

EAST AFR. PROT  
40308

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1917

C.A.S.  
Bowring dec.

1917  
13 July.

Last previous Paper.  
580+9  
580/18342/15

CAVALIERE LUIGI FRIGERIO  
ITALIAN CONSUL, AT MOMBASA

Reports as to unsatisfactory conduct of for such action as seemed desirable. Would be glad if Italian Govt were represented by a consul de carrière unconnected with any commercial house locally.

Copy to Cons. 18 Aug 17  
Annotated copy of paper sent 7 Sept 17  
70  
43644

For Read

There is talk about Frigerio  
100 in the ~~Consular~~ papers  
in 580/18342/15, but the whole  
case is a little shadowy & I  
doubt if 70. will feel themselves  
able to proceed.

However, City of Mombasa & Consul  
to 70, refer to our letter  
on 19338, and wish if Mr  
Telfour is prepared to  
communicate with the Italian  
Govt on the subject, saying  
that in that case we will  
ask the City to furnish the  
"additional evidence" we lack

at subsequent Paper.  
580/43644

at once  
H.C.R.

SECRET.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

10th July 1911.

Sir,

I have the honour to bring to your notice for such action as you may deem possible or desirable the following facts.

1. It appears from correspondence which has passed through the Consul's Office that the activities of Cavaliere Luigi Frigerio, the Italian Consul at Mombasa, extend to matters with which it is scarcely proper that an official in his position should be concerned.

2. Cavaliere Frigerio is not of course a regular member of the Consular service but merely a Mombasa merchant appointed to act; I presume, however, that even so he is not supposed to take advantage of his office to further the interests of his firm at the expense both of his compatriots and of subjects of allied Powers.

3. A Memorial, a copy of which I attach, from Italian residents in German East Africa to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Rome makes it evident that Cavaliere Frigerio is not regarded as a satisfactory representative by them. It is claimed, and I

think/

Right Honourable

Walter Long, P.C., M.P.,

Secretary of State for the Colonies,

Downing Street,

LONDON.

think with some justice, that he has neglected to take any steps to protect his countrymen and has acquiesced in the suppression of a rival firm, in which many of them were employed.

5. The Censorship authorities have also reason to believe that Cavaliere Frigerio has been actively engaged in trade in German East African produce since the beginning of the war, that he has supplied copra and sim-sim to the Oleificio Nazionale of Genoa, a concern which is known to have had transactions with Germany, and that he has consigned quantities of goat skins to America, before the United States joined the Allies.

6. Cavaliere Frigerio is also apparently submitting copies of his consular correspondence to his firm in Genoa and is supporting various claims for damages made by it in his consular capacity. Further it is practically certain that he is evading the censorship by sending letters by hand through the Captains of the Italian Line, with whom he is personally acquainted.

7. While he does not, as has been seen, consider it derogatory to the dignity of his office to descend to the methods above described Cavaliere Frigerio is a stickler for any privileges to which he thinks himself entitled and recently made representations to me because he had been served with a summons for a breach of the Motor Traffic Regulations. No proceedings were taken and his apology for his contravention of the law was accepted, but his attitude is not helpful to this administration, and I must own that,

3.

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that I should be glad if the Italian Government were represented by a consul de carriere unconnected with any local commercial house.

8. I do not know whether you consider it possible to pursue the matter further, but, if so, I will endeavour to collect and forward to you any additional evidence regarding Cavaliere Frattico which may be forthcoming.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble obedient servant,



116 30. 3. 03.

Translation of a letter written in Italian, enclosed in a letter from G. CANTU, Societa Coloniale; Mombasa to Sr. BARTOLOMEO ROCCI, Tabora.

To His Excellency  
The Minister of Foreign Affairs 4, Mombasa 12th November 1918  
ROME.

Your Excellency,

The undersigned, late prisoner of war in GERMAN EAST AFRICA, and liberated on account of the occupation of TABORA, which took place on the morning of the 19th September 1918, by the British Troops, were at last able to meet the Italian Consul's authorities of BRITISH EAST AFRICA, first at KWANZA, and then at DAIROBI.

From the Royal Consul of DAR-ES-SALAAM, through the Royal Consul at MOMBASA, the following was sent for despatch to Your Excellency: the "Memorial to H.E. the Minister of Foreign Affairs in ROMAN, on the treatment sustained by the Italian prisoners of War in GERMAN EAST AFRICA", dated TABORA August 1st.

Further information and particulars were given personally to the Consular authorities, with reference to their imprisonment, and as they communicated nothing to the proper authorities on the action taken in favour of the Italians of GERMAN EAST AFRICA, the undersigned, late prisoners, maintain in its entirety and confirm what has been said in the above mentioned Memorial for the consideration of the Government of the King.

