



# KENYA.

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## Compulsory Labour for Government Purposes.

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*Presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies  
to Parliament by Command of His Majesty,  
July, 1925.*

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# KENYA.

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## Compulsory Labour for Government Purposes.

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### A.—General Provisions for Compulsory Labour for Government Purposes as approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

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(a) *Extract from Mr. Churchill's despatch to the Officer Administering the Government of Kenya of the 5th September, 1921 (reprinted from Cmd. 1509).*

Under the Native Authority (Amendment) Ordinance\*, 1920, provision was made for Headmen to issue orders to be obeyed by natives residing within the limits of their local jurisdiction for the provision of paid porters for Government servants on tour and for the Government Transport Department, and for the provision of paid labour for work on the construction or maintenance of railways and roads wherever situated in the Protectorate (now Colony and Protectorate of Kenya) and for other work of a public nature whether of a like kind to the foregoing or not, subject to the provisos that no person should be required to work in this way for a longer period than 60 days in any one year, or if fully employed in any other occupation, or if so employed during the preceding 12 months for a period of three months, or if otherwise exempted under directions issued by the Governor.

I do not propose to examine now the various arguments put forward for or against this form of labour. Lord Milner agreed to the enactment of the Native Authority (Amendment) Ordinance, 1920, being satisfied at the time that the position justified this measure; but it has always been recognised that recourse should not be had to compulsory labour for Government purposes unless this was absolutely necessary. I need not enlarge on this point of view, which is generally accepted, no less in Kenya by Sir Edward Northey and the Colonial Government than by His Majesty's Government. But conditions have to some extent changed, since the Ordinance was framed, and it is clear from the information with which I have been supplied that the Government has in fact been able to carry out necessary work with only rare recourse to the powers of compulsion conferred by the Ordinance. I hope and believe that in the present state of the labour market in Kenya, recourse to compulsory labour will not be necessary; but it is not certain that this state of affairs will be permanent, and work essential to the life of the community must be carried on. While, therefore, in order to leave no room for misconception, I wish it to be placed on public record that it is the declared policy of the Government of Kenya to avoid recourse to compulsory labour for Government purposes, except when this is absolutely necessary for essential services, I have decided that the legislation which empowers the Government to obtain compulsory

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\* Replaced by Ordinance No. 26 of 1922, see later.

labour shall remain on the statute book, but with the following amendment: It should be provided that, except in regard to the provision of paid porters for Government servants on tour or for the transport of urgent Government stores, the Government must refer to the Secretary of State for prior authority to utilize the powers of compulsion conferred by the Ordinance and that such authority will only be given for specified works for a specified period. Further, the works of a public nature for which compulsory labour is now permissible and for which in special cases the Secretary of State may in future authorize compulsory labour should be defined in the amending Ordinance. I have not attempted to prepare such a definition, as I think that this ought first to be carefully considered by your Government; but in any event I wish it to be made clear that works carried out for the Government by a contractor cannot be included except with the express sanction of the Secretary of State.

(b) *Relevant sections of the Native Authority Ordinance No. 22 of 1912 as amended by section 2 of the Native Authority (Amendment) Ordinance No. 26 of 1922.*

7. Any Headman may from time to time issue orders to be obeyed by the Natives residing within the local limits of his jurisdiction, for any of the purposes following:—

- (m) the providing of paid labour for urgent repairs in case of sudden or unforeseen damage to roads or railways or to Government buildings or works, or for the purpose of preventing loss of life or damage to property from fire, flood or other unforeseen cause;
- (n) the providing of paid porters for Government servants on tour and for the transport of urgent Government stores;
- (o) the providing of paid labour for work on the construction of and maintenance of the following works of a public nature:—
  - (1) Roads, Bridges and Waterworks,
  - (2) Railways,
  - (3) Government Buildings,
  - (4) Harbour Works, Wharves and Piers,
  - (5) Telegraph and Telephone Systems,
  - (6) Such other work of a public nature provided for out of public monies as the Governor may, with the prior approval of the Secretary of State, declare by notice in the Gazette to be a work of a public nature within the meaning of this clause;

8. (1) Whenever a Provincial Commissioner or District Commissioner shall consider that, for the proper administration and good government of the area for which any Headman has been appointed, it is necessary or desirable that

any order or orders should be issued for any of the purposes enumerated in the preceding Section he may direct the Headman to issue and enforce such order or orders as aforesaid as to the Provincial Commissioner or District Commissioner may seem proper.

If any Headman shall neglect to issue any order which he may be directed to issue as aforesaid, the Provincial Commissioner or District Commissioner may himself issue the order or orders.

- (2) Whenever a Provincial Commissioner or District Commissioner shall consider that any order issued by a Headman should not have been issued or should not be enforced he may direct the Headman to cancel the order or to refrain from enforcing the order, and if any person shall have been convicted before a Native Tribunal of failing to comply with such order may quash the conviction and order the repayment of any fine which may have been recovered.

9. Any Native who shall without lawful excuse, disobey or shall fail to comply with any lawful order issued or given by a Headman under this Ordinance or by a Provincial Commissioner or District Commissioner under the powers conferred by the preceding Section, shall be guilty of an offence and shall, on conviction before a Magistrate or before a Native Tribunal having jurisdiction over such Native, be liable to a fine not exceeding Seventy-five Rupees\* and in default of payment to imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding two months.

- (c) *Additional provisions made in regard to section 7 of the Native Authority Ordinance, 1912, by section 2 of the Amending Ordinance No. 26 of 1922.*

Provided always that the powers conferred under Sections 7 and 8 of the Principal Ordinance shall not be utilised for any of the purposes mentioned in this clause without the authority first had and obtained of the Secretary of State which authority shall only be sought for a specified work for a specified period.

And provided further that no person shall be required to work under the provisions of this clause or of the clause immediately preceding :—

- (1) for a longer period than 60 days in any one year ;
- (2) if he be fully employed in any other occupation or has been so employed during the preceding 12 months for a period of 3 months ;
- (3) if he be otherwise exempted under the provisions of any direction issued by the Governor.

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\* The equivalent in present currency is 150 shillings.

- (p) requiring natives subject to his jurisdiction to attend, for any purpose in the interest of good government, before a Senior Commissioner or District Commissioner at any time and at any place appointed by him, or before himself at any place within the local limits of his jurisdiction;
- (q) prohibiting natives subject to his jurisdiction from holding or attending any meeting or assembly within the local limits of his jurisdiction which in his opinion might tend to be subversive of peace and good order, and
- (r) for any other purpose approved by the Governor in writing.

(d) *Exemptions made by Administrative Order of the Governon.*

In a despatch dated the 29th May, 1923, the Governor reported that he had decided to issue an administrative order exempting the following classes of Natives from the obligation of paid labour on Government undertakings for public purposes :—

- (1) Headmen and members of Councils.
- (2) Natives actually working under contract.
- (3) Teachers appointed by the Director of Education.
- (4) Hospital dressers appointed by the Principal Medical Officer.
- (5) Chief's clerks appointed by the District Commissioner.
- (6) Persons exempt under the Native Exemption Ordinance, 1920.
- (7) Aged or infirm.
- (8) Natives (approved by District Commissioner) steadily engaged in a trade or in business or agriculture on their own account.
- (9) Camp caretakers, market masters or other natives, appointed by District Commissioner, engaged in public service.
- (10) Native clergy, teachers, Mohammedan priests, church and mosque caretakers.

**B.—Correspondence in 1924-25 as to the application of the provisions for Compulsory Labour for Government Purposes.**

**No. 1.**

*The Governor of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Received 6th January, 1925.)

[Answered by Nos. 3 and 6.]

Government House, Nairobi, Kenya, 15th December, 1924.

SIR,

I have the honour to address you on the subject of the serious shortage of labour for Railway works in this Colony.

