
*
* REPORT OF SIR SAMUAL *
* WILSON, *
* ON HIS *
* VISIT TO EAST *
* AFRICA, *
* 1929. *



REPORT OF

Sir Samuel Wilson, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.B.E.,

ON HIS

Visit to East Africa, 1929

*Presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies
to Parliament by Command of His Majesty,
September, 1929.*

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*NOTE BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE
COLONIES.*

This report is issued at the earliest possible date for the information of Parliament.

The late Secretary of State for the Colonies explained to Parliament in March last that it would be Sir Samuel Wilson's task to ascertain on what lines a scheme for closer union in East Africa would be administratively workable and otherwise acceptable and to report the outcome of his consultations. At the same time Mr. Amery made it clear that Sir Samuel Wilson could not commit His Majesty's Government or Parliament in any way and that any proposals for action arising out of his Report would be submitted to Parliament before any final decision was taken. On the 10th of July the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies reaffirmed in the House of Commons on behalf of His Majesty's Government the undertaking given by Mr. Amery.

Publication of Sir Samuel Wilson's Report is not therefore to be taken as in any way committing His Majesty's Government to acceptance of the proposals or to agreement with the views expressed therein. The matter is engaging the consideration of His Majesty's Government who will, in due course, submit their conclusions to Parliament before any final decision is reached.

PASSFIELD.

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APPENDIX I.

(a)

Telegram from the Acting Governor of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 30th January, 1929.

Have been requested send you following with hope that publication England be deferred pending receipt of news of publication here. (Message begins.) Conference of Elected Members and Convention Executive now sitting expresses profound disappointment recommendations main Report Commission, astonishment at certain of their assumptions more particularly their complete ruling out of responsible Government in future and premature anticipation native participation in Central Government and surprise at their interpretation of their terms of reference and their entire failure to suggest practical scheme likely to find general acceptance. Conference recognising the grave Imperial issues involved reluctant to shut the door to further negotiations but feels that federation prospects with Kenya's consent have been seriously jeopardised and no progress possible unless Imperial Government repudiates main Report's fundamental conception regarding self-government in future and reasserts its attitude as definitely stated in that portion Churchill's speech 1922 when Secretary of State for Colonies that "he did not contemplate any system which would prevent British East Africa from becoming characteristically and distinctively a British Colony looking forward to the fruition of full self-government" and implied in White Papers 1923 and 1927 and on many other occasions which has been responsible for adoption by large numbers colonists of Kenya as permanent home and also repudiates the unsustainable assumption that native intellectual development can be so rapid that his direct participation in Central Government will be practicable within a measurable period of time and that our political institutions should be moulded accordingly from outset. The acceptance of the above principles is essential to any further useful negotiations. Given this basis discussions in Africa on the spot would appear to give the only chance of policy capable of acceptance. In view of the fact that Kenya Elected Members are pledged to a general election being held before any change takes place in the Constitution and that the Secretary of State has undertaken that any change must be based on consent countries concerned Conference considers High Commissioners powers should not conflict with above and feel strongly appointment of Special Commissioner without powers execution more suitable preliminary step. Communal franchise formed essential part of settlement of 1923. Re-opening the question of a common roll which Commission itself admits is quite impracticable unless agreement by Europeans obtained must rearouse inter-racial feeling. Conference unconvinced that its essential interests can be effectually safeguarded other than by elected majority which must also be only reasonably stable repository for the controlling influence in legislature. Once official majority set aside any legislature based on nice balance of racial representation bound keep alive for ever racial antagonism and the subservency of state-manship to party politics. London Advisory Board considered constitutionally unsound as calculated to undermine authority of Governor-General and jeopardise relations between him and Secretary of State. Far from reassuring local opinion it is considered that it would largely stultify movement Central control from London to Africa. Kenya colonists have never questioned the present necessity of investing some central authority with powers for holding balance even racial matters but conference considers powers proposed for Governor-General in Report excessive and believes that this matter must be thoroughly investigated locally during period of preliminary step. In any case this must be so as powers of Central Authority so vaguely defined and various references Report so contradictory in effect that it is difficult to understand effect on powers three legislatures without further close consideration. To sum up Conference feels that the whole of the main Report is based on a bureaucratic conception and is definitely opposed to the theory of trusting our own people on the spot which is the essence of the spirit of the white paper 1927 that the tendency all through to overemphasise the native interests and to minimise those of the Europeans is bound to accentuate inter-racial feelings and to encourage

