

1937

Kenya

No. 38066/14

SUBJECT:

CO 533/479

Italian Occupation of Abyssinia

Treatment of Deserters and Refugees

Previous 1936.

see { 46599/1/37 EA Policy  
46011/24/36 Somali

Subsequent

1938 see

TITLE.

The position is getting serious.  
There are the 370 refugees who crossed with Paula Ayala and 5 other Ethiopian notables, and now this 1000.

The deserters from the Italian native forces detained at Isiolo number about 450

In addition to sending copies of the telegram to Fo., W.O. & Trs., a copy had better go to Treasury Ref No. 65 on 4/6/37/1/37

A. Grossmuth  
2/7/37

2 copies to  $\frac{Fo.}{W.O.}$  } Yf.  
 $\frac{Trs.}{M.R.}$

J.J. Cannon  
2/7

I don't think will get many more. The Italians are in Moga have worked round the top of Lake Rudolf & will probably press them away from Kenya. (The wish may be father to the thought.)

X Distribute as proposed but I think we ought to say something to Kenya, if only to approve their action, & say we shall no doubt get reports on this lot also, and ask whether the earlier party whom it had been proposed to put at Kitale will be concentrated along with the new lot.

Copy for Knight tell the  
Alderman Refugee Policy Office.  
ref. 64. or 46547/1/37

Yf. 2/7

27 W.O. 3737  
stones

- 2 To F.O.
- 3 " Treasury
- 4 " W.D.
- 5 " Air Ministry

W70.1 aff - 3/7/37

Action as per X + Y  
overleaf

6 The Secretary  
To Air R.F. Office. — s.o. 7. 7. 37.

7 To Kenya - Secret - (Backgr) Cons. — 8/10  
8/7/37

M. Flood.

7a M. Lambert (F.O.) brought over the  
amended of. tel. wh. he would ~~be~~ be  
sent to Kenya.

I subsequently discussed with you  
& you agreed that we wd. hardly do so  
far as to prevent any communication  
between Abyssinian refugees in Kenya  
other conscripts in Abyssinia; & to  
have advised the second para of the of. tel.  
attached.

J.P. Rasmussen  
30/6

Sir C. Bottomley

You should see. We can't try to cut off  
communication. If the refugees advised there left to stop  
fighting & surrender the Italians would be very pleased.  
But we can't allow Kenya to be used as a sort of  
C. H. Q. for the Abyssinians & that might easily happen  
with a big man like Zaudu Ayale about.

So I suggest a revision

J.P. Rasmussen  
30.6

If F.O. will accept the new version  
the tel. may go. W.B. 30.6.37

I have read it over to M. Lambert who  
agrees. So I have "at once" the of.

J.P. Rasmussen  
30/6

Mr. Flood 217  
Sir C. Bottomley  
1937

R. 197

Mr. Flood.

9

With reference to the attached correspondence the following is briefly the position in regard to the Italian deserters and Ethiopian refugees now in Kenya.

In the early part of 1936 some 400 deserters from Italian native forces crossed the Ethiopian frontier into Kenya and have since been detained in a special camp at Isiolo.

On the 15th of January, 1937, the Foreign Office addressed H.M.'s Ambassador at Rome, requesting him to approach the Italian Government with a view to an agreement being reached for the disposal of these deserters so that the men could return to their homes without fear of punishment or reprisal. Ten days later the Ambassador was requested by telegram to suspend action because of a report from Addis Ababa of mass executions by the Italians of "intending deserters".

There have been  
more since.  
J.P.B.

In January, 1937, 40 African deserters from the Italian army who had been fighting for the Ethiopians, accompanied by one woman, sought refuge at Turkana and surrendered to the Lokitaung garrison. They were disarmed and transferred to Isiolo for internment.

In May, Zaude Ayala, a cousin of the Emperor of Abyssinia, with 5 other Ethiopian notables and the wife of a former Ethiopian General, now a refugee in Palestine, gave themselves up to the garrison at Lokitaung. It was proposed to concentrate them and 370 other Ethiopian refugees at Kapenguria near Kitale. Incidentally, it had been

agreed

agreed that the refugee General mentioned above should go to Kenya to collect his wife and take her back to Palestine.

The Governor was informed that there was no alternative but to maintain the refugees, and that there could be no question of requiring them to return to Abyssinia against their will at the present time.

A telegram was received yesterday reporting the arrival of at least 1,000 men, women and children refugees, with cattle. Relief measures are in hand, and it is intended to concentrate them at Isiolo in separate camps from the Italian deserters.

*C.A. [unclear]*

2.7.37.

The extract is rather peculiar because we have not heard that the Abyssinian refugees were those who had refused to fight for the Italians. On the contrary they were part of Zaude Ayela's forces. The regiment that came across was a regiment of Italian native soldiers from Eritrea. They arrived in the beginning of 1936 and have been interned ever since. We cannot let them go back because they would be shot and the latest information I had (derived from Captain Vernon of the K.A.R. Supply and Transport who has been up there) is to the effect that they undoubtedly massacred all their

Italian

Italian officers and N.C.Os. before coming into Kenya. They deny that they did so but they cannot account for the possession of revolvers, field glasses and other articles of officers' equipment which are present among them. I am afraid that the yarn about the crocodile does not appeal to me very much because there are no lakes anywhere near the frontier (except Rudolpa, and nobody had to cross that).

As we are trying to get some assistance out of the Treasury for the maintenance of these refugees this letter sent in by the Chancellor gives a chance of putting the matter to him unofficially. Draft letter herewith which the Secretary of State might be prepared to sign.

*J.E.U. Read*

2.7.37.

*I have called some witnesses to see  
N. Flood writes.  
P. [unclear] 2/7*

*10. To Sir J. Simon (9 and)*

*5.7.37*

*Copies 16047 to be kept  
on 40547/1137 GA.  
10/8/37*

11. GOV. KENYA..... TEL. No. 144 SECRET..... 12.7.37.  
(Ref. No. 1) Gives further information regarding  
refugees who number 1458, including 353 soldiers,  
since disarmed, 104 unarmed men, 318 women, 125 children,  
& 490 servants and followers.

Copies to Mr. W.O. A.M. & Treasury  
Ref. 2-5

C.H. Smith  
14/7

& more immediately.

J.P. Pascoe  
14/7

12. GOV. KENYA..... TEL. No. 145 SECRET..... 13.7.37.  
Reports entry of approx. 1,000 refugees into Kenya  
immediately east of Lake Rudolph and states that  
arrangements will be made as indicated in (1).

Include this in distribution - No. 11

9 items.

J.P. Pascoe  
14/7

at once.

1 - To F.O. (w/c 11+12) 1/12b

1 - To W.O. (w/c 11+12) 1/12b

1 - To A.M. (w/c 11+12) 1/12b

1 - To Treas (w/c 11+12) 1/12b

14 7 37

DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE (a) will comply.

The only point requiring immediate  
consideration is the proposal in the last  
sentence of No. 11, to which I can see no  
possible objection, though perhaps we ought to  
consult the Foreign Office as in draft herewith.

I

I also submit a draft conveying the  
information in Nos. 11 and 12 to the Abyssinian  
Refugees Relief Fund.

J.P. Pascoe  
14/7

Mr. Wilson Young (F.O.) telegraphed  
me that no reply to my letter  
copy of the 5th June had been  
received - was the reply  
sent on 4th (63 on 46597/37) if  
Mr. Wilson Young would care of a copy  
of the same.

J.P. Pascoe

27

6/8

18 To F.O.

18 To Abyssinian Refugee Relief Fund

R 298 as at X  
1908 8.2.10  
Copy of 6 of 60  
Reg. on 46597/137 ER

19 To Wilson Young (w/c 63 on 46597/37) B 12A 23 7 37

20. ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF FUND. ....20.7.37  
DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE (19) which will be put before the Committee.

21. FOREIGN OFFICE (J.3217/2/1).....20.7.37.  
Ref.(18) states that Mr. Eden has no objection to offer on Gov's proposal provided he is able to satisfy himself that those returning will not be in danger.

20. *Paris by*  
21. *Telegram to Gov*  
*(After which was 1/6. in regard*  
*Bishop should see the file)*

*Three*  
22/67

22. *to Gov Kenya tel 15/6 secret 24.7.37*

*draft to side*

23. GOV. KENYA.....SECRET.....17.7.37.  
Comments on the refugee problem.

*Mr. Bishop*  
DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE  
copy of 6.7.37 to be  
on 46597/137EN

24. P.S. TO GOV. KENYA... ..3 PM.....19.7.37.  
Supplies date of .....

25. ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES.....D.....28.7.37.  
Encls. cheque for £250, payable to Crown Agents, and requests that the amount be despatched and used for relief of Abyssinian Refugees who have crossed into Kenya. Requests report as to disposal of the money, in due course.

I have acknowledged this letter - see flimsy attached to the file. I have also prepared a draft letter to the Crown Agents and a draft telegram to the Governor. In the latter, I have not thought it necessary to include a specific reference to para. 6 of No. 23, as that is a secret despatch.  
(The above action is similar to that which we have taken when we have received similar assistance in respect of the refugees in Somaliland.)

After

After the drafts have issued, the file should recirculate for further consideration of No. 23.

*Three*  
30.7.1937

*26* *Tel to Gov Kenya* *30/10* *11/1/37*  
DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE  
*27* *to C.A. (1/4/37 add. (15))* *3.8.37*  
DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE

28. GOV. KENYA.....TEL. UNNUMBERED SECRET.....2.8.37  
Details present position with regard to Refugees.

1. This telegram, with its very disturbing news, was discussed briefly on the 3rd August in Mr. Flood's room, when Mr. Flood, Mr. Calder, Mr. Crossmith and I were present.

2. Mr. Flood thought it desirable to communicate copies of the telegram as soon as possible to the two other Departments most nearly concerned - namely the Foreign Office and the Treasury. He thought that we ought to make it clear at once to the Treasury that, in the Secretary of State's view, no part of the cost of maintaining the refugees should be borne by Kenya funds - in other words, the refugees should be regarded as, in fact, an Imperial liability, just as was the cost of the emergency measures necessary on the Kenya frontier during the Italian-Abyssinian war. At the same time, it was thought that a brief telegram should be sent to the Governor to indicate that we here fully appreciate the difficulties with which he and his officers are faced as a result of these

continued

continued (and unexpected) incursions of Abyssinian refugees.

3. It is clear that with the numbers of refugees in Kenya going up to over 8,000 (plus over 460 Eritreans and about 1,350 refugees in British Somaliland) the Abyssinian refugee problem is going to be a much more difficult one than we had anticipated even a month or two ago. It was thought, therefore, that as soon as the Governor's despatch of the 1st August arrives, it would be a good thing if we sent forward to higher authority here a comprehensive review of the present position, together with suggestions for future policy as regards the disposal of the refugees. We should hope that as a result of such a review, that a decision would be given as to whether <sup>and</sup> ultimate objective is to be <sup>(1)</sup> an arrangement with Italy whereby the refugees were <sup>and</sup> under a promise of an amnesty or (2) a settlement of the refugees somewhere within the British Empire. We recognise there are serious difficulties about both of the above courses; but these will be fully set out in the proposed review. As soon therefore, as immediate action has been taken, this file should be sent to me (together with all other files dealing with Abyssinian refugees in East Africa) so that I can prepare such a review in consultation with Mr. Grosamith.

4. I attach herewith drafts to cover the immediate action referred to in paragraph 2 above.

I have not thought it necessary to send to

either

8  
either the Treasury or the Foreign Office at this stage copies of the Governor's despatch of the 17th July, particularly as this is mainly concerned with questions of future policy, which would be discussed fully in the review to which I have referred.

5. It will be desirable to send copies of 28 to the War Office and the Air Ministry, secret J.F., in the usual way.

*Chadwell*  
3.8.1937

Sir C. Parkinson

I am very bothered about this, we have to take these refugees because of policy - also for humanity's sake because the Italians would kill them. But Kenya cannot house, clothe & feed them, and the despatch shows that they are useless for any practical purpose.

If we accept them & keep them they will just go on and expect us to continue to look after them. They won't go back to Ethiopia they can't be settled in Kenya, & Kenya cannot be expected to pay.

F.O. will set the policy & say we must receive them: Treas' will - very naturally - object to paying. But a head on the Col. Services Vote maintenance of refugees might bring home to Parliament what generosity means.

*S.W. Kent*  
4.8

Yes - this is going to be a serious problem. The money side is important, but not nearly so important as the question of what

now see  
Mr Lees memo  
on 46597/1/37 EA

to do with visas / passport

used  
4/8/37

above

29 To Sw. tel. 161 - 28 and - 4.8.37

30 To Tracy (works 28) -

hand  
4/1/37

31 To To (works 30 and)

32 T. H.O. (works 28)

3rd hand

33 - as hand

34. EXTRACT FROM MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY FOR PERIOD 22.4.37 TO 29.5.37 (CN 34099/37 K.A.R.)

35. EXTRACT FROM MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY FOR PERIOD 22.4.37 TO 29.5.37 (CN 34099/37 K.A.R.)

36. EXTRACT FROM MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY FOR PERIOD 29.5.37 TO 26.6.37 (CN 34099/37 K.A.R.)

37 Sir R Brooke Popham, 3/0 - 12.8.37  
Reports on condition of refugees

38 To Sir Brooke Popham 3/0 37 and 25.8.37

40 Extract from morning Post 24.8.37

41- the same then withdrawn dated 19.8.37  
said copy of letter from Lord Noel Buxton  
Mr. H.W. Watson addressed to the Times  
the "Manchester Guardian" resp

see minutes on envelope  
attached to No. 41

42 the Abyssinian Refugee Relief Fund 4.9.37  
Lords. cheque for £25 for train to Kenya with  
instructions to apply it to the relief of  
Tit Amari Landi Ayella

in reference  
R297

Mr. Paskin.

As I told you this morning, Sir Sidney Barton some time ago spoke to me on the telephone about this and said that he had had a letter from Kenya (I think he said from a District Commissioner but I cannot be sure) to the effect that Zaude Ayella badly needed some new clothes and other personal articles. Sir Sidney Barton asked me whether there would be any objection if a further small grant were made to the Government of Kenya by the Abyssinian Refugees Relief Committee so that from it the Government could provide Zaude Ayella with some new clothes, etc. Sir Sidney said that he would rather send the money through us than send it direct to anyone unconnected with the Government. I said that we should much prefer the adoption of the procedure which he suggested - namely that any assistance given by the Refugees Relief Committee should go through the Government of Kenya.

As you will see from the flimsy attached to the file, I have already sent an acknowledgment to No. 42. I suggest that we should take further action as in the drafts herewith.

P. Hee

8.9.37.

To Abyssinian Refugee Relief Fund 8.9.37  
4.2 amend

To CA (w/cheque for) 9.9.37  
25

DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE

To Kenya - 749 11/12  
11/9/37

DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE

To FC (sic 22) 14.9.37  
P 10

To CA 9.9.37  
ack cheque in no 444

DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE

Extract from Manchester Guardian dated 2.9.37  
Pastor  
15/9/37

48. GOV. KENYA..... SECRET..... 15.9.37.  
Trs. report on m or taken to feed and care  
for refugees.

49. FO. (i.o.) 20.9.37  
Reports enquiries made by Station Charge  
& officers & requests shown. None.

No.48. Besides being a tribute to the initiative, resource, and devotion to duty of all the officers concerned, whether administrative, police, or medical, in the arrangements for shepherding the refugees to the concentration camp at Isiolo, this despatch is a vivid reminder of the magnitude of the problems which confront the Government of Kenya as a result of the incursions of refugees which took place during July and August, and will no doubt play a useful part in persuading the Treasury to agree

agree to accepting the cost of the maintenance of these refugees as a charge on Imperial funds.

The problem of their disposal was discussed recently at a meeting attended by representatives of the Treasury and the Foreign Office, in the course of which it became clear that Kenya would have to contemplate the maintenance of these refugees for an ~~indefinite~~ ~~considerable~~ time. In the course of the discussion Mr. Hale of the Treasury intimated that he fully appreciated that the cost of maintaining these refugees ought to be a charge on Imperial funds. We shall not be in a position to write to the Treasury about it officially until the notes of the meeting have been agreed, but from the point of view of keeping the Treasury interested in the subject, it will no doubt be desirable to let them have a copy of this despatch forthwith.

I accordingly submit drafts of a reply to Kenya and of letters to the Treasury and the Foreign Office.

No.49. In the course of the meeting mentioned above, the possibility of enlisting some of the Italian native deserters, and possibly also some of the Abyssinian refugees, in the K.A.R., was discussed; but there was general agreement to the effect that any such action would annoy the Italians and so would make our eventual negotiations with them more difficult.

It is quite certain that none of these people could have been enlisted in the K.A.R. without our having been consulted, and it is even more certain that

(Unless Kenya have gone mad)  
Wes

W.C.S.

that none of them could have been issued with new fire arms. The Foreign Office will therefore be quite on safe ground in denying these reports, without reference to the Governor of Kenya.

I submit a draft reply to Mr. Lambert.

J.P. Pasam  
27.9.1937

20/9/37

50. Gov. (S.O.)

Suggests that steps shd. be taken to make some public statement as to what is being done for the refugees in Kenya.

This letter was received after I had prepared the report on Nos. 48 & 49. Anon there have been references in the press (based on a report in the E. African Standard which are annexed to No. 48), to what is being done for these refugees. The Gov. whether some public statement shd. be made shd. however perhaps wait till the A.P. are available on which the Gov. of the disposal of these refugees is under discussion with the Treas. & the F.O.

J.P. Pasam  
27/9

whole machinery of Kenya. The article from the local Standard too much should show full appreciation of the troubles.

at our meeting Mr. Stiel of the Treas. said H.M.C. would carry the cost & thought that is not confirmed. I have ventured to be a bit more hopeful than Mr. Pasam's first draft. There is another deep question for which the Gov. seeks for authority to assume the public that H.M.C. will pay. You can't give that till we get leave from the Treasury but perhaps the S. of S. would mention it to the Chancellor.

As to publicity I agree that Kenya's effort should be known but the difficulty is the right kind. We don't want splash headlines about "weary warriors" and "glad news of welcome to Kenya" and harrowing tales of disease & hardship. The reality is bad enough but it isn't too bad. Mr. Ridgway might be asked to advise.

Page 13 para 13 ought to get a lot of publicity viz. that the Ethiopians possibly brought about 100 boys and don't see a finding they could not be sold. That would cause the Kikuyu joy but might cause to steady opinion here. However better not.

As to No 50 "Anon" is bound on me as much as on the Governor. I don't want a problem but we've got it. And I can't see a solution. Where can they go? And they won't work.

J.S.O. Hand  
18.9.

Sec. of State

You should see these drafts. As regards the S.O. letter, I suggest that we should commission a report on the Gov. says to go. I don't see how we can do better for these cases as to public info.

I cannot fail to mention a  
criticism of Italy, and that is  
their business. But, like his  
stock, I am not sure as to  
the kind of publicity - "The  
Times".

W.C.S.  
29.9.37

W.C.S. 30.9.37.

Major Bishop's  
see after Dept have  
issued.  
A.

51 To J.H.U. Lambert (F.O) (49 mod.) 2/10/37

52 To Kenya Consul. (76 49 & 61) - 48 mod. - 5 OCT 1937.

53 To Trelo. (W/C. 48 & 52)  
Copy sent to 9/c dept.

54 To F.O (W/C. 48, 52)  
+ 53

7.10.37

Extract for Africa World dated 16.10.37

56 Extract for The Times of 14.10.37

57 To S. Easton (W/C. 48 & 52) 23.10.37

58 To S. Easton (W/C. 48 & 52) 23.10.37

59 To S. Easton (W/C. 48 & 52) 23.10.37

NO. 5187, 53, 54 TRANSFERRED TO S.P.O.F.

60 Extract from The Times of 23.10.37

DESTROYED UNDER

Mr. R. S. Gray

I am glad for your guidance a letter  
61 from the F.O. enclosing a note as to  
the reply we should be returned to  
any Press enquiries about the  
charges made against the "Azione  
Coloniale" against the Govt. general  
as regards physical refugees.  
Will you please return it to me in  
due course, with the relevant cutting  
from the Times, so that it can be  
placed on the file.

Mr. Paskey,

Dear Sir, please see how much  
a copy of the relevant typecript  
is being sent to you.

Extract attached

62. H.M. Morda (Armenian Refugee Relief Fund) 70 — 5.11.37.

Forw. cheque for £1,000 for benefit of Armenian Refugees in Kenya.

I sent an acknowledgment of No. 62 as soon as it arrived - the films should be attached to this file in due course, together with a copy of the letter which Sir S. Barton sent to Mr. Flood about this further grant.

Drafts to the Crown Agents and the Governor of Kenya herewith.

*J. Hea*  
8.11.37  
*Wm*

62 To Armenian Refugee Relief Fund - 6 Nov. 37.

63 To C.A. (w/cheque) for £1000 — 9.11.37

10/5/38

Kenya 978 - Cont - 10 NOV 1937

65 Sir S. Barton (4/6 to Mr. Flood) — 5.11.37.  
66 (4) in copy of case for Mr. Campbell & Sir S. Maxwell regarding need for statement by H.M.M. with regard to refugees in Kenya — 6.11.37.  
67 Gov. Kenya — 662 — 3.11.37  
68 F.O. (7.11.37) — 18.11.37  
69 ...  
70 ...  
71 ...  
72 ...  
73 ...  
74 ...  
75 ...  
76 ...  
77 ...  
78 ...  
79 ...  
80 ...

Nos. 65 and 67. Proceed as in draft herewith.  
No. 66. The long reply given by the Secretary of State to Mr. Graham White's question on the 3rd of November was intended to comply with the Governor's suggestion in No. 50 that some public statement should be made with regard to the action taken in Kenya to deal with the refugees, and the Foreign Office were influenced, in agreeing to that being done, by the fact that Sir George Maxwell had also urged that some public statement should be made. As regards a reply to Hd. 50, a draft has already been prepared to be sent when the Treasury and the Foreign Office have concurred in the draft despatch which it is proposed to send on 46597/1/37 E.A.

*I. Graham White*  
agreed with a minor alteration.  
*J*

No. 66 can be put by.

No. 68. This article in the "Azione Coloniale" is no doubt the one which gave rise to the report in the "Times" of the 23rd of October (see Nos. 60 and 61). The opportunity afforded by the Secretary of State's reply to Mr. Graham White's question on the 3rd of November (copy in No. 66) was taken to deny the allegation that Kenya had encouraged these refugees to enter the Colony. A copy of the enclosure to No. 68 should go to the Governor, if.

*See*  
*of*  
*No.*  
*70*  
*11/37*

*J. P. Pearson*  
12.11.37.

Cont Sir G. Maxwell had his own business?  
68 is comic. If we left them alone we should be accused for having done so. If we starve them when they can be watched we are accused of "incarcerating" them. If they were left near the frontier they would be a hindrance. The Italian attitude that the refugees are "outlaws" is of course ridiculous.

*J. P. Pearson*  
12.11.37.



outbreaks, 2372 new cases were created during October.

The problem of finding occupation for the refugees after the work of building the camp is completed is already under consideration, though no obvious solution presents itself.

Clotey White  
1972

87. Gov. Kenya - Secret - 13 10.12.37.  
Cables (7) with comments on action taken by Kenya Govt. with regard to Abyssinian refugees.

No. 79. It would, I think, be a good thing to send a copy of this despatch to the Secretary of the Fund - draft herewith.

