

KENYA
6827

C.O.
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FOREIGN

1921

2TH FEBRUARY

Next previous Paper.

5140

SOUTHERN ABYSSINIAN BOUNDARY

The copy of desp. from Adis Ababa enclosing memo. by Major Hawkins suggesting that such territorial compensation required by Abyssinia should be at expense of Sudan rather than Kenya. Also fws copy of tel. ~~Cairo~~ Cairo, that in view of this alternative it is not improbable Adis Ababa may defer observations on C.O. letter of 25th Jan. unless otherwise instructed.

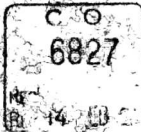
Mr. Balfour

I put up a map of Abyssinia showing the country in question. Major Dodds has sent a copy of his desp. ^(of the Nile Sudan) to Nairobi, and there is some suggestion to the effect that we should wait.

The point for Kenya is whether ¹⁵ ¹¹ ²¹ ²⁶ ³¹ ³⁶ ⁴¹ ⁴⁶ ⁵¹ ⁵⁶ ⁶¹ ⁶⁶ ⁷¹ ⁷⁶ ⁸¹ ⁸⁶ ⁹¹ ⁹⁶ ¹⁰¹ ¹⁰⁶ ¹¹¹ ¹¹⁶ ¹²¹ ¹²⁶ ¹³¹ ¹³⁶ ¹⁴¹ ¹⁴⁶ ¹⁵¹ ¹⁵⁶ ¹⁶¹ ¹⁶⁶ ¹⁷¹ ¹⁷⁶ ¹⁸¹ ¹⁸⁶ ¹⁹¹ ¹⁹⁶ ²⁰¹ ²⁰⁶ ²¹¹ ²¹⁶ ²²¹ ²²⁶ ²³¹ ²³⁶ ²⁴¹ ²⁴⁶ ²⁵¹ ²⁵⁶ ²⁶¹ ²⁶⁶ ²⁷¹ ²⁷⁶ ²⁸¹ ²⁸⁶ ²⁹¹ ²⁹⁶ ³⁰¹ ³⁰⁶ ³¹¹ ³¹⁶ ³²¹ ³²⁶ ³³¹ ³³⁶ ³⁴¹ ³⁴⁶ ³⁵¹ ³⁵⁶ ³⁶¹ ³⁶⁶ ³⁷¹ ³⁷⁶ ³⁸¹ ³⁸⁶ ³⁹¹ ³⁹⁶ ⁴⁰¹ ⁴⁰⁶ ⁴¹¹ ⁴¹⁶ ⁴²¹ ⁴²⁶ ⁴³¹ ⁴³⁶ ⁴⁴¹ ⁴⁴⁶ ⁴⁵¹ ⁴⁵⁶ ⁴⁶¹ ⁴⁶⁶ ⁴⁷¹ ⁴⁷⁶ ⁴⁸¹ ⁴⁸⁶ ⁴⁹¹ ⁴⁹⁶ ⁵⁰¹ ⁵⁰⁶ ⁵¹¹ ⁵¹⁶ ⁵²¹ ⁵²⁶ ⁵³¹ ⁵³⁶ ⁵⁴¹ ⁵⁴⁶ ⁵⁵¹ ⁵⁵⁶ ⁵⁶¹ ⁵⁶⁶ ⁵⁷¹ ⁵⁷⁶ ⁵⁸¹ ⁵⁸⁶ ⁵⁹¹ ⁵⁹⁶ ⁶⁰¹ ⁶⁰⁶ ⁶¹¹ ⁶¹⁶ ⁶²¹ ⁶²⁶ ⁶³¹ ⁶³⁶ ⁶⁴¹ ⁶⁴⁶ ⁶⁵¹ ⁶⁵⁶ ⁶⁶¹ ⁶⁶⁶ ⁶⁷¹ ⁶⁷⁶ ⁶⁸¹ ⁶⁸⁶ ⁶⁹¹ ⁶⁹⁶ ⁷⁰¹ ⁷⁰⁶ ⁷¹¹ ⁷¹⁶ ⁷²¹ ⁷²⁶ ⁷³¹ ⁷³⁶ ⁷⁴¹ ⁷⁴⁶ ⁷⁵¹ ⁷⁵⁶ ⁷⁶¹ ⁷⁶⁶ ⁷⁷¹ ⁷⁷⁶ ⁷⁸¹ ⁷⁸⁶ ⁷⁹¹ ⁷⁹⁶ ⁸⁰¹ ⁸⁰⁶ ⁸¹¹ ⁸¹⁶ ⁸²¹ ⁸²⁶ ⁸³¹ ⁸³⁶ ⁸⁴¹ ⁸⁴⁶ ⁸⁵¹ ⁸⁵⁶ ⁸⁶¹ ⁸⁶⁶ ⁸⁷¹ ⁸⁷⁶ ⁸⁸¹ ⁸⁸⁶ ⁸⁹¹ ⁸⁹⁶ ⁹⁰¹ ⁹⁰⁶ ⁹¹¹ ⁹¹⁶ ⁹²¹ ⁹²⁶ ⁹³¹ ⁹³⁶ ⁹⁴¹ ⁹⁴⁶ ⁹⁵¹ ⁹⁵⁶ ⁹⁶¹ ⁹⁶⁶ ⁹⁷¹ ⁹⁷⁶ ⁹⁸¹ ⁹⁸⁶ ⁹⁹¹ ⁹⁹⁶ ¹⁰⁰¹ ¹⁰⁰⁶ ¹⁰¹¹ ¹⁰¹⁶ ¹⁰²¹ ¹⁰²⁶ ¹⁰³¹ ¹⁰³⁶ ¹⁰⁴¹ ¹⁰⁴⁶ ¹⁰⁵¹ ¹⁰⁵⁶ ¹⁰⁶¹ ¹⁰⁶⁶ ¹⁰⁷¹ ¹⁰⁷⁶ ¹⁰⁸¹ ¹⁰⁸⁶ ¹⁰⁹¹ ¹⁰⁹⁶ ¹¹⁰¹ ¹¹⁰⁶ ¹¹¹¹ ¹¹¹⁶ ¹¹²¹ ¹¹²⁶ ¹¹³¹ ¹¹³⁶ ¹¹⁴¹ ¹¹⁴⁶ ¹¹⁵¹ ¹¹⁵⁶ ¹¹⁶¹ ¹¹⁶⁶ ¹¹⁷¹ ¹¹⁷⁶ ¹¹⁸¹ ¹¹⁸⁶ ¹¹⁹¹ 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FOREIGN OFFICE,
S.W.1.

