



EAST AFR. PROT.  
No 21093

C. O.  
21093  
12 JUN 08

Governor No.  
1908  
19 May  
Last previous Paper  
No of 6  
17/5/08  
No 21025

(Subject)

Labour Question

Sends with other proceedings of Labour Inquiry Board & meetings at Mombasa & Pemba, & State Commissions & requirement of applicants can be met by local labour but introduction of W.L. Tax is desirable. It is felt undesirable to have the applicants & the coast will be mostly dependent on embarked labour & the development of coastal area is largely dependent on embarked labour.

PRINTED FOR PARLIAMENT  
Cd. 5194 JUNE 1910.

M. Antillon

See also for & for Agalund  
29267 28146

I have had the advantage of discussing this at some length with Mr. Hollis who has recently come on leave.

The general question of labour in the Protectorate can be considered under two heads - labour required for (A) front departments, and for (B) Settlers.

With regard to (A). The main employers of labour are the Railway & the Public Works Dept<sup>ts</sup>. The system of recruiting labour for the Railway has been bad in the past. Low rates have been paid & Indian contractors

To Mr. Nyaculau M...  
Tel for East Africa...

Next subsequent Paper  
No 29267

have been employed & he, it appears, has  
in some cases treated the returns disingenuously.  
His reports are now being paid and there  
is a consequent improvement. Mr. Hollis, who  
is a keen supporter of the returns & whose opinion  
and therefore carry weight in the matter, has  
little doubt that with supervision on the  
part of the inspectors of labour things  
will go satisfactorily in the future.

Under Mr. Watts the Commission of Workers  
and the Indian Office of conditions  
standing the Public Works Dept. is (as  
Mr. Hollis assures me) in perfect working  
order & a model employer of native labour.  
These three depts. are the main employers  
of native labour among the Govt. depts.  
The Forest and Agricultural depts.  
employing small numbers of native labour  
& matters seem to be satisfactory here.  
I do not think therefore that we need  
trouble ourselves further about native  
labour, so far as Govt. depts. are  
concerned.

With regard to (B). At present there is  
an understanding that Govt. will assist  
the settlers as far as possible in  
finding labour for them. I think that  
this is a fundamental mistake & it  
will

would appear from the 11th para. of the  
depts. that the Govt. has been brought in  
the subject. The Govt. of Hyderabad (see 26/1/14)  
has no doubt whatever, for he says in a private  
letter to Mr. Harris: - "I do not think that  
B.S.A. will do any good in the labour problem  
till fundamental changes be obtained & supply  
labour for employers. The proper course  
would appear to be for the Govt. to introduce  
legislation laying down the conditions for  
the employment of native labour, or of the  
native labourers with suitable penalties  
for the contravention of the regulations & the  
to stand aside & let the settlers make  
their own arrangements for engaging the  
labourers. There are inspectors of labour  
under the control of the Provincial  
Commissioners who can keep an eye  
on the working of the ~~law~~ by paying  
surprise visits to the estates when they  
have reasonable grounds to suppose that  
the labourers are being ill-treated etc.  
The Notice, which forms the 5th  
Sec. in this depts. & which represents  
what has been at present agreed upon  
between the Govt. & the settlers, would  
form a very good basis for legislation  
of the kind. We already have a Master  
& Servant Act designed to protect  
the Master against such acts of the servant

as desirable & the new legislation would  
be the counterpart of this. I here might  
indeed be one old  $\frac{2}{3}$  dealing with  
the whole matter.

Coming now to Section 1 of the first  
order - the first deep.

Jan: 7. The fr: says that it has been  
their experience that a settler who treats  
his labour well can get as much as he  
requires, & that this appears to be the case  
still, but why likely not to the extent it  
formerly was. The fr: agrees with our experience  
on the J. Coast during the fall mining  
boom. There was a great outcry about the  
want of labour, but it was found that  
the companies which treated their men  
properly eventually all the labour they  
wanted & this too, when some thousands of  
settlers were being employed in the  
construction of the first railway. Woolbaiter

Jan: 17-18. I think that we may  
well come to the fr:'s view.

Jan: 19-20. I would approve of the  
proposal. You will see from  $\frac{20}{29075}$  104  
& later onwards that the system has  
been widely adopted in Victoria, & that  
both the Chiefs & missionaries are  
in favour of it. See especially Jan: 9 of  
printed matter.  $\frac{20}{29075}$  104 is what  
the fr: says of the fr: of the 13<sup>th</sup> J

of Victoria & quoted to the effect that  
nothing but good could come from the  
imposition of the tax.

Jan: 21. I think that we should refer  
to the suggested remission of Doll Tax.  
You will see from  $\frac{3}{26146}$  that a similar  
arrangement is in force in Myasaland &  
works well. I found that Mr. Hall  
was in favour of the proposal.

Jan: 22. The question of Native Reserves  
is being dealt with in another paper &  
to ask? the depts:, we might refer to  
our depts: in that paper.

Jan: 24-26. These Jan: raise the question  
of Indian indentured Labour for the land, &  
the fr: which is more fully discussed in  
Jan: 28-29. It will be seen from the 9<sup>th</sup> Jan: of  
the depts: that the fr: proposes that  
the Indians should bring their wives &  
family with them & that inducements  
should be offered to them to settle in  
the country after the period of their  
indenture is over. I understand, however,  
from what Mr. Selby said at a recent  
meeting of the Commission that the  
Indians are opposed to Indian indentured  
labour on any terms, & the fr: must be  
informed accordingly. The way out of the

the difficulty is indicated in the last  
para: of Sir A. Sharpe's letter where he says  
that if the S.A.P. wants more labour than  
it has got, he will be very happy to  
arrange for a good many thousands of Nyasaland  
boys to go to work there for 12 months  
periods at 15/- a month if the S. of S.  
approved. The hindoo might perhaps be  
more skilled but these Nyasaland boys are  
good workers & there are advantages in  
employing natives of Africa, instead of  
Australians, among Africans. As Sir A. Sharpe points out  
however, the Nyasaland boys would be working  
under better health conditions in E. than  
in S. Africa, & I think that all  
that is required is that the gov<sup>ts</sup> of  
the two Protectorates should work  
out between them some system for  
the engagement & proper treatment of  
the labourers, & submit it to the  
S. of S. for his approval. Mr. H. H. H.  
thought that the solution of the labour  
question would be in excellent order.

Write to the gov<sup>ts</sup> in the sense of  
the foregoing?

H. J. R.

Colonel Seely 8/8

1888



12/8 I agree

J.S. B.S. advance

1095 Memorandum of the East African Protectorate to the Secretary of State  
19th March 1908

21093

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Governor's Office  
Nairobi,  
May 10th 1908.

EAST AFRICAN PROTECTORATE

No. 244



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My Lord,

With my despatch of the 26th March last, I submitted the proceedings of the meeting of matters convened by me at Nairobi to discuss the Labour Question together with a copy of my opening address on that occasion, and of a Memorandum containing my replies to the matters put forward by Lord Delamere at the meeting given to a deputation which attended at my office on the following morning.

2. I have now the honour to submit -

(a) The proceedings of the Labour Enquiry Board held at Nairobi March 23rd to 25th, the report and resolutions passed, the report of the minority of the Board on the resolution regarding a Poll tax, the amended Labour Rules and my reply to the resolutions given in the Legislative Council on the 11th instant;

(b) Proceedings of a Labour Meeting at which I presided at Kalindi on the 29th April, drawn up by my Aide-de-Camp, Captain Hayes Sadler, and an account of the same by a Kalindi special correspondent;

(c) Proceedings of a similar meeting held at Mombasa on the 1st instant as reported by the African Standard and substantially correct.

3. There have since, between the 23rd March and 1st May, been four important meetings to discuss the Labour Question; two at Nairobi in the forenoon of the

H. M. PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR THE COLONIES.

DOWLING STREET,

LONDON, E.C.4.

Proceedings of Enquiry Board  
Report  
Resolutions  
Report of the Minority  
Amended Labour Rules  
My reply in Leg. Council  
Proceedings of 1st Meeting  
Account of do. Spec. Correspo.  
Proceedings of Mombasa Meeting  
Circular

1315763

Not printed

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(2)

the ranchers, settlers and fibre concessionaires, and  
the of the coast area, where the interests of the  
planters were mainly concerned. And I think it may  
be said that we are not in possession of the views of  
all classes who are dependent on labour for the  
development of their estates and the prosecution of  
their industries in East Africa.

*Two*

4. DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE UPLANDS AND THE COAST:

In considering the labour problem in this Protectorate  
it is important to draw a distinction between the  
labour required for the up country ranchers, farmers  
and contractors and that required for the fibre  
concessions from Kilweini to Voi and the planting  
concerns on the coast. The considerations referring  
to each will be dealt with in the course of this  
despatch.

5. NAIROBI MEETING OF THE 23RD MARCH: This was  
a largely attended meeting of settlers and farmers  
and large land owners of the uplands, with represent-  
atives from the fibre concession holders in the  
intermediate country between the uplands and the coast.  
Mr. Anderson, the proprietor of the African Standard,  
attended from Mombasa and framed a resolution. The  
object of the meeting was, however, to discuss the  
labour question chiefly as it affected the settlers  
in the uplands and the resolution subsequently put  
by Lord Delgore was carried.

6. DIFFICULTIES COMPLAINED OF: Most of the  
speakers dwelt on the difficulty of obtaining and  
retaining labour now as compared with formerly, and

on

on the insufficiency and unreliability of the labour they did get, and they pointed out that it would be impossible for them to run their farms and properties unless a sufficient supply of unskilled labour was made available. The cause of these difficulties they attributed to the Labour Rules, to want of Government assistance, to an impression existing amongst the natives that Government did not wish them to work unless they chose to do so, and to the idle life the natives were allowed to lead. On the other hand some of the speakers stated that they could get as much labour as they wanted, but objected to the Rules.

7. It is difficult, in the face of conflicting statements, to gauge exactly the extent of the difficulties complained of by the upland settlers, and how much is due to themselves and how much to outside influences. It has been our experience that a settler who treats his labour well can get as much as he requires; and this appears to be the case still but very likely not to the extent it formerly was. Certain of the settlers will never keep their labour whatever the terms and conditions be, for others the natives will willingly work; it is a matter in which the effect of the personal equation is strong.

8. But apart from this there is a general opinion that, generally, the natives are more disinclined to work, and that labour cannot now be obtained as it used to be; and it is urged, and rightly so, that if in a country which is dependent on unskilled labour locally obtained there are difficulties in meeting

present requirements, what will be the case when development, which may be only said to have commenced, makes far larger demands than it does now. The whole question is a most intricate one; it depends upon a number of considerations and cannot be solved in East Africa, any more than elsewhere, in a day or by any set of Rules or Regulations.