No. 80. This is a remarkable record of achievement under very difficult conditions and in a very short time, and I think a copy of this might also be sent to the Refugee Fund on the other hand, it would perhaps be preferable, instead of sending it to the Secretary, to send it to Sir Sydney Barton with the draft herewith. A copy should also go to the Foreign Office (see draft on (81)).

No. 81. This does not add anything to what we know already, and the Foreign Office can hardly make use of Sir Robert Brooke-Popham's previous experience of refugee problems in any further conversations which may take place with Signor Crolla. It will, however, enable them to deny, with even greater emphasis than they have already done, the allegations that Kenya has not been following the path of

strict

strict rectitude in relation to these refugees.

Copy to the Foreign Office with draft

herewith.

J.J. P. O'Brien  
18.12.37.

D. O'Brien to see No. 80.

I send on as a matter of interest to what the S. of G. may like to see. It might be well, if he so think fit, to send a copy of the enclosure in No 80 to one of the Opposition M.P.s who put questions regarding to colour that Kenya does nothing. I think perhaps if that was done they would try to blame Kenya for this the deplorable state of the refugees.

Action is done - as proposed

J.J.P.

18.12

W.P. 10.12.37

W.P. 20.12.37

Yes.

W.P.

20.12.37

W.P. 21.12.37

82 To F.O. (w/c 50 + 81)

83 To Sir S. Barton (w/c 80) 5.0

84 To R. Fund (w/c 79) 5.0

DESTROYED

20.12.37

85 Miss Jackson 20 Dec 37  
Request an advance that Abyssinian refugees will not be expelled from Kamp

86 To Miss Jackson (85 ans) 16 Dec 37

87 Sir J. Barton (20) 28 Dec 37  
Agrees to the Gov's suggestion that the Grant Office should forward the general relief of the refugees towards the grant of £200 contributed by the Save the Children Fund to the children's camp at Isid.

This is satisfactory. The Save the Children Fund will have plenty of scope for their activity in helping to look after the orphan children in the refugee camp. The enclosure in the despatch (No. 80) does not say what number there is but refers to "many orphans and small slave children". If the money now supplied can help to do any good with these children, then it will be better applied than most charitable funds. I have acknowledged Sir Sydney Barton's letter and submit a draft to the Governor.

88 To Sir J. Barton (87 ans) 29 Dec 37 29.12.1937

89 To Miss Jackson (87 + 80 ans) 30 Dec 1937

90 Abyssinian Refugees Relief Fund 31.12.37  
Returns cheque for £200 given by the Save the Children Fund, towards expenses of the Children's Camp at Isid.

91 To Abyssinian Refugees (90 ans) 11.1.38  
Relief Fund

To C.A. (Cheque for £200) 11.1.38

92 To Miss Jackson 12 Jan 1938

Sir C. Parkinson 2/1/38

Sir C. Bottomley 4.1.38

Mr. Dawe 4.1

M. P. P. P.

I attach an extract from a letter which the Secretary of State has received from Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, which can be registered on an appropriate file.

G. C. Gray

3.1.38

95 Brown (20) (20, Dept) 2.1.38

Returns cheque for £200 for interest as it is drawn in form of the Colonial Office.

96 To Brown Agents (95 ans + cheque returned) 14/1/38

Nos 94-96

Put by Clerk White 14/1

97 O'Brien (20) 21/1/38

Not been a personal business

Copies of 6, 7, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

98 To Brown Agents (95 ans + cheque returned) 14/1/38

Nos 94-96

W. P. P. P. 15/1

17  
94

6

Extract from a letter from Sir Robert Brooke-Popham  
to Mr. Ormsby Gore, dated 17th December, 1937.

\* \* \* \* \*

2. I have got your refugee despatch and am very glad to get the official assurance that the cost won't fall on Kenya. There have been various enquiries about this and a certain amount of anxiety as to the expenditure involved, but I told Francis Scott and also Pandya what the position was, and so avoided any questions being asked in Legislative Council. I notice there was an indignant letter in some of the English papers signed, amongst others, by Jomo Kenyatta, demanding "the right of political asylum for our black brothers" - apparently in Kenya - and "protesting against this threat to expel Abyssinian refugees from Kenya". So the criticisms have already started and the excellent statement you made on the 3rd November was none too soon.

\* \* \* \* \*

38066/18/14/37  
93

C. O.

Mr. Coker White 3/1/38  
Mr. Parkin 4/1/38

Ans - (1) - 938 file

SH

12 Jan '38

- Mr.
- Sir H. Moore.
- Sir G. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bottomley.
- Sir J. Shuckburgh.
- Perms. U.S. of S.
- Party. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

3 DRAFTS

Kenya  
No. 12  
Gov.

(88)

114) In  
(193) with ref. to my despatch No. of the 30th of December, I have etc. is to inform you that a cheque for £200 (two hundred pounds), the gift of the same to the Children Fund, has now been received from the Abyssinian Refugees Relief Fund to be used for the benefit of the children detained in camp at Isista.

The cheque has been transmitted to the C.A. for the balance to be credited to Kenya funds.

FURTHER ACTION

C. O.

28066/14/37

DOWNING STREET.

30 December, 1937.

Mr. Flood. 24.12.37

Mr.

Mr.

Sir B. Moore

Sir G. Tomlinson

Sir F. Blomfield

Sir J. Shackleton

Perms. U.S. of S.

Party U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

SLAM

Sir,

I have etc. to refer to your despatch No. 662 of the 3rd of November and to inform you that the Committee of the Abyssinian Refugee Relief Fund has no objection to the diversion of the sum of £25 which had been intended for Pitaurari Zaude Ayella to the general relief of the refugees as proposed by you.

I have been informed by Sir Sydney Barton that the Save the Children Fund proposes to contribute a sum of £200 to be specially devoted to the needs of the orphan children in the refugee camp. I have not yet received this sum, but Sir Sydney Barton has been informed that I have

DRAFT.

KENYA

NO. 1147  
GOVERNOR

FURTHER ACTION

and the receipt of the cheque has been ackd. to the ARRFF with an expression of my thanks on your behalf.

The Sec. you allude to in regard to the Relief Fund is being reported on your behalf to the Hon. Sec. of the Save the Children Fund. I am sure that his gift will be most appreciated by you and that a report on the matter will be forwarded in due course.

(Signed) W. ORMSBY-GORE

no doubt that it will be accepted with  
*by the Govt of France*  
gratitude and that it will be devoted to  
the care of the children as suggested.

3. I take this opportunity to acknowledge  
the receipt of your further despatch No. 729 of  
the 30th of November, forwarding a Health Report  
on the camp and hospital at Isicla. The Report  
sets out, in clear and illuminating manner, the  
great difficulties with which your Government and  
its officers were faced with the influx of the  
refugees, and the measures taken to meet the  
situation are, in my opinion, deserving of the  
highest praise. The fact that the total number  
of deaths among so many diseased and suffering  
people who had gone through considerable hard-  
ship was only 107 out of 6,288 shows that the  
efforts of the Medical Department have been  
most successful in controlling disease. I shall  
be glad if you will convey to all concerned  
a further expression of my warm appreciation of  
the work which they have performed in connexion  
with the refugees.

C. O.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr.

Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Ballowley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Paris, U.S. of S.

Paris, U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

**DRAFT**

*on relief of the orphans*

**FURTHER ACTION.**

*Whole this part  
should be  
signed by  
the Secretary*

4. A copy of your despatch has  
been forwarded to the Foreign Office  
and a copy has also been sent to  
Sir Sydney Barton, who has been informed  
that there is no objection to his  
communicating its contents to the  
Committee of the Abyssinian Refugees  
Relief Fund.

5. When the proposed grant from  
the Save the Children Fund has been  
received, and if you approve of its  
being expended as suggested, I request  
that you will furnish, in due course,  
for the information of the Committee  
of the Fund, a report on the use to  
which the money will be put and of the  
condition and special needs of the  
children. From the enclosure to  
your despatch it would appear that most  
of the children are healthy and fit,  
though no doubt the provision of extra  
comforts for them will be appreciated.

I have, etc.  
(Signed) W. G. GIBBS GORE

Printed and Published by the Government Printer, London, 1918.

21  
29th December, 1937

Dear Sir Sydney,

Thank you for your letter of the 23rd of December reporting that the Committee of the Relief Fund has agreed to divert Zaude Ayella's £25 to general relief. We shall also be very grateful for the extra £200 from the Save the Children Fund in aid of the orphans. I am sure that the Governor of Kenya will welcome this grant with gratitude, even as we do. If all charitable funds could be devoted to as worthy an object and applied as faithfully, the world might be a better place.

As you know, I am leaving this Department and am handing over to Mr. A.J. Dawe, so I will wish you farewell and all prosperity in 1938.

Yours sincerely,

SIR SYDNEY BARTON, K.C.V.O., K.B.E., C.M.G.

87<sup>12</sup>

19, NEVILLE STREET,  
ONSLow GARDENS, S.W. 7.  
TEL. 6127 KENDINGTON.

RECEIVED  
18 DEC 1937  
C. O. REGY

23 December, 1937.

Dear Flood,

with reference to your letter of the 16th ult. (38066/14/37), the proposal to spend for the general relief of the refugees the grant of £25 originally earmarked for Vitaumari Lande Ayele was considered at a meeting of the Committee of the Abyssinian Refugees Relief Fund held yesterday, when it was decided to agree to the diversion of this grant as suggested by the Government of Kenya.

Will you kindly inform Sir Robert accordingly? You will shortly receive from our Honorary Secretary a further grant, of £200 contributed by the Save the Children Fund for the needs of the 300 orphans in the children's camp at Isiolo.

In a private letter dated 2nd November which

J. E. W. Flood Esq. C.M.G.

~~69~~  
69

I received from Glenday, in reply to one from me<sup>6</sup> informing him of the existence of our fund, he mentioned in his letter that his biggest problem at the moment were some 300 orphan children whom the refugees had with them. An opportunity occurred to mention this to the Save the Children Fund - with whom we are in an official collaboration and the latter have now asked us to transmit their gift to Kenya for relief in the children's camp.

I trust that the earmarking of this sum for the special purpose indicated will meet with the approval of the Government and that we may receive - in due course for the information of the Save the Children Fund a report on the use to which this money will be put and on the condition and needs of the children in question.

Yours sincerely,

S. Paston

86  
16th December, 1937.

Dear Madam,

Mr. Ormsby Gore desired me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th of December, regarding the position of the Abyssinian refugees in Kenya, and to say that, as he stated in reply to a question in the House of Commons on the 13th of December, there is no suggestion that the refugees now being maintained in British territory will be compelled to return to Abyssinia against their will.

Yours truly,

(Signed) GERALD CREAMY

Private Secretary.

Miss Joachim.

17, SOMERSET TERRACE,  
DUKE'S ROAD, W.C.1.

Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> 1937

Sir

I hope there is no truth that  
in the reports that Abyssinian  
refugees are to be expelled from  
Kenya and returned into the  
hands of the Italians who use  
neither law nor justice in their  
treatment of that people. The  
massacre of Addis Ababa  
was not an isolated one

24  
It was repeated in every district where the Italians were in effective occupation, and sporadic killings without accusation or trial are of constant occurrence. I am referring particularly to the killing of non-combatants. If we send the refugees from Kenya back, we shall

be participating still further than we have already done in the crime of the Italian aggression. I shall be glad to have your assurance that this is not to be done.

Yours faithfully,

Maun Joachim

The Rt. Hon. W. G. A. Osmund, for  
Colonial Secretary.

83

36066/14/37

C. O.

Mr. Paskin. 18/12/37.

Mr. Flood 18-12

Mr.

Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Ballomley 20.12

Sir J. Shuckburgh

+ Permt. U.S. of S. 20 18/12/37

Parly. U.S. of S.

X Secretary of State 20/12/37

For Mr. Flood's signature.

~~29~~ 29

December, 1937.

**DRAFT.**

3 of 5

SIR SYDNEY BARTON, K.C.V.O.,  
K.B.E., C.F.G.

Dear Sir Sydney,

You will, I think, be interested to see the enclosed copy of a despatch from the Governor of Kenya, transmitting a health report on the Refugee Camp and Hospital at Isiolo up to the 31st of October. You will, I am sure, agree that it is a magnificent record of achievement under difficult conditions.

No. 60 with enclosure

There is no objection,

if you consider it desirable, to your showing this report to members of

**FURTHER ACTION.**

of the Committee of the Abyssinian

Refugees Relief Fund.

Yours sincerely.

Signed) J. E. W. FLOOD

38066/14/37. 2b



29<sup>th</sup> December, 1937.

C. O.

Mr. Paskin. 18/12/37.

Mr. Paskin 18.

Mr.

Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley. 20.12

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S. 20 18/12/37

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State. 21.12.

**DRAFT.**

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,  
FOREIGN OFFICE.

No. 60 with enclosure

No. 61

**FURTHER ACTION.**

Sir,

With reference to previous correspondence regarding measures taken to deal with incursions of Abyssinian refugees into Kenya, I am etc. to transmit to you, to be laid before Mr. Secretary Eden, the enclosed copies of a despatch from the Governor of Kenya transmitting a health report on the Refugee Camp and Hospital at Isiolo, covering the period from its commencement at the end of July up to the 31st of October. A copy of this report is being sent to Sir Sydney Barton, and he is being informed that there is no objection

objection, if he considers it desirable, to his showing it to the members of the Committee of the Abyssinian Refugees Relief Fund.

2. I am also to enclose a copy of a secret despatch, dated the 10th of December, in regard to the allegations that officers of the Government of Kenya had encouraged Abyssinian refugees to enter Kenya, and that proper steps had not been taken by the Government of Kenya to prevent the refugees from engaging in anti-Italian activities.

I am, etc.

Signed J E W FLOOD

KENYA  
No.



81  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
NAIROBI  
KENYA

SECRET

RECEIVED

DEC 29 1937

10 December, 1937

Sir, C. O. REGY

71  
I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Secret despatch of the 25th November regarding conversations at the Foreign Office with Signor Grolla, of the Italian Embassy, on the subject of Abyssinian refugees in Kenya and to thank you for the support that this Government is receiving in the matter.

The general situation regarding Abyssinian refugees is of course well known to you and was explained to Signor Grolla as clearly as possible in the Foreign Office. I need not emphasize the well known fact that the finding of suitable land for our own population is already a problem necessitating grave consideration and that the presence in the Colony of the refugees is a source of embarrassment. As invited by you, however, I take this opportunity of making a few more comments, largely of a personal nature.

2. I might remind you that I have had some experience of refugees in Iraq. In trying to deal with the Assyrian problem I became personally acquainted with the difficulties that face any Government once it makes itself responsible for refugees. I have also a lively recollection of the troubles that arose at the end of 1929 between Nedj and Kuwait when the Mutair and Ajman tribes fled into Kuwait to escape from Ibn Saud. It would, therefore, be only logical to deduce that I should be  
opposed

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
W. ORMSBY GORE, P.C., M.P.,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,  
DOWNING STREET,  
LONDON, S.W. 1.

opposed to any refugees from Abyssinia or elsewhere entering Kenya. In fact some months ago and before the last influx of refugees, I consulted with Mr. Glenday and others as to the possible steps that could be taken to turn back refugees coming across the Kenya frontier.

We considered co-operation with the Italian authorities and also forming a chain of posts on our side of the border. The latter proposal was finally turned down as impracticable, firstly because of the difficulty of maintaining an adequate number of posts in the desolate country to the east of the northern end of Lake Rudolf, and secondly because it was evident that, short of opening fire, there was no likelihood of inducing these refugees to turn back into Abyssinia.

3. At a later stage I examined the possibility of establishing a camp within reasonable distance of the Abyssinian border, in the hopes that some of the Abyssinian refugees might drift back again. This was not carried out for various reasons, amongst which was the probability that the establishment of a refugee camp within one or two days' journey of the Abyssinian frontier might give some reasonable cause to the Italians to lodge complaints.

4. The points mentioned above have not been considered of sufficient importance to report in any previous despatch, but in view of the line taken by the Italians they may possibly be of value as showing my attitude of mind in the matter.

5. As you are aware, Isiolo is over 220 miles from the nearest point on the Italian frontier. One of the reasons for selection of this site for the camp was to keep the refugees as far away from Abyssinia as possible,

5.

so as to remove any cause for the supposition that we were encouraging communications between the refugees and their compatriots. Except under control the refugees are not allowed to wander from the camp, and have of course all been disarmed. As you are aware, Teclé Hawariate, who applied for permission to settle in Kenya, was forbidden to do so, the question actually being referred to me personally for decision. The statement that Mr. Reece and Mr. Glenday have encouraged refugees to enter Kenya is exactly the reverse of the facts.

6.

With regard to Signor Pomilio's article, the "definite case of encouragement last August" has reference, I believe, to a statement that British aeroplanes dropped messages over the frontier to encourage Abyssinians to come across. This allegation is utterly incorrect. Royal Air Force aeroplanes were used in the area east of Lake Rudolf in August to check any inclination on the part of the Gelubba to raid in that area, but they were given orders not to fly close to the frontier. They were also used at the time in order that this Government could take such steps as might be immediately possible to turn back <sup>any</sup> refugees not in imminent danger whom the Royal Air Force might have observed in this isolated part of the Colony which is not normally patrolled.

The same gentleman then goes on to assert that I have received two Abyssinians from Europe. I have visited refugee camps and spoken to Abyssinians there, but the statement and its implications are completely misleading. Therefore, in order to support their allegations, the Italians have to rely either on vague assertions or on evidence that can be proved to be contrary to facts.

If the

4.

If the Italian Government wish to accuse Kenya officials, including the Governor, of succouring people in distress, of restoring the sick to health, of nursing starving children and of striving to inculcate a healthy outlook on life amongst the destitute then, on behalf of Kenya, I will plead guilty. If the Italian authorities consider that they have a just cause for complaint on this account, I can merely be thankful that we still adhere to our British ideals.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

*P. Brooke-Poplam*

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL,  
GOVERNOR.

KENYA  
No. 728



GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
NAIROBI  
KENYA

30 November, 1937.

Sir,

With reference to previous correspondence regarding the measures taken to deal with the incursions into this Colony of refugees from Ethiopia, I have the honour to enclose, for your information, a copy of a Health Report on the Refugee Camp and Hospital at Isiolo covering the period from its commencement at the end of July up to the 31st of October last.

I am sure that you will agree that this full and interesting report reflects credit on the medical authorities responsible for the organization of medical services at the Camp.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

*Brooke-Naptham*

AIR CHIEF-MARSHAL,  
GOVERNOR.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

W. ORMSBY GORE, P.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, S.W. 1.

*Copy to O.S.  
Auton. 13  
Stewart (P)*

31/10/37.

ABYSSINIAN REFUGEE CAMP.Health Report to end of October.

This report covers the period from the commencement of the Camp till 31/10/37. It has been a period of growth from nothing, up to a community of about 6200 persons of all ages and both sexes, all housed after a fashion, with an arrangement for rationing, with a system of sewage disposal, and with a fully organised hospital. This time in inception and growth, though of great interest, is one which is very difficult to tabulate satisfactorily from the point of view of figures as the numbers changed daily and various health measures gradually came into operation. Nevertheless, an instructive series of figures is available from which certain conclusions may be drawn.

The history of this camp is complementary to that of the Refugees at Karsa and N. Horr, but owing to circumstances it is recorded in full before the latter.

1. Beginning of the Camp.

When in the end of July it was decided to locate the Refugees at Isiolo, a site was chosen on the bank of the Siolo River about four miles from the Station and fairly well removed for administrative reasons from any local inhabitants.

The ground is covered with light sandy soil on which some grass and thorn trees were growing.

The river provides an ample supply of water and forms one boundary of the camp.

Fifty able-bodied Abyssinian men were dispatched as an advance party to prepare the ground and make a commencement of the building of huts, and were inspected by me on 2nd August. From then on till 7th October refugees continued to pour into Isiolo, by which time all the survivors of those who had reached Karsa, N. Horr, and Kapenguria, were concentrated in the growing camp. The total population on 31/10/37 was 6181 refugees.

These arrivals were in various degrees of misery, weakness and ill-health, with relatively few who had maintained strength and vigour to the end. Apart from the 351 who came from Kagen-guria, they arrived on foot or in sick convoys in lorries. When one states that some arrived on foot it must be realised that there were a number of horses, donkeys and mules with them which mostly carried baggage but were also utilised to the full for riding purposes if they could be spared. Besides, accompanying each foot safari there was a lorry to pick up any who fell out on the way. Before each foot safari left N. Horr, each man, woman and child was medically examined as to their fitness to perform the arduous march of nearly three weeks duration over 270 miles of hard country, with water only at the end of each day's march, and carrying with them sufficient maize meal to last for half the journey. It speaks well for the hardiness of the people and the effectiveness of the examination when one realises that only 5 deaths occurred on the way amongst about 3680 who started, bearing in mind that they had already undergone much in the way of hardship and disease.

Naturally, the same freedom from casualties was not found amongst the sick evacuated by lorry, although indeed there were remarkably few deaths, only 3 or 4, until the last convoy of all which contained mostly moribund people. It was absolutely essential to remove these persons from Horr, for during the rains the place is completely cut off for weeks or even months.

2. Plan of the Camp.

The Camp has been laid out following the lie of the land on the bank of the Siolo. It is in the form of two rectangles, each about four or five hundred yards long by about the same broad, separated from each other by a broad wedge-shaped piece of ground on which stand the administrative structures. The circumference of the camp is over two miles in length, and is girdled by a continuous thorn hedge, having, when it is completed, not more than four openings.

34

Within the two rectangles are parallel rows of huts numbering in all about 1100, or more when all are finished.

There is a gentle slope from one end of the camp to the other, interrupted by a more or less level patch where comes the administrative wedge. The prevailing wind is roughly down the slope.

The houses are built of wattle and poles, thatched with grass, and are moderately spaced out. Grass and bushes have been completely cleared away within the boma to diminish the risk of fire spreading and to make it more difficult for any sanitary defect to escape notice.

Inside the boma in recesses in the hedge are latrines. These are ~~of the~~ covered trench type, of varying depths up to about twelve feet. The individual seats or rather holes number 300 excluding those for the superior persons and for the Hospital and Government personnel, so that they may be considered ample in number. It is planned to make a number of night latrines but these are not yet started. Adjoining the latrines are a sufficient number of stone-built cone shaped incinerators, but one feature of the camp has been the small amount of rubbish.

At first, owing to the great amount of bush round the camp and the absence of any other facilities, the whole place was used indiscriminately as a latrine. This was especially seen on the side of the camp next the river. Immediately on my arrival this was represented to the Administrative authorities who at my request promptly cleared and burned all bush between the camp and the river and instituted constant patrols which move up and down the bank trying to enforce sanitary control. Now sufficient latrines are completed and are very satisfactory, and are being used by the people who never had any idea of such things before. The Sanitary Superintendent, Mr. Bennet, engaged for the camp, and our own carpenter are responsible for the construction and maintenance of these with the help of unskilled Abyssinian labour. An Abyssinian sweeper has been put in charge of each to keep it clean and in order, but the type of latrine needs very little attention.

