

EAST AFR PROT

26954

2. 31. 1907

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26964

1910

to Aug.

Government Paper.

No 403

Abyssinian Frontiers

Extracts from Sir P Lycurgus's Report on visit to
Coast Province (Gov 26952). Telegraphed safely arrived

H. Field

See also Rev 26950

We are at a disadvantage in dealing
with the military question, as the
armies of the I.G of the R.A.R.
I think the best plan will be
to send the paper & the first extract
to Capt Chinnery for any time
that is necessary to him.

I know that Capt. Salkeld, who has
a limited knowledge of the situation
but, was a friend of the
emperor of Abyssinia.

Report from General in 1905

Answer Mr 2/9

Major Chancellor

Mr. Butler

I sent there are 5 col. again
today as I was informed
that Major Chancellor's substitute

was Mrs. E. J. Barber.

Miss Barber rang me up
this afternoon stating that he
was in no way competent to
express an opinion; that
Major Chancellor was not due
well till middle of October
although he might look in
at end of this week.

In the event I advised him
~~to~~ to telegraph the babies here at once

Well 2/9

Siddons

I do not think that we should be justified in
waiting for ~~Major~~ Chancellor until the middle of October,
as the Governor seems for telegraphic approval of the

occupation of Afmadiu.

It is a pity that we have not Colonel Thesiger to advise us at the present juncture, in view of the strong position taken up by him on Gov/13834 with regard to the increasing military responsibilities of the Protectorate.

The Minutes on Gov/13834; Gov/26408; Gov/26964; and F.O./29402 should be read together. There are really three or four separate questions involved.

(1) In our despatch of the 2nd of June on 13834 it was intimated to the Governor that the Secretary of State was not quite happy about the position of the small military detachments on the Abyssinian frontier, and he was requested to forward a scheme showing how he would propose to support and maintain those posts in the event of trouble arising. Such a scheme is furnished by Lieutenant-Colonel Llewellyn, the Officer Commanding the troops in the East Africa Protectorate, as the first enclosure in Gov/26408. In forwarding this scheme the Governor remarks that he does not think that there is any reason to anticipate trouble on the boundary either from the Abyssinian or from the frontier tribes, but that he quite agrees that it is necessary to be prepared for any contingency, and that Lieutenant-Colonel Llewellyn's scheme will provide for any sudden change in the situation demanding military reinforcements. I do not see that we have any grounds for questioning this deliberately expressed opinion.

(2) The Governor now asks for telegraphic approval of the occupation of Afmadiu, the central and most important station amongst the Jubaland Somalis. In our despatch of

the 2nd of June on Gov/20750/09, the Governor was requested to furnish his report on the situation in Jubaland, and was given to understand that no forward movement was to be made until the Secretary of State had received and considered that report. He was reminded that hitherto Jubaland has been looked upon as the danger spot in East Africa, and that it was for this reason that a striking force was kept ready to deal with any sudden emergency. In Gov/26964 Sir Percy Girouard reminds us that the centre of the Somali land country is Afmadiu and that it has been constantly urged by all who know the problem best that its occupation would ensure the peace of the whole of the Somali tribes. He observes that the Camel Company in proceeding to Moyale and the frontier has had to go through Afmadiu and that it is probable that both the victualling and the relief of the posts on the frontier will have to be carried out from the Juba via Afmadiu and El Wak. He says that the Somali Chiefs themselves have asked that we should occupy Afmadiu, and that he thinks that in the interests of all concerned this should be done at the earliest possible moment. He therefore begs for telegraphic approval of this movement.

It is to be gathered that he expects to be able to carry out this occupation without any special military expedition, simply by going there with a Company or two of troops and sitting down. This is a very different prospect from that which we have hitherto had in view in considering a forward movement in Jubaland. It has hitherto been supposed that a force of 2,000 men might be required, and the late Inspector-General of the King's African Rifles,

Colonel

Colonel Gough, left on record, in Gov/33166/09, an elaborate scheme of operations for carrying out the movement. It is evident that Sir Percy Girouard and his officers, including Captain Salkeld, the experienced Provincial Commissioner of Jubaland, have gone into the whole question very thoroughly, and I do not know how it is possible for us to question this deliberately expressed opinion that Afmadiu should now be occupied. On the last page of his report in Gov/26048, Mr Hope, the Officer in charge of the New North Frontier District, says that he expects that when Afmadiu is occupied he may have some slight trouble with some of young Ogaden men who will probably try to settle in the neighbourhood of the Lower Swamp in order to keep away from the vicinity of a Government Station. If this is all the trouble to be expected I think it may be faced.

