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Colonial Office

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Last previous Paper

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Italian Aspirations

Minutes of meeting of Colonial Committee May 15, 19, 20, 30, & brief report for Supreme Allied Council

~~See previous~~
in ~~Reference~~

These H. have recently been handed over with a view to re-arranging for purposes of record. It is, of course, to a period much earlier than the history. It is correspondence in which he interested to see

Part 1

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COLONIAL COMMITTEE.

(1) MEETING OF MAY 15, 1919.

The meeting was opened at the Colonial Ministry at 11.30 a.m.

PRESENT

France:

M. Henry Simon, Minister for the Colonies, with
M. Duchène, Conseiller d'Etat, Under-Secretary
at the Colonial Ministry;

Great Britain:

Lord Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies,
with Sir Herbert Read, Assistant Under-Secretary
of State for the Colonies and Mr. Tennant,
Secretary of Embassy;

M. Crespi, Minister of Sicily, with M. di Martino,
Ambassador-General to the Italian Ministry for Foreign
Affairs and M. Piacentini, Consul-General.

M. Henry Simon opened the meeting and said that he believed he was expressing the general feeling of the Committee in proposing the appointment as President of the Committee as regards by all the members present as eminently qualified for that office. The appointment was unanimously approved.

Lord Milner took the chair, thanked his colleagues and stated briefly the task of the Committee. The Governments concerned were agreed that the partition of the late German Colonies in Africa entitled Italy to benefit by Article 13 of the Treaty of April 29, 1918. He then asked M. Crespi to state the Italian claim.

M. Crespi said that the Italian Government could not have demanded the execution of Article 13 if, as they had hoped, they

had been admitted to some participation in the administration of the Syrian Colonies at the partition effected on May 7.

Henry Simon observed that the partition had been decided on in the presence of the Italian Government and that the French Government had no reservation, as far as he was aware, of any oral or written reservation made by the Italian Government.

Giustini reminded the Committee of statements made by the Italian Government on this point at the meeting of the Supreme Council held at Versailles on May 7.

M. Brizzi then presented to the Committee a map of Africa showing the territories which Italy, in accordance with Article 17, wished to see added to the Italian possessions.

These territories were adjacent to Tripoli on the one hand and Eritrea and Italian Somaliland on the other.

As regards Tripoli the object of the Italian claim to the coast was to obtain the acquisition of a better caravan route than that which had connected Ghat and Ghadames since 1916 and which had become useless by the absence of wells. This claim did not include Djanet or Vert Polignac which would in any case remain French.

To the east of Tripoli Italy claimed the territory west of a line drawn southwards from Fas Jebel Sollum and including the area in Italian territory. South of Jambub the line would be longitude 25° east to its intersection with latitude 25° north.

As regards Eritrea and Italian Somaliland Italy wished to see these possessions incorporated with French and British Somaliland. Italy also claimed Kismayu and Juba land.

Giustini, in support of these claims, recapitulated the sacrifices imposed on Italy by the war: military sacrifices, which had been considerable, not only in Europe, but also in Africa where 40,000 men had been maintained in Tripoli during the war.

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and was helped by their presence to cover the frontiers of Egypt in Tunis; financial sacrifices, the Italian debt being at that time 80 milliards and likely to rise to 90 milliards. The conditions of economic life were upset. The cost of living had increased five fold and, if it fell, would probably remain three times what it had been before the war. Wages would not drop and Italy would thus have lost the most favourable factor in her industrial development, namely cheap labour. Italy also needed new possessions as fields for emigration for her ever increasing population and for the supply of raw material. If she did not get them the opinion, which had till then so stoutly resisted pro-German Bolshevik intrigues and which had for some time past been seriously disturbed, would be grievously disappointed. M. Crespi emphasized the consequences which such a disappointment might have on the policy of the Empire.

Lord Milner desired in the first place to examine the main claims presented by M. Crespi from the point of view of British interests, which would generally speaking be largely sacrificed. The area claimed on the frontier of Tripoli was considerable. The question was of interest to Egypt and would be dealt with particularly with reference to the ancient rights and interests of the Egyptian Government. But the Italian claim in Eritrea and Albania was a more serious matter. Here was no question of rectification of frontiers as provided for by article 13. of the treaty of 1912. The proposal was simply and solely to suppress colonies, one British and one French, a proposal which went beyond the terms of reference to the Committee. Lord Milner felt bound to observe that it tended towards the complete dismemberment of Abyssinia. Finally, the claim to Jubaland concerned Great Britain alone, but there appeared to be no justification for the extension of the zone marked on the map. The main consideration

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consideration was the valley of the Juba. It was an extremely high valley, capable of great developments especially in the direction of cotton growing. The section of the Juba valley would involve the cession within a few miles of the territory west of that stream. The boundaries of the territory, administered by the Commission were agreed to, would require careful and slow determination.

