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FURTHER PAPERS

RELATING TO THE

KAFIR OUTBREAK IN NATAL.

(In continuation of C. 1121 of 1875.)



Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty,
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Further Papers relating to the Kafir Outbreak in Natal.

(In continuation of C. 1121 of 1875.)

No. 1.

Governor Sir H. Barkly, K.C.B., G.C.M.G., to the Earl of Carnarvon.— (Received February 1.)

My Lord,

Government House, Cape Town, January 5, 1875.

YOUR Lordship's despatch of the 4th ultimo,* informing me of the decision of Her Majesty's Government on the case of Langalibalele, reached me on the 31st ultimo, and I lost not a moment in bringing it under the consideration of my Responsible Advisers, with a view to obtaining the promise of their co-operation in making arrangements for the location of the Chief and his son, after their liberation from Robben Island, on the mainland of this Colony.

2. I regret to have to state that, for the reasons assigned in the inclosed Minute, Mr. Molteno and his colleagues, after much deliberation, conducted with every disposition to act in accordance with the opinions of Her Majesty's Government, feel themselves precluded from taking any step towards giving effect to your Lordship's wishes.

3. I regret this, not only on account of the inconvenience that may thus be occasioned to Her Majesty's Government, but for the sake of the Colony itself; because, whilst still adhering to the opinion I felt it my duty to express to your Lordship five months ago,† that it was better for the peace of South Africa, as well as their own security and comfort, that Langalibalele and Mahlumbuli should remain on Robben Island for some time to come, I cannot but perceive that if their release thence is determined on, it will be far safer for all interested in preventing Kafir wars to keep them, as your Lordship proposes, under strict surveillance somewhere in the neighbourhood of Cape Town, than either to send them back to be confined under stringent restrictions in Natal, or pardon them on condition only of their not returning to that Colony.

4. That there would be some risk in the first case, as pointed out by Mr. Brownlee in a Memorandum (which, together with the note from Mr. Molteno on the subject, forwarded privately last mail, are attached to the Minute), of their escaping into the Trans-kei, where so many of their relatives live, and causing, either intentionally, or from the superstitious reverence with which Langalibalele is far and wide regarded, serious disturbances, cannot be denied; but there would be still more danger in their return to Natal; and it would assuredly be the most dangerous course of all to permit them to proceed triumphantly direct from Robben Island to the very flanks of the Drakensberg, as they would do in the last case.

5. I fear, however, that the conclusions to which my advisers have come, will prove to be in closer accordance with the views entertained by the vast majority of the colonists of European descent, than those I have above expressed, and that it would have been vain, consequently, to have attempted to withstand the agitation which will arise whenever the despatches are published.

6. Under the circumstances, I see no alternative but to await your Lordship's instructions in the matter before moving further, detaining Langalibalele and his son on Robben Island until either a formal pardon from the Queen is forwarded in their favour, the disallowance of Act No. 3 by Her Majesty is announced to me, or the Natal Government apply to this Government for their redelivery.

7. Meanwhile, steps will be immediately taken to ameliorate the condition of the

* *Vide* No. 30 of previous Paper C. 1121 of 1875.

† *Vide* despatch of August 14, 1874, No. 10 of same Paper.

prisoners there by allowing them all possible indulgence, and putting them as nearly as possible on the same footing as if they had been transferred to a location of their own on the mainland, where it would have been necessary, indeed, to keep them under much stricter regulations than are prescribed in their present insular home.

8. Robben (*i.e.*, Seal) Island is not, as seems to be supposed by the British public, a penal establishment, and has not been so for years, except in so far as it has been used as a secure place of custody for rebel Kafir Chiefs, and as the lunatic and benevolent asylums upon it occupy but a comparatively small portion of its area, there is nothing to prevent Langalibalele and Mahlumbuli from occupying their own kraal, keeping their own cows, cultivating corn, and living, if they can induce any of their wives or other members of their tribe to join them, exactly in the same position as they are used to.

9. None of the former, I believe, volunteered to accompany the prisoners when they embarked at Natal, but perhaps Mr. Shepstone may be able now to persuade one or more to come down by an early steamer, or possibly, failing this, some of the Zulus or Fingoes now engaged on the railways in this part of the Colony may be hired to attend on the old Chief.

