



EAST AFR. PROT
30452

30452

1913

1913

August

MURDER OF CAPT AYLMER

Last previous Paper.

26828

This copy of further despatch from Adis Ababa respecting the compensation to be exacted. Disposed to agree claim for pecuniary compensation must be dropped, but a final decision on this point is perhaps unnecessary for the moment. Does not favour arbitration. Requests views on proposal to occupy Kuddaduma, in event of reply from Abyssinia being unfavourable respecting boundary.

W. B. B. L. G. P. Riddes

Think we shall have to accept I.O. view as to the pecuniary compensation - & I wd certainly negative the arbitration proposal.

As to Kuddaduma - see map in Govt 1977/11. It is difficult to see how the Sab Port. with the Mercha on hand & with only 1/24 C^o kah. at Moyale can

effectually occupy this district but

*Old copy to Govt of Adis Ababa 5/10/13
P. 13 Sept 1913*

1913, W. 20 997-98
1912, 1112, A. B. W.

Next subsequent Paper.

31065

but we had better do the
the

I feel in answer to Col
inquiring whether in the event
of the rejection of the
objections of the proposed
rectification of the frontier
the Fed Govt is prepared
to occupy Kudduduma
if so in what strength
& in what manner
they could do this - a suggestion
that the inquiry is made
with a view to using, this
threat to Abyssinia in
case of prolonged obstruction.

ALCC

2/19/13

Kudduduma & Bogda are the two places
Gadda
at which Capt. Reed suggests we should
have custom houses in order to give the
Abyssinians a trade across the frontier.
The idea of occupation is therefore not
out of the question, though I do not much
like anything which involves any
commitments on the frontier frontier.

Ans 3158

Substance
25th
4:10 pm
2/22

When we have the Governor's reply we
shall know better what to say, but in
any case I do not think we need
explicitly give up the claim for pecuniary
compensation. An occasional reminder
that he has that point in reserve might
assist his thought in indicating the
desirability of rectifying the frontier.
The idea of referring to the inhibition
of the other foreign frontiers would be
just as well at any other Court & really at
last of all at last.

UCS 2/19/13

Sagre Feb 29 13

30457

9983



In any further communication
on this subject, please refer
to No. 39108/13
and address
The Under Secretary of State,
Foreign Office,
London.



FOREIGN OFFICE

August 30 1913.

Sir:-

With reference to my letter of the 24th. ultimo
I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to
you herewith for the information of Mr. Secretary
Harcourt copy of a further despatch from His Majesty's
Minister at Adis Abeba respecting the reparation to be
exacted for the murder of Captain Ayles.

Sir E. Grey is disposed to agree with Mr.
Thesiger's view that it will probably be necessary to
drop the demand for pecuniary compensation, which has
not yet been definitely put forward, but a final
decision on this point is perhaps unnecessary for the
moment. As regards the proposal that the case might
eventually be submitted to arbitration he considers
that this course would not be desirable, as, even if
any of the foreign Ministers were willing to serve as
arbitrators, they would not be likely to give the

frontier

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

* No 25643

gap

(39268/3)

279



frontier rectification which is required. Sir E. Grey would propose, if Mr. Harcourt concurs, to address a despatch to Mr. Theisiger in this sense.

It has been suggested to Sir E. Grey that the only effectual step which could be taken against the Abyssinian Government in the event of their rejecting the demand for a rectification of the frontier would be the occupation of Kuddadama, in the territory required on the East African frontier. Sir E. Grey would accordingly be glad to learn whether Mr. Harcourt would be disposed to agree to a threat that this district would be occupied, in the event of the Abyssinian reply to the representations made by Mr. Theisiger being unfavourable.

I am, etc

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

James Watson

Encl in No

28972
13

BRITISH LEGATION,

ADIS ABABA

July 31st, 1913.

Sir:

I have the honour to report that I met such of the Ministers as are here in Council this morning and asked them for a reply to my last note, in which I reminded them of the necessity of coming to a decision.

Nagdras Haili Giorgis entered into a detailed account of the orders which had been given and informed me that all the hunters on whom it was possible to lay hands in the various frontier provinces, were in chains the total number amounting to many hundreds; that investigations were being carried on to find the men actually concerned in the attack on the late Captain Aylmer's party and that all the precautionary measures possible were being taken to prevent further raids in the meantime.

