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EAST AFRICA
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S. Abyssinian Frontier

1910

11 Feb

East African Report
2009

Needs dep. of ... records ... and
to provide resp. ^{propos} arrangements for control of
frontier. Draws attention to ... to
employment of Abyssinian regulars on the frontier

W. Reed

Our Minutes at Addis Ababa points out
the difficulties which will arise if K.A.R. troops
were used on the frontier to do some of the
things which Mr. Zaphiro's first men have
done in the past. At the same time the
F.O. drew (in ^{F.O.} _{10/24/09}) on the importance
of making the Abyssinians respect the
frontier of protecting the natives on the
British side of the boundary from being
ruined at once & without waiting for the
Abyssinians to accept Major Gwynn's
line

This may be a door by which

to be sent to ...
to ...
to ...

reintroduce Mr Zaphiro. It is quite con-
ceivable that, with a few of his old
irregulars, & backed by a regular British
force and British administration at
the central point of Fort Harrington, he
may be able to go on doing the sort of
work he has been doing in the past, only
even more effectively and more profitably & that
it will no longer be dependent entirely
on bluff. This would be a very useful
part to play pending the final acceptance
of Major Croghan's line by the Abyssinians
which it may take years to secure.

Everyone is agreed as to the excellence
of the work which Mr Zaphiro has done in
the past & the pity it would be if his
services could not still be utilised.

Write to the C.O. with suggestions
in this sense, & also ask him what
arrangements he can suggest for
permitting the officer in charge of the
frontier district to communicate direct
with Abba Ababa in cases in which

How ought
to be left
about the
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p. 2

his course would be a valuable lesson
subject always to the provable that
appear a mistake to the end of the
E. A. P. ... of the trip
to the ...

My dear ...

Respectfully

Yours

1882

I am ...
I am ...
I am ...
I am ...

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. 4132/101

The Under-Secretary of State,
Foreign Office,
London.

FOREIGN OFFICE

February 11, 1910.

1278
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Sir:-

With reference to your letter 41187 of January 4th last respecting the control of the Southern Frontier of Abyssinia, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa on the subject.

I am to request you to draw the attention of the Earl of Cromer to Mr. Inghis's remarks in regard to the employment of the frontier of Abyssinia by the latter.

SIR,

Your most obedient,
Lambie Service,

L. Lambie

The Under-Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

Copy to Cairo

4132
FEB 5 1910

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REC'D
FEB 10

British Legation,

Addis Ababa, January 10 1910.

Sir

With reference to the Southern Frontier question I have the honour to report that on leaving Fort Harrington Mr. [Name] was informed by Captain Barrett who relieved him that his instructions were to send back his escort of sixty men of the King's African Rifles as soon as Zaphiro could depart and send down from Addis Ababa twenty five Abyssinian irregulars to take their place. These men were engaged but before they could be sent off a letter was received from Captain Barrett stating that his orders had reached him that the [Name] was to remain at [Name] with his men it would not be necessary to send the Abyssinians.

Mr. [Name] consequently held back these men until my arrival. I then telegraphed to Sir Percy Girouard that

as the Abyssinians were alarmed at the sudden placing of

Grey Hart, M.P.

Foreign Office

regular troops of the Ford... the exact
definition of the frontier was still under discussion.

It will be better to refer to the previous arrangements
concerning the militia of Abyssinia as reflected in 91.

It is felt that it would not be wise to authorize this
without consultation with Captain Barrett whose position,

without regular troops might be difficult if not impossible.
As I was informed that the Abyssinian Government had told

off soldiers to enter our troops I again intercepted
expressing that at least the British could supply

to be the Abyssinian irregulars for patrol work on
both the Arab and the Abyssinian side possibly

to act as a buffer between the two civil territories.
The frontier between them had been defined by the British

pending a final decision on the lines on saying that
I would be for his Majesty to disband them.

No direct answer has been received
until a further telegram is received from the British Government.

At various times to Mr. [Name] requested his administrative
and judicial powers.

Since the permanent occupation of the line, a
regular frontier force is not necessary and cannot be

arranged

arranged for too soon, I am strongly of the opinion that until a firmer line is definitely accepted it is most essential that we should do nothing to arouse Abyssinian suspicion or to create incidents on the border.