- 4 -

Water supplies for drinking are obtained from one central watering place, made by stone banking the river. Above that spot no one may wade, bathe or wash but it has proved impossible to prevent this completely. Below it, people may wash clothes or themselves, and on certain days it is a great sight to see scores of people at once busy with the family washing. A favourite way is to use an ox hide spread out in a shallow depression in the bank as a tub, and to heat the water in a kerosene tin over a little fire alongside. To see this is very comforting to a sanitarian who knows that these people have been suffering recently from louse-borne relapsing fever and typhus. A more satisfactory arrangement of drinking water supply has been planned but has not yet been started.

### 3. Rations.

There is an issue twice a week of meat and maize meal on a scale of a pound of each daily for an adult and half that for a child. The issue has been so organised that it is done very rapidly, an hour sufficing for the issue of maize and five hours for the meat. In order to supply the camp with meat, slaughtering takes place twice a week and on each occasion 50 oxen are slain. This is done on the far bank of the river and the meat brought over, then weighed and divided up. The slaughtering and cutting up at present are not satisfactory and a proper abattoir has been planned out and will be taken in hand very soon. The meat issued and not used at once is cut up into long thin strips and dried. It is surprising how few flies are attracted.

Very many of the people have brought money with them; others, by the sale of their animals and a few by the sale of other articles have acquired a little money. This is being spent at one or other of the two Indian dukas which have been established in the camp, or in the purchase of milk, vegetables or other food from Somali women who come round to sell. Sugar, coffee, ghee, peas, lentils, clothes, hats and shoes, and strangely enough maize meal, although that is issued as mentioned before, are the chief things they buy, but there is not very much money really and no more to come in.

A method of bread making with maize flour is used and is described in an appendix. As it involves fermentation followed by quick cooking it is possible that there is a considerable quantity of the B complex vitamin produced, but during their arduous march this was not possible.

Beer is made by most families. There are two varieties. One called ta'aj is made by fermenting honey and is said to be very strong. The other called tala is from grain called garbu or gups which seem to be oats or barley. The fermentation is said to be encouraged by the addition of pieces of a particular wood and is allowed to go on for four days. The liquor is poured off carefully and the lees containing the crushed grain thrown away.

#### 4. Industry, Sport, etc.

Up to the present the demand for labour for building the camp has fully occupied the available fit men. This will continue for a month or two and then something will have to be done to give them occupation. They appear to come largely from an agricultural people but tradesmen and artisans of various kinds have been found. No open air games or sports of any kind are played. The women, it is understood, are excellent spinners and weavers and certainly their products are eagerly bought by the neighbouring Somalis but are far too little in amount. It may be possible to devise some sort of occupation for them, too.

Sexual morality, as understood in Europe, seems to be greatly lacking.

Three churches have been established and services are held there. Amongst the refugees are certain of the clergy.

A burying ground has been consecrated also.

#### 5. Health.

A special section follows dealing with this in detail but it may be remarked here that a wonderful improvement in vigour and appearance has taken place especially amongst the children. The people as a whole strike one as being of <sup>an</sup> exceedingly hardy, tough race. This is in spite of the fact that they are riddled with venereal disease and

intestinal worms. - The issue of milk to children has had a miracu-  
ous effect. 37

## 6. Hospital.

A. A hospital has been built with accommodation for 300 patients. The staff consists of one M.O. specially engaged, his wife also qualified in medicine, two sub-assistant surgeons, two hospital assistants, one laboratory assistant, dressers, cooks and sweepers. Besides these, refugees assist in the wards and are under training. Amongst them are eight women who show aptitude for the work of nursing.

B. The hospital is situated in a rectangular space measuring 155 yards by 135 yards, adjoining the area set aside for administrative purposes.

The main part is housed in eight large huts each capable of taking 25 patients but it is proposed to put only 20 into them as pressure on space cases. The remainder of the patients are nursed in small huts.

Store huts, office, dispensary, women's clinic, and laboratory have also been built, as well as a bath hut, latrines and incinerator. Up to the present the staff, except Europeans, have been living in tents inside the hospital compound, but proper huts for them are to be built shortly. The Europeans live in tents in a special area set apart for them.

C. The equipment for such a temporary hospital is naturally not so elaborate as for a permanent one but has proved satisfactory and adequate. A charpoy, blankets and feeding utensils have been provided for each patient as well as hospital clothing. Sheets have been indented for and are expected shortly.

Other ward equipment has been supplied at once on demand. A very great deal has been improvised on the spot from packing-cases by our own carpenter and others.

D. Drugs, dressings, medical and surgical appliances are also supplied generously and promptly. No reasonable demand has been refused.

E. Food on the same scale as the rest of the Refugees receive has been issued, with an addition of ~~very~~ many extras such as milk, rice,

tea, sugar, bovril, potatoes, etc., while ox livers and hearts have been specially secured from the slaughter house. All this has been deemed necessary as malnutrition has been so often met with, and especially on account of the emaciation and weakness following on severe diarrhoea and dysentery, as well as the definite food deficiency leading to famine dropsy about which more is said later on.

F. Besides sick admitted direct from the camp, convoys arrived from N. Horr from 5/8/37 till 7/10/37. Included in these convoys were sick, aged, weak and relations of sick who were employed looking after them. A table is shown in the appendix recording the numbers and dates of each.

Arrangements were made to receive the convoys on the arrival of a wire from Marsabit announcing when they had left there. These arrangements consisted mainly in having a hot meal of soup, meat and rice with water to drink, ready for serving immediately on the people getting down from the lorries. Medical staff was ready waiting to check nominal rolls and sort out the sick needing hospital attention and to convey them straight to the wards.

At that time exact records were difficult to keep but the highest number in hospital here at any moment is estimated to have been a little over 300. That was in the first fortnight in October. Since that time the number has declined and on 31/10/37 was 163. It is likely that the peak has been passed and that numbers will steadily decline still further but at present it is impossible to say just how far.

G. Numbers Treated.

From 1/9/37 when the In-patients register was started till 31/10/37 there were 650 admissions. Out-patients number, new cases, September 1732, October 2372. Women's clinique 27/9/37 to 31/10/37 761 new cases. Return cases hitherto have not been listed but exceeded these by a good deal. About 75% of these women's cases are of venereal origin. They are not included in the number of the out-patients.

H. Important Diseases. Dysentery & Diarrhoea.

These are grouped together. Although generally of similar

causation, in many cases the diarrhoea was merely a terminal event in patients suffering from famine dropsy following on small-pox and general exhaustion.

At first the dysentery was of the bacillary type; latterly it has been more of the amoebic. There were 284 cases with 85 deaths. Remaining in hospital are a number of patients who are suffering from chronic dysentery, probably of bacillary type whose outlook is hopeless.

Famine Dropsy.

This has been seen only in poor patients. Not one of the well-off appears to have suffered and there is a larger proportion of young persons among them than in the general public. Whether this is due to the condition affecting growing persons more than adults, or to the fact that many of the slaves, who are the first to suffer, and who suffer greatest, are young, cannot be stated. The condition is being described in a paper to be published later but it may be said that it affects both sexes and all ages, is due to a defective diet, hardship, fatigue and misery, and shows itself by anaemia, oedema of the tissues sometimes confined to one part of the body such as the face or legs but mostly widespread, as well as serous effusions in cavities of which the peritoneum is oftenest involved, neuritis, cardiac weakness, great asthenia and often diarrhoea in a terminal event. Its relation to and distinction from beriberi are very obscure, and so is its connection with the terminal oedema seen in chronic bowel diseases. There were 104 cases with 21 deaths. This does not include many mild cases admitted for something else.

Malaria.

There were 176 cases with 3 deaths. This is an unusually high percentage of deaths if one were considering uncomplicated malaria in African natives, but the circumstances are not usual, nor of course, is the series large. The type is subtertian with an occasional benign one. Before the laboratory assistant arrived diagnosis had to be made in the absence of a blood examination, so that there must be a few mistakes. Since his coming all pyrexial

cases have had their bloods examined and only those in which parasites were found have been listed under the heading "malaria" the remainder, even though suggestive of malaria, have been grouped under the head of "pyrexia N.Y.D.". This is due to the presence of such serious illnesses as typhus and relapsing fever together with a desire to prevent those possibly being overlooked.

Relapsing fever and Typhus.

There were 28 cases of the former with 5 deaths, and 3 of the latter with no deaths. In both these diseases the vector was the louse. The habitat of the parasite appeared always to be in the hair of the head which was often most grossly infected.

Owing to the presence of these diseases, which were early recognised, the routine practice was adopted of shaving all patients all over, bathing them and clothing them in clean hospital clothing in spite of the trouble such a measure entailed in an improvised temporary hospital. Fortunately, it is the custom of Abyssinian women to shave the body hair so that no prejudice in this matter was encountered. Meanwhile, the patient's own clothing which had been removed was either burned if merely rags, or sterilized in a steam disinfectant and stored in a pack store. All hospital blankets are similarly sterilized each week, as well as being washed.

It is believed that this is the first time in Kenya that these diseases have been recorded as having been spread by lice.

It is likely that a few cases listed under "Pyrexia N.Y.D." may rightly belong to this group and also some of those which early on were called "Clinical malaria". There were in all 41 cases of which 4 died which have had to be called "Pyrexia N.Y.D." Some no doubt, were just recovering from a bout of malaria, and from whose blood the parasites had since disappeared, and some from simple but undiagnosed febrile complaints.

Respiratory diseases.

There were 23 cases with 4 deaths.

Debility.

35 cases of complete exhaustion and often emaciation as well were admitted in which no special disease could be found,

though several had had small-pox recently, and many had had dysentery. Accurate histories were impossible. There were 3 deaths amongst them, which considering the state in which they were received, is excellent.

Mumps 4 cases, snake bite 3 cases, pulmonary tuberculosis 1 case, paratyphoid B. 1 case, were encountered, with no deaths.

#### Veneral Disease.

These were nearly all treated as out-patients. It is difficult to assess correctly the morbidity from these but it is very great.

I. In all since the commencement of the camp there have been 107 deaths and of these 10 were not in the hospital. At first the people were afraid of, or ignorant of the hospital and on arriving at the end of their long trek would hide in a shelter made by themselves or by their friends and might so die. Now, I am happy to say, the Refugees in general have confidence in the hospital and readily come and no deaths occur in the camp itself.

#### J. Milk Queue.

The strikingly successful plan of a daily issue of milk to the children has been followed here. Although, owing to the much better conditions here in the way of housing and food, there is not the same need, yet a large number of children collect daily and are given a drink of milk. The improvement in health of the children is striking and is universally remarked. There is no doubt that this practice has helped materially to increase the good name and reputation of the hospital and beget the confidence of the people.

#### K. Women's clinic.

We are fortunate in having been able to obtain the enthusiastic and skilled help of Mrs. McKenna in this matter. The refugee women, as a whole, are unaccustomed to male doctors and as venereal disease is exceedingly common it has been very difficult to make effective contact with this class of patient. Now the reverse is the case, and the Women's clinic is, if possible, too busy.

L. Laboratory Work.

492 specimens have been examined. Of them 275 were blood slides, 185 were specimens of faeces, 14 urines, 14 pus smears, and 4 sputa.

M. Training.

A number of refugee helpers have been gathered together for ward work. They include some trained men, and are of the greatest help. Special attention must be drawn to the enrollment of refugee women for nursing mentioned before. This is in the hands of Mrs. McKenna and 8 have been retained to date after a good deal of weeding out. They are invaluable. It is greatly hoped that sufficient will in time be obtained to perform all the nursing duties in the women's and children's wards at least. They are clean, intelligent, conscientious and quiet.

N. Tailor.

An Abyssinian tailor has been employed by the Hospital and has been provided with a sewing machine. He makes clothing for those from whom rags are removed for burning and for naked orphans, as well as carrying out all sorts of odd jobs.

O. Orphanage.

Many orphans and small slave children are amongst the Refugees. One ward contains 20 of these orphans, and has been put aside for this purpose. They are all boys. In addition there are 7 little orphan girls who are living in the female wards. These orphans are looked after by one of the Abyssinian members of the staff but are not shown as patients, nor are they, for they are now healthy, bright little rascals. One would like to extend this activity but uncertainty as to what to do ultimately with them makes one hesitate. The rule is to take in and keep any orphan or slave child who shows any sign of positive neglect or ill-treatment, and only such.

P.	Total number received in camp -----	6288
	Deaths in hospital and camp -----	107
	Remaining in camp on 31/10/37 -----	6181
	Total received in sick convoys -----	2294

At the end of the month there were the following numbers being treated in hospital for the diseases listed :-

Dysentery -----	47
Famine Dropsy -----	27
Malaria -----	9
Relapsing Fever -----	4

APPENDIX.

Bread making.

Flour from one or other of two grains known as TEF and SINDE is used in Abyssinia. Other flour can be used. Here they are using maize flour. First the usual maize meal is thoroughly pounded till it is very fine then sieved, only the finest being used. A thin watery paste is then made with water and a pinch of salt added. This is put aside in a large crock in which are the remains of the previous day's batter, to which yeast was originally added. The whole is mixed and left for 24 hours. By this time it is full of small bubbles showing that fermentation has been vigorous. A large iron plate slightly dished is heated over the fire and lightly greased. A cupfull of the batter is carefully poured on the plate and a large thick earthen-ware bowl inverted over the plate so as to retain the heat. When cooked the thin sort of pancake is carefully peeled off the plate with the aid of a knife and stacked on a tall basket work stool to cool. - Another sort of bread in the form of thick cakes is made from an unfermented dough from coarse flour but is considered inferior but more "filling".

DAILY TOTALS in Hospital.

These have only been kept since 14/10/37 when they were already declining. They are as follows :-

Oct. 14-----	225	Oct. 23-----	168
15-----	180	24-----	169
16-----	199	25-----	205
17-----	196	26-----	175
18-----	185	27-----	161
19-----	176	28-----	193
20-----	148	29-----	186
21-----	163	30-----	184
22-----	174	31-----	183

(Sgd) R.F. CORMACK, Capt.  
SENIOR MEDICAL OFFICER.

Appendix showing convoys of sick.

August 4-----6  
 5-----30  
 7-----37  
 9-----33  
 11-----35  
 22-----75  
 24-----74  
 29-----69

Sept. 1-----11  
 3-----70  
 8-----14  
 7-----108  
 11-----17  
 13-----62  
 14-----41  
 20-----79  
 21-----100  
 23-----200  
 25-----234  
 26-----120  
 27-----134  
 28-----122  
 30-----133

Oct. 1-----128  
 2-----61  
 3-----33  
 4-----180  
 5-----134  
 6-----21  
 7-----63

TOTAL 2294.

(Includes sick, convalescents, old, weak, children, relatives of sick looking after them and a few healthy workers at the end).

(Sgd) R.P. GORMACK.

(Capt.)

SENIOR MEDICAL OFFICER.

70

KENYA

No. 726



GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
KENYA.

24th November, 1957.

137

NY

Sir,

64

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 111 of the 14th November regarding the grant of £1,000 for the Kenya Relief Fund for the purchase of clothes and other comforts for the refugees in the Congo.

The Government are most grateful for such generous assistance and I am glad to hear that an expression of our thanks has already been conveyed by you to the Committee.

The Committee may rest assured that the funds supplied will be used in the most suitable manner possible and that details of expenditure will be furnished in due course.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

W. Brecker-Popham

Copy to A.R.C. 11/5/57

RECEIVED  
11/5/57

APPENDIX.

Refugees - Northern Frontier District.

1. Ethiopian Refugee Camp, Isiolo - Civil.

As the report of His Excellency the Governor's speech at the opening of Legislative Council on 29-10-37 on the refugee position in Kenya has recently appeared in the local Press, it is not proposed to go into detail on the subject here. Suffice it to say that, taking into consideration the distance from Northern Horr to Isiolo across arid and difficult country and the consequent supply difficulties, the emaciated condition of the refugees coupled with the high incidence of disease, it is a credit to all concerned that the trek down to Isiolo was accomplished without any serious hitch and with very few casualties. The last party of refugees arrived at the Ethiopian Refugee Camp, Isiolo, on 7-10-37 and there are now a total of 6,180 Ethiopians interned there. This does not include a party of Eritrean deserters which was transferred to the Military Internment Camp. (See Para. 2). The Ethiopian camp is under the control of the civil administration, the military being responsible for supplies and transport.

2. Eritrean Refugee Camp, Isiolo - Military.

The above-mentioned party of Eritreans came across under the leadership of Grazmach Salemon, who furnished the following information:

(a) Organization.

(i) Rank and File. The Eritrean troops are organized in battalions 1,000 strong. Each battalion is divided into four companies of 200, the balance forming battalion headquarters. There were no native officers, the highest native rank being Izbasha, or sergeant major, who had three stars as a hat badge, but no stars on his epaulettes.

(ii) Officers. Battalion headquarters consisted of the under-mentioned officers:-

- 1 colonel - in-command.
- 1 major - second-in-command.
- 1 quartermaster.

Company headquarters:-

- 1 captain.
- 2 lieutenants.

(b) The deserters are mainly from battalions Nos. 41, 42, 43 and 44 but battalions Nos. 1, 5, 13, 17, 19 and 21 are also represented.

The causes of their disaffection were twofold:-

(i) They had been serving in Tripoli and when they embarked for Italian Somaliland they understood they were returning to Eritrea.

2.

- (ii) On arrival in Italian Somaliland they were made to march on foot, while the Somali troops were invariably transported by lorry. This made them very bitter and was the main cause of their desertion.
- (c) Some of these men had European officers' equipment. This may be due to the fact that a number of these deserters were officer's orderlies and had stolen it. In any case, it is asserted they did not kill their officers.
- (d) An endeavour is being made to obtain information as to which army these men deserted from, date and place, as well as details as to their service in Ethiopia.
- (e) The number of refugees at the military camp is now as follows:-

Men ...	551
Women ...	<u>10</u>
Total ...	<u>561</u>

5. European Refugees.

On 26-9-57 two European Italian subjects:-

- Sardu Onorio, an electrician and
- De Siona Francesca, a baker,

arrived at Mandera from the direction of Daua river. They stated they absconded from Mogadiscio on the eve of being sent to Europe, as they feared unemployment on their return, and that they had come to Kenya to search for work. Having no passports they were detained at Mandera pending further instructions. They carried no arms or ammunition.

Nairobi, 5th. November, 1957.

77

Draft  
46597/1/375 A

KENYA.

Downing Street,

SECRET. (2)

7. December, 1937.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to my secret despatch of the 5th of October and connected correspondence in regard to the Abyssinian refugees now in Kenya, and to transmit to you for your information copies of a memorandum prepared in the Colonial Office for the purpose of a discussion with representatives of the Foreign Office and the Treasury, and a record of the discussion at a meeting held at the Colonial Office on the 15th of September.

Memorandum

Note of Meeting

I much regret that the general conclusion reached was that there is no immediate prospect of the Government of Kenya being relieved of the responsibility of maintaining these refugees in Kenya. I am however now in a position to authorise you to let it be known that His Majesty's Government have agreed to a vote being submitted to Parliament in due course for the necessary provision to enable the expenditure incurred by the Government of Kenya in the maintenance of these refugees and on other special services arising out of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, to be refunded to the Government of Kenya. While therefore, it is unfortunately necessary to contemplate the continuance, for an indefinite period, of the grave anxieties caused by the presence of these people in the Colony, the Colony will at any rate not in addition be called upon to bear the

financial

GOVERNOR

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL

SIR ROBERT BROOKE-POPHAM, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., O.M.G., D.S.O., A.F.C.,  
etc., etc., etc.

6.11.37.  
23.11.37.

financial burden of their maintenance. I enclose a copy of the relevant correspondence with the Treasury.

2. As regards the possibility of arrangements being made with the Italian Government for the return of the refugees to Abyssinia, you will observe that it is considered that so little reliance can be placed on any assurances that might be given by that Government in regard to their treatment, if they were returned to Abyssinia, that doubts were felt as to the utility of seeking such assurances even when it becomes possible to open negotiations for a general settlement of the various questions arising out of the Italian conquest of Abyssinia. The question will however not be overlooked, and will be reconsidered in the light of the circumstances as they exist at the time when such negotiations become possible. You will no doubt appreciate the importance, in any public statement which you may make in regard to the cost of maintaining these refugees in Kenya, of saying nothing which might render it more difficult for you to make an arrangement with the Italian Government for their repatriation; or which might tend to make the refugees themselves unwilling to return to their homes if it became possible to make such an arrangement on their behalf.

In the meantime, if any of the refugees express a desire to be permitted to return to Abyssinia, they should be allowed to do so.

The question whether it would be possible to establish at any rate some of these refugees in an agricultural settlement in the Eastern Highlands District of Tanganyika, has been discussed on 11/11/37 with Sir Harold Macdonald, but he is satisfied that no such scheme would be practicable. He is however taking steps to ascertain

ascertain whether a certain number of the refugees could be employed as agricultural labourers on estates in Tanganyika.

4. As regards the suggestion that some of the refugees or Eritrean deserters might be enlisted in the King's African Rifles, you will have learnt from the papers transmitted with my secret despatch of the 6th of October, that enquiries were made at the Foreign Office by the Italian Chargé d'Affaires in regard to a rumour that some of these men had already been enlisted. It must therefore be assumed that any such action would be resented by the Italians and would tend to jeopardise the success of the eventual negotiations on boundary questions. The suggestion that some of the Eritrean deserters might be employed by the Army on certain defence works in Sierra Leone is being further considered. You will however appreciate that even if the Army were prepared to employ some of these men, and if the Foreign Office saw no objection from the international point of view, it would be necessary to consult the Governor of Sierra Leone before a final decision could be reached.

5. As regards the question raised in your secret despatch of the 6th of September I have dealt in my secret despatch of the 3th of November with the request of the Italian Consul General to be furnished with particulars of the Eritrean deserters. As regards the question of the action to be taken in the event of Italian (European) deserters finding their way into Kenya, I would invite your attention to the conclusions recorded in paragraph 5 of the note of the meeting held on the 26th of September, by which you should be guided if this contingency should arise.

I take this opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of your secret despatch of the 2nd of October and of thanking you for the clear explanation of the circumstances which render it necessary to continue to maintain the special measures rendered necessary by the abnormal situation on the northern frontier of the Colony.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient  
humble servant,

(Signed) W. O. GORE

76

88066/14737

C.O.

Mr. Paskin 30/11

Mr. Flood 27/11

Mr.

Sir H. Moors.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

X Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Perms. U.S. of S. 30.11.37

Parly. U.S. of S.

X Secretary of State (No. 50)

Comin

For sig. by the S. of S.

(Not to be sent until F.O. & Treas. have concurred in draft despatch herewith).



612-37

See Brooke-Popham,

I have put off replying to

your letter No.O.G.9 of the 20th of September about the Abyssinian refugees, until I was in a position to give you an official assurance that your Govt. would be relieved of the cost of maintaining them. I know that this is only a part of the anxieties created for you by these unwelcome guests.

But at any rate it is something and will no doubt help to keep your 16 help you to this, and not unofficially sweet.

Like you, I am most anxious

that the situation should not develop into another "Assyrian problem", but I am afraid that there is nothing we can do at the moment. You will see

from

DRAFT.

Asi Chief Marshal  
SIR B. BROOKE-POPHAM,  
Robert

20/11

FURTHER ACTION

from the papers which I am sending with  
my official despatch that not only the  
Colonial Office but also the Foreign Office and  
the Treasury, have been examining the matter  
from every possible angle.

(d.h.)

in 46597/1/37  
E.A.