9. We cannot have forced labour, in other words we cannot compel the African to work either for himself or for others if he will not; but we are all anxious to induce him to work and the native policy of the Administration has ever this object before it. In the past the methods of the chiefs in collecting labour in some of the districts were reprehensible and amounted to forced labour; this had to be put a stop to, and I am inclined to think that a good deal of the feeling which has been expressed on the native question may be set down to the reaction which followed the suppression of these methods. Last year the department of Native Affairs was created and so important did I consider it, that I spared the services of my chief Secretary to take charge of it. A most important part of the duties of this Department was, in communication with the district officers, to assist settlers and others in obtaining the labour they require, and to see that the labour so obtained was properly treated and cared for. As I mentioned in my opening address at the Labour Meeting on the 23rd March, during the five months preceding 25 settlers had applied for 1,546 men, of whom 650 had been asked for within the



(5)

*Section*

last three weeks; of these 896 had been supplied .  
2,842 men had been recruited by Government departments  
and 2,893 labourers out of 3,599 applied for had been  
supplied to contractors.

10. To argue then that the Government is not  
assisting the settlers is somewhat illogical. Moreover,  
it is a curious coincidence that but a few days after  
this meeting there should be two or three hundred men  
looking for work at Nairobi and unable to find it.  
These were not men hurriedly sent for by the Government  
as I have heard had been supposed, but natives of the  
Kenya Province who came in of their own accord to  
search for work, direct from their villages without the  
intervention of any of our officers.

11. CONDITIONS ON WHICH LABOUR TO BE SUPPLIED. A  
great many hard words have been used in connection with  
the Labour Rules, or Conditions, under which Government  
would endeavour to supply labour, which were published  
last November. If Government does undertake this  
responsibility, and its obligation to do so may well  
be open to question, it follows that it accepts  
responsibilities towards the natives that it cannot  
and will not ignore. These labour rules were  
primarily intended to deal with a situation which had  
become intolerable. The chief offenders were the  
Indian contractors on the Railway, whose want of  
method and consideration in dealing with the labour  
supplied to them led to lamentable results, which have  
already been reported and which called for immediate  
remedy.

12. The improvement in the treatment of the  
natives

(8)

natives which followed the introduction of these Rules  
 has been most marked. The Rules were not introduced  
 to affect labour previously recruited, but it has been  
 argued that the better conditions imposed by Government  
 for labour it supplies has affected the natives  
 generally and induced them to stipulate for terms they  
 had never asked for before. There is some truth in  
 this argument so far as the supply of blankets and  
 food is concerned. I recognized that there were  
 difficulties in this connection and at the meeting of  
 the 23rd March, I at once gave out that the conditions  
 of the Rules in these two respects had been altered,  
 thus meeting the main objections of the settlers to  
 the rules as they then stood. Subsequently the rules  
 were considered by the Board which followed the  
 meeting and as I had expressed my readiness to consider  
 the revision of details provided that the main  
 principles were adhered to, and as the recommendations  
 of the Board did not surpass this limit, I signified  
 my acceptance of their recommendation and a copy of  
 the revised conditions is enclosed. As a matter of  
 fact, after I had withdrawn, in certain cases, the  
 conditions as to the supply of food and blankets, the  
 conclusions arrived at by the Board showed that there  
 was little left in the Rules to which exception could  
 be urged and that in reality the clamour for the  
 immediate withdrawal of the rules was baseless.

15. DESERTIONS: As regards desertions there are  
 grounds for the complaints made. The labour in East  
 Africa is raw and untrained. Men come in to work

who

who have no idea of any work but that connected with their own cultivation. Wood cutting for the Railway, which is a hard form of labour, in particular is quite new to many of them, and it has been found that natives will run away after one or three days work with an axe or other implement to which they are unaccustomed. On the other hand once they have got accustomed to this form of labour many stay on beyond the original term of their agreement, and others return to the same work after a visit to their homes. In the present conditions of East Africa it is impossible for Government to undertake to catch all natives who run away from their employers, even if this were always desirable; but I have before me a case where a gang was caught after deserting from their employer and the latter did not find it worth the while to take any action. The Master has his remedy under the "Master and Servants Ordinance" but unfortunately there has been a difference of opinion as to the validity of verbal contracts under this Ordinance, upon which a definite ruling is necessary.

14. Desertions will become less frequent as the labour settles down and becomes more accustomed to work; and the appointment of chiefs under the "Village Headmen's Ordinance" which have been made, a few of the principal chiefs being given limited judicial powers, will help to regulate the labour and check desertions.

15. LABOUR AVAILABLE: There is an ample supply of labour more than sufficient to meet all requirements of settlers and ranchers and contractors in the uplands if it can be made available. The difficulties of

which

(8)

which the settlers complain are not owing to any want of assistance by the administration but are due to causes which are to be found mainly in the social condition of the natives themselves, amongst whom a European settlement has suddenly sprung up making demands on them of which they had no previous experience, and partly to the want of proper treatment of the natives to which I have previously alluded. When we see how the natives are now coming in to work, both on recruitment in their districts and leaving their districts of their own accord to look for work, and compare this with the time the Uganda Railway was constructed and all labour had to be imported from India, I am by no means inclined to take a despondent view of the situation in the uplands.

16. LABOUR ENQUIRY BOARD: The Labour Enquiry Board, which sat at Nairobi from the 25th to the 28th March, was a sequel to the meeting of the 23rd idem. It was presided over by the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Provincial Commissioners from all the provinces, except Jubaland, and a representative body of officials and non-officials sat on the Board, and a number of witnesses were examined. My views on the Resolutions passed by the Board are contained in the Memorandum of replies which I gave in the Legislative Council on the 11th instant. Copies of the circular issued in connection with resolutions I and II are attached.

17. PROPOSAL TO SUBSTITUTE POLL TAX FOR HUT TAX: As regards resolutions 4 to 6, I will amplify the opinions I expressed in my reply of 2nd inst. against increasing the

Hut

*Handwritten signature*

(9)

hut tax for some years to come for several reasons. It is but a few years since it was imposed, and in some districts it has twice been raised up to its present figure of Rs.3 at which I consider it should stand until a general increase of prosperity warrants an increase without damage to the peace of the country.

Were we to increase the tax now the natives would lose confidence in us, they would never know when a further rise would be made, discontent and dissatisfaction would soon make itself felt and we should probably be faced with serious trouble. Besides this I have already alluded to the assurance given in certain districts two years ago that no further enhancement of the tax was at present contemplated.

18. My objections to substituting a Poll tax for a hut tax in the present condition of the country are almost as strong and I would invite Your Lordship's attention to the reasons advanced against such a proposal in the minority report of the Board. The hut tax is now well understood by the people; no serious objection is raised to it; on the contrary it is coming in in the most satisfactory manner, and our revenue from this source shows a most encouraging increase from year to year. In 1901-02 the receipts from this tax were £.3,328; in 1906-07 they came to £.61,232 and for the year ending the 31st March last they reached the figure of £.77,608. I should certainly leave well alone here. Moreover, except in the more settled districts, we could not collect a general poll tax; we have not the machinery or power to do so. Years hence when the outlying districts are as settled as the Nyanba district outside Nairobi we may think

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of such a change, but the time for this is not yet come.

19. POLL TAX ON ABLE BODIED MALES: The institution of a Poll tax of Rs.8 on able bodied males who do not pay the hut tax is quite a different proposition. It would not affect the present hut tax, but would catch idle men who do nothing for the development of the country and who should be induced to take their share in increasing the general prosperity of the Protectorate. It is a frequent complaint of the chiefs that their young men are getting out of hand, and now that we do not allow them to coerce their young men to come in and work, they spend their time in tembo-drinking, and the chiefs find them increasingly difficult to deal with. We may fairly say to the chiefs "We admit what you say, you wish your young men to work and they will not listen to you, well we will help you by imposing upon them a light tax which will give the necessary inducement for self exertion".

See 9/10/104  
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20. I introduced such a tax into the Kingdom of Uganda some three years ago, it at once produced satisfactory results and I believe the system has since been extended to other provinces of the Uganda Protectorate and I think that the time has come when it might be tentatively introduced in East Africa. We should have to proceed cautiously, imposing the tax at first in a few selected districts and being guided as to its extension to others by experience and opportunity. I believe such a measure would be productive of good to the people, help the labour question, add to our revenue and assist in material development. As such I recommend it to Your Lordship's favourable consideration.

*See p. 14*

21. REMISSION OF POLL TAX: On the subject of the remission of the Poll tax in the case of natives working for a month for European or other duly authorized person I am aware that very opposite opinions may be held. It may be urged that to impose a tax and then remit it for work done treads narrowly on the confines of forced labour. Were we to impose the tax solely to procure labour this might be the case. But this would not be so. The tax would be imposed to give those who do not work either for themselves or others an inducement to self exertion, to add to the prosperity of the country and to help the chiefs to keep their young men under control. The remission proposed would be incidental and contingent on the native working for a settler or contractor and to grant the remission would not be the main object of the tax, though it would be one reason for its incidence and one that should aid in partially solving the labour difficulty. It may be argued that if a remission is granted in the case of the Poll Tax why should it not be also allowed in the case of the Hut tax. To this I would say that a financial dislocation would ensue which I am not prepared to risk. The hut tax must go on as it does now, whether the payer earns the amount of his tax by labour or by the sale of his produce. With the Poll tax we shall be, so to speak, breaking new ground; the incidence of the tax will be very partial to commende with and we can afford to grant this remission without the financial loss which would follow its application to the Hut tax. For

these

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Apr 7

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21. REMISSION OF POLL TAX: On the subject of the remission of the Poll tax in the case of natives working for a month for European or other duly authorized person I am aware that very opposite opinions may be held. It may be urged that to impose a tax and then remit it for work done treads narrowly on the confines of forced labour. Were we to impose the tax solely to procure labour this might be the case. But this would not be so. The tax would be imposed to give those who do not work either for themselves or others an inducement to self exertion, to add to the prosperity of the country and to help the chiefs to keep their young men under control. The remission proposed would be incidental and contingent on the native working for a settler or contractor and to grant the remission would not be the main object of the tax, though it would be one reason for its incidence and one that should aid in partially solving the labour difficulty. It may be argued that if a remission is granted in the case of the Poll Tax why should it not be also allowed in the case of the Hut tax. To this I would say that a financial dislocation would ensue which I am not prepared to risk. The hut tax must go on as it does now, whether the payer earns the amount of his tax by labour or by the sale of his produce. With the Poll tax we shall be, so to speak, breaking new ground; the incidence of the tax will be very partial to commence with and we can afford to grant this remission without the financial loss which would follow its application to the Hut tax. For

these



(12)

these reasons I would recommend that the revision suggested be allowed, should the proposal to institute the Poll tax gradually on able bodied males who now evade the hut tax, meet with Your Lordship's approval.