10. Trusting that these arrangements will meet with your Lordship's approval, as the best that could, under all the circumstances, be made,

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY BARKLY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 1.

Minute on a Despatch from the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies to his Excellency Sir H. Barkly, K.C.B., G.C.M.G., dated December 4, 1874.

MINISTERS having carefully considered this despatch, as also that addressed to Lieutenant-Governor Pine, on the subject of Langalibalele and his son, now confined on Robben Island, together with your Excellency's Minute expressing confidence that Ministers would authorize you to inform Lord Carnarvon, by return of post, that they are prepared to do all in their power to carry out the wishes of the Imperial Government, cannot do otherwise than express their very great regret that the Imperial Government should have adopted a course of action which, it is feared, will prove to be most detrimental to the peace and security of this Colony, and of South Africa generally.

Mr. Molteno's note to your Excellency, which it was deemed advisable to transmit to Lord Carnarvon by last mail, as also a Memorandum drawn up by the Secretary for Native Affairs, which accompanies this Minute, give fuller expression to the views of the Ministers on this subject.

While it will at all times be the earnest desire of Ministers to co-operate with the Imperial Government, occasions may arise when it would be impossible to do so without sacrificing the interests of the Colony.

Such an occasion seems now unfortunately to have arisen.

This Government cannot give its assent to Langalibele and his son being "removed from Robben Island to a location to be set apart for him within the Cape Colony, under strong restrictions against re-entering Natal."

The laws of this Colony give the Government no such power as would be necessary for enforcing such restrictions, and it is hoped that upon the Imperial Government being made aware of the want of the necessary power to confine these men to any particular location or district, if once set at liberty, it will see the reasonableness of the objection to having them let loose in the Colony to become a certain source of danger and trouble.

Nor can Ministers avoid noticing that the Imperial Government whilst exercising clemency to this Chief and his son, by assigning to them a location within the Cape Colony, has given the Colony no opportunity of expressing any opinion as to how far its interests and rights would thereby be compromised or affected.

The Imperial Government has determined to disallow Act No. 3 of 1874; this done, the action taken by this Colony in this unpleasant business will be virtually set aside, and there would appear to be no alternative, in so far as Ministers are concerned, but to revert to the position they were in before the Act was passed, by returning Langalibalele and his son to Natal.

But as this would be in opposition to the desire of the Imperial Government, Ministers will be glad to learn in what other way this Government may be relieved of the charge as soon as Act No. 3 of 1874 ceases to be law.

(Signed) J. C. MOLTENO.

Inclosure 2 in No. 1.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Cape Town,
December 24, 1874.

My dear Sir,

JUDGING by the articles and correspondence in the "Times" and other English newspapers, lately received, it seems clear that Bishop Colenso has carried out his intention of agitating on the Langalibalele matter, and is endeavouring to create an impression that he has been cruelly and unjustly punished. In the absence of anything which would indicate the view Her Majesty's Government would be likely to take, I confess to some anxiety lest they may be induced to yield to pressure in the direction of releasing the two prisoners now on Robben Island, the effect of which, on the peace and security of this Colony, might be most disastrous.

Whatever exception may be taken to the proceedings of the Natal Government throughout this unfortunate business, certain prominent features must not be lost sight of.

It is unquestionable that Langalibelele deliberately intended to and did defy the Government, and that, had he not been made prisoner quickly, the probability—indeed, almost certainty—is that very serious disturbances would have taken place amongst the native tribes within and immediately beyond this Colony, to say nothing of Natal, which, if once commenced, there is no telling where they would have ended, and what would have been the ultimate consequences.

Secondly, that with all native tribes the one opinion and idea is that this Chief has defied the Government, has been checkmated and defeated in his purpose, and is now justly undergoing punishment; indeed, that he has been leniently dealt with.

Should he now be released, the idea with these people will be that it is from fear and distrust on our part as to the success of our policy; consequently our difficulties in the management of the natives would be increased enormously, so much so that it would be impossible for us to preserve peace and the satisfactory state of affairs which have now existed for the last twenty years and upwards, in which case the question would necessarily arise as to whether the Home Government could leave us to ourselves to bear the brunt of a policy essentially their own.