2. I enclose for your information copies of communications received from :

- (i) The Contractors for the Uasin Gishu Line;
- (ii) The General Manager, Uganda Railway, on the subject of labour on the Thika-Nyeri Extension.

These communications disclose a very serious state of affairs, and I feel it is urgently necessary that steps should be taken to ensure that labour will be forthcoming for the early execution of important works in this Colony.

3. I therefore request your approval of labour being called out for work on the railways in Kenya if, and when, required, in terms of Section 2 (o) of Ordinance No. 26 of 1922.\*

I am satisfied that the work is of urgent public importance and that the only means of securing the labour required is by the adoption of a measure which will make it compulsory for the natives to work on railways in which they are so directly interested, subject of course to the restrictions and conditions laid down in the Ordinance referred to. All such work will be under the supervision of Government Officers and the fullest care and attention will be paid to the rate of wages and the restrictions governing the employment of these natives. I trust that the reports which I have recently sent you will satisfy you that the conditions governing the labour on railways throughout the Colony are satisfactory.

4. The East African Commission are fully aware of this shortage of labour which is being felt in many directions in the Colony at present, and I understand from Major Ormsby-Gore that he and his colleagues would be favourably inclined to support proposals for the employment of compulsory labour on public works of this description, more especially in connection with railway construction.

5. I shall, of course, use every effort to secure the labour required voluntarily, and Administrative Officers are now taking steps to notify throughout their districts the shortage of labour on the railway. I consider, however, that it is essential that I should be provided with the power—only to be used if necessary—of calling out native labour for such work, a power which you may be assured will be only exercised with the greatest care and if found to be absolutely necessary.

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\* See page 6.

6. In view of the urgency of this matter, I shall be glad to receive approval of my proposal by telegram. I shall of course furnish you with full particulars in respect to all labour carried out for public works in this Colony stating :

- (a) nature of the work,
- (b) steps taken to obtain the labour voluntarily,
- (c) the urgency of securing such labour compulsorily,
- (d) the number of men employed,
- (e) the district from which the labour is obtained,
- (f) the district in which the labour is employed,
- (g) the average rate of wages,
- (h) the period during which it is proposed to employ such labour (which will not of course exceed that laid down in Section 2 of Ordinance No. 26 of 1922),
- (i) measures taken by Government for the supervision of such labour and for the fulfilment of the conditions of service.

I have, etc.,

R. T. CORYNDON.

ENCLOSURE 1 IN NO. 1.

Griffiths & Coy., Ltd.,  
P.O. Box No. 34,  
Nairobi.

29th October, 1924.

DEAR MAJOR DUTTON,

As you were good enough to give me a short interview on the subject of labour on October 9th, and asked me to prepare a statement for you when you came up to Eldoret at the end of the month, I am doing so in the form of a personal letter to yourself.

I left for England at the end of May, and had I then been asked what was the greatest asset Kenya had, I should have said, without hesitation—its labour, which is practically unlimited.

On my return here early in September, I found a situation with regard to labour which, frankly speaking, has given me the shock of my life.

I will quote a few figures dealing with Railway labour only, but from what I hear on all sides they will apply proportionately to almost every plantation and labour-employing industry in the country.

On May 31st, 1923, we had a maximum number of labourers on the line of 17,426, of which some 14,000 were recruited from what may be called the Lake area.

May, 1923 ... ..	17,426	May, 1924 ... ..	9,382
June, 1923 ... ..	15,809	June, 1924 ... ..	7,278
July, 1923 ... ..	14,625	July, 1924 ... ..	5,600
Aug., 1923 ... ..	15,850	Aug., 1924 ... ..	3,824
Sept., 1923 ... ..	14,789	Sept., 1924 ... ..	2,891
Oct., 1923 ... ..	12,040	Oct., 1924 ... ..	2,719

Up to May, 1924, we were able to get all we required. There was a noticeable falling off during June and July.

The shortage became acute in August, and since that time there has been a steady decrease each month without any corresponding number of new men coming in.

I have made several trips to Kisumu trying to get all the recruiting agents there to make special efforts to get up to 1,000 to 1,500 men only in order to guarantee the completion of the Railway by the end of this year, which they promised to do, and I believe they have honestly tried to do so, in spite of being daily urged by planters to obtain labour for them also. The result of these efforts has been :—

In September, 78 new men, from all sources, including local casuals.

In October, 172 new men, from all sources, including local casuals.

Railway work on the Uasin Gishu line has never been unpopular. The work is hard, but they are well paid, fed, housed, and medically cared for. The Kisii prefer it to any form of labour.

Sub-Contractors who, in the past, have had no difficulty in obtaining anything from 500 up to 3,000 men individually, are now finding the same trouble, and planters equally with them.

We have now applied for permission to recruit labour in Tanganyika Territory but with the splendid potential, and, until comparatively recently, obtainable, supply of Kenya, it places the Colony in a most humiliating position that such a course should now be necessary.

The labour recruiters in Kisumu have written to us that, in spite of having had to raise their fees, they are now running their organisations at a loss, and one of the principal firms tells me that they are closing down that branch of their business. Figures supplied to me by this firm, of all labour sent out by them from Kisumu, bear out our own, which shows that the heavy falling off dates from about the end of May. In March they sent out 642 and in August and September 176 and 183 respectively, of which they could only send a few to the Uasin Gishu Railway.

To revert from the general situation to the completion of the Uasin Gishu Railway in particular, at the rate at which labour is coming in, as against those becoming time expired, we are already faced with the necessity of only concentrating on certain works for which we have got the necessary amount of labour, and a stoppage of work in other directions equally essential to the completion of the line in the near future. Thus, for the want of one-tenth of the number of men we had a year or eighteen months ago, the line, the completion of which is so urgently required by the Colony, is held up unnecessarily, which will add materially to its cost. Completion by the end of this year, possible at the beginning of September, is now out of the question.

With regard to labour from Tanganyika Territory, our early experience in this direction was so unfortunate owing to the large num-

ber of unfit men that were passed out of the Territory, and the heavy expense incurred in their import and repatriation, that it is only the urgent necessity of obtaining labour from any available source that has compelled us to ask permission to recruit there again. Even so, if such permission were granted, we are very loath to avail ourselves of it.

Yours sincerely,  
J. H. GAILEY.

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ENCLOSURE 2 IN NO. 1.

Urgent.

22nd November, 1924.

*The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Colony of Kenya, Nairobi.*

THIKA-NYERI RAILWAY.

The Resident Engineer of Thika-Nyeri Construction informs me that owing to shortage of labour he is experiencing difficulties in his work, and that his progress is being delayed. Further, that a large number of the existing labourers complete their contracts shortly, and although every endeavour is being made to recruit new men, the results are not satisfactory.

2. I suggest that Government should instruct the District Officers to make it known to the natives in their areas that labour is expected to come out for work on the Railway construction which is in progress, especially as this Railway passes through Native Reserves and will largely benefit the natives themselves.

C. N. FELLING,  
General Manager.

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No. 2.

*The Governor of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Received 9th January, 1925.)

[Answered by Nos. 3 and 6.]

Urgent. 9TH JANUARY. Position with regard to labour for railways and public works serious and becoming daily more so. General Manager of the Railway reports acute shortage of labour at Kisumu for dealing with the cotton crop from Uganda; and congestion, delays, and damage to traffic becoming alarming, which will lead to grave delays in despatching cotton. Similar complaints received regarding the position of Uasin Gishu (*vide* your letter of 4th December\*), Kitale, and Thika Railways, and for Public Works Department. Addressed you by despatch of 15th December† asking that limited compulsion may be allowed in the terms of Section 2 (o)‡ of Ordinance No. 26 of 1922. Every possible effort is being made to secure labour voluntarily but with very little success, and I consider it essential that power to call out native labour for railway construc-

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\* Not printed. † No. 1. ‡ See page 6.

tion and Public Works be granted without delay so as to relieve the congestion and damage in the meantime. Every possible precaution will be taken by the Government to safeguard the interests of labour and power will be used only where in my opinion absolutely necessary. Request early reply by cable.

