

EAST AFRICA

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German East Africa

1915

4 Oct

Two copy memo by Mr. Heckler Munro
dealing principally with post-war
settlements

Last previous Paper.

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Att: Mr writing on

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at home

H. J. D.

5/27/15

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Next subsequent Paper.

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EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

No. 727.

October 4th, 1915.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of an interesting memorandum respecting German East Africa which I have received from Mr. Hector Munro.

Memorandum

1. The writer was in German East Africa, where he has spent a considerable time on business connected with the Kilimafesa Mine, at the time when war broke out and was detained in Bukoba until that place was captured by our troops. He was then released and came down to Nairobi.

2. The paper to which Mr. Munro refers in the first paragraph of his memorandum was, I understand, a communication addressed by him to the Prime Minister in 1913.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your humble, obedient servant,

Alwin Benda

GOVERNOR.



THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ANDREW BONAR LAW, F.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S. W.

INCLOSURE
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P.

A CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN PARTS OF
GERMAN EAST AFRICA
IN RELATION TO BRITISH INTERESTS.

In regard to the Peace Conference which must of necessity follow the war, and in particular reference to the disposal of German East Africa, I venture to refer to my paper of December, 1913, entitled "British and German Interests in Africa", and to repeat that it is of the greatest importance to Great Britain to retain German East Africa with a view to the future consolidation, under the British flag, of the whole of Eastern Africa from the Cape of Good Hope to the Mediterranean.

If, however, it be deemed advisable to return this territory (when captured) to Germany, I propose to offer suggestions as to how the territory should be retained and to state in my own acting suggestions.

These

These are the possession and control of:-

1. Lake Victoria and its principal feeders.
2. The eastern shores of Lakes Tanganyika, Nyasa, and Kivu.
3. An appreciable strip of land connecting Lake Tanganyika with Lake Kivu, and the latter with Uganda.
- and 4. The territory lying between the British boundary and the third degree South of the Equator in a direct line from the southern extremity of Emin Pasha Gulf (Lake Victoria) to the 34th degree of longitude, and thence in a straight line to the mouth of the Pangani River on the Indian Ocean.

LAKE VICTORIA.

1. The possession and control of the waters of this lake and its principal feeders are most important to Great Britain inasmuch as by means of the River Nile they vitally affect the watering of lower Egypt, and could be made to do so on a much more comprehensive scale, as I shall hope to show.

It has been truly said that "The Nile system consists of a grandly flowing river fed by the rains of the Tropics controlled by a vast reservoir (Lake Victoria) and several masses of

repose.

repose (lakes Kioga and Albert) and annually flooded by the accession of a great body of water with which its eastern tributaries (notably the Blue Nile) are flushed.

These possessions of water occur in the winter months and cause the annual flooding of the river, but the mainstay of the Nile, and consequently the salvation of lower Egypt in relation to its water supply, is unquestionably lake Victoria which never fails to sustain the flow throughout the year, and prevents the lower Nile from ever running dry in the summer months; and in the same manner as the Assuan dam is used as a "replenisher" during the dry season so could Lake Victoria be converted into a vast storage area during the period when the Nile is flooded by the Abyssinian affluents, and its dams opened in the summer months, which would ensure to the Nile a very much greater volume of water than under present conditions, and would result in that country which now lies dormant in the dry season being brought constantly under the benefits of irrigation.

... figures and details as to the magnitude of this lake reservoir and the water it contains will serve to illustrate more clearly the great benefits which would result from its conversion into a great water storage area than that provided

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Some figures and details as to the magnitude of this great reservoir and the water it conserves will serve to illustrate more clearly the great benefits which may accrue from its conversion into a greater storage area than that provided

provided by nature.

The superficial area of the lake is 26,000 square miles, being the second largest fresh-water lake in the world. The coast line is over 2,000 miles, the greatest length from North to South 250 miles, the extreme breadth from east to West 200 miles, and the greatest ascertained depth 270 feet.