It is not clear however, how far the occupation of Afmadiu is inseparable from question No. (3), namely the distribution of troops along the frontier.

In Gov/26964, Sir Percy Girouard proposes to place the whole of one battalion along the Juba and the northern frontier at Afmadiu, Sererli, Dolo, possibly Jaro, Mala and Marsabit. See the accompanying map on which most of these places and the others referred to are marked.

There are at present two battalions in the Protectorate, the second consisting of four companies, and the third consisting of six, but the latter furnishes an establishment of two companies stationed at Janjibar. By one battalion in this proposal therefore the Governor would appear to mean four companies. This would leave four companies for disposal. In this connection it is necessary

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to refer to paragraphs 13 and 19 of the report of the Committee on Sir Percy Girouard's military proposals, (C.O./24641, print herewith), in which it is stated that the minimum mobile force which should be kept concentrated at Nairobi should consist of not less than four companies, and should be exclusive of any garrison which the Governor may consider it necessary to keep there if the mobile force were withdrawn. This report was sent to Sir Percy Girouard in our despatch No. 52 of the 13th of September, and he therefore had had no opportunity of considering it when he made the proposal now under consideration. It will be seen that his proposal can only be squared with the opinion expressed by the Committee, if, apart from the battalion along the frontier, he required no troops at any place except Nairobi, or if prepared in an emergency to leave Nairobi without the others at all.

On the 21st instant, he has now ~~said~~ ^{written} a ~~two~~ and ~~three~~ would be ~~say~~ telegraph that, in view of the Governor's strong representations on the subject, the Secretary of State is prepared to agree to the occupation of Afmadi ~~Ente~~, on the assumption that no trouble is anticipated, and that any trouble likely to arise can be met by the forces already at the Governor's disposal in the Protectorate; that, as to the distribution of said battalions along the frontier, he will be glad if the Governor would consider the report enclosed in our despatch No. 586 of the 13th of September; and especially the considerations stated in paragraphs 13, 14 and 19 of that report, and ~~say~~ ^{that} if the proposed disposition could be reconciled with those considerations, it may be carried out as early or as soon as

the Governor thinks advisable, but that, if it conflicts with those considerations, the Secretary of State would be glad to receive his views by despatch on the subject before the altered distribution comes into effect, unless in the Governor's opinion the political situation would be seriously compromised by such delay. This telegram should be confirmed by despatch and the Governor should then be asked to report, also on the additional expense which will be involved by keeping a large number of troops at stations so remote.

(4) The fourth question ~~just~~ raised by these despatches is that of the Merchan, a tribe occupying roughly the angle between the river Juba on the east and the river Daga to the north. The correspondence is full of references to the troubles amongst of these people who are supposed to be brigands and to have a large number of rifles apparently stated at 800 ~~in~~ 1,000. Their chief resort is to recruit all the neighbouring tribes as well as against the Government. The surrounding chiefs have represented to Mr Hope that the disarming of the Merchan, if taken in hand, would not be very easily matter, but that, if it is left for very long they would get absolutely out of hand. It is stated that numbers of them have been with the Millah, and many more are continually returning home from the Millah's country. Mr Hope's own opinion is that the disarming of this tribe is the most important operation of the district and that hence this is done and a permanent garrison is left at Delo, as would be the case under the arrangement proposed by the Governor (see (3. above)).

KCP

kept quiet, the whole country would be open for trade, and the roads to Bardera, Kisimayu, and Nairobi would be safe.