If Captain Barrett's force is purely to ensure supply and to patrol south of the red line no difficulties need be anticipated, but on the other hand if Mr. Tappin's system of using calls on the Abyssinian side of this line in his patrols and of crossing into Abyssinian territory in the course of these patrols to discuss matters with local chiefs is adopted by Captain Barrett with regular effect it will raise very great suspicion on the part of the Abyssinians as to British motives and a serious dispute with the rather irascible and proud Abyssinian military which will be laid off to war will be bound to be most serious into districts which will, until the present, be looked on here as Abyssinian ground.

It was for these reasons that I went to tell Captain Barrett that I had suggested to Mr. Tappin the necessity of his having Abyssinian irregulars under him and expressing the hope that he would view the matter in the same light.

Yours truly,

Whenever arrangement is finally come to for the control of the border it will be necessary that the officer in command should be authorized to deal directly with the Administration on all frontier matters concerning Abyssinia, as the delay occasioned in such cases by sending records to the capital for transmission to this Abada must always be inconvenient and might at times be harmful.

With regard to your telegram of the 7th inst. asking me to allow Mr. Fakhro to resume his former duties on his return from leave without further instructions I venture to hope that this does not imply that his services are to be dispensed with.

It would I consider be very difficult to replace him as his knowledge of the frontier districts and of the various races inhabiting it, together with his acquaintance with the principal dialects, customs and political tendencies of the people is certainly unique.

As has not yet been established by any means, there are under very difficult circumstances, a definite position there and his familiarity with the various Abyssinian chiefs on the border and his mastery of their language and of Abyssinian law would enable him to give invaluable aid to

any officer who might be placed in command of the troops,

Mr Zaphiro fully realizes that in any rearrangement of the frontier ~~control~~ could not hope to have the chief command but he would I think be satisfied with a subordinate position if it were permanent and included a rise on his present scale of pay with a fixed increment.

All these things were certainly definitely promised him by Sir John Harrington but his pledges were never redeemed.

I would therefore ask that Mr Zaphiro's claim for re-employment should not be overlooked as I am most confident that his services would be of great utility and would very largely facilitate all future dealings with the Abyssinians on the frontier.

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

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

from the employment of regular troops on the frontier before the modifications of the treaty line proposed by Major Gwynn

have been accepted by the Abyssinian Government. It is important that some means of being reestablished should be devised, and I am disposed to think that the employment of Abyssinian regulars for patrol work in the debatable portions of the territory is the best solution.

I am ~~impressed~~ impressed with the desirability of finding some ^{employment} ~~employment~~ in which Mr. Lapierre's unique knowledge and experience of the frontier can be utilised.

It has occurred to me that the difficulties referred to above afford the opportunity of offering Mr. Lapierre further employment.

A party of his men irregulars, and backed by a regular British force and British administration at the main points of the line, he will be able to continue the extension work which has done so much good.

It is a very and thoroughly in that

that he would in future no longer be dependent entirely on his own resources. This would be a very useful part to play pending the final acceptance of a border line by the Abyssinians, which it may take a considerable time to effect.

4. I should be glad if you would consider this suggestion ^{carefully} and trust that you will ^{be able to} ~~be able to~~ recommend a recommendation which will have the result of retaining Mr. Lapierre's services.

That event I ^{should} ~~shall~~ be glad to ^{be} ~~be~~ prepared to ^{make} ~~make~~ arrangements you propose, and what salary ^{you} ~~you~~, in your opinion, is suitable for him.

You will no doubt consider at the same time whether if an arrangement of this ^{kind} ~~kind~~ is adopted, it will not be possible to reduce ^{his} ~~his~~ ^{responsibility} ~~responsibility~~ because the cost of the arrangements which you have already proposed.

You will see that Mr. Chesler observes in his report that whatever arrangement is come to for the control of the border, it will be necessary that the officer

that

In command should be authorized to deal

directly with the ^{Captain} ~~resident~~ at Adis Ababa

on all frontier matters concerning Abyssinia,

at the delay occasioned by sending reports

to Nairobi for transmission to Adis Ababa

must be always convenient, and might at

times be desirable, to occur in one week

of the month proposed, and should be

so to be arranged that it strikes you

an earnest for permitting the officer in

charge of the frontier district to remain

in direct touch with His Majesty's Minister at

Adis Ababa, and to be in a position to

report on the progress of the frontier

the principle that that the frontier

is to be governed by the East Africa Pro-

tection Act. It would, of course, be necessary

to have the views of the Government on this

subject, and to have the views of the

Minister at Adis Ababa on this

subject, and to have the views of the

Minister at Nairobi on this