

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

C0537/775

ORDER NO. ⇒
CAMERA NO. ⇒ 9
OPERATOR. ⇒ ED
REDUCTION. ⇒ 12
EMULSION NO. ⇒ 341091
DATE. ⇒ 4/10/72

CROWN COPYRIGHT

THESE COPIES ARE SUPPLIED FOR INFORMATION
AND RESEARCH ONLY-NO REPRODUCTION MAY BE
MADE FOR PUBLICATION WITHOUT THE ASSENT

THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

THE PAGES IN THIS VOLUME ARE TOO
TIGHTLY BOUND FOR ALL WORDS TO BE
REPRODUCED IN ENTIRETY

CLOSED
UNTIL

1968

00537/775

EAST AFR. PROT.

C O
60454

REC'D
REF 10 DEC 17

60454, Read

809
Bowring

Secret

1917

29 October

Last previous Paper.

Qw
48375

Italian Aspirations

Discusses possible territorial adjustments with Italy on the northern frontier of the E.A.P.

T.W. Read.

W. Bowring's recent proposal - to give up not only Kismayo & the neighbourhood but also a strip some 70-140 miles wide to the west of it - involves, as I understand it, the ~~total~~ abandonment of his idea of a British concession at the (Italian) port of Kismayo, which would be unnecessary if we gave up the river entirely.

I see no objection to his outline of the new administrative arrangements, though any idea of keeping nomadic tribes to one side of an artificial frontier is likely to be disappointed, as we have in the

✓
Copy 70 sent 14 Dec 1917

Next subsequent Paper.

Qw
2858/19

Mr. Downing wishes to get Jubaland
into proper order before it is ceded
(if it has to be). There should be
time for this from the military
point of view, but if he wishes
to establish full civil control
there he will want more admini-
strative Officers, and we cannot
hold out much hope of getting them.

I agree as to the agricultural
possibilities of Jubaland. Cotton
has been grown (on a small scale)
by European planters & has thrived.
Probably the only obstacles to a £5,000,000
crop of cotton from Jubaland are
(1) capital (2) labour.

L.C.D. 12.12.17

Mr. G. Fiddes (away)

A copy of the despatch: - $\frac{C.O.}{19403/17}$
together with a copy of this despatch & map
shd. now go to the F.O. to be brought
before the Abneg. etc. - but, in
view of what the C.O. says in the
last ~~para~~ para: of his despatch, we shd. be
very slow to part with the territory to
the West of the Jubra unless there is some
overriding necessity?

M.C.

13. XII. 17

H. J. R.

12/21/17

W. H. 13 (12.17)

SECRET.

29th October 1917.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to your Secret despatch of April 15 on the subject of possible territorial adjustments between British and Italian territory in East Africa.

2. It appears to me that, should any territorial concessions to Italy be decided upon, the minimum area to be ceded might consist of the town and harbour of Kismayu, with an area of say 10 miles surrounding it, this being the extent of the Sultan's dominions in Jubaland. If this were agreed to, it would be necessary to provide certain safeguards in respect of British administration and trade. Such safeguards might be of the nature of a British concession at Kismayu, with a right-of-way to the River Juba where goods in transit could be treated as if in a bonded warehouse.

3. As you are aware, in January 1905, a small area of land on the East side of the town of Kismayu was leased to the Italian Government for the erection of a bonded warehouse and other

necessary

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WALTER HUGH LONG, M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, S.W.

necessary buildings. In addition, sufficient ground on the foreshore of the spit lying South-East of the pier was leased for the erection of a pier for the use of the Italian Government, together with a right-of-way from the said pier to the warehouse and thence to a point on the Juba River opposite Gumbo. By December 1916 the Italian Government had spent £5,000 on this concession and had thereupon qualified for a 66 years' lease. This lease has not yet been issued because of the absence of any accurate and complete survey of the area involved. The terms of the concession provide for the reversion of the area and all buildings thereon to the British Government on the determination of the lease. The privileges enjoyed by the Italian Government are as follows :-

- (a) It is at liberty to erect such accommodation as may be necessary for the temporary shelter of Italian troops landing at Kismayu en route for Gumbo.
- (b) Import duties imposed on goods landed at the pier to be erected by the Italian Government are refunded in accordance with the transit and re-export regulations for the time being in force in British East Africa when the goods are eventually removed to Italian territory.

At the same time the land leased and the persons residing thereon are subject to the laws and regulations in force in British East Africa.

4. The terms of a British concession in an Italian township of Kismayu might be on similar lines.

A special stipulation would be desirable entitling the British Government to construct a railroad and motor road from the concession area to outside the 10 mile limit.