22. NATIVE RESERVES: So long as a liberal view is taken of the term "present requirements" I see no objection to this proposal. The Provincial and District Staff and the officers of the Department for Native Affairs can be safely trusted to safeguard the interests of the natives as regards future reserves. In certain cases, notably in the case of the Ukamba Reserve, far more land has been allotted to the natives than they can possibly require, and I believe that it was this fact in connection with the Ukamba Reserve which led to this discussion of the general question of reserves.

23. VALINDI MEETING: It was a pleasure to preside at this meeting of a new and rising colony of planters, with but one thought, the promotion of the important industries with which they were concerned. No time was lost in discussing extraneous matters; Mr. Jones and his colleagues came at once to the point, the difficulties their community experienced in obtaining an adequate supply of labour and the suggestions they proposed for meeting them. It appeared that they had sufficient labour for the season's planting, but would require from 150 to 200 men for the working season, and this number I considered could be procured for this year from the uplands, the method of doing so being for one of the settlers to recruit the required

number

number with the assistance of the District Officers, some of their own men accompanying their delegate to assist recruitment amongst their tribesmen. The labour employed at Malindi was from uplands and from German East Africa; the local tribes, the Girima, had not come in to work and it was not anticipated by Captain Barrett, the Native Affairs Officer present at the meeting, that they would do so for some years.

24. NECESSITY FOR INDENTURED LABOUR: It was pointed out that during the cotton picking and ginning season, which lasts from September to January, a reliable and constant supply of labour was essential, otherwise the prosecution of the cotton industry would be impossible. After this year the requirements of labour could not be met inside the Protectorate and indentured labour from India would be a necessity. In this Major Leggett, on behalf of the British Cotton Ginning Association, gave his full concurrence. It was evident to me that the requirements of the cotton industry on the coast cannot after this year be met by local labour, and I promised to address Your Lordship on the subject of indentured labour from India, with a view to deciding if the principle can be accepted, and, if so, that all preliminaries may be arranged so that no time be lost when the actual necessity for recruiting it arrives. This I shall do by separate despatch when certain enquiries at Malindi and Mombasa are completed.

25. I see no help for it if cotton on the coast is to be the success it promises to be, but to obtain labour from India, and the fibre concessions from

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Kibwezi southwards will also in the main be dependent on this form of labour. Even if the labour were available locally, which it will not be, the question of reliability and continuance is a vital matter for both industries and it is here that the local labour, as I say if available, would fail to satisfy the demands of the settlers. The labour they require must be certain, reliable and available at the time it is wanted, and these requirements can only be met by indentured labour.

*J. Jackson*  
*Secretary*

26. MOMBASA MEETING:—The meeting at Mombasa showed very much the same needs as those at Malindi, strong insistence being laid on the question of indentured labour. The speakers raised a variety of questions, more or less connected with <sup>the</sup> subject at issue to all of which I was not at the <sup>time</sup> prepared to reply. But the main point was the necessity for arranging for a supply of indentured labour for which there could be no help, and in this connection I repeated the assurance I had already given the Malindi planters that I would address Your Lordship on the subject. Of the other two matters put forward in Mr. Anderson's motion, one dealt with a proposal for reorganizing the Native Affairs Department, the other for a redistribution of taxation. As regards the former I had already stated at Nairobi that I was opposed to the appointment of a Commissioner for Native Affairs from another colony, which would presumably be South Africa, and that we had in this Protectorate able officers with local knowledge quite capable of dealing with the labour question as it affected East Africa. Until it is shown that this is not the case

I decline to consider the introduction of an outsider.

27. As to the proposal for a more equitable taxation of the natives that is a question I am not prepared to discuss until some feasible scheme is put forward. I have certainly no intention of imposing a tax on the cattle of the warlike pastoral tribes, who hold their stock dearer than their womenfolk; and as to differentiation of the hut tax as between the high-lands and the low-lands on the ground that wages will be higher in the latter than the former, this opens so broad a question, and if carried out might be so disastrous in its effects that as I have said I must decline to discuss it until some feasible proposition is put forward.

28. CONCLUSIONS To sum up, the conclusions arrived at after a long and careful consideration of all the questions involved in this correspondence are:-

(a) That the requirements of the uplands can be met by local labour, but that it will be desirable to institute a Poll tax gradually to supplement the Hut tax and create an inducement for the young men, who are not touched by the hut tax, to exert themselves and to take their proper share in the work of developing the country.

(b) That the fibre industries in the tracts intermediate between the uplands and the coast, though obtaining a certain amount of labour from the uplands will, as they develop, have to be dependent, in the main, on indentured labour.

(c) That development in the coast area must be dependent

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dependent on the early introduction of industrial  
labour.

29. I must apologize for the length of this  
despatch which I feel, with all I have written, hardly  
does justice to the subject with which it deals. I  
have as far as possible confined myself to the main  
points of the labour question as discussed at the  
various meetings to which I have referred.

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

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,  
 humble servant,

*J. Hayes Parles*  
*J. Hayes Parles*

March 28th 1908

Your Honour,

On the conclusion of the sitting of the Labour Commission convened by His Excellency the Governor we, the undersigned, as mover, seconder and supporters of an unsuccessful amendment to an original resolution adopted by the majority of the Commission, in as emphatic a manner as possible, desire to record our objection to the resolution as carried at the sitting.

The resolution referred to was that a "Poll" tax be instituted in place of a Hut tax. The amendment was to the effect that the present Hut tax collection be continued, and that it be extended so as to apply to the unmarried able-bodied men not occupying separate huts, offering them, if necessary, an exemption or abatement in cases where they could show that they had been employed by an European or other approved employer of labour for one month.

In our opinion the imposition of a poll tax is open to the following objections:-

(1) Its imposition would be a distinct change in the present method of taxation. In many districts a promise has been given to the natives that no increase in the amount of the hut tax will be made for the present. This tax, the collection of which was only commenced in earnest in 1904, was originally

R.S.

Honour  
The Lt. Governor,  
Nairobi.

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Rs.2, and it was raised to Rs.3 two years ago.

(2) Any system under which a poll tax could be satisfactorily collected would require some time to bring into effect. If the hut tax in the meantime were to be abolished it would mean a dislocation in the smooth working of the Administration, a loss of revenue, and a more than possible likelihood of a disturbance of existing conditions.

(3) By the retention of the present system of Hut tax and its gradual application to all able bodied males it is needless to point out that no derangement or shrinkage of revenue would occur, indeed the contrary would be the case for it would automatically increase, and at the same time the young men would in many cases undoubtedly go out to search for work in order to enable them to earn the necessary money with which to pay the tax. Thus the labour supply would be automatically added to.

(4) Considering the present satisfactory yearly increase in the hut tax collections, and bearing in mind how undesirable it is in an uncivilised country to interfere, except where absolutely necessary, in an existing satisfactory form of taxation, we think it would be detrimental to the best interests of the Administration to adopt, at least for some time to come, the proposals contained in the Resolution referred to.

In forwarding this letter we would wish to make it quite clear that our difference in this matter with the majority is one of opinion only, the objects aimed at are practically the same. We believe

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(2)

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however



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however most sincerely that our method would be the best understood by the natives, the easiest applied, and the most satisfactory. While at the same time it would have equally good results as regards the procurement of labour.

We have &c. &c.

Sd/-

A. G. HOLLIS

(Mover of the Amendment)

Sd/-

JOHN AINSWORTH

(Seconder of the Amendment)

Sd/-

S.L. WINDE

Sd/-

C.W. HOBLEY

(Supporters)

In Despatch No. 744 of 1908

REPLY OF HIS EXCELLENCY TO THE

21093

RESOLUTIONS OF THE LABOUR INQUIRY BOARD SEND ATNAIROBI ON THE 25th to 28th MARCH 1908.

12 JUN 08

I would wish to record my thanks to the President and Members, both official and non-official, of the Board for the pains they have taken in dealing with the complicated questions before them, and for the able and lucid manner in which they have given expression to their views.

No. 1. If, in the face of the persistent efforts that have been made by the officers of the Administration to induce labour to come in, any such impression exists in the minds of the natives, it is due to circumstances over which we had no control; all doubts on the subject will have been removed by the Circular to the Provincial and District Staff which has lately been issued by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor. I fully recognize the difficulties with which the officers who have been confronted and the able manner generally in which they have attempted to meet them.

No. 2. A Circular has been issued to Heads of Departments desiring them to conform as far as possible to the current rates of wages and to keep down the rates.

No. 3. With this I concur.

No. 4-5. These are matters of policy which will require reference to the Secretary of State and upon which no orders can now be issued. I say, however, that I am not of opinion that the time has yet come to substitute a Poll Tax throughout the Protectorate

for

for the system of the Hut tax which is an easily obtained form of taxation, and one not thoroughly understood by the Natives. Nor should I be in favour of increasing the hut tax generally for some time to come.

It is but a few years since the hut tax was instituted; it has since twice been raised; the receipts are coming in in a most satisfactory manner in most of the districts, and any enhancement of the tax at the present time would probably tend to discontent and unrest. Moreover, in at least one of the provinces, an assurance was given when the Hut tax was raised from Rs.2 to Rs.5, two years ago, that no further enhancement was at present contemplated. But I am of opinion that, whilst retaining the existing system of the Hut tax, there need be no objection to instituting, in certain selected districts to be subsequently extended as circumstances permit, a form of poll tax of say Rs.2 per annum, on able bodied males who either own no hut or who for other reasons evade the hut tax and have therefore no inducement to ~~improve their land~~ work. We have a precedent for such a tax in Uganda and I do not see why it should not work as well here as it does there.

The question, too, may be fairly considered whether such a poll tax may not be remitted in the case of natives producing a certificate from a European or other duly authorized person that they have worked for a wage for one calendar month; such a system is not free from criticism, but we have a precedent for it in British Central Africa and on the whole I ~~am~~   
 propose

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prepared to recommend it as a tentative measure. Such remission would be confined to the poll tax, and not affect the hut tax. I fully agree that individual receipts should be issued both for the hut tax and the poll tax, if introduced, and that such receipts should obviate the necessity for the present system of road passes for which all fees have lately been remitted.

But there are administrative difficulties in a country where none of the chiefs or people are able to read or write, in the way of a general issue of receipts identifying the individual payer and though these are being overcome gradually, some considerable time must elapse before a system of this kind can be general in the Protectorate.

No.9. Appointments under the Village Headman's Ordinance have already been gazetted; more will follow. Letters of appointment will be furnished to each Headman on a sealed document containing a summary of his duties amongst which impressing on the natives the desirability of working for a wage will be given prominence.