partisan anti-native policy amongst Europeans which up to date has been absent. In this connection the report unfairly withholds credit from local Government and colonists for having already initiated many schemes native development and welfare now advanced by Commission as if entirely new ideas. By banging door on any prospect of ultimate responsible Government the Report is sure to bring about more vigorous action on the part of the colonists to assert their point of view and ambitions. That to propound the theory that the advanced and civilised part of the inhabitants of the country must stand still till the backward races (whom the Report itself describes as twenty centuries behind the Europeans) have reached their standard is an impossible proposition which no virile and governing race could be expected to acquiesce in. Finally Conference repeats it would regard as a violation of the undertaking that any scheme would be based on general consent any partial application of Commission's recommendations until a Conference of official and unofficial representatives of all three Territories have met under chairmanship special commissioner and secured agreement. Delamere Chairman elected members; Harper Chairman Convention. (Message ends.)

BARTH.

(b)

Letter from the representatives of the Elected Members of the Kenya Legislative Council and of the Convention of Associations to Sir Samuel Wilson, dated 5th May, 1929.

THE MEMORIAL HALL,
NAIROBI,

5th May, 1929.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL SIR SAMUEL WILSON, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.
GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI.

Sir,

Further to our interview with you we have the honour to submit the following points we wish to emphasise:—

1. That the Commission's Report has created an atmosphere of suspicion in Kenya that makes it extremely difficult to secure impartial consideration of any scheme of co-ordination or federation.

2. That in consequence, liberal safeguards must be introduced into any scheme now proposed in order to dispel these suspicions.

3. That no scheme is likely to find general acceptance in Kenya unless accompanied by an unequivocal declaration by the Imperial Government that it recognises the scope for further white colonisation without native interests being jeopardised, and reaffirmation of the policy of complete freedom of development in the political sphere in accordance with British colonial traditions, and

4. Our conviction that Kenya has come to be regarded as a thorn in the side of the Imperial Government, solely because our political aspirations are misunderstood.

If a genuine effort were made by all parties to appreciate these aspirations and to recognise that we are not actuated by selfish or sectional anti-native motives but by a strong desire to play our part in building up a new province of the Empire on lines consistent with the complementary development of the native races, many of the problems artificially created by this false atmosphere would solve themselves with the passage of time. Kenya's ambition is to be an instrument of, not an obstruction to, Imperial policy.

We have, etc.,

(Signed) CONWAY HARVEY,

T. J. O'SHEA.

H. H. HARPER.

APPENDIX II.

Cablegram from President of Associated Chambers of Commerce of East Africa to Sir Samuel Wilson, dated 15th June, 1929.

As promised following resolutions unanimously passed present session Association Chambers Commerce Eastern Africa begins That this association reaffirms its desire for the earliest co-ordination of essential services in the three territories of Kenya Uganda and Tanganyika Territory under one departmental head for each service further that the following essential service viz. customs railways ports and communications including aerial communication defence central research law and civil procedure posts telegraphs and telephones should be immediately transferred to a central control (stop) Further that the central authority when established shall in collaboration with local governments consider what further services can profitably be co-ordinated or transferred (stop) That the preliminary stage visualised by the report is passed and there is no reason why the second stage which calls for the appointment of a central authority should not be entered into forthwith (stop) That these objects cannot be achieved unless the central authority is endowed with executive powers and considers that this can best be obtained by the establishment of a central council with legislative authority (stop) That the central control shall be vested in an individual of wide colonial experience and that his Council in addition to his official advisers shall be selected from the three Territories (stop) That Sir Samuel Wilson's attention be drawn to the necessity of securing in any revised legislative assembly for any of the Eastern African Territories that adequate representation of the commercial community must be secured.