M. Henry Simon considered that from the French point of view the Italian claims called in the first place for the following observations. In the case of Tripoli the proposals could be examined by France with a desire to give the subject possible satisfaction. In the case of Somalia however the claim could not be admitted. Jibuti was for France a point of vital importance on the route to Indo-China and Madagascar. The railway into Abyssinia had been built with French money. France could surrender neither the city nor the territory, from which it could not be separated. Moreover the encirclement of Abyssinia by Italian possessions would deprive France and Great Britain of the share of influence enjoyed by them under the treaty of December 18, 1906, which was not admissible.

M. di Martino enquired whether Great Britain would give any undertaking in connection with the independence of Arabia which would be of value to Italy in view of the proximity of Eritrea.

Lord Alner replied that the question was outside the terms of reference to the Committee.

M. di Martino observed that the Italian claim included also the Farsan islands in the Red Sea, not far from the coast of Eritrea. A few years ago Germany had contemplated obtaining a footing in the group and had only abandoned the idea in consequence of objections raised simultaneously by the British and Italian Governments. After the defeat of Germany, Italy felt entitled to claim the group.

Lord Alner remarked that the Committee had no authority to discuss the subject.

M. Henry Simon

consideration was the valley of the Juba. It was an extremely rich valley, capable of great developments especially in the direction of cotton growing. The cession of the Juba valley would also involve the cession within certain limits of the territory west of that stream. The boundaries of such territory, supposing any cession were agreed to, would require careful and minute examination.

M. Henry Simon considered that from the French point of view the Italian claims called for the first place for the following observations. In the case of Tripoli the proposals could be examined by France with a desire to give the Sultan possible ratification. In the case of Somalia however the claim could not be granted. Djibuti was for France a point of vital importance on the route to Indo-China and Madagascar. The railway into Abyssinia had been built with French money. France would surrender neither the bay nor Djibuti to the Germans, from which it could not be separated. The cession of the empire east of Abyssinia by Italian possessions would reduce France and Great Britain of the share of influence enjoyed under the treaty of December 13, 1906, which was not desirable.

M. de Martens enquired whether Great Britain could give any undertaking in connection with the independence of Arabia which would be of value to Italy in view of the proximity of Eritrea.

Lord Alton replied that the question was outside the terms of reference to the Committee.

M. de Martens observed that the Italian claim included also Farah islands in the Red Sea, not far from the coast of Eritrea. A few years ago Germany had contemplated obtaining a footing in the group and had only abandoned the idea in consequence of objections heard simultaneously by the British and Italian Governments. After the defeat of Germany, Italy felt entitled to claim the group.

Lord Alton remarked that the Committee had no authority to discuss the subject.

M. Henry Simon

Mr. Henry Simon and Lord Alton expressed the opinion that the claims put forward by Crespi did not on the whole appear likely to promote Italian migration to countries in which emigrants could settle, except in the case of Juba land.

Crespi desired to state that that part of the Italian claim was connected, not with political objects, but with an economic programme.

Mr. Hartington observed that the Italian proposal with regard to Eritrea and Somaliland was founded chiefly on the view that in Africa it was desirable for each of the great countries of the Empire to have at their disposal large areas in which they would enjoy liberty of action, thereby grounds of dispute would be avoided.

Lord Alton maintained that Article 13 could not become operative unless Great Britain first obtained definite territorial acquisitions in Africa in consequence of the increase of her colonies. The scope of the article would accordingly be narrowed if Great Britain's assistance did not secure conditions of equality as those which were contemplated at that moment.

Mr. Crespi said that he could not deny the justice of that observation.

The Committee agreed to meet again during the following week, when summoned by the President.

The Sitting closed at 1.40 p.m.

COLONIAL COMMITTEE.

(2) Meeting May 19, 1919.

The meeting opened at 11 a.m., Lord Milner presiding.