No.10. With this I agree, provided that a liberal interpretation is given to the term "present requirements".

No.11. Principles that have been laid down and accepted by the Government will naturally be followed by the Labour Boards.

Nairobi,

May 10th 1908.

Sd/- J. HAYES SIBLER.

In Despatch No. 1114 of May 19 1908

A Meeting of the Planters of Malindi was convened to meet His Excellency the Governor on April 19th to discuss the Labour Question. There were present:-

OFFICIALS

H.E. the Governor  
 Mr. Hinde  
 Mr. Watts  
 Mr. Lincoln  
 Mr. Spencer  
 Captain Barrett  
 Captain Sadler.

PLANTERS

The Hon. Major Leggett  
 Mr. Jones  
 Mr. Baker  
 Mr. Kyle  
 Mr. Kinahan  
 Mr. Robertson  
 Mr. Teagott  
 Mr. Burroughs  
 Mr. Newman  
 Mr. Davies  
 Mr. Hecketh  
 Mr. Griffiths  
 Mr. Ford  
 Mr. Von Berg  
 Mr. Damian, &c.

His Excellency opened the discussion in informing the meeting that he had come to ascertain the difficulties regarding labour at Malindi and to hear any suggestions that those present would put forward to assist in solving the problem of labour in the locality.

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He reminded the meeting that we in East Africa are not singular in being confronted with labour difficulties: in addition the country is a new one and the natives are not yet grown accustomed to work. The natives are undoubtedly coming forward to seek labour, but not yet in sufficient numbers. Large projects are on foot in Malindi, and if these projects answer - as it is hoped they will - the planters will require more labour than the locality will be able to meet; that however was rather a matter for the future, the immediate object of the meeting was to consider the question as it actually stood with reference to present requirements. With this brief address His Excellency called on the meeting to explain the difficulties and to favour him with their views and suggestions.

Mr. Jones rose and said:-

"Your Excellency, on behalf of the planters of Malindi I wish to thank you for the trouble you have taken in coming here and summoning this meeting, which shows that you have our interests at heart.

Our chief difficulty here is labour and with regard to this I draw attention to three points in particular:-

1. Difficulty of obtaining labour
2. The high price of labour
3. The difficulty of retaining labour.

As regards the first point, planters recruit their labour in Mombasa and so far have had little difficulty in obtaining their requirements, but many recruits desert between Mombasa and Malindi, a point, however, that I understand is already settled by Your Excellency conceding fares for labour at Rs.2/- a head by the S.S. "Juba". Again, we want a particular class of labour here for

clearing

clearing the bush, i.e. men of strong stamp, such as the Wa-Nyamweni, of whom we at present employ about 150. These hefty fellows will soon be going back to their own homes time-expired and then there will be no one left for the work of clearing bush. It is not likely that these Wa-nyamweni will return to seek work at Malindi as there is plenty of means of employment in their own country, where, too, wages run high; here we pay them Rs.12 and give them posho. As regards local labour there are very, very few natives engaged on Shamba work: the other classes employed - such as Wakamba, Wakikuyu, Wa-Teita, &c. - are good for light work such as picking cotton, but useless for clearing bush.

And now for the second point: When the price of labour rises beyond a certain point, the planters' <sup>business</sup> will not be profitable: at present the margin of profit is fair.

As regards the retention of Labour, I would like to state first of all that we, planters, treat our labour fairly and justly - and the local officials will support this statement - but, the labour will run away.

This does not matter much in the case of the Wakikuyu but when any of our permanent staff desert, we simply can't replace them. There <sup>are</sup> about 200 Kikuyu employed and very few have deserted during the year; they seem perfectly happy, have been working for six months and don't appear to wish to leave their work; a Kikuyu receives Rs.10/- wages, or Rs.8 and posho.

There is sufficient labour for the present time and more will not be required until the crops mature in September. Now, last year we lost some tons of cotton because we could not pick it; we wish to obviate this difficulty

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difficulty during the coming season, and ask Your Excellency if you can arrange to bring down sufficient labour, Wakikuyu or what not to meet our requirements for the season. We have worked out a scheme embodied in this resolution which I will now read.

Such a scheme would meet our requirements for this year, but if Malindi develops we must look for some other source of supply from some other part of the world, i.e. we must consider indentured labour.

I understand that the Colonial Office wish to exhaust the local supply first, but please give this question your serious consideration as I anticipate great difficulties in the very near future.

We are cutting our own throats by teaching the natives to cultivate cotton, as they will amass money with little effort, and that effort will be expended on their own concerns.

At this point His Excellency asked for a statement showing the total amount of Labour now employed at Malindi

Wanyawesi	about	200
Wakikuyu	"	200
Wakikoma	"	70
Wakamba	"	55
Others	"	<u>142</u>
		667

Those present informed His Excellency that the Wakamba work better and stay longer than the Wakikuyu; Mr. Davise stated that his Wakamba had been with him for 14 years and did work equal to that of Wanyawesi, receiving £2.12 a month (enhanced rate for long service).

His Excellency then asked if any other gentlemen would favour



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favour the meeting with their opinions.

Mr. Watts rose and suggested that the Malindi planters should adopt a plan which had met with great success amongst the Assam planters, viz: that ~~one~~ one of their member, accredited by Government and accompanied by a few of their long service and contented labourers, should proceed to the Wakamba country and investigate labour on behalf of them all. Major Leggett seconded this suggestion, and drew a parallel with the recruitment of labour for the Mines in South Africa.

Mr. Davies objected to the scheme on the score that it amounted to private touting for labour and suggested that it would be better that an official should proceed into the recruiting area and investigate labour. Mr. Watts informed the meeting that the Central Provinces Government in India had refused to permit an official to carry out this work. The planters had sent their own man, as they themselves were averse to employing a paid European (known as coolie catcher) to recruit them <sup>for</sup>.

Mr. Banker stated that all the planters in Malindi were working on their own plantations and none could afford the time to leave their estates to obtain labour on Mr. Watts' system.

Mr. Watts here observed that he was looking into the future, and not the present time. Mr. Jones then said that the future commences this September: he liked the idea of Mr. Watts' scheme but no one could afford the time.

His Excellency then addressed the meeting: in support of Mr. Watts' scheme he illustrated the favourable results attending a like system in the recruiting of Sikhs in India for the Indian Contingent, explaining how the men

liked

liked to see an officer under whom they were to serve, and so, too, with the recruitment of labour by the Malindi planters; the labour was at present shy and nervous but if the natives were to actually see the gentleman under whom they were to work, in company with some of their native brethren who were already willing workers, a great step would have been taken in overcoming the primary difficulties.

As regards the planters' resolution, His Excellency could see no difficulty in getting the amount of labour required for the coming picking season, which would have to come from ~~the~~ Ukamba or Embu so as not to interfere with the districts upon which the upland settlers now relied more immediately for labour, but if Government recruits their labour for the planters, the association must take it over in Nairobi and be responsible for it until the individuals return to their homes. Government cannot undertake to convey the labour to Malindi and retain charge of it there. In his opinion the proposal set forth by Mr. Watts was the best, that one of the planters accredited by Government and accompanied by an official should proceed into the recruiting area for a month or so and arrange for labour for the Association. He understood that the planters wished to obtain, and retain, their labour en masse for the picking season, that is that the workers should move in one body from shamba to shamba and not be split up amongst the planters. As the shambas are fairly close together, <sup>labour</sup> shelter for the in the shape of rough huts might be erected in a central shamba.

This, His Excellency added, deals with the problem for the ensuing season; after that he agreed with Mr. Jones that labour will have to be indentured for, but

Government

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Government wishes to avoid this measure, and exhaust the local labour supply as long as possible. The planters appear to have sufficient labour except for the picking season. There was this difficulty that the Government could not guarantee the retention of labour for six months in Malindi. As regards their journey from Nairobi arrangements could probably be made by the Railway for reduced rates, for it will naturally save time and expense to have them railed and if necessary the Subs can bring them from Mombasa to Malindi on an extra trip. (The planters assent to this proposal).

His Excellency then asked Mr. Jones if he would kindly forecast his prognostications for the following year. Mr. Jones stated that he himself would require many more workers; that the Association had discussed this matter amongst themselves and, excluding fibre concessionaires, but including Kilifi planters, some 2,500 men would be required. At the same time the fibre planters expect to get to work in another <sup>6 months and lay a short</sup> tramway line, which will require another 1,000 men.

On the question being put to him, Captain Barrett answered that he could hold out no hope of the Girama at present coming in to seek work, but the Arabs say that a few are working for them. Their own fertile soil and rich crops enable them to sell produce sufficient to raise any rupees they may want. The Girama cannot be reckoned as a factor in the Labour problem for the next three years at least.

His Excellency then said the best way to make the Girama seek work was to create amongst them a want and hoped that this would take the form of a liking for

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the Manchester goods as had been the case with the Baganda. This would give a greater stimulus to trade in general and when the want had been created the Girians would have to work to satisfy it. Therefore no opportunity should be lost of encouraging the natives to take to cotton apparel.

His Excellency asked Captain Barrett if this large amount of labour could be entered for in the ensuing year on the same lines as this year. Captain Barrett answered that it could not possibly be met. His Excellency then asked the planters if, supposing the natives brought their wives and children, they would permit them to live on their land and cultivate a patch? The planters answered that they were quite in accord with this idea, in fact Mr. Davies said he had two or three on his plantation, but that the Wakamba did not care about cultivating their own patches.

His Excellency asked if it was not possible to induce the inhabitants of Malindi town to take up their quarters on the shambas and work: the reply was that these local people would cultivate their own shambas or seek work as house boys, but had absolutely no inclination to work on the planters' land.

His Excellency then asked if any present could inform him as to whether any <sup>ideas</sup> ~~measures~~ had been formulated as to the cost of indentured labour.

The Hon'ble Major Leggett replied that the Planters' Association had obtained information from several colonies who have already employed indentured labour, and studied carefully the various conditions of each; after mature consideration they were agreed that the system

system followed in Mauritius was the most suitable for East Africa; he was in possession of the Mauritius Ordinance on the subject and this would form a good basis for our Ordinance.

The planters had already submitted their behests regarding indentured labour for transmission to the Colonial Office, but His Excellency had replied that the Colonial Office were not in favour of such a scheme. He added that no one in East Africa desired the introduction of indentured labour, but it was necessary to look ahead for future requirements of labour. Now a whole season may be ruined whilst Government discusses the pros and cons of the question: India and the Colonial Office will undoubtedly expend time over the negotiations, and we desire that the scheme be now set afoot so that all the preliminaries may be thrashed out between the various Government Departments - Colonial Office, India Office and this Government - and all preparations may be made against the time when indentured labour becomes a necessity.