They add, also, that the Royal Consul of DAR-ES-SALAAM, in the residence of the same Consul at TABORA, in a conversation on the contents of the Memorial in question, and more precisely on the fact that he did not ask the German Government for the permission for the Italians to leave the Colony; not even when ENGLAND declared war officially, the blockade of the Coast; he observed that "he could not attend to let the employees leave". There were, in fact, five Italians in GERMAN EAST AFRICA, including the Consul, employed by the firm of MAX KLEIN. Notwithstanding the special and abnormal situation created by the War, the Consulate did not issue any instructions, and never felt the necessity nor the duty of closer relations with Italians of the Colony, he observed that "he always gave assistance to those who applied to him".

The Consul of DAR-ES-SALAAM, therefore, put the interests of his firm before those of Italian citizens, and did not understand that instructions and general advice ought to have been given on his own initiative, for the protection of Italian citizens.

From the "Memorial" submitted, it appears also that all the initiatives towards the German authorities, directed to better the situation of the Italian prisoners at TABORA, had origin from the prisoners themselves, and not from those who represented, at least for them the authority of the King's Government.

It does not appear, either, that the Consul at MOMBASA took any steps with the Government of the British Colony when, at the outbreak of the European War, the communications with GERMAN EAST AFRICA were suspended; and later on the 28th February 1918, on the official declaration of the blockade, that the British Government might ask the authorities of the GERMAN Colony for the delivery of the neutrals that were in the territory.

We note that Cav. Uff. L. FRIGERIO, proprietor of the firm of the same name, had agents and personnel of his own, of Italian nationality, in GERMAN EAST AFRICA; and as the departure of his employees from the territory would have implied the abandonment of the business of his firm, it is evident that there was a conflict of interests between those of his countrymen that

as Consul, he was bound to defend) and the interests of his own firm.

The undersigned also wish the fact to be known that, while the region of KILIMANJARO, where the Italians have invested about a million rupees capital in plantations, was occupied by the British during the first days of March 1916, it would have been easy and dutiful for this Consul to visit the place and, besides proceeding to a verification, also to arrange and defend the interests of Italian subjects, nothing was done.

And if such a visit was deemed necessary in November 1916 when the persons interested had already been able to reach their plantations; all the more necessary would it have been nine months later, when the above mentioned plantations were abandoned; it would, therefore, have been easier to verify the damages due to military operations recently incurred.

To the other Italians, here undersigned, and who were not prisoners of war, it is clear that he (FRIGERIO), being in commerce, was the cause of closing down the firm of MAX KLEIN, his competitor in EAST AFRICA, stating to the authorities of the British Colony that the firm of MAX KLEIN was German. This statement was then found to be false, as the firm of MAX KLEIN could prove its American nationality, and obtained permission to continue its commerce.

It is not to be wondered at that the British Authorities have faith in Mr. FRIGERIO, when it is known that he was for several years employed by the firm of MAX KLEIN and, therefore, able to judge, and also if one keeps in mind that, though acting in his quality as merchant, Mr. FRIGERIO is still the representative of the King of Italy.

The closing up of the firm of MAX KLEIN would have had the inevitable consequence of placing in the street, in the most critical of moments, twelve Italians -- in EAST AFRICA Alone. Now the undersigned would like to know whether an Italian Consul, independent, would have acted in the same way as the Consul FRIGERIO.

Without wishing to analyse the fact that the representative of the nation acquires privileges, and more consideration by the authorities with whom he is accredited, independently of his official charge, it is obvious that Mr. FRIGERIO cannot be contemporarily Italian Consul and merchant, in a country where Italian firms, and others employing Italian personnel, carry on the same commerce as that of the Consul.

Uniting, further, the Consulate of MOMBASA, with the double commission of Commissioner of the Merchant Marine and that of Agent of a subsidised Navigation Company, the same conflict of interests exists between those of his firm.

As with such sort of merchant Consuls one cannot expect so much patriotism as to sacrifice, or to place his own interests behind those of his compatriots, we desire, and respectfully insist that the official Italian Consul, destined many years ago to take charge of the Italian Consulate at MOMBASA, may at least be sent to uphold the decorum of Italy, and to defend the rights of her citizens.

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DRAFT.

10 August 1917

The M.S. of S.  
To

Sr,

MINUTE.

- Mr. Branley, 17 Aug
- Mr. Bottomley, 17.8.17
- Mr.
- Mr. Grindle.
- Mr. Lambert.
- Mr. Read.
- Sir G. Fildes.
- Sir A. Steel-Maitland.
- Mr. Long.

I am so happy to you to be  
 laid before Mr. Sec Balfour a  
 copy of a despatch for the  
 of the Govt. dealing with the  
 unsatisfactory position as  
 regard the Italian Consul  
 at Mombasa. In this connection

I am to refer to the letter  
 to the F.T.D. of the 3  
 of May, the enclosed to which  
 furnish considerable info as to  
 the dealings of Messrs. Angeris  
 & Co. I think would be  
 to had clear whether the

10 July 1917  
 sent

19338  
 25.07.17  
 19338  
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Ballou is prepared to communicate  
with the State Govt on the subject,  
and in that case he ~~would~~ will act Mr  
Bowring to submit the additional  
written to which he refers in  
the last page of his report