

1935

SECRET

1935

38066/35

KENYA

38066/35

C0533/457

SITUATION IN ABYSSINIA:

EXPORT OF SUPPLIES (FOODSTUFFS, ETC.) FROM KENYA.

Previous

38066/35
(main file)
with major file
of 2/2/35

Subsequent

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| R309. | 29/5/35 |
| Mr Treeston | 30 |
| Mr Lee | 30 |
| Mr. Hood | 30 |
| Mr C. Bottomley | 30 |
| Mr. Maffey | 31 |
| Mr. Hood | 18/6 |
| Mr. Hood | 27/7 |
| Mr Treeston | 5 |
| Mr Lee | 24/7 |
| Mr Treeston | 24/7 |

2
1. O.A.G., Kenya - Secret - 13th May, 1935.

(Requests guidance as to attitude to be adopted)
(in the event of any large transfer of supplies)
(from Kenya to Italian territory or to Abyssinia.)

x Notably Wheat
meal and flour.
Tinned butter
Cheese
Prepared Coffee
Coconuts.

It is clear that in the six months
November 1934 - April 1935 additional supplies
of certain food stuffs have been exported from
Kenya to Italian Somaliland, but it will be seen
that the total of Kenya's domestic exports to Italian
Somaliland for those six months is roughly half of
the corresponding total exports for the full year 1934.

42083/35
Tanganyika.

The question raised in this despatch is
somewhat similar to a question raised on Tanganyika
papers, whether the Italians could acquire the
business of Meat Rations Ltd. for the purpose of
feeding their troops in Italian Somaliland.
Meat Rations Ltd. is the enterprise which has been
carrying on the business of preparing meats and
by-products derived from cattle purchased from
natives in Tanganyika. (The Company is heavily
indebted to Government.)

In the Minutes on 42083/35 Tanganyika it
was pointed out that we have refused to countenance
any more recruiting for Italy and it was suggested
that the supply of rations is very much on the same
footing. The principle as regards recruitment
was not considered important in the case of Meat
Rations Ltd. It was decided however that if the
Italians made any overtures to the Company the
matter would have to be referred to the Governor
before any decision could be reached.

AS

As regards Kenya, the O.A.G. asks for an indication of the attitude which the Government should adopt in the event of large transfers of food stuffs etc. to Italian or Abyssinian territory.

Provided the Colony's own supplies are not endangered and there is no sign of this, there seems no reason why Government should interfere in any way. It may be considered desirable however to obtain F.O. and W.O. views.

C.A. Freeston

29th May, 1935.

Until hostilities are actually declared, I don't see what reason the Kenya Govt could have for interfering in the trade between the Colony and its neighbours, or what legal power exists for any such interference. We had better consult F.O., but W.O. hardly come into it.

Freeston

30/5

I entirely agree with Mr. Freeston; it seems to me that we can make a clear distinction between (a) that may be called ordinary trade and (b) the supply of arms and ammunition and (c) the recruitment of natives as soldiers or labourers. We know that the direct and transit trade

trade between British Somaliland and Ethiopia has increased very largely in recent months (special consignments of motor trucks and petrol have recently been taken up to Ethiopia), but we have not thought it necessary to interfere in any way. I think that in writing to the Foreign Office we should say that the Secretary of State proposes to advise the O. G. that unless and until hostilities are actually declared there is no reason for interference with either the direct or ordinary trade between British Somaliland and Ethiopia concerned. We should also say that we are in correspondence to the Government of Ethiopia for his information.

Whee

30/5/35

But even if hostilities are declared would it be proper or right to interfere with the export of food supplies to the Italians or the Ethiopians? Abyssinia can't blockade Italian Somaliland and if we are neutral we can surely supply food and ordinary stuff. There would also be no crime in supplying munitions of war unless some League of Nations principle comes in or our Govt decides to prohibit the export of arms to either side.

? 10/10 as proposed

11/6/35

30/5

W.C.S.

30/5/35

W.C.S.