Almost our only hope is that, when it  
becomes possible to negotiate with the Italians  
about Abyssinia, we may be able to make an  
acceptable arrangement to take these people  
back. But what would happen if they refused  
to go? When it will be possible to start to  
negotiate it is impossible to say. In the  
summer we had hopes that we might start in  
September, but <sup>we</sup> ~~we~~ have upset all  
that and we are now ~~it is unlikely~~  
that the political situation will become ripe  
for such negotiations ~~until next April or May~~  
*for some time yet*  
~~at the earliest.~~

I have not overlooked your suggestion  
that some public reference should be made to  
the part played by Kenya and Somaliland in  
looking after these refugees. But any statement  
of this kind has to be made with care, and with  
due regard to the general political situation at

the time.

This para will  
require reply to  
my suggestion is  
adopted of making  
a statement in  
reply to a P.Q.  
on 3/21  
(46597/13) (PQ)

H/C

As regards your suggestion  
 that some public reference should  
 be made to the part played by  
 Kinga in looking after these refugees,  
 you will have seen that I took  
 the opportunity of ~~circulating~~  
 getting a <sup>long</sup> statement into Hansard  
 in reply to a question by  
 Mr Graham White on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of  
 November, and I do not fail to express my  
 appreciation of the work done by your office

(V. copy - No. 66  
 on 32066/14/37)

Yrs. sincerely,

John W. Ormsby-Gore

Extract from *Manchester Guardian* of 24.11.37

### ABYSSINIANS IN KENYA

#### The Right of Asylum

To the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*

Sir.—Our organisations, which are working for the economic, political, and social advancement of Africans and peoples of African descent, beg to draw the attention of British friends of colonial peoples and all subject races to the terrible condition of the Abyssinian refugees in Kenya and the danger of their repatriation back to Abyssinia. During recent months thousands of Abyssinians—men, women, and children—have crossed into Kenya and British Somaliland to escape from the brutal terrorism of the Italian military authorities following the attempt on the life of Marshal Graziani. According to an official statement issued by the Kenya Government, there are about 8,000 refugees at a concentration camp at Isolo, about 150 miles south of the Abyssinian frontier.

The terrible condition of these people is beyond description. Epidemics of smallpox, malaria, typhoid, and dysentery broke out among them when they first arrived, and a small hospital had to be set up. Smaller camps have since been organised in other parts of the colony. Apart from small contributions of money, clothes, and medicines sent from England and America by Negro organisations and English friends of Abyssinia, no organised assistance has been rendered the refugees by the League of Nations.

But what is even more alarming is the recent statement of the Governor of Kenya that the Abyssinians now in Kenya will not be allowed to settle there, since the Secretary of State for the Colonies considers it would be "unfair and unwise to absorb them in the colony." Since when has the Colonial Office become so solicitous about the welfare of Kenya Africans? However, we can assure the colonial authorities that the natives not only of Kenya but of other territories would be prepared to make any sacrifices, financial or other, in order to rescue their Abyssinian brothers from the Fascist clutches, especially as the National Government prevented them rendering military aid during the war.

The coloured peoples of the Empire have watched with shame the Government's weak-kneed foreign policy in Manchuria, Abyssinia, Spain, and now in China, and will not condone any further betrayal of a defenceless people seeking asylum in a country which is "primarily an African territory," to quote the Duke of Devonshire's memorandum. We appeal to all fair-minded and democratic people, all anti-Fascists and anti-Imperialists, to join us in protesting against this threat to expel Abyssinian refugees from Kenya and other British territories in Africa. We demand the right of political asylum for our black brothers and call upon the League of Nations to organise a joint commission of white and black members to visit Kenya and report on ways and means of absorbing the refugees into the colony without prejudice to the interest of the indigenous population.—Yours, &c.

GEORGE PADMORE, Chairman  
International African Service Bureau.

WALLACE JOHNSON, Organising Secretary West African Youth League.

JOMO KENYATTA, General Secretary Kikuyu Central Association.

T. R. MAKONNEN, Secretary, Pan-African Federation.

The International African Service Bureau, 94, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C. 1.  
November 18.

74

23rd November, 1937.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Ormsby Gore desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd of November, regarding the settlement in Kenya of refugees from Abyssinia.

If your Association has any concrete proposals to make regarding this question, Mr. Ormsby Gore would suggest that they should be communicated officially to the Colonial Office when they will be carefully considered.

Yours truly,

(Signed) GERALD GREASY

Private Secretary.

The Honorary Secretary,  
Abyssinia Association.

# ABYSSINIA ASSOCIATION

56

73

SIR NORMAN ANGELL

PRESIDENTS  
SIR HERBERT BELL, G.C.M.G.

SIR GEORGE PAISH

VICE-PRESIDENTS  
THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF WINCHESTER  
MR. PHILIP J. NOEL-BAKER, M.P.

SIR JOHN J. WITHERS, C.B.E., M.P.  
MISS ELEANOR F. RATHBONE, M.P.  
MR. VYVYAN ADAMS, M.P.

HON. TREASURER: PROFESSOR H. STANLEY JEVONS

HON. SECRETARY: MR. F. BEAUFORT-PALMER

TELEPHONE  
WHITEHALL 2201 EXT. 8

TELEGRAMS  
ABYSA. RAND-LONDON

CABLES  
ABYSA. LONDON

144 GRAND BUILDINGS

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.2

22nd November, 1937.

The Rt. Hon. W.G.A. Ormsby-Gore,  
The Colonial Office, Whitehall, S.W.1.

Sir,

I have received a letter of some importance from a member of this Association who is at present in Africa. He refers to a cabled statement of yours published there hinting that the reason that the refugees from Abyssinia cannot be accommodated permanently in Kenya is lack of suitable land. My correspondent informs me that that is not so.

The Committee, at present sitting, to report to the local Government on the possibilities of further settlement in Kenya, is apparently confining their attention to European settlement. May I ask, that as there is nothing in their terms of reference to justify this, that they should also consider settlement for the refugees?

My correspondent also draws my attention to the sixteen mile square recently leased to Lord Chesham in, I think, Tanganyika. This is for European settlement but surely, it would seem that the refugees being African have a prior claim to such land.

I would be much obliged if you could give these matters your attention. I am forwarding a copy of the letter received from my correspondent to The Abyssinian Refugees' Relief Fund Committee.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

*F. Beaufort-Palmer*  
Honorary Secretary.

71

C. O.

Mr. Paskin. 19/11/37.

Mr. Flower 19.11.

Mr.

Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottamley. 20.11.37

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Perm. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

C. D.  
R 22 NOV  
11 24

And (81)

ASS

25. November, 1937.

Sir,

DRAFT.

KENYA.

SECRET

Governor.

(52)

F.O. 15/2

(No 70)

Some despatch - 22 October  
enclosure to No 68.

by Sir. G. Tomlinson (FO) (P)

which have obviously  
no foundation in fact

FURTHER ACTION.

Copy to P.O. with  
draft herewith.

With reference to the last paragraph of my Secret despatch of the 5th of October, I have etc. to transmit to you, for your information, a copy of a further semi-official letter from the Foreign Office containing an account of two conversations with Signor Crolla, of the Italian Embassy, in regard to the Abyssinian refugees in Kenya. It will be observed that Signor Crolla's representations do not call for any action on the part of your Government, but you may possibly wish to furnish me with your observations, for the

guidance

guidance of the Foreign Office,

in case further similar representations should be made.

2. I take this opportunity to enclose a copy of a despatch dated the 22nd of October from His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome, containing a summary of an article which appeared in the "Azione Coloniale" on the 21st of October. A reference to this article appeared in the "Times" of the 23rd of October, and you will be aware that, in my reply to Mr. Graham White's question in the House of Commons on the 3rd of November, I took ~~the opportunity to say~~ *denied* the allegation that your Government had taken any action to encourage these Abyssinians to take refuge in Kenya.

I have, etc.

(signed) W. ORMSBY GORE.

(copy - 66)

10

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

15th November, 1937.

(J 4524/2/1)

CONFIDENTIAL.

Dear Flood,

51

Your letter No.38066/14/37 of the 2nd October; Ethiopian refugees in Kenya.

Signor Crolla called on the 27th October. I told him that none of the refugees had been enlisted in the King's African Rifles or given new firearms. I also said that the Government of Kenya were fully alive to the desirability of ensuring that the refugees did not engage in anti-Italian activities; but while Kenya would take all reasonable precautions to that end, it must be realised that owing to the large number of refugees (which I put at 8,000, as that was then our information) and their serious condition, arising from illness and exhaustion, the Kenya officials would have many other and more pressing problems to deal with concerning them.

Crolla was inclined to be disappointed with that part of

the

*Copy to Kenya (11)  
Abnisco (12)*

J.E.W. Flood Esq., C.M.G.

the communication which concerned Kenya's other difficulties, and said that he would have to "change" it before transmitting it to Rome. I pointed out that all it meant was that while Kenya would do their best to prevent anti-Italian activities they wished to make it clear that they had other problems on their hands as well.

Grolla then made a further communication on the subject of the refugees. He said that the Italian Government continued to receive information regarding their anti-Italian activities. According to some of these reports, two of the persons who appeared to have been involved were Mr. Reece (formerly British Consul at Mega) and Mr. Glenday, the Officer in Charge of the Northern Frontier District of Kenya. These officials, according to the Italian Government's information, had been indulging in "attività informative" with regard to the refugees (the only elucidation I could obtain of this typically Italian phrase was that it meant that the British officials referred to had been communicating political or administrative information to the refugees).

60

It appeared that emissaries of the refugees had been in touch with "rebel" troops in Ethiopia with a view to encouraging them to cross into Kenya. Crolla emphasised that the foregoing information was very vague and that it was not "controlled", i.e. the Italian Government did not vouch for its accuracy.

Crolla then continued that Tekla Hawariat, who was Ethiopian Minister at Paris and Delegate from Ethiopia to the League of Nations until the end of 1935, had arrived at Mombasa and seemed to have been authorised by the British authorities to settle in Kenya, possibly for the purpose of "organising" the refugees. I have interposed that so far as the refugees were being organised for purposes of administrative control in Kenya, this was, of course, undertaken by the Kenya authorities.

Crolla stated that he had been instructed by the Italian Government to draw our serious attention to the above reports and to represent to us that the eventual constitution of a refugee centre in Kenya near the Ethiopian frontier would obviously not favour the improvement of good neighbourly relations between the "two colonies" and would create a source of suspicion and incident.

61

incident. I said that we would, of course, go into the matter, but I pointed out that the camps in which the refugees were confined had been particularly placed at some distance from the frontier with a view to avoiding the difficulties which the Italian Government seem to fear.

The matter was further considered here and as a result Crolla was asked to call again, which he did on the 10th November. I then gave him a copy of the reply given to Mr. Graham White's Question of the 3rd November and drew his special attention to the statements in it to the effect that the refugee camp was over 200 miles from the frontier and that owing to the situation of the camp the refugees concentrated there were not in a position to engage in any anti-Italian activities, even if they wished to do so. I said that we must ask that if the Italian Government had any complaints or allegations to make on this subject they should make themselves fully and formally responsible for them. Allegations against British officials were a serious matter. Some of the Italian reports, I suggested, might have come from natives, e.g. Ethiopians; Crolla said that they had come from the Government of Galla-Sidama. He repeated that the Italian Embassy had been instructed to

bring

bring them to our notice, as the fact of a centre of Ethiopian refugees being established in Kenya and indulging in anti-Italian activities would not conduce to friendly relations. I agreed, if it were a fact; but I again pointed out that the answer to Mr. Graham White's question showed that anti-Italian activities by the refugees were impossible.

I think Crolla appreciated our standpoint in this matter. At all events, he undertook to transmit our request to Rome. The whole thing is of course very irritating and petty and I am afraid that the information which the Italians have been retailing to us comes from very questionable sources. You will understand, however, that it is undesirable to be too short with them on the subject, owing to the fact that we must not do anything which might give them an excuse to refuse the Kenya tribes grazing and watering facilities on the Ethiopian frontier. I hope, in any case, that our statements to Crolla will result in these tiresome complaints being less frequent than they have been recently.

We do not think it is necessary to ask the Government of Kenya to take any action with regard to the

Italian

Italian statements mentioned in this letter, though they may care to know of them.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Frederick*

38066/14/37.

C. O.

Mr. Paskin. 12/11/37.

Mr. Flood 12/26

Mr.

Sir H. Hoors.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.



for Mr. Flood's signature.

6 November, 1937.

Dear Sir Sydney

**DRAFT.**

SIR SYDNEY BARTON, K.C.V.O.,  
K.B.E., C.M.G.

(65)

Many thanks for your

letter of the 5th of November about the Abyssinian refugees. The contribution of £1,000 which the Relief Fund has been good enough to make, for the purpose of providing comforts for the refugees in Kenya, is very much appreciated.

Gov. 3/21

In this connection I enclose a copy of a despatch which we have now received from the Governor from which you will see that he considers that the grant of £25, which was made for the purpose of providing Pitaurari Zaudi Ayela

with

FURTHER ACTION

l.f. - No 68

with clothes and necessaries, could  
much more profitably be spent for the  
general relief of the refugees. I  
should accordingly be glad to know  
whether the Relief Fund would be  
prepared to agree to the diversion of  
this grant as suggested by Sir Robert.

You will see from paragraph 2  
of the despatch that they are making  
good use of the money provided by the  
Fund.

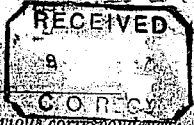
*Yours sincerely*

*Am. P. R.*

In any further communication on this subject, please quote  
No. 94438/2/11  
and address—not to any person by name, but to  
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

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.

Foreign Office,  
8 November, 1937



Reference to previous correspondence:  
C.O letter of 7 October (38066/14/37) (54)

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
<p>From H.M.R Rome</p> <p>No 888</p> <p>22 October 1937</p>	<p>Ethiopian refugees in Kenya</p>

copy sent to Dept (7)

Similar letter sent to ✓

British Embassy,

ROME.

22nd October, 1937.

No. 698.

(135/51/37)

Sir,

I have the honour to report that the "Azione Coloniale" of October 21st contained an article by the editor, Signor Marco Pomilio, entitled: "How the colony of Kenya receives and organises the Abyssinians who have crossed the frontier". Signor Pomilio returned some time ago from Abyssinia, where, it is reported, he did not get on too well with the local authorities, and it is understood that he is now in close touch with the Colonial Office.

2. He begins by saying that for some time past the concentration of Abyssinian refugees in Kenya had been followed closely by the Italian frontier authorities. He maintains that, as these Abyssinians are outlaws, it is clearly unfitting that any attempt should be made to organise them or to attract other immigrants from a colonial territory subject to another Power. In some quarters in England this was felt strongly, and the "Yorkshire Post" had recently commented upon the attitude of the refugees, and said that no false sentimentalism should permit them to settle in British territory, where they were obviously undesirable. It appeared, however, that the Kenya authorities, so far from repressing this movement, had, although cautiously, taken steps to attract the remains of the army of the Negus.

Signor /

The Right Honourable  
Anthony Eden, M.C.,  
etc. etc. etc.

FOREIGN OFFICE.

- 2 -

Signor Pomilio alleges a definite case of encouragement last August, and complains that the British authorities are organising these refugees in districts at a considerable distance from the frontier. His next grievance is that two Abyssinians coming from Europe have been received by the Governor of Kenya, together with two Abyssinians who had come from one of the concentration camps. These were facts, he asserts. What conclusions should be drawn? They could be summed up in a question. What were the aims of these refugees and who was facilitating their intrigues? Without waiting for an answer, it would be well to affirm that Italy was closely following what was happening on the frontier of her new empire.

5. Signor Pomilio closes with vague threats against anyone who thought of disturbing or menacing Italian interests. They were on the wrong path; it was not by such methods that good relations and collaboration between the empire and the neighbouring possessions could be created.

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

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

(Signed) PERTH.

AIR MAIL

KENYA  
No: 662



GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
NAIROBI  
KENYA

3 November, 1957.

Sir,

45  
With reference to your despatch No. 749 of the 11th September last on the subject of the sum of £25 received from the Abyssinian Refugees Relief Fund for the purchase of clothes and other necessities for Fitaurari Zande Ayella, I have the honour to inform you that the Officer-in-Charge, Northern Frontier District, has reported that the Fitaurari is very well dressed and has unquestionably plenty of money.

In the circumstances, therefore, it would appear to be unnecessary to devote this grant to the purpose named, and I shall be glad if the Abyssinian Refugees Relief Committee could be approached with a view to their agreeing that the £25 should be added to the £250 referred to in your telegram No. 160 of the 31st July last which has already been received for the general relief of the refugees.

26  
I would add that the Fitaurari appears to be restless and somewhat unappreciative of the relief measures accorded to him by this Government.

2. It is proposed to devote a part of the grant to a clinic for women in the camp, and the remainder to the purchase of materials and implements for the encouragement of industry, cultivation and education.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient, humble servant,

*W. Brooke-Polham*

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL,  
GOVERNOR.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
W. ORMSBY GORE, F.C., M.P.,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,  
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.1.

68  
66

In any further communication on this subject, please quote  
No. 440/2/1  
and address - not to any person by name, but to  
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

38060/14

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 copies of the under-mentioned papers

Foreign Office,  
6<sup>th</sup> November, 1937.

RECEIVED  
8 - NOV 1937  
SECRET

Reference to previous correspondence.

61. *Mr Lambert's letter to Mr Paskin, C.O.*  
*of 23 October (4460/2/1) not seen*  
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
<p>From Sir G. Maxwell to Mr Stevenson 18 October 1937</p>	<p>Ethiopian refugees in Kenya and the Sudan: question of statement by H.M.G.</p>
<p>To ditto from Mr Campbell 5 November 1937.</p>	

Similar letter sent to ✓

6130 1544 (4)

COPY

(J 4401/2/1)

Chindles,

High Salvington,

Worthing,

Sussex.

18th October, 1937.

Dear Stevenson,

Would it not be a good thing if some authoritative statements were published concerning the Ethiopian refugees (1) in the Sudan, and (2) in Kenya and Uganda? The accounts which appear from time to time in the newspapers are seldom inspired by the purest philanthropy. The Colonial Office must have a series of despatches from the two Governors, with full particulars, but obviously would not think of publishing them without some suggestion from the Foreign Office. Doubtless the Foreign Office has had a number of reports from the Sudan.

Somewhat similar reports of Ethiopian invasions into the Sudan in the past have been published as a White Paper. Publication of official papers would, I venture to suggest, be in the interests of all parties concerned, and would render a public service by checking an agitation in the press.

Yours very sincerely,

(Sgd) George Maxwell.

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.F.I.

5th November, 1937.

(J 4401/E/1)

Dear Sir George Maxwell

I write to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th October to Stevenson on the subject of the Ethiopian refugees in Kenya and the Sudan (there are, so far as I know, none in Uganda).

We do not think that the publication of official reports on this subject would be in the public interest. On the other hand, various questions have been asked in Parliament about the refugees, including one on the 3rd November (of which I enclose a copy). On these occasions as full a statement is made as is consonant with the procedure of Parliamentary Question and Answer, and I feel sure that you will agree with us in thinking that this is, in practice, the best way of dealing with the matter.

Yours very sincerely

(Sd.) DONALD CAMPBELL

Sir George Maxwell, K.B.E., C.M.G.  
Chindles,  
High Salvington,  
Worthing,  
Sussex.

ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES.

Parliamentary  
Question.

37. Mr. Graham White asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give the House any information with regard to the numbers and conditions of refugees from Abyssinia in Kenya?

Mr. Ormsby-Gore: As my reply is lengthy, I will, with the hon. Member's permission, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

*Following is the reply:*

It is difficult to give precise figures, but according to my most recent information there are now in Kenya about 6,000 Abyssinian refugees, including many

women and children. These have entered the Colony at various times and in varying numbers, but the main influx took place between the latter part of June and the beginning of August this year, when several parties varying from a few score up to about 2,000 in number crossed the frontier at intervals of a week or so. The majority had travelled long distances and had suffered very severe hardships. Many were sick and there were 155 cases of smallpox. Other diseases were also prevalent, though I am glad to say that fatal cases are said to be very few. The parts of Kenya into which they had penetrated are remote, arid and devoid of communications. Even water supplies are scanty and occur only at isolated places separated by considerable distances. It therefore became immediately necessary to improvise arrangements for supplying them with food, water, and medical attention, for their segregation (in their own interests) from the native population of the Colony, and for their transfer to an area where it was possible to maintain life. Supplies of vaccine were despatched by aeroplane from Nairobi, vaccination was carried out and other assistance rendered by all the medical staff available. A camp was established at Isiolo, which is over 200 miles from the frontier. This involved a 350-mile journey for some of the refugees, but such motor transport as was available was fully utilised for the transport of the necessities of life and for the conveyance of those who were too ill or exhausted to walk across the desert country.

This sudden advent of large numbers of refugees presented a grave problem to the Kenya administrators, police, military, and medical authorities, and I cannot speak too highly of the splendid work which they have performed under conditions of great stress in providing the refugees with supplies and supervising their health. With reference to a report which appeared in the Press a few days ago, there is no foundation whatever for the suggestion that the Government of Kenya took any action to invite these refugees to the Colony, though of course, when presented with the problem, they took immediate steps to deal with it in accordance with the dictates of humanity. I may mention that owing to the stipulation of the camp at Isiolo, the refugees concentrated there are not in a position to engage in any anti-Italian activities, even if they wished to do so. I cannot say what the future of the refugees will be. They cannot be accommodated in Kenya, where it would be impossible for them to maintain themselves.

3 - NOV 1957

LA copy of the letter  
from memo 90 a the  
Somaliland papers, which  
in copy the Committee for  
Refugees [1937]

19, NEVILLE STREET,  
ONSLow GARDENS, S.W. 7.  
TEL. 6127, KENSINGTON.

65.72

5 November 1937

(2) on 38066/14 D/37

Dear Flood,

Many thanks for your letter of the 3rd inst (38066/14 D/37) and for submitting to the Governor of Kenya the suggestion regarding B.C.M.S. missionaries for Isiob.

At the Committee meeting of the Abyssinian Refugee Relief Fund on the 2nd inst it was decided to contribute £1000 for comforts for the Refugees in Kenya and the Honorary Secretary is sending a cheque accordingly through the Crown Agents.

We should have liked to send a similar amount for Somaliland at the same time, in response to the request conveyed in your letter of the 14th ult, but unfortunately our available resources do not permit of our doing this immediately and we feel that the case of the Refugees in Kenya was perhaps the more urgent.

J. E. W. Flood Esq. C.M.G.

Yours sincerely  
S. Barton

62A

Mr Perkins  
297

38066

6th November, 1937.

Dear Madam,

I write to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th November, with which you were good enough to forward a cheque for £1,000 (one thousand pounds), representing a contribution from the Abyssinian Refugees Relief Fund, to be expended by the Government of Kenya on the refugees who are being maintained in that Colony.

The cheque is being sent to the Crown Agents for the Colonies, who will credit the amount to Kenya funds in their hands, and who will send you a formal receipt.

I am sure that the Governor of Kenya would wish me to ask you to convey to your Committee an expression of his appreciation of their action in making available this most generous contribution, which will, without doubt, help to make life somewhat easier for the refugees in the Colony.

Yours sincerely,

*Perkins*

THE HON. SECRETARY,  
THE ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF  
FUND.

74  
62  
**THE ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF FUND**

Hon. Treasurer: F. S. Livie-Noble.

