

PROFORMA PAGE

REC'D
REG. 25 1-

Foreign
Office

Proposal to neutralize Congo Basin

1914

21 Nov

Forward copy of reply sent to

Previous Paper

U.S. & Ambassador for
transmission to German Government

40122 S

Mr. ~~B. Stantley~~
Mr. ~~Row~~
Sir G. Fiddes

This is all right, but
we do have taken their
time (no doubt purposely)
to reply.

Put by?

to G.B. 23/11/14

F. J. R. 23/11/14

W. 23.11.14

23.11.14

H. 24.11.14

Correspondence with

Previous Paper

34686
S. J. R.

W. Hawkins & W. Greedy attached

28/5

Can. letters to Tinsant & W. Steel

Mailbox also annexed

WWS

23/7/15

So. A. 26/7/15

Sir I Anderson 26/7

W. Steel W. Hand

W. Bonar Law

Further letter from W. Hawkins attached dated 23rd July. We will note his release South Africa.

an acknowledgment will suffice.

28/5

28/5
18
26/7/15
18/2/15

Secret

The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
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
paper.

Foreign Office,

November 21, 1914

Reference to previous correspondence:

Letter ^{sent} from Foreign Office: October 15 *Secret* 58894/14

Description of Inclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
To United States Ambassador, November 20	German proposal to neutralize the Congo Basin

(Similar letter sent to W.O. & Adm 9)

No. 70303/14.

629

FOREIGN OFFICE,

November 20th, 1914.

Your Excellency:-

I have had under careful consideration Your Excellency's note of September 24th last transmitting a proposal made by the German Government on August 22nd last for the neutralization of the African conventional free trade zone.

I have the honour to state in reply that such a proposal would not be practicable in view of the hostilities which have already taken place on both sides, which include attacks made by German forces on British East Africa, British Central Africa and Albertville.

I should be grateful if Your Excellency would cause the above reply to be communicated to the German Government.

I have the honour to be, with the highest consideration,

Your Excellency's most obedient,
humble servant,

Excellency

The Honourable

M. H. Page,

ac., ac., ac.

Copy.

633

Downing Street,

24th June, 1915.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 17th of June, in which you ask for an interview to discuss the possibility of suspending all further fighting in Central Africa. The matter is primarily one for the Foreign Office, but I fear that it would not be of much use simply to refer you to that Office, as it is within my knowledge that the question of neutralising the districts in Central Africa covered by the General Act of Berlin 1885 has been raised on more than one occasion since the outbreak of war, and it has been decided on various grounds that it is impracticable to adopt the suggestion.

Yours truly,

(Sd.) A. Bonar Law.

A. C. HAWKIN, ESQ.

634

3 Hampden,

Temple St.

25 June 1911

Dear Sir,

I am obliged

for your letter of yesterday

and presume you have

seen my suggestion to

to Dr. [unclear]

Wednesday last

This has brought

me a good deal of

conspicuous, and
think the Foreign
should pay some
to the view of tobacco
among blacks

If you had
allowed me to be
of an interview
should have

other means of a
voluntary to which
I have not yet mentioned
to be given

Yours truly
W. C. Hoar

W. C. Hoar
Collected Secretary

636

Downing Street,

26th June, 1915.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 20th of June relating to your suggestion that all warlike operations in Central Africa should henceforward be suspended.

I am afraid that, as I told you in my letter of the 24th of June, the matter is primarily one for the Foreign Office and I shall be grateful if you would approach them with any suggestion which you have to make.

Yours truly,

(Sd) A. BONAR LAW.

29 June 1915

Dear Sir, Central Africa

I have sent my suggestion to
Lord Robert Cecil

It is reported yesterday that
a Black Colour Sergeant and some
King's African Rifles bravely defeated
the Germans in East Africa.

Since day one of these heroes
will be given the option between obeying
a white Magistrate and doing "must"
to him. There shall be a mess
and it will be for the Colonial Office
to show up - the white will appeal to
you. The Foreign Office will say - better
Africa - we are busy at Tcheran!

Respectfully yours,
yours truly

W. A. Thomas Esq. Sec. Secy

J. H. H. H. H.

no matter

~~a. j. Hawking~~

Will you please send me through Mr. ~~sed~~
 Lead, Sir J. Fiches, Sir H. Jast, & Sir J.
 Anderson the papers relating to the proposal
 to avoid warlike operations in Africa,
 including Mr. Bonar Law's recent correspondence
 with Mr. Hawking? I do not remember any
 evidence to support the statements marked A
 in the documents below. And I do not
 think that there is any ground for the state-
 ment that Mr. Bonar Law is favourable to an
 armistice. See his first letter to Mr. Hawking.