5. The cession of the township of Kismayu would necessitate the creation of a new headquarters for British Jubaland. This could be established at Hellwalud, on the Juba River, which is in every respect more suitable than Sobwen. It is a healthy spot where stone, lime, firewood, and water are available, and where there is a natural quay for steamers and plenty of room for the establishment of a properly laid out township.

6. The great objection to such an arrangement appears, however, to me to be the vulnerability of the whole of our administration on the Juba River should trouble with Italy arise. The provincial headquarters could be cut off immediately, together with all forces and administrative posts on the Juba River. The railway, if constructed, would be lost, and the Italians would immediately be in a position to seize Jubaland until and unless our naval forces could regain possession of Kismayu.

7. I therefore agree that the cession of Kismayu would involve a cession of the Juba River Valley, and the question to be considered is therefore the amount of territory which should be ceded. After giving due consideration both to the topographical features of the country West of the River Juba and to the question of tribal boundaries, I suggest that the following area should be included in that to be ceded

to Italy if any territorial adjustments at all are to take place :-

The whole of the area East of a line from the Northern Frontier along Long 41° 15', due South to a point due East of Dieff (X f V), thence due West to Dieff, thence due South to the Lamu-Kismayu provincial boundary, thence along such boundary to the sea.

Such a line would give a well protected military boundary, as it would pass through the middle of the driest part of the whole area. The wells and water-holes at Kil Wak and Wajheir and the Torian Swamp would be within British territory and would be administered as part of the Northern Frontier District from Nairobi. I enclose a map on which this suggested boundary is marked

8. It would however be necessary, when deciding upon any cession of territory, to insist upon a more rigid observance of tribal boundaries than has been done hitherto. So long as Jubaland remains a part of British East Africa it is not so essential to confine the various tribes closely within specific boundaries; indeed, owing to the fact that it has not yet been possible to give effect to the scheme proposed in 1914 for the administration of Jubaland and the Northern Frontier District, it would have been impossible to do so. But with a portion of the area in question handed over to a Foreign Power it is necessary that tribal boundaries be clearly defined and observed.

9. I consider therefore that the new proposed boundary

boundary line referred to above should be the western limit of movement of the Somalis, except as regards the Abd Wak and Abdulla Somalis of the Tanaland Province. If it had been possible to give effect to the 1914 proposals, and thus to exercise an efficient control over the Somali tribes, it is probable that by now they would have been debarred from encroaching on the wells at Bil Wak and Wajheir as well as the Lorian Swamp. The present actual eastern limit of the Somali tribes is from Melkasala on the River Daua to Bil Wak (Marehan), to Wajheir (mainly Mohamed Zubeir), to West of the Lorian Swamp (Aulihan), to Sankuri on the Tana River (Abdulla and Abd Wak). Such limit is all by encroachment of recent date. The Marehan encroachment was taken place within the last 3 years, the Mohamed Zubeir and Aulihan within the last 10, and the Abdulla and Abd Wak somewhat earlier - say 15 to 20 years. In each case the movement has been at the expense of the Galla tribes. The Marehan encroachment has never been recognised. The Mohamed Zubeir right to Wajheir was partially recognised by Sir Percy Girouard, but the Aulihan right to Lorian has never been admitted.

10. By the removal of the Somalis from Bil Wak, Wajheir, and the Lorian, the water-holes and grazing grounds will become available for various Northern district tribes who have for some years past been gradually driven South and West by the Somali pressure.

11. I should have preferred to have awaited the result of the measures now being undertaken by

Colonel

Colonel Barrett against the Aulihan in the vicinity of Serenli before making definite recommendations on this subject. It appears to me that we should now seize the opportunity of imposing our policy on the Somalis to the West of the Juba with as little delay as possible. It is unfortunate that the outbreak of war and the shortage of staff from which we have suffered during the past 3 years have prevented us from taking the Somali question firmly in hand. It would be very damaging to our prestige if we were to hand over the Jubaland Somali tribes to another administration before we had firmly established control over them.

12. I do not think that the line I have suggested as the western boundary of the area to be ceded could be varied in any way. It could not be moved further West because it would then encroach on the wells and watering places to which I have already referred. And there is no particular object in delimitating it further to the East. General Llewellyn, whom I have consulted on the military point of view of the proposal, considers that it is as suitable as can be arranged and would still provide us with strong defensive posts at Bil War and Wajheir. It would not interfere with the administration of the Northern Frontier District, and, although communication is possible between Kismayu and Wajheir, it has now been proved that the most convenient route to the latter place is from the direction of Mount Kenya.