PRESENT:

France: M. Henry Simon, Minister for the Colonies with M. Duchêne, Conseiller d'Etat, Under Secretary to the Ministry for the Colonies; M. Fournol, Secretary General to the French Colonial Committee for questions arising out of the war; Merlin, Governor General of French West Africa; M. de Peretti della Rocca, Italian Plenipotentiary, Under Secretary to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Great Britain: Lord Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies, with Sir Robert Reid, Assistant Under Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, and Mr. Vansittart, Secretary of State.

Italy: Signor Crespi, Minister of Supply with M. di Martino, Secretary General to the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sicily, Consul-General.

The President declared the meeting open.

After an exchange of observations the report of the meeting of May 15 was adopted.

M. Henry Simon, being invited by the President to define the attitude of France towards the colonial claims of Italy, said that he was anxious to do so in the most friendly and definite form. The French Government was ready to fall in with the views of Italy regarding the western frontier of Tripoli. But it was absolutely impossible for him to accept the demand of the Italian Government with regard to Somaliland. A slight rectification of the frontier between

between Britrea and Somaliland would be of no use to Italy. The latter Power wanted was Jibuti. Now, it would be beyond the power of any French Government to cede Jibuti for two essential reasons. Firstly because Jibuti was a port of vital importance to France, the only port of call on the way to Indo-China and Madagascar. Secondly because the abandonment of Jibuti would lead to the surrender by France of the advantages which she enjoyed in Abyssinia under the treaty of December 13, 1905.

Lord Milner then defined the attitude of Great Britain. The British Government accepted the line of the new frontier between Tripoli and Egypt, which would leave Jubah to Italy and would follow, roughly, the line marked on the map submitted to the Committee by M. Crepi. With regard to Jubah Lord Milner observed that on the detailed map now produced to the Committee the Italian claim was extended over a much larger territory than that shown on the earlier general map. About one-third of the colony of British East Africa was not claimed by Italy. Without being able to concede a much larger part, Great Britain would, in a spirit of liberality, assign to Italy the port of Berbera, where British subjects could be granted the same rights as those now enjoyed by Italians, and the Jubah valley to cede, with the dependent territory of the tribes inhabiting that district, provided British settlers in the ceded territory wishing to migrate under the transfer to Italy should be compensated in a liberal spirit.

As regards British Somaliland Lord Milner was not disposed to make any concession, seeing that the French Government, for reasons the justice of which he recognised, was not able to make any concession in those regions. Lord Milner was therefore unable to agree that all the sacrifices should be made by Great Britain alone. In offering Jubahland to the Italian Government he was already

already making an offer of real value. The area of the territory in question exceeded 31,000 square miles.

M. Crespi thought the situation might be summarized as follows. France would grant Italy no appreciable compensation, since it was impossible to regard as such the definite recognition of the caravan routes, a concession which had been admitted in principle for the last three years.

M. Henry Simon observed that this could only be the case through the application, in advance, of the agreement of 1915.

M. Crespi replied that the war had been going on during the last three years.

M. Henry Simon objected that this applied equally to France and that the Government of the Republic, for all its good-will towards Italy, could not go so far as to cede Jibuti.

M. Crespi said that Italy could willingly recognise the special position of France by granting a free zone and coaling depot in the port of Jibuti for the communications with Indo-China and Madagascar and would insist as liberally as possible French interests concerned in Jibuti and its dependent territories. But the point was of as vital importance to Italy as it could ever be to France.

M. Henry Simon saw only one possible answer, namely that which he had already returned, since what Italy wanted and France at more than Great Britain could admit, was exclusive preponderance in Abyssinia.

After an exchange of observations between Lord Milner, M. Crespi and M. Henry Simon it was agreed that a further meeting should be held on Thursday May 22 at 11 a.m.

The meeting closed at 1 p.m.

COLONIAL COMMITTEE.

(31) Meeting May 28th, 1919.

The meeting opens at 5.30 p.m..

PRESENT:

FRANCE, M. Henry Simon, Minister for the Colonies with M. Duchêne, Conseiller d'Etat, Under-Secretary to the Ministry for the Colonies; M. Fournel, Secretary-General to the French Colonial Committee for occasions arising out of the war; M. Merlin, Governor-General of French West Africa; M. de Péretti della Rocca, Minister Plenipotentiary, Under-Secretary to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

GREAT BRITAIN, Lord Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies with Sir Herbert Read, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office; Mr. Vansittart, Secretary of Embassy and Mr. Sperling, Senior Clerk at the Foreign Office.