**Vice-Presidents:**

- The Rt. Revd. The Lord Bishop of London
- The Rt. Revd. Marshall B. Lang
- The Revd. J. Scott Lidgett
- Sir Norman Angell
- S. Vyvyan Adams
- Professor S. Alexander
- The Rt. Hon. Lord Dickinson
- The Rt. Hon. Lord Gborough
- C. E. M. Joad
- Storm Jameson
- Lady Layton
- F. L. Lucas
- Hugh Lyon
- Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence
- Canon Charles E. Raven
- Mrs. Seligman
- The Viscountess Snowden

All communications should be addressed to:

Hon. Secretary: Hazel M. Napier,  
5, Crossfield Road, London, N.W.3.  
(ERLmose 4337)

5th November 1937

To F. A. Lee Esq  
Colonial Office  
Sew.

Dear Sir -

My committee have asked me  
to forward to you the enclosed cheque  
for £100 for the benefit of  
Abyssinian refugees in Kenya.

Yours sincerely

Hazel M. Napier

Her Sec

Cheques to C.A. (A)  
E. Napier  
S. (1937)

38066/14/37 Kenya

75

Immediate

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

13rd October, 1937.

Dear Paskin,

With reference to our telephone conversation this morning, I enclose a copy of a note which I prepared for our News Department on the subject of the "Azione Coloniale's" charges against the Kenya Government in respect of their treatment of Abyssinian refugees.

If the Press here make enquiries on the subject, the News Department will speak to them in the sense suggested in the second paragraph of the note. You may <sup>ent</sup> ~~agree~~ to take the same line with the Press should they make enquiries at the Colonial Office or perhaps (on the principle that ~~may~~ be one department should deal with the matter) you might say that you know that the Foreign Office are replying on this line.

Yours sincerely,

*McLennan*

J. J. Paskin Esq., M.C.,  
Colonial Office.

### Abyssinian Refugees in Kenya.

To-day's "Times" publishes a message from its Rome correspondent stating that complaints are made in this week's issue of the "Azione Coloniale" of the welcome given during past months in Kenya to refugees from Abyssinia. The authorities of Kenya are accused of having displayed veiled hostility to Italy by not only failing to discourage such escapes across the frontier, but even of encouraging them and taking steps to organize the refugees. In support of these charges, it is alleged that last August over one thousand refugees and their chieftains were encouraged by messages dropped from British aeroplanes to cross over into Kenya from Galle and Sidama.

I have spoken to Mr. Paskin, of the Colonial Office and suggested to him that, although the "Azione Coloniale" is a paper of little importance or circulation in Italy, it may be desirable to rebut its charges in the event of any enquiries being made by the Press here. He agreed, and we suggest that in that event the rebuttal might take the following form. (1) Kenya does not encourage the entry into its territory of Abyssinian refugees, but <sup>when</sup> that large numbers of such refugees seek an asylum in Kenya, and the Kenya Government naturally has to do what it can to succour them. (2) The refugees are kept in camps owing to their large numbers and for purposes of control. (3) They are disarmed and not permitted to indulge in any activities designed to further hostilities in Ethiopia. (4) The charge respecting the dropping of messages by British aeroplanes is quite untrue.

25th October, 1937.

38066/14/37

53

C.S.O.

Mr. Paskin. 27/9

Mr. Flood. 28.9.

Mr.

Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley. 29.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

+ Secretary of State.

DOWNING STREET.

Oct. 11/9  
September, 1937.

Secy 9/11/37

Sir,

With reference to previous

correspondence in regard to the emergency expenditure incurred by the Government of Kenya in connexion with the invasion of Abyssinia by Italy, I am etc. to transmit to you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, a copy of a despatch from the Governor of Kenya, describing the arrangements made in connexion with the concentration at Isiolo of the various parties of refugees which have entered the Colony from time to time, and of the reply sent to the Governor.

DRAFT.

THE SECRETARY,  
TREASURY.

Copy to P.O. 5/2

From Kenya 15/9 (No. 48)  
To 5/10 (52.)

FURTHER ACTION.

As Their Lordships are

aware, the problem of the disposal of these refugees was discussed at a recent

recent meeting of representatives of the Treasury, the Foreign Office, and the Colonial Office, in the course of which it appeared that it is necessary to contemplate the maintenance of these refugees in Kenya for an indefinite period. While it is not yet possible to furnish any estimate of the ~~costs~~ Expenditure which have already been incurred, and which will continue to be necessary for the maintenance of these refugees, Their Lordships will appreciate that <sup>it is</sup> ~~they are~~ likely to be heavy ~~costs~~ that, even if the financial position of Kenya ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> better than it is, it would be unfair for the burden of this responsibility to be placed upon the Colony. Mr. Ormaby Gore accordingly trusts that Their Lordships will be prepared to give favourable consideration to the proposal which he will feel obliged to place before them, when the inter-departmental discussions are concluded, that the <sup>full</sup> cost of the measures taken in Kenya to deal with these refugees should be accepted as a charge on Imperial funds.

52

G. O.

Mr. Paskin 27/9

Mr. Flood: 28

Mr.

Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

X Sir C. Bottomley 29.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Comm. U.S. of S.

Party, U.S. of S.

+ Secretary of State.

Downing Street,

September 1937

5 OCT 1937.

Sir,

I have etc. to acknowledge the receipt of your secret despatch of the 15th of September in regard to the measures taken to deal with the incursions

into the Colony of large numbers of refugees from Ethiopia which took place during July and August, and to inform you that I fully share your appreciation of the fine and uniring work performed by all the officers concerned in dealing with these unfortunate people. The arrangements made for escorting the various parties, and for providing them with food, water, and medical attention, and for their accommodation at Isiolo and the various camps en route, reflect the highest credit on the initiative,

resource

3 DRAFTS

KENYA

SECRET

GOVERNOR

P.O. (G.O.) 20/9. (No. 49)

To P.O. (G.O.) (d.h.) 2/10/37

Copy to Treas. G.O. Sec.

**FURTHER ACTION.**

Copies to Treas. with P.O.

Recd. for [unclear] 1/10  
[unclear] [unclear] 5/10

resource, humanity and devotion to duty

of the Officers of the Administrative, Police, and Medical Departments and their

native staffs, and I request that an

expression of my warmest appreciation & thanks

may be conveyed to all concerned, and

especially to the officers mentioned

in paragraph 6 of your despatch.

2. The question of what can be done

to relieve your Government of the responsibilities

trusting upon it by these incursions of refugees

has been discussed and is still

under discussion with the Treasury and the

Foreign Office, but I regret to <sup>state</sup> have to

inform you that, at the moment, I see no

alternative but to contemplate the necessity

of their <sup>indefinite and</sup> possibly prolonged accommodation

at Isiolo. I will communicate with you

further on this aspect of the matter as

soon as I am in a position to do so. As

regards the financial aspects, I am ~~not~~ <sup>have not yet received any formal</sup>

~~without hope that the Lords Commissioners~~ <sup>understanding but I have hope</sup>

~~of the Treasury will be prepared to accept~~ <sup>that H.M.G.</sup>

the cost of the measures taken to deal with

*Wells memo*

*I also realize the anxiety which must have fallen on you & the officers of the central Govt. and I highly appreciate the manner in which the situation has been faced*

C. O.

- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr.
- Sir H. Moore.
- Sir G. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bottomley.
- Sir J. Shuckburgh.
- Permt. U.S. of S.
- Parly. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

**DRAFT.**

with these incursions, and for the maintenance of the refugees at Isiolo.

pending the time when it may be found possible to make arrangements for their disposal, as a charge on Imperial funds.

3. I take this opportunity of enclosing copies of semi-official correspondence with the Foreign Office in regard to a discussion with the Italian Charge d'Affaires concerning these refugees.

I have, etc.

FURTHER ACTION.

C. O.

and (70)

51

- Mr. Paskin 22/9
- Mr. adbr Bishop 3/0
- Mr. Flood 7/27
- Sir H. Moore
- Sir G. Tomlinson
- Sir C. Bottomley 25/9
- Sir J. Shackleton
- Perm. U.S. of S.
- Party, U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State

Downing Street.

2 10/21/1937

S.O. for Mr. Paskin's Signature.

Dear Lambert,

Your letter No. J.3957/2/1 of the 20th of September. We are sending a copy to Kenya, but the story that some of the Abyssinian refugees have been enlisted in the King's African Rifles, and that some of them have been given new firearms, is so certainly untrue that we think that, if you wish, you can safely deny it without waiting for comments from Kenya.

As regards the request that supervision should be exercised in order to ensure that the refugees do not engage in any anti-Italian activities, you will remember that on the 30th of June we sent a telegram to Kenya to this effect at your request. Signor Crolla can therefore be told that the Government of Kenya is fully alive to this aspect of the matter.

**DRAFT.**

J.H.U. LAMBERT, ESQ.,  
Foreign Office.

Copy to Kenya (53)

(B)

**FURTHER ACTION.**

Copies (this 49)  
to Kenya with d.h.

We are however inclined to think that it would not be out of place at this stage to give some indication to Signor Crolla of the magnitude of the problems with which the Government of Kenya has been faced by the incursion of nearly 8,000 refugees into the Colony.

We have just received a despatch of which a copy is being sent to you officially describing the hardships suffered by these refugees. Most of them arrived in Kenya in a state of exhaustion and many of them were suffering from small-pox and other diseases.

48.

It is almost impossible to visualise the hardships which they suffered in the course of their trek through the almost waterless deserts of the Northern Frontier District of Kenya. It has not been possible to provide motor transport for more than a small minority, and the tasks of shepherding the various parties and of hastily improvising arrangements for providing them with food, water and medical attention, on their trek to the internment camp at Isiolo and for their accommodation there, have been a heavy burden on the

L.C.O.

- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr. H. Moore.
- Mr. G. Tomlinson.
- Mr. G. Bottomley.
- Mr. J. Shuckburgh.
- Mr. U.S. of S.
- Mr. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

Part of the administrative police, and medical staff of the Colony.

Even when they are all concentrated at Isiolo the administration of such an "army" of unwanted aliens will be a constant source of anxiety to the Government of Kenya, and we suggest that it should be made clear to Signor Crolla that while of course the Government of Kenya will take all reasonable precautions to prevent these refugees from fomenting trouble for the Italians, the officials of that Government will have many more pressing anxieties, in connection with the problems created by the presence of these refugees in the Colony.

Yours sincerely,

Signed J. E. W. FLOOD

DRAFT

FURTHER ACTION

Mr. Flood



Mr. Ormsby Gore

has seen the attached

letter from Sir Robert

Brooke-Popham and will

be glad if it could

come along with the

despatch to which he

refers, regarding

Indian refugees.

*J. May*

27. 9. 37.



50 84  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
KENYA.

20th September, 1937.

Dear Ormsby-Gore,

This is just to thank you for the action you are taking with regard to our beef quota. The point about rinderpest is very unfortunate. Daubney, our Chief Veterinary Officer, was under the impression that the matter had been satisfactorily dealt with when he was last in England. An official letter on the subject will go off in a few days.

2. If you have time, I wish you would read the rather long despatch that I sent off last week giving the history of the Abyssinian refugees up to the present. If it would be possible without sending Italy up in flames, I feel it would be a very good thing to make some public statement with regard to the action that has been taken here and, I have no doubt, in Somaliland as well, to take care of these refugees. This is not ~~for~~ <sup>with</sup> the object of getting praise for the people out here who have been concerned in it, though they do deserve it, but because of my experience with the Assyrians. The British Government, and indeed all the British people, have been severely blamed for their failure to settle the Assyrian problem, and the world quite forgets that if it had not been for the action that the British took in 1918 there would have been no problem because there would have been no Assyrians. Of course, at that time there was so much else going

on.....

O.G.9.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
KENYA.

5084

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on.....



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THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
LONDON  
LONDON

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
KENYA.

on that the good work that was then done could not have been stressed particularly. But we don't want the same thing to happen again over the Abyssinian refugees. There will be difficulties over their final settlement for which we shall all come in for criticism, but I think we ought to have the action which has been taken up to the present marked up to our credit. By "our" I don't <sup>only</sup> mean Kenya, but the British Government and people. I enclose a few photographs of the ~~refugees~~ Abyssinian refugees which you might like to see. I did not take them myself, but I think they were all taken at Iharsa. As stated in the despatch, it is a pretty desolate spot and difficult of access.

*Y. S. G.*  
*RB Breche-O'Pham*

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE W. ORMSBY-GORE, P.C., M.P.,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,  
DOWNING STREET, S.W.1.  
LONDON.

# On His Majesty's Service

86









FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

20th September, 1937

(J 3967/2/1)

30

Dear Passtin,

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires called here on the 17th September to speak about the Ethiopian refugees in Kenya.

The Italian Ministry for the Colonies, Crolla said, had informed the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the number and activity of these refugees was increasing, and that there were in fact now more than 3,000 such refugees in the Colony. The Italian Government realised that His Majesty's Government had to extend hospitality to these people. On the other hand, they had heard that some of the refugees had been enlisted in the King's African Rifles, and that some had been given new firearms. The Italian Government felt sure that His Majesty's Government realised the importance

Ames (51)

By 6 Kenya (52)

J. J. Passtin Esq., M.C.

49

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

20th September, 1937

(J 3957/2/1)

30

Dear Pasikin,

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires called here on the 17th September to speak about the Ethiopian refugees in Kenya:

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Answer (51)  
Copy to Kenya (53)

J. J. Pasikin Esq., M.C.

97

importance of seeing that these Ethiopian refugees did not engage in any anti-Italian activities; and they would be glad if supervision could be exercised over the refugees to that effect.

I told Grolla that we would transmit his observations to the Colonial Office. I said, however, that I thought it was out of the question that any of the refugees had either been enlisted in the King's African Rifles or had been given arms in Kenya. When they entered the Colony they had been disarmed, and they were now kept together in a camp under conditions which precluded their moving anywhere they liked about the country. I often wondered whether these reports of anti-Italian activities among the refugees were not spread by natives in Ethiopia for the purpose of creating dissension between His Majesty's Government and the Italian Government - dissension which, of course, they would be very ready to create.

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AIR MAIL

KENYA  
No.

SECRET



GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
NAIROBI  
KENYA

RECEIVED  
29 SEP 1937  
C. O.

15 SEPTEMBER, 1937.

Sir,

29

With reference to your Secret telegram No. 161 of the 4th August, I have the honour to report as follows upon the large incursion of refugees from Ethiopia into this Colony during July and August and the measures being taken by the Kenya Government to feed and care for these unfortunate victims of the situation which has arisen in their own country.

2. The total number of persons at present interned in the Colony is estimated to be approximately 7,570. It is regretted, however, that until all have been concentrated in camps no precise figures can be furnished nor is it possible to provide even approximate numbers of men, women and children.

As you are aware, there are two main classes of refugees; firstly, Eritrean deserters from the Italian forces who mostly appear to have joined up with bands of Abyssinian forces before finally seeking sanctuary in Kenya, and secondly, Ethiopian refugees consisting mainly of those who had taken up arms in the conflict and on threat of grave danger had fled with their families and followers.

As regards the first class, it will be remembered that in my Secret despatch of the

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17th

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
W. ORMSBY GORE, P.C., M.P.,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,  
DOWNING STREET,  
LONDON S.W. 1

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17th July last I reported that there were 464 in the internment camp at Isiolo, which had been established by the Military authorities in 1955 when the first batch of Eritrean deserters surrendered. Since that date further deserters from the Italian forces have been found amongst the other refugees and steps have been taken to transfer them as early as practicable to the camp under Military authority. At present, therefore, some 500 are interned in this camp and about another 100 remain to be sent there.

5. With regard to the great majority of refugees, namely the second class consisting mainly of true Abyssinians, I would explain that in the first few months of this year it seemed highly probable that a number of those who were resisting the Italian forces in South West Abyssinia might eventually attempt to seek sanctuary in Kenya. It was a matter for conjecture, however, whether in such event they would enter the Colony through that part of Sudan territory known as the Ilembi triangle, to the West of Lake Rudolf, or whether they would cross the frontier to the East of the Lake. When therefore the first main body was admitted, with a view to internment, at Namurupus on the West of the Lake it was considered likely that further bodies would cross the frontier on the same side of Lake Rudolf. In view of the difficulties and expense occasioned in feeding and caring for them near the border and far from the railway, and in view of the possibility of further incursions, it was decided to ....

3.

to transport them as soon as possible by means of motor transport, for they were mostly too emaciated to march any further great distance, to a site near Kapenguria where they could more readily and economically be fed and cared for. The question of establishing the camp in or on the outskirts of Kitale town was considered but this was deemed inadvisable in view of the amount of disease amongst the refugees and of the general desirability of segregating them. During June and July, the first main body of Ethiopian refugees was engaged in constructing huts in a temporary camp at Kapenguria in the charge of the Military authorities. It soon became apparent that Military forces could no longer be spared for the purpose and I therefore authorised the transfer of a District Officer to administer the camp and the engagement of extra Police to form a guard, leaving only the Eritrean deserters camp at Isiolo for administration by the Military.

4. At the end of June large numbers started to cross the frontier immediately to the East of Lake Rudolf and for the following three weeks entry into Kenya in this neighbourhood persisted. Since the area in which the refugees halted after crossing the frontier was arid, not under close administration, and devoid of communications, a prompt decision as to their concentration in an internment camp at some place where they could be more easily cared for was necessary, and I accepted the advice of the Officer in Charge, Northern Frontier District that they should be moved to a site five miles from the Eritrean deserters camp at Isiolo.

4.

While active relief measures, which I will describe later, were being taken as regards the refugees scattered in the inhospitable country to the East of Lake Rudolf no more Ethiopians entered the Colony to the West of the Lake, except one small body of approximately 25 who by night had skirted round the military post which had been established by the Italians opposite Namurapus shortly after the entry of those refugees who had been transferred to Kapenguria. In view therefore of the improbability of further large incursions to the West of the Lake, I decided that the temporary camp at Kapenguria should be closed and that all Ethiopian refugees should be concentrated at the projected Ethiopian internment camp at Isiolo until such time as a decision had been reached by His Majesty's Government regarding their future. In making this decision I was influenced by the necessity for economy in camp guards and staff and the desirability of commencing the construction of the Isiolo camp while the main body of refugees destined for internment therein was being assembled and moved to the site; moreover, it was understood that the camp at Kapenguria was <sup>at</sup> too high an altitude to be a fitting place for internment for a long period. The Kapenguria camp was accordingly closed towards the end of August and the internees and Police guard were transferred in lorries to Kitale, thence by special train to Nanyuki and thence in lorries to Isiolo. In view of the large proportion of women and children, and in order to avoid the spread of any infectious disease, this move through the more closely populated parts of the Colony had to be effected ....

5.

effected as quickly as possible; it was not therefore considered advisable to arrange for any part of the journey to be made on foot. The District Officer also moved across from Kapenguria and immediately made arrangements for the construction and administration of the new Ethiopian camp at Isiolo and the reception of the large number of other refugees who were moving towards the camp in stages through the Northern Frontier District.

5. In my Secret telegram No. 138 of the 30th June, you were informed of the first body of refugees to enter the Colony East of Lake Rudolf under Pitaaurari Tadame. Contact was established as early as possible with them by Police patrol under Assistant Superintendent Ireland and they were found to have halted near . . . This party numbered 1,458 and was brought in to . . . Horr to be disarmed and to receive such medical attention as Dr. B.P. Harris, Medical Officer to the Northern Frontier District, was able to accord with the limited facilities at his disposal.

As reported in my Secret telegram No. 145 of the 13th July, a further party entered under the leadership of Pitaaurari Angaso and Dejazmach Walde Mariam. This party which ultimately proved to number approximately 1,200, made its way to Karsa and was there disarmed.

A further party of 146 under Kenyazmach Neka arrived at Karsa on the 21st July and was augmented on subsequent days by other small detachments until it reached a total of approximately 950. It was . . .

6.

was closely followed on the 26th July by a large party of approximately 2,000 under Lij Gramai Yasu, a son of Lij Yasu the ex-Emperor.

Again on the 1st August, a further party, which it is hoped may be the last, under Fitaurari Wobenu and numbering some 1,200 was reported to have found its way to the water holes round Karsa.

6. It will be realised that this sudden advent of large numbers of refugees of all descriptions, including many women and children, presented a grave problem to Mr. V.G. Glenday, C.M.G., O.B.E., Provincial Commissioner in charge of the Northern Frontier District and to Mr. G. Reece, O.B.E., the District Commissioner at Marsabit. Fortunately in mitigation of the arrival of a few refugees, Mr. ... had arranged for a dump of foodstuffs to be ... at Karsa which can be reached by motor transport during the dry season. This small dump, however, would soon become exhausted and immediate arrangements had to be made for further supplies to be transported by the Supply & Transport of the King's African Rifles and dumped at Karsa and North Horr. Naturally the food problem was of major importance, but there remained other matters of urgency such as the care of the sick whom it was soon found existed in large numbers, the collection of arms and the prevention of contamination of the small and scattered water holes round which the multitudes were gathering. With the able assistance of Assistant Superintendent Cleland and his small force of Native police and of Dr. Harris with an Asian Sub-Assistant Surgeon and a few Native hospital dressers,....

dressers, some sort of organisation was rapidly formed. In view of the heavy cost of hiring motor transport the additional number of lorries purchased by the Military to deal with the whole situation arising out of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict was increased to twenty, and the Director of Medical Services promptly dispatched Dr. P. Cormack, Senior Medical Officer, from Nairobi to take charge of medical arrangements.

As it was not possible to tell whether further parties of Ethiopians were in the neighbourhood of the frontier East of Lake Rudolf, having crossed or intending to cross the border, and since it appeared possible that the Gelubba or Merille tribesmen inhabiting Abyssinia to the North of the Lake, who were known to have bought a quantity of arms and ammunition from Ethiopians in flight, might attempt to cross the border into Kenya with a view either to settlement in the Colony or to raiding Kenya tribesmen or harassing the Ethiopian refugees, two aircraft of the Royal Air Force were temporarily stationed at Marsabit. Frequent air reconnaissance patrols were carried out by these machines between the 2nd and 8th August when one was recalled. The other remained at Marsabit until 24th August patrolling the affected areas.

It is not improbable that the presence of these aircraft had a deterrent effect on the raiding habits of the Gelubba and Merille, for the frontier remained quiet during the critical period.

7. On the 14th August the Chief Native Commissioner and Commissioner of Police proceeded to the Northern Frontier District to enquire into the general situation. At that time the disposition of the refugees in the district was

as .....

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as follows:-

(i) Approximately 250 had arrived at Isiolo, having been transported in returning convoys of lorries after delivery of supplies to the main bodies at Karsa and Horr. The able-bodied men were employed in constructing huts in accordance with a camp lay-out devised by the District Commissioner and the Medical Officer from Meru.

(ii) 1,941 were on the road between Horr and Isiolo, marching to camp in three batches. A motor lorry was accompanying each batch to pick up stragglers and bring them to successive halting places, and supply dumps had been arranged. I now learn that this march was concluded on the 28th August.

84 were at Horr, of whom about 700 too sick to accompany the march to Isiolo and the remainder had just completed a march from Karsa.

(iv) Approximately 1,000 were on the march from Karsa to Horr.

(v) Approximately 1,000, including many sick, remained at Karsa.