With regard to the rectification of the frontier he declared that owing to the absence of Lij Yasu and of the principal chiefs and the impossibility of calling them in during the rains it was out of the question for the

Right Honourable
Sir E. Grey, Bart., K.C.,
&c., &c., &c.

the Council as it now stood to give a definite answer on such an important question, and asked that a final discussion of the points at issue should be put off until after the rains which would cease in about six weeks time when a full Council under the presidency of Lij Yasu could be called together, promising at the same time that no relaxation would be allowed in the efforts they were now making to keep order on the frontier.

To this I gave a qualified answer saying that whether His Majesty's Government would consent to this delay must depend on the reports which were received from the frontier: if the details they had given me with regard to the hunters were confirmed and these men were kept under restraint until a settlement was arrived at, and no news of fresh raids was received from the border, I would consent to postpone further discussion from one week to another, but in the event of information arriving of fresh raids and disorders I would be obliged to press at once for immediate reply.

I pointed out the small extent of the territory affected under the rectification, and the equality of

BRITISH LEGATION
LHASA

Right Honourable
Sir E. Grey, Bart., K.G.
&c. &c.

the exchange proposed, dwelling on the fact that, once it were agreed to, friendly co-operation between the frontier officers of both countries to prevent future raids was possible, and a very serious source of discord abolished.

I reminded them that between the 22nd of April and the 16th of May there had been five raids by armed bands from their side which had led to fighting in which 77 men had been killed, warning them that it was impossible for them to go on declining to accept any responsibility for this state of affairs and at the same time to expect that no alteration would be thereby caused in the feelings of Great Britain towards Abyssinia. The policy of His Majesty's Government had always been to assist Abyssinia in maintaining a stable Government, thereby ensuring a continuance of her integrity, but that this policy imposed upon the Ethiopian Government the obligation to prevent their border tribes and hunters from raiding our subjects and so endangering the friendship between the two countries. For three years they had given us incessant promises to do so, and the fact that in this time the condition of affairs on the border had

the Council as if now stood to give a definite answer on such an important question, and asked that a final discussion of the points at issue should be put off until after the rains which would come in about the same time when a full Council under the same circumstances could be called together, promising that the same time that no relaxation would be allowed in the efforts they were now making to keep order on the frontier. To this I gave a qualified answer saying that whether His Majesty's Government would consent to this delay must depend on the reports which were received from the frontier. If the details they had given me with regard to the numbers were correct and these men were kept under restraint until a settlement was arrived at, and no news of fresh raids was received from the border, I would consent to postpone further discussion from one week to another, but in the event of any more serious arriving of fresh raids and disorders I would be obliged to press at once for immediate reply. I pointed out the small extent of the territory affected under the negotiation, and the possibility of

gone from bad to worse proved that their Government was incapable of carrying these promises into effect and therefore it had at length become necessary for us to insist on our present demands in order that we might co-operate efficiently with them in checking these disorders, and I urged upon them that it was their duty to represent this fully to Lij Yasu.

The fact that the Ministers for the first time in this discussion studied the map and asked questions as to the distances between certain points may be taken as an indication that they are prepared to consider the question on its merits; but the facility with which their opinions are swayed and their fear of going against public opinion prevents one from holding any optimistic views as to their final decision.

Public opinion is, as far as I can gather, hostile to any cession of territory, the extent of our demands being apparently exaggerated by rumour, and it is generally said also that if the murderers are caught and executed nothing further can in justice be demanded from Abyssinia, the local custom being either vengeance

the exchange proposed, dwelling on the fact that, once it were agreed to, friendly co-operation between the frontier officers of both countries to prevent future raids was possible and a very serious source of trouble would be removed. I remained seated between the 2nd and 3rd of the 5th of May there had been five raids by armed bands from their side which had led to fighting in which 11 men had been killed, warning them that it was impossible for them to be a bad neighbour to accept any responsibility for this state of affairs and at the same time to expect that no attention would be thereby caused in the feelings of Great Britain towards Abyssinia. The policy of His Majesty's Government had always been to assist Abyssinia in maintaining a stable Government, thereby ensuring a continuance of her integrity, but that this policy imposed upon the Ethiopian Government the obligation to prevent their border tribes and hordes from raiding our subjects and so endangering the friendship between the two countries. For three years they had given us incessant promises to do so, and the fact that in this time the condition of affairs on the border had

or blood money but under no circumstances both.

