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War Office

1915

21 Jan

Last previous Paper.

O.P.

1250 S

German East Africa.

Telegraphic correspondence and
regards operationsMr. B. B. B. B.
Mr. B. B. B. B.

Mr. G. F. F. F.

NOTE as to possibility of
unaided attack on Tassim
with naval cooperation.= Proposed plan of offensive in
Schl. Wapikare's telegram
of 19th January. Very doubtful
if it is thinkable, whether this
could be carried out without
considerable reinforcement.

= Question of getting 500 Europeans

Put 4/1

The release of operations with
the forces at the General's disposal
appears risky in the extreme.
I have got to be shown the
object a wisdom of an
offensive policy on our part
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with the obvious chance of disaster etc
will attend it

25.1.15.

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in German East Africa
with the obvious chance of disaster which
will attend it.

25.1.15.

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373

The Director of Military Operations presents his compliments to *Under Secretary of State for the Colonies*

and begs to forward for his information a copy of *telegrams*
which have been received dealing with
operations in *East Africa and replies sent-*

Secretary of State for the Colonies
Colonial Service.

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SECRET.

379

From "Weymouth," Zanzibar, to Admiralty.

(No. D. 5032.)

18th January, 1915, 8 p.m.

"Weymouth" proceeded to Horivanga, the port of Wanga, in reply to very urgent request of General Officer Commanding for man-of-war; co-operating at once "Pyramus" and "Duplex" off Rufiji.

Repeated to Commander-in-Chief, Cape.

From Zanzibar to Admiralty.

(No. D. 5049.)

19th January, 1915, 10.5 a.m.

"Weymouth" arrived at Horivanga.

Repeated to Commander-in-Chief, Cape, and Commander-in-Chief, East Indies.

From Commander-in-Chief, India, to War Office.

(No. S. 1324.)

19th January, 1915, 7.25 p.m.

The following reinforcements for Force "B" sailed from Bombay on 11th January:—

For 101st Grenadiers, Captain Lloyd, 122nd Infantry, and Lieutenant Bolton, Indian Army Reserve of Officers attached to 108th Infantry.

For 13th Rajputs, Major Lyall, attached to 13th Rajputs.

Five per cent. for Imperial Service Infantry.

Five per cent. for Indian Infantry, with the exception of the 63rd Infantry, for whom only five Sepoys were despatched.

Five per cent. for Faridkot Sappers.

On the next convoy the deficiency will be completed.

From Major-General Wapshare, Nairobi, to War Office.

(No. S. 177.)

19th January, 1915, 5.30 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 2721, cipher, M.O. 1 (A). I consider that to increase the expeditionary establishment of the King's African Rifles is the only feasible scheme of raising additional local forces. The absolute minimum of training which would be required is, in the opinion of officers of local experience, 8 months.

From Major-General Wapshare to War Office.

(No. S. 176.)

19th January, 1915, 7 p.m.

In my telegram of the 13th instant to Chief of the General Staff, India, I asked that the Coy. Rifles, the Kokand Rifles, the Bangalore Rifles Volunteers, and the South Princes Mounted Rifles, all of my brigade in India, might be approached with the view of raising 500 men for service in British East Africa. I have received the following answer:—

"The question involves so many important points that your application should reach Government of India through Secretary of State for India before it can be considered. Even if men were eventually allowed to go, India could not supply officers, rifles or equipment."

These men are good shots and well trained, and would be of the greatest value to me. The men could choose their own officers, but I should rely on you for arms and equipment. I would use these men for the attack on Tanga, and do not anticipate the have to retain them long.

From Major-General Wapshare to War Office.

(No. S. 175.)

19th January, 1915, 9.45 a.m.

Early on the 18th January the Jasin post in advance of Vanga was heavily attacked. An attempt to relieve it that day failed, and the post is now isolated. To-day we resume the attack. Naval co-operation is being arranged; the troops engaged in the Mafia expedition have been sent to General Tighe at Vanga, and one double company Loyal North Lancashire Regiment has been sent to Mombasa as reserve. Land communication with General Tighe had been interrupted, but wireless telegraph will be established between Mombasa and the steamer "Barjora" off Vanga.

From Major-General Wapshare to War Office.

(No. S. 182.)

19th January, 1915, 10.35 p.m.