In his instructions on the subject of the frontier generally, (last enclosure in Gov/26408), Sir Percy Girouard says that Mr Hope should endeavour from Dolo or some other suitable point to get into communication with the Merhan, if he deems it necessary, and that Captain Balkeld has the same idea with regard to the Merhan dear Somalis. Later on in the same instructions Sir P. Girouard says he has impressed upon Mr Hope the fact that our policy for the present must be one of observation and that any untoward incident which occurred on the frontier might seriously jeopardise the very good work already begun. He adds that the Merhan question must stand over until he hears the result of Mr Hope's visit to Dolo, and the views of the Secretary of State as to the general policy to be pursued both on the frontier and with regard to the Somalis. Further on he says that the British Minister (Addis Ababa) has suggested co-operative measures between the Abyssinian, Italian, and East Africa Protectorate authorities, with a view to clearing up the country surrounding the north east angle (that is the Merhan), and that this is a matter which Mr Hope should consider when he is at Dolo. Again, in Gov/26408, Sir P. Girouard says that the one difficult spot is the Somal and Merhan country and that he thinks that, as soon as we are well established on the frontier and in Abyssinia country should be occupied by all three governments, and that the boundaries should be finally determined. It appears from

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the Enclosure in F.O./29402 that the local discussion of this subject has been exaggerated at Addis Ababa, where the Italian representative has had a telegram from Rome asking what the arrangement was which had been made between the British and Italian legations and the Abyssinian Government for the pacification of the country round Hugh (that is the Merhan country).

In writing the despatch under (3) above we should tell Sir P. Girouard that the Secretary of State will await the result of the proposed move to Afmada and the re-distribution of troops before considering the question of the Merhan country, but that he will then be glad to consider any proposals which the Governor may wish to put forward on the subject. We should also, in reply to F.O./29402, send a copy of both these despatches and of our telegram and despatch in reply, and say that it will be seen from the correspondence that it is ~~present~~ ^{now} to speak of any arrangements having been made between the British and Italian authorities and the Abyssinian Government for dealing with the Merhan tribe.

A copy of the despatches and of the correspondence with the Foreign Office should also go to the D.M.C. for his information.

P. J. Hope

The second of his letter is
more or less of the same
order as the first, and about
as full of any big bush business. The
third is the same as the one just
described.

policy of doing nothing might practically lead us
as a factor of hardly less difficulty. The present
disadvantage of course (1), over course (2) seems to
me to be in the fact that we shall have a number
of scattered settlements; and of consequence the
country will be in a large way without frontier
people

fully prepared for the case of
hostile Indians attacking them.

But the Govt has had no attack directed
to the water, the other options carry quite consider-
able risk - & the necessary audience. In
the case of the water of the river to the
circle. I think the the work of the river to the
water must be accepted, though there seems nothing

I agree generally with the course proposed
of Mr. Bulwer, but I think it would be well to
expel him from the meeting relating to Govt.
for his recommendations, and I would begin the
deliberations on the subject - I am

impressed by the views relative the measures
which you would be compelled to take having
consequences, the more serious, but far more
nearly evident, viz., the responsibility
involved in recommending the same and I would
only a few words of yourself to you others
in this matter. I am however disposed to give in full
as far as Mr. Bulwer

P.S. 29/9

I should like to P. Gunn's suggestion
on this point & practice - he is
now here as military adviser &
is interested in bush-bittery -
say he has applied to me
that he should be made
further action to himself and - the
fact that he wants money
to be given him to make good
in the mounting up of expenses
for the work of the

Govt

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done

60964
18. With reference to the Frontiers, I am now in

position to gauge more accurately the whole question. Prior to last September the Protektorate

Government hardly concerned itself at all with frontiersitters, which were left to the discretion

of Mr. Zambiro, who took his orders from Adis Baba and was supported, I believe, by a small body of irregular police.

In September last, shortly before my arrival, the Protektorate received instructions from the Secretary of State to relieve Mr. Zambiro, who was about to proceed on leave, and a British

Officer Captain Haynes and a force of 40 men of the King's African Rifles under Captain [redacted]

proceeded to Toyale. Since then authority has been

granted to organise what is now known as the Northern Frontier District, which comprises to-day

the previously authorized stations of Karesibit and

Bole, and Bole will probably be opened at a later date. This place Bole was formerly much frequented

by Mr. Zambiro. From all reports I have received, I

should say that this occupation of our own territory and carrying on the administration through our own

officers has had the very best effect. If Mr. Zambiro, a foreigner, with a few irregular and badly armed

police, was able to keep nominal peace on the frontier, I have no fear as to the future with reference

31 AUG 10

own
to our administration. It recently became necessary
to relieve the station at Moyale, and a camel
company was sent up not only to effect this
purpose but to establish a new station at Sarenli
on the Juba, almost opposite Bardera, an Italian
post.