Under ordinary circumstances public opinion here does not count for much, but in the present instance it is formed by the voice of the lower officers and soldiers who are in a permanent state of discontent and of whom the Government certainly stands in awe, and as the question of reprisals for any offences committed in frontier raids is one which touches them nearly their influence and the effect it will have on the Government must be taken into consideration when estimating the strength of the opposition we have to face.

There is no doubt that the opposition to our demands is going to be very obstinate indeed, and, as all ideas of an ultimatum or a menace of any kind have to be laid aside, I am reluctantly compelled to advise that our demands be modified by the omission of the question of a monetary compensation which, however justified it may be, we can now scarcely hope to obtain in addition to the rectification and the execution of the culprits.

On the latter point the Abyssinians will make no difficulty, once they have caught the men in question, as they will consider it a strong argument to be used in evidence

evidence of our injustice in asking anything further;
 with regard to the chances of obtaining Abyssinian
 consent to the alterations on the border it is impossible
 to say anything yet, but, pending the arrival of Lij
 Yasu, they will I think continue to arrest and hold the
 hunters which is at least a temporary gain.

All will depend on whether they choose ultimately
 to face the resentment of their own officers and soldiers
 who do not understand the seriousness of the situation
 and the gravity of such incidents, or to risk offending
 Great Britain and forfeiting her friendship.

They are faced with two evils and will choose
 whichever appears at the time the least and no argu-
 ments touching the moderation of our demands or the
 necessities of the rectification will induce them to
 look at it from any other point of view.

As therefore the only argument which would weigh
 down the balance in our favour is not available, I
 think it wiser not to increase the force of the opposi-
 tion by asking for a monetary compensation as well.

The point remains open, as I have notified the
 Government in writing that the question of compensation

is reserved for the time, and if it is thought advisable it can be brought up when Lij Yasu returns, or allowed to slip out unnoticed.

I would also suggest that, in the event of the Abyssinian Government showing any hesitation in granting our demands for fear of the effect on the country, it would be possible to suggest referring the matter to the arbitration either of the Italian Minister singly, or to a court of three of the Foreign Ministers, one to be chosen by each country and the third by mutual consent.

The Ethiopian Government would thus be freed from the responsibility of the decision and might on this account be glad to accept such a solution, whereas a refusal on their part would at least strengthen our position by the argument that they were afraid to submit their case to an independent tribunal.

The arbitrators would be chosen from three out of the four Legations of Italy, France, Germany and Russia.

Count Colli would certainly give a fair decision, while Mr. Brice would I think with equal certainty support the Abyssinian view; Herr von Syborg might be

...evidence of our intention to make any further...
...with regard to the chance of...
...admission of 31...
...to say anything yet, but pending the arrival of...
...I think I think...
...at least a temporary...
...All will depend on whether they choose...
...to face the...
...do not understand the...
...and the gravity of such...
...Great Britain and...
...They are faced with two...
...whichever appears at the...
...ments touching the...
...necessity of...
...look at it from any other...
...As there is the only...
...down the balance in our...
...think it wiser not to...
...tion by asking for a...
...The point remains open, as I have...
...Government in which the...
...is

biased by the tendency hitherto shown by his Legation
 to make mischief for British interests; and Mr.
 Tchermizine would I think be inclined to follow Court
 Coll's lead, but I think both the latter would care-
 fully consider and weigh the rights of the case.

In the event of arbitration being accepted I would
 certainly council the insertion of a demand for money
 compensation in our case.

I am addressing a copy of this despatch to Lord
 Kitchener.

I have &c.,

(Signed) Wilfred G. Theisger.

is reserved for the time, and it is thought desirable
 it can be presented when it is possible to give
 to give out unmodified
 I would suggest that in the event of the
 Arbitration Commission knowing the position in regard
 to demands for reparation of the injury on the contrary
 would be possible to suggest relating the matter to
 the arbitration either of the Russian Minister either
 to be a copy of the views of the Foreign Ministers, one to
 be chosen by each country and the third by mutual
 consent
 The Russian Government would be bound to
 the responsibility of the decision and right on this
 account to accept such a solution, whereas
 relation on their part would at least strengthen
 position by the agreement that they were made in a
 position to an independent tribunal.
 The arbitrators would be chosen from three out of
 the four Legations of Italy, France, Germany and Austria.
 Court Coll would certainly give a fair decision
 while Mr. Bryce would I think with equal certainty
 support the Russian view; Herr von Spreti might be