

EAST AFR. PROT

A3636

Foreign

1914

2nd November

Last previous Paper.

MR OTTO MARKUS
LATE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN VICE-CONSUL AT MOMBASA

Trs at request of American Embassy at Vienna copy of communication from Austro-Hungarian Ministry for Foreign Affairs re treatment he is alleged to have received at the hands of Colonial Authorities at Mombasa.

Dr. G. Fidler

*Copy to the Fin. for report
- inf. F.O. that this has been
done?*

H. J. R.

9/27/14

abovce

11/11/14

Revised LF

6543 24 3 15 a force

Next subsequent Paper.

1591

German Consul at Mombasa, but it is only...
On the representations of Italy, Tibuti has been...
temporarily closed to the passage of arms...
Six German or Austrian field guns, machine-guns...
arrived at Tibuti consigned to Mr. Mayer, a German...
Alphastian. But as he had declared them as machinery...
they were confiscated and are now being used by the...
French authorities for drill and instructional purposes...
A certain number of rifles were given out at Mombasa...
among others at least 100 to Stehlik Knofel of the 2nd...
Shanga. These were reported Russian rifles...
Owing to regular traffic from Port Sudan, the Gona...
Camela trade seems to be good, but that of Akka Abba is...
very bad. The Arab trade to Aden was mostly in the hands...
of German and Austrian agents, who have now ceased...
in reply to a call for earlier officers, Captain...
Sanderson, acting Consul, has been permitted to join the...
VICTA

*Copy to 1027 card 20/11/14
See memo 191 case 26 March 1914*

In any further communication on this subject, please quote

No. 66450/1914

593

45036
REC'D
NOV 17

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

W

The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents 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, with the request that he may be favoured with observations thereon.

Foreign Office.

November 7th, 1914.

Reference to previous correspondence:

Letter to Foreign Office: _____
from _____

Description of Inclosure.

Name and Date

Subject.

United States
Ambassadors
Nov 2, 1914

Alleged ill-treatment of
Mr. J. H. Markus

(Similar letter sent to

43636

REC'D
NOV 7 1914

Copy.

(66450)

The American Ambassador presents his compliments to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to transmit herewith enclosed, at the request of the Embassy at Vienna, a copy of a communication from the Austro-Hungarian Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with a report of Mr. Otto Markus, late Austro-Hungarian Vice-Consul at Mombasa regarding the treatment he is alleged to have received at the hands of His Majesty's Colonial Authorities there.

American Embassy,

London.

November 2nd 1914.

VIENNA.

October 14th 1914.

NOTE VERBALE

The American Embassy at Vienna has the honour to transmit to the Embassy at London for communication to the British Government, a copy of the letter from the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs transmitting a report of Mr. Otto Markie, late Austro-Hungarian Vice-Consul at Mombasa, giving a recital of his alleged treatment at the hands of the colonial authorities subsequent to the declaration of war between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary.

This Embassy has assured the Imperial and Royal Government that they might count on the British Government applying such corrective measures as might be warranted by the results of their investigations.

VIENNA.

October 1914.

Copy
(56450)

My dear Grant-Smith,

I beg to forward you a memorandum in which Mr. Otto Markus who has acted as Austro-Hungarian Vice-Consul in Mombasa describes the outrageous way in which he himself and the other Austrian and Hungarian subjects residing in British East Africa have been treated by the British authorities after the outbreak of the war.

By the shocking treatment which they have suffered the rules of public law and of international decency have been grossly violated.

We would therefore be very grateful to you if you would be so good as to communicate the enclosed memorandum to the American Ambassador in London and beg His Excellency to draw the attention of the British Government to the facts stated by Mr. Markus, in order that the sad situation of our countrymen who are detained in British East Africa should be improved.

Very &c.,

(Signed) Misulin.

VIENNA

October 6th 1914.

Sir:-

With reference to the conversation which Count Richard Coudenhove has had the other day with your good self and in accordance with his request, I herewith beg to give you the following particulars in connection with the treatment of the German and Austro-Hungarian subjects in British East Africa during their detention as prisoners of war.

On the 20th August last Mr. Hemsted, Provincial Commissioner at Mombasa, and the Officer Commanding the Troops, and the Imperial German Consul, Herr von Zelewski, and myself to induce all German and Austro-Hungarian subjects to sign printed forms of a Parole. The form in question was headed "Parole for all German and Austrian subjects". The German subjects signed the Parole, but I did not see any reason for having the parole likewise signed

Er. N. Grant-Smit.,

Secretary of the Embassy of the United States
of America.

Vienna.

signed by the Austrian and the Hungarian subjects living at Mombasa, the war between Austria-Hungary and Great-Britain not having been declared. I represented this matter to Mr. Hemstead, who fully agreed with my views. On my own behalf I suggested that I would ask all Austrian and Hungarians to promise me, not to undertake any hostile action whatsoever against England and to remain perfectly neutral. My countrymen without exception agreed and I informed the Provincial Commissioner accordingly.

On the 7th of August all German subjects were interned at Mombasa in a building belonging to a German firm. On the 9th of August they were sent to Nairobi where they were imprisoned in the jail together with native convicts.