8. It has subsequently been represented that, rains being due in the middle of September, it would then become almost impossible to continue to transport supplies to Karsa and a matter of difficulty to do so to Horr. It has therefore been arranged that Karsa should be completely evacuated and .....

and as many as possible of the refugees from Karsa and Horr should be moved to Isiolo before the rains break. With this end in view eight lorries were to be loaned by the Military to the District Commissioner, Marsabit, and I am informed that arrangements for the move are proceeding satisfactorily. I therefore have every hope that by the end of this month all the Ethiopian refugees totalling some 7,000 will be interned in the special camp at Isiolo, save possibly for a few who may be too sick to move for some time.

9. As might well have been expected sickness has presented one of the greatest problems in connection with the temporary settlement of the refugees. Not only had there been a minor outbreak of small-pox amongst those who entered to the West of Lake Rudolf, necessitating vaccination and a quarantine period before they could with safety be transferred to Kapenguria, but small-pox appeared in an alarming manner amongst those who made their way to Karsa and Horr. Supplies of vaccine were dispatched by aeroplane from Nairobi and vaccination was carried out at both places by all the medical staff available. No less than 155 cases occurred, but I am thankful to say that fatalities appear to have been remarkably few and that, even if a few persons may have failed to receive vaccination during the initial campaign owing to the large area over which they were encamped in scattered groups, there no longer appears to be danger of a further epidemic since care is being taken to inspect all and vaccinate those not already treated whilst they are being assembled preparatory to marching to Isiolo.

10.

Typhoid, typhus and relapsing fever were also found to be diseases from which a number were suffering, while dysentery was reported to be prevalent.

10. Local conditions have rendered the work of the medical staff in endeavouring to stamp out disease extremely arduous, and as an illustration of the difficulties experienced, I quote the following extract from a report on the position at North Horr by the Senior Medical Officer who was sent to take charge of medical arrangements:-

" They are scattered over a rocky hillside over an area of about 5 square miles. Water is obtained from a large water-hole. There is no grass and there are only the scantiest of scrubby trees, around each of which a family group is camped. These conditions result in the weak and sick getting little or even no water as ordinary feelings of humanity are curiously absent.

Some donkeys and mules and a very few of which go back along the route 5 miles to graze.

They have been fed hitherto on the meat of their cattle. They are still eating this with the addition of maize given by Government.

Owing to the lack of anything whatever of which to build a hospital, it has been necessary for the Medical Officer, his cook, dresser and a police dubat to go round trying to find sick, to give them fluid, and medicine, and to dress their sores.

Sanitary arrangements do not exist. The ground is covered with discarded, soiled dressings near the shelters. Some fashion of shelter was made by the Medical Officer, the best he could do with the material, about 200 yards from the water-hole. Here, and in a large cave close by which held at one time 120 very ill people, there were collected such of the sick as it was possible to collect.

The filth and litter of dirty dressings round about is dreadful. There is no staff available to do more than seek out sick and given them the necessary fluid and even that is tremendous work. The people, although there are hundreds of able-bodied men, won't help themselves. The staff cannot spare a moment to collect and burn rubbish.

11.

In spite of this the Medical Officer has done herculean work in getting the people vaccinated.

Since the above was written further Medical equipment and stores and additional staff have been despatched to the area and everything possible has been and is being done to facilitate the work of the medical staff and to relieve the sufferings of the sick.

11. As regards the general conditions under which the move from Karsa and Northern Horr towards Isiolo had to take place, I cannot do better than quote the following extracts from a report by the Chief Native Commissioner who, as stated, recently visited the area:-

" A most graphic account could be written of the move of the refugees from Karsa to Isiolo. It is doubtful if those who do not know the country would appreciate the difficulties that have had to be met and the extreme work that has been done.

Imagine 6,000-7,000 men, women and children; some well-born Amharas with some money and a few horses, ponies and mules; many women of Galla, Konti and other tribes, probably slaves; a number of boys who have been picked up en route, speak no known language and probably do not know accurately where they come from.

What their experiences were before they were found at Karsa we may never know; or how many people died on the way.

Then imagine the country these people have got to traverse before they arrive at Isiolo, some 350 miles from Karsa. The barren lava and sand plains to North Horr, the Koronli Desert, 70 miles long with fortunately oases on either side so that pedestrians can zig-zag across and get water at possibly 15 miles intervals. But there is little or no food for stock and the mortality will be heavy.

After Koronli they have to cross some 30 miles of lava-strawn country, waterless and terribly destructive to the feet of men and beasts. A rest on the slopes of Marsabit, and the refugees descend to the Kaisut desert about 25 miles across with no water till they get to Laisamis. After that the last part of the journey is somewhat easier with water at about 15 miles intervals, but these unfortunate

12.

unfortunate people will be very very tired when they reach Isiolo.

Everything possible is being done, there are water and food dumps at the shortest possible intervals but the distance between them is necessarily great for tired people.

Parties are despatched as and when the available transport can replenish the food and water dumps; they may leave a certain point more or less together but the 600-800 people in each party (some) get strung out and one party we met probably covered 10 miles of country.

See

We saw men and women riding mules and ponies; women walking with 2 or 3 children on a mule; donkeys being ridden or used for pack purposes; camels laden with household goods, cattle, sheep and goats being driven along.

Men, women and children with no transport plodding along carrying their rations and possibly a bottle or kettle with a little water. Surprisingly, many looked comparatively fit.

Comparatively few humans have died en route; a few babies have been born on the road under conditions it is difficult to imagine, and the route is strewn with dead animals. There is or no food for these beasts and probably they will die when they reach the fly area.

A lorry is behind each party and helps the really down and out and I give great credit to the Native Police and lorry drivers in the way they have carried on. If every one who wanted a lift was given one, a fleet of lorries would be insufficient and the N.C.Os. have to use their discretion and they seem to have done it well."

A more graphic account is perhaps contained in the attached extracts from the issue of the "East African Standard" of the 26th August wherein the difficulties facing officers of this Government are by no means exaggerated and well-deserved praise is meted out to those who have striven hard to overcome these problems with no small measure of success.

12. Before turning to the future, I would report that the arms and ammunition surrendered to the Government by the Eritrean deserters and Ethiopian refugees and now

in .....

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in the custody of the Military authorities are classified as follows:-

Rifles and Bayonets, various types .....	2083
Automatic Guns, various types .....	25
Anti-tank gun .....	1
Revolvers and pistols, assorted .....	270
Ammunition, various .....	50,000 rounds

An assortment of accoutrements.

13. As soon as concentration at the Ethiopian internment camp at Isiolo under the Civil Administration is complete and all deserters from the Italian forces have been singled out and transferred to the Eritrean internment camp nearby under Military administration, it will be necessary to ascertain the precise numbers of men, distinguished between aged and able-bodied, women and children. Fuller details regarding them such as their districts of origin and normal vocations.

It is known that there are a number of notables who will be accorded separate accommodation in the Ethiopian camp. It is also understood that there are approximately 100 young boys belonging to the Konta and Kalo tribes in Abyssinia who were forcibly made to leave their homes by the Ethiopians during their flight for the purpose of herding stock which the former brought with them. On arrival in Kenya the Ethiopians neglected them entirely, finding that they were no longer of monetary value as slave boys and that the stock had mostly to be slaughtered for food supplies during the flight and before they could be supplied with other foodstuffs on entry into Kenya. These boys will ...

14.

will have to be provided with separate accommodation in camp for the present, but pending a decision as to their future, it is hoped that it may be possible to arrange with the Roman Catholic Mission at Meru to care for them and given them some schooling.

It can be said with certainty that for some weeks every able-bodied man will be fully employed on the construction of huts in the camp, while a ration store of permanent materials is being build under Public Works Department supervision. Whether, after a period, there will remain enough work in the camp or its vicinity to keep the able-bodied men employed remains to be seen, and in this connection I propose shortly to consider the question of the employment of the Eritrean deserters and possibly the reduction of their scale of rations, as their camp is by now well established and their physical condition should in most cases have sufficiently improved to justify some employment being found for them outside the camp. I understand that there is land available near the Ethiopian camp on which it will be possible for the refugees to cultivate crops for themselves.

14. The Ethiopian camp will be under the general supervision of the District Commissioner at Isiolo; there will, however, be a District Officer stationed at the camp who will be immediately responsible for its administration and construction. The camp guard will consist of one Assistant Inspector of Police and about 120 African police. Hospital facilities will be provided in the camp

under ....

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under a staff composed of an Asian Sub-Assistant Surgeon and African dressers; but an European Medical Officer will be responsible for starting the hospital and will probably remain until sickness in the camp is reduced to normal proportions. In view of the urgency of rapid construction, it is proposed to engage a European Foreman to assist the District Officer in its supervision.

15. From financial statements relating to the special expenditure incurred in the past year which have been supplied to you, it will have been seen that the costs of guarding several hundreds of Eritrean deserters and of providing and transporting food and clothing have amounted to a considerable sum. I regret that the estimate of the additional charge which will be borne by Imperial Funds on account of the assembly, transport and care of the extra 7,000 refugees can be given at the present time. It is clear, however, that the recurrent amount will not be inconsiderable and that some capital expenditure will be incurred; although you may rest assured that the organisation of relief for the refugees is being carried out on the most economical lines possible having due regard to the obligations thrown on this Government.

16. I take this opportunity to stress once more the necessity for an early decision on the question of the ultimate disposal of those who have sought sanctuary in this Colony. It has not proved possible for my officers to enter into any negotiations with the local Italian Authorities on the lines envisaged in my Deputy's Secret telegram of the 12th

July 1941

July for the return to their own country of any of the refugees who might be ascertained to be in no danger of severities; and it will be appreciated that once the concentration of all refugees at Isiolo is completed the great distance from the frontier will render the possibility of any successful local negotiations extremely remote. I trust therefore that the examination of the question of the future maintenance and disposal of the refugees which you have undertaken will shortly be concluded and that the Government of Kenya will be relieved of its responsibilities in the matter at an early date.

17. While no additional refugees are expected to make their way into the Colony in large numbers, I would add that the District Commissioner at Kapoeta in the Sudan has recently reported that numbers of Ethiopians were in Sudan territory at the Southern end of the Ilembi Triangle. In view of the lack of administration in this particular area of the Sudan in the past by the Sudan Government, it seems possible that steps will not be taken to disarm and intern the Ethiopians in question and that they may therefore attempt to enter this Colony. You will, however, be advised of any further developments.

18. From personal observation as well as from reports, I cannot speak too highly of the fine and untiring work performed in connection with the refugee problem by all officers concerned. Administrative Officers and their staffs to the West and East of Lake Rudolf have organised and dealt with admission of refugees with tact, energy and initiative, while the Medical Officers concerned have, together with their Native staff displayed remarkable endurance and sympathy in relieving the sufferings of these people. Similarly the Military and

Police ....

Police engaged in guarding and generally caring for the internees have performed their arduous duties in a most commendable manner under good organisation. The Supply and Transport Corps has often worked under great difficulties demanding a large degree of organisation and has yet maintained supplies satisfactorily.

I would bring to your notice in particular the good services of those officers whose names have been mentioned in paragraph 6 of this despatch.

In conclusion, I think that you will agree with me that the history of the influx of these refugees and their subsequent treatment provides a worthy contribution to the execution of those humanitarian tasks which must ever be the duty of civilisation.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

*P. Brooke Clapham*

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL,

G O V E R N O R.

THURSDAY, AUG. 26, 1937

# HOW 7,000 REFUGEES FOUND KENYA SANCTUARY

## WITH MACHINE GUNS, RIFLES AND AN ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN

### Riddled with Disease

#### GOVERNMENT'S STRUGGLE IN INHOSPITABLE COUNTRY WITH URGENT PROBLEM

The Government of Kenya has been studying very closely the problem presented by the presence in the Colony of about 7,500 refugees from Abyssinia, including a number of deserters from the Italian Native forces. It has been decided to establish a central camp at Isiolo and the position was recently examined on the spot by senior officers of Government, including the Chief Native Commissioner, the Officer in Charge of the Northern Frontier Province and the Commissioner of Police.

There is a remarkable story behind this migration. It goes back nearly two months when large numbers of Abyssinians of all classes, freemen and slaves, fled exhausted across the Kenya border, riddled with disease, small pox, typhoid and relapsing fever.

Many of them were heavily armed. The Kenya Government has come into possession of a score of modern machine guns, hundreds of rifles, many rounds of ammunition and what is probably the first anti-aircraft gun in the country. It had been carried three hundred miles by people who cherished the pathetic belief that if their flight was spotted by Italian aircraft they would be able to defend themselves.

### Central Camp Decision

Most of the refugees have crossed the border within the last two months. On July 10 a party arrived numbering about 1,200 including 300 armed Abyssinian soldiers and nearly 700 women and children. More reached Kenya on July 21 and a third large party reached Kenya from the north on July 30. Many of them came from North East Abyssinia and the districts around Harar, having struggled and fought their way for at least 300 miles before reaching Kenya. A large number were armed and about twenty brought with them hundreds of rifles, many rounds of ammunition, and one light anti-aircraft gun have been collected by the Kenya authorities. These arms were willingly handed over by the refugees though there is no doubt that they were the property employed on the long and weary march when the great crowd of men, women and children came into conflict with hostile tribesmen, especially in southern Abyssinia, and when disputes arose over cattle and food. It is believed that these refugees have been wandering about for several months, steadily

degraded condition, dysentery and typhoid added to the problem and though most of the refugees are now able to be moved to Isiolo—some by motor lorry and others on foot—there are still a number of sick who require close attention. By the time they reach camp, most of the Abyssinians will have travelled at least 500 miles from their homes.

#### Exhausted and Starving

The large party crossed the frontier at the North East end of Lake Rudolph, entering a part of Kenya which is not so well populated and is a most unattractive and inhospitable. There they were found exhausted, starving and thirsty by a patrol based on Karsa about 40 miles south of the Lake shore. A European Police Officer arrived immediately after their presence was reported and a temporary camp was made for the party, many of whom were suffering from small-pox. There was an emergency supply of miltre meal at Karsa which was distributed at once and further food

assistant surgeons and Native dressers.

#### Another Group Near Kitale

There is another group of refugees at Kapenguria near Kitale who crossed into Kenya to the west of Lake Rudolph, and they, too, will be brought to Isiolo. At Harar there are more, but fortunately their condition was not so bad as that of the party who came within the area patrolled from Karsa. But in all cases the Administration has been faced with the same difficult problem of providing immediate medical attention and supplying the wanderers with food and water. To deal with the small but large supplies of lymph from the Nairobi laboratories were transported to the frontier by the Royal Air Force.

The refugees are of all ages—old men and women scarcely able to walk, young men showing signs of their military training either in the Abyssinian or Italian armies, young women with small children, members of better class families with claims to culture, peasant people and a large number who were obviously slaves under the Abyssinian system of domestic servitude. But they are all grateful, give no trouble, are anxious to do as they are told but share a fear that they will be returned to Abyssinia, where they believe that death awaits them. The men bow low to the ground when they see a European officer and the better class women, many of them wear trousers, take off their hats in salutation.

When the refugees arrived at Karsa, two thousand of them, there was practically no accommodation and a hundred small-pox cases were found quarters in a cave.

#### Now Fit and Well

Today all the refugees are being looked after extremely well, the children are tractable and beginning to take a new interest in their strange life and the adults are full of gratitude to the Government of Kenya for everything that is being done for them. The difficult task of handling so many strange people has been faced resolutely by the Administration and the surmounting of the hardships presented by so unusual a problem in the conditions of the inhospitable Northern Frontier District has been a triumph of emergency organisation.

Much of the burden has fallen on the shoulders of four European officers. Mr. V. G. Glenday whose knowledge of the Frontier and its people is, perhaps, almost unequalled. Mr. Gerald Reese, District Commissioner, Marsabit. Dr. R. P. Cornock,

Many of them were heavily armed. The Kenya Government has come into possession of a score of modern machine guns, hundreds of rifles, many rounds of ammunition and what is probably the first anti-aircraft gun in the country. It had been carried three hundred miles by people who cherished the pathetic belief that if their flight was spotted by Italian aircraft they would be able to defend themselves.

## Central Camp Decision

Most of the refugees have crossed the border within the last two months. On July 10 a party arrived numbering about 1,200 including 300 armed Abyssinians, soldiers and nearly 700 women and children. More reached Kenya on July 21 and a third large party reached Kenya from the north on July 30. Many of them came from North East Abyssinia and the districts around Harar, having struggled and fought their way for at least 300 miles before reaching Kenya. A large number were armed and about twenty machine guns, hundreds of rifles, many rounds of ammunition and one light anti-aircraft gun have been collected by the Kenya authorities. These arms were willingly handed over by the refugees, though there is little doubt that they were desperately employed on the long and weary march when the great crowd of men, women and children came into conflict with hostile tribesmen, especially in southern Abyssinia, and when disputes arose over cattle and land. It is believed that these refugees have been wandering about for several months, steadily moving south, dodging Italian columns, fighting desperately against hostile communities through whose country they passed, molested by the wandering armed bandits who have long earned out their forays across the border, and pursued by disease consequent on their wretched and starved condition. It is not known how many died during the long trek, but as death took toll of the long straggling columns, others joined the ranks, by persuasion or force.

### Better Class Families

The parties which ultimately reached Kenya consisted of complete Abyssinian families of the better class, peasants and slaves, some travelling on donkeys, mules or horses, the majority on foot—an almost disorganised rabble with little discipline or leadership. With one of the larger parties however was an Abyssinian who was apparently in charge. His name was given as Lej Yasu and he claims to be an illegitimate son of the famous figure of that name in recent Abyssinian history, whose claims to the throne languished with him in prison for many years during the reign of Haile Selassie.

Most of the refugees had come from the higher altitudes of the South Eastern corner of Abyssinia and wore clothes of a kind which were ill suited to the hot lower regions of the frontier. Their worldly possessions were tied up in large numbers of small bundles, and most of their effects will be brought with their owners to the camp at Isiolo.

The great majority crossed the border in an utterly exhausted condition. Small pox had broken out amongst them during the march and deaths must have been numerous. Children had been born to some of the women on the way and other births have taken place in Kenya. The children presented a pathetic sight and the dangerously unhealthy condition of the great majority of these refugees has been one of the most urgent and most difficult problems before the Kenya Government. Every one had to

verminous conditions. Scarcely had typhoid added to the problem and though most of the refugees are now able to take a few steps, some are unable to do so at all. In fact there are still a great many sick who require close attention. By the time they reach camp, most of the Abyssinians will have travelled at least 500 miles from their homes.

### Exhausted and Starving

One large party crossed the frontier at the North East end of Lake Rudolph, entering a part of Kenya which is not easily administered and is almost unpopulated and unexplored. There they were found, exhausted, starving and thirsty by a police patrol based on Karsa about 40 miles south along the Lake shore. A European Police Officer arrived immediately after their presence was reported and a temporary camp was made for the party, most of whom were suffering from small pox. There was an emergency supply of maize meal at Karsa which was distributed at once and further food-stuffs were rushed up by the King-African Rifles Supply and Transport Corps over the tracks which serve as roads in that little known corner of Kenya.

They are being moved to Isiolo under police escort to Isiolo where there is a camp of 2000, and active measures are being taken, with the assistance of the Abyssinians, to clear up a few seem to be about the work to build a number of grass and tree wood-huts and to organise a proper camp. A police staff of at least one European officer and 60 Africans will be needed to control and guard the encampment and arrangements have also been completed for the establishment there of a medical unit consisting of a doctor, sub-

stant and a nurse. They will be returned to Abyssinia. They have no idea that death awaits them. The men lay low in the shade of a tree when they see a European soldier, but the better class wear a number of them wear trousers like all their own countrymen.

When the refugees arrived at Karsa two thousand of them, there was practically no accommodation and a hundred small box cases were found quarters in a cave.

### Now Fit and Well

Today all the refugees are being looked after extremely well, the children are tractable and beginning to take a new interest in their strange life and the adults are full of gratitude to the Government of Kenya for everything that is being done for them. The difficult task of looking after so many strange people has been faced resolutely by the African staff and the superintendent of the Isiolo camp presented a serious problem for it, the conditions of the "Inhabitable" Northern Frontier District has been a triumph of emergency organisation.

Much of the burden has fallen on the shoulders of four European officers, Mr. A. G. Hendry whose knowledge of Harar and its peoples is perhaps almost unequalled, Mr. Gerald Rice, District Commissioner Marsabit, Dr. R. P. Cornack, who has organised the medical services, Assistant Supt. K. Cleland of the Kenya Police, whose force has been a handful of regular African policemen and a few tribal retainers.

### REFUGEES

#### A Kenya Task

The remarkable story which we publish to-day of the Abyssinian refugees now in Kenya will bring home to everybody in the country the difficult nature of the problem which the war in Ethiopia has left for this Colony and Great Britain to solve. There are now nearly 8,000 uninvited guests in Kenya and they include people representative of almost every class in the one-time Ethiopian Empire. Some of them come from good families who have fled from a regime which they feel holds out little hope for them; some are peasants whose reason for flight is less obvious; others are slaves either belonging to the members of the parties or collected on the remarkable trek of over three hundred miles to security. There are others—deserters from the Italian Native forces—whose homes are in far away Eritrea and who sought safety early in the conflict. Included, too, are men who at one time served in the Abyssinian army. Together they represent perhaps as difficult a problem as was ever placed before the Government of this country. All of them, except children who have not reached the age of knowledge and infants who came into this troubled world during or after the flight, have one thing in common. They do not want to go back to Abyssinia. They are afraid of their new masters; they cannot face again the terrible journey through inhospitable border country and among hostile tribes and armed bandits and slave-raiders. The bare, hot plains of Isiolo may not be very attractive compared with their homes in far off Harar, but they mean peace and kindness, and skilled attention. There is something in the story of which Kenya may well be modestly proud. Dignified Amharas and peasants alike bow to the ground when they see a British face and women who have come through terrors which can only be guessed at bare their heads before the Administrative officers, the policemen and the doctors who have gone to their help. The Government has decided to establish a central camp at Isiolo in which the whole of these people can be concentrated, supervised, and, if necessary, disciplined. That step has been made possible after a campaign against terrible diseases the like of which has not been seen in this country for many years. Thousands of people, physically exhausted, emaciated by starvation, exposure and thirst, many of them dying where they stood, practically crawled over the frontier with their equally wretched mules and horses and cattle. But they brought with them small pox, typhoid, and fevers resulting from their incredibly unclean condition. They were a menace to the country. No

words of praise are fulsome enough for the handful of European officers and their African assistants who tackled that problem, risking their own well-being, bringing order out of disorder and restoring some measure of disciplined self-respect into one of the most extraordinary rabbles that ever wandered the face of the earth in these modern times. It was a humanitarian task. It could not be shunned. These unfortunates had sought sanctuary and in a British Colony they are entitled to expect it. They are being fed and medically attended, protected and helped, and these ministrations must continue as long as they are in this country. The post is heavy. Food alone cannot be supplied and transported at much less than a shilling a head and at the moment their necessities alone must be costing nearly £400 a day. That is too big a burden for Kenya. It has been shouldered so far by the Imperial Government as part of the price to be paid for past history. It is probably true that many of these people are by no means desirable additions to the Kenya population from any point of view. Their record is probably no better than that of the border tribes with whom they undoubtedly fought on their way through. That they were well armed for self-defence is indicated by the astonishing array of modern equipment which they brought with them, but which they willingly handed over as soon as they felt secure. How many more will come across it is impossible to say. Much will depend on the nature of Italian control and the character of Italian policy. It was stiffened since the bomb Marshal Graziani. But the hardest hearted would not have them to be returned to their homes, however difficult it is to decide what to do with them. All of them cannot stay here though some may be eligible enough to join other Abyssinians who have resided in this country for years. On the frontier they present a problem in a part of the country that bristles already with difficult questions. The only reasonable hope is that when the British Government comes to make its peace with Italy, these wretches will not be forgotten and some proper steps will be taken to exact a pledge from the Italian authorities that if and when these people are returned they will not be subjected to reprisals and revengeful penalties. Italy has a chance here of doing the big thing, of welcoming these people back home and of telling Abyssinia and the world that they need not be afraid of the 'missionaries of civilization'. For the time being the refugees will have to remain where they are, a serious and urgent problem calling for very special measures in their own interests as well as those of the surrounding peoples. But we may hope that the story told in these columns to-day will be accepted as reflecting well upon the Government of Kenya and the handful of white men and black who have borne the brunt. Whatever happens in the future Kenya has done her humanitarian work well and without stint.