J.B.

2.7.15 -

See over

Mr. Beckley

Mr. Strauss (man) 1114 1)

Mr. Read

The 24 are reported 1 Africa (Kenya) etc
correspond between Mr. Hawken and Mr. Bonar has a lead
to 43952 / 8 Apr 1945

The idea that all warlike operations in
Africa could be stopped at this stage is so
manifestly ridiculous that it does not
require much argument. In the first place
none of the allied Powers who are fighting in
Africa want it, two proposals could only be
to the advantage of Germany

As regards "atrocities" by natives (as at
in 1940s report) this war, in fact we
have in Africa where a human Red Cross doctor
was in the darkness shot by a native patrol
(no European officers being present) and there have
been some cases of mutilation etc on the
other side. But these ~~are~~ incidents are

of course, isolated, not typical & it seems
absurd to argue that by reason of these, the
whole ~~the~~ relations between white & black,
with afterwards undergo a change.

691

Octagon 1945 a hopeless proposal.

The case of Dr. Schindler appears 8 Apr 24/45
to have been one of pure mistake - not of
strategy. Assuming the effect on the native mind
of sudden cessation of hostilities would be regarded
as disastrous.

25/4/45

~~and the case of the Congo~~
[The clause of the Congo
was defined by the Berlin Act - does not
include the area in which we are
fighting in the Cameroons]

27/4/45

And there was the incident of some
very ^{serious} mutilating and firearms.
The L. "horrorous" informant grossly present in the
these atrocities are "very perfect King of" compared to the Germans
and as well as any European force. He must
be German agent sitting or committing, for the ~~purpose~~
of an armistice just and have as greatly

prejudicial effects, as if the Germans had been
defeated in Africa.

21st 27.15

The note here relates to an committee for
Central Africa, the Congo Free State, and Mr. Hawkins
letter to the newspaper of 30 June wants military
operations in which native troops are concerned to
be carried throughout Africa, his argument being
that the natives will get out of hand & that
interventions have been committed. It is impossible to
listen to him, in present circumstances, for it would
lead to hopeless inconsistency. Activities in Africa,
as far as we know, have been in no way worse than
elsewhere in Europe.

Mr. J
H. J.

Page 2 No doubt that ~~muschikov~~ ~~husband~~ Hawkins
has moved up to Lombard. I should tell D.D. that
but we plan only trained & disciplined native troops
with white officers.

23rd 27.15

AS 17 47

Yes. Let it be made plain to Lord K that
there is no truth whatever in the statement that
I had approved any agreement with the view of
Mr. Hawkins

AS 17 47.15

1st. July 1915.

My dear Butler,

Would you look at the enclosed letter which Lord Loreburn has written to Lord Kitchener? Does your information bear out what he has been told with regard to the conduct of the operations in Central Africa?

Yours ever,

J. Greedy

J. B. A. Butler Esq., C.M.G.,

Colonial Office.

P.S. "Tasell" has some remarks this week on the subject. I add a further letter from R. C. Hawker.

8, EATON SQUARE, S.W.

30th June, 1915.

Dear Lord Kitchener,

Will you excuse my troubling you in this serious time? It is for a purpose of importance.

In the war in Central Africa the native troops are, I am told on first rate authority, carrying on the war as pure savages, with mutilation murder &c., of whites.

I will not say anything about the consequences of this kind of warfare in Africa itself or upon Anglo-German conditions, for you will know all about that.

But is it not possible to have an armistice now till the end of the war for that region pursuant to the neutrality clauses in the 1865 Treaty or Act?

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) LOREBURN.

3 Hare Court,

Temple E.C.

30th June, 1915.

Dear Tennant,

Here you are and perhaps Lord K. will care to see me. I will come if so. Botha introduced me some 2 years ago.

Please do your best.

Yours &c.,

(Sd.) R.C.HAWKIN.

DOES THE MILITARY SITUATION PERMIT OF THE
ACCEPTANCE BY BRITAIN OF AN ARMISTICE IN
CENTRAL AFRICA TO LAST TILL THE END OF THE
WAR?