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No. 3.

*The Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor of Kenya.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Sent 14th January, 1925.)

[Answered by Nos. 4 and 9.]

Your telegram 9th January.\* Regret unable grant general approval for compulsory labour as under ordinance my approval can be given only for a specific work in every case. In view of your assurances as to Thika and Uasin Gishu extensions, approve subject to conditions laid down in Ordinance 26 of 1922 compulsory recruitment of Kikuyu for Thika extension and other natives for Uasin Gishu up to maximum of 4,000 labourers at any one time. If this step does not release sufficient voluntary labour for other essential services, report specific public services on which you consider it would be justifiable to employ local labour compulsorily for a specific period. As regards Turbo-Tororo section, please ascertain from Governor Uganda whether any Bagishu likely to volunteer, and I do not see why voluntary North Kavirondo and Kitosh labour should not be available, but if absolutely necessary I should, on receipt of full statement as to why labour not likely to be forthcoming, be prepared to approve of compulsory recruitment, but do not wish total of 4,000 compelled labourers at any one time exceeded unless satisfied of urgent necessity in public interests, having due regard to other requirements of labour for production on farms and in reserves. Is there no danger lest compulsory labour will have serious effect on voluntary labour supply?

As regards Kisumu docks I am of opinion that compulsion is quite inappropriate, and I should be glad to learn what steps have been taken to obtain additional labour there and what wages are offered.

Are you satisfied that Government organisation for recruiting voluntary labour cannot be improved? Please report by telegram what rates of pay you propose for compelled labour and what organisation you propose to establish for selection of labourers to be compelled and for what period you desire compulsion in each case.

## No. 4.

*The Governor of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Received 23rd January, 1925.)

[Answered by Nos. 5, 6 and 8.]

23RD JANUARY. Your telegram of 14th January.\* Pay will be the lowest accepted rate in the area of recruitment, most likely 12s. per month, while ordinary rate for voluntary labour is 14s. I consider it essential that the pay of compelled labour be slightly lower than for voluntary labour, otherwise the whole value of the lesson will be lost. Difference between the figures above will not constitute hardship.

2. Administrative Officers will select non-workers wherever possible through native council. Labour will be medically examined and regularly inspected also by the Senior Commissioner personally from time to time.

3. There is no regular Government organisation for voluntary recruiting, as the District Officers have always dissociated themselves from any active form of recruiting.

4. Period as in proviso to sub-para. (o) of Section 2 of Ordinance 26 of 1922. Every endeavour was made for a long time to encourage voluntary labour from North Kavirondo and Kitosh, but with no result whatever. It is impossible to state definitely the effect of compelled labour on voluntary, but have no reason to suppose that the effect will be anything but beneficial and stimulating.

5. The only possible source of labour at present available for Kisumu docks is prison labour; after making special arrangements for housing and transport I have sanctioned a transfer of prisoners for this purpose.

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 No. 5.

*The Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor of Kenya.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Sent 30th January, 1925.)

[Answered by Nos. 7 and 11.]

30TH JANUARY. Your telegram 23rd January.† See strong objection in principle to your proposal regarding wages for compulsory labour, as I do not see how a lower rate than the ordinary market rate can possibly be defended or how it could be maintained that the loss of 2s. a month was not a hardship. What exactly do you mean by phrase "whole value of the lesson"? Is it a fact that more labour has come out to work on public works and farms in 1924 than in any previous year?

Do not consider use of prison labour at Kisumu docks as satisfactory solution of problem there and wish explanation of special

difficulty at Kisumu while private companies can obtain sufficient port labour at Mombasa. As port work is heavy it always commands higher wages. Are higher wages being offered for this special class of work at Kisumu? Send by mail full report from Provincial Commissioner Kisumu as to why in his opinion voluntary labour in the centre of the most populous native reserve is not forthcoming for dock work.

I agree that administrative officers should be dissociated as far as possible from recruiting or even inspecting labour on works. Do you recommend increase in number of labour inspectors by seconding junior administrative officers or otherwise? Presumably the compelled labourers will be employed mainly by sub-contractors, but obviously the recruitment of compelled labourers could not be put into the hands of sub-contractors.

Has the report on labour by the Economic and Finance Committee been received? In view of the further coming demands for labour for public works and developing farms, send by despatch full recent information regarding the labour situation.

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No. 6.

*The Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor of Kenya.*

[Answered by No. 14.]

Downing Street, 6th February, 1925.

SIR,

I have the honour to confirm my telegram of the 14th of January,\* on the subject of the recruitment of native labour for the construction of the Thika and Uasin Gishu extensions of the Uganda Railway.

2. I am glad to note from your telegrams of the 22nd of January† and of the 23rd of January‡ that, with the limited resort to compulsory labour which I approved by telegraph, you do not anticipate any difficulty in utilising such compulsory labour for railway construction or any unfavourable reactions on the volunteer labour supply of the Colony. I wish to take this opportunity, however, to indicate briefly why I should be reluctant to consider any extension of compulsory labour beyond the limits explained in my telegram and why I hope that compulsory labour will be dispensed with at as early a date as possible.

3. The extent to which, subject to certain safeguards, compulsory labour may be sanctioned for works of recognised public utility is laid down in Mr. Churchill's despatch of the 5th of September, 1921;\*\* and it is not necessary for me to remind you, in view of the correspondence and the public comment which preceded the sending of that despatch, that any deviation from the policy there laid down would arouse much opposition in this country.

4. As stated in Lord Milner's despatch of the 22nd of July, 1920, †† the provision of compulsory labour for private employers is

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\* No. 3. † Not printed. ‡ No. 4. \*\* See page 5. †† No. 1 in Cmd. 873.

absolutely opposed to the traditional policy of His Majesty's Government, and I should be disposed to regard in the same light any proposal to utilise such labour for Government purposes otherwise than as indicated in the despatch of the 5th of September, 1921. Any proposal for a more extended use of compulsory labour would be difficult to reconcile with the definite pledge of trusteeship and of responsibility for the interests of the natives of Kenya, which was expressly conveyed in the decisions of His Majesty's Government on the Indian Question, in July, 1923.

5. It is generally admitted by those who oppose the principle of compulsory labour that there are certain services of recognised public utility for which in the last resort the Government has the right to claim the services of individuals. The extent, however, to which this should be done is limited by the degree in which those who are thus compelled to give their labour understand the social utility of the works on which they are employed. From this aspect, the case of the African native presents much difficulty. However necessary for the development of the Colony the works to which he is put may be, it is not to be expected that he will readily appreciate their necessity when he is called upon to take part in them far outside the limits of his tribal territory; and there will be no mitigation on this account of the distaste and resentment naturally produced by the use of compulsion.

6. The economic objections to compulsory labour were fully realised by the South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903-05, who stated, in paragraph 380 of their report,\* that any measure of compulsion was to be deprecated not only as unjust, but as economically unsound. The standard of work under any system of compulsion will naturally be inferior to that of voluntary workers; and in addition the fact that compulsory labour is available tends to discount enterprise and progress by diverting attention from the possibilities of labour-saving machinery. Moreover, in the case of natives such as those of Kenya, in whom it is desired to encourage habits of industry, I fear that the results of any widespread association of labour with the sense of oppression caused by resort to the compulsory system may outweigh any educative influence which might otherwise be effected by inducing the natives to offer their labour upon terms sufficiently attractive to them.

7. For these reasons I have laid down a maximum of 4,000 compelled labourers at any one time. In the selection of the individuals for compulsory labour efforts should, as you say, be made to pick out the non-workers. By "non-workers" I refer of course not merely to those able-bodied males who have not engaged in work for wages outside their reserve but to the class which has neither undertaken such work nor has shown willingness to produce economic crops for export from the land in the reserve.

