

EAST AFR. PROT

31506

31506

Governor Conf. 135  
Belfield

MR C.G. WRIGHT

1914

24th July

Last previous Paper.

22893

Reports further as to termination of employment. Encloses minutes by D.P.W. explaining action in suggesting to Mr Wright that he should apply to Uganda for employment.

Mr Reed  
Mr Bottomley

This all seems rather unsatisfactory. The question of leave is not clear; the Gov. says (§ 3) - "Sanction was given to the suggestion" - but adds that this sanction did not necessarily imply that any such assurance was to be given <sup>then & there</sup>. But as this question is settled, the Gov's explanation can be dismissed.

Par. (4) is very unsatisfactory, since (a) no explanation is given; (b) the reports by Mr. Colwell asked for in our despatch of 27 May 1898, are not furnished.

With regard to Mr. Reed

Mr. Conf. Case 3rd July 14

Next subsequent Paper.

33475

minute, the explanation seems  
weak. It is true that all the  
evidence against Mr. Wright had not  
accumulated in Sept. '12, but it  
is clear that he was regarded as an  
unsatisfactory officer. Secondly,  
Mr. Ross' remarks about actively  
interposing between Mr. W. & further  
employment is beside the point;  
what he did, apparently, was definitely  
to recommend Mr. W. to apply for  
employment in Uganda. Finally, I  
cannot suppose that the P. W. D.,  
Uganda, was really so hard up that  
it would be stranded without the  
services of incompetent E. A. P. men.

? Ask. & say that the  
action of the Acty Ch. Sec. & the O.A.G.  
(§ 4) is not understood; and ask that  
Mr. Cornwall's reports may be furnished  
as requested before.

And say that Mr. Ross'  
explanation is not considered satisfactory  
and ask that an expression of the  
S of S's disapproval may be conveyed  
to him.

A. C. 25/8/14

Some months ago I suggested that when the Govt  
or his Representative have in stores show him  
a specimen of a properly conducted business case

- 1912 January. Mr. Cresswell reports very adversely on Mr. Wright.
- February. Mr. Ross talks to Mr. Eshant about Mr. Wright.
- August. Mr. Macay's reports generally favorable on Mr. Wright.
- September 2. After two interviews with the Governor, Mr. Ross recommends that "in view of the probability of other professional employment being open to him in the near future" Mr. Wright be kept for six months, without leave, "in order that proposals now under consideration have time to mature."
- September 14. Mr. Ross, his union having been approved, lays down to Mr. Wright the terms of his future employment & suggests that he should make application to Dr. P. W. Lyander for employment there.
- In forwarding this application, Mr. Ross says "You are astounded by my views as to Mr. Wright's capabilities."
- November. Mr. Wright's employment is extended & he is given an independent charge. ?

I saw my minute upon yesterday, & as Mr. Peasey is due to be back next week I did not pursue the matter - especially as it would probably not be easy at short notice to produce a perfect example.

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This is a case of a man or agreement, & the Gov. has said, in another agreement, that he does not consider the full machinery of Ex. Co. to be applicable. This view is as death count, but I should like it to be explained to the Gov. that in any case of the sort it is expected that he will obtain documentary evidence of all that can be said for or against the man and that he will furnish the S. G. with his own views but with the documentary evidence.

I would not take further notice of the opinion to confront Mr Wright with Mr. Cresswell's report, except to make a mental note in Mr. Brown's favour that he thought it desirable to ask the Gov. to send the report - & also to thank Mr. Cresswell's own favourable report.

We must also I think it had to compare with the R.P.O., Ufford, referred to towards the end of the minute by Mr. Ross, whose position in the matter

not yet felt in Sept. 1912.

And say that without expressing at this stage any opinion as to Mr Ross's handling of the matter the S. J. P. must request that in future any compromise with other Col's or Protos as to the transfer of a European official shall be conducted by the Govt & not by the head of the sect. Had address at A.B. U.S. 25. 8. 14

Sgt. Conn.  
at roll  
H. J. R.  
25/8/14

I have tried to indicate in the tabular statement attached. Mr. Ross is at pains to show that he did not mislead Mr. Esphant, but on the whole I think there can be little doubt that he encouraged Mr. Wright to lobby for a Uganda addt. with a hope that Uganda would take him for want of a better man, or - <sup>knowing that</sup> ~~perhaps~~ to show Mr. W. right that he (Ross) had done all he could. If I am right, <sup>perhaps means</sup> ~~that~~ the words "permitting him to inquire through me" economize truth.