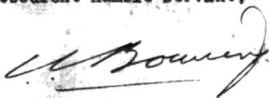
13. It would appear that, if the Somalis on both sides of the Juba were under the same administration, better

better control could be exercised over them, and the spread and influence of Mohammedanism amongst the other tribes could be more easily watched. Apart from the Somali question, we should however be conceding to Italy what may one day prove to be a very valuable and productive area along the Juba River. At present a comparatively few number of farms and plantations have been surveyed and alienated, and but little development has taken place, but the Juba River Valley lends itself to large irrigation proposals, and it has been estimated that 750,000 acres of alluvial land on our side of the river, apparently equal in all respects to the best land in Egypt, could be put under cultivation without any difficulty by means of irrigation. Doubtless the potential value of this land will be taken into account in any negotiations which may be entered into with the Italian Government, together with the value of the harbour of Kismayu, owing to the lack of any other port on the Benadir Coast, both to the Italian Fleet as a naval base and as an outlet of trade from Southern and Eastern Abyssinia.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,



ACTING GOVERNOR.

G.D.
REPAID
14

Gov
60454S

SAP

19

Secret

14 Dec 1917

Sir,

I am so to transmit
to you, to be laid before
Mr. Sney Balfour, the
accompanying copy of
correspondence with the
O.A.G. of the S.A.P. on the
subject of the possible
territorial adjustments
between British & Italian
territory in East Africa.
I am to hope that these
papers may be brought
before the Abyssinian
Committee.

DRAFT.

The U.S. off.

Foreign Office

MINUTE.

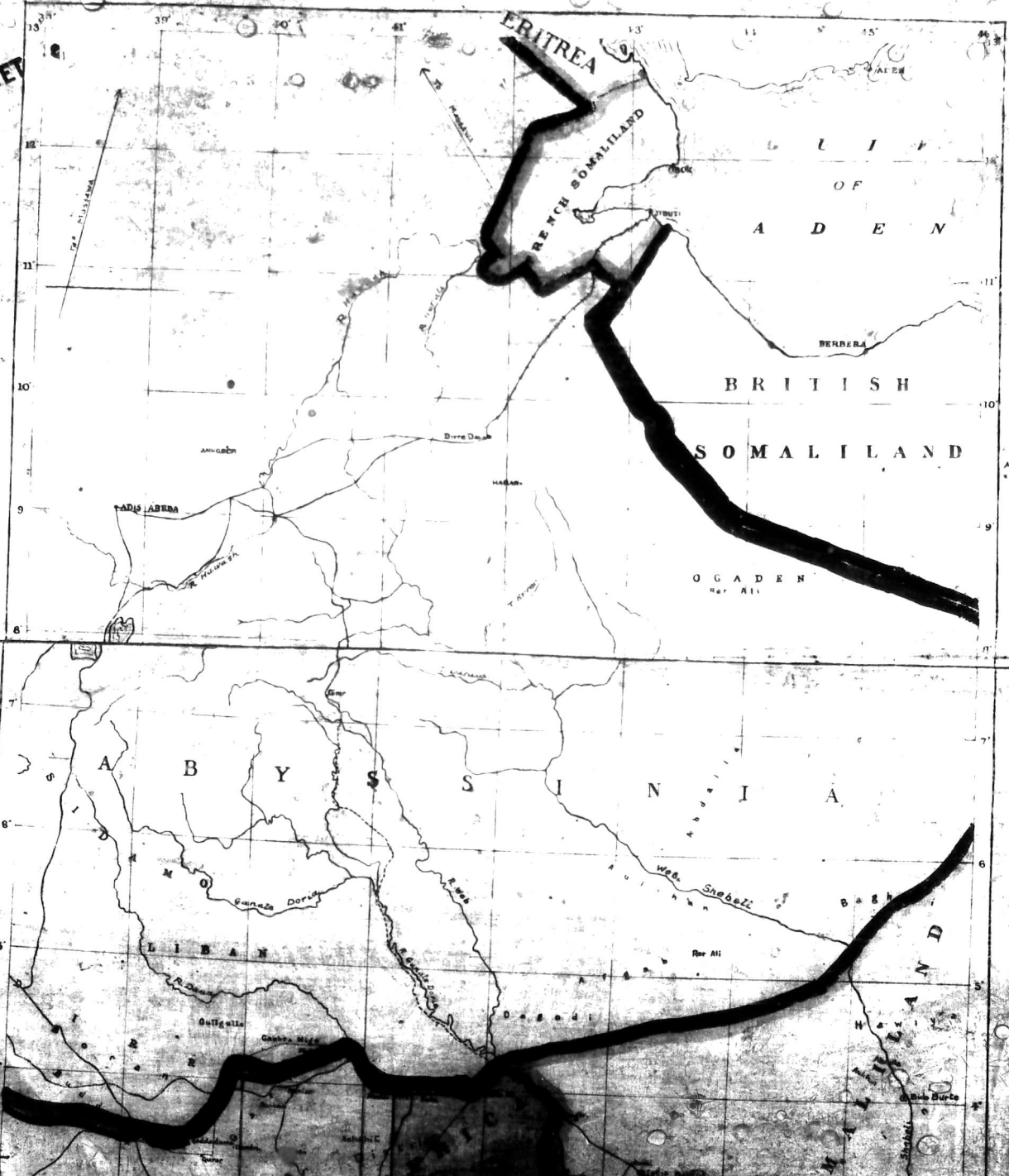
- Mr. Bottomley 14.12.17
- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr. Grindle
- Mr. Lambert.
- Mr. Bond.
- Sir G. Fildes.
- Mr. Hewins.
- Mr. Long.