Mr. I would now particularly refer to our own
Somali position. The most important of our Somali
tribes are the Hereran, Mullah, Mohamed Zubein,
Herti and Abdiye. Captain Collard, the Provinc-
cial Commissioner of Jubaland, has been in constant
touch with all these peoples except the Hereran for
several years, and has constantly held councils with
them in Kismayu itself. Such a council was arranged
for on my return from my trip up the Juba, and
representatives of all these tribes attended except
the Hereran. They are a most intelligent body of
chiefs, who assured me that they had no intention of
doing anything which would embarrass the Government
if we, on our side, did not interfere with their
religion or their cattle, and various small matters,
in all of which I could acquiesce. The centre of
the Somali country is Afshud, which has formed the
subject of much correspondence during the last few
years, and it has been constantly urged by all who
know the problem best that its occupation would
ensure the peace of the whole of the Somali tribes.
The camel company is proceeding to Moyale and the
frontier has had to go through Afshud and the whole
of the Somali country, except Hereran, the necessity
of this being based on the fact that the river roads
are infested with tsetse fly. There is little doubt

that

that we shall have in a measure to fall back upon such a country far providing the grain, &c. necessary on the frontier and that both the victualling and relief of the route will in all probability be carried out along this route via Asmara and M. Tigray. The Russal whites themselves said that we should occupy Asmara, and I think therefore that in the interests of all concerned this should be done at the earliest possible moment, and would have to receive telegraphic approval of the need.

2. That I would propose to ask to place the bulk of one Battalion along the table in the Northern frontier, a scheme which would ensure the continued presence of a senior officer. The stations chosen would be Tigray, Berelli, Daga, Leyda and Koulait, although the latter would probably have no troops. Stations there except a body of police or irregulars named from amongst the Amhara or Tigray dispositions which are being made by the Italian government will not allow of any incursions from their territory into ours. On the other hand, I consider placing along the Abyssinian boundary as soon as it is settled. The one difficult point therefore is the horana and Negash country, which I have hitherto mentioned and which I think, as soon as we are well established on the frontier and its extent should be occupied by all three governments and the boundaries finally determined. I do not think there is any reason to anticipate serious resistance from these people. There has, I think, been far too much readiness to exaggerate the military position along

(16)

the Juba and in the North. The writer of one
memorandum of Government a few years ago seems to have
affected this very largely. I would call to Your
Lordship's recollection the fact that the Nigerian
Province of Bornu, containing a population of
500,000 Kanuri Moham'edans, situated as it is from
effective reinforcements and subject to raids from
fanatical French tribes totally unassisted, was
garrisoned by 100 mounted infantry and 100 infantry
on a boundary line some 200 miles in length.
Provided always that the Abyssinian and Italian
Governments do their part here. I think the presence
of one battalion along the boundary is all that is
required, and this opinion is shared by officers
of many years' experience. In case of war trouble
with the Somalis - the only one which might possibly
arise - our reinforcements are not far distant
20 days away but only about 40 hours distant. I
am firmly of opinion that it is only by closing
up Jubaland and its trade to the perfectly willing
Somalis that we shall find absolute peace and
witness their advancement and civilisation.

God
26904

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T. has had a number

countries abroad

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our confidence & aptitude

DRAFT. Telegram

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Monte

MINUTE.

Mr. Fletcher Sept 30

Mr.

Mr. Fidden. 30

Mr. Judd.

Mr. Cox.

Sir C. Lucas.

+ Sir P. Hopwood Sept 30. 9

+ Col. Beely. 11/10

Lord Brougham 11/5. 2

In view of

the circumstances

and present position

and the fact

of the general

general situation

confidence & aptitude

as indicated

11/11/10 Aug 1st return

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total value

the same total

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and satisfaction of

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introduction of

the bill to the

Senate

of one hundred and

forty days, or even

if it is introduced

by the president

the time of 30 days

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can be treated with

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and consideration

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for the occupation

of a house for me

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advisable, if no conflict~~

~~with those considerations~~

Genovesato

* Should be glad to have your reaction to the description submitted by Debacker

before the final decision is made as to the feasibility of operation.