PRESIDENT.

APPENDIX III.

Note showing approximately the financial aspect of proposed Scheme of Closer Union.

The Central Government will be financed by hypothecating a certain percentage of the total Customs revenue for Eastern Africa and the whole of the postal and telegraph revenue. The percentage of Customs revenue to be hypothecated will be such as, with the postal revenue, will be sufficient to cover the cost of administering the Customs services, the cost of defence, the cost of administering the posts and telegraphs, and the cost of research, and to allow a sum calculated at 2 per cent. of the total Customs revenue to cover the cost of the High Commissioner's establishment and Central Government and at the same time provide a small surplus to meet unforeseen circumstances and to allow of minor adjustments in the accounts between the Central Government and the different territories.

2. In addition, the Railways will pay towards the cost of the High Commissioner's establishment and Central Government a joint contribution of £10,000 per annum calculated as a percentage of the gross revenue of the two systems. The salary and expenses of the Railway Adviser or Director of Railways will be provided for in the same manner.

3. Accounts will be kept by the Central Organisation showing separately the amount of revenue contributed by each territory and the amount of expenditure on central services to be charged against that revenue according to given proportions. These proportions will be:—

Customs.—In the proportions determined by Customs revenue.

Defence.—According to the number of troops at the disposal of each territory.

Posts and Telegraphs.—Expenditure on postal and telegraph stations in each Territory will be charged against the territory concerned; expenditure on services common to all three territories will be charged in proportion to the postal revenue of the territory concerned. (This is the basis now in operation between Kenya and Uganda and no difficulties are foreseen in applying the same basis throughout East Africa).

Fundamental Research.—On the basis of existing contributions to the Amani Institute. Each new research institute brought under the control of the Central

Authority will be paid for in proportions to be determined and will be subject to the approval of the local legislatures.

Central Organisation.—In equal shares.

4. Estimates on these lines will be prepared each year and the excess of revenue shown as contributed by each territory over the expenditure charged against the territory in the accounts will appear as an item in the Revenue Estimates of each territory as "Repayments from the Central Authority."

5. The question of provision for Fundamental Research presents a difficulty because this service is not yet fully organised. It seems at this stage better to deal with facts as they exist than to take into account possible future extensions of research services: and it should be noted that for this reason the cost of the Amani Institute is the only item now taken into account.

6. In regard to *Buildings*, there is no suggestion that the Central Authority should be equipped with a separate Public Works Staff.

7. Maintenance and repair of all public buildings will be carried out under the direction of the Public Works Department of the territory in which the building is situated and at the expense of the territory concerned.

8. Rent will be paid to each local Government for any existing or new building belonging to or erected by that Government which is taken over by the High Commissioner's establishment and the Central Government. This rent will be calculated so as to take the cost of repairs into account.

9. In the case of any new buildings being required for the development or proper administration of the common services, such as Customs, Posts and Telegraphs or Defence, the responsibility for providing funds will rest primarily on the territory in which the building is to be erected except in such cases as the establishment of new military headquarters for the Northern group, or Amani, where responsibility would be divided between the territories concerned in proportions to be determined.

10. Extraordinary departmental expenditure will be dealt with on the following lines:—

Customs.—Such expenditure is unlikely to be large. It will be included in the amount shown in annual estimates as required for Customs Administration.

Defence.—The extra cost of any military operations will be divided between territories as agreed at the time.

Posts and Telegraphs.—Capital expenditure on new construction will be paid for by the territory concerned. This will entail a vote in the local Legislative Council before the work can be carried out.

11. The staffs of common services will be under the Head of the Department, and eventually of the High Commissioner, for purposes of discipline. Medical services will be rendered by the territory concerned and the regulations in force in the territory will normally apply, e.g., in the case of allowances of furniture and local leave privileges, which are not the same in all territories.