31/5

- 2 To Foreign Office (1/c 1) cons. } 4th June 1935
3 To Somaliland Govt (1/c 1 & 2) 4/11 }
EX

4. - Foreign Office - 13th June, 1935
 (obligations to terms of proposal)
 reply to Kenya.

Submit Draft
 C. Crossinitch
 18/6/35

5. To O. G. Kenya - Secret - 18 June 1935
 (Answering No. 1)
6. To the Foreign Office - 13/12 } Secret - 19/6/35
7. " " for. of Homeland - A }
 (2 copy copies of 5)
8. Acting Governor of Kenya - Secret - 27 June '35
 (Contracts for supply of bullocks to
 Station Fort.)

It is necessary, I think, to have
 a legal opinion and the views
 of F.O. on the contents of para 2.
 We are asked to answer the
 following question by telegram:-
 'If it is decided, on the outbreak of
 hostilities between Italy & Abyssinia,
 to forbid the export of foodstuffs
 from Kenya to the belligerent
 countries, what would be the
 position effect upon existing Kenya
 contracts?'

As regards para 3 of the Dispatch,
 we can inform the Gov. in
 due course of Mr Wade's views.
 C. Crossinitch
 5/7/35

Speke to Mr. Lee & Mr. Flood
 Copy 3 to F.O., asking for
 comments on para. 2, and request
 an early reply. Add that copy
 is being sent to U.O.

Copy circ. U.O. LF info.
 J. P. ...
 5/7/35

9. To Foreign Office - Secret - 11th July '35
 (2 copy copies of no. 8 for comments on para 2)
10. To War Office - Secret - 13/12 - 11th July '35
 (2 copy copies of 9 & encl)

Foreign Office - Secret - 22 July 1935.
 Matter would depend on position of Station Fort.
 after outbreak of hostilities is whether neutral
 or participating in action under Article
 16 of Covenant.

Presumably we cannot do otherwise
 than telegraph to Kenya on the
 lines of the second paragraph of
 the 1st letter.
 Submit draft telegram

C. Crossinitch
 24/7/35

Not very happy, but it is
 hard to see how in the present
 uncertain position F.O. can do

any thing else?

Copies of 8 and 7 this
tel. should go to Somalia
LF. A/1.

Whee

24.
Director
is ok

12. To Gov. Kenya. Tel no 192. Secret $\frac{25}{7}$
(answering no. 8) $\frac{85}{85}$
13. To former Somalia Secret. A-26/7/35
(with copies of 8 & 12)
- 26/7/55

C. O.

38066/1/31
Secret.

5
12

- Mr. Brown 24/7/35
- Mr. Lee 24
- Mr. Weston 25 June
- Mr. Parkinson.
- Sir G. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bottomley.
- Sir J. Shuckburgh
- Permt. U.S. of S.
- Parly. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

Called Secret
7.0 PM
25.7.35
dls

no. 192
Secret.

| |
|----------|
| C. D. |
| R 26 JUL |
| D 26 |

DRAFT.

(Tel.)

Minor
Matters.

(8)

If ~~any~~ specific enquiries
 are ~~made~~ ~~to~~ ~~Govt.~~
 conclusions should be ~~drawn~~
 Gov. is not in a position
 to indicate what might
 happen if ~~any~~ ~~one~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~lines~~
 were ~~crossed~~ ~~that~~ ~~commitments~~
 who ~~make~~ ~~these~~ ~~future~~
 commitments do so at
 their own risk.

Your Secret despatch
 27th June. It is not
 possible at present to
 give a definite answer
 to the question in
 paragraph 2 since the
 position must inevitably
 depend on the situation
 which arises between
 Great Britain and Italy
 in the event of an
 outbreak of hostilities
 and it is not possible
 to say at present what
 that situation ~~would~~ ^{might} be.

Secret.

FURTHER ACTION.

Copy to 30.
L. Secret
Ref. 11.

Copy P. to this L.
Somerset At. Secret

Copy to Gov. of Ind. (no. 13)

In any further communication
on this subject, please quote

No. J 2815/1/1.

and address—

not to any person by name

but to—

"The Under-Secretary of State,"
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

SECRET.

6 11
FOREIGN OFFICE.

S.W.1.