The action of Mr. Tanner (acting S.P.W. in Jan 1913) in telling Mr. Wright that his anticipated service would carry leave privileges (which had been sanctioned), seems to have been very proper. Mr. Wright - originally 12 months - had already served 6 & his extension to 30 was definite.

? Ask for papers as at A, and, further, <sup>and for any minutes, then may</sup> ask for a definite statement from Mr. Ross as to <sup>be as to the best</sup> ~~action or~~ <sup>course to be</sup>

- (1) whether he suggested or permitted the Uganda application &
- (2) if he suggested it, whether he told Mr. W. that he had previously expressed any - & if so what - opinion to Mr. Esphant as to his capabilities, &
- (3) whether the short-handling of the debt which was apparent in Nov. 1912, was <sup>the result of</sup> ~~the result of~~ <sup>the result of</sup>

31506

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

Confidential No. 135

RECEIVED  
19 AUG 1914  
COL. OFFICE

July 24th 1914.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Confidential despatches of the 29th of May and the 12th of June on the subject of Mr. C. G. Wright's employment in this Protectorate.

2. With reference to paragraph 2 of the former despatch, I have to report that in November 1912 the Director of Public Works communicated with headquarters, stating that Mr. Wright had not hitherto performed his duties with satisfaction but that owing to shortage of staff he proposed to place him at Mombasa as Acting Executive Engineer in charge of the Public Works in the Province. He added that if this suggestion was approved, Mr. Wright would be retained in this country until February 1914 and would then be offered a single passage to England and three months leave.

3. Sanction was given to the suggestion of the Director of Public Works, and Mr. Tanner thereupon appears

The Right Honourable

Lewis Harcourt, P.C., M.P.,

Secretary of State for the Colonies,

Downing Street,

LONDON, S.W.,

W  
1914/8  
20026

appears to have informed Mr. Wright to that effect on the 14th of January 1913, though no copy of his letter was forwarded to headquarters, nor did the sanction given necessarily imply that any such assurance was to be given then and there. The fact that this promise had been made was not known either to the Secretariat or myself when my despatch Confidential No.4 of January 9th was written. I note that the leave in question has now been granted to him.

4. With regard to paragraph 3 (i) of the former of the despatches under reply I am unable to state why the Acting Chief Secretary ( Mr. A. C. Hollis ) and the Acting Governor ( Mr. Bowring ) thought it unnecessary that Mr. Wright should be given the opportunity of answering the charges brought against him by Mr. Creswell. The proposal emanated from the Assistant Chief Secretary.

5. With reference to paragraph 3 (ii) of the same despatch I enclose for your information a copy of Mr. McGregor Ross' explanation of his action in suggesting to Mr. Wright that he should make application to the Director of Public Works, Uganda, for employment in that Protectorate.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

*A. Lindsay Beylet*

GOVERNOR.

INCL. COURSE  
1st Dec 1914 No 135 of 747 1914

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,  
HEAD OFFICE,  
NAIROBI.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Incipitly please quote No. 3811/8

and Date July 1st 1914.

THE HON. ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY,  
NAIROBI.

MR. GORDON WRIGHT.

Your confidential minute of the 29th ultimo calls for an explanation, in an abbreviated form, of my having suggested in September 1912 to Mr. Wright that he should apply for engagement as a Temporary Assistant Engineer on Loan Works in the Uganda Protectorate.

2. At the time in question Mr. Wright had not given the evidences of unsuitability which have since accumulated. I had received two confidential reports from superior officers of his, of which one was adverse and the other favourable. I considered that Mr. Wright was entitled to the benefit of a doubt as to his capabilities, and that I was not justified in interposing actively between him and opportunities for further employment.

3. A few months previously - in February 1912 - I had had a conversation with Mr. Espeut, the Director of Public Works of Uganda, in Nairobi, upon the subject of Mr. Wright, and in forwarding the latter's application, I added, as a reminder of this conversation:

"You are not unaware of my views as to Mr. Wright's capabilities."