12. The financial effect of the proposals along these lines is worked out in the accompanying schedules.

13. It is anticipated that, apart from greater efficiency, the cost of administering the transferred services will eventually show a decrease. In the figures given it has been anticipated that savings will occur to the extent of:—

	£
Customs	5,000
Defence	*60,000
Posts and Telegraphs	5,000

No account has been taken of economies which may become possible in the Estimates of each territory as a result of the creation of a Central Authority. These might eventually be considerable.

14. On the figures given, i.e., the figures for the current year, 25 per cent. of the Customs Revenue for East Africa would have to be hypothecated to the Central Authority. Unless different percentages are to be hypothecated by each territory it is not possible under the proposed scheme to avoid repayments of a somewhat large amount in the case of Kenya. Practically the only new expenditure

* Approximately £10,000 of the savings effected on the cost of the Southern Group will be credited to Nyasaland.

will be the cost of the High Commissioner's establishment. In fact the net financial result for the current year of the adoption of the proposals would be approximately as follows:—

Kenya.—About the same.

Uganda.—About the same.

Tanganyika.—A net gain of about £25,000 per annum.

15. It will be observed that the Railway finances are not dealt with in this statement, as they will be kept quite separate from the other finances of the Central Authority.

SCHEDULE I.†

Skeleton Budget of Central Authority.

<i>Revenue.</i>		<i>Expenditure.</i>	
	£		£
25% of Customs Revenue in East- ern Africa.	507,000	Central Organisation ...	50,000*
Postal Revenue (Total for East- ern Africa).	315,000	Customs	81,000
Contributions from Railways...	10,000	Defence	274,000
		Posts and Telegraphs ...	266,000
		Research	10,000
		Repayments to:—	
		Kenya	130,666
		Uganda	10,667
		Tanganyika	9,667
			151,000
Total	£832,000	Total... ..	£832,000

* This figure includes reserve for unforeseen contingencies.

SCHEDULE II.†

Calculation of Repayment.

(a) *Calculations affecting revenue.*

	<i>Kenya.</i>	<i>Uganda.</i>	<i>Tanganyika.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
	£	£	£	£
25% of Customs Revenue	232,000	103,000	172,000	507,000
Postal Revenue	186,000	50,000	79,000	315,000
Total	£418,000	153,000	251,000	822,000

(b) *Allocation of expenditure.*

	<i>Kenya.</i>	<i>Uganda.</i>	<i>Tanganyika.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
	£	£	£	£
Central Organisation	13,334	13,333	13,333	40,000
Customs	37,000	16,000	28,000	81,000
Defence	108,000	63,000	103,000	274,000
Posts and Telegraphs	127,000	48,000	91,000	266,000
Research	2,000	2,000	6,000	10,000
Total	£287,334	142,333	241,333	671,000

(c) *Repayments due.*

	<i>Kenya.</i>	<i>Uganda.</i>	<i>Tanganyika.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
	£	£	£	£
Revenue credited	418,000	153,000	251,000	822,000
Expenditure allocated	287,334	142,333	241,333	671,000
Repayment due	£130,666	10,667	9,667	151,000

† Round figures have been taken, based on the Estimates for 1929 of Kenya and Uganda and the Estimates for 1929-80 of Tanganyika.

SCHEDULE III.*

Effect on Estimates of each Territory.

				Kenya.	Uganda.	Tanganyika.
				£	£	£
<i>Revenue.</i>						
Decrease in Customs Revenue	...	...	...	232,000	103,000	172,000
Decrease in Postal Revenue	...	...	...	183,000	50,000	79,000
Total Decrease in Revenue				418,000	153,000	251,000
New Item of Revenue :—						
Repayments from Central Authority	...	...	...	130,666	10,667	9,667
Net Decrease in Revenue				£287,334	142,333	241,333

Expenditure.