8th September, 1937.

Dear Madam,

I write to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th September with which was forwarded a cheque for twenty-five pounds (£25) to be used by the Government of Kenya for the purchase of clothes and other necessities for Fitaurari Zaude Ayella.

I have passed the cheque to the Crown Agents for the Colonies who will credit the sum in question to Kenya funds in their hands and will send you a formal receipt. The Government of Kenya has also been notified of the receipt of this sum for the purpose indicated and has been asked to send in due course a statement for transmission to you showing how the money has been spent.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) F. C. Lee.

THE SECRETARY,

THE ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF  
FUND.

3  
117  
**THE ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF FUND**

Hon. Treasurer: F. S. Livie-Noble.

All communications should be addressed to:

Hon. Secretary: Hazel M. Napier,  
5, Crossfield Road, London, N.W.3.  
(PR11mrose 4227)

September 8th 1937

Vice-Presidents:  
The Rt. Revd. The Lord Bishop of London  
The Rt. Revd. Marshall B. Lang  
The Revd. J. Scott Lidgett  
Sir Norman Angell  
S. Vyvyan Adams  
Professor S. Alexander  
The Rt. Hon. Lord Dickinson  
The Rt. Hon. Lord Gisborough  
C. E. M. Joad  
Storm Jameson  
Lady Layton  
F. L. Lucas  
Hugh Lyon  
Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence  
Canon Charles E. Raven  
Mrs. Sellman  
The Viscountess Snowden

H. A. Lee Esqre  
Colonial Office  
Downing St  
S. W. I.

Dear Mr Lee

Answer 43  
About the 18th August Sir Sidney Barton I understand spoke to you about our wishing to send £25 to Fitaurari Zandi Ayella in Kenya to provide him with clothes and necessaries.

safe  
R297  
I enclose herewith the cheque £25 in the hope that you will transmit it to Kenya with instructions to apply it as a special grant to Zandi.

Again thanking you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Hazel M. Napier  
Hon Sec.

R. F. Booth

R 27 *Booth*



To see. On the telephone they proposed to say  
the we had been written "with the knowledge  
of the C.O." and I said that we would not  
reply. I also said that I felt sure that we would  
the Gov. of Kenya, would welcome assistance to help  
"enlighten" for the natives. They have not included a  
reference to these lines either. <sup>1931</sup>  
In the lines originally proposed.

F. G. Lee Esq., <sup>1931</sup> *But it doesn't matter.*

No: they do admit that  
Kenya has asked to relieve  
the distressed  
there. So it's all right

*S*

Colonial Office,

S.W.1



FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT

# THE SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND

FOR PREVENTING CHILD SUFFERING AND IMPROVING THE  
STANDARDS OF CHILD CARE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

PRESIDENT: THE RIGHT HON. LORD NOEL-BUXTON

20, GORDON SQUARE :: LONDON, W.C.1

TELEPHONE: EUSTON 5204

SECRETARY FOR PUBLICITY AND RESEARCH: EDWARD FULLER

1st September, 1937

F. G. Lee Esq.,  
Colonial Office, S.W.1

RECEIVED

- 3 SEP 1937

C. O. REGY

Dear Sir,

With further reference <sup>to</sup> our conversation on the telephone yesterday, I now beg to enclose a copy of a letter Lord Noel-Buxton is sending to The Times with regard to refugees from Abyssinia who have arrived in Kenya, and also a copy of a letter which Mr. J. D. Watson is sending to Lancashire Guardian and other papers on the same subject. You will notice that in both of these letters reference is made to the Colonial Office and the Government of Kenya in the terms agreed on the telephone yesterday.

Yours faithfully,

*Edward Fuller*

Encs.

EDWARD FULLER,  
Publicity Secretary



20 GORDON SQUARE  
LONDON W.C.1

September 2nd, 1937

To the Editor,  
"The Times,"  
Printing-house Square, E.C.4

Sir,

Refugees from Abyssinia

The arrival of some 8,000 refugees from Abyssinia on British territory in Kenya, as reported in The Times, revives the question of our attitude to the victims of a war which, though recent, has under the press of more far-reaching catastrophes, faded somewhat from the public mind. We all feel compassion for these destitute and fear-ridden people, of them women and children, some of the latter actually born during the three months' trek from their own land, whose plight is so graphically described by your correspondent; and I believe that many of your readers will desire to give practical expression to their sympathy.

The Government of Kenya appears to have taken prompt and effective measures for safeguarding the health and ensuring the general safety of the refugees who have sought its hospitality, but I understand that both that Government and the Colonial Office will welcome supplementary help from voluntary sources. The Save the Children Fund, which conducted relief work in Abyssinia be-

fore the Italian occupation, has available for the relief of Abyssinian refugees a small fund from which assistance has been given to an earlier group who fled to British Somaliland. Our remaining resources for such purposes, are, however, inadequate to meet the needs of the new situation which has developed and we should welcome gifts which could be used to this end. Contributions addressed to the Hon. Treasurer, The Save the Children Fund, 20 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1, and earmarked "Abyssinian refugees" will be gratefully acknowledged.

Yours faithfully,

HON.  
Treasurer  
Save the Children Fund

20 Gordon Square,  
London, W.C.1



20 GORDON SQUARE  
LONDON, W.C.1

September 2nd, 1937

To the Editor

Sir,

Refugees from Abyssinia

Recent reports in the Press of the incursion of a large body of refugees from Abyssinia into British territory emphasize the fact that the suffering created by a war persists long after the war itself has ceased. The condition of these people - their number estimated at some 8,000 and many of them women and children - is desperate in the extreme. They are to be starving and footsore and sick, homeless and tired. Many have inevitably died during the three months' journey since their homes, a number of infants have been born into this misery either on the journey or within the past few days since the refugees' arrival in Kenya.

To aid these unfortunate people, the Save the Children Fund feels a special responsibility. During the war in Abyssinia, we carried on relief work and established work for the welfare of mothers and infants, and more recently we have given aid to refugees who penetrated into British Somaliland. We now desire to do something to help those who have sought refuge in Kenya and we

understand that such help will be welcomed by the Colonial Office and the Government of Kenya, which has taken prompt and effective steps to secure the health and safety of the refugees. Our funds available for this purpose are, however, scanty and I venture to appeal to your readers, many of whom have been generous in aiding our varied work at home and abroad, to help us to provide adequate assistance in the present need, by sending a special gift to me at the headquarters of the Save the Children Fund, 20 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1. Such contributions should be earmarked "Abyssinian refugees".

Yours faithfully,

Chairman  
The C.A.F.

YOU,  
Treasurer,  
Save the Children Fund

20 Gordon Square,  
London, W.C.1

38066/14

C

85-6 Brix  
R. 247 - for file  
[We know, (sic)]  
M.L.

Morning Post

24<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>o</sup> 1937

### SMALLPOX IN KENYA

#### ABYSSINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS OUTBREAK

MOMBASA, August 23.

Smallpox has broken out among the camps of refugees from Abyssinia in the northern frontier province of Kenya. Terrified refugees are attempting to escape from the camps, but they are rounded up by the police and taken to isolation camps.

Doctors with vaccines and other medical supplies have already been sent to combat possible spreading of the disease to surrounding Kenya tribes.

It is also understood to have been among the starving, foot-sore refugees roaming the northern frontier in search of food and water.

In view of the danger that these people might become bandits, the Kenya police sent reinforcements, including Europeans, to the province recently.

The number of refugees from Abyssinia, which was recently stated to be 5,000, is now believed to be many thousands more. The Italian Consul at Mombasa, however, denies that this is possible for the strong Italian border patrols make it difficult for many Abyssinians to leave the country. - Reuter.

Only in one camp, with other outbreaks.

Reuter

New 8,000.

R 23 AUG  
D 24

38066/14/37

1217

C. O.

- Mr. Flood. 25-8
- Mr.
- Mr.
- Sir H. Moore.
- Sir G. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bottomley.
- Sir J. Shuckburgh.
- Permu. U.S. of S.
- Parly. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

DOWNING STREET.

25 August, 1937.

DRAFT.

SIR ROBERT BROOKE-POPHAM, G.C.V.O.,  
K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

Dear Sir Robert,

Many thanks for your letter of the 12th of August about the Abyssinian refugees. The problem is indeed a difficult one. It is complicated by considerations of diplomacy and humanity which appear to be inextricably mixed. We are now trying to get some kind of policy laid down. The difficulty is that if we start arranging for their return to Ethiopia, it will involve recognition of the Italian conquest and I don't know how far H.M.G. is at present prepared to go in that direction. If they would return of their own accord, then so much the better, but there would be a frightful outcry in this country

FURTHER ACTION.

from ill-informed people if we take any  
action which could be misrepresented as  
handing over the trusting refugees to the  
mercy of the Italian conqueror. We don't  
see here what can be done with them in Kenya.

There is no land to put them on except in  
the northern frontier, and the Turkana districts,  
and that would not be suitable for them.

We cannot go on maintaining them in idleness  
and, as you very properly remark, there are  
limits to the number of roads that can be  
built or improved. We cannot turn them loose,  
and we cannot very well allow the impression  
to grow up that there is a home from home for  
Abyssinians in Kenya. As I told you, the

Secretary of State feels quite strongly on the  
subject, and it is to be hoped that, with the  
improvement which is now becoming manifest in  
the relations between Italy and this country,  
some satisfactory arrangement may be reached  
with the Italians, not only as regards the  
Abyssinian refugees, but as regards the Eritrean  
deserters.

*Your sincerely* (Signed) J. E. W. FLEGG



GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
KENYA.

12th August, 1937.

Dear Lord,

You wrote to me on the 3rd August about Abyssinian refugees. I don't know how many you had been told that there were in Kenya at the time you wrote your letter, but at the present moment there are just under 8,000. The last batch appeared to consist largely of the riff-raff of Abyssinia, but have got an epidemic of confluent smallpox, and on their way through Southern Abyssinia captured several children from the local villages, apparently as slaves, and arrived with about 150. These poor little things are in an awful state and are dying of exhaustion, dysentery and smallpox. We are keeping this lot in a desolate spot on the shore of Lake Rudolf in order to minimise the chance of the smallpox coming into Kenya. But you will be satisfied from this that we are doing it at a very heavy expense. I was in the Northern Frontier last week and immediately on my return ordered a large consignment of condensed milk to be sent up, in the hopes of saving some of these children. We have also had to purchase twenty lorries in order to get them and the others fed, and the transport of the food alone is a big item. I want every penny I can get in Kenya for hospitals and other work, and I think



GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
KENYA.

it will be most unfair if we are to be saddled with the cost of these refugees.

2. In view of this large number, the question of final disposal becomes much more urgent. One problem, for instance, is that of finding work for them. If we don't keep them occupied they will become troublesome. We can't go on improving their camp for ever, and there are limits to the number of unwanted roads that one would justifiably construct in the neighbourhood of their camp. It is most undesirable to move them into any of the occupied areas for work there, and we must not let matters drift on until we are suddenly faced with another Assyrian problem.

3. I am finding rather too much to do and at the present moment am feeling very tired.

*Yours sincerely*

*R Brooke-Popham*

F. E. FLOOD, ESQ., C.T.G.,  
COLONIAL OFFICE,  
DOWNING STREET, S.W.1.  
LONDON.

29.5.37 TO 26.6.37 (REGD. ON 34099/37 K.A.R.)

Refugees.

10. Reference Intelligence Summary No. 32, para. 20, the refugees who were at LOKITAUNG have now been evacuated to the Internment Camp at KAPENGURIA, where arrangements have been made to accommodate them for the present. They were all vaccinated prior to evacuation.

11. The following is a list of the refugees of distinction, together with their designations:-

1. Fitaurari Zaude Ayella - Governor of Maji.
2. Negradas Keffele - Governor of Chirchir.
3. Negradas Bakola - District Officer in Chirchir.
4. Fitaurari Kassa - Deputy Governor of Arusi.
5. Assayi Zaude - 2nd. in charge of the Royal Palace.
6. Woyzero Keleme Work - Wife of Dej. Amde, G. or of Arusi, who fled with Emperor.
7. Kenyasmatch Imany - Military Leader under Fitaurari Kassa.
8. Grazmatch Debela - District Office in Chore Province.
9. Grazmatch Guedamon - Military Leader of Dejazmatch Amde.
10. Lidj Alemayetion Belainch - Captain of the Imperial Guard.
11. Lidj Alemayetion Febate - Lieutenant of the Imperial Guard.
12. Desta Belainch - -do- -do-
13. Kenyasmatch Haile Mariam - District Officer, Bako.
14. Kenyasmatch Walde Maskel - District Officer, Bako.
15. Grazmatch Assfa - Military Leader under Dejazmatch Fikre Mariam (killed in the War), Deputy Governor of Wollo Province.

In addition there are several minor military and civil officials. Very few of the refugees have any money. A large percentage of them was suffering from relapsing fever, but the incidence of this infection is now on the decrease and all sick persons are receiving medical attention.

Extract from Military Intelligence Summary for period  
22.4.37 to 29.5.37 (34099/37 A.R.)

Refugees from Ethiopia.

17. Reference Intelligence Summary No. 31, para. 4, the seven refugees in question left LOKITAUNG on 25-4-37 en route for ISIOLO Internment Camp.

18. In view of the events outlined in paras. 13 and 14 of this summary it was evident that a large influx of refugees was imminent, in spite of the fact that Fit. Zaude had been instructed by the District Commissioner to issue orders that only those who were in danger of severities from the Italians would receive admission to Kenya.

19. The influx of refugees commenced on 15-5-37, when 110 men, women and children were handed over to the Officer Commanding, 4th. K.A.R. detachment, by the District Officer, LOKITAUNG. Since this date the numbers have increased daily, the latest figures being given below:-

<u>Men.</u>	<u>Women.</u>	<u>Children.</u>	<u>TOTAL.</u>
235	84	65	380

All these refugees came across the frontier in the neighbourhood of NAMARAPUTH and among the prominent persons who have arrived are:-

- Fitaurari Zaude,
- Negradas Keffle,
- Yazadi Zaude,
- Negradas Bekale and
- Lij Bezwork,

all of whom brought their own parties of followers. In addition the under-mentioned came across in parties:-

- 25 members of the Imperial Guard.
- A party of Ethiopian Police.
- 60 Eritrean deserters from the Italian Army.
- A party of irregulars.

20. In view of the fact that there was a possibility of a still greater influx of refugees on the remaining Ethiopian forces in the field being defeated, it was considered essential to select a suitable site for a new internment camp, the prospective site being approximately 2 1/2 miles from KAPENGURIA.

21. In order to escort and guard these refugees as well as to assist in the construction of the new internment camp, two officers and two platoons of the 4th. K.A.R. were moved from BOMBO to KITALE, where they arrived on 25-5-37. In view of the emaciated condition of the majority of the refugees, it has been necessary to arrange for their transport by military lorries from LOKITAUNG to KAPENGURIA, and the first motor convoy, and escort, is at present on its way to LOKITAUNG. ....6

*Summary of Military Intelligence Summary for period*

22.4.37 to 29.5.37 (a 32099/37X O.R.)

13. Early on 12-5-37 a herilla reported that large numbers of Ethiopians were encamped at SHOLA (five miles from NAMARAPUTH; later it transpired this was Fit. Zaude and his followers who had arrived from KATAMA. A representative sent by Fit. Zaude to the District Officer confirmed the evacuation of MAKUA (see also para. 13) by the Italians who had been informed by aeroplanes of the approach of the Ethiopians. He also said Ras Desta was alive and contemplated further resistance to the Italians. This representative then informed the District Officer that Fit. Zaude desired to meet him. The meeting took place on 13-5-37, see para. 14.

14. Fit. Zaude and Negras Keffle (formerly Provincial Commissioner of CHERCHER near HARAR) visited the District Officer at NAMARAPUTH on 13-5-37. The following is a brief resume of the information obtained:-

- (a) They came from BAKO with the object of obtaining permission to enter Kenya as refugees along with some 350 followers, many of whom were women and children.
- (b) At BAKO Fit. Worbiner was preparing an expedition against MAJI. Fit. Zaude, however, was convinced of the futility of further resistance and he therefore left the majority of his men at BAKO with instructions to submit on the arrival of the Italians.
- (c) Fit. Bereda and Kenyasatch Mukra were stated to be fighting in Bala (East Sidamo) with a following of some 10,000 well-armed men.
- (d) With reference to Ras Desta (see also paras. 12 (i) and 13) it was stated that he was last heard of on 18-4-37 at KULC whither he had fled with a very small following after having been defeated at SOMDU in Walamo about two months ago. Dejj Boyena and Gabra Marian were said to have been with him. In this connection see Intelligence Summary No. 31 para. 22 (viii) quoting reports from Italian sources according to which all three had been captured and shot.

Mr. Lee. 3/8  
Mr. Flower

Mr.  
Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

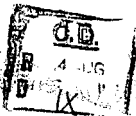
Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

X Perm. U.S. of S.

Party, U.S. of S.

Secretary of State



DOWNING STREET.

August, 1937.

*Very much interested*

Sir,

I am etc. to refer to your letter No. J.3217/2/1 of the 20th July and connected correspondence concerning the Abyssinian refugees who are being maintained in Kenya and to transmit to you, to be laid before Mr. Secretary Eden, a copy of a telegram from the Governor, in which it is reported that the total number of refugees now being maintained in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya has ~~now~~ risen to an estimated total of 5,650 (exclusive of 372 refugees who are in a camp at Kapenguria, and approximately 465 Eritrean deserters who are interned at Isiolo). The telegram

**DRAFT.** SECRET  
IMMEDIATE

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,  
FOREIGN OFFICE.

*Miss C. W. 2/18*  
*to Parsons*

FURTHER ACTION

copy of (28) to  
W.O. & A.M.  
sent R.F.

Reciev. to Mr Lee

goes on to say that another band of refugees, estimated to number 3,000 (including 1,000 soldiers) is expected to arrive shortly.

Mr. Eden will appreciate that the maintenance in Kenya of large numbers of

Abyssinian refugees involves not only substantial expenditure, but administrative problems of the first importance. It will

clearly be necessary to give careful consideration both to the immediate problems caused by the arrival of these refugees in the Colony and to the question of what policy should be adopted as regards their future. The Secretary of State

proposes to arrange for a full review of these questions to be made as soon as the Governor's despatch of the 1st August (to which reference is made in the penultimate paragraph of his telegram) has been received.

I am to enclose a copy of a letter which is being sent to the Treasury concerning the Governor's telegram.

I am, etc.

C. O.

38066/14/37

30

Mr. Lee. 3/8

Mr. Flood 4/8

Mr.

Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh

X Permt. U.S. of S. 4/8

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

DOWNING STREET.

August, 1937.

Secret in substance

Sir,

With reference to the letter

from this Department of the 11th June

(46597/1/37) and subsequent correspondence

concerning the entry of Abyssinian

refugees into Kenya, I am etc. to

transmit to you, to be laid before the

Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, a

copy of a telegram from the Governor,

in which it is reported that the total

number of refugees now being maintained

in the Northern Frontier District of

Kenya has now risen to an estimated

total of 5,650 (exclusive of 372 refugees

who are in a camp at Kapenguria, and of

approximately 465 Eritrean deserters

who are interned at Isiolo). The

telegram.

DRAFT.

SECRET  
IMMEDIATE

38/16

THE SECRETARY,

1ST F.

copy sent 7/8/37

Per CW/1002/18/37  
28 (as altered)

FURTHER ACTION.

(Signed) I. FLOREN

The telegram goes on to say that another band of refugees, estimated to number 3,000 (including 1,000 soldiers) is expected to arrive shortly.

2. It is clear that the maintenance in Kenya of Abyssinian refugees in such large numbers, not only involves substantial expenditure but raises administrative problems of the first importance. The Governor's despatch of the 1st August, to which reference is made in the penultimate paragraph of the enclosed telegram, has not yet been received, but as soon as it

arrives, the Secretary of State proposes to *arrange for* ~~arrange that~~ a full review should be made in the light of the information and recommendations contained in it *to be made covering* of the problems caused by the maintenance of the refugees in Kenya and ~~of~~ the question of what *the* future policy should be followed in regard to their disposal. In the meantime, however, he thinks it desirable to emphasise that

C. O.

- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr.
- Sir H. Moore.
- Sir G. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bolton.
- Sir J. Shuckburgh.
- Permt. U.S. of S.
- Privy. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

DRAFT.

that, in his view, <sup>no part of the</sup> expenditure involved by the maintenance of the refugees ~~should not~~ <sup>Costs largely</sup> be a charge on the revenues of Kenya; <sup>and he trusts that the Govt. of Kenya will meet this view.</sup>

3. A further letter will be sent to you ~~at a later date~~ after the Governor's despatch of the 1st August has been received and considered.

I am, etc.

(Signed) J. A. W. FLOOD

FURTHER ACTION

C. O.

38066/14/37

29

Mr. Lee. 3/8

Mr. Flood 4.8

Mr.

Sir H. Moore.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh

X Permt. U.S. of B

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

C.D.  
R 4-A16  
D 4-

Sec (148)

Re-Cyphered sent 4/8/37  
4/8/37  
[Signature]

NO. 161.

SECRET

Your Secret telegram of

2nd August. I fully appreciate anxiety which continued arrival of Abyssinian refugees in large numbers must be causing you. As soon as your despatch of 1st August is received I propose to examine carefully whole question concerning future maintenance and disposal of refugees in the light of considerations which you have mentioned. In the meantime I am informing Treasury that in my view no part of cost of maintaining refugees should be a charge against Kenya funds.

DRAFT.

TELEGRAM

RE CIPHER.

GOVERNOR

NAIROBI

(I was over - of course I agree that we should maintain that view, but in case Treasury will be able to do it - I am

FURTHER ACTION

not desirable to say this now as it will advertise division in my J. [unclear]

Secret

COPY FOR REGISTRATION

28.

CYPRER TELEGRAM from the Governor of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Dated 2nd August, 1937. Received 11.31 2nd August, 1937.

RECEIVED  
3 AUG 1937  
C. O. REG

Unnumbered Secret.

Addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies repeated to Governor General, Khartoum.

12

Reference to my telegram No.145. Number of Ethiopian refugees in northern frontier district exclusive of Eritrea deserters and Kapsangaria camp is now estimated at 5,650 and Pitaurari Wabena is expected to arrive shortly with 3,000 others including 1,000 soldiers to whom it will not be possible to deny entry.

There are 110 cases of virulent type of smallpox which make concentration difficult. It has already been necessary to purchase additional lorries for supply of rations and you will appreciate that this large number of refugees has and will involve this Government in heavy expenditure on transport supplies, guards etc.

refugees are accommodated in the Colony on instructions from Government. I assume that expenses involved which this Government no position to meet will continue to be re-imbursed from Imperial funds.