12th February, 1921.



Sir:-

With reference to your letter No. 2831/20/21 of 25th January relative to the Southern boundary of Abyssinia, I am directed by Earl Curzon of Kedleston to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch, No. 4 of January 6th, received from His Majesty's late Chargé d'Affaires at Adis Ababa enclosing a memorandum by His Majesty's Consul at Meji in which the suggestion is made that in any negotiations with the Abyssinian Government such territorial compensation as they may require should be offered to them at the expense of the Sudan rather than of Kenya Colony.

2. I am also to transmit herewith copy of a telegram asking His Majesty's High Commissioner for his observations on this proposal, and to observe that in view of the alternative scheme now submitted it is not probable that His Majesty's Minister at Adis Ababa may defer submitting his observations on the scheme outlined in your letter under reference unless he is otherwise instructed.

I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

R. Sperling

The Under Secretary of State,

Colonial Office.

WESTERN LEGATION,
ADIS ABABA,
January 5th, 1930.

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My Lord,

With reference to the proposal for a rectification and fresh fixation of the southern frontier of Abyssinia, I beg the honour to transmit herewith for Your Majesty's information a document, an opinion by Major G. H. ... on this subject.

I am inclined to think that Major ... proposal offers a solution for the rectification of the frontier which would be the most acceptable to the Abyssinian Government.

As I have shown in my report No. 122 and 123 it was with the greatest reluctance that the Abyssinian Government accepted to recognize the frontier and to issue orders that the territory so laid down by treaty should be respected, thereby giving away, as they put it, much country which a large number of Abyssinians had come to regard as Abyssinian territory.

From the remarks of the Premier *Mejta Giorgis* at the last meeting of the Government on the Magi question, reported in my report No. 122 of December 5th, it is obvious that he at least and probably other members of the

Government

The Right Honourable,

The Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

cc. cc. cc.

His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs.

Government hope one day to recover the territory lost to
 them.

I venture to think, therefore, if the ~~British~~ author-
 ities view the suggestion with favour that we are more
 likely to obtain with less difficulty a satisfactory
 rectification on the Kenia frontier by offering compensa-
 tion at the expense of the Sudan.

The Abyssinian Government agreed in principle to
 a re-delimitation and they continue to assert that the present
 frontier line is only of a temporary nature until it has
 been properly demarcated by both Abyssinian and British
 Commissioners in concert.

It is on this argument that I venture to think that
 we should proceed with our negotiations for a rectification.
 But before entering seriously into these negotiations we
 should be prepared with definite proposals and decide
 what we require and what we are prepared to concede.

I have not lost sight of the fact that His Majesty's
 Government are of the opinion that any cession of territory
 by the Abyssinian Government should be regarded as compensa-
 tion to His Majesty's Government for the numerous incursions
 that have been made by marauding Abyssinians into British
 territory.

I venture to suggest however that the adoption of
 this attitude in its full sense might be deferred until
 negotiations are well advanced and it was found necessary to
 do so, as I fear, were we to tell the Abyssinian Government
 now that we intended to regard any cession of territory
 as compensation, they would oppose our desire for a rectifi-
 cation by every means in their power.

I am enclosing copies of this despatch with Major
Kendall, Major-General de Gales, Major-General, Balfour and
Balfour.

I am, Sir, Sir,
With the kindest regards,

Yours,

Your obedient servant,

J.H. Dodds.

Signed. J.H. Dodds.

BRITISH LEGATION,
ADIS ABABA
December 3rd, 1920.