The following Heads and Items of Expenditure are deleted from the Territory's Estimates :—

				Kenya.	Uganda.	Tanganyika.
				£	£	£
Governors' Conference...	...	...	...	2,000	2,000	2,000
Customs...	...	...	...	31,000	17,000	38,000
Defence ...	...	...	...	123,000	73,000	128,000
Posts and Telegraphs ...	...	...	...	129,000	49,000	93,000
Research ...	...	...	...	2,000	2,000	6,000
				£287,000	143,000	267,000

The net result is therefore† :—

Kenya : About the same.

Uganda : About the same.

Tanganyika : A net gain of about £25,000 per annum.

APPENDIX IV.

QUESTION OF PUTTING PROPOSED SCHEME OF CLOSER UNION INTO OPERATION.

(a)

Note by the Governor of Tanganyika, dated 10th May, 1929.

The Government of Tanganyika, proceeding always from the standpoint of its obligations, as the Mandatory Power, to the natives under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, agrees generally with the principles enunciated by the Commission in their earnest endeavour that some settled policy to govern the relations between the native and the Immigrant Communities and the political development of the three northern territories should be laid down and adopted. It points out, however, as it pointed out to the Commission, that it is impossible to segregate the natives in Tanganyika by forming reserves. The Government is aware, however, that other views may be expressed on the general conclusions of the Commission and it considers that a highly authoritative Committee or Commission should be set up in England in order that those persons who are in opposition to the principles recommended by the Commission, or the manner indicated for safeguarding their due execution, should have an opportunity of stating their views publicly before such an authoritative body, of enunciating their own principles and of explaining definitely the manner in which, in their opinion, effect should be given to those principles. An earnest attempt should be made to put an end to the days of generalisation and consequent drift for lack of a policy. It considers that a greater measure of agreement than otherwise might be secured if this method was followed. It feels most strongly

* Round figures have been taken, based on the Estimates for 1929 of Kenya and Uganda and the Estimates for 1929-30 of Tanganyika.

† If the cost of Defence were to be excluded, the net result in each case would be :—Kenya, a loss of about £15,000; Uganda, a loss of about £10,000; and Tanganyika about the same as now.

the paramount importance of the issues, not only to East Africa but to the whole British Empire, and that the attempt to solve them should be made only after investigation in this public and independent manner. If, finally, His Majesty's Government accept the principles enunciated by the Closer Union Commission it agrees that a Chief Executive is advisable in order to co-ordinate the affairs of the three territories in accordance with approved policy. He should be a Governor or Governor-General in the ordinary sense of the term, created in the ordinary way by Letters Patent or Order in Council; he could not be a "delegate" of the Secretary of State. He should study on the spot the difficult problem of the "common services," with all the implications, financial and otherwise. It is a very difficult problem and requires deep study and full consultation with all the interests affected; it could not be settled in a few weeks or indeed in a month or two,

(Signed) DONALD CAMERON.

10th May, 1929.

(b)

Note by the Governor of Uganda, dated 4th June, 1929.

The Report of the Hilton Young Commission has not caused me to modify materially the views I expressed in the correspondence with Sir Edward Grigg, which took place before the issue of the Report, of which Sir Samuel Wilson has a copy.

The Hilton Young Report considers that the need for a common policy of and a common direction of Administrative Services is of minor importance compared with the need for a common policy in dealing with all matters affecting the present position and future development of the natives in their relation with the immigrant communities. While the truth of this proposition may be conceded it appears to me that whereas the former is a matter of practical politics to-day, the latter is not.

It is suggested that a High Commissioner who is to be appointed should spend from a year to eighteen months in formulating this native policy which is considered the chief need of the Territories and the chief justification for a Central Authority. I am inclined to think that after the proposed High Commissioner had spent from a year to eighteen months in investigating all the facts of the problem he would not be much further advanced as regards laying down a general native policy which would at the same time be capable of application in detail to the administration and development of the extremely diverse tribes which inhabit East Africa than we are to-day. At any rate if this is the High Commissioner's first concern he will be involved during the whole of his term of office in a sea of controversy and controversial opinions, the value of which he will have no first-hand knowledge to enable him to test.

