

EAST AFR PROT

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14 AUG

93

27339

Governor. No.

Section 384

1909

13 July

Last Previous Paper.

6 of 6  
2-553/4

Inspection of Labour Camps

Reads with favourable remarks report by Secy for Native Affairs. Considers that the more completely Govt dissociates itself from the actual recruitment of labour the more rapidly a proper solution of the whole question will be arrived at.

Mr. Finlay

ACK: say that Lord Curzon has read the report with satisfaction, & with regard to the last para: of the despatch refer the O.A.F. to Lord Curzon's despatch No. 620 of the 27<sup>th</sup> of Aug 1908 <sup>(the 2nd para)</sup> of which he said that he had no hesitation in condemning as unsound the system under which the Govt undertakes to assist the settlers in finding labour?

Amended 5 of 25 Aug

See 21093/08

W. J. R.

Conservatively

£23. VIII So proceed

18/VIII

W. J. R.

18/8

J.P.C. 23.8

2733

Governor's Office  
Nairobi,  
14 AUG

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

July 13th 1900.

No. 594

(Incl. 1)

94

My Lord,

I have the honour to transmit herewith for Your Lordship's information a copy of a report received from the Secretary of Native Affairs on his recent inspection of labour camps.

Mr. Hollis  
Jul. 8th

2. I am sure that Your Lordship will be gratified to note that the unsatisfactory conditions which prevailed at the time of Mr. Hollis's appointment and were amongst the principal reasons on account of which Sir J. Hayes Sadler recommended the creation of a Native Affairs Department, have now almost entirely disappeared.

3. I entirely concur with the concluding sentences of the report and feel convinced that the more completely this Government dissociates itself from the actual recruitment of labour the more rapidly shall we arrive at a proper solution of the whole question.

I have the honour to be,  
With the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

humble servant,



H.M. PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR THE COLONIES.

DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, S.W.

INCLOSURE

In Despatch No. 384 of 12<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 1907

Native Affairs Office,

Nairobi, 14 AUG

July 8th 1908,

733  
95

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have recently visited all the principal and most of the smaller labour camps on the Uganda Railway from Kookoi to the Lake, and it is with much pleasure that I am able to report that a very satisfactory state of affairs exists all along the line.

2. My last visits of inspection were in 1907 when I found it necessary to criticise very severely the methods employed both by the Railway and by the Administration and to call attention to the deplorable state of many of the camps. A pernicious system of forced labour was then in vogue in many parts of the Protectorate and some of the labour camps on the Railway had to be guarded by police to prevent desertions: up and down the line natives were arrested on sight on suspicion of having deserted from their employers; the Railway contractors were often men of straw, and the price of contracts was generally so low that the contractors found difficulty in making both ends meet; the work of the natives was execrable: the pay promised them was frequently never paid them; the food given them was as a rule insufficient in quantity and bad in quality and deaths were of common occurrence in all the camps. Complaints were heard on all sides, the Railway authorities, the contractors and the natives were alike dissatisfied. All this has now changed. The worst of the contractors have not had their contracts renewed by the Railway

officials

The Secretary to the Administration,

Nairobi.

INCLOSURE

In Despatch No. 381 of 12.5.1907

Native Affairs Office,

Nairobi, 14 AUG

July 8th 1909, 95

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have recently visited all the principal and most of the smaller labour camps on the Uganda Railway from Mombasa to the Lake, and it is with much pleasure that I am able to report that a very satisfactory state of affairs exists all along the line.

My last visits of inspection were in 1907 when I found it necessary to criticize very severely the methods employed both by the Railway and by the Administration and to call attention to the shocking state of many of the camps. A pernicious system of forced labour was then in vogue in many parts of the Protectorate and some of the labour camps on the railway had to be guarded by police to prevent desertions: up and down the line natives were arrested on sight on suspicion of having deserted from their employers; the railway contractors were often men of straw, and the price of contracts was generally so low that the contractors found difficulty in making both ends meet; the work of the natives was execrable; the pay promised them was frequently never paid them; the food given them was as a rule insufficient in quantity and bad in quality and deaths were of common occurrence in all the camps. Complaints were heard on all sides, the Railway authorities, the contractors and the natives were alike dissatisfied. All this has now changed. The worst of the contractors have not had their contracts renewed by the Railway

officials

The Secretary to the Administration,

Nairobi.

officials who have been careful to select a better class of men: the price for contract work which is now paid not only enables the contractors to earn money for themselves but acts as an incentive for them to look after the welfare of their employees in order to win for themselves the good name which is so essential to the employer of labour. On the occasion of my recent visit there were in most of the camps no complaints at all, the employer and the natives all being satisfied: such complaints as were made were of a trivial nature. It was a most pleasurable experience after seeing the skinny and sulky scarecrows of two years ago to witness the well fed and willing workmen of to-day.

3. I have also recently inspected the principal fibre works between Voi and Makindu. At this season there is rarely much difficulty in getting labour, and during the present year, owing doubtless to the drought, the demand is scarcely equal to the supply. On all the fibre works there was as much labour as the managers could find employment for.

4. I am more convinced than ever that the only way to obtain an efficient and sufficient labour supply is to permit nothing but voluntary labour throughout the Protectorate. The administration must hold aloof from all recruiting, and each employer of labour must work out his own salvation without the assistance of a paternal government. Had this policy been followed from the start, there would in my opinion never have been any labour troubles to contend with in East Africa and no unpopular labour rules would have been required. If the settlers of the highlands were made to understand that in the event of their being unable to obtain their own labour, the

sooner

sooner they leave the Protectorate the better, we should be quit of the one class of person who does harm to the development of the country.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,



Secretary for Native Affairs.

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ca. l.



for

DRAFT

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J. M. J.

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25 Aug. 1909.

MINUTE

- Mr. Parkin *20/18*
- Mr. Reed *24/1*
- Mr. Fildes
- Mr. Just
- Mr. Cox
- Sir C. Lucas
- Sir F. Hopwood
- Col. Seely
- Lord Orce

Sir,  
I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 3824 of the 13<sup>th</sup> July, & to inform you that I have read, with satisfaction, Mr. Hollis' report on his recent inspection of labour camps in the Pa.

2. With regard to the final para. of the despatch enclosed