I have, etc.,

L. S. AMERY.

No. 7.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the  
Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Received 13th February, 1925.)

[Answered by No. 8.]

12TH FEBRUARY. Your telegram of 30th January.\* It is not intended that pay for compelled labour should be below the market rates for farm labour, which may be generally taken as not exceeding 8s. to 10s., but that it should not from the start be placed on the higher level of pay which the railway is offering to attract and retain the best type of labour. It must further be remembered that all labour will have the benefit of special railway rations. By "whole value of the lesson" reference was intended to the general impression which would be created in the native mind if it were found that the Government pays to men who are called out the same rate as it offers to men who are accustomed to seek and obtain voluntary employment. The former will generally belong to a class without previous experience and not accustomed to regular work. It is desirable that the natives should feel that they are gaining more by offering their services for employment than by awaiting compulsion. It must be remembered that little economic pressure or inducement to earn money at present exists. It should be recognised that the position is that the cotton and port traffic will be paralysed unless labour forthcoming. Supply is available, but attraction of spending at present insufficient to induce the natives generally of their own accord to work while possessing for the time sufficient money, and in fact they like working in numbers, and I believe will be found to come out without any difficulty when called upon to do so, but some measure of compulsion is necessary, as the only alternative is letting matters drift until the natives consider that they require more money for their own objects. The mere suggestion of compulsion has already had excellent effect on Thika-Nyeri line, where labour is now coming out well.

Total of native labour employed in 1924 was less than employed in 1923 though exceeding the numbers employed in previous years, while wages, rations and demand for labour generally increasing.

I agree that the use of prison labour at Kisumu not the best solution but necessary as a temporary measure owing to great shortage which still prevails there. If labour not made available practical deadlock will occur. Wages offered by railway 18s. to 20s., also piece-work which enables the labourers to earn up to 1s. 6d. per day. Great difficulty is being experienced in recruiting Kavirondo locally at present owing to their prosperity and the demand for their labour from all parts of the country. Comparison with Mombasa conditions misleading, assured and constant employment being available there throughout for any number of hours workers choose, and gangs further are trained to that kind of work. At

\* No. 5.

Kisumu work heavy for shorter time only and there is practically only one employer. I am detailing special Administrative Officer to report on labour possibilities and further steps to be taken to encourage voluntary labour Kavirondo area. I am arranging for labour inspection. Steps are being taken immediately to fill the new appointment in the estimates this year. The interim report of Economic and Finance Committee on Labour received and sent you by mail.

Despatch follows.

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No. 8.

*The Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officer Administering the Government of Kenya.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Sent 20th February, 1925.)

[Answered by Nos. 9, 12, 14, 16, and 18.]

20TH FEBRUARY. In view of urgent importance of completing through railway connection to Uganda at earliest possible moment, am prepared to approve proposals regarding pay and recruitment of compelled labour on specified new railway construction contained in your telegrams of 23rd January\* and 12th February† on the understanding that difference in pay between accustomed voluntary workers and inexperienced compelled workers does not exceed two shillings per month. But consider that if compelled workers on or after commencement are willing to volunteer for longer engagement as voluntary workers they should be immediately raised to same rate as regular voluntary labour of same grade. Please submit regular monthly reports regarding numbers, pay, medical conditions of both voluntary and compelled labour on all railway constructions now being undertaken.

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No. 9.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Received 13th March, 1925.)

[Answered by No. 10.]

12TH MARCH. Your telegram of 20th February‡ Compelled Labour. Action taken hitherto has been to call out 1,200 labourers from Kavirondo and 300 from Kerio Province for Uasin Gishu Line; recruiting has proceeded very satisfactorily. In this connection I would state that the Contractors recently informed me that given 1,500 labourers for two months and 750 for a further six weeks their demands would probably be satisfied. I find it necessary to call for 500 men for Thika-Nyeri Railway, and the Chief Native Commis-

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\* No. 4. † No. 7. ‡ No. 8.

sioner advises that call be made on the Akamba rather than Kikuyu, see your telegram of 14th January\*. Former tribe shows only thirteen per cent. of the available labour to be working whereas the latter is providing the highest percentage of labour to-day. 200 men also required for relaying near Samburu. I recommend call should be made on the Akamba, who are accustomed to similar climatic conditions. If the proposal is approved it would have excellent effect on the Akamba Tribe, and the Senior Commissioner reports that there will be no difficulty in securing the number of men required. The total which will thus be called on will be considerably less than the number permitted by you in respect of both railways, and it is hoped that will meet all requirements.

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No. 10.

*The Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officer Administering the Government of Kenya.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Sent 7th April, 1925.)

7TH APRIL. Your telegram 12th March.† Akamba proposal approved up to maximum of 700 and for purposes specified.

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No. 11.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Received 7th April, 1925.)

Government House, Nairobi, Kenya, 14th March, 1925.

SIR,

In accordance with the instructions contained in your cablegram of the 30th January last,‡ I have the honour to transmit a copy of report by Mr. R. W. Hemsted, Senior Commissioner, Nyanza Province, on the subject of labour at Kisumu Docks, together with the covering observations of the General Manager, Uganda Railway. It will be noted that the recommendations in Mr. Hemsted's report are being acceded to, and it is to be anticipated that an improvement in the position may result in consequence.

2. I would take this opportunity of stating that the appointment to the Railway from the Provincial Administration of an Officer to arrange for the recruitment, supervision and care of Railway labourers is at present under consideration. Separate recommendations will be addressed to you in this connection at an early date.

3. I will address you further in the near future on the situation both as regards voluntary and compelled labour, a subject which is at present receiving my fullest consideration.

4. I may state that the Administrative Officer who has been detailed to supervise the general arrangements for the engagement, transport and conditions of service for Railway Construction reports

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\* No. 3. † No. 9. ‡ No. 5.

that up to the 9th of March 442 compulsory and 108 voluntary labourers have been despatched to the Uasin Gishu Railway. A further 120 were awaiting medical examination. He expresses the opinion that compulsion has caused large numbers of natives to seek private employment.

I have, etc.,

E. B. DENHAM,

Acting Governor.

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ENCLOSURE 1 IN No. 11.

LABOUR AT KISUMU PIER AND DOCKS.

1. Labour is needed at the Kisumu pier for loading and off-loading steamers, lighters and wagons, and for stacking imports and exports.

2. Owing to the recent large increase in trade, more labour than formerly is required. This has not been forthcoming in sufficient quantity, and there is considerable congestion on the pier in consequence. A large quantity of cargo is stacked in the open with no protection from the weather.

3. The Marine Superintendent informs me that there are at present 287 dock labourers on his books, and that 600 are needed to clear the present congestion and to deal adequately with the existing and future estimated traffic.

4. The difficulty is being met to some extent by the employment of convict labour, and an average of about 230 prisoners are now employed at the Docks. 122 prisoners were transferred to the Kisumu Gaol about a month ago to assist in the work.

I understand from the Marine Superintendent that such labour is by no means equal in efficiency to the voluntary local labour, and he would much prefer to have a full complement of the latter and dispense with the former.

The combined voluntary and convict labour is not at present sufficient for requirements.

The convicts are not generally of good enough physique for the work required, and there is some sickness among them. Natives from the Highlands, such as Kikuyu, Nandi, Kisii, etc., of whom there are a number with the prisoners drafted from Nairobi, do not thrive under the climatic conditions of Kisumu and should not be employed. Four have been returned to Nairobi as physically unfit for the work.

I would, therefore, advocate the withdrawal of the convict labour from work at the Docks as soon as it is possible to obtain the requisite number of volunteers.

5. As regards the voluntary labour, I would mention in the first place that conditions at Kisumu are in no way analogous to those obtaining at Mombasa. At the latter port a working class has come into existence, and, I understand, sufficient casual labour for the

loading and off-loading of ships is procurable at a few hours' notice. At Kisumu no such labour is available, and other arrangements are necessary.

