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Reg. - [unclear]

FOREIGN

ABYSSINIA

SITUATION AT MAGI

1921
7th JANUARY

Last previous Paper.
Gov/1023

Trs copy desp. from Adis Ababa respecting the return of Dejazmatch to Magi

occupation
jaddaduna
Put by

See 14. [unclear]
In Sudan boundary point is
of some interest.

Put by
W.C.D.
10.1.21
at once.
H. J. R.
10/1/21

Next subsequent Paper.
20/2341

In any future communication
this subject, please quote

No. *19038/674/1*

address
not to any person by name,

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

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SER.
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THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his
compliments to *The Under-Secretary of State*
for the Colonies and, by direction of the Secretary of State,
transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
7th January, 1921.

56/61075

Reference to previous correspondence:
Colonial Office Letter
No 61075 of 22nd December

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
<i>From Major Dodds</i> <i>(Adis Ababa)</i> <i>Despatch No 141</i> <i>of 1st December</i>	<i>Return of Dejazmach</i> <i>Desto to Mage</i>

Similar letter sent to _____

December 1st, 1920.

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My Lord:-

With reference to my despatch No. 125 of November 2nd. last I have the honour to inform Your Lordship that I had a further discussion of the Magi question with Ras Taffari, Ras Kassa and the Fitaurari Hapta Giorgis three days ago; Major Hawkins was also present.

I opened the discussion by informing the Haik Apparent and his chiefs that as His Majesty's Government were anxious to assist the Abyssinian Government in any way in their power in order to arrive at a satisfactory and speedy settlement of the Magi question that I would no longer oppose the return of Dejazmatch Desta to Magi on condition that he was instructed before me as to the exact limitations of his province as laid down by Treaty, and that if Major Hawkins had any reason to complain of his conduct in the future he should be recalled immediately to the Capital.

The Ras replied that they were faced with a difficulty of another nature which he felt sure I would appreciate and report to my Government. He then entered upon a recital of the Magi question dating from the signing of the Treaty. He laid emphasis on the

fact

The Right Honourable,

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

&c. &c. &c.

His Majesty's Principal Secretary of state for Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Office.

fact that although the Treaty has been signed fifteen years
no attempt has been made by the Sudan Government to 20
occupy the territory allotted to them and that, in con-
sequence a certain portion of the Sudan had become to be
regarded by his subjects as belonging to Abyssinia,
and that, now, in complying with my request to define the
frontier as explained by Treaty, the Central Government
would be accused of having sold part of Abyssinia to the
British. He suggested as a solution of the diff-
iculty in which the Abyssinian Government found themselves
that, while there was no question of disputing the red line,
a temporary frontier line should be agreed upon thereby
giving Abyssinia a certain extent of the Sudan side of the
frontier including the Boma plateau until a redelimitation
of the frontier could be made.

I expressed my sympathy with the Central Govern-
ment on the embarrassing position in which they were placed
but I regretted that I was in no better a position than
themselves to tamper with the terms of a Treaty which had
been signed by our respective Governments and I added,
moreover, that I did not consider that His Majesty's Gov-
ernment were called upon to make concessions to the
Abyssinian Government to enable them to extricate themselves
from a position created by their own negligence.

I said that all I could possibly concede was
that peaceful Abyssinians now residing in British territory
could remain as long as they gave no trouble but that their
numbers should not increase and that Abyssinian soldiers
would not be allowed to cross the frontier under any pretext
whatsoever.

A discussion in respect to the redelimitation of the
frontier

frontier followed.

The Rasas and the Fitaurari declared that the frontier had not been delimited jointly as agreed to by Treaty and that the present boundary as defined by the British Commissioners was merely of a temporary nature until the delimitation was undertaken by representatives of both Governments.

I referred them once again to the terms of King Menelik's undertaking with the British Government and his signature thereto, which did not admit of discussion. I expressed my willingness, however, if they desired a fresh delimitation, to ascertain the wishes of His Majesty's Government on this point. They replied that they would consider the matter and give me a reply at the next audience.

Before taking my leave I reminded the Heir Apparent that Major Hawkins had now been two months in Adis Ababa and that unless the Magi question was settled to my satisfaction without further loss of time I did not feel justified in retaining this officer longer in the country and would be obliged to send him back to England.

I was thereupon given an audience for Saturday next and was assured that the matter would be definitely finished then.

I am addressing copies of this despatch to Cairo Khartoum, and Nairobi

I have the honour to be,
with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

humble servant,

Signed J.H. Dodds.