The annual rise and fall of the lake level varies considerably, which is attributed to the abundance or scarcity of rain as the case may be. This rise and fall is on an average from one to three feet per annum. The rain falls more or less throughout the year, but is heaviest in March, April and May, and in September, October and November. The first mentioned rains affect the lake most, and it usually attains its maximum in July.

The area drained by this vast reservoir, including the lake itself, is 92,240 square miles. It has been calculated by Sir William Garstin that the rainfall over the whole averages 50 inches per annum, and assuming that 25% thereof enters the lake, this would be equivalent to 112,750,000,000 cubic metres per annum.

Measurements taken at the Ripon Falls show that 18,000,000,000 cubic metres, or

13% of the annual access of water to the lake is taken off by the Nile, and there being no other outlet it is assumed that the balance of 120,750,000,000 cubic metres must be lost by evaporation.

It does not appear that the damming of the Ripon Falls will offer any great engineering difficulties. The cliffs at the outlet are approximately 200 ft. high, with a breadth from top to top of, say, 1,500 ft. The Cliffs on the Western bank are precipitous, but those on the Eastern side have a gradual ascent. Calculating upon raising the level of the lake from four to six feet only the required length of weir would not be more than 800 ft. The fall is 16 ft. over a broad solid basalt dyke, and is divided into three channels by two small islands. In 1890 the lake was divided between Great Britain and Germany, the 1st degree of South latitude being taken as the boundary line, but as moving water is not divisible, Great Britain cannot raise the lake level without the consent of Germany, and in consequence of this joint ownership the great possibilities offered by the lake in the connection indicated cannot be exploited.

I referred to the matter some two and a half years ago when visiting the Falls in

company

company with Dr. Solf, the German Imperial Secretary of State for the Colonies, and he informed me that his Government would not under any circumstances consent to the proposed damming of the Falls. He did not give any reasons, but they are self evident inasmuch as whilst the raising of the lake level will not detrimentally affect any of the British parts, it will undoubtedly submerge the towns of Bukoba and Musoma (at Mara Bay) and also to some extent Muanza, all of which are situated in German territory. Outside of these places the question of encroachment on the present coast line will not offer any serious obstacle as it is practically speaking uninhabited, and excepting that part of the Uganda coast which lies within the "Kingdom", is entirely Government property. The submergence of some of the many islands will not present any difficulties for the twofold reason that, with two exceptions, they are entirely Government property and have been wholly depopulated. The exceptions are Ukerewe and Bumbiro, both in the German zone, but being familiar with these I feel that the slight encroachment of water would result in any material loss or damage to the islands.

Deepening

DEEPENING THE LAKE FOR STEAMER TRAFFIC.

Apart from the benefits which will accrue to lower Egypt by damming the Rippon Falls, it is generally admitted by those most intimately connected with traffic on Lake Victoria that sooner or later something will have to be done to secure a greater depth of water at various places in the British section, particularly in Kavirondo Gulf, and at the busy port of Kisumu (Port Florence) where the shallowness of the lake is so pronounced at times as to render navigation most difficult. It is a well known fact that should a steamer be steered foul of the channels formed by the fleet in their constant passage to and fro she will in all probability ground in the mud. I have been on board on more than one occasion when this has happened, and as time goes on the trouble will be accentuated inasmuch as the tendency is to build larger steamers and of deeper draught.

I believe the East African Government has already considered the question of introducing dredgers. As nothing further has been done in this direction the presumption is that the scheme has not found favour with them. The damming of the falls will effectually solve this troublesome problem.

LIGHTING THE LAKE.

In an article contributed to the Press
three

three years ago I advocated the lighting of the steamer routes on Lake Victoria. I have since been informed that the matter has been under consideration, but as nothing tangible has resulted I assume that the difficulties have presented themselves.