My forwarding letter contained no word of recommendation, and Mr. Espeut was aware at the time that Mr. Wright was not to be retained in this Department, and that he was at liberty to leave for other employment at any time.



4. It is frequently the case in such a country as this that one is not only reduced to the necessity of engaging assistants who exhibit a standard of efficiency far below what would be required in more advanced communities, but is even glad to obtain them. A case in point was my own position in November 1912 when I recommended that Mr. Wright should be kept at work in this Department in order that operations in one Province might not be left entirely without Engineering supervision. As I knew that Mr. Espeut was in want of staff in August - September 1912, and as he was aware that Mr. Wright was not to be retained for more than a short period here, I considered that there was no impropriety involved in my permitting the latter to enquire, through me, whether the former wished to offer him employment. This correspondence with the Director of Public Works in Uganda was twice reported to Government at the time, in letters of September 2nd and 17th 1912.

5. Mr. Tanner is at present away from Nairobi on inspection. I will place His Excellency's enquiries before him for reply on his return, which will be in the course of a day or two.

(sd) W. McGregor Ross,

Director of Public Works.

St

RECEIVED  
D. 28 AUG  
31

31 Aug 1914

Ansrd 48391

Sir,

I have the honour  
to acknowledge the receipt of  
your confidential despatch  
No. 135 of the 24<sup>th</sup> of July,  
and enclosure, regarding  
the termination of the  
appointment of Mr C. G.  
Wright as Asst Engineer  
in the P.W.D.

(3) I have not yet  
received the copies of Mr  
Geswell's reports on Mr  
Wright for which I asked  
in my confidential  
despatch of the 29<sup>th</sup> of  
May. I should be glad  
if you would furnish me  
with

DRAFT.

E. A. P.

Confidential

for Sir H. Belfield

MINUTE.

Mr. Cooke 27/8/14

Mr. Bottomley 27.8.14

Ms. Read 28

Sir G. Fiddes.

Sir H. Just.

Sir J. Anderson.

Lord Emmott.

Mr. Harcourt.

with these papers and  
with a copy of Mr Mac-  
millan's report, together  
with copies of any  
minutes which there may  
be as to the proposal  
that it was suggested might be taken  
action on Mr Creswell's  
report.

(3) With reference to  
the minute by the  
Director of Public Works,  
which accompanied your  
despatch under acknowl-  
-ement, I have to  
request that Mr Ross  
may be asked to  
furnish a definite  
statement as to the  
following points

(i) whether he suggested  
or permitted <sup>Mr Wright</sup> the application

by

by Mr Wright for employ-  
-ment in the P.W.D. of  
Uganda &

(ii) if he suggested it,  
whether he intimated to  
Mr Wright that he had  
previously expressed  
any, and if so what,  
opinion to Mr Esport  
as to his capabilities; and

(iii) whether the short-  
-handedness of the P.W.D.  
of the E.A.P., which  
was apparent in Nov., 1912,  
and necessitated the  
retention of Mr Wright's  
in that Dept  
services, was not yet  
felt in Sept., 1912.

(4) Without, at this  
stage, expressing any  
opinion as to Mr Ross'  
handling

handling of the matter, I  
must request that, in  
future, any correspondence  
with the Col<sup>o</sup> or Prot<sup>o</sup>,  
as to the transfer of an  
European official shall be  
conducted by the Govt, and  
not by the Head of the Dept.

(5) I would add that,  
in any case <sup>similar</sup> ~~of this~~ to the  
present, whether the full  
procedure laid down in the Colonial Regulation, for the hearing by  
~~machinery~~ <sup>as Committee</sup> of the Executive  
Council is applicable or  
not, it is <sup>durable</sup> ~~expected~~ that  
the Govt. <sup>shall</sup> obtain  
documentary evidence of  
all that can be said for  
or against the official  
concerned, and ~~that he~~ <sup>should</sup>  
will ~~forward to~~ <sup>forward to</sup> the Secy of S. &  
in furnishing him ~~with~~  
not only with his own  
views <sup>on the subject</sup>, but also with  
~~the documentary evidence~~