ITALY, Signor Crespi, Minister of Supply

The Report of the last meeting was adopted after an exchange of observations.

Lord Milner observed that the meeting had been adjourned at the request of M. Crespi, whom he called upon to speak.

M. Crespi expressed regret that the absence of M. Di Martino and the importance, from various points of view, of the questions entrusted to him by his government made it impossible for him to supply the Committee with a more detailed statement.

M. Henry Simon felt bound to say that the attitude adopted by the French Government with regard to Tibuti could not be modified. This matter, in regard to which, but a few months ago, the Italian Government had appeared not to wish to make any claim,

/ Lord

Lord Lilner stated that, if agreement were impossible, the Committee could only draw up a report at the time the impossibility was referred for a decision to the Supreme Interallied Council.

1. Crespi thought it best to make no counter proposal, as this would weaken the force of their demand for Jibuti.

Henry Simon, as a final effort, and as an earnest of his desire for a friendly settlement, offered, and indicated roughly on the map, a fresh concession by France to the south of Tripoli in the direction of Tistenti, which would place the oasis of Ghardaia in practical control under Italian authority. That concession would however only be made in order to bring about an agreement within the Committee on the understanding that the Italian claim to Jibuti was definitely abandoned.

Mr. Crespi regretted that the absence of Mr. Arpino made it impossible for him to express an immediate opinion with regard to the above offer, which would have to be carefully examined.

The Committee agreed to meet again on June 30th in order to embody in a Report the partial agreement which had been reached.

Time expired at 6:30 p.m.

(4)

Meeting of the Committee

Meeting opened at 2.30 p.m. in the presence of the following members:

- Mr. Henry DE MONTEBELLO, Minister for the Colonies.
- M. DECAUX, Counsellor of State, Director of the Ministry for the Colonies.
- M. FOURMEL, Secretary-General of the French Colonial Commission on questions raised by the War. France.
- M. LEBLANC, Governor-General of French West Africa.
- M. DE VIGNY, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Great Britain.
- Lord MILNER, Secretary of State for the Colonies.
- M. ROBERT DE MONTEBELLO, Assistant Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.
- M. VASSIANI, Secretary of Embassy.
- M. STELLINGMA, Senior Clerk, Foreign Office.
- M. BRUNETTI, Minister for Food.
- M. DI ARMI, Secretary-General, Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Italy.
- M. DIAMANTI, Consul-General.

M. DECAUX read the Minutes of the third meeting.

M. DECAUX, who had been asked by Lord Milner to define the views of the Italian Government regarding the proposals made by the British Government, stated that the offers made by France as to the Trieste region did not seem attractive for his country. With regard to the British proposal concerning Jubaland, Italy could accept it subject to certain reservations which M. DeCAUX asked Lord Milner to express.

MR. PIACENTINI pointed out how important it would be for Italy were Great Britain to extend towards the north that portion of territory in Jubaland which she had a right to cede. According to Mr. Piacentini, such an extension would be in agreement with the general spirit of the Treaty of 30th December, 1884, for this Treaty seemed to reserve the entire southern portion of Abyssinia for Italian influence, and it was precisely in the north of Jubaland that the commercial activity of that part of Africa was centred. Further, an alteration of the new boundary between the British and Italian possessions, in the direction indicated by Mr. Piacentini (i.e. towards the North-West) would have the advantage of not disturbing tribes who were of the same origin, and to whom it was impossible to refuse access to the water which existed at certain points.

After an exchange of remarks with Lord Selkirk, MR. PIACENTINI said that he would accept the British offer concerning Jubaland on behalf of his Government, although this offer did not seem to be completely satisfactory. With regard to British Somaliland, he did not insist on the claims originally put forward by Italy, which, however, had the same importance, as France had refused to give up Jituti.

MR. DEBYE pointed out that had France agreed to Italy, Great Britain would by no means have considered herself obliged to give up Berbera and Galle.

MR. DEBYE suggested that it might be possible, in the event of Italy not receiving Jituti or Somaliland, to grant her administration of Togoland.

LORD JILKE said that should this suggestion be adopted, Italy would no longer be able to benefit under article 13 of the treaty of 29 April, 1915.

M. de ARTIG said that this remark was relevant, if article 13 was to be applied literally. He considered, however, that this Article should be interpreted according to the general spirit thereof, and that the "reasonable" compensation mentioned therein should be as liberal as possible, more especially as the collapse of Italy, who had been a contracting party, had since 1915 changed the conditions of the agreement which the Italian Government had signed.