Owing to the presence of many islands and the irregularity of the coast line, the navigation of the lake resolves itself into pilotage pure and simple. Commanders of vessels are guided by landmarks either on islands or the mainland, and provided the proximity of land could be ascertained there would be no difficulty in piloting ships safely at night, which would mean an increase of fully 40% in their working capacity. Under normal conditions the present fleet cannot cope satisfactorily with the cargo traffic as in conformity with existing regulations anchor is dropped at nightfall and lifted at about 5 a.m., which means a clear loss of eleven hours per day per ship. The reason of this is the danger of running into land or one of the many islands in the dark, and if these eleven hours could be turned to account it is ~~obviously~~ ~~obvious~~ that the amount of ~~work~~ ~~work~~ could be got out of the fleet. It is so ~~obvious~~ ~~obvious~~ that this will result in a great saving in respect of outfitting

that

that it is difficult of comprehension why the matter has not been taken in hand long ere this, and the only conclusion I can come to is that the German government were responsible for the frustration of the scheme. With the lake entirely under British control no insurmountable difficulties should be encountered.

FEEDERS OF LAKE VICTORIA.

The principal feeders of the lake are the Kagera and Mara Rivers, both of which are in German territory.

Of these the Kagera is by far the larger and more important, and is in point of fact the most remote head-stream of the Nile. It rises in the hilly country East of Lake Kivu, and after flowing in tortuous fashion for 430 miles, enters the Western side of the lake just North of 1 degree South. It is navigable by shallow draught steamers for 75 miles from its mouth, when it is obstructed for a short distance by a series of small rapids, after which it is again navigable to the "elbow" of the river, a distance of about 150 miles. This "elbow" is the junction of the German railway now under construction from Tabora (vide my paper 13).

The river enters British territory at two points

points during its course, viz: for six miles from its mouth, which is North of the Boundary line, and at a small bend 70 miles inland. Some years ago a proposal was made to the German Government to exploit this river by private enterprise, but although the proposal was at first entertained it was ultimately shelved; the reason being ^{given} that Customs difficulties presented themselves on account of the river entering at two points and discharging in British territory, but I learned subsequently that the real objection was that the enormous trade with Ruanda and the Congo would be diverted from Fokota to a British port. I refer again to my paper of 1913, and say that the possession in their entirety of both banks of the Kagera River will ensure to the possessor the practical monopoly of the Ruanda and the middle-Eastern Congo trade.

The value of the river as a feeder to Lake Victoria may be judged by its volume, which varies between 21,000 and 54,000 cubic feet per second, the variation being due to the rainfall of Ruanda, which province it drains.

The feed ~~er~~ of importance is the Mara River, which has its source in British Territory but flows south and enters the lake on the East between the 1st and 2nd degrees of

South

South latitude. In so far as I am aware no measurements have been taken of its volume, but in any event it is greater than that of either the Ruizi or the Katonga Rivers, which are the principal feeders in the British section.

LAKES NYASA, TANGANYIKA AND KIVU.

2. The possession of the Eastern shores of Lakes Nyasa, Tanganyika and Kivu is important to Great Britain in many respects, but I need only to refer to a few.

It is now common knowledge that the Germans have launched a gunboat on Lake Nyasa, and have fortified the Eastern and Southern shores of Tanganyika at Udjiji and Bismarcksburg, which actions constitute a cause of grave danger to British interests in time such as the present. The possession of the Eastern shores of these lakes will prevent a repetition of this in the future, and will moreover enable Great Britain to attain better control of the traffic, thereby minimising the opportunities for and evils of illicit trade. Furthermore, with Germany out of the way, Great Britain would only have Portugal to deal with, and she has been and Belgium in the other in [redacted] to any schemes which may be introduced for [redacted] betterment of [redacted] on the Lakes, and she could ultimately by means of

of the Cape-to-Cairo railway divert the South Eastern Congo trade from the Udjiji-Daressalam line to Chinde or Beira and Lake Victoria.

Lake Nyasa is 350 miles long by 45 miles wide, and covers an area of 11,000 square miles. The greatest depth is 2,500 feet.

In regard to Lakes Tanganyika and Kivu there is also the very important matter of the Cape-to-Cairo Railway to be borne in mind, it being generally understood that these lakes will form connecting links in this great trunk line.

The length of Tanganyika from North to South is over 400 miles, and of Kivu 55 miles, the average breadth 40 and 30 miles respectively. The total area of the former is 12,700 square miles and of the latter 1,100 square miles. Both lakes are deep in comparison with Lake Victoria, Tanganyika being 2,000 feet in depth and Kivu approximately the same.

