



EAST AFR. PROT.
22885

C.O.
22885
5 JUL 13

Foreign Office

1913

14 July

Last previous Paper.

22-130

Situation on S. Abyssinian frontiers.

Seals dep. p. Adm. Akaba having had Mr. Hooper has given permission for an Abyssinian force of 500 men to cross over into Br. territory for purpose of capturing the raiders responsible for Capt. Pylson's death. Proposal to approve action, which however must not occur again.

~~Interdict~~ In y. Fiddle

20

The action directed on 22388 does not appear to be affected by the & I have drafted.

for/ 22730

As to this paper, we must recognise I suppose, but I do not see that good is to come of it. It is all very well to say that the action proposed by the whole on the Abyssinian border, but at the best it means that we are unable to stop our own courts & at the worst it means that the Abyssinians will never get in touch with the offenders but will carry on offensive operations. The one fact that they have done so will make the Abyssinian Govt to take credit for their current endeavours to make reparation of the whole to Govt. - 1807/13

14 July

A. Apr. Th...
to be with
them W.S.R.

100,000 W.S. 20-007 - 50
41,000 11/12 A.S.E.W.

Next subsequent Paper

20.
23487

5/7/13

20

to meet so far as I am concerned
I am not going. Mr. H. R. Wight
took out at our meeting at the 7.0,
the matter in the way, with understand +
will think that the abeyance ^{at the time} are
matters of the situation. ~~at the time~~

H. R. W.

7/27/13

Pr. 7.7.13

U. J. 2.13

68.7.13.

I agree: tell F.O. so

H 8.7.13

22085

22885 230
5 JUL 13

In the further communication
on this subject, please quote

No. 29845/13.

and address
The Under-Secretary of State
Colonial Office,
London.



FOREIGN OFFICE
4th July, 1913.

100

Sir:-

I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, with reference to the letter from this Office of the 30th ultimo,* copy of a further despatch which has been received from His Majesty's Minister at Adis Ataba from which it appears that Mr. Thesiger has given permission for an Abyssinian force of three hundred men to cross over into British territory for the purpose of capturing the raiders responsible for Captain Aylmer's death.

Sir E. Grey proposes to reply to Mr. Thesiger by telegraph that in the exceptional circumstances he approves of the course which he has taken but that permission for an armed force to cross the frontier should not be given again as such action is liable to misinterpretation by the British frontier tribes.

I am to enquire whether Mr. Secretary Harcourt concurs in a telegram being addressed to Mr. Thesiger

in

* No 22306

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

(29886/13)

in this sense,

I am, etc

Sir,

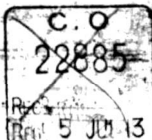
Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

Wangley

No. 36

ADIS ABABA.



June 1913.

Sir:-

I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of my despatch dated the 5th instant to the Governor of the East African Protectorate informing him of the action I have taken to obtain satisfaction on the frontier for the death of Captain Aylmer at the hands of one of the numerous bands of outlaws now infesting the frontier.

I feel convinced that this action offers the only possible hope of a final solution of this question and trust that you will approve it.

I hold however that apart from everything which the Abyssinian Government may do on the frontier it is very essential we should ask for heavy compensation from the Central Government. As I pointed out to the Ministers for War and Foreign Affairs three days ago we agreed to put aside the question of the rectification of the frontier indefinitely, only on their promise that they would take all measures in their power to put an end to raids over the border and to recall the hunters.

For over a year now I have warned them incessantly that their failure to keep their promise was increasing the danger of complications between our two Governments and that unless they took serious ac-

tion

The Right Honourable

Sir E. Grey, Bart., K.G.

&c., &c., &c.,

action at once their negligence to do so might well bring about the very thing that has now unfortunately occurred, and beyond vain promises they have remained deaf to my representations.

The responsibility rests upon the Central Government and, whatever action they may take now upon the frontier, this responsibility must be brought home to them and the compensation which is decided upon exacted to the uttermost.

For the loss of British lives at Odongo no compensation was asked for, and I feel now I was wrong in not urging it as the Central Government failed to take the action we desired with the result that the Anuak tribes are in open revolt, Gambela was in danger and Mr Walker might well have shared Captain Aylmer's fate.

By now the gunboat for which I telegraphed must have arrived and I believe the crisis to be over, but this is in no way due to the Government whose members can neither appreciate the danger they are incurring or insist on the orders which they may be forced to give being carried out.

I would venture therefore to urge most earnestly that compensation on the lines suggested in my telegram No. 13 of the 4th instant should be insisted on, and if necessary enforced by the threat that failing it relations between the two countries will be broken off. That there would be any necessity for putting this threat into execution I do not for a moment believe, but I do doubt that anything short of that will overcome the apathy and utter want of appreciation of their obligations as an independent

nation.

nation which is now shown by the present Government
to all questions which concern European nations.

I am addressing copy of this despatch to Lord
Kitchener.

etc
I have the honour to be, Sir,
with the highest respect,
Your most obedient humble servant,

(sgd) Wilfred G. Thesiger.

723836

JUN 30 1913

BRITISH LEGATION,

ADIS ABABA.

5 June 1913.

Sir:-

With reference to Your Excellency's telegram of the 2nd June, I would wish to express the deep regret felt by all members of this Legation on hearing of the death of Captain Aylmer and to ask Your Excellency to accept our sincerest condolences on the loss sustained by the Protoborate Government.