On the 13th of August at 10 o'clock a.m. the Provincial Commissioner paid me a visit in my office and informed me that he had received instructions to arrest me and all Austrian and Hungarian subjects, telling me that by 12 o'clock, that is to say after two hours notice, we all would have to appear in the aforementioned building of a

German

German firm. I pointed out to him that I was holding an exequatur signed by His Late Majesty King Edward VII and Sir Edward Grey, granting me immunity, and that I therefore could not very well believe that he actually received instructions regarding my arrest. Upon his request I showed Mr. Hemsted my exequatur from which he noted the date of the Royal Commission. I intended to telegraph to His Excellency the Governor, Sir Henry Belfield, at Nairobi, but could not do so because His Excellency had just left Mombasa by rail for Nairobi. Mr. Hemsted however kindly promised to telegraph on my behalf, sending a reply as soon as to hand, but pointing out that in any case I must consider myself a prisoner of war by 12 o'clock.

We were detained at Mombasa during 24 hours, during which time we received the best treatment from our guards, who were all personal friends of ours. On the 14th August at noon we left Mombasa by rail for Nairobi, accompanied by members of the Legion of Frontiersmen and arrived the next day in the afternoon at Nairobi

where

where we were all taken to the jail. There we remained imprisoned together with the German prisoners of war and a respectable number of native convicts.

We were lodged two in a cell in which there was no other furniture except two wooden boards on which we had to sleep. Considering that we were all used to the tropical heat which prevails at Mombasa we naturally felt the cold at Nairobi rather much, Nairobi being over 5000 feet high. When I asked for some blankets and pillows I was told that none were left. It is certainly most remarkable that I was informed that in my cell the night before, natives were still imprisoned, of which I could convince myself not only by the most terrible smell but also by certain traces which everybody could notice on the floor.

Our food which consisted of black coffee in the morning, porridge at 9 o'clock, boiled beef and vegetables for lunch, was always presented in big kettles which were placed in the open court-yard and where we had to help ourselves. I was told by German prisoners of war that their treatment was not always as good; originally they were fed together with the native convicts out of one kettle with boiled maize and beans.

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It is of course needless to say that the cells were infested with insects.

On the 15th of August late in the afternoon those Austrians and Hungarians who did not belong to the army reserve were sent from the jail to the English school, sitting on their luggage on carts, and thus carried under escort through the streets of Nairobi. At the school we had it considerably better because we had large rooms in which some twenty of us could sleep in proper beds, and the food was likewise better.

I protested again against my arrest and was informed that His Excellency the Governor would be prepared to ship me to a neutral port. I replied that I do not wish to proceed to a neutral port.

On the 20th August I was informed that His Excellency intended to send me home by first available steamer and on the 21st of August I was told that His Excellency had definitively decided to adopt that course. I was given to understand that His Excellency's decision was final and that no discussion was permitted. I informed Captain Brook,

Base

Base Commandant, who was the bearer of His Excellency's message, that I would not leave the country without passport assuring me of my safe conduct. Captain Brook went with me to the Secretary of His Excellency who informed me that my passport had already been posted to Mombasa, where I would receive it from the Provincial Commissioner.

I then left Nairobi but refused to travel with an escort. That time I was allowed to return to Mombasa by myself without guard, I left Mombasa by an Italian steamer on the 23rd of August.

I would still add that in the jail at Nairobi there was also a German lady imprisoned who had very much to suffer by the bad behaviour of the native guards until she was removed to a hospital.

I leave it to you to make use of the afore-mentioned facts and should be pleased to give you any verbal comments should you desire me to do so.

Yours &c.,

(Signed) Otto Marcus.

F.O. ~~436~~ 43636/1914

693

E.A.P.

For

20 November, 1914.

Ans'd 15871

Sir,

I have the honour
to transmit to you
the accompanying copy
of a letter from the
Foreign Office, with
its enclosures, on
the subject of the
treatment alleged to
have been accorded
to Mr. Otto Markus,
late Austro-Hungarian
Vice-Consul at

DRAFT.

E.A.P.

No. 1027

For Sir H. Balfour.

MINUTE.

Mr. Harper 17/11/14

Mr. Bottomley 17/11/14

Mr.

Mr.

Sir G. Fiddes.

Sir H. Just.

Sir J. Anderson.

Lord Islington.

Mr. Harcourt.

[Handwritten signature]

2446

Bombasa, and
to request that you
will furnish me with
a report on the matter.

J

LL

FD 43636/1914

Exp.

~~_____~~
J.S.

604

20 November 1914.

Sir,

DRAFT.

The U.S. G.S.

J. O.

MINUTE.

Mr. Harper 17/11/14

Mr. Bottomley 17/11/14

Mr.

Mr.

Sir G. Fiddes.

Sir H. Just.

Sir J. Anderson.

Lord Islington.

Mr. Harcourt.

I am glad to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of the 7th of Nov., No 66450/1914, and to inform you that on the subject of the alleged ill treatment of Mr. Otto Markus late Austro-Hungarian Vice-Consul at Bombay, and to request you will to inform Secy. Sir Edward Grey that a copy of the comm. has been

(P.T.O.)

4/6

sent to the fore. of
the C.A.P. who has
been asked to
furnish a report
on the matter.

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H.A.