But this is not all, for while it is quite possible that British power, which has spent so many millions and sacrificed so many lives in an Abyssinian expedition, and lately on the west coast of Africa, may say, no matter at what cost, we are determined to enforce our views of what we consider abstract justice in this case of Langalibalele, what would be the position of the colonists and white inhabitants of the whole of South Africa? To them it would be a question of life and death; their property would be sacrificed and their lives imperilled to a fearful extent should anything like a war of races be now brought about.

Every year that now passes strengthens our position and renders any serious disturbance of our relations with the native tribes less and less likely; but should a war be now brought about it would certainly not be a small one, and, no matter what the result, could not do otherwise than throw back civilization in South Africa for an indefinite period.

If it were possible to get all these circumstances properly considered and weighed by British statesmen, I feel sure that they would hesitate to take steps which would certainly tend to bring about such a state of things, simply because to the nicely-balanced judicial minds of a few enthusiasts the proper forms of trial have not been adhered to, and perhaps more severe measures in regard to the mass of the people of the rebellious Chief have been resorted to than was warranted, but which latter has since been redressed as far as possible.

Under any circumstances, I feel it is necessary that Her Majesty's Government should be fully informed as to the consequences likely, in the opinion of those supposed to be in a position to judge, although not responsible for what has been done in Natal, to ensue.

It will be for your Excellency to judge in how far it will be advisable to inform Her Majesty's Government of the view taken in this matter before any definite action is perhaps taken.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) J. C. MOLTENO.

His Excellency Sir H. Barkly, K.C.B., G.C.M.G.,
&c. &c. &c.

Inclosure 3 in No. 1.

*Memorandum.**In re Langalibalele.*

IF the Act No. 3 of 1874 were repealed, and Langalibalele were located on the main land, this Colony would possess no power to exercise any control over him; he would therefore very soon find his way overland to the borders of Natal; for an appeal to the members of his tribe at Natal, or even to his countrymen and connections in this Colony, would at once place at his disposal abundant means for that purpose.

In considering the effect on the Native tribes of the release of Langalibalele, it cannot be overlooked that he possesses even greater influence, from his reputed powers as a magician, than he does as a Chief of a large and powerful tribe.

Last year, when I visited the Trans-kei, heavy floods had fallen; these were attributed to Langalibalele's captivity, and it was said that until he was liberated the land would be inundated by floods, which would be attended with loss of life, destruction of stock, and devastation of crops. The unprecedented floods of last month, extending from Natal to the eastern divisions of this Colony, sweeping away our bridges, and causing enormous damage to property of all kinds, will, in the minds of the natives, greatly enhance the importance of Langalibalele, and will tend to confirm the predictions of last year.

Langalibalele's influence, both as magician and Chief, is greatly strengthened by his extensive family connections with almost every tribe between the Colony and Natal; his own children, apart from other relatives, amounting to the number of 54 sons and 68 daughters, many of whom are influentially married amongst these various tribes.

All the natives feel, and those friendly to us admit, that Langalibalele has received substantial justice. His release would be considered as a sign of weakness rather than an act of clemency on the part of the British Government, and would be attributed to his power as a magician. His importance would thus be magnified in the eyes of all the native tribes both in the Colony and Natal. Their minds would become unsettled and our influence impaired.

Macomo, the greatest general known to the natives, who took and held possession of a portion of the Colony for three years, in spite of all attempts to eject him, until expelled by our united efforts under Sir G. Cathcart, died recently on Robben Island, after a long exile.

Umhala, the most crafty and politic of Kafir Chiefs, together with other influential Chiefs transported to Robben Island for offences committed by them, were pardoned, and only after a lengthened captivity.

Lynx, the celebrated prophet, under whose inspiration in 1819 the Gaikas were conquered with great slaughter by the Hlambis and driven out of their land, perished in his attempt to escape from Robben Island; but now a man arises superior to all of these, who, after captivity of a few months, is liberated from Robben Island.