I regret to report that after the expenditure of all the ammunition the Jasin Post surrendered this morning. The casualties include Colonel Ragbir (†) Singh, Kashmir Rifles, killed, and 40 wounded, out of three companies in the post. Captain Hanson of the Kashmir Rifles, and Captain Turner, 101st, were released on parole and are now in General Tighe's camp. The enemy was estimated at 300 Germans and 1,500 blacks, with 6 guns and 16 maxims, and suffered great losses. Tighe is maintaining himself on the Umba River with 2,000 troops, and I can reinforce him further if necessary. Two attacks were made yesterday on the enemy force besieging Jasin, which was isolated, but they did not succeed in relieving the post. Tighe reports that our troops fought magnificently. To-morrow I proceed to Mombasa.

From Major-General Wapshare to War Office.

(No. S. 175.)

19th January, 1915, 5.10 p.m.

Your No. 2744 of 14th January, and my No. S. 87 of 14th December, regarding general summary of situation. Modifications of the plan therein proposed have been rendered necessary during the past month by alteration made in the strength of reinforcements proposed to be sent.

2. It is now definitely known that the reinforcements are: Baluchis, squadron of cavalry, and such Europeans as can be raised in British East Africa. As to possibility of obtaining European volunteers from India I am making separate proposals.

3. It has always been understood that the offensive was ultimately to be resumed. above-mentioned reinforcements are not likely to be increased in the near

future—recently established information tends to show that there has been exaggeration as to strength of enemy in the Tanga Moshi area, and I hope we may count upon Belgian co-operation.

4. If, therefore, the offensive is to be taken, it seems that little will be gained by postponement and I propose the following plan:—Tanga, such European volunteers as can be raised in India or British East Africa, if available, marines from H.M.S. "Goliath," 3 guns, about 2,000 Indian and African troops; attack supported by two warships. (b) At Umba the permanent garrison of 1,000 Indians and Arabs. (c) Voi line, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, 2nd Bn. Kashmir Rifles, 8 companies King's African Rifles and 7 guns; general reserve, half 29th Punjabs. The number of troops that can be used on this line is limited by difficulty of water and supplies. This, however, is intended to be the decisive attack. (d) Longido line, half 29th Punjabs, 300 East African Rifles, squadron cavalry, 4 guns. (e) I shall use the greater part of my less reliable troops on Lines of Communication and on interior defence.

5. The attack on Tanga would take place first, and, next, the demonstration from Longido, so as to draw troops from Taveta and increase the chance of a successful attack on the Moshi area by the Voi column. After taking Tanga and fertilizing it, I hope to be able to withdraw troops to back up the attack on the Voi—Taveta line. Our chance of being able to do this would be greatly increased by the presence of the "Goliath" as guardship.

6. As the rains commence in April, I was anxious to commence operations by 15th March, but unless I can make satisfactory arrangements for the raising and training of new European corps from India and British East Africa, and am fully assisted in time by India as regards supply and transport, I shall be obliged to postpone offensive until I receive such assistance. A mule corps for the 1st Line Transport and ammunition columns is most urgently needed. India states that this is not available, but it is essential to me, as porters are worse than useless near the firing line and there are very few mules obtainable locally. I would most earnestly ask that arrangements may be made to meet this need.

7. My first request was for two brigades. This view has been modified by certain new factors that have come to light. But although I am ready to attack as proposed above with the small reinforcements now promised, I think that two new European Volunteer corps, two warships and the transport asked for are essential to give a fair chance of success; but if it is found that further reinforcements of good troops will be sent later, I think it would be advisable to await them and in the meantime make arrangements. It is understood that no forward movement takes place without the previous sanction of the Secretary of State. I would have answered sooner but have only just returned from Longido.

From Major-General Wapshare, Nairobi, to War Office.

(No. S. 183.)

20th January, 1915, 10.35 a.m.

Garrison of Jasin post was 2 companies, Kashmir Rifles, and 1 company 101st. Enemy now hold southern bank of Umba. Tighe withdraws garrison to Bwaga, which is 12 miles up Umba, and strengthens his other two posts. I leave Nairobi to-day for Umba to consult with Tighe and Senior Naval Officer as to the possibility of an attack on Jasin with naval co-operation.

From Major-General Wapshare, Nairobi, to War Office.

(No. 352 O.D.)

20th January, 1915, 4.30 p.m.

Your No. 2738, 13th January. Please cable what rifles available for 500 additional British volunteers. 303 charger loading for Mark VI ammunition preferred with bayonets. Any infantry equipment besides arms very acceptable, as India cannot supply. Please despatch five lime-lights, large, complete, for India forces. None available in India.