As soon as circumstances permit all refugees east of Lake Rudolf will be concentrated at Tuleip. Consider it essential that your should be made earliest possible to secure some arrangement with the Italian Government as refugee position in this Colony already serious in which connexion reference is invited to paragraph 3 of my confidential despatch No.106 of the 1st July.

August

Glenay has reported that Gelubba are heavily armed with rifles (Czechoslovakian Government) purchased from (corrupt group) and may cause trouble.

25A  
30th July, 1937.

Dear Madam,

I write to acknowledge the receipt of the letter sent to me on the 28th July by the Honorary Treasurer to the Abyssinian Refugees Relief Fund, forwarding a cheque for Two hundred and fifty pounds (£250) which is to be used by the Government of Kenya for the relief of the Abyssinian refugees who are now being maintained in that Colony.

I have passed the cheque to the Crown Agents for the Colonies, who will credit the sum in question to Kenya funds in their hands and send you a formal receipt. The Government of Kenya has been notified by telegraph of the grant of this assistance, and has been asked to send, in due course, a statement, for transmission to you, showing how the money has been spent.

I am sure that the Governor of Kenya would wish me to ask you to convey to your Committee an expression

THE HONORARY SECRETARY,

THE ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF FUND.

of his appreciation of their generous action in making  
this assistance available.

Yours sincerely,

*J. H.*

154  
25  
THE ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF FUND

Hon. Treasurer: F. S. Lavie-Noble.

Vice-Presidents:

The Rt. Revd. The Lord Bishop of London  
The Rt. Revd. Marshall B. Lang  
The Revd. J. Scott Lidgett  
Sir Norman Angell  
S. Vyvyan Adams  
Professor S. Alexander  
The Rt. Hon. Lord Dickinson  
The Rt. Hon. Lord Gisborough  
C. E. M. Joad  
Storm Jameson  
Lady Layton  
F. L. Lucas  
Hugh Lyon  
Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence  
Canon Charles E. Raven  
Mrs. Seligman  
The Viscountess Snowden

All communications should be addressed to:

Hon. Secretary: Hazel M. Napier,  
5, Crossfield Road, London, N.W.3.

(PR11905C 4217)

July 28, 1937

-- Lees Esq.,  
Colonial Office,  
Whitehall: S. W. 1

Dear Sir;

I enclose cheque value Two Hundred & Fifty Pounds (£250), made payable to The Crown Agents for the Colonies, and should be grateful if you would cause this amount to be despatched and used for the relief of Abyssinian Refugees who have crossed into Kenya. This is in reference to your letter of the 7th instant.

Your receipt to the Secretary will oblige, and we should be grateful if, in due course, a report could be made as to the disposal of this money.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,



Hon. Treasurer

AIR MAIL  
KENYA  
No.



GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
NAIROBI  
KENYA

SECRET.

REC  
11  
63

17 JULY 1957

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to your

(5) on 4600/19/37 same  
46597/1/37a. (20)  
46597/1/37a. (63)

Secret despatches of the 4th March, 8th April and 15th June respectively on the subject of Ethiopian refugees who have sought refuge in this Colony.

(5) on 4600/19/37 same  
46597/1/37a. (20)

2. The general policy adopted by this Government is on the lines indicated in paragraphs 6-9 of the letter to the Foreign Office enclosed in your despatch of the 4th March and in paragraph 2 of your despatch of the 8th April, on receipt of which further appropriate instructions were issued to the authorities concerned.

46597/1/37a. (15)

3. As you are aware, including the original Britrean deserters from the Italian forces, in which connection reference is made to your Secret despatch of the 2nd February last and connected correspondence, there have been four separate incursions of refugees into this Colony, the first and last having been into the Garbham Frontier, and the second and third into the Turkana District.

(2) on 46597/1/37a  
(5) on 46597/1/37a

The first consisted of the original Britrean deserters referred to above, and the remaining three were reported to you by my Secret Telegrams Number 17 of the 2nd January, unnumbered of the 27th May, and Numbers 158 of the 30th June and

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
W. ORMSBY GORE, P.C., M.P.  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,  
DOWNING STREET,

LONDON. S.W. 1

and 144 of the 12th July.

(2) on 46597/1/37 E A. As indicated in my telegram of the 22nd January, the second party, which entered the Colony West of Lake Rudolf and which ultimately proved to consist of 44 Eritrean deserters, 1 Tigran (an Ethiopian soldier) and one Amhara woman, the wife of one of the Eritreans, were transferred to Isiolo for internment in the camp already established there.

The Isiolo camp therefore now consists of 464 men and one woman.

The third party, as indicated in my unnumbered telegram of the 27th May, has been concentrated at Kapteberia and numbers 372 consisting of 288 men, 55 women and 49 children. Of these 17 men and three women are Eritreans and will in due course join their compatriots at Isiolo.

The refugees reported in my telegrams of the 10th June and 12th July numbering 1458, comprised of 666 Ethiopian soldiers, 104 unarmed men, 515 women, 196 children and 480 servants and followers are at present concentrated at Northern Horr and will ultimately be transferred to Isiolo and accommodated in a separate camp from the Eritrean deserters. Tribal particulars of these refugees are not yet available.

4. The total known number of refugees at present in this Colony is therefore 2,295 consisting of 1,649 men, 401 women and 245 children; to which however must now be added the further party reported in my telegram No. 145 of the 18th July, the precise numbers and details of which are not yet known.

5.

It is not possible to form an estimate of the number of further refugees who may be expected to take refuge in this Colony.

5. No refugees in the proper sense of the term have been refused admission into this Colony, though it may be mentioned that a number of Ethiopian tribesmen who with their stock crossed the frontier at the time of the capture of Ethiopian Moyale were subsequently returned by the Officer in charge, Northern Frontier District, by arrangement with the Italian authorities and without any objection by the tribesmen concerned.

6. As you are aware the expenditure incurred by this Government in the reception and concentration of refugees is reimbursed by His Majesty's Government.

While the necessities of life are furnished by this Government, any financial assistance from unofficial organisations to provide additional comforts would be welcomed provided that any sum made available is put at the disposal of this Government.

7. In regard to your despatch of the 15th June, I have the following observations to offer on the specific points raised in paragraph 4 of your Confidential despatch of the 6th May to the Governor of Somaliland:-

- (a) From such investigations as it has yet been possible to make it would appear that none of the refugees yet questioned consider it will ever be safe for them to return to Ethiopia. A small number have ...

(63) 46577/1/17E.A.

(74) 46577/1/17E.

have expressed a wish to seek employment in Nairobi or Kampala; the majority, however, have no views as to their future which they are prepared to leave in the hands of this Government.

(c) It has not yet been possible, apart from the Eritrean deserters, to ascertain full tribal details of the considerable number of refugees now on the hands of this Government. Of those interned at Kapenguria, however, all describe themselves as Abyssinians, and one only is a Mohammedan, the remainder professing the Christian faith.

(d) Up to the present one only of the refugees has owned to being a pastoralist, the remainder having apparently followed such occupations as policemen, lorry drivers, soldiers, clerks, servants, schoolmasters, hospital dressers, dhobies, etc.

The majority appear to originate from the Addis Ababa or Harar neighbourhoods of Ethiopia and may therefore be regarded as Highlanders.

(e) No great difficulty is anticipated in moving them as a homogeneous body under their own leaders; though I am advised it would be preferable to move the Eritreans separately.

(f) In the absence of more concrete proposals this question is difficult to answer. Given, however, suitable arrangements, no reason has been seen, other than the fact that they do not appear to be equipped with any agricultural knowledge.

5.

knowledge, why it should not be possible in time to establish the refugees as a self-supporting community.

(g) I am advised that the inclusion of the Eritrean deserters in the same settlement as the Ethiopian refugees might present difficulties, as they have fought against one another, a fact which has not been forgotten by either side.

8. Generally in regard to the refugees, I am advised that their general state of health is poor. The emaciated condition of many of them is, however, improving now that they are receiving regular food, and a steady improvement may be expected.

It is noteworthy that the leaders and officers have very little control over their men and take little interest in them.

The men themselves have obviously not been accustomed to discipline and will do nothing except under the strictest supervision.

9. I note with satisfaction from the record of the meeting held at the Colonial Office on the 21st of April, enclosed in your despatch of the 15th June, that the establishment of a permanent refugee settlement in this Colony is recognised to be out of the question.

(63) on 26597/1/275A

I persist in the hope that it may still prove possible to dispose of the Eritrean deserters by arrangement with the Italian Government, and in fact I am advised that a number of them have themselves expressed a wish to return to their own country irrespective of whether any form of indemnity is forthcoming from the Italian Government.

6.

In regard to the Ethiopian element, the proposal that an area should be set aside in the Tanganyika Territory for the permanent settlement of those, presumably a vast majority, who cannot be returned to Ethiopian territory, would, on the information available, appear to be the most satisfactory arrangement which could be devised.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,  
humble servant,

*Brocke*  
BROCKE

CHIEF MARSHAL



In any further communication on this subject, please quote

No. J 3217/2/1.

and address

not in any person by name,

but to

"The Under-Secretary of State,  
Foreign Office,  
London, S.W.1."

21  
142  
FOREIGN OFFICE.

S.W.1.

20th July 1937.

21 JUL 1937  
C.O. REGY

Sir,

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Eden to refer to your letter No. 38066/14/37 of the 15th July regarding the proposal of the Governor of Kenya to arrange for the return to Ethiopia of the servants and followers in the party mentioned in the Governor's telegram No. 144 of the 12th July.

I am to request you to inform the Secretary of State for the Colonies that Mr. Eden has no observations to offer on the Governor's proposal, provided the latter is able to satisfy himself that the servants and followers, on their return to Ethiopia, will not be in danger of severity at the hands of the Italians.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

*Robert B. Jell*

The Under-Secretary of State,  
Colonial Office.

O.D.  
R 15 JUL  
D 15 37

C. O.

Mr. Paskin 15/7/37

Mr. Plover 15

Mr. Lee 15/7/37

Sir C. Parkinson.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

Semi-official for Mr. Lee's signature.

Downing Street,

July, 1937.

Dear Madam,

DRAFT.

THE SECRETARY,

ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF  
COMMITTEE.

(6)

(11)

In continuation of my letter of the 7th of July <sup>I write to say</sup> we have had a further telegram from the Governor of Kenya reporting that the party of refugees mentioned in my letter has been ascertained to be made up as follows: 353 soldiers (since disarmed), 104 unarmed men, 313 women, 196 children and 490 servants and followers.

In addition to Pitaaurari Tadame the party was accompanied by Pitaaurari Garodo from Harar, Lij Alemayyuna (formerly Deputy Governor of Maji), Pitaaurari Tamagusi of Huggeli and Ganyazmucha Danuga and Sarajlow of Sidamo and Gondar.

FURTHER ACTION.

18 144

In a further telegram of the 13th of July the Governor has reported the influx of a further party of refugees estimated at 1,000 east of Lake Rudolf. This party was accompanied by Pitaurari Angdu and Dejazmach Walde Mariam. The Governor reports that arrangements have been made for the necessary relief measures and that it is intended that this party should also be accommodated at Isiolo.

(12)

Yours sincerely,

*P. J. Ke*

C. O.

Mr. Paskin 15/7/37

Mr. Flood

Mr.

Sir C. Parkinson.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Boddanley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Parlt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

Downing Street

15 July 1937.

Sir,

With reference to the letter

**DRAFT.**

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,  
FOREIGN OFFICE.

(13)

from this Department of the 14th of July transmitting copies of two further telegrams from the Governor of Kenya in regard to the influx of Abyssinian refugees into Kenya, I am etc. to inform you that subject to any observations which Mr. Eden may desire to offer it is proposed to approve the proposal of the Governor of Kenya to endeavour to arrange the return to Abyssinia of the servants and followers who formed part of the party mentioned in the Governor's telegram No. 144 of the 12th of July, provided it can be ascertained that they would not be in danger of severity from the Italians.

**FURTHER ACTION.**

(11)

*P. J. Ke*

I am, etc.

RECEIVED  
13  
C O PLGI

COPY FOR REGISTRATION

CYFFER TELEGRAM from the Governor of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Dated 13th July, 1937. Received 4.52 p.m.; 13th July, 1937.

No. 145. Secret.

Addressed Secretary of State for the Colonies repeated to Governor General Khartoum.

Reference my telegram No. 144 Secret. Fitaurari Angasu Dejanbach Walde Marism both reported entered into Colony immediately east of Lake Rudolph with large numbers of Ethiopian refugees estimated 1,000. Arrangements will be made on the lines reported in my telegram No. 138 Secret.

Copy to: F.O.  
NO.  
3  
4  
5  
6

CYPHER TELEGRAM from the Governor of Kenya to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Dated 12th July, 1937. Received 10.30 a.m., 12th July.

No. 144. Secret.

RECEIVED

13 JUL 1937

C. O. REGY

Addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies repeated to Governor-General Khartoum.

Reference my telegram Secret No. 138. Refugees in question number 1458 including 385 soldiers since disarmed 104 unarmed men 315 women 196 children 490 servants and followers. In addition to Pitaurari Tadama party is accompanied by Pitaurari Garodo from Harar, Lij Alemayuma formerly Deputy Governor of ... Pitaurari Tamasgual of Fuggeli and Ganyamacha ... and Sarajfow of Sidamo and Gondar. It is doubtful whether servants and followers are in danger of ... from the Italians and if it can be ascertained that they are not it is proposed to endeavour to arrange their return to Ethiopian territory.

Copy to FO  
A/C  
A/M  
Jaredo

147  
10

C. O.

Mr. Flood 2 17/37

Mr. Lee 2/7

Mr.

Sir C. Parkinson

Sir G. Tomlinson

X Sir C. Bottomley 27

Sir J. Shuckburgh

Perms U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

X Secretary of State. 1/9

For the Secretary of State's signature.

Downing Street,

5th July, 1937.

*Sir Simon*

You handed me the other

day a letter addressed to Lady Simon

about refugees from Abyssinia who

have entered Kenya. I think that

the young lady in Kenya has got a

little mixed. The facts are as

follows:-

Early in 1936 an organised

body of about 400 Italian native

troops (part of a regiment raised

in Eritrea) crossed the frontier

into Kenya having deserted from the

Italian army. They have since then

been kept in an internment camp

near Isiola and are being maintained

by the Kenya Government with the

assistance of some funds which have

**DRAFT.**

THE RT. HON. SIR JOHN SIMON, G.C.S.I.,  
F.C.V.O., O.B.E.

**FURTHER ACTION.**

seen

been supplied by Parliament.

More recently in January of this year forty more deserters from the Italian army who had originally deserted to the Abyssinians and had been fighting against the Italians came across accompanied by one woman. They were disarmed and transferred to their compatriots at Isiolo.

There were very few Abyssinian refugees until a few weeks ago when a party of about 370 crossed the frontier under the leadership of a cousin of the Emperor and some other notables and surrendered. Arrangements <sup>have been</sup> ~~are~~ being made to maintain them also for the present and our latest information is that a further influx of about 1,000 men, women and children with cattle has taken place. These will be received and concentrated at Isiolo but kept separate from the Italian deserters.

In addition to the refugees into Kenya <sup>(over 1000 deserters)</sup> ~~there has been~~ a fairly large body ~~that~~ took refuge in Smaliland where they are also being looked after.

G. O.

- Mr.
- Mr.
- Mr.
- Sir C. Parkinson.
- Sir G. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bottomley
- Sir J. Shuckburgh.
- Perm. U.S. of S.
- Parly. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

**DRAFT.**

**FURTHER ACTION.**

The question of <sup>these</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>these</sup> ~~the~~ refugees is a matter of very great difficulty. Common humanity directs that they must not be forced to go back to Abyssinia. If they did the Italians would probably execute them out of hand. For the same reason the deserters from the Italian forces cannot be returned to their homes in Eritrea where they would probably meet with very short shrift. Yet it is not possible to provide for <sup>or smaller</sup> ~~them~~ <sup>them</sup> ~~in Kenya~~ <sup>in Kenya</sup>. They are all different from the Kenya natives and could not be expected to settle down as part of the native community in Kenya. Further, there is no suitable area of land on which they could be settled which is not already in ~~some form~~ <sup>one</sup> of native ownership.

The Northern Frontier Province <sup>(in Kenya)</sup> where they are at present is a barren and district and sparsely inhabited by various

*with the permission of the Secretary*

10

various more or less nomadic tribes. The  
 Refugees, either Abyssinian or deserters,  
 could not be left there because they would  
 probably meet their end at the hands of the  
 Kenya natives. In the circumstances there  
 seems nothing for it but to go on treating them  
 as refugees and to maintain them as best we can  
 I hope that when we appeal to the Treasury  
 for financial assistance for this extraordinary  
 expenditure you will be able to look kindly on  
 our request.

*if disarmed, while if they  
 were allowed to keep their arms  
 they would make short work of  
 our men; in any case  
 they could not be  
 self supporting by peaceful  
 means*

*for the present  
 although while we  
 cannot leave  
 Abyssinia  
 disarmed  
 cannot do  
 both Abyssinia  
 Italian deserts*

You might perhaps reply to Mrs. Walker  
 to the effect that the refugees have been  
 received in Kenya and are being looked after and  
 maintained though the question of their future  
 disposal is a matter of great difficulty.

*It is intended that  
 houses being built  
 for them*

*return the original correspondence*

Yours sincerely,

*W. A. G. Gore*

The death of  
 the ... ..  
 ... ..  
 ... ..  
 ... ..  
 ... ..

2, Belgrave Place,

Kempton,

Brighton.

June 25th, 1937.

Dear Lady Simon,

I must apologise for writing to you as one, unknown to you, but it seems to me that your book on Slavery justifies my approach. The enclosed half sheet is part of a letter received from Diana Gordon, a girl staying with Major Rimington and his niece, Major Rimington being District Commissioner at Isiola, N.W. Frontier, Kenya Colony. It is written to her grandmother, Mrs. Hanson Infield (whose husband controls the Southern Press). Mrs. Infield would, herself, write to you, but an accident to her hand, prevents. What she and I want to know, is - can anything be done? Colonial Office for 500 Abyssinians, having reached sanctuary, surely? In British territory, could be given the where-withal for bare living? (The half sheet explains their fate, should they be returned). The Basque children did not come under the heading of "intervention" would this?

With renewed apologies for thus bothering you.

Yours, etc.,

(sd) Eleanor Walker.

(Mrs. Walker)

15)

A girl with a bad character could make havoc here in a week, so I rather sympathise with Glenday not wanting women in the N.F.P. He is busy upon the frontier, arguing with the Italians about the exact border, there was always a neutral zone before, now the line has to be drawn. There is an Internment Camp here of 500 Abyssinians and more refugees come over daily. Glenday can't feed them for ever and we don't know what to do with them. If they go back their throats will be cut, Italy won't even waste bullets on them. These lads refused to fight against their kinsmen for Italy, so a whole regiment strong made a bolt for British territory, the Italians bombed them from above and they had to cross a crocodile infested lake, the only way they could get across was when the crocodile was busy eating, so only 500 out of 1000 have lived to tell the tale. One poor woman is with them! They are very cruel, religious but fine warriors.

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C. O.

C. O.  
1 JUL

154  
Received  
9.0. pm  
30.6.57  
J.H.

Mr. J. Parnis 30/6  
at (v. minister)

No. 146. Secret.

- Mr. C. Parkinson
- Sir G. Tomlinson
- Sir C. Bottomley
- Sir J. Shuckburgh
- Permt. U.S. of S.
- (Partly U.S. of S.)
- Secretary of State

**DRAFT. TEL. (RECYPHER)**

GOVERNOR,  
NAIROBI.

I learn from secret source that the Italian authorities in Abyssinia allege that the Abyssinian troops interned in Kenya are reported to be encouraging their compatriots in Abyssinia to resist, to attack the Italians during the rains, and when the rains are over and further resistance is impossible to flee into British territories.

You will appreciate that it is inadvisable to allow anything which might be represented as directing or advising hostilities against Italians to be carried on by refugees from British territory by the refugees.

20

Copy to J.H.U. (67)

**FURTHER ACTION**

Register  
Copy to M. J. H. U. (67)  
(Fo) with M. Parnis  
Comp  
3/12/57

F. O.

June 1937

J. H. U. L.

Despatched

M.

Draft Tel (Receipt)

The Governor of Kenya.

No

Nairobi

Telegram

No

I learn from a most secret and reliable source that the Italian authorities in Abyssinia allege that the Abyssinian troops interned in Kenya are reported to have written to their compatriots in Abyssinia encouraging them to resist, to attack the Italians during the rains, and when the rains are over and further resistance is impossible to flee into British territories.

You will appreciate the necessity of ensuring that the Abyssinian refugees in Kenya do not communicate with their compatriots in Abyssinia.

You will appreciate that it is inadvisable to allow anything which might be represented as assisting hostilities against Italians to be carried on by refugees <sup>upon</sup> British territory.

or advising

33066/14/37.

C. O.

Mr. Grossmith.

Mr. *Parkin* 6/27 p.

Mr.

Sir C. Parkinson.

Sir G. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

DOWNING STREET.

8 July, 1937.

Sir,

I have etc. to acknowledge the receipt of your Secret telegram No. 138 of the 30th of June, in which you reported the entry into the Colony, at points east of Lake Rudolf, of large numbers of Ethiopian refugees.

2. I note that relief measures are in hand, and that it is proposed to concentrate these refugees at Isiolo in separate camps from those in which the deserters <sup>from</sup> to the Italian military forces are detained. I fully concur in the proposal and in the action which has already been taken.

3. You will no doubt furnish me with a report of the present incursion, and, at the same time, I should be interested to learn whether the earlier

DRAFT.

KENYA

SECRET

GOVERNOR

FURTHER ACTION.

cm to  
for  
146597/11/37  
EA.

party of refugees mentioned in your  
 secret telegram of the 27th of May, which  
 it was intended to concentrate at Kapenguria,  
 will also be sent to Isiolo.  
 I have, etc.

*Ch 46827/1137  
 EA*

C. O.

- Mr. Grossmith.
- Mr. *Harkin* 6/7 4/7 8
- Mr.
- Sir C. Parkinson.
- Sir G. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bottomley.
- Sir J. Shuckburgh.
- Permt. U.S. of S.
- Perly. U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State.

38066/14/37 (17)



DOWNING STREET  
 7 July, 1937

S.O. for Mr. Lee's signature.

*83*

Dear Madam,

Since my letter of the

15th of June, the number of  
 Abyssinian refugees in Kenya  
 has considerably increased. We

heard from the Governor of Kenya  
 by telegram on the 30th of June  
 that large numbers of refugees  
 had entered the Colony immediate-

ly east of Lake Rudolf. The  
 numbers were not known, but were  
 estimated to be at least 1,000  
 men, women, and children, with

cattle. *It is understood that*  
 relief measures are in hand, and

that the present intention is to  
 concentrate this party at Isiolo.  
 as in the case of the party that  
 crossed

*6/4  
 46827/1137  
 EA*

**DRAFT.**

THE SECRETARY,  
 ABYSSINIAN REFUGEES RELIEF COMMITTEE.

FURTHER ACTION.

*Ch 46827/1137  
 EA*

crossed the frontier on or about  
the 27th of May, the Governor has been  
asked to forward a further report. You  
will no doubt inform your Committee of  
this latest incursion.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) P. G. LEE.