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promised. If such a
delay, I will await

definitely
result of proposed map

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redistribution of hosts

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before considering application

of Merchant

Globe

C.W.
Gov. / 2000/1910.

East Africa Protectorate.

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DRAFT.

EST AFRICA PROTECTORATE

CONFIDENTIAL

Governor

Colonel Sir P. Girouard, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., R.A.

MINUTE.

Mr. Butler. Oct 10

Sir,

Mr. Read 10

I have the honour to inform you that

Mr. Fiddes. 10/10

I have had under my consideration your Confi-

Mr. Just.

dential despatch No. 79 of the 1st of August,

Mr. Cox.
Sir C. Lucas.

(above) dental despatch No. 79 of the 1st of August,

Sir F. Hopwood.

relating to the general political situation

Col. Seely.

along the Abyssinian borders and Parigraphs

Lord Crewe.

16 to 20 of your Confidential despatch No. 79

of the 6th of August, in which you ask for

permission by telegraph to occupy Afmadi, and

suggest a redistribution of the troops in the

Protectorate with a view to the occupation of

10/10
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the Juba and the Northern Frontier. After

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giving to your proposal is the serious consideration which they demand. I telegraphed to you on the 6th of September in the following terms:-

"I have had under consideration your confidential despatch No. 75 of 1st August, paragraphs 18, 19, and 20 as your confidential despatch No. 79 of 6th August. I am impressed by the importance of the measures which you invite me to sanction and their possible consequences, but I have no desire to interfere. I have carefully weighed the aspect of the question and I must rely on the judgment of you and your officers in this matter.

I am therefore prepared to agree to the occupation of Afmadi at once, understanding that you do not anticipate any difficulty in effecting occupation without a garrison. In view of any slight trouble that might arise by forces already at your disposal in the Protectorate, as to the distribution of troops which

I understand four companies, please consider report enclosed in my despatch of 13th September No. 656 especially considerations stated in paragraphs 13, 14, and 16. If distribution proposed by you can be reconciled with those considerations it may be carried out as soon as you think advisable. It is difficult without further information to say whether or not I should be justified in having a conference with you before the new distribution is carried out. If so, you probably of opinion that participation in such a conference would be seriously compromised by such a visit.

I will await results of proposed move to Afmadi and redistribution of troops before considering question of Marjum.

2. The reference to the battalion which you propose to distribute along the frontier being understood to consist of four companies, is dictated by the fact that it may at any time be arranged that the 2nd battalion,

King's African Rifles, shall furnish the detachment of two companies stationed at Zanzibar, in which case the stationing of one battalion, namely, the 3rd King's African Rifles, along the frontier would apparently involve the utilisation of six companies for this purpose. This would mean that only two companies, namely the two remaining companies of the 2nd battalion, would be ~~readily~~ available to be stationed at Nairobi or elsewhere in the Protectorate. Such a distribution cannot be reconciled with the opinion expressed in the report enclosed in my despatch No. 556 of the 13th September, and it was therefore necessary to guard against the possibility of supposing that I was prepared at this stage to agree to ~~the~~ ^{as far as} more than ~~the~~ ^{one} 4th battalions being used for military purposes on the frontier.

I should be glad if, in conveying to me by despatch your views on the points raised

DRAFT.

In my telegram, you would also report on the additional expense, which will be involved by maintaining so large a number of troops at stations so remote.

In view of the urgency of the matter ~~and of the strength~~ of the opinions expressed by you, I do not feel that the question of ~~expenses~~ can be made a decisive factor in the present connexion, but it is a matter of great importance, and it will be necessary that I should be in a position to explain and justify to the Treasury any increase of military or frontier expenditure which may be involved, ~~and to state in what manner~~ it will be met.

With reference to the concluding sentence of my telegram, I enclose a copy of correspondence with the Foreign Office relating to the opinion expressed by you that the ~~even~~ ^{even fully} question of the Merikan should be taken up by all the three Governments concerned.

I have, etc.
(sd.)