to remain

The Under Secretary of State.

10.10.13.

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in the country, either taking service with us for further periods from year to year or going into other employment.

It is, of course, obvious that to import labour from India must entail no little expense, as, in addition to the man's passage, good quarters have to be provided and the feeding of an Indian is considerably more expensive than that of a native; consequently, we would hesitate to undertake such importation unless we knew that this labour could be bound to us under an indenture for a period of years.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF
THE NAGALI SOJA COMPANY

MANAGERS.

enclosure.

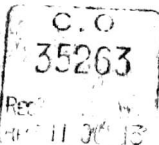
COPY

THE NAGADI SODA Co., Ltd.
LONDON

Nagadi Railway

September 13th 1913.

Guy Symonds Esq.



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Dear Sir,

During the time that I have been out here, I have carefully watched the labour question and I am rapidly modifying my opinion of the relative values of native & Indians.

With luck and an extension of time it is possible that the construction will be carried through with a mixture of the two kinds of labourers, but it is almost improbable that the natives will prove satisfactory for the permanent working of the lake.

There appears to have been an original objection to Indians, originating principally among the settlers and merchants who discovered that the higher types were competitors. I have conversed with a number of men who have been in this country for several years and they tell me that the objection to the East Indian is disappearing for it is found that in many ways he is far more useful than a native.

The work at the lake will be arduous and carried on under trying circumstances, and for its success it will be desirable to possess a number of settled and more or less permanent labourers. It is not an uncommon occurrence for the natives to desert in a large batches, and often a subcontractor

will be working one day with several hundred and in a few days they will be reduced to a handful. A native rarely signs on for more than three months and the morning after the third day the huts are found very often nearly empty; to give notice or indicate that he is about to "trek" home is far from the mind of the native.

I imagine that a sudden fall in the number of labourers will be highly undesirable when soda is being exported from the lake.

It will be necessary to recruit a large number of natives from localities of a very different nature to the lake men, and in many ways these will be unsuitable and will perform very little work.

Where large gangs are concerned the labour question is every-day becoming more acute, and the general opinion is that this will not be ameliorated.

It is a sufficiently difficult matter to convert the warrior of yesterday into an industrial unit of to-day, and he will not be capable for many years to come of continuous or intelligent labour.

The East Indian coolie has been drilled to labour for many generations; he is dirty and insanitary but between him and the native there is little to choose in this respect.

Disciplinary labour the coolie understands, the native certainly does not. The latter will seldom work for six days a week for any length of time unless he is continuously driven

to it.

The wage of coolies obtained from India would be about Rs 12 a month each. The fare is 30 Rs. and the probable total cost would be about Rs 42. each.

They can be indentured for 3 years, and at the end of the time repatriated so that there would be no question of flooding the country with undesirables. If a shipment of 500 coolies was obtained (and permission could easily be obtained from the Colonial Office) this would settle our labour difficulties for the next three years.

A large number of coolies have been shipped to the West Indies, for as a business proposition it has been found that they are of more value than the native. When properly looked after they are hardy and excellent labourers and will submit to conditions which are instantly refused by the negro race.

I am writing this as a suggestion for it appears to me that this is an alternative that will require careful consideration.

At the present time we have as many East Indian funds at the Settlement site as we have natives.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) **LEWIS NICHOLS.**

1/3/13

DRAFT:

The Magistrate's Office

20. 1. 1913.

MINUTE.

- Mr. G. G. 17/10/13
- Mr. G. G. 18/10/13
- Mr. G. G. 18/10/13
- Sir G. Fiddes.
- Sir H. Just.
- Sir J. Anderson.
- Lord Emmott.
- Mr. Harcourt.

... the receipt
 of your letter, dated 15/10/13, in relation
 to the question of ...
 skilled labour ...
 at ...
 ... the matter careful ...
 ... the Indian ...

...
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 ...
 ...
 ...

Copy ...

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THE MAGADI SODA COMPANY, LIMITED.

M. SAMUEL & CO. MANAGERS

AGENTS: SOGAGADI, LONDON.
PHONE: LONDON WALL 1883.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS
TO BE ADDRESSED TO
THE COMPANY.

is reply please quote

*Shell House
258-27 Bishopsgate
London E.C. 4* November 2th 1913.

Dear Mr. Read;

It was a most happy suggestion of yours that I should try and have an interview with Mr. Ainsworth.

I went up to Manchester yesterday and spent the whole morning discussing labour matters with him, in consequence of what he said my whole view of the labour question as far as Magadi is concerned is considerably brighter.

Mr. Ainsworth hopes to come down the Magadi line on his way back to his Province in January, and I have every hope that if we are able to satisfy him that it is our honest intention to treat the native labour fairly then not only will the question of un-skilled or casual labour be made vastly easier, but we may even hope to obtain not ~~and~~ perhaps what one would call skilled labour, but a type of fairly intelligent man and one who will stop with us long enough to make it worth our while to train him to a job, and this without going out of the country for our labour supply.

It seems even possible that my idea of our own labour living on our own land might be worked in as a

THE MAGADI SODA COMPANY, LIMITED.

M. SAMUEL & CO. MANAGERS

AGENTS: SODABADI, LONDON
TELEPHONE LONDON WALL 1883

Handwritten:
25, 27, Bishopsgate
London E.C. 2

INCORPORATED
IN ENGLAND
SODA WATER
COMPANY

PLEASE QUOTE

small part of a much larger scheme which Mr. Ainsworth has in view.

At all events the information I got was quite reassuring enough to make it unnecessary for me to consider the question of Indentured labour at any rate for the present, and I do not propose to worry Mr. Grindle in the matter, and we need not mention the very unsavoury question of Chinese labour at all.

I should like to see you one day next week if you could spare me a few minutes, thanking you for advising me to see Mr. Ainsworth.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature:
Angus

Handwritten notes:
Lalson
Bantatos
Limes
J.H.

Handwritten notes:
My own taking please
as use mistakes and
'Gumal' misinterpretation
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