M. Henry SIMON, who apologised for having to retire at 7.15, agreed with the remarks already made by Lord Jilke. Article 13 did not apply unless Italy were excluded from the administration of the German Colonies, in the conquest of which she had taken no part.

M. de ARTIG reminded the Commission that Italy had taken some part in military operations in Africa, since she had sent about 50,000 men in Libya, thus covering the French-Somali frontiers.

M. de PERETTI queried whether it should not, on the contrary, be said that the French forces in Tunisia had protected Italian activities in Tripoli.

M. de ARTIG stated that the help had been mutual, and that it was natural for the Italian Government to claim the administration of the land by way of compensation, since its claims to Somaliland had not been recognised.

MR. DUCLOS remarked that such reasoning was hardly dissmissible. The French and British Governments had considered that the complete incorporation of French and English Somaliland, claimed by the Italian Government, much exceeded the frontier modifications referred to in the Article. The Italian Government claimed Togoland in the place of the two other colonies. This claim made was no more acceptable than the first, and for the same reasons.

MR. MERLIN dwelt on the essential difference between the two kinds of compensation claimed by Italy - i.e., frontier modifications in Jubaland and Libya on the one hand, Togoland on the other. The two positions were irreconcilable by the terms of Article 13, and Italy must take her choice.

MR. CRESPI thought the allocation of a caravan route between Ghat and Ghadames and the extension of Tripoli towards Tibesti, could not take the place of the compensation expected by Italy from France.

MR. PIACENTINI added that the alteration here proposed by France only affected a small part of Tibesti. The route from Tripoli to Ghadames had already been attributed to Italy in 1916.

MR. PEUZZI stated that he had found no trace of any agreement of that kind at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

LORD CURZON proposed to close the Meeting and suspend the work of the Commission. Since it had been found impossible to reach an agreement all that the Commission could do was to submit a report containing a summary of its discussions to the Supreme Council.

The Commission agreed with this opinion and appointed Mr. Curzon, Mr. Vansittart and Mr. Piacentini to prepare a draft of a report to be submitted to the members of the Commission.

The Meeting rose at 7.30 p.m.

MR. DUCLOS remarked that such reasoning was hardly feasible. The French and British Governments had considered the complete incorporation of French and British Somaliland, claimed by the Italian Government, much except of the frontier modifications referred to in the Article. The Italian Government claimed Toroland in the place of the two other colonies. The French claim made was no more acceptable than the first, on several reasons.

Mr. MURLIN dwelt on the essential difference between the two kinds of compensation claimed by Italy - i.e., frontier modifications in Jubaland and Libya on the one hand, Toroland on the other. The two positions were irreconcilable in the terms of Article 13, and Italy must take her choice.

MR. CRESPI thought the allocation of Benghazi, Misratah and Ghadames and the extension of Tripoli towards Tibesti, could not take the place of the compensation requested by Italy from France.

MR. PIACENTINI added that the alteration here proposed by France only affected a small part of Tibesti. The route from Tripoli to Ghadames had already been attributed to Italy in 1916.

MR. PERETTI stated that he had found no trace of any agreement of that kind at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

LORD MILLER proposed to close the Meeting and suspend the work of the Commission. Since it had been found impossible to reach an agreement all that the Commission could do was to submit a report containing a summary of its discussions to the Supreme Interallied Council.

The Commission agreed with this opinion and appointed MR. VANSITTART and MR. PIACENTINI to prepare a draft of Report to be submitted to the members of the Commission.

The Meeting rose at 7.30 p.m.

After having divided the administration of the former German colonies in Africa between France and Great Britain the Supreme Interallied Council, at its meeting of 7th May 1919, considered that Italy might avail herself of Article 15 of the Treaty signed at London on 26th April 1915, which ran as follows:-

"In the event of France and Great Britain increasing their African colonial possessions at the expense of Germany, these two Powers acknowledge in principle that Italy might claim some reasonable compensation, especially as regards settlement in her favour of questions concerning the frontiers of the Italian colonies of Eritrea, Somaliland and Libya and the colonies bordering on France and Great Britain."