His Excellency agreed with these remarks and said that all preliminaries should be thoroughly thrashed out, the Colonial Office asked to sanction the principle of the scheme and everything prepared beforehand to set the machinery in motion: but the actual point of indenting for labour will not be raised until local labour fails. In Calcutta the Colonial Office retains the services of an Agent who can arrange the best class of recruit: probably Tamil and Telegu would suit this country.

His Excellency then asked to be informed regarding the expenses of indentured labour, and what was the least amount of this labour that would pay the planters to obtain.

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The Hon'ble Major Leggett replied that as regards Mauritius, expenses are chiefly connected with the care of the Labourers, medical arrangements for their health, &c and probably not less than 500 would be the least amount it would pay the planters to indent for. The pay of an indentured coolie in Mauritius is Rs.9/- per mensem: we in East Africa would have to pay more in accordance with the higher rates of wages prevailing in this country. He considered that Indians at Rs.15/- per mensem would equal in value Wanyawesi at Rs.12/-.

His Excellency asked Mr. Jones to summon a meeting of the Planters and address his office on this subject of indentured labour, mentioning the matter that the planters were willing to pay the transport expenses of the Labourer's families.

Mr. Fragett here interposed that a great number of Indian labourers would bring their families at their own expense.

The Hon'ble Major Leggett replied that the Mauritius Ordinance allows for Indians who wish to bring their families at the Planter's expense, that the Planters' Association had already agreed with the principle of the Mauritius Ordinance, and to comply with these principles would save time in the negotiation of details between the India and Colonial Offices.

His Excellency then came to the point of the proper inspection of cotton gins and seed. In Uganda there had lately been difficulties in the matter of the cotton industry and he wished these difficulties to be avoided in East Africa by regulating the matter beforehand. He asked Major Leggett to explain the state of Affairs in

Uganda

Uganda regarding the cotton industry.

The Hon'ble Major Leggett stated that in Uganda Government and certain parties had given to the natives to plant five varieties of seed: these varieties now occur in every lot of cotton with the result that this mixed cotton does not fetch the price on the market that any one of these varieties would fetch, of itself unmixed. In other words, Uganda cotton is quoted below the price of the cheapest variety and has fallen from 10d. to 6½d. for the best handginned and even goes so low as 5½d to 5d. The price of cotton has fallen generally on the world markets but at least 2d of the fall of Uganda cotton is due to admixture. His Excellency Mr. Heath Bell is enforcing regulations so that there shall be only one variety of cotton planted.

His Excellency then stated that he proposed to license ginneries and place them under Government inspection. The planters should select the variety that they consider the most profitable and only this kind of seed be maintained. The Agricultural Department has been strengthened and is now in full working order, and it is proposed to obtain from the Colonial Office the services of a Cotton Inspector and place this officer under the head of the Agricultural Department.

Mr. Jones was glad to hear that regulations would be enforced regarding cotton and that the arrangements would be in the hands of Mr. Macdonald in whom they all had confidence. Here in Malindi they were not certain that Abbas was the most profitable seed to cultivate, because Abbas has not such a yield as Afifi, and this was demonstrated last year.

As regards S.S. Island cotton, this year in Egypt

S.S. Inland and Abbasi seed were planted side by side and the former yielded more at a better price. So far experiments with S.S. seed in Malindi had not met with success.

Mr. Jones was quite in accordance with the principle of distributing to the natives only one variety of cotton, but as regards the white planters he asked that they might be permitted to continue their experiments.

The Hon'ble Major Leggett stated that in Uganda the white planter/ could plant what seed he liked: the one variety system applied to distribution amongst natives only; the native being uneducated and ignorant invariably mixed his seeds, but the white planter could be trusted to keep his varieties apart.

As regards Afifi, he said, returns show that the yield of this cotton during the past year was 20% better than Abbasi, but the price on the market was 12% less, which shows that where natives and large yields are concerned it would be better to distribute Afifi. However the Planters' Association should say each year what kind they consider it would be most profitable to distribute.

His Excellency asked how if the variety of seed be changed annually it could be answered that none of the old seed remained with the natives.

Major Leggett replied that all cotton seed must be ginned and as gins will be licensed the seeds will come under the eye of the Inspector. Major Leggett further desired that the purchasers of cotton seed should be licensed, to prevent the indiscriminate buying by Indians who knew little about cotton and mixed all kinds in one bag: the result would be mixed seed.

Mr. Watts said that this actually happened in Berar



In 1866, when Government met the situation by ordering all cotton to be sold in fixed cotton markets.

Major Leggett said that the system Mr. Watts quoted had on the whole failed in Berar. The license is needed for the next two years, after which there should be nothing left but pure strains throughout the country.

His Excellency remarked that he presumed there would be no objection to various districts in the Protectorate cultivating their own suitable cotton seed, and to ~~state~~ this the planters saw no objection.

Mr. Jones said that since the distribution of seed would be watched by Inspectors, he could see no need for licensing the purchasers of cotton; moreover all seed had to come, sometime or other, to a licensed ginmery. Major Leggett said that it was most desirable for one year, and here the discussion on cotton terminated.

The subject next touched on at the meeting dealt with facilities for landing and shipping goods on and from the Malindi shore.

Mr. Watts explained that his Department had made a searching enquiry into the feasibility of constructing a deep water pier at Malindi, and a scheme (which the Planters had had the opportunity of seeing) was formulated, the cost of which would amount to £40,000. The <sup>but</sup> project was a big one, ~~was~~ impossible owing to the absence of funds, but unfortunately there was only a sum of £2,000 in the estimates for landing and shipping facilities at Malindi and the question was how to expend those £2,000 in the most profitable manner.

There is an open roadstead at Malindi, and another at Casuarina Point, two miles south of Malindi. The Malindi roadstead provides good anchorage in the S.W. monsoon, but bad in the N.E.; on the other hand the Casuarina roadstead is good in the N.E. monsoon, but doubts prevail as to the anchorage there in the S.W. The money at his disposal would go far to provide a half tide show jetty at one of these two places, either work being completed in two years. This would assist the show traffic but not steamer traffic, which would have to be left out of consideration. It remained for the planters to say which roadstead would offer them the greater facilities as regards their business.

Mr. Jones then read a resolution of the Planters which advocated a pier at Casuarina Point. He added that Mr. Watts had put that scheme out of court on the score of expense, and that therefore they must rest content with a half tide show jetty at Malindi. Mr. Watts pointed out that if the money was expended on a show jetty in Malindi harbour further extension in the course of time, as money came to hand could not be carried out but of Casuarina Point extension to a show jetty could be made later to form a deep water pier.

The Honourable Major Leggett observed that the extra two miles land haulage would add £4 to the cost of shipping each ton; from the scientific researches made either harbour would be open for only six months in the year.

Mr. Davies pointed out that the six months that Casuarina would be open and Malindi difficult for shipping coincided with the shipping season for cotton.

Mr. Watts

Mr. Watts remarked that at present goods cannot be either shipped or landed in a dry condition: the planters must settle amongst themselves which harbour suited their interests.

The Hon'ble Major Leggett stated that fibre must be considered as well as cotton, and in future years the whole of the ginning will by no means be completed by the month of February [the time of the change from N.E. to S.W. monsoon] He was in favour of the central situation afforded by Malindi.

Mr. Davies pointed out that a jetty at either harbour would suit the fibre concessionsites.

It was then resolved that the planters should discuss the matter amongst themselves at the earliest possible opportunity and inform Mr. Watts of their wishes in the matter.

His Excellency then thanked the planters for the interesting information they had given him, which would be a great help to him; He had been very pleased to meet them all that day, and hoped to be able to visit their plantations before the cotton they were now planting had been picked.

Mr. Jones proposed, and Major Leggett seconded, a hearty vote of thanks to His Excellency for having taken the chair and the meeting dissolved.

# The Governor's Visit to Malindi. Labour Difficulties.

## Inspecting the Cotton Gins, 124

(By our Special Correspondent.)

On Thursday, the 23rd instant His Excellency, the Governor accompanied by Captain Hayes-Sadler, the Provincial Commissioner and the Director of Public Works Mr. G. K. Watts arrived by s.s. 'Juba' at Malindi. The town was gaily decorated for the occasion, festoons of flowers, palms, flags being arranged with taste and skill in every available spot. The gaiety of the scene was somewhat marred by the heavy rains, but though outward appearance may have been somewhat damaged by this, at heart it was a matter of rejoicing to all, for the rain is an absolute necessity to white and black.

His Excellency was welcomed on landing by a large gathering of the principal inhabitants, and after the usual introductions, proceeded to the District Commissioner's house. After a short stay there, a move was made to the Ginney of the B. C. G. A., where the whole working was explained by Major Leggett and Mr. Robertson. Having finished their tour of inspection, a return was made to Mr. Maclean's where the party was most hospitably entertained to lunch by Mrs. Maclean.

In the afternoon His Excellency and party inspected the Ginney built by the "Sabaki Company" at Malindi. They were conducted over this by Mr. Jones and Assistant Engineer, and after inspecting the process of ginning from the beginning to the end, and seeing the installation of the Hydraulic Ram and Electric Light, the distinguished visitors returned to the District House.

In the evening His Excellency and party left by S.S. "Juba" for Northern Ports, returning to Malindi on the 29th instant.

A break in the rainclouds on that morning of the 29th about 10 a.m. revealed the approach of the "Juba" His Excellency landed opposite Government House, where he was again welcomed by a large crowd. The heavy rains of the morning and the uncertainty as to the date and time of the Juba's arrival, prevented the Planters—several of whom live at a distance from Malindi, from being present, but in spite of that there was a goodly assemblage to receive His Excellency. On Sir James intimating that he would be glad to meet the Planters, hurried invitations for lunch were sent out by Mrs. Maclean to all within reach. These were present in addition to His Excellency, Captain Hayes-Sadler, Mr. Hinde and Mr. Watts, Major Leggett, Messrs. Jones, Waggett, Barker and Davis. A sumptuous repast was provided and the presence of Mrs. Maclean added the charm and brightness which are the necessary adjuncts of such a proceeding. A short interval, and it was time to turn to the more serious part of the afternoon's work, namely the meeting with the planters, to discuss briefly the Labour Question.

This was convened at the Local Office. There was a full muster of Planters, the only one unavoidably absent being Mr. Brand. There were present, Messrs. Barker, Robertson, Kinahan, Kerrett, Newman, Damian, Burrows, Davis, Kyle, Graham Griffiths, Waggett, Jones, Ford, Major Leggett, etc., in addition to all the local Officers.

His Excellency, having briefly opened the meeting and stated for what purposes it was called, viz. to hear the views of the Malindi Planters on the Labour Question, and to confer with them on the best means of supplying Labour. His Excellency called on Mr. Jones to speak as Chairman of the Malindi District Planters Association on this subject.