22nd July, 1935.

Sir,

(9) With reference to your secret letter No. 38066/1/35 of the 11th July regarding the position in the event of hostilities between Italy and Ethiopia in respect of contracts entered into previous to the outbreak of such hostilities for the export of cattle from Kenya to the Italian Somaliland or Ethiopia, I am directed by Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare to say that the matter would depend entirely on the position of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom after the outbreak of hostilities. If His Majesty's Government were to adopt an attitude of neutrality, there would be no objection to the carrying out of the contracts. If, on the other hand, His Majesty's Government were to participate in action against Italy under Article 16 of the Covenant, Sir Samuel Hoare is advised that it must be assumed that steps would be taken to prevent the contracts from being carried out; for as the cattle are to be supplied to the Italian Government and are doubtless intended for the use of the troops stationed in Africa, it is unlikely that the transaction would be covered by any exceptions which might be made to the operation of Article 16 as regards the supply of foodstuffs to Italy.

2.

The Under-Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

7

2. In Sir Samuel Hoare's opinion, however, it is undesirable in the existing circumstances that these possibilities should be discussed in correspondence with the Governor of Kenya, and I am to suggest for the consideration of the Secretary of State for the Colonies that the Governor should be informed that it is impossible at present to give a definite answer to his question, since the position with regard to the matter must inevitably depend on the situation which arose as between Great Britain and Italy in the event of an outbreak of hostilities, and it is not possible to say at present what that situation would be.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Ronald Campbell

FOREIGN OFFICE,

S.W.1.

SECRET.

22nd July, 1935.

Sir,

With reference to your secret letter No. 38066/1/35 of the 11th July regarding the position in the event of hostilities between Italy and Ethiopia in respect of contracts entered into previous to the outbreak of such hostilities for the export of cattle from Kenya to the Italian Somaliland or Ethiopia, I am directed by Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare to say that the matter would depend entirely on the position of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom after the outbreak of hostilities. If His Majesty's Government were to adopt an attitude of neutrality, there would be no objection to the carrying out of the contracts. If, on the other hand, His Majesty's Government were to participate in action against Italy under Article 16 of the Covenant, Sir Samuel Hoare is advised that it must be assumed that steps would be taken to prevent the contracts from being carried out; for as the cattle are to be supplied to the Italian Government and are doubtless intended for the use of the troops stationed in Africa, it is unlikely that the transaction would be covered by any exceptions which might be made to the operation of Article 16 as regards the supply of foodstuffs to Italy.

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The Under-Secretary of State,

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9

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I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

G. O.

38066/1/35

Mr. *Frederick Sp.*
Mr. *Frederick Sp.*
Mr.

Sir C. Parkinson.
Sir G. Tomlinson.
Sir C. Bottomley.
Sir J. Shuckburgh.
Permu. U.S. of S.
Parly. U.S. of S.
Secretary of State.

C.D.
R 8-JUL
D 11

cust by Hall.

Secret

11th July 1935

Sir,

St 4

I am etc to refer to the

DRAFT.

The U.S. of S.
Foreign Office

27th June 1935
(8)

Correspondence terminating with
the letter from this department
of the 19th of June
regarding the attitude to
be adopted by the Government
of Kenya in the event
of any large movement
of foodstuffs or other
goods from Kenya to
Italian Somaliland or to
Ethiopia, and to
transmit to you to be
this before Secretary
Sir Samuel Hoare, a
copy of a further

FURTHER ACTION.

copy w/enc
to W.O. of
inf.

copy to W.O. of
inf.

despatch from the Acting
Governor of Kenya.

2. Mr Macdonald would be
glad to receive the comments
of Sir Samuel Hoare on the
second paragraph of Mr Wade's
despatch. As the matter is of
some urgency an early reply
would be much appreciated.

3. A copy of this letter is being
sent to the War Office.

Dear Sir,

(Sgd) J. E. V. Flood

AIR MAIL

KENYA
No.
SECRET.



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
NAIROBI
KENYA

RECEIVED
25 JUL 1935
C. O. REGY

27th June, 1935.