In accordance with this decision of 7th May 1919, Mr. Henry Simon (French Colonial Minister), Lord Milner (British Secretary of State for the Colonies) and Mr. Crespi (Italian Food Minister) duly accredited by their Governments and assisted by technical delegates met at the Colonial Office, Paris, with Lord Milner in the Chair, on 15th, 19th, 27th and 30th May 1919, to determine the territorial compensations in Africa which might be granted to Italy under Article 15 of the Treaty of 1915.

At the first meeting, Mr. CRESPI explained the claims of his Government, which included:-

(1) Rectification of the Franco-Italian and Italo-Anglo-Egyptian frontiers of Libya;

(2) Incorporation of French and British Somaliland in the Italian possessions including the ports of Jibuti, Zeilah and Berbera and the Franco-Ethiopian railway.

(3) Cession of territory, including the right bank of the Juba, the port of Kismayo and a district of about 60,000 square miles, belonging to the colony of British East Africa.

The representative of the French Government agreed to the frontier rectification claimed for Libya, subject to deciding on the spot the new boundary line which would in any case leave Hassi-Imlal and Janou, as well as the caravan route connecting these two points, to France. The representative of the

British Government also agreed to the rectification of the boundary between Libya and Egypt, including the oasis of *Jaghub* ~~Siwah~~ *Siwah*. The representative of Great Britain also gave his consent to the cession to Italy, subject to certain guarantees in favour of English nationals, of the port of Kismayu, the right bank of the Juba and a district west of that river belonging to the Valley of the Juba and representing an Area of about 21,000 square miles.

The French and British representatives pointed out, however, that total incorporation of French and British Somaliland in the Italian possessions would exceed the scope of frontier rectifications referred to in Article 13 of the Treaty of 1916. Such a concession would also mean that Ethiopia would be completely surrounded by Italian possessions, notwithstanding the guarantees actually given by the three Powers by the Agreement of 15th December, 1906. Moreover, France would be absolutely unable to give up Jibuti in view of the important interests involved.

Those interests consist mainly in the fact that the Port of Jibuti is the only French port of call on the Far East and Madagascar route.

Moreover, the railway from Jibuti to Addis-~~Ababa~~ *Ababa* is all the more important for France as it is the only railway between the Eastern coast of Africa and Ethiopia. If she lost that line, France - to whom alone the merit of its construction is due - would at the same time and contrary to the general tenour of the 1906 agreement, give up the economic influence and interests she has acquired in Ethiopia.

The British representative, in view of the fact that the French Government (for reasons which cannot be recognized) was unable to make any concessions whatever on the French Somaliland coast, stated that he was not prepared to make any concessions in British Somaliland, since the ports of Zeilah and Berbera were required by Great Britain to maintain relations between Ethiopia and the Gulf of Aden.

Mr. CRESPI, whilst noting the fact that the representatives

of France and Great Britain could not agree entirely with the Italian demands, nevertheless insisted that those claims should be accepted as a whole, since Article 13 of the Treaty of London should not, in his opinion, be taken in its literal sense, chiefly for the following reasons:-

(1) Article 13 established that equitable compensation should be due to Italy in the event of France and Great Britain increasing their colonial possessions at the expense of Germany.

It is true that the same article added by way of explanation, that Italy would "especially" have the right to claim the settlement in her favour of questions concerning the frontiers of her colonies. But a general principle existed by which Italy should receive fair compensation in Africa, i.e., in proportion to her sacrifices and contributions to the common war on the one hand, and to the advantages acquired by the Allies on the other hand.

(2) The Italian programme did not in any way aim at political supremacy in Ethiopia or an attack on the independence and sovereignty of that State. Italy only desired, in an entirely reasonable manner, to improve her colonies of Eritrea and Somaliland by connecting them with the neighbouring colonies of the French Somali coast and British Somaliland, in order to create one organic and fertile whole.

(3) The objections raised by the French Government with regard to the necessity for keeping Jibuti as port of call and the proprietorship of the Addis-Ababa railway, did not appear to the Italian Government such as to prevent France from agreeing to the demand put forward by Italy. Italy would be expected to cede to France sufficient land, in the Jibuti district, for setting up of a coal depot and of the stores necessary for her trade. The railway would be re-purchased by Italy, all shareholders and all interested parties fully compensated.