The Commission says "Conditions in all the Territories are still uncertain and fall short of any approximation to equilibrium. Progress must be tentative and the time has not yet come for bold experiments. It is enough to take one step at a time, leaving the exact nature of succeeding steps for decision in the light of experience thereby gained. But even before the first step is taken some idea must be formed of the general direction to be followed, and for this and all succeeding steps the guidance of definite principles is necessary."

It seems to me that such definite principles could very well be laid down by His Majesty's Government. Many such principles are formulated in the Report and most of them would command general assent. It is possible that the presence of a High Commissioner in East Africa, even without executive control for native policy in the first instance, may be of great value in co-ordinating opinions and policies in conditions which have admittedly not yet reached a state of stable equilibrium.

I am convinced, however, that the need of a co-ordination and central control of the economic and Administrative Services is of great importance at the present stage of their development, and that steps can be taken at once to ensure their direction by a Central Authority. It would, I consider, not be in the best interests of administration and progress to postpone this step pending the extremely difficult question of the laying down of a common native policy for the three Territories. The appoint-

ment of such a Central Authority for such a purpose need not in any way prejudice its future development on the lines foreshadowed by the Commission. Indeed I consider that it will be considerably facilitated thereby.

Co-ordination of native policy can be best effected for some time to come subject to the directions of the Secretary of State by free discussion in Conferences of Governors under the Presidency of the High Commissioner.

I am accordingly entirely in agreement with the general remarks at the beginning of Sir Samuel Wilson's note* and I consider that the scheme which is subsequently outlined for the establishment of a Central Authority is both practical and acceptable. It has, I think, been laid down by the Secretary of State that no scheme of Closer Union will be imposed on these Territories without some measure of general agreement. If the executive control of native policy and native affairs in each of the Territories by the Central Authority were to be made part of the scheme from its inception such a scheme would most certainly fail to command any general measure of assent. To take one instance only, the Baganda people would be wholly opposed, as they have often stated, to the interposition of any intermediate authority between their local Governor and the Secretary of State. To this point they attach very great importance, whether rightly or wrongly, and though such an organisation might be imposed on them, they would, so far as I am able to judge, refuse to give their willing assent to it for many years to come at any rate. I have no doubt that equally strong objections to the immediate unification of, and control of, native policy by a Central Authority are felt by other communities in other Territories.

I trust that it may be found possible to bring into existence the scheme outlined in Sir Samuel Wilson's Note with the least possible delay.

(Intld.) W. F. G.

4th June, 1929.

(c)

Note by the Acting Governor of Kenya, dated 8th June, 1929.

I have had the advantage of reading the Memorandum of Sir William Gowers of the 4th June, 1929, and, if I may say so, I am in entire agreement with it. The matter has been so well put by Sir William Gowers that I feel I cannot usefully add anything of value.

In my view it is essential that native policy, which must affect largely all other matters in territories such as those in the East African Group, should primarily be dealt with by each of such territories under the general direction of the Secretary of State, who can be relied on to apply principles approved by His Majesty's Government. It is important to emphasise the fact that native conditions in the East African territories vary to a large extent, and what may be possible and advisable in one such territory would not be applicable to another.

The limited federation now proposed of common services under a High Commissioner should, in my opinion, be put into operation without delay. There can, I think, be nothing controversial in such a federation and no useful purpose would be attained by appointing committees, commissions or individuals further to discuss it. There is no doubt that the High Commissioner under the proposed scheme will exercise by the methods outlined by Sir William Gowers a very considerable influence in guiding native policy along acceptable lines although he will in the first instance have no executive control over it.

The case for the federation of these services dealt with by Sir Samuel Wilson's memorandum is so strong that there cannot be any reasoned opposition to the suggestions made. I understand that Sir Samuel Wilson has obtained an unprecedented measure of agreement to his scheme by all sections of the local communities and I think that immediate steps should be taken to put the scheme into practice.

(Signed) J. W. BARTH.

8th June, 1929.

* Not reproduced.