Mr. Jones after expressing a cordial welcome to His Excellency to Malindi, proceeded to deal with the subject of labour in three different points—

(1) The actual difficulty of obtaining labour.

(2) The difficulty of keeping down the price of Labour to a point which the Planter could afford and,

(3) The difficulty of keeping Labour.

In the course of his remarks, he pointed out that all Coast Planters require special Labour to do the heavy work of clearing bush, that Wanyamwezi were the only tribe that could profitably be employed in this work, and that Wakikuyu and similar tribes were useless. It was shown that there were over 600 employed in the District, but that for next year the estimate would be nearer 2,500. Was it possible to secure anything like this number. If not and present evidence pointed out the impossibility of it where was the Labour to come from?

Then Mr. Jones went on to ask His Excellency if means could not be devised to recruit natives especially for "harvesting", i.e. the picking of cotton. The proposal of the Malindi Planters' Association was that Government be asked to recruit and keep under the observation of the Labour Officer

at Malindi, a gang sufficient to harvest this season's crop. In his reply His Excellency said that he could not adopt the proposal to keep a large gang under the Labour Officer, but Government should help the Association if latter itself wished to get and keep a gang. Mr. Davis, in response to questions by His Excellency, showed that Wakamba were ready to remain for long periods at the Coast and testified to their usefulness for certain kinds of work.

Having elicited the general views of the meeting, His Excellency in clear terms summed up the proceedings and amongst other things, pointed out the infancy of the country and the difficulties attending the question and the Government's unabated attempts to secure a supply of Labour. He further stated, that failing an adequate supply, there could be no solution of the difficulty other than that of indentured Labour. On this point, Major Leggett spoke as to the ways and means of obtaining this Labour, and gave the meeting an account of the various indentures entered into by the Indian Government and the different Colonies importing Labour. His Excellency stated that representations had been made some time ago to the Colonial Office on this point, and the reply was that Home Government do not want to sanction such import of indentured labour until the indigenous supply had been fully tested and found wanting. His Excellency promised, however, that means should be taken at once to settle all preliminaries, so that when the necessity of the importation of indentured Labour was admitted that no time would be lost in their bringing it in.

His Excellency then proceeded to lay before the meeting certain proposals drawn up by the British Cotton Growing Association to "safeguard the cotton growing industry in B. E. A."

Major Leggett explained these which in the main are—

(1) The Licensing and supervision of Ginnersies.

(2) The prevention of the distribution to natives of all seed other than approved kind for each district.

(3) The Licensing of Distributors of seed, and

(4) The Licensing of all buyers of

The meeting was prepared to discuss these new proposals, but Mr. Jones while heartily welcoming any efforts to keep cotton pure, cordially agreed to His Excellency's proposal that all importation of seed be under the management of Mr. Macdonald, the Director of Agriculture; he took strong objection to two of the proposals viz. the second and fourth.\*

In regard to the 'second' it would be unjust to confine seed as far as white planters are concerned to one variety, for the experience of planters during the last season went to prove that Abassi is not the best variety. Extensive experiments are being made this year by individual planters on this point, and the result will be closely watched.

In regard to the 'fourth' proposal it is evident that the attempt to confine the buying of cotton to a few is not consistent with the ordinary principles of trade. It is not to the buyer that we must look for maintaining the purity of cotton, but to the seed distributor, and as long as the latter is under Government supervision there ought to be no danger of the standard of purity falling.

This subject he hoped, would be further ventilated at the cotton conference at Mombasa.

Then followed a short discussion on the question of a pier for Malindi, when Mr. Watts explained the different schemes, and their cost and generously asked the Malindi Planters Association to lay their views before him at the earliest possible date. A cordial vote of thanks to His Excellency, proposed by Mr. Jones and seconded by Major Leggett, brought proceedings to a close.

With her customary kindness Mrs. Maclean welcomed everyone present to tea etc., on her charming verandah. Her efforts in dispensing hospitality were admirably seconded by Mrs. Barker and Malindites can congratulate themselves on the fact that these two ladies are sojourning in their midst.

The Juba with His Excellency's party on board, left the same evening for Mombasa. To everyone's regret His Excellency had to cut his visit short, but even in the brief time allotted to us, we were able to meet His Excellency, to confer with him as to our difficulties and to receive assurances from him of his firm resolve to aid Planters in every way he can.

\*We understand the B. C. G. A. objects are the controlling of seed issued to Natives and confining it to approved variety, while of course white planters would not be under restriction. The great object is to avoid mixing types in hands of unskilled natives—this is the cause of Uganda Cotton falling over 20% in value lately.—E.

# THE LABOUR MEETING.

## Mombasa of one Mind.

### Re-organization Essential.

21093  
12 JUN 08  
126  
6.00

### "Indentured Labour Inevitable."

#### INEQUITABLE TAXATION.

#### General Review of Native Labour Question.

A meeting called by His Excellency, the Governor to discuss the Labour Question was convened at Mombasa on Friday last, May 1st. The meeting was held at the New Land Offices and was largely attended by Planters, Merchants, Shipping and Forwarding Agents and others interested in the all absorbing subject—the present lack of native Labour.

HIS EXCELLENCY, who was supported by the Hon. the Commissioner for Lands, the Provincial Commissioner and the Commissioner for Public Works amongst other officials, opened the proceedings stating that he did not think that any one could be said by him as regards the attitude of the Government towards labour, than he had said when he addressed the meeting at Nairobi on the 23rd March. Since then there had been meetings at Nairobi and Malindi at which certain resolutions were passed. Notes of the proceedings had been printed, or at any rate he expected to find that they had been printed when he returned to Nairobi. What he wanted to do was to ascertain the difficulties in Mombasa and the Coast strip. He had just had a meeting at Malindi and had obtained some facts but he wanted the views of the people here so that the Government could help in the matter of labour and if they were able to do so he promised that they would do so. His Excellency asked members to give him their views.

#### Mr. Anderson's Motion.

MR. ANDERSON (Mombasa): Your Excellency, at this, the first Public meeting in this City, at which your Excellency has been present, I take the opportunity—an opportunity not very often afforded us—of welcoming your Excellency to Mombasa. (Hear Hear.)

In selecting this day the First of May for the Labour Meeting your Excellency has chosen a day commonly associated with Labour Demonstrations in lands of older civilization and it is noteworthy that whereas we, this morning, are demonstrating to your Excellency that we are would-be employers seeking employees, the overseas demonstrations are showing would-be employees seeking employers.

As a recently and popularly nominated member for the Seydis Provincial Labour Board and awaiting your Excellency's approval to such nomination I will, with your Excellency's permission, refer briefly to the

#### Latest Gazetted Rules

under which the Government is prepared to recruit labour for Colonists. I am disappointed with these latest rules I regard them as hastily considered and am surprised that more detail was not gone into considering that the Body responsible for their production was composed of some six un-official members and eight or ten of the Executive Heads of Government Departments.

I understand from Your Excellency, that it is essential that the Government should protect the native labourers which they supply in case they may fall into the hands of roguish employers and this being so one would have thought those responsible would have paid greater attention to the drafting of the Rules than has been done. For example the Rules provide that Blankets shall be supplied by the employer to the employee, the price to be deducted from the employee's first month's pay but makes no suggestion how the price shall be fixed. It is open to an employer to charge a fancy price and thereby secure to some extent free labour on his profit. Nor is there any mention made of feeding the employees when they are sick although, if required, prior to their commencing their work, the Recruiting Officer may call upon the employer to provide food when they are in health. The class of food is left open which is to be regretted as it means the continuance of the very unwise policy of feeding our natives on imported rice, a food to which they are unaccustomed, to the detriment of the local cultivators of indigenous food-stuffs. The Government Departments, I am afraid supply rice whenever they can, as though very much more expensive it requires less personal trouble to oversee than local foodstuffs.

Again on the other hand, other clauses are inequitable to the employer. Calling upon an employer to telegraph every desertion amongst his labourers is placing upon him—under the present conditions—a tax which will seriously interfere with his dividends.

I would suggest the alteration of Rule 6 which reads that "the Employer shall keep an adequate supply of medicines and bandages at each of his camps, and in the event of any of the employees being seriously sick, shall provide suitable medical attendance"—By substitute one more equitable and more suitable to the present economic conditions, on the following lines.

"In the case of sickness or inability to work, employers will feed such employees gratis for two days in each month and for succeeding days at the rate of 12 cents (or equivalent) per day; the amount together with the actual cost of such medicines supplied to be deducted from the employees wages on pay day. Ordinary medicines and bandages to be stocked by the Employer and in case of serious sickness, the Government Medical Department must be forthwith notified.

Your Excellency, I now beg to

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**move the following motion**  
a copy of which has been printed and circulated among the Members of this Meeting.

That in the opinion of this meeting no permanent or satisfactory solution of the Labour Question will be possible:—

- (i) Until such time as a responsible Native Affairs Department has been established on a broad basis.
- (ii) Until the native population is called upon to contribute in a more equitable manner to the common revenue of the State.
- (iii) Until arrangements are made permitting the restricted importation of indentured skilled labourers from abroad.

Sir, you will notice that the motion is based in a modified form on the motion I moved at the Nairobi meeting and which has unfortunately withdrawn. I have added clauses in which chiefly interests the Lowland Colonies.

At this Nairobi meeting which you, have kindly referred to—as one showing a feeling of moderation and good spirit on the part of those present—your Excellency stated:—

“Now we all want the African to work—for himself—in a far greater degree than has hitherto been the case. How is this to be brought about? How are the wants of the settlers, of the numerous agricultural and industrial concerns now springing up and of the Government to be met? We cannot have forced labour. We cannot resort to compulsion; and I gather Sir, that you are asking those present here to-day the same question. For my part I hold only one opinion and have held that opinion for some years past. The answer to—How we can attain reliable and consistent labour? lies in the creation of a powerful, responsible and intelligent Native Affairs department on a broad basis and in indentured imported labour.

It should not be difficult for us to create such a Department. We can begin where others have reached and can most probably

#### **avoid the bitter experiences**

of our sister colonies of the South. Your Excellency, since the meeting in March, has ruled that henceforth Native Affairs and Labour supply questions would be under the administration of your Provincial Commissioners and their Assistants. I welcome this move as I see in it a step towards the right direction and one leading to an end which I so much desire. But it does not quite meet the needs. I have at various intervals taken occasion to study the duties of our District and Assistant District Commissioners. Only a short time ago I watched with deep interest one week's work of an ordinarily situated District Commissioner. I found that the major portion of his time was occupied on the bench with magisterial duties. In addition to these duties and the ordinary daily routine of civil administrative work I ascertained that in one week's mail he was called upon to advise on, and in many cases decide, questions relating to Customs; Posts; Public Works; Agriculture; Land Applications; Surveys; Prisons; and Police matters.