MEMORANDUM.

Possible adjustments of frontier between the Governments
of the Sudan and Kenya Colony and Ethiopia.

1. SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT SITUATION.

From the north a working and apparently satisfactory boundary appears to exist from Hittrea to the junction of the Libor and Akobo rivers.

From this point southward to Lake Rudolf and thence eastward to Moyale Post British Administration does not approach nearer than 150 miles and is often at a much greater distance.

From Moyale area eastward the border is regularly patrolled and appears satisfactory.

It is highly undesirable that we should make any adjustment of frontier under which we hand over to Abyssinia tribes or clans to whom we have promised protection. It is therefore clear that, should either the Sudan or Kenya Colony wish to adjust their present administered frontiers any compensation offered should be in the area which we have never previously administered, i.e. between Akobo Post and Moyale.

2. ADJUSTMENTS REQUIRED.

1. By the Sudan.

No information is available as to whether the Sudan Government desire to adjust any part of their northern frontier with Ethiopia at the expense of the southern

or whether any other concessions are desired from the Abyssinian Government.

'B'. By Kenya Colony.

Adjustment here is clearly needed and has been the subject of much controversy and correspondence for a number of years.

An ideal, conceived by Captain Hodson, the British Consul for Southern Abyssinia, would be that the whole of the Boran Country be transferred to Kenya at the expense of considerable compensation to Abyssinia immediately west or east of Lake Rudolf or both. This scheme has been submitted to the Foreign Office but no reply has yet been received.

On the other hand a workable and fairly satisfactory frontier for Kenya Colony has been worked out by Mr. Kittermaster whose unique experience in that area over a long period gives his scheme great weight. This scheme is given in detail in Colonial Office Letter No. S135/V15/1. 22623/1920 dated 17.3.20 to the Foreign Office.

His idea was to compensate the Abyssinians by ceding to them a stretch of country east of Lake Rudolf.

The defect of this scheme is that the country east of Lake Rudolf is well known to be arid desert both by ourselves and the Abyssinians and for the most part is uninhabited.

The idea of compensating Abyssinia North West of the Lake Rudolf does not seem to have been mooted.

This would only be possible should the Sudan not desire to see the country for adjustments of their own frontier or concessions farther north.

No scheme can be properly worked out without full

reports on the country available to be used as compensation. This is examined in the following paragraph.

2. UNADMINISTERED BRITISH TERRITORY.

Though the unadministered British Territory is large comprising a large part of the upper Nile and Hadif basins, the ~~most fertile~~ areas are comparatively small. They consist of:-

(A). The Nodinga plateau and part of Southern Toposa the administration of which the Sudan Government are about to undertake and which therefore need not be considered.

(B). The area commonly known as the 'Noma Plateau'. The British area of the Noma Plateau consists of about 2000 square miles, roughly 80 miles from north to south and 40 miles from east to west, said to average 5000 feet above the sea.

It is the extreme south-west corner of the great Abyssinian tableland.

From the reports of travellers it would appear to show the same characteristics as the rest of the Abyssinian plateau and to have been rich in cattle, barley, wheat and native cultivation.

For many years now this country has been ruled, and administered by Abyssinian Governors as part of Abyssinia and no action has been taken by the British Government.

Even so, owing to continued Abyssinian raids from this plateau to the west and south west, the British Government has taken action and, on the appointment of a British Consul at Magi, propose to compel the Abyssinians to respect the frontierline as laid down by treaty.

MULTA

The Abyssinian Government have expressed their willingness to consider the appointment of a joint Boundary Commission.

It is on this account that I consider that we should be ready with such proposals as the Sudan and Kenya Governments may wish to put forward, for the adjustment of their frontiers. Manifestly no such opportunity will occur again once the Boundary Commission has completed its work.

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In seeing any part of the Boma plateau in view of adjustments in favour of themselves or Kenya Colony, Sudan lose the highest and probably the healthiest 20 square miles of their territory. On the other hand, the Boma plateau, from the Sudan point of view, is quite isolated by a belt of waterless desert and, beyond having certain possibilities as a health resort in the far future, is of no immediate value to them.

It must however be remembered that it is inevitable that the Sudan Government must at some future time establish a frontier post in this area, and an enclave for it on the plateau together with walls, grazing grounds and a cultivatable area must be retained.

Should we fail to do this we should again find ourselves in the unenviable position in which we are at present - hanging almost by our ankles on the edge of the Abyssinian highlands - with insufficient water, and cultivatable land on which to maintain even the geriatrics.

Even by retaining a considerable and valuable area we should still have a large area for possible Abyssinia for which it should be possible to really valuable concessions elsewhere with no apparent loss to ourselves.

(A. 750/22.1)

~~TO BE DESTROYED~~

Cypher telegram to Lord Alisby (Cairo.)

Foreign Office, February 11th 1921. 3.40 p.m.

No. 98. (7).

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Re: Arab dispatch No. 4 (of January 21st.)
adjustment of Abyssinian frontier.)

Please furnish your observations as regards
Mr. Huxford's proposals.

.....

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