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Number 104

Date.
1912
February

ABYSSINIAN MISSION TO NAIROBI

Previous Paper.

7652

Describes negotiations and points out that the proposal to put it off emanates entirely from Ad's Ababa. Cannot understand why it is thought he wishes for delay. On the contrary, is strongly in favour of its coming as soon as possible.

Mr. G. Fisher

ACK: in writing as proposed

on 7.0.
7652 ?

11.2.12

18/III

In view of
of his committee minutes
~ 7652 best letter

~~...~~ 19.10

19.3

19.3

I may have done Sir P. G. an injustice

on 7652

19.3.12

Copy - 302

Reprint Paper

10196

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8012

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI, ~~Kenya~~ ^{British East Africa}
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

February 15th 1912.

No.104

4.
101
4607

Sir,

In confirmation of my telegram of the 14th instant, I have the honour to describe the negotiations which have taken place with regard to the proposed Abyssinian Mission to Nairobi.

2. On November 27th I received a telegram from Major Doughty Wylie suggesting the possibility of such a mission. To this I replied by telegram on December 2nd saying that I had no objection.

3. About the beginning of January I received a letter from Major Doughty Wylie on the subject of the mission, and took the opportunity of consulting Sir John Hannington, who was then in Nairobi. He was of opinion that if sufficiently important representatives were sent it would be of value but otherwise it would be of little use. I accordingly telegraphed as follows on January 15th

"Your letter of November 29th. I am leaving for Europe next month so question of mission from Adis Ababa had better await my return. I am in favour of the project if sufficiently influential representatives are sent".

4. Subsequently while I was on tour in Tana-land and out of reach of telegraphic communication the two following messages were received

from

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LEWIS HARCOURT, P.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

- 2 -

from Major Doughty Wylie and Mr. Thesiger on January 25th and 26th respectively:-

"Abyssinian Mission. Probably consisting of son of Menclik, Master of Ceremonies, other officers include Fitaurari Hapta Giorgis. Party with 50 soldiers would reach you about end of May. If postponed, difficult to renew as no officer available to accompany them and rainy season beginning".

"Your telegram January 17th. Strongly recommend that Abyssinian Mission start with H.M. Consul at once in spite of absence of Governor. If postponed now when Abyssinians favourable it will probably be impossible to arrange later. Please telegraph definitely."

5. A reply was sent on January 27th saying that I was away on tour and that a definite answer would be sent in a week's time.

6. On my return finding that the question of the mission was assuming an unexpected importance I thought it advisable to refer the matter to you vide my telegram No. 22 of the 2nd February. I informed Mr. Thesiger accordingly in the following telegram of the same date:-

"Your telegram of January 26th. I think as this matter is assuming such importance it should be referred home. Will you do so, I will strongly support proposal".

7. Your approval was received on February 6th and I telegraphed to Adis Ababa in the following terms:-

"Colonial Office have approved Abyssinian Mission. Please let me know as soon as possible details and arrangements necessary for receiving and entertaining at Nairobi".

in reply to which I received this reply:-

"Your telegram February 6th. Abyssinian Mission would take three weeks to be ready. Delay in obtaining definite approval makes it now too late to start them before rainy season. Must now postpone until autumn".

8. You will perceive from the course of the correspondence that the idea of postponing the mission was early abandoned by me, directly I realised its influential character and that the subsequent proposal to put it off emanates entirely from Adis Ababa. I am at a loss to understand why it should be thought that I wish for delay. On the contrary I am strongly in favour of its coming to Nairobi as soon as possible, but it appears that this will not now be feasible owing to the approach of the rains.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,


GOVERNOR.