6. The labour at the Kisumu Docks is not, in my opinion, very well organised. Of the 287 stevedores on the books on the 6th and 7th February, 217 worked on the former day and 214 on the latter, and it appears that something like 20 per cent. of the available labour is habitually absent. This is explained by the fact that the men are so often required to work overtime that they need a day's rest.

7. On examination of some of the foremen labourers, the question of overtime was found to be a burning one. It was stated that overtime was frequently compulsory, and, although payment was made for it in excess of the ordinary rates, it was not generally popular. The Marine Superintendent and the Pier Master emphasised the necessity for it by reason of the shortage of labour and the impossibility of working in regular shifts. On discussing the matter, however, it did not appear that overtime compensated for the loss entailed by so many daily absentees, and the native Foreman stated that if compulsory overtime was abolished there would be few, if any, absentees.

In order to remove the grievance felt by the natives in regard to compulsory overtime, the Marine Superintendent is arranging to start from the 9th February a system of work by shifts, as under :—

One shift to work from 7 a.m. till 4 p.m. and another from 9 a.m. till 6 p.m., both shifts having an hour off in the middle of the day, and consequently working 8 hours a day.

The natives stated this would be acceptable to them, and that they would be quite satisfied if compulsory overtime was put an end to and they could do it if and when they pleased.

8. In addition to the question of overtime, other grievances put forward by the native foremen were :—

- (a) The hard work entailed by the handling of heavy cases, bales, etc.
- (b) Inadequate pay for overtime.
- (c) That the rate of pay of the older hands had not been increased proportionately with the general rise in wages.
- (d) The difficulty of procuring an adequate supply of wood fuel for domestic purposes.
- (e) The inadequacy of the water supply at the Stevedores' lines.

With regard to (a), it was not possible to find any solution other than the abolition of compulsory overtime.

With regard to (b) and (c), the Marine Superintendent is considering the matter, and will advocate such increase in wages and rates of pay as appear to be fair and reasonable.

As regards (d) and (e), the Marine Superintendent is taking immediate steps for a fuel ration to be issued, and for the provision of a more adequate water supply.

9. The rate of wages now offered on engagement to Dock Labourers is as follows :—

Shs. 18/- a calendar month, with a rise of Shs. 2/- a month after six months, and a further rise of Shs. 2/- after each succeeding six months.

Rations consist of :—

- 2 lb. of posho a day.
- 2 ozs. of groundnuts a day.
- $\frac{1}{4}$  oz. salt a day.
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  lb. meat a week.
- 1 lb. potatoes a week.

A blanket is issued to every man on joining, and another if they sign on for an additional six months.

Housing conditions are satisfactory.

These rates are higher and conditions generally more attractive than those offered for any other class of labour at Kisumu. The Public Works Department obtains what labour is required at Shs. 10/- a month and 2 lb. of mealie meal as a daily ration. The rates paid in the town and on farms in the Province do not exceed Shs. 12/- or Shs. 14/- a month, except for certain classes of work.

I consider the rates offered on engagement are sufficiently high.

10. I think the reasons why labour for Dock work has not been forthcoming in sufficient quantity are :—

- (a) Dissatisfaction with the conditions referred to in paras. 7 and 8 of this report.
- (b) The general shortage of labour due to increased demand and general prosperity in the Native Reserves.
- (c) The fact that the natives are beginning to realise their value in the labour market, and will only work where the conditions are sufficiently attractive.
- (d) No proper system of recruiting labour.
- (e) No Labour Officer is available for the supervision of employees, and insufficient attention is paid to their interests and welfare.
- (f) None of the labour is contracted.
- (g) Natives from this province applying for Dock work are sent by the Railway Authorities to Ports in Uganda-Jinja and Namasagali.

As regards (a), the grievances are being remedied.

As regards (d), one or two of the older employees are proceeding to the areas where the labour is usually obtained to explain the conditions and act as recruiters. A satisfied labourer is the best possible recruiting agent.

In the past, the practice has been to approach Administrative Officers in the matter of labour requirements, and although they have done everything possible by explaining the conditions and the urgency of the work, sufficient numbers have not been obtained by this means,

With regard to (e), I consider there should be a competent European Labour Officer in charge of the natives employed at the Pier. I understand the Marine Superintendent is considering the question of engaging a man for this purpose.

With regard to (f), the Railway Authorities have little hold on the natives owing to there being no contract with them. It is recommended that all labour employed should be put on a proper form of contract.

As regards (g), it appears that Kavirondo labour is readily forthcoming for work at the Ports of Jinja and Namasagali in Uganda, and the Railway issues passes or tickets for the natives to proceed there. The Kavirondo appear to find work at these Ports more congenial than at Kisumu, but in view of the prevailing shortage in Kenya, especially for railway and stevedore work, I am of opinion that Kavirondo labour should not be employed in Uganda.

11. Briefly my recommendations are:—

- (a) Abolition of convict labour for work as stevedores, as it is not an economic proposition and has other drawbacks. More suitable work is available for the convicts on roads, etc.
- (b) Better organisation of available supply by working in shifts, putting the labour on contract and taking steps to ensure that the men do not absent themselves from work without sufficient reason.
- (c) The abolition of any system of *compulsory* overtime.
- (d) Consideration of the rates of pay of the older employees, and the provision of an adequate fuel and water supply.
- (e) The employment of a suitable European as Labour Officer.
- (f) A better system of recruiting labour through some of the present employees.
- (g) That no encouragement or facilities be offered to Kenya labour to work at the Uganda ports.

12. If the above recommendations are carried out and adhered to, I see no reason why all the labour required should not be forthcoming. The Magadi Soda Company had much the same difficulties to contend with a few years ago, but by better organisation and improved conditions were able to obtain all the labour required.

R. W. HEMSTED,  
Senior Commissioner, Nyanza.

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ENCLOSURE 2 IN No. 11.

Uganda Railway, General Manager's Office, Nairobi,  
23rd February, 1925.

No. E.1052/III.

*The Hon. the Acting Colonial Secretary, Colony and Protectorate of  
Kenya, Nairobi.*

Re LABOUR FOR UGANDA RAILWAY.

Ref. Your No. S/A.20321/43/37 dated 19th February, 1925.

I note the contents of the enclosure to your communication under reference and of the report made by the Senior Commissioner of the Nyanza Province.

2. I have throughout taken the line that I am prepared to agree to anything reasonable considered necessary by the Senior Commissioner of the Nyanza Province in connection with labour conditions on the piers there, and I have given instructions for the recommendations now made by him to be given effect to as far as practicable.

3. I would point out, however, though not with the object of provoking discussion, that the overtime complained of was only resorted to because it was inevitable; that if a sufficiency of natives is forthcoming work in shifts will succeed, but if there is a shortage of natives shifts cannot succeed and overtime may be the only way of keeping the traffic moving; that we already have at Kisumu a Marine Superintendent with other European officers, a European Pier Superintendent, a European Assistant Pier Master, and others, but I have no objection to an additional European if that will assist; that our wages are admitted to be higher than paid by anyone else; that our housing is as good as any other housing and is being steadily improved; and that in almost every other respect we are constantly studying the position in regard to the treatment of native labour.

4. As stated above I have no wish, in the present delicate state of affairs in regard to native labour, to provoke unnecessary discussion, but the Government must realise that if, and whenever, natives show reluctance to come out to work, conditions are improved the natives will soon discover that it pays them not to come out too quickly, and the consequence may not be precisely what either the Government or the public of the country would like to see.

5. I would suggest that, so far as Kisumu is concerned, the papers be filed until we see the effect of the action we are taking.

C. L. N. FELLING,

General Manager, Uganda Railway.

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No 12.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Received 11th May, 1925.)

Government House, Nairobi, Kenya, 17th April, 1925.