Sir,

(5)
780 66/11-1

Copy to Governor, Somaliland - No. 131

I have the honour to refer to your Secret despatch of the 18th June regarding the attitude to be adopted by this Government in the event of any large movement of foodstuffs or other goods from this Colony to Italian Somaliland or to Ethiopia.

2. At an interview with stock interests on the 21st June I was given to understand that contracts were about to be secured for the supply of a minimum of 1,500 bullocks a month to the Italian Government at Massawa and Mogadiscio.

I observe from your despatch that there will be no present objection to the export of the cattle. I shall, however, be glad of some indication, if possible, as to what would be the position, in the event of hostilities, in regard to contracts entered into prior to their outbreak.

It will be appreciated that a contractor would be placed in an unfortunate position if, having undertaken commitments for the local supply of the cattle required, he should subsequently be precluded from fulfilling his contract with the Italian Government.

5. I am not aware whether the Italian Authorities have utilised stock available in Italian Somaliland; but, generally, I would observe that, in view of the fact that in Italian Somaliland, and particularly in the

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

MALCOLM MACDONALD, M.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, S.W. 1

2.

in the former Jubaland Province of this Colony, there always have been, and are now, large numbers of Somali stock which could presumably be requisitioned, the need of the Italian Somaliland Government for meat supplies from outside sources may have some significance; and you may care to bring this aspect to the notice of the War Office.

4. It will be appreciated if a reply to paragraph 2 could be furnished by telegram.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

Adri. Wade

ACTING GOVERNOR.

38066/1/35

C. O.

Mr. *Swanwick* 15/6/35
Mr. *Flood* 18/6/35
Mr.

C.D.
R 18 JUN
D

Sir C. Parkinson.
Sir G. Tomlinson.
Sir C. Bottomley.
Sir J. Shackburgh.
Permt. U.S. of S.
Parly. U.S. of S.
Secretary of State.

Air Mail

18th June, 1935.

Sir:

I have etc to acknowledge the receipt of your (secret) despatch of the 13th of May in which you asked for guidance with regard to the attitude which should be adopted by your Government in the event of any large ^{movement} transfer of food stuffs from Kenya to Italian Somaliland or to Ethiopia.

DRAFT.
Kenya -
OAG
Secret.

no. 6
secret
to
copy to 70.
for handling

or other goods

In my opinion, with which the ~~my views on this matter~~ which are shared by the ^{agrees} S of S. for F.A. are that unless and until hostilities are declared there is no reason for interference in so far as transfers of foodstuffs, etc., between Kenya

FURTHER ACTION.

Copy to 70. 46.
Copy to
for Somaliland
46. Ref. 3.

Kenya and the neighbouring territories
concerned. It will be
appreciated, however, that
the matter will call for
further consideration if
and when hostilities are
declared. commence.

Yours etc

(Sgd.) MALCOLM MacDONALD

C. O.

Mr. ~~Spencer~~ 1935 38065/1/35.
Mr. ~~Wright~~ J.P.
Mr.
Sir C. Parkinson.
Sir C. Tomlinson.
Sir C. Bottomley.
Sir J. Stuchburgh.
Permt. U.S. of S.
Party. U.S. of S.
Secretary of State.

Handwritten: 142
Stamp: O.D. JUN 3 1935
Handwritten: 55

DOWNING STREET,
4th June, 1935.

SECRET.

Sir,

DRAFT.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,
FOREIGN OFFICE.

I am etc. to refer to the
correspondence regarding the present
dispute between the Italian and
Ethiopian Governments and to trans-
mit to you, to be laid before Secre-
tary Sir John Simon, a copy of
a despatch from the Acting Governor
of Kenya requesting guidance with
regard to the attitude which should
be adopted in the event of any large
transfer of food stuffs from Kenya
to Italian Somaliland or to Ethiopia.

Handwritten: 13th June 1935
Handwritten: 4/6/35
Handwritten: Copy to Amuland 1/1

FURTHER ACTION.

Copy corres. to
Governor, Somaliland
for inf.

