

THE  
SOMALI  
DISPUTE

3

John Drysdale



FREDERICK A. PRAEGER, *Publisher*  
NEW YORK · LONDON

FREDERICK A. PRAEGER, *Publisher*  
64 University Place, New York 3, N.Y., U.S.A.  
77-79 Charlotte Street, London, W.1, England

Published in the United States of America in 1964  
by Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., Publisher

Published in the United Kingdom in 1964  
by Pall Mall Press Ltd., London and Dunmow

*All rights reserved*

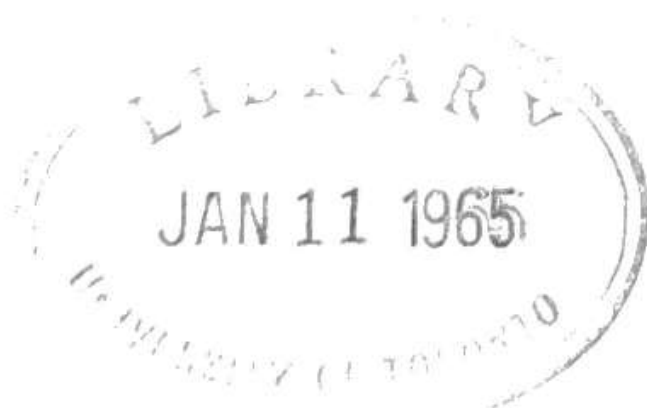
© John Drysdale 1964

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 64-13122

DT

401

D7



951913

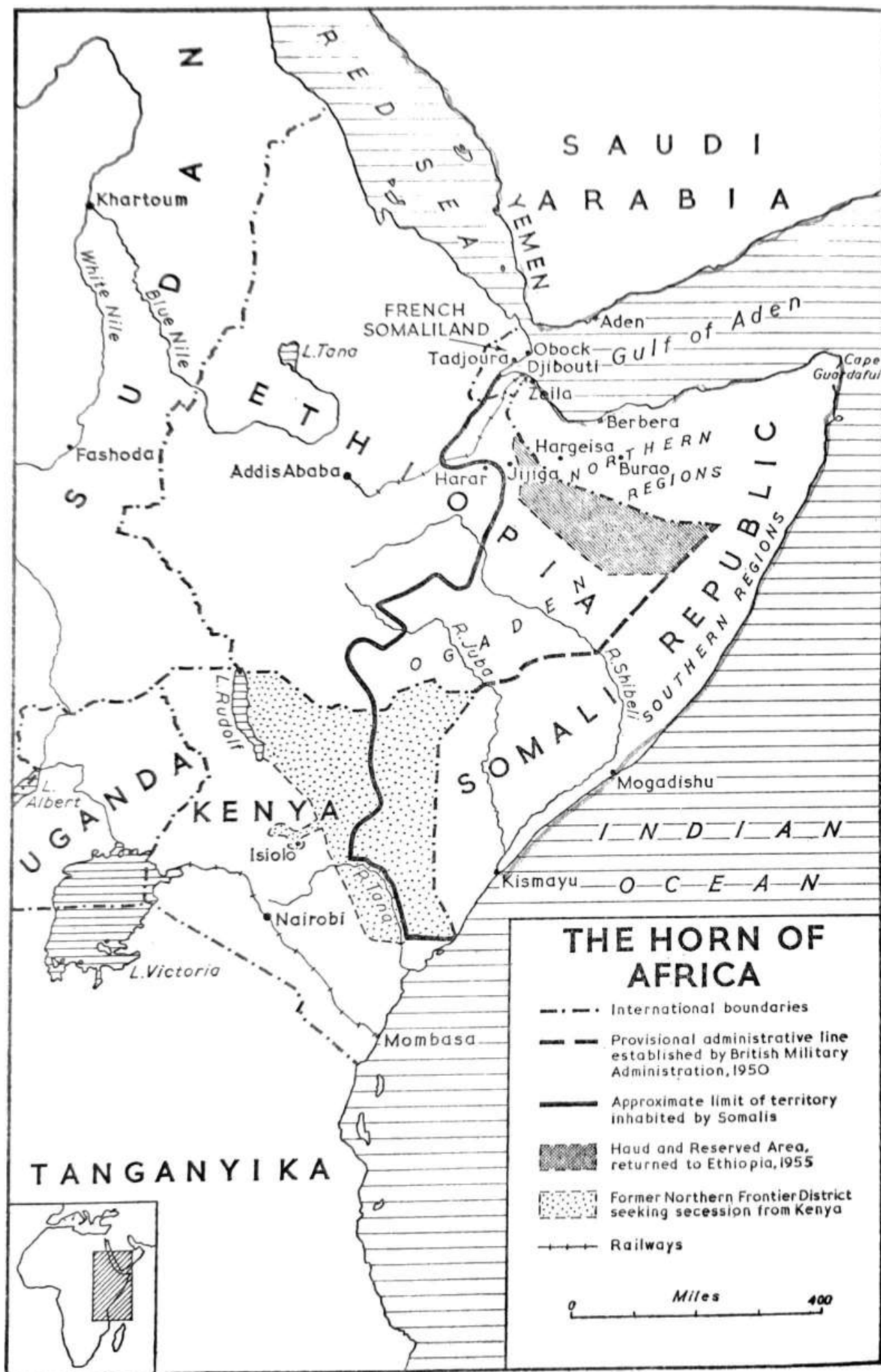
Printed in the United Kingdom



## CONTENTS

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| ✓ Introduction: Their Way of Life | 7   |
| 1 The 'Second Scramble'           | 25  |
| 2 Kenya's Northern Frontier       | 33  |
| ✓3 Ethiopia's Eastern Frontier    | 40  |
| 4 The Wal Wal Incident            | 48  |
| 5 The War Years                   | 56  |
| 6 Aftermath of War                | 65  |
| ✓7 The 'Haud' Fiasco              | 74  |
| ✓8 The Intractable Frontier       | 88  |
| ✓9 Legitimate Expectations        | 100 |
| 10 An Invitation to Mogadishu     | 113 |
| 11 The Commission Reports         | 122 |
| ✓12 Diplomatic Exchanges          | 130 |
| 13 Rupture                        | 139 |
| 14 African Arena                  | 146 |
| 15 Rome and After                 | 154 |
| Notes                             | 168 |
| Index                             | 178 |

|                                        |    |
|----------------------------------------|----|
| <i>Map 1 The Horn of Africa</i>        | 6  |
| <i>Map 2 International Boundaries</i>  | 24 |
| <i>Map 3 Kenya's Northern Frontier</i> | 32 |



Map 1

## INTRODUCTION

### THEIR WAY OF LIFE

As Somalis see it, their frontier dispute is not essentially about land. It is about people—nomadic people at that—for whom there is one frontier only: the furthest limits to their pastures. With the exception of some areas in northern Kenya, which were occupied later, Somalis reached these limits by conquest two hundred years ago. Today, about two-thirds of them live under the flag of the Somali Republic, and the remainder are divided between the Governments of French Somaliland, Ethiopia and Kenya.