SIR,

In accordance with the last paragraph of your telegram of the 20th February\* on the subject of labour for Railway Construction, I have the honour to submit a return of labour compulsorily recruited by Government during March and of such figures as are available of voluntary labour during that month, from which it will be observed that the total number of compulsory labour during March amounted to 1,561 on the Uasin Gishu Railway and 59 on the Thika-Nyeri Extension.

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\* No. 8.

2. I attach also a report on the medical condition of the labour employed on the Uasin Gishu Railway and will furnish similar reports as regards the Thika Extension Railway in due course. The rejection of medically unfit natives took place at the Local District Headquarters and none of these left the Reserve.

3. With regard to the rate of pay the rate on the Uasin Gishu Railway for voluntary labour at the time of the first negotiations was Shs. 16/- per month. The pay for compulsory labour was accordingly fixed at Shs. 14/-. The labour market has since become somewhat easier, and the rate for voluntary labour has fluctuated between Shs. 16/- and 12/-. This reduction will be reflected in the rate of pay of labour compelled in future.

4. I am addressing a separate despatch to you on general labour conditions.

I have, etc.,  
E. B. DENHAM,  
Acting Governor.

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ENCLOSURE 1 IN NO. 12.  
RETURN OF LABOUR.  
*Uasin Gishu Railway.*

Month of March, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—1,561.  
Standard rate of pay—14s. per month.  
Medical condition—Good generally. Rejects amount to about 25 per cent.  
Death-rate per 1,000—.640 (one in 1,561).

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—5,861.  
Standard rate of pay—14s. per month.  
Medical condition—Good. All reports satisfactory.  
Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

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RETURN OF LABOUR.  
*Solai Branch.*

Month of March, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—Nil.  
Standard rate of pay—.....  
Medical condition—.....  
Death-rate per 1,000—.....

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—1,139.  
Standard rate of pay—Shs. 14s. per month.  
Medical condition—Good. To be inspected in April.  
Death-rate per 1,000—No figures to hand.

RETURN OF LABOUR.  
Thika-Nyeri Railway.

Month of March, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—59.  
Standard rate of pay—Shs. 12s. per month.  
Medical condition—Good. No detailed labour report as yet.  
Death-rate per 1,000—.....

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—1,483.  
Standard rate of pay—Shs. 14s. per month.  
Medical condition—Good.  
Death-rate per 1,000—No figures to hand.

RETURN OF LABOUR.  
Kitale Branch.

Month of March, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—Nil.  
Standard rate of pay—.....  
Medical condition—.....  
Death-rate per 1,000—.....

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—2,616.  
Standard rate of pay—Shs. 14s. per month.  
Medical condition—Good. Labour Inspector at present on duty.  
Death-rate per 1,000—No figures to hand.

RETURN OF LABOUR.  
Uganda Extension, Uasin Gishu Railway.

Month of March, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—Nil.  
Standard rate of pay—.....  
Medical condition—.....  
Death-rate per 1,000—.....

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—No figures available.  
Standard rate of pay—No figures available.  
Medical condition—No figures available.  
Death-rate per 1,000—No figures available.

## ENCLOSURE 2 IN NO. 12.

Native Affairs Department,  
Labour Section,  
P.O. Box 322,  
Nairobi.  
15th April, 1925.

*The Hon. Colonial Secretary through The Hon. Chief Native  
Commissioner, Nairobi.*

MEDICAL CONDITION OF VOLUNTARY AND COMPULSORY LABOUR  
RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

Ref. your S/A. 20321/43/72 of 25.2.1925 and further to my Labour  
Return for March.

Colonial Office decode dated 20/2.

The Kikuyu compulsory labour on the Thika-Nyeri Railway is just commencing, there being 59 forced labourers only at work at the end of March. Arrangements have not yet been made for inspection, but during this month a Labour Inspector will visit this line and report.

2. The Akamba compulsory labour on the main line (Uganda Railway) (relaying and ballasting) has not yet commenced work, but when this commences a Labour Inspector will visit and report.

3. The compulsory labour from Kisii and Nyanza ordered to the Uasin Gishu Railway is working at present, the number for March being 1,561. The medical condition of both compulsory and voluntary labour is satisfactory. There were 55 admissions into hospital of "compulsory" and 48 of "voluntary" recruits during March. They appeared to find the sudden change to high altitudes on the line rather trying to start with, and, owing to the prevailing climatic conditions, cold and wet weather, a fair number suffered from bronchitis, influenza and malaria; otherwise, the majority of the new labour seemed unaffected from a health point of view.

One death occurred amongst the compulsory labour in Eldoret camp, from pneumonia, evidently contracted on the journey from Kisii. This native was found dead two days after arrival, and had not in the meantime reported sick. The tribes that suffered most from sickness during the month were chiefly Kamasia, Elgeye, Suk and Marakwet recruits.

4. The above information is culled from a report by the Medical Officer-in-Charge, Uasin Gishu Railway.

5. In future, this monthly report will be compiled from reports received from the departmental Labour Inspectors.

ERNEST MCINNES,  
Labour Inspector.

The Hon. Colonial Secretary.  
Forwarded.

F. HILLIER,  
for Chief Native Commissioner.

No. 13.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Received 20th May, 1925.)

[Answered by No. 15.]

20TH MAY. Your telegram of 14th January\* and your telegram of 7th April†, am I correct in assuming that this Government is authorized by your first telegram under reference to recruit under Ordinance No. 26 of 1922 without further reference to you up to total of 4,000 labourers at any one time for work in regard to which you have approved the compulsory recruitment? Anticipate Thika-Nyeri construction will continue until the end of the year. No further compulsory recruitment necessary for line to Turbo.

No. 14.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Received 23rd May, 1925.)

Government House, Nairobi, Kenya, 17th April, 1925.

SIR,

With reference to recent correspondence ending with your despatch of the 6th February‡ on the subject of compulsory labour for Railway Construction works, I have the honour to inform you that at the end of March 1,620 natives, compulsorily recruited, were at work on the Uasin Gishu and Thika-Nyeri Railways. Reports, as desired in your telegram of the 20th February,\*\* have been sent under cover of my despatch of to-day's date.†† The latest returns show a total of 11,099 voluntary labourers on the 4 lines under construction.

2. The labour compulsorily recruited for the Uasin Gishu Railway consisted of 1,178 natives from Nyanza and 383 from Kerio Province. The recruitment of the former was undertaken by Mr. S. F. Deck, 1st Grade Administrative Officer, in the South Kavirondo District, and the necessary arrangements for medical inspection were carried out at Kisii Station. Mr. Deck reports that the nature of the work for which labour has been compulsorily recruited is not unpopular with the natives, but it is certainly advisable that as full notice as possible should be given of labour requirements. I have informed the Departments concerned accordingly, though I trust that compulsion will cease to be necessary.

3. It is difficult to estimate the precise effect of compulsory recruitment on the supply of voluntary labour, but it is noteworthy that during the three months preceding compulsory recruitment in this particular district 548 natives were employed on long term con-

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\* No. 3. † No. 10. ‡ No. 6. \*\* No. 8. †† No. 12.

tracts as compared with 707 during February and March. So far therefore as the number of natives volunteering for long term contracts can be taken as an index of the total amount of volunteer labour, it appears that voluntary labour has increased since compulsory recruitment began.

4. The labour recruited in the Kerio Province was obtained through the local Administrative Officers, and that required from Kikuyu and Ukamba Provinces is coming in during the present month satisfactorily. The total number compelled at any one time will be considerably within the maximum of 4,000 imposed in paragraph 4 of your despatch under reference.\*

5. An immediate sufficiency of labour for Railway Construction has thus been obtained by the application of the Native Authority Amendment Ordinance, 1922. There may, however, be some difficulty in obtaining in future any considerable number of able-bodied Kikuyu and Kavirondo who have not worked for a period of three months during the preceding twelve: those who have so worked are not liable to be conscribed. It will therefore probably be necessary to go further afield and to recruit labour from tribes which have not been in the habit of furnishing labour for this class of work, *e.g.*, Akamba, from whom you have recently approved the recruitment of 700.