How is it possible, Sir, for us to ask then a District Commissioner to take up, in addition, the grave responsibilities which fall to the lot of a Native Affairs Officer? How can he get away from his duties among his people in the back country? How can he give that exceptional detailed attention

which must be demanded from a responsible Native Affairs Officer?

Your Excellency has stated in the Legislative Council that you thought the time was approaching when the office of Provincial Commissioner would be no longer necessary. I hold, Sir, that the time is already reached and the office of Provincial Commissioner is no longer necessary—in any case in the majority of our Provinces. I hold the time is ripe to-day when decentralization is no longer desirable in our civil administration and that the District Commissioners and their Assistants should henceforth be in direct touch with the Executive Head of their Department at the Capital. This Sir, would release our present Provincial Commissioners, Officers of experience with a knowledge of the natives in their own provinces, men we could safely look to take up those responsibilities which their work as Provincial Commissioners of Native Affairs would entail. To-day they have not sufficient time at their disposal to attempt to seriously deal with Native Affairs.

At the meeting in Nairobi I urged upon Your Excellency the advisability of appointing an experienced Commissioner of Native Affairs from an older Colony and a resolution to that effect was unanimously passed. When I asked for the appointment of an

#### **experienced Commissioner**

I meant experienced in the executive work of a Native Affairs Department. I did not suggest that he should have power to induce a policy but power to see that a policy put before him was carried out in the best possible manner. Your Excellency has recently appointed the Hon. the Lieutenant-Governor to take charge until further orders of Native Affairs during the absence on leave of the Secretary of Native Affairs. If I thought Sir, that such further orders would be withheld for some considerable period and that so responsible an Officer was to remain as the executive head of Native Affairs I doubt whether I should urge so strongly for an imported Commissioner. Here, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to an answer given by the Secretary of Native Affairs at the Nairobi Meeting. This Officer boldly stated that under the Masters and Servants Ordinance verbal contracts held good for one month and that Deserters could be punished under these conditions. This is not my experience, nor is it the experience of many others whom I have consulted. I have myself taken cases to our Courts and I have been invariably told from the bench that unless there was no written contract a servant could leave his employer any day of the month at sunset, further he could demand his wages up to the time he ceased work. Who is right? The Law Administrators or the Secretary of Native Affairs? If the Secretary is right then the law is being

#### **administered unsympathetically**

towards the Employer. If the Secretary is wrong then I have not much confidence in his advice to your Excellency.

It is reported in the Press that your Excellency has stated that a Commissioner of Native Affairs was not needed on the ground your Excellency held that position. I, Sir, regard your Excellency, in the position of Governor of this Protectorate, equally Commissioner of Europeans and Asiatics as Commissioner of Natives. I regard you Sir, as an umpire holding the scales between all sections of the State, and as I before stated I do not ask for a Commissioner of Natives to induce a policy, but to attend to its execution.

### **liquor traffic**

and its relation to the labour supply, as I entirely fail to grasp the present policy of the Government towards the existing excessive drinking among our natives.

Your Excellency, the last clause of the motion I approach fully realizing the grave responsibility resting on those who advised the introduction of the Asiatic to Africa.

I acknowledge that there are many, very many reasons, why we must temporarily seek abroad for cheap, skilled and efficient labour although it is more particularly at the coast this class of labour is so seriously needed.

During the ordinary routine of my daily work, more particularly since I had the pleasure of organising the recent Coast Products Exhibition, I am very frequently called upon to reply to enquirers who are desirous of settling or investing money in this country. The end of my correspondence with the mounted man who seeks to find an opportunity for investing his funds in our tropical coast belt is invariably an expression of gratitude for the trouble I have taken in giving him information "but—he prefers to wait until such time as the labour supply is put on a more reliable and sure footing." Apart from the investor I have another large class of correspondent who are inclined to make their homes amongst us. I have received by this last mail a very typical letter which I will, with Your Excellency's permission, read to the meeting. The writer, a Secretary to an important Military and Civil club in India, writes:—

"Dear Sir,—I should be extremely grateful to you if you could kindly give me any information on the subject of B. E. A. Several friends of mine are anxious on leaving the service to settle in B. E. A. and go in for farming and are naturally anxious to know the facilities of the country and all about farming and the purchase of land, etc."

Your Excellency, I have not answered that letter. How can I reply? I cannot recommend the writers' friends to come here to join the ranks of those who plaintively told your Excellency at the Nairobi meeting that their efforts to succeed were in vain so long as it was necessary for whiteman to till their land under a tropical sun with their own hands alone.

Your Excellency has just returned from a visit to Kisumu. I am authoritatively told that there are many men with sufficient capital who are anxious to take up land on the Juba River. On making enquiries they find that there is hardly any local labour in the district and what there is is of an indifferent nature and demanding fifteen rupees per month. Again

### **at the Tana.**

your Excellency is aware that there are men and capital ready to step in and cultivate the fertile banks of this remarkable river and only waiting until such time as a definite and continuous labour supply is possible.

I have made most careful enquiries and I am prepared to state that 2,400 imported skilled labourers are wanted immediately for our tropical plantations and industrial works within a radius of fifty miles of this city alone.

There are many other reasons why imported labour is desirable. It will release many thousands of native labourers which are now, and I think

### **improperly, taken away**

from the Highlands, when they are so urgently needed. Further we are endeavouring to introduce a Cotton industry, and I hold the opinion of many others who have given consideration to the difficulties of introducing the product that it is better for the industry that the individual native should be encouraged to cultivate on his own home-

stead his small crop than he should spend his working time on the cotton plantations of European Planters.

Even after a Native Department has been created I believe it will be many years before the supply of labour will equal the demand and on this ground I support the temporary introduction of Imported Labour.

I think, Sir, if imported labour is sanctioned the labourers should be allowed to bring families. The initial expenses will be greater but the men will be more content and the wives and children will be found useful in gathering in the harvest.

I do not like the principle of settling time-expired men yet if this is a *sine qua non* I think we should settle them on lands far away from native reserves and grant them simple tenure only.

In concluding, Your Excellency, I would like to refer to a remark passed by Mr. Archibald Colquhoun, who when reading recently a paper before the Royal Colonial Institute advised us not to be selfish. I agree, Sir, with Mr. Colquhoun that we must not be selfish but I differ entirely from his view of what constitutes selfishness in this instance. I hold, Sir, that when we are considering principles connected with imported Asiatic Labour we must not overlook the renaissance of the Eastern peoples which has just begun. The growth of nationalism which is extending from China to Egypt and nowhere gaining greater force than in British India. The time is coming your Excellency, and that rapidly, when the West will be face to face with

### **800 million peoples**

of the East—all of one accord, all actuated with one motive—and we must see to it that no temporarily selfish desires of ours hamper our children's children in the great coming fight for supremacy over the world's surface. (Applause.)

MR. OWEN GRANT, said, he spoke with no little diffidence at this meeting because he was probably the most junior member present with regard to East African experience, however, he had had some years experience on the other side of Africa. He had recently been on a tour of inspection, for the company with which he was connected, to the fibre area on the Sabaki River. These areas were undoubtedly very valuable. He had however to report to the Directors that it would be necessary to import 500 labourers in order to satisfactorily work them. It was impossible to work the areas with the local natives, the Giryama, who were a rich people, because it was not likely that they would work regularly for them when they had their own Shambas to look after. They certainly would work at seasons but if they were employed they would only be willing to work when they were not required on their own lands. If an attempt was made to carry on industrial work under these conditions there would be times when the Machinery would be still and the Europeans standing idle, for the lack of labour.

### **Reliable and continuous**

labour was essential to success. He had asked his principals to approach the Colonial Office and the Government here with a request that they be allowed to import 500 labourers from India. When he was in Beaufortia in S. W. A. some 18 months ago his firm had imported over 100 Indian coolies from Natal and that number had been decreasing within the space of six weeks. The Governor here remarked that the Natalians were evidently glad to get rid of them. To supply to a certain Mr. Grant said that the Natives were originally from Southern India.)

MR. H. BAARCHOU, stated he rose to support the motion in it reference to indentured labour and Mr. Anderson's remarks in general. He was a little surprised at the fact mentioned last by the speaker that Natal had settled coolies to leave the country for West Africa.



### Natal sugar industry

had been built up to the present stage of prosperity entirely by imported labour, as many other Natal industries. It is possible that they had too much indentured labour at the time, more than they needed. In any case he would like to see only a good class of coolie brought in to East Africa which badly needed a reliable labour supply.

THE HON'BLE MAJOR LEGGETT, B.E., D.S.O., (General Manager of the B. E. A. Corporation representing the British Cotton Growing Association in East Africa) formally seconded the motion. He said that he thought the desire was unanimous to avoid the imported coolie if possible on the ground of the possible complications of nationalities. It was first desirable to endeavour to meet the demand for labour with the indigenous native of the country. The first portion of the motion met this desire in that it provided for the establishment of a Department with duties confined to the affairs of the natives and the native labour supply. The motion he thought supported the policy of the Imperial Government. Mr. Anderson had referred to the advantage of the Lieutenant Governor being appointed as the executive head of native affairs and he welcomed the step which he regarded as the first step towards re-organisation under the direction of His Excellency, the Governor. He congratulated the Government on placing its native affairs and labour supply under the direction of the Provincial Commissioners. He differed with Mr. Anderson as to removing judicial duties from the native affairs administration. He thought it desirable for Native Affairs Officers to hold magisterial

positions it strengthened their powers. He, however, was quite prepared to support the resolution as it stood leaving the details to be worked out by the Executive of the country.

It was un-english to tax the native to make him work but he must be taxed in the interests of the general welfare of the state. He agreed with Mr. Anderson as to differential taxation and the proposal should be examined fully.

On the question of Imported Labour he agreed very fully with previous speakers he was confident that

#### it was inevitable.

The present labour was not reliable nor yet continuous, two very important and essential considerations when dealing with machinery and mechanical appliances. He gathered from His Excellency's speech in Malindi the Government had decided to suggest to the Home Government that a draft ordinance be arranged so that if the need was proved imperative it could be put into force by cable. (His Excellency here corrected the speaker stating that he had suggested such a course but he had not yet put the matter before his Executive Council. Major Leggett in accepting the correction stated he did not think the Executive Council would differ from His Excellency.)

Continuing he stated: That he thought His Excellency's suggestion should be put in hand without delay as we knew from the experience of other countries that it was sometimes two or three years before an Ordinance of the nature became operative. There were so many references to be made backwards and forwards between the various Governments interested.