These two latter Governments consider their Somali population as just one of many other minority communities living within their borders; and they regard any desire by the Somalis to break away and unite with the neighbouring Somali Republic as seditious. The support given to the Somalis by the Republican Government, which bases its policy on the right of the Somalis to determine their political future, is viewed by the other Governments as an infringement of their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

It is unrealistic to consider the problem in abstract terms and it would be equally foolish for strangers, who are unfamiliar with this part of Africa, to relate the problem to their own environment. It is a human problem, in an arid and uneconomic zone, concerning nomadic people with the

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

same culture and nomadic way of life. Every one of them, from the age of eight years, can recite his or her genealogy through the male line, some twenty or thirty generations back, to a common ancestor.]

The Somali Prime Minister, Dr Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkay, has put it this way:<sup>1</sup> "Our misfortunes do not stem from the unproductiveness of the soil, nor from a lack of mineral wealth. These limitations on our material well-being were accepted and compensated for by our forefathers from whom we inherited, among other things, a spiritual and cultural prosperity of inestimable value: the teaching of Islam on the one hand and lyric poetry on the other. . . . No! Our misfortune is that our neighbouring countries, with whom, like the rest of Africa, we seek to promote constructive and harmonious relations, are not our neighbours. Our neighbours are our Somali kinsmen whose citizenship has been falsified by indiscriminate boundary 'arrangements'. They have to move across artificial frontiers to their pasture lands. They occupy the same terrain and pursue the same pastoral economy as ourselves. We speak the same language. We share the same creed, the same culture and the same traditions. How *can* we regard our brothers as foreigners?"