TERRITORY BETWEEN LAKES TANGANYIKA AND KIVU AND UGANDA.

3. A strip of country between Lakes Tanganyika and Kivu and Uganda is necessary solely for the purposes of the Cape-to-Cairo Railway. It is to the director of the line will take it of course a matter for Railway

Railway engineers. The country along the Congo Border is mountainous and volcanic, and at least one of the volcanoes in the vicinity of Kisenji, immediately to the North of Lake Kivu being still active, this would be a source of danger to railway enterprise, and possibly the original scheme of making Bukoba the terminus on Lake Victoria may still be adopted, but whatever course the line may take it must be looked to that ^{the} strip of land selected be sufficient in breadth to ensure a fair measure of safety in time of war.

TERRITORY SOUTH OF THE E.E.A. BORDER & NORTH OF THE THIRD DEGREE SOUTH, etc.

4. The possession of the land described under this heading will bring with it, inter alia, the following substantial benefits:-

(a) The whole of the Tanga-Moschi Railway.

The ownership of this land will moreover nip in the bud the proposed extension of that line to Speke Gulf on Lake Victoria which, as pointed out in my previous paper, is shorter by some 45 miles than the Mombasa ~~line~~ line, and will, if extended by ~~the~~ Ugandans become a powerful competitor of the ~~Uganda~~ Uganda Railway for the Lake trade. If, on the other hand, this line

line be extended by the British it could be used to carry the up-traffic to the lake and the Uganda line the down-traffic, which would in effect be equal to the doubling of the line from Mombasa to Kisumu. As a matter of fact the usefulness of the proposed Tanga-Speke Gulf line would be of greater value than the doubling of the Uganda Railway inasmuch as in addition to the lake trade two distinct portions of the country will be catered for.

- (b) The rich plantation lands of the Usambara district, and the best coffee land in German East Africa, which is situated around Kilimanjaro, Aruschi, and Moschi.
- (c) The great tract of splendid ranching land lying between Kilimanjaro and Ikoma, and
- (d) That highly mineralised country, covering an area of about 18,000 square miles, stretching from Ikoma to Lake Victoria and from the E.S.A. border to below the southern extremity of the lake. This territory is comprised within the Mwanza district, and the reefs of the lake are of great value. Reefs of great ascertained value have been discovered, and I say with confidence that the district will in the near future attract a large European population.

population and will in time become one of the principal revenue producers of the country.

* * * * *

ALTERNATIVE TO No.4.

As an alternative to my fourth suggestion I would recommend, should such be possible of arrangement, that a line be drawn from Usumbura on the North Eastern shores of Lake Tanganyika 25 miles South of the 3rd degree of South latitude in a direct line to the 34th degree of longitude, and then in a straight line South-East to the mouth of the Pangani River on the Indian Ocean.

This will simplify matters and will secure to Great Britain the whole of the properties suggested under the headings 1, 2, 3, and 4 excepting the Eastern shores of Lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa, and it will, moreover, secure to her the provinces of Ruanda and Karagwe and a portion of Urundi. The first named contains within its limits the finest pastoral and agricultural land in German East Africa besides being the best native reserve in that country. The last named are highly mineralised and are excellent stock raising and native labour recruiting districts.

Nairobi,
27-9-18.

ed. HECTOR MUNRO.

N. 50286/1915

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Efficiency

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8 November 1915

Draft

E.A.P.

No. 81

Mr. H. C. Belfield (M. 50707)

M.B. 6/11/15
Bottlesby, 6.11.15

With reference to my
 despatch No. 736 of the 7th of
 Oct. I have the honor
 to request that you will
 cause Mr. Hector Munro to
 be informed that I have
 received his letter of the
 27th of Sept. forwarding a
 folder memorandum
 relating to tribal
 in East Africa.
 I shall also to
 acknowledge to receive

of your despatch, No
727, of the 4th of Octr.,
forwarding a copy
of ^{his former} ~~the~~ memorandum
referred to

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SECRETARY