The representative of France and Great Britain, in order not to overstep the limits of the mandate given the Commission, did

not oppose the general observations submitted by Mr. Crespi, by putting forward similar observations, and especially by recalling the sacrifices imposed by the war on their respective countries. The representative of France, however, in order to emphasise his desire to discover a satisfactory settlement and further to meet the compensation demanded, offered to extend the rectification of the limitations east and south of Libya, asked for by Italy, in such wise as to include the oasis of Bordai and part of Tibesti. The Italian representative did not consider the advantages of this proposal of appreciable interest to his Government. Moreover, speaking on behalf of his Government, and in view of France's reiterated refusal to cede ~~any~~ ^{the} ~~territory~~ ^{territories} he withdrew his demand for rectification of one ~~of the~~ ^{of the} ~~frontiers~~ ^{frontiers} preferring that the question of ~~the~~ ^{the} colonies should remain ~~open~~ ^{open} between the Governments of France and Italy, independently of the Peace Treaty.

Mr. CRESPI added, however, that he was ready to abandon all claims to both French and British Somaliland if the former German colony of Togoland were placed under Italian administration. On this point, the Italian representative recalled that at the meeting of the Supreme Council on 7th May, Mr. Orlando had pointed out that Italy should not have been excluded from participation in the colonial mandate, for "if a mandate constitutes a charge, she is ready to bear her part of the responsibility; if, on the contrary, there are advantages attaching to a mandate, Italy is entitled to participate in these advantages."

The representatives of France and Great Britain were unable to take these new demands into consideration for the two following reasons, viz:-

On the one hand, the Italian claim to Togoland - substituted for that concerning French and English Somaliland - appeared to them equally impossible, as likewise exceeding the scope of the frontier rectifications provided for. Further, if Italy

not oppose the general observations submitted by Mr. Crespi, by putting forward similar observations, and especially by recalling the sacrifices imposed by the war on their respective countries. The representative of France, however, in order to emphasize his desire to discover a satisfactory settlement and further to note the benefits decidedly offered to extend the rectification of the limitations east and south of Libya asked for by Italy, in such wise as to include the oasis of Bordaï and part of Tibesti. The Italian representative did not consider the advantages of this proposal of appreciable interest to his Government. Moreover, speaking on behalf of his Government, and in view of France's reiterated refusal to give Jähuti, withdrew his demand for rectification of the W. Lybian ^{Libyan} frontier, preferring that the question of ~~the~~ ^{colonial} colonies should remain open between the Governments of France and Italy, independently of the Peace Treaty.

Mr. CRESPI added, however, that he was ready to abandon all claims to both French and British Somaliland if the former German colony of Togoland were placed under Italian administration. On this point, the Italian representative recalled that at the meeting of the Supreme Council on 7th May, Mr. Orlando had pointed out that Italy should not have been excluded from participation in the colonial mandate, for "if a mandate constitutes a charge, she is ready to bear her part of the responsibility; if, on the contrary, there are advantages attaching to a mandate, Italy is entitled to participate in these advantages."

The representatives of France and Great Britain were unable to take these new demands into consideration for the two following reasons, viz:-

On the one hand, the Italian demand for Togoland - substituted for that concerning French and English Somaliland - appeared to them equally inadvisable, as likewise exceeding the scope of the frontier rectifications provided for. Further, if Italy

received Togoland at the division of the former German colonies, she could no longer benefit by Article 13 of the Treaty of 1918. Indeed, according to the representatives of France and Great Britain, the terms of this Article entitled Italy to territorial compensation only in the event of her being excluded from administration of the former German colonies.

In view of these divergent points of view, the representatives of the Governments concerned decided to refer the question to the decision of the Supreme Interallied Council, summing up the discussion as it stood when the work of the Commission broke off, as follows:-

1. Subject to certain reservations, to be settled between the two Governments concerned, Italy accepts the British proposal concerning Jubaland.

2. Italy shall accept the rectification by Great Britain of the frontier between Cyrenaica and Egypt.

3. France and Great Britain cannot see their way to consent to the incorporation of French and British Somaliland within the Italian possessions.

4. Italy does not accept that portion of the Tebeesti country offered by France, and withdraws her request made to the latter Power regarding rectification of the western and southern frontiers of ^{Libya} ~~Libya~~; by so doing, Italy desires to keep the question of African colonies, raised between herself and France, open.

5. Italy would, in the event of the administration of the former German colony of Togoland being assigned to her, be prepared to renounce all claims on the French coast of Somaliland and also on British Somaliland.

The representatives of the United Kingdom considered the request to be inadmissible on the grounds which they received from the Supreme Interallied Council on 27th May, 1919.