The land to which the Prime Minister refers is the Somali plateau, a triangle of some 370,00 square miles. It is bounded on two sides by the sea and on the third side by the great East African rift. It rises 7,000 feet above the maritime plain on the northern coast, opposite the Gulf of Aden, and slopes gently to the south-east until it reaches the Indian Ocean. The Somali Republic, shaped like the figure 'seven', occupies two-thirds of the plateau. The rest is divided between French Somaliland, Ethiopia and Kenya.

Except for the sorghum-producing areas in the extreme north-west of the plateau, and the riverine areas between the Shibeli and the Juba, where maize, sugar, and bananas grow, the rest is camel country—arid and sparsely populated.

## INTRODUCTION

Eighty per cent of the three or four million Somalis that inhabit this region are nomadic pastoralists. They drive their herds to the limits of their grazing lands in the wet seasons and withdraw them to the home wells when it is dry.

The northern plateau, above five hundred miles wide and between a hundred and two hundred miles in depth, has no river. The spring and autumn rains burst upon it sporadically at intervals of two or three weeks, flooding the gullies with spate upon spate of muddy water. Each spate vanishes as quickly as it comes, leaving behind ridges of wet chocolate-coloured silt to bake and disintegrate in the sun. During the summer months, the high winds of the south-west monsoon blow the fine silt across the plains and lodge it, here and there, against tufts of coarse grass, or bank it against the rugged hillsides. It is swept away again during the autumn rains.

Further to the south, the plateau slopes gently towards the better pastures of the Haud, a territory under Ethiopian administration, but occupied seasonally during the rains by Somali nomads and their livestock from the Northern Regions of the Somali Republic. It is divided from the Republic by a string of underground rain-water tanks, military outposts, and a dusty track. The distinctive soil is brick-red in colour, and the pastures are dotted with thorn trees and gigantic anthills, three or four times the size of a man. In the winter and summer months the Haud is abandoned for the lack of water.

In contrast with the Haud, pasture is scarcer on the northern plateau because of the presence of deep wells. Whilst the pastures are green, neither sheep nor camels need to be watered, but as soon as the dry weather sets in, the wells attract vast concentrations of livestock to the detriment of neighbouring pastures. Thus, ample pastures and no wells in some areas, and poor pastures and permanent water in others, is the pattern of the camel country, which extends



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

from the Haud to the northern frontier regions of Kenya, and conditions the cycle of nomadic movement. The success of this hard and precarious livelihood depends on the fitness and intelligence of the camel herdsman matched by the endurance of his milch-camels and frailer relatives.<sup>2</sup>

The Somali camel, a one-humped beast, can go longer without water than any other breed of camel. In the very driest weather it need not be watered more than once every three weeks. It can thus browse a hundred miles or so from the nearest wells. Herdsmen will drive their camels in the dry season to pastures seven days distant from the wells, graze them for a week and march them back again for water; and repeat this performance for three or four months between seasons. It is an astonishing feat. The nomad subsists during this period entirely on camel's milk. Not even the morning dew passes between his lips; that he collects to wash himself. Meanwhile the womenfolk, accompanied by their sheep and goats, pitch camp within a day's journey of the wells. As the season lengthens and pastures become scant, they are forced to shift to remoter areas and to supply themselves and their flocks with water transported by camel, not in galvanized containers but in meticulously woven vessels.

Like everything else in the Somali nomadic encampment, these vessels, which hold eight gallons of water and take a month to weave, represent the exploitation of the natural resources of their country. To the eye of the stranger this amounts to very little. On closer examination, however, it is startling to find that the Somali nomad, whether he lives in the Berbera district on the Aden Gulf or the Wajir District in Kenya, is almost entirely self-sufficient, on a 'do it yourself' basis, having utilised for his comfort and for the welfare of his herds, the most unexpected trees, roots, plants and shrubs.