Last August Belgium proposed to place Central Africa outside the sphere of military operations. France agreed to the proposal and asked Spain to act as mediator and to make the suggestion to Germany. Germany signified her assent and Portugal and the United States supported the Belgian view. The International Treaty of 1885 relating to Civilization in Africa to which England is a party, provides of the neutrality of the Congo basin in case of a European war, It is understood that our Admiralty and War Office felt at that time unable to agree to the Spanish intervention because of the German cruisers and the wireless stations in Togoland, Dares-Salaam and Windhoek. These objections have all now disappeared. To meet the Belgian view England then undertook to prevent native risings in the Congo so we are now responsible for order there. There have been native risings in Nyasaland and in the Portuguese Congo. Our native soldiers in East Africa have sometimes got out of hand and murdered wounded Germans and mutilated their dead bodies. The English whites fear this will affect future relations between whites and blacks. The fighting in Africa between blacks led by British, French and Germans will hardly affect the European settlement but it may give rise to serious trouble for the whites in Central Africa after the war. South Africa does not like the employment of black soldiery against whites. Spain would not intervene a second time unless the British Government indicates some disposition to change

change the view she took last August.

Mr. Bonar Law and Lord Robert Cecil seem favourable to an armistice but it is a matter for Lord Kitchener. Does Lord Kitchener agree that an armistice in Central Africa proposed by a neutral could be favourably considered, provided reasonable terms were proposed?

647

Downing Street.

5th July, 1915.

My dear Creedy.

I return Lord Loreburn's letter to Lord Kitchener and Mr. Hawkin's letter to Mr. Tennant with its enclosure. We consider here that Lord Loreburn's informant has grossly misrepresented the situation in Central Africa. He might be informed that we employ in our tropical African Colonies only trained and disciplined native troops with white officers, and that they are quite as well in hand as any European force.

As to the question of neutralization, Mr. Bonar Law wishes Lord Kitchener to know that there is no truth whatever in the implication that he has expressed any sympathy with the views of Mr. Hawkin. When Mr. Hawkin wrote to him suggesting neutralization, Mr. Bonar Law replied that the matter was primarily one for the Foreign Office, but that it would not be of much use simply to refer him to that Office, as it was within Mr. Bonar Law's knowledge that the question of neutralizing the district

is

in Central Africa covered by the General Act of Berlin of 1885 had been raised on more than one occasion since the outbreak of war, and that it had been decided on various grounds that it was impracticable to adopt the suggestion.

Yours ever,

... R

648

in Central Africa covered by the General Act of Berlin of 1885 had been raised on more than one occasion since the outbreak of war, and that it had been decided on various grounds that it was impracticable to adopt the suggestion.

Yours ever,

(SD) F. G. A. BUTLER

in Belmont
let law Dr. J. Anderson

See to just 619

For your obs.

Please Do you
know to what his spirit
is?

21-7-15

I don't think it is necessary
to add anything to the minutes
and especially on this subject
attended to at last week's meeting.

The matter is being dealt
with in the minutes, so we
cannot have a separate report?

There are no minutes, therefore
the matter is being dealt
with in the minutes.

Publy? 21-7-15
H. J. Anderson
120



650

19th July, 1915.

Dear Steel Maitland,

I send you on a letter I have received from Mr. Hawkin, as it appears to concern the Colonial Office more nearly than it does the War Office. I have informed Mr. Hawkin that I am taking this course.

(The letter already received - official reply from Mr. Hawkin)
Yours sincerely,

A.D. Steel Maitland Esq., M.P.

65

36 GOLDERS GREEN CRESCENT

N.W.

Handwritten scribble

... ..

... ..

Colonial Office,

653

Downing Street, S.W.

July 22nd, 1915.

My dear Tennant,

R.C.Hawkin.

I would gladly save you trouble where I can but I can't take over Mr. Hawkin.

He wrote to Bonar Law (this wasn't I imagine his first ventilation). B.L. passed him on to the F.O. and Bob Cecil. Bob Cecil saw him and passed him on to you. It would be wholly absurd if he were to come on again to us and complete the circle.

(This quite apart from strict argument about who is naturally responsible).

The real fact is we all agree, F.O., C.O., W.O. that we can't restore peace in this way in Africa. Why not tell him so straight. Consult Bob Cecil if you think it necessary. They say we all agree that much as we regret hostilities now there, we cannot now suspend them. The best we can do is to try and get a better régime established, after a general peace has been once more restored.