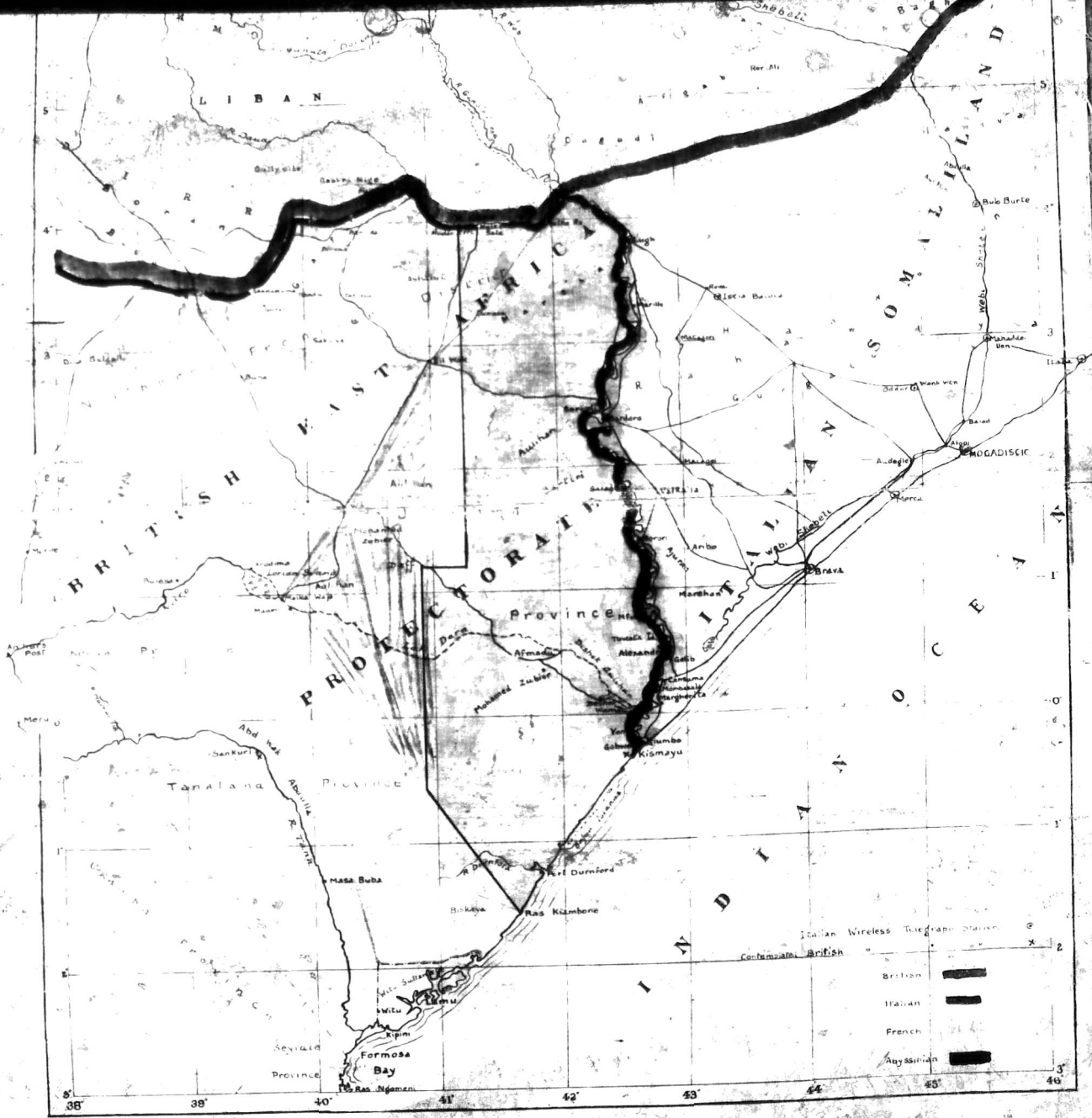
To Gov. Secret 15.4.17
19403S.

To O.A.G. Secret 29.10.17 D. b
map
60454S

(S) H. J. Read

SECRET





Scale 1:5,000,000 or 1 inch to 48 Miles

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

END

TOTAL EXPOSURES →