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C. O.  
2007

REC'D  
JAN 19

2007

Foreign Office

1919

Jan

Previous Paper.

30/12/18

*Abyssinia Corporation*

*Sent to come with Col. C. A. Villiers reaf.  
issue of shares, and fraud of mining rights  
in Abyssinia*

*Publy WMS 11. 189.*

*WMS*

Subsequent Paper.

C.O. 533

218

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In any further communication  
on this subject, please quote

21337/W. 1

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

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C O  
2007  
REC  
REC 9 JAN 19

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 copy of the under-mentioned paper. S

Foreign Office,

January 8, 1919.

~~Reference to previous correspondence.~~

Letter to  
from Foreign Office :

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date	Subject
Colonel C. Williams December 27.	Abyssinia Corporation
do. Dec 28.	

(Signature)

C O  
2007

Folly Court, REC  
Wokingham, 9 JAN 19  
27.12.18. 33

ar to the Foreign Office -  
Abyssinian Corporation -  
the views of the  
possible way.

take all possible steps  
the shares.  
copies of the  
will see that many  
public issue - in the

Respondent.  
some ago I stated  
right course.

The public  
the right  
information  
lots and  
of lines  
to make  
in what

no gamble in the unknown  
publicly and give all  
up the shares in  
market are unable to get  
quickly it is not worth their

to get them  
dealer poss

is made publicly or privately  
shares if issued privately they  
the original stockholder and

Having been sanctioned one mode of issue the Treasury  
cannot logically refuse to let the public have the shares at  
part. The Treasury has already sanctioned the issue and the  
publication of a prospectus after allotment to private  
persons. It was never intended that it should be done.  
The stock exchange committee are undoubtedly right and  
has evidently mis-understood the position of the

to the reported concession of mining rights going to a  
 a foreign authority in Abyssinia.

I have thought this carefully over and I feel sure you  
 will agree with me that the Abyssinian Corporation's duty is  
 to serve British Interests and help the Abyssinians to  
 develop their country on the lines of East Africa and Egypt.  
 It is clearly then necessary for us to join with the  
 French and take part in a monopoly which must in the long run  
 be essential to the best interests of the country.

I understand that if the French do not come to terms  
 with the Abyssinian Corporation - they will complete nego-  
 tiations with another group in the city.

I am going to ask you whether it would be possible  
 for the British Government to approach the French Government  
 in view to joint action in suggesting to the Abyssinian  
 authorities that they should cease to grant these monopolies  
 unless they should put down bribery. This would prevent  
 people risking their money in such a venture.

In a monopoly such as this is given it is quite pos-  
 sible that in the near future some one may get hold of a  
 monopoly which will give them control of the head waters of  
 the Nile. I understand it has already been attempted.  
 For as mining is concerned the Abyssinian Government  
 has asked to adopt a mining law and the claim license  
 law which is fair to all and will also bring in a revenue  
 to the Abyssinian Government.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) C. S. Villiers.

~~As the reported concession of mining rights owing to a~~  
~~foreigners in authority in Abyssinia.~~

I have brought this carefully over and I feel sure you  
agree with me that the Abyssinian Corporation's duty is  
to protect the British Interests and help the Abyssinians to  
develop their country on the lines of East Africa and Egypt.  
It is clearly then necessary for us to join with the  
French and take part in a monopoly which must in the long run  
be beneficial to the best interests of the country.

I understand that if the French do not come to terms  
with the Abyssinian Corporation - they will complete nego-  
tiations with another group in the city.

I am going to ask you whether it would be possible  
for the British Government to approach the French Government  
in view to joint action in suggesting to the Abyssinian  
Government that they should cease to grant these monopolies  
and that they should put down bribery. This would prevent  
people risking their money in such a venture.

A monopoly such as this is given it is quite pos-  
sible that in the near future some one may get hold of a  
concessions which will give them control of the head waters of  
the Nile. I understand it has already been attempted.  
If no mining is concerned the Abyssinian Government  
is asked to adopt a mining law and the claim licenses  
which is fair to all and will also bring in a revenue  
to the Abyssinian Government.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) J. S. Milliers.

Public Record Office	Reference
6	C.O. 533
218	
A reproduction of this document is available from the Public Record Office, 61, Parliament Street, London, W.C.2.	

the reported concession of mining rights going to a  
persons in authority in Abyssinia

I have thought this carefully over and I feel sure you agree with me that the Abyssinian Corporation's duty is to protect British Interests and help the Abyssinians to develop their country on the lines of East Africa and Egypt. It would clearly then be necessary for us to join with the French and take part in a monopoly which must in the long run be detrimental to the best interests of the country.

I understand that if the French do not come to terms with the Abyssinian Corporation - they will complete negotiations with another group in the city.

I am going to ask you whether it would be possible for the British Government to approach the French Government in view to joint action in suggesting to the Abyssinian authorities that they should cease to grant these monopolies and that they should put down bribery. This would prevent people risking their money in such a venture.

A monopoly such as this is given it is quite possible that in the near future some one may get hold of a concession which will give them control of the head waters of the Nile. I understand it has already been attempted. As far as mining is concerned the Abyssinian Government has been asked to adopt a mining law and the claim license law which is fair to all and will also bring in a revenue to the Abyssinian Government.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) C. H. Williams.

C.O. 33

Foreign Office.

December 23rd 1912

C O  
REC'D  
REC'D 9 JAN 19

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Dear Colonel Villiers,

We have dealt with the question of the delay in the issue of a letter received from Lord Wolmer of the same date as your own of the 17th.

As regards the question of mining rights it is doubtful whether this is the best moment to approach the French Government in the sense you propose. In any case we should have also to get the concurrence of the Italian Government as parties to the agreement of 1906.

You will however notice from Article 2 of that agreement that as regards "agricultural commercial and industrial" concessions the three Powers undertake not to secure concessions for their own subjects, which would be "injurious to the interests of the two others". Although mining concessions are not specified it seems clear that a mining monopoly would be contrary to the interests of the Powers not concerned in it, and therefore contrary to the spirit of the Article, on which we should be entitled to rely.

It is of course doubtful whether the Abyssinian Government can grant a monopoly of mining rights, seeing that there are at least three concessions in existence already, namely Prasso's, the Baro River and the Potash Concession. They may be doubtfully valid but have at least the merit of having existed for a good many years.

I am etc.

(Signed)

Villiers  
Court,  
Birmingham.