If you were to do this you can certainly speak for us as well as for War Office and I am sure Bob Cecil would let you do so for the F.O. also.

It will be far better than farther circumlocution and it isn't a question like our friend Mr. Ritch that can give any trouble in Parliament.

Yours truly,

(Sd) ARTHUR STEEL-HAYLAND.

3 Hanpoint.

Temple St.

23 July 1911

Dear Sir

The enclosure at
 your suggestion I can find
 Robert's first certificate of
 membership for of parties
 above. He suggested my
 seeing Mr. Tennant.

The latter writes me
 that I shall have an
 official answer from
 the Foreign Office but that

he is sending on my letter
to the State Department

The Foreign Office has
not replied yet.

You will perhaps
remember that some time
ago a promise was given

to inform that she should
be consulted concerning
matters affecting the

Secretary of State

and in any case as far
as Mr. Deane is concerned
the conventional basis
and Washburn's view might
be of interest.

Enclosed is a copy of
the letter written
on this matter

I have it however

Jan. 6. 1894

W. L. Washburn

Mr. W. W.

C. H. Brown Sec. M. O.

656

Downing Street,

26th July, 1915.

Dear Sir,

I am desired by Mr. Bonar Law to thank you for your letter of the 23rd July relating to the neutralization of Central Africa.

Yours truly,

(SD.) F.G.A. BUTLER.

L.C. Hawkin, Esq.

CO. 533 115

~~W. H. ...~~ 14
W. Lambert 16
D. W. ...

657

There has been, I believe, a considerable amount of corr. about this. Please read forward with your obs. & his papers

W.H.S.

14 8 15

There is a mass of correspondence with Mr. Haskin attached to 45952, Pap. to which there seems nothing to add except that Mr. Haskin is, of course, quite wrong when he says that he originally decided that Haskin Co. was largely concerned, and that French & Belgian Govts. also came into it. Can't this man be stopped?
Egm 14/8/15 H. J. R.

14/8/15

Mr. Haskin, who is a prolific writer many of these

Comparisons as far as I have seen these
persons must internal value, is a firm
believe in the advantage of filing 'copy' from
forth Dept. ? act. receipt
12/16/15

Pr. 16. J. H.
100. 10/10/15

Am. 10. 11

I have acted. d-7

Dec.

17/8/15

3, Hare Court,

ENGLD.

TENNANT, E. B. C.

638

13th August, 1918.

Dear Sir,

May I refer you once more to your letter of the 26th June.

In accordance with the suggestion therein so kindly made, I ventured to press on the Foreign Office the subject concerning which correspondence has passed between us.

I saw Lord Robert Cecil and he suggested my seeing Mr. Tennant. Mr. Tennant suggested my writing to Lord Kitchener through him; this I did. Mr. Tennant now says that he has sent on my papers to Mr. Steel Maitland, but an official answer shall be sent me by the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office have written me a short letter calling my attention to an answer in the House of Commons to a question put by Mr. Joseph King, M.P.; I did nothing to do with this question, but I judge from the wording of the reply that the question I have raised was never decided by the late Cabinet. It appears to have been a departmental decision of the Foreign Office.

You will notice that South Africa has been asked to send troops to Nyasaland, which is affected by the Berlin Act. I believe it was agreed at an Imperial Conference that South Africa should be consulted regarding Imperial questions south of the Equator. I hope, therefore, you will forgive my suggestion, firstly, that the neglect of the Berlin and Brussels Acts is a subject for the whole Cabinet and especially for the Colonial Office; and secondly, that the opinion of the High Commissioner for South Africa might be taken before South Africa inadvertently becomes a party to the destruction of the basis of law on which the European occupation of Central Africa is founded.

I enclose herewith a proof of a pamphlet on this subject which will shortly be issued, and I hope you will accept a few copies for the library of the Colonial Office.

It may perhaps influence you to hear that at the Meeting of the Grotian Society a letter was read from Sir Graham Bower, who had 13 years experience as Imperial Secretary in South Africa, strongly urging the adoption of my suggestion.

You will not omit to consider the influence that Dutch opinion has on South African politics when you read page 15 of my pamphlet.

Believe me, Sir, to be,

Yours truly,

The Rt. Hon. A. Bonar Law,
M.P.,
Colonial Office,
S.W.

M. C. Tennant