2. Provided Sir John Simon
sees no objection, Sir Philip
Cunliffe-Lister proposes to reply
to the Acting Governor
that unless and until hostilities
are

are

are declared, he sees no reason for

interference in this matter in so far

transfer of land etc.
as ~~concerns~~ *lands* between Kenya and her

neighbours is concerned.

I am, etc.

(Signed) J. E. W. FLOOD

AIR MAIL

KENYA
No.
SECRET.



4c.
15
1
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
NAIROBI
KENYA

RECEIVED
27 MAY 1935
C. O. REGY

13th May, 1935.

Sir,

With reference to Mr. Wade's Secret despatch of the 24th April, relative to the Italian-Abyssinian situation, I have the honour to state that it is understood that a Mr. R. Anderson of Messrs. Mitchell Cotts' Nairobi branch has made two journeys by British owned aeroplane to the neighbouring Italian territories. It is considered that his visits are concerned with the possibilities of selling foodstuffs in Italian territory.

2. Recent export figures of foodstuffs to Italian East Africa furnished by the Commissioner of Customs show:-

4/6/35-
A/1
Copy to F.O.
Copy to Amalind

| Commodity | Domestic exports for the period November, 1934, to April, 1935. | Corresponding totals for the full year 1934. |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| <u>Italian Somaliland.</u> | <u>Cwts.</u> | <u>Cwts.</u> |
| Maize | 2782 | 9196 |
| Wheat Meal & Flour | 1068 | 22 |
| Butter (tinned) | 26 | 4 |
| Cheese | 80 | 2 |
| Coffee (Buni) | 2818 | 6396 |
| Coffee (prepared) | 49 | - |
| Potatoes | 2392 | 1968 |
| Tea | 244 | 351 |
| Sesame Seeds | 27560 | 48660 |
| Coconuts | 1800 | 20 |
| Total | <u>58819</u> | <u>66619</u> |
| <u>Eritrea.</u> | | |
| Maize | 980 | - |
| Coffee (hulled) | 5097 | 9390 |
| Total | <u>6077</u> | <u>9390</u> |

/s. I have

MAJOR THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
SIR PHILIP CUNLIFFE-LISTER, P.C., G.B.E., M.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET,
LONDON, S.W. 1

2.

3. I have deemed it advisable not to question Mr. Anderson direct upon his business, for which it is said he has received permission from Rome, but, having regard to the fact that this Colony has frontiers with both Italian and Abyssinian territory, I should be glad of an indication of the attitude which this Government should adopt in the event of any large transfer of foodstuffs, etc. to either territory.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,



ACTING GOVERNOR'S DEPUTY.

13th May, 1955.

Sir,

With reference to Mr. Wade's Secret despatch of the 24th April, relative to the Italian-Abyssinian situation, I have the honour to state that it is understood that a Mr. R. Anderson of Messrs. Mitchell Cotts' Nairobi branch has made two journeys by British owned aeroplane to the neighbouring Italian territories. It is considered that his visits are concerned with the possibilities of selling foodstuffs in Italian territory.

2. Recent export figures of foodstuffs to Italian East Africa furnished by the Commissioner of Customs show:-

| Commodity | Domestic exports for the period November, 1954, to April, 1955. | Corresponding totals for the full year 1954. |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| <u>Italian Somaliland.</u> | | |
| | <u>Cwts.</u> | <u>Cwts.</u> |
| Maize | 2782 | 9196 |
| Wheat Meal & Flour | 1068 | 22 |
| Butter (tinned) | 26 | 4 |
| Cheese | 80 | 2 |
| Coffee (Buni) | 2818 | 6596 |
| Coffee (prepared) | 49 | - |
| Potatoes | 2392 | 1968 |
| Tea | 244 | 351 |
| Sesame Seeds | 27560 | 48660 |
| Coconuts | 1800 | 20 |
| Total | <u>58819</u> | <u>66619</u> |
| <u>Eritrea.</u> | | |
| Maize | 980 | - |
| Coffee (hulled) | <u>5097</u> | <u>9590</u> |
| Total | <u>6077</u> | <u>9590</u> |

/S. I have

18
and

2.

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I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

H. G. FILLING

ACTING GOVERNOR'S DEPUTY.