On the whole he thought His Excellency's pronouncement was one of the most cheering he had heard since he had been in the country. He had pleasure in seconding the three resolutions.

MR. OWEN GRANT stated he thought a number of coolies could be obtained from Natal in less than six weeks.

MR. HUTTON said that as a Forwarding Agent a point which interested him very closely was the present system of giving half pay advances to Porters and labourers as time of their engagement. He would like to see this system abolished. He thought it would be easily got over if the Porters or labourers appointed a deputy at the place where they were engaged to receive their pay.

MR. AARUP satirically suggested that as other means had failed the Government should give liquor free to the natives like the Portuguese Government in West Africa. There was no more drunkenness among the Portuguese Natives than there was in this country.

HIS EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNOR asked if there were any other employers of labour who would like to address the meeting and appealed to Mr. Powys Cobb.

MR. POWYS COBB replied that he had only been a short time in the country. He did not propose to move an amendment. He must plead inexperience for not speaking on the subject.

MR. WHITLARK asked whether Dr. Brode would give the meeting information as to the labour system in German East Africa and whether it was true that the Germans had built their railway with indigenous labour?

DR. BRODE (Vice-Consul for Germany at Mombasa) in stating that he could not address the meeting answered Mr. Whitlark's question in the affirmative.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR closing the meeting said that he had heard with great interest the resolution which had been moved by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Major Leggett, Mr. Anderson's speech was very interesting, but many of the points would be found difficult to carry out. As regard the first portion of the motion, he had (as they knew) placed the Native Affairs Department in the hands of the Lt. Governor and he did not propose making any alterations until he had seen how the new officers worked, and that the system should have a fair trial before anything further was considered. He agreed with Major Leggett that the difficulties were those of obtaining reliability and continuance of labour but if the magisterial powers were taken away from the District Commissioners their power over the native would be removed and that the taxation of the pastoral tribes would then be a difficult thing to manage. In his opinion the Provincial and District Commissioners were looked upon as the fathers of the districts, and as magisterial powers were a great help to their influence, he would not contemplate taking any of their magisterial powers from them. They were the best labour officers because they were in constant touch with the people.

With regard to the contribution of the natives to the revenue, the pastoral tribes because they valued their cattle rather higher than their women, could not be called upon to contribute in cattle to the revenue of the country, it might lead to complications. He hoped that a remedy was to be speedily found, so that they might contribute something. He mentioned the fact that one gentleman and well known in the colony had in the past been greatly in favour of

**taxing the Masai Tribe**

but he had now changed his opinion. The best way out of the difficulty in his opinion was the hut tax. When he came to the country the hut tax was Rs. 2, but after taking the opinion of the officials concerned, he had increased it to Rs. 3 and the amount produced from this source was increasing rapidly. In the Kenia province alone the amount raised in solid cash was £26,700. Six years ago the amount collected from the same province was only £319, and 8 or 9 years ago the amount was nil. As regards taxation on the Coast of course wages ruled higher there than up-country but then the cost of living was also very much higher on the coast strip than up-country. It was a very difficult problem but it was having attention. As regards indentured labour. He held the same views now as he had expressed when Mr. Churchill was at Mombasa. That view was practically the view of the Home Government. If indentured labour were really needed permission would have to be granted for its introduction but they did not want it to come if the natives could supply the labour. There was any quantity of labour if they could only get the native to work with continuance and reliability. He feared that there would

**always be a difficulty**

because it was not possible to get the people from their shambas just at the time that the labour was most wanted.

His Excellency then referred to his speech at Malindi, and finally promised to lay the matter before the Home Government.

Upon concluding His Excellency asked the Meeting whether the motion should be put.

Mr. ANDERSON in asking His Excellency to put the motion stated he wished to draw the attention of the Meeting to one point which he thought had been overlooked and that was that the Government in applying the Village Headmen Ordinance had already proposed largely to transfer the active Magisterial duties from the District Commissioners to the Village Headmen. It was not the removal of judicial powers from the District Commissioner he was advocating as under his proposal District Commissioners would not be included in the Native Affairs Department.

His Excellency put the motion which was carried. *Nem. con.*

A vote of thanks to His Excellency for presiding at the meeting was proposed by Mr. A. G. Turnbull, seconded by Mr. W. A. Sim and received with applause.

ENCLOSURE NO. 10

Date: May 9 1908

21093

C I R C U L A R .

In order to prevent the undue raising of wages and to maintain a reasonable scale Heads of Departments are requested to instruct their officers to conform as far as possible to the ordinary rate of wages prevailing in the District where the labour is employed.

Nairobi,

May 8th 1908.

Ed/- P. J. JACKSON.

Lieutenant-Governor.

DRAFT.

27 Aug 07

New Zealand No 185  
Sir:

MINUTE.

- Mr. Read. 20. Aug.
- Mr.
- Mr. Just.
- Mr. Antrobus. 11/12/07
- Mr. Coz.
- Mr. Lucas.
- Sir F. Hopwood.
- Col. Selby 11/24/8.
- Mr. Churchill.
- Crewe. 1/5.
- The Earl of Selkirk

Answers

Sir, I have the honor to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a despatch which I have addressed to the Sir of the S.A.P. on the subject of the Labour question, & to call your attention to the concluding paragraph 2. I understand from a private letter addressed by you to Mr. Harris of this despatch on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June that you would

Sir: S.A.P. 27 Aug  
 (H. Smith)

25ft.

be willing to accept  
for some thousands of  
New Zealand boys to go  
and work in the  
U.K.P. for periods of  
12 months at 15/-  
a month, +, if so.

Major Sellar concurs in  
the proposed arrangement.  
I should be glad if  
you would elaborate  
in conjunction with him  
a scheme for the  
engagement of the  
labourers.

3. In any scheme I  
would suggest that the  
terms should be very  
clearly defined +  
that it should be  
stated, for example,  
whether the wage of  
15/- a month includes  
retains +, if so, whether

submit it to me for my approval  
before bringing it into  
force.

Suggested by Mr. P. R. ...  
with whom I have discussed  
the question  
H.P.H.

the rate of wage would  
be different in cases  
where the labourers are  
unable to grow or  
obtain their food free  
of cost - the employers  
have to supply retains.

Joe



*Dr. 21093*

Secretary of State to the Governor of the South Africa Protectorate

*1 Aug 1905*



*Dr. 27 Aug 05*

DRAFT  
S.A.P. (No 420)  
*Dr. 27*

Sir, I have the honor to  
ack. the rec<sup>d</sup> of your  
desp: No 244 of the 19<sup>th</sup>  
of May respecting the  
Labour Question in the  
Protectorate.

MINUTE.

- Mr. Read. 20. Aug 05
- Mr.
- Mr. Just.
- + Mr. Antrobus. #BX 21
- Mr. Coz.
- Mr. Lucas.
- Sir F. Hopwood.
- ~~Mr. Chamberlain~~
- The Earl of ...

2. At present there is an  
understanding that the  
Govt. will assist the  
settlers as far as possible  
in finding labour for  
them. It appears from  
the 11<sup>th</sup> June: of your  
desp. that you have  
some doubts as to the  
wisdom of the plan  
envisaged, and have no  
hesitation in ...

*Chief Magistrate 185. 27 Aug*

*2 5/10*

It is unreason.

3. The proper course would appear to be for the Gov<sup>t</sup> to introduce legislation laying down the conditions for the employment & proper treatment of the native labourers, with suitable penalties for the contravention of the regulations, & then to stand aside leaving the settlers to make their own arrangements for procuring the labour.

4. The Notice, which forms the 5<sup>th</sup> enc: is your despatch & which represents what has been at present agreed upon between the Gov<sup>t</sup> & the settlers with regard to the recruitment

recruitment of labour, 136 would in my opinion form a good basis for legislation of this kind; & the present inspection of labour could be altered for the purpose of ensuring that its provisions were properly observed.

5. There is already a Code of Servant Ordinances designed to protect the master against the certain acts of his servant, & the new legislation would be its counterpart. These might indeed be merged into one Ordinance dealing with the whole matter both from the point of view of the master & of the servant.

6. Coming now to a consideration of the other important points raised in your despatch

I enclose the news  
expressed in the 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>  
para: of your despatch:  
with regard to the  
proposed substitution of  
a Poll Tax for a Hut  
Tax.

7. I approve of the  
suggestions made in para:  
19-21 of your despatch:  
that a Poll tax of  
Rs 2 ~~should be~~  
<sup>testamentary</sup>  
imposed on able-bodied  
males who do not pay  
the Hut tax should  
be introduced tentatively,  
& that the tax should  
be remitted in the case

of natives working for  
a month <sup>for</sup>  
~~any person~~ <sup>for</sup> a day  
authorized person;

8. I am dealing in a  
separate despatch with  
the question of Native  
Reserves referred to  
in the 22<sup>nd</sup> para: of

either for themselves or

it being clearly understood  
that the exemption arises from  
work done irrespective of the  
race or status of the employee.

DRAFT.

MINUTE.

- Mr. ...
- Mr. ...
- Mr. Just.
- Mr. Antrobus.
- Mr. Cox.
- Mr. Lucas.
- Sir F. Hopwood.
- Mr. Churchill.
- The Earl of Elgin.

Your despatch:  
9. The 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> para:  
I have raised the question of  
the employment  
of Indian indentured  
labour for the best  
& middle districts of  
the Prots., which is  
more fully discussed in  
your despatch No. 274 of  
the 4<sup>th</sup> of June.

10. I have carefully  
considered the reasons which  
you have adduced for the  
employment of labour of this  
kind, but, while desiring  
to give every assistance  
to the settlers who are  
making such admirable  
efforts with a view  
to develop the cotton &  
other industries in the  
districts in question, I  
regret that the objections  
to the adoption of the  
scheme appear to me to  
be so great as to preclude  
me

11/2/24



me from sanctioning it.

11. I am glad however,

to be able to suggest

an alternative which

will, I trust, find a

solution of the difficulty.

12. I understand that

there is a surplus of

labourers in the Nyasaland

that the Governor of that

Part would be willing

to arrange for the

engagement of some thousands

of boys for work in the

S.A.P., the periods

of engagement being

12 months and the

wages being at the

rate of  $1\frac{5}{12}$  a month.

13. So far as I have been

able to gather from

the representatives of two

of the Companies engaged

by those concerned, for

in the cotton industry in the

South an arrangement of

this kind would meet

the present difficulties, &

I would suggest that <sup>if</sup> ~~you~~

this view is generally shared

should communicate with

the Sir A. Shepe with a

view to elaborating a

scheme for the engagement

& proper treatment of the

labourers, which could

then be submitted to

me for my approval.

14. I am communicating

a copy of this despatch to

Sir A. Shepe.

Yours,

Crewe.