In a study of Somali vegetation, H. B. Gilliland<sup>3</sup> lists no less than 281 different species of vegetation, each with a Somali

## INTRODUCTION

name. It is part of a child's education to be able to distinguish every plant, shrub or tree; and to know its value, or danger, to man or beast.

One of the most unpromising looking plants, the *qabo*, which is like a cactus bush with long stems and white thorns, is essential to the nomadic weaver of milk and water vessels. It is rare and fetches high prices in the local markets. Before it can be handled it must be burnt so that the noxious thorns are destroyed. It is then stripped of its outer covering revealing a white, ribbon-like fibre. The herdsmen collect the fibres for the womenfolk who weave all kinds of vessels; from large cone-shaped water vessels to small water bottles, or quart-size milk jars; or alternatively, one of three different models of milk container: a large milk pail for camels, or a small quart-size pail for goat's milk, or even a vessel, holding about four gallons of camel's milk, for guests.

The only instrument used in weaving is a prodding needle which pushes the fibres round coils that wind to the shape of the vessel in concentric circles. The weave is strengthened by extra stitches which run interlaced patterns down the sides of the vessels. The finished article is symmetrical and artistic but of no value until it has been made waterproof by a coating of tannin from the boiled bark of an acacia tree.

Milk and water vessels are not, of course, the only items of domestic use which are made by the women and the girls. They also weave grass and fibre mats for their dome-shaped tents; mats for saddlery to prevent the camel loads from chafing; bridles for the horses, rope to secure their baggage or to tie the mats to the supporting structure of their tents.

There is very little that they need from the outside world. Tea, sugar and dates are the principal foodstuffs; and in the springtime a few luxuries: smart shirts and sarongs for the men; and for the women, silks and chiffon in pastel shades, coloured threads for embroidery, jewels and perfumes.

Springtime is the season of plenty. The rains fall, fresh grass springs to life and there is an abundance of camel's

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

milk. It contrasts vividly with the gruelling months of drought that precede it. Although the menfolk and their camels can usually stand up to the severest drought, the lives of the weaker ones, the old and the infirm, the women and the children, hang by a thread. A mother can be left with the appalling choice of having to save herself or her infant child during a prolonged drought. It is with this backdrop on the stage of nomadic life that the rainy season begins. Small wonder then that the women especially relax and look around for a few of the luxuries of this world, but there is no relaxation in the standards of behaviour.

In good times or in bad, strict adherence to the code of conduct in the nomadic encampment is an accepted tenet of pastoral life. However hard the conditions may be, self-restraint is the test of true worth. Selfishness is condemned. It is a matter of honour and pride not to yield, or at least not to be seen to yield, to thirst, hunger or fatigue. Clans will vie, one with the other, to win a good name for generous and hospitable conduct. Conversely, lapses in good manners are severely rebuked. Such a reproof, in the absence of any other method of publicity, takes the form of alliterative poetry,<sup>4</sup> and if the argument is skilfully woven into good alliteration it will be passed from mouth to mouth and recited from one end of the Somali Plateau to the other.

The conduct and bearing of women plays an important rôle in clan esteem, for however honourable a man might be, his wife's waywardness can ruin his reputation and that of his family and clan. There is an old poem by the Somali poet Sahid Qaman which throws some light on this.<sup>5</sup> It is a marriage proposal by an elderly man to a young girl in which he lists the 'alphabet of conduct'—a guide to the way his wife should behave if she is to perform her duties in accordance with the accepted standards of his family. He emphasises good manners and appearance, self-control and modest reticence, and the importance of safeguarding the good name of the clan.



## INTRODUCTION

*. . . I have chosen you not only because your skin is like brown amber  
But because you are well born, unlike many other women.  
Hearken then to my words, O woman, as I remind you of the alphabet of conduct.  
The wife of an ignoble man does not use the incense burner to scent herself:  
Never be forgetful therefore about the cleanliness of your body and your skin.  
Always clean your teeth with the 'aday' brush and apply shadow to your eyes.  
You must know too that my clan will put your breeding to the test.  
They will approach you arrogantly and will insult your dress;  
So always wear those ear-rings and those ornaments which are in your tent.  
And put on your necklace of purest quality and the very best of clothes,  
For they may come at any hour and you must be prepared.  
In the late afternoon perhaps, or at sunset, you may see guests striding to the camp.  
Some will shamelessly approach the entrance to the courtyard  
Along the dusty bridle paths used by horses, sheep and goats;  
Not so my clan! Its pride does not permit an error such as this.  
Go out then when they come. You will know them for what they are.  
They are not like any other people and you will not fail to recognise them.  
In my absence, Muslims and other guests may still approach and call out my name.  
If deficient of provisions, don't say "I swear by God I have nothing for you".*