Passing over the effects likely to be produced on the powerful tribe of the Gaikas, with whom we were at war in 1835, 1846, and 1850, we have, across the Kei, the still more formidable tribe of Gealekas under Kreli, the most powerful Chief on our frontier, who forfeited a large portion of his country in 1858. This Chief is at present peaceful, because he sees no prospect of succeeding against us in war, but would not hesitate to join any powerful confederacy which held out any prospect of his regaining his forfeited land and lost power. Kreli is regarded by the Gaikas as their Paramount Chief, and he exercises great influence over them as well as over other powerful tribes.

Six years since the Basutos, at the urgent request of their late Chief Moshesh, became British subjects, and the tribe has ever since made rapid strides in civilization. But since the death of Moshesh his sons are endeavouring to regain that power and influence over the tribe which Moshesh surrendered for his people's good.

Whatever Bishop Colenso (with reference to whom, I may remark, that many of the facts stated in his book recently printed are so distorted as to make his conclusions unreliable) says to the contrary, there is no doubt that overtures were made by Langalibalele to Molapo, and which were favourably received; and it is more than probable that had it not been for the prompt action taken by this Government, and the presence of an armed Colonial force on the scene, as well as the pursuit by a large force from Natal, that Langalibalele would have found an asylum with Molapo, and the most embarrassing and wide-spread complications would have been the result.

There are, undoubtedly, tribes which sympathize with the Hlubis, and regard their

fate with grief and consternation, inasmuch as they have thus lost a powerful alliance, with the further result that the fate of Langalibalele has caused others to pause lest they should be placed in the same position.

The liberation of Langalibalele would produce the most serious consequences. By it the work of civilization, under our rule now so satisfactorily progressing, would be checked and retarded; the disaffected would be strengthened; the wavering would be gained by the disaffected; and the evil consequences which may result cannot be foreseen. It cannot be forgotten that the most disastrous war we have experienced, that of 1850—53, was brought about by the agency of a magician: and that in 1856, the bold and reckless attempt of Krelu to drive the Kafirs to desperation in a combined attack on the Colony, by causing the destruction of their cattle and their means of subsistence, was brought about by the agency of the prophet Umhlakaza. Langalibalele may have more power and influence than either of the two through whom so much evil was wrought. He has long been famous with the Zulus, and other tribes on the borders of Natal; late proceedings have brought him to note with tribes who knew little of him; his liberation from well-merited captivity would give him an immense importance in the eyes even of the well-disposed, and would so greatly magnify his position that he would be most enthusiastically received wherever he went; and the ovations with which he would be met would so inflate him as to lead him to actions the results of which might be most disastrous.

(Signed) C. BROWNLEE,
Secretary for Native Affairs.

*Office of the Secretary for Native Affairs,
Cape Town, January 1875.*

No. 2.

The Earl of Carnarvon to Governor Sir H. Barkly, K.C.B., G.C.M.G.

Sir,

Downing Street, February 15, 1875.

IT has been with regret that I have learnt from your despatch of the 5th ultimo that your Responsible Advisers feel it difficult to give me their co-operation in carrying out the resolution at which Her Majesty's Government, after very anxious consideration of the case, and with an equally anxious desire to consult the interests and the feelings of the South African colonists, had arrived in regard to the disposal of Langalibalele and his son Malambule.

I had hoped, by the course which I proposed, to render unnecessary any detailed discussion of this subject in England, by being able to assure both Houses of Parliament that, through the cheerful co-operation of the Cape Government and Legislature, a matter so full of importance was already settled.

I will frankly own that I had strained my own sense of what is due to the justice of the case to the uttermost. Out of consideration for the feelings, and, in some respects, for the difficulties of the South African colonists, in their relations towards the native races, I had brought myself to advise the Crown to reverse or modify the action of the Colonial Governments in South Africa in no greater degree than justice, as well as public opinion, absolutely demand.

It should be superfluous for me to say that the Imperial Government has never entertained a thought of dictating to your Ministers the course which they were expected to pursue in matters as to which, under the Constitution of the Colony, they may properly claim to be responsible; but if such an assurance be needed, I can sincerely and readily give it to you. I still, indeed, rely so unreservedly on the good sense and loyalty of the Cape Legislature, and on the wisdom and rectitude of your principal advisers, that I shall not allow myself to doubt for a moment their readiness to meet me half-way in my endeavours to find a satisfactory solution of a difficulty such as that in which all parties now find themselves placed.