6. You will now have received a copy of the Interim Report† on Labour of the Economic and Finance Committee, which will resume its enquiries at an early date. Generally, the labour situation is now considerably easier than it was during the latter part of 1924 and early in 1925. The period of the maximum demand has passed and the normal demand is least between January and July—see paragraph 8 of the Interim Labour Report: and it is not anticipated that there will be any serious shortage for the requirements of farms and plantations before the latter part of the year, when the demand is greatest. By that time it is hoped that the various remedies suggested in the Interim Labour Report will have been put into successful practice by employers.

7. The staff of Labour Inspectors has been increased by the appointment of three local candidates, who will be primarily employed in the inspection of labour conditions in the Construction Camps. Their reports will be forwarded with the future monthly returns of voluntary and compulsory labour employed on Railway Construction work.

I have, etc.,  
E. B. DENHAM,  
Acting Governor.

## No. 15.

*The Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officer Administering the Government of Kenya.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Sent 3rd June, 1925.)

[Answered by Nos. 17 and 19.]

3RD JUNE. Your telegram 20th May.\* Approval for recruitment of compulsory labour in my telegram 20th February† was definitely given in view of urgent importance of completing through connection to Uganda. I have never contemplated that any such number as 4,000 labourers should be compelled for other lines. I see wide distinction between use of compulsion on account of pressure of time for Uganda section and its use for Thika-Nyeri extension, which could only be justified on further information showing its absolute necessity. I have no evidence at present of such necessity.

## No. 16.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Received 9th June, 1925.)

Government House, Nairobi, Kenya, 14th May, 1925.

SIR,

With reference to my despatch of 17th April‡ and in accordance with the last paragraph of your telegram of the 20th February† on the subject of labour for Railway Construction, I have the honour to submit returns showing the compulsorily recruited and voluntary labour employed during the month of April, from which it will be observed that the total number of compelled labourers now amounts to 1,355 on the Uasin Gishu Railway and 1,138 on the Thika-Nyeri Extension.

2. The returns include remarks on the general medical condition of the labour and a special report on the outbreak of influenza on the Uasin Gishu Branch is also attached. It will be observed that there is a discrepancy of two deaths between Dr. Wilson's figures and those given in the return.

This is explained by the fact that the medical report only deals with deaths from influenza which occurred in hospital, while the return includes one death from influenza which occurred in a camp and one death which took place following the amputation of a leg. The labour return refers to deaths among the compulsorily recruited labour, while the medical report includes one death among the voluntary labourers.

I have, etc.,

E. B. DENHAM,  
Acting Governor.

## ENCLOSURES IN NO. 16.

## RETURN OF LABOUR.

*Uasin Gishu Railway.*

Month of April, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—1,355.

Standard rate of pay—14s. per month.

Medical condition—Poor. Medical report enclosed.

Death-rate per 1,000—10.33 per month.

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—2,635.

Standard rate of pay—12s. to 16s. per month.

Medical condition—Good.

Death-rate per 1,000—.374 per month.

*Remarks.*

Epidemic of pneumonic influenza attacked the compulsory labour, resulting in 14 deaths. Some 30 are now convalescing in hospital.

*Outbreak of Influenza among Native Labour employed on the Uasin Gishu Railway Construction during April, 1925.*

The Medical Officer-in-charge of the Uasin Gishu Railway Construction reports that during April 90 cases of influenza were admitted to hospital at Eldoret; of these 13 proved fatal.

The outstanding feature of the fatal cases, as shown by post-mortem examination, was a purulent pericarditis; this was present in every case examined. There was also broncho-pneumonia.

The fatal cases occurred, according to tribes, as under:—

*Compulsory Labour—*

South Kavirondo	...	...	...	...	*8
Suk	...	...	...	...	4
Elgeyo	...	...	...	...	1

*Voluntary Labour—*

Kitosh	...	...	...	...	1
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The fatal cases (8) among South Kavirondo natives all occurred in one batch of recruits which only left Kisii at the end of March.

Towards the end of the month all recruits from Elgeyo, Kamasia, and Suk were repatriated.

(Signed) C. J. WILSON,  
for Principal Medical Officer.  
May 9th, 1925.

\* The records of the Inspector of Labour show 10 deaths among the South Kavirondo (instead of 8), making a total of 15 among this compulsory labour.

(Signed) A. DE V. WADE,  
for Chief Native Commissioner.  
9/5/25.

## RETURN OF LABOUR.

*Thika-Nyeri Railway.*

Month of April, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—1,138.  
 Standard rate of pay—Shs. 14s. per month.  
 Medical condition—Excellent.  
 Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—1,422.  
 Standard rate of pay—Shs. 16s. per month.  
 Medical condition—Excellent.  
 Death-rate per 1,000—.70 per month.

*Remarks.*

One death from pneumonia occurred. General conditions are good and a rigorous inspection is being carried out.

## RETURN OF LABOUR.

*Kitale Branch.*

Month of April, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—Nil.  
 Standard rate of pay—.....  
 Medical condition—.....  
 Death-rate per 1,000—.....

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—3,000.  
 Standard rate of pay—Shs. 14s. to 16s. per month.  
 Medical condition—Excellent.  
 Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Remarks.*

No serious cases of illness. General conditions excellent.

## RETURN OF LABOUR.

*Solai Branch.*

Month of April, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—Nil.  
 Standard rate of pay—.....  
 Medical condition—.....  
 Death-rate per 1,000—.....

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—1,168.  
 Standard rate of pay—14s. per month.  
 Medical condition—Excellent.  
 Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Remarks.*

Sick in hospital numbered 2.80 per cent., owing to prevalence of worms. This is seasonal and not epidemic. No serious illnesses.

## RETURN OF LABOUR.

*Uganda Extension, Uasin Gishu Railway.*

Month of April, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—Nil.  
 Standard rate of pay—.....  
 Medical condition—.....  
 Death-rate per 1,000—.....

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—882.  
 Standard rate of pay—Shs. 16s. per month.  
 Medical condition—Excellent.  
 Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Remarks.*

Only a few sick with minor ailments. Hospital accommodation is rather limited, but efforts are being made to improve this. Construction is just beginning on a 33-mile Section.

## RETURN OF LABOUR.

*Main Line Uganda Railway—Relaying and Ballasting.*

Month of April, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—Nil.  
 Standard rate of pay—.....  
 Medical condition—.....  
 Death-rate per 1,000—.....

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—600.  
 Standard rate of pay—20s. per month (Contractor's Labour).  
 Medical condition—Fair, owing to district being more or less unhealthy.  
 Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Remarks.*

Fever and ulcerated legs are almost unavoidable in this district, in spite of good rations. The daily sick report, mainly with these two complaints, is about 15 per cent. Constant efforts are being made to ameliorate conditions of work. A rigorous monthly inspection is being carried out.

## No. 17.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

[TELEGRAM.] -

(Received 11th June, 1925.)

10TH JUNE. Your telegram of 3rd June.\* Compulsory Labour. My telegram of 20th May† was sent with the object of ascertaining whether your authority was required in case of each successive batch of compulsory labour ordered out for approved work or whether proceedings for further recruitment beyond the first batch could be taken under the general authority of your telegram of 14th January,‡ which included authority for compulsory recruitment for Thika-Nyeri extension, as well as for Uasin Gishu Railway, *vide* also Kenya despatch of 15th December last.\*\* It was never the intention that the limit of 4,000 should be reached for Thika-Nyeri and relaying work only. At the moment there is no necessity to compel labour for railway construction, as voluntary labour is coming out satisfactorily. Compulsory labour at work on 31st May was 1,333 on Thika-Nyeri extension, 134 on Uasin Gishu line, and 120 on main line relaying work. Despatch follows.

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 No. 18.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Received 6th July, 1925.)

