**NLI 13073/26/2**

**Enclosure in Cadbury letter to Casement of 24 May 1911**

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Questions re Sao Thomé

SESSION 1911

San Thomé Cocoa Trade

Questions & Answers

Tuesday 21 March 1911

SIR GILBERT PARKER

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Treaty of July 1842 and the Convention of July 1871 relating to the suppression of the traffic in slaves, between the British and Portuguese Governments are considered by His Majesty's Government to have been in any way invalidated by the recent change of Government in Portugal; and how far His Majesty's Government regard those instruments, and the Act of Brussels of July 1890 and the Anglo-Portuguese Protocol of March 1892, as conferring upon this country the right of making representations to the Government of Portugal on the subject of labour conditions existing on the mainland of Angola and upon the islands of S. Thomé and Principe.

SIR E. GREY

The change of Government in Portugal has not affected the Treaty relations between Gt. Britain and Portugal.

The signatory Powers of the Brussels Act agreed in Article 22 to restrict to the zone on the East coast defined by Article 21 the clauses of their special Conventions for the suppression of the slave trade which relate to the right of visit, search and detention of vessels at sea. Such clauses therefore of the Treaty of July 1841 and the Convention of July 1871 are no longer in force as regard the West Coast of Africa. There is no Anglo-Portuguese Protocol of March 1892.

The labour conditions in Angola and in S. Thomé and Principe, as governed by the Regulations of July 1909, and provided those Regulations are properly administered would not justify representations to Portugal based on the provision of the Brussels Act.

SIR GILBERT PARKER.

Do the present Portuguese Government accept or administer those Regulations?

SIR E. GREY

Certainly the present Government accept the Regulations. As regards administration, a statement was brought to my notice the other day that 300 labourers had been recruited. I understand that the Regulations were in suspense because no recruiting was going on. I am now enquiring into the recruiting of these 300 labourers.

28 March 1911

SIR GILBERT PARKER

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the representations made from time to time by His Majesty's Government to the government of Portugal in connection with the conditions of labour existing in Angola and upon the islands of S. Thomé and Principe have been wholly based upon the provisions of the Brussels Act; & whether it is on the Brussels Act alone that His Majesty's Government rely to justify present of future enquiries into, and representations concerning, the state of affairs prevailing in the dependency of a Foreign Power.

SECRETARY SIR EDWARD GREY

Any representations which have been made have been of an entirely friendly character, and have been received in that spirit; it has not been necessary to base them upon any treaty provision hitherto, nor will it, I trust, be necessary to do so in the future.

SECULO¸  
3RD May 1911.

Interview with Major Rocha Viera.

The "Seculo" of the 3rd. published an interview with Major Rocha Vieira, who was sent out as Governor of Principe by the Provisional government shortly after the proclamation of theRepublic, and who has just returned having been recalled by the Colonial Minister, and it appears that the Government, having extinguished the district of Principe intends to nominate him Governor of the province of s. Thomé and Principe.

After speaking about the disturbances that took place thereafter the proclamation of the Republic, and which he was sent out to inquire into, he goes on to say:- Let me tell you frankly that, although I consider the political question as dead, the situation is not good as yet. There are two facts that require much attention and the greatest energy to be put a stop to the evil rapidly. I refer to the alarming spread of the sleeping sickness and the labour question. They are two subjects of great delicacy, which must be speedily resolved.

The sleeping sickness **[para re sleeping sickness etc]**....

Everything that is done for the purpose of bettering the condition of the poor labourers ought to be applauded, and I believe that a governor of that province will have plenty to doon this head, if he wishes to take his charge seriously.

Another point that ought to preoccupy him equally is the question of labourers. I am for the repatriation of the labourers, but the obligatory repatriation, which is the only way for the law not to be evaded. But even if the regime of voluntary repatriation is rigorously established, I would not trust the reports that would be shown to me; I should like to hear myself from each labourer his clear declaration after he had also had the question clearly put to him, after he had had the facility of repatriation explained to him.

There are about 30,000 men who ought to be repatriated. In virtue of this the planters may complain that the repatriation of such a scale will cause them great and irremediable losses. To that I reply that the question in consideration is one of humanity, and if it has become difficult, it is exactly through their fault in not having, as the law demands, complied with their contracts. Finally, we are treating of a question of humanity, which is above all considerations of material interests.

Snr. Rocha Vieira having finished, we took our leave of him with the conviction that it is exactly functionaries of this moral calibre that the Republic needs in the colonies, to maintain the prestige of the Portuguese name.