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Foreign
Office

Belgian Operations against German
East Africa

1914

Nov 19

Considers that Belgian Govt should be acquainted with the considered view of his military authorities in British East Africa as to the probable effect on the safety of Belgian territory of the recent British reverses

Foreign Office Paper

44923 S

Mr. Bickerton
Mr. Read
Mr. G. Fiddes

The F.O. seem very reluctant about this in spite of what has happened at Tanga it still remains very improbable that the Germans will make a serious attack upon the German Congo, as we shall no doubt keep them pretty fully occupied. Nov 44923 it appears that the Belgians have quite enough men to withstand any attack which the Germans will be able to make against the Belgian

24 Nov
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Foreign Office Paper

47596 S

frontier. But, as to, seem to expect it, we might feel to Sir G. Balfour with ref. to his telegram on 44923 and ask him to ascertain from his S.O.C. what he considers the likelihood of an German attack on the Belgian Congo in present circumstances to be?

Epun 20/11/14

I think we have no option but to telegraph & propose, but I don't of course much prefer of an attack in form on the Congo so long as S.A.P. exists. But the news of a concentration at Lubumbashi (near the Belgian Congo) seems to indicate the possibility of activity on the both West of the German, have many troops as is stated they could hold the Belgians in check while sending a front on Angola (to draw off some of our troops) & then a main attack from Kinshasa & Tabora to the railway station for this would ripple as I don't know.

W.M. 10/11/14

J.R.

20/11/14

Sir J. Anderson

I refer to this aspect of the question - the news that you saw today. I ~~have~~ ^{would} like to draw the opinion of the G.O.C. - the question of

it seems to me that the answer depends not a bit, but a bit is decided here as to the next steps.

I think it is a matter for Lord Kitchener's consideration in present circumstances.

W.M. 20/11/14

I have been & meant to write to you that has passed with the 10th the subject, and what time to do it with the news & proposed on 44923. The request to be modified to meet the criticisms of H.C.

W.M. 21/11/14

I don't understand this. We told you on 10/11/14 that they should tell the Belgians of the exact position. Sir E. Grey and I agreed at the Cabinet yesterday (Friday 20/11) that this should be done. But refer the matter to Lord Kitchener or to the others who are now in charge, if this is to be done. It is useless to consult Balfour.

W.M. 21/11/14

In any further communication on the subject, please quote

No. 71852/14.

FOREIGN OFFICE

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

November 19th, 1914.

Secret and Immediate.

Sir:-

I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, No. 44392/1914, regarding Anglo-Belgian operations in relation to German East Africa.

The Belgian Government desire to know how great is the danger of a German attack on the North East Congo and how far the British forces can guard against such an attack. Sir E. Grey feels that this information is the least that is due to the Belgian Government from His Majesty's Government, and before making any communication to the Belgian Government, he would be glad to be supplied with the considered view of the military authorities on the spot as to the probable effects on the safety of Belgian territory of the reverses recently suffered by the British forces.

In

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

(71852/14)

In the present circumstances, Sir E. Grey does not feel justified in making to the Belgian Government communications which withhold from them the military information vital to the defence of their territory.

I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

E. A. Lowe

823

24 Nov. 1914

Recd and
immediate

Di,

With ref. to the
~~Def~~ letter from the
 dept. of 17 Nov., 1914
 and etc to transmit
 to you for the
 case of the a. e.
 copies of correspondence
 with the FO re
 with regard to the
~~operation~~ attitude
 of the Govt. of the
 Belgian Congo
 towards German East
 Africa.

2 With regard to
 the previous corresp.

DRAFT.

(L.F.M.)
(44923)

The Secretary,
War Office

MINUTE.

- Mr. Eglin 23/11/14
- Mr. Bolla 23/11/14
- Mr. Reed 23/11/14
- Mr. [unclear]
- Sir G. Fiddes.
- Sir H. Just.
- Sir J. Anderson.
- Lord Islington.
- Mr. Harcourt.

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to. to co. Nov. 11

co. to F.O. Nov. 16

to. to co. Nov. 17

on this subject I
am to refer to
the letters from this
Dept. of 5 Bureau,
1 November, 9
November and 17
November.

~~Wednesday~~

I am H. W. L.
glad if the A.C.
would state how
far the reply to
the Belgian Govt.
proposed in the
letter from this
Dept. to the F.O.
of Nov. 16th
should be modified

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SECRET AND IMMEDIATE

44392/Secret.

Downing Street,

24th November, 1914.

Sir,

With reference to the letter from this Department of 17th November, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Harcourt to transmit to you, for the consideration of the Army Council, copies of correspondence with the Foreign Office with regard to the attitude of the Government of the Belgian Congo towards German East Africa.

2, With regard to the previous correspondence on this subject, I am to refer to the letters from this Department of 5th October, 1st November, 3rd November and 17th November.

3. Mr. Harcourt would be glad if the Army Council would state how far the reply to the Belgian Government proposed in the letter from this Department to the Foreign Office of November 16th should be modified in view of Sir E. Grey's criticisms. It would appear to him that the question depends not on the opinion of the General Officer Commanding in the East Africa Protectorate, but on the decision (which now rests with the Army Council) as to what steps are to be decided upon in this country for future operations against German East Africa.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(S) H. J. Bond

Foreign Office.
November 11th.

Foreign Office
November 16th

Foreign Office.
November 19th.

Secretary,
WAR OFFICE.

in view of the

fact's criticism. ~~It~~

~~was~~ It would appear

~~that~~

↳

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not on the ^{opinion of} S.C.

in the C.A.P.

but on the decision

(which now rests

with the Army

Committee) as to

what steps are

to be

~~that~~ decided upon

in this country

for future operations

against German

East Africa.

↳

↳
H.P.A.

24 Nov. 1918

Secret and
In media

DRAFT.

The O.S. of S.

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MINUTE.

Mr. Brien 23/11/18

Mr. Read 24

Mr.

Mr.

Sir G. Fiddes. 24

Sir H. Just.

Sir J. Anderson.

Lord Islington.

Mr. Harcourt.

for cinema

on Mr Read's

Assertion

I am etc to ask you
of you to
71852/18 of Nov. 19
with respect to
Anglo-Belgian operations
in relation to German
East Africa.

It appears to
me that the
question of how great
may be the danger
of a German attack
on the North West
Congo depends not
so much on the

Opinion of the
P.O.C. in the
E.A.P. as to
the decision taken
in this country as
to the future of the
operations ~~the~~ against
German East Africa.

³ The question
has therefore been
referred to the
War Office (to
whom, as Int. Secy
is aware of the
conduct of operations
against German East

Africa has been
transferred) and
they have been
asked how far
(to the Belgians but)
the reply previously
suggested might
be modified.

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1
A. G. R.