Government House, Nairobi, Kenya, 11th June, 1925.

SIR,

With reference to my despatch of the 14th May†† and in accordance with the last paragraph of your telegram of the 20th February‡‡, on the subject of labour for Railway Construction, I have the honour to submit returns showing the compulsorily recruited and voluntary labour employed during the month of May, from which it will be observed that the total number of compelled labourers amounted on the 31st May, 1925, to 134 on the Uasin Gishu Railway, 1,333 on the Thika-Nyeri Railway, and 120 on the re-laying of the main line.

2. I am addressing you in a separate despatch on the whole subject of compulsory and voluntary labour in continuation of my telegram of 10th June.§

I have, etc.,  
G. A. S. NORTHCOTE,  
for Acting Governor.

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\* No. 15. † No. 13. ‡ No. 3. \*\* No. 1. †† No. 16. ‡‡ No. 8 § No. 17.

## ENCLOSURES IN NO. 18.

## RETURN OF LABOUR.

*Uasin Gishu Railway.*

Month of May, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—134.

Standard rate of pay—14s. per month.

Medical condition—Good. A few cases of influenza only.

Death-rate per 1,000—7.46 per month.

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—2,207.

Standard rate of pay—16s. per month.

Medical condition—Good. Pulmonary complaints occurring.

Death-rate per 1,000—.90 per month.

*Remarks.*

Three deaths occurred owing to the relapse in hospital of some of the patients convalescing after the influenza epidemic mentioned in my report for April. Influenza and pneumonia are still giving some trouble, but the epidemic is now well in hand.

Compulsory labour is being repatriated. This line is completed and further supplies of labour will not be required.

*Thika-Nyeri Railway Construction.*

Month of May, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—1,333.

Standard rate of pay—14s. per month.

Medical condition—Fair. Fever and pneumonia are prevalent.

Sick report is about 3.90 per cent. daily.

Death-rate per 1,000—2.25 per month.

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—1,488.

Standard rate of pay—16s. per month.

Medical condition—Fair, owing to fever, etc.

Death rate per 1,000—1.34 per month.

*Remarks.*

Hospital accommodation is as yet limited. The prevalence of fever and, as a consequence, pneumonia, is to be expected. A rigorous inspection is being carried out, and utmost efforts are being made to obviate avoidable illness.

*Uganda Extension—Uasin Gishu Railway.*

Month of May, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Nil.

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—1,980.

Standard rate of pay—16s. per month.

Medical condition—Good, some fever cases, but nothing serious.

Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Remarks.*

These camps are shortly to be moved into unhealthy areas where fever may be expected.

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*Main Line Uganda Railway—Relaying, Ballasting and Regrading.*

Month of May, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Number working—120.

Standard rate of pay—18s. per month.

Medical condition—Excellent. Men of very fine physique.

Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—811.

Standard rate of pay—20s. per month.

Medical condition—Good. Daily sick report, 7.15 per cent.

Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Remarks.*

Camps are moving out of unhealthy areas, the daily sick report is mainly concerned with ulcers and sores. One serious accident, fractured leg.

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*Solai Branch Construction.*

Month of May, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Nil.

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—1,137.

Standard rate of pay—15s. per month.

Medical condition—Fair.

Death-rate per 1,000—1.76 per month.

*Remarks.*

A great percentage of diarrhœa owing to bad water in this district. Attempts are being made to improve this as far as possible.

*Kitale Branch Construction.*

Month of May, 1925.

*Compulsory Labour.*

Nil.

*Voluntary Labour.*

Number working—2,065.

Standard rate of pay—14s. per month.

Medical condition—Excellent.

Death-rate per 1,000—Nil per month.

*Remarks.*

The daily sick report amounts to 1.45 per cent., mostly with fever and ulcers. The district is healthy, and this sick rate is very reasonable.

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 No. 19.

*The Officer Administering the Government of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Received 6th July, 1925.)

[Answered by No. 20.]

Government House, Nairobi, Kenya, 11th June, 1925.

SIR,

I have the honour to refer to my telegram of 10th June\* and to address you further on the whole position as regards compulsory and voluntary labour for railway works.

2. I have forwarded under Kenya despatch of the 11th June† the returns showing the numbers in each category employed on the 31st May, and, as I informed you in the telegram under reference, owing to the improvement in the voluntary labour supply no steps are being taken at the moment to replace these compelled labourers. It is, however, quite impossible to forecast how long this desirable state of affairs will continue.

3. It was not perhaps quite clear from the terms of my telegram of May 20th‡ that the point on which doubt was experienced was whether your telegrams of January 14th§ and April 7th\*\* were intended to authorize the recruitment of successive batches of com-

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\* No. 17. † No. 18. ‡ No. 13. § No. 3 \*\* No. 10.

pelled labourers without further reference to you, provided that no labour was engaged for works other than those specifically approved by you, and that the total of 4,000 compelled labourers was not exceeded at any one time. The views expressed in your telegram of June 3rd|| are noted, but guidance is still required on this point.

As I have stated above, no compulsory recruitment is necessary at the present time and I take this opportunity of suggesting that the authority given by you in your telegram of January 14th\* for compelled labour on the Thika-Nyeri Railway and in your telegram of April 7th† regarding the relaying be interpreted as allowing such recruitment for those works without further reference up to maxima of 1,500 and 300 respectively.

4. I have little beyond the above to add to my despatch of April 17th‡ except that (i) I have now received a reply to my enquiry addressed to the Governor of Uganda in accordance with the instructions contained in your telegram of January 14th\* on the subject of the recruitment of Bagishu labour for the Turbo-Tororo Section. This reply, while favourable in that the Uganda Government raise no objection to labour recruiters operating in the Bagishu country, is not particularly encouraging in that the Governor is of the opinion that their efforts will not be attended with much success. From the reports received on the labour situation for this section of the line, it is doubtful however whether it will be necessary to recruit labour in Uganda. I am taking steps to make known the conditions under which recruiting among the Bagishu is allowed in case of the necessity arising; and (ii) labour has been compulsorily recruited from South Kavirondo District, Kerio Province, Kikuyu Province and Ukamba Province, and the opinions of the District Officers concerned have been sought on the effect of compulsion on the flow of voluntary labour; from their reports I think there can be no doubt that in the main the result of compulsion has been that a certain number of natives have sought employment voluntarily. In Kerio Province the result is reported to have been the reverse, while in Ukamba the effect has been nil.

I have recently returned from tours throughout the Kavirondo and Kitui Districts. I held several meetings in each district and nowhere was any complaint or even reference made to the compulsory calling out of labour for the railway.

The Administrative Officers informed me that there was no feeling on the subject of any kind, and that the natives generally liked the work and went out without difficulty.

5. I will keep you informed from time to time of any further information which may be received on this subject.

I have, etc.,

E. B. DENHAM,  
Acting Governor.

*The Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officer Administering  
the Government of Kenya.*

[TELEGRAM.]

(Sent 9th July, 1925.)

Your despatch, 11th June\*, paragraph 3, in view of fact that there is no present need for compulsion, and of fact that returns seem to indicate that labour obtained by compulsion is not generally of a high physical standard, I should prefer to wait until the existence of an emergency can again be established before sanctioning further compulsory recruitment.

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COLONIAL OFFICE NOTE.

*Uasin Gishu and Thika-Nyeri Railways.*

The completion of the Uasin Gishu Railway is essential for making a start at the Kenya end of the extension into Uganda, which was approved by Parliament in 1924, with a view to stimulating cotton cultivation, mainly in Uganda.

The Thika-Nyeri Railway is at present approaching completion as far as the Tana River, which is within the main part of the Kikuyu Reserve. The further extension to Nyeri, while it will open up the European settlement area of Western Kenya, will also make possible the development of the native reserves on the Southern slopes of Mount Kenya. It is incorrect to regard this railway as being purely in European interests.

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\* No. 19.

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