In continuation of my telegram of the 4th June, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that I have insisted on the Abyssinian Government sending down orders at once to all the Southern chiefs to unite and exterminate Onos and for all these outlaws, and to arrest and hold at my disposal all those concerned both in the murder of Captain Aylmer and in the incident reported in Your Excellency's telegram of the 20th May.

I have informed them that, for the moment, I reserve the question of the reparation to be made by the Government for his death and have telegraphed to His Majesty's Secretary of State suggesting certain terms of compensation which I think should be insisted on, and I am now awaiting his reply.

With regard to my telegram of today's date, the Abyssinian Government have pointed out to me that

these

to Excellency

W. C. Belfield, Esq., C.M.G.

Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the East African Protectorate.

these Tigrean outlaws on hearing of the movement of 236
Abyssinian troops will at once take refuge on our side
of the line and that unless I give orders that a
force of some 300 men under a reliable officer shall
have permission to pursue them south of the frontier,
they will be unable to effect a real clearance of the
border districts and consequently the Government
could accept no responsibility for their failure to
do so. They asked me therefore to give this permis-
sion and to instruct Captain Barrett to send a Brit-
ish officer to accompany the force and see that our
native subjects were in no way molested or pillaged,
and I enclose copy of the letter I have sent to Cap-
tain Barrett.

I do not think any other course is open to us,
and, in spite of the many objections to allowing an
Abyssinian force to cross the frontier, I firmly be-
lieve it offers the only chance of settling this
question once and for all, and that an exception is
imperative in this case.

If we put off all action until we can send from
Mairobi a sufficient force to co-operate efficiently,
the delay will be misunderstood here and the impulse
which I hope to be able to give to Abyssinian action
while they are still under the first shock of this
incident will evaporate and they will finally do no-
thing.

If we refuse them this permission, and we fur-
nish them with an excellent excuse for failure, of
which they will most certainly avail themselves, and
with the troops now at Moyale we can neither hope to
prevent these Tigreans from passing the line nor to
catch

catch them ourselves if they do so.

237

By allowing a force to cross under British supervision and giving them every facility, we can and must place the whole onus of solving this question definitely on the Abyssinian Government and we must accept no excuses for failure.

As they acknowledge, I have given them warning after warning that this very thing would happen if they did not take severe order with their local chiefs, and the only hope now of breaking up these bands and of restoring order on the border is to force them to shoulder their responsibility and do the work themselves, giving them clearly to understand that unless they do so the whole question of our relations with Abyssinia will have to be reconsidered, and to make the lesson a lasting one by exacting heavy compensation.

This may well increase the disorder on the frontier temporarily, but it offers the possibility of a definite solution and if that is obtained we can afterwards increase our force on the border and prevent any recurrence of this state of things.

I have told the Council of Ministers I must see them tomorrow and will then hear what measures they have taken and I intend to insist on a force being sent also from Adis Ababa under an officer who is known to me and whom I can hold responsible for what is done or left undone.

I trust Your Excellency will approve the action I have taken and in view of the urgency of the question excuse my taking upon myself the responsibility of sending orders to Captain Barrett.

I

I am addressing copies of this Despatch to His Majesty's Secretary of State and Lord Kitchener.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

(signed) Wilfred G. Thesiger.

F. R. M. MINISTER.

2885

239

July 22 1913



11
1002

Immediate

DRAFT

the usps.
70

11 July 1913

MINUTE.

- Mr. ~~de la~~ 107/113
- Mr. ~~de la~~ 10.7.13
- Mr. ~~de la~~
- Sir G. Fiddes.
- Sir H. Just.
- Sir J. Anderson.
- Lord Emmott.
- Mr. Harcourt.

in. ~~forwarded~~ by Mr. Sec. Harcourt
 have etc. to act: the receipt
 of your letter No 29006 of
 the 4th July* enclosing
 a copy of a despatch from
 His Ministers at Addis
 Ababa from which it
 appears that Mr. Theiger
 has given permission for
 an Abyssinian force of
 300 men to cross over
 into British territory for

non despatch
 (all mail)
 22.7.13

* No. 22885.

11 or 2370

30 P

for the purpose of
capturing the raiders
responsible for Lieutenant
Aymer's death.

2. Lt. Harcourt
telegrams
concerns in ~~the~~ ~~draft~~
being addressed to Mr. Thénier
~~of a telegram~~ ~~which~~
in the annex proposed by
Sec. Sir E. Grey, ~~forward~~

~~to be sent to Mr. Thénier~~
~~but I am to be sure~~

~~that~~ he fears that
the step which Mr.
Thénier has taken
will ~~not~~ be misinterpreted
by the hostile tribes living
on the south side of
the Abyssinian boundary
as indicating that ~~the~~

the Abyssinians are masters
of the situation on both sides
of the boundary.

3. I am to take this
opportunity of transmitting
to you, for Sir E. Grey's
info., a copy of a ~~note~~ ~~sent~~
from the Dep. Gen. of the
Col. (with ~~the~~ enclosures)
dealing with the attack
by Abyssinian Tigre near
Moyale on the 11th of May
which resulted in the
death of Lt. Aymer.

9 am etc

* No 22730