In the Minute and Memorandum which accompany your despatch, the principal reason assigned for objecting to the proposal to place Langalibalele and his son upon a location within the Cape Colony is, as I understand it, that if the Act No. 3 of 1874 were repealed there would be no law in existence by virtue of which they could be confined to any particular district, and it is urged that the effect of removing them from Robben Island to any place within the Colony on the mainland would be to render escape possible, or to allow them to become a source of danger and trouble.

I would here observe that the Act No. 3 of 1874, if it were left in force, would not, as it appears to me, provide for the detention of Langalibalele and his son upon the

mainland under conditions which, subject to the necessary supervision, would allow all practicable freedom, because that Act purports only to legalise their imprisonment within the Colony. But, passing by this point, I will at once say that I am ready to attach all due weight to an objection, urged by so high an authority, and so serious in itself, as that which has been brought before me, nor am I disposed to undervalue the risks which might attend a premature release of the prisoners unaccompanied by proper provisions for their control. The deficiency of legal power to control them on a location is, however, an objection which can clearly be removed by legislative and administrative precautions such as the experience and knowledge of your Ministers will readily suggest, and in which they may safely count upon the assistance or co-operation of Her Majesty's Government if any such there be that they can give.

Looking, therefore, to all the circumstances, I feel that I cannot hesitate to desire you to press strongly upon your Advisers the decided opinion of Her Majesty's Government that they should without delay propose to the Legislature such an enactment as will invest them with the power which they are advised they do not now possess of restricting Langalibalele and his son to the district in which they can, with the least inconvenience, be settled.

I do them the justice to believe that they will remember that the complication which has now arisen is the result, in some degree, of the legislation of the Cape Parliament, which in passing the Act No. 3 of 1874, providing for the imprisonment within the Cape Colony of a prisoner sentenced in another Colony, set aside the provisions of the Imperial Act 32 Vict., cap. 10. I have on a previous occasion endeavoured to explain how entirely I appreciate the sincere and disinterested wish of the Cape Government and Legislature to assist the neighbouring Colony by providing through that enactment for the confinement of the prisoners in Robben Island, and I cannot but hope that, as it was not at the instance of Her Majesty's Government that your Ministers have become parties to the proceedings connected with this question, they will feel themselves under a special obligation to assist me in the very difficult duty which has now been imposed upon me. I have every hope, therefore, that they will be able to dismiss all other objections, except those connected with the technical point already referred to, and will see their way to procuring the necessary legislation at a very early date.

It would be foreign to my present purpose to discuss further the painful history of the late transactions in Natal. It is enough for me to express my confident hope that your Advisers on further consideration will feel that, by pursuing a course opposed to that which I have urged, they would render a state of affairs already very full of difficulties still more complicated. On my own part I have considered anew every alternative, and after much thought I cannot avoid the conclusion that the course approved by Her Majesty's Government is clearly preferable in the interests of all parties. I feel therefore constrained to press through you upon your Advisers my original proposal; and in doing so I would desire it to be understood that, while it will obviously be my duty at the earliest moment to recommend the disallowance of the Act No. 3 of 1874, I have delayed doing so with the view of enabling your Government to substitute for it such legislation as will better meet the requirements of the case, and to adopt any administrative measures which may be necessary.

I will only add in conclusion that I feel sure I shall not be misunderstood if I earnestly remind you of the strong desire felt in this country to see this unhappy question finally disposed of in such a way as may generally satisfy the justice of the case, and may secure the best interests of the South African Colonies. Nor need I say how sincerely the ready co-operation of your Government and Legislature in that behalf would be appreciated, or, on the other hand, how deeply it would be regretted if, in the course of the discussions which must inevitably arise out of the prolonged detention of the prisoners in Robben Island, the good feeling which happily subsists between this country and one of its most important Dependencies should be, even in the smallest degree, impaired by any imputation that the Cape Colony had in a grave Imperial difficulty failed to evince that desire which I am satisfied is very widely felt to assist Her Majesty's Government in a question in which the justice and the honour of the British Crown are involved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CARNARVON.