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

*For that news will reach me, however far, and shame will  
be brought upon my name.*

*Be generous always, particularly to the girls, for they must  
never curse you.*

*Princely qualities can also belong to women, give them  
expression with the elders.*

*Be prudent and be bashful, especially with my cousin who  
shares my ancestry.*

*Be on your guard, measure your words, and control your  
manners.*

*Steady the poles, clear out your tent and brush the  
courtyard,*

*For guests must not kick up the dust as if it were a camel  
pen.*

*The mats in the corner where I sleep must be well woven,  
with no loose ends,*

*So that they will also give comfort to my honoured guests.*

*Finally, if I should have to beat you for your mistakes*

*You must suffer it in silence and never weep.*

*Now that I have stated my position, be so advised.*

*If God has given you wisdom, you will profit from my  
words.*

*If, on the other hand, you do not accept my advice,*

*Whoever God may find to be your husband, it is not I.*

All Somali poetry has some form of alliteration, not evident, of course, in translation. The serious and formal poem has as many as a hundred and fifty lines, each line having fourteen to eighteen syllables.<sup>6</sup> Two key words in every line begin with the same letter. This alliteration taxes the ingenuity of the poet and distinguishes the great poets from the lesser ones. It requires a rich vocabulary to alliterate adequately without the poem becoming too obscure, or even losing its purpose and coherence altogether.

Allegory and metaphor are favourite instruments of every Somali poet, but in the hands of an indifferent poet, flounder-

## INTRODUCTION

ing with his alliteration, they quickly become irrelevant, and the poet would receive a scornful reception if he dared recite it in public. But a subtle combination of inspired alliterative vocabulary and well contrived allusion and imagery will earn for the poet an attentive, almost gasping audience.<sup>7</sup>

Alliteration also serves to assist the memory and ensures that the original poem is preserved and passed on without mutilation. Somali poems, which have never been written, are often learnt in their entirety by intelligent Somali listeners after only one recitation, and stored in their memories for a lifetime. The best of the old poems are recited to this day by Somalis in every corner of the plateau.

The voice of the Somali broadcasting stations in Mogadishu and in Hargeisa, which reach well beyond the Republic's frontiers, foster Somali nationalism with the emotional appeal of Somali poetry. It can soothe as well as it can excite. A week before the conference between the Somali, Kenya and British governments in August 1963, when the Somalis still nourished a hope that Britain might allow the Northern Frontier District of Kenya to secede, Mogadishu Radio broadcast<sup>8</sup> a poem appealing to the inhabitants of this area to keep calm.

*. . . Justice is as clear as the midday sun and truth cannot  
be hidden.*

*Plans for talks and negotiations are going on*

*Unless someone undermines them again and breaks the  
truce.*

*We do not object to fraternity if the other side has good  
will.*

*We have always wanted it but others have obstructed  
it. . . .*

*Things seem to be getting better and more hopeful,*

*And until I know of the final outcome of the negotiations  
I am unable to decide on what to do or say at the moment.*

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

*So remain quiet and wait a while until we hear the final outcome.*

But no sooner had the conference ended in failure, the same radio station broadcast<sup>9</sup>

*. . . We shall take up arms. Let all perish!*

*We shall take up arms. Let all perish!*

*We shall not delay in recovering our missing parts.*

*We are filled with discontent and fury and shall take up arms.*

*A person robbed of his property wastes no time recovering it.*

*He never enjoys conversation or social entertainments.*

*We have no time for gossip and luxurious conversation,*

*But shall take up arms to restore our missing property. . . .*

A week later,<sup>10</sup> Mogadishu again broadcast a poem on the same theme which contained a surprising but perhaps justified criticism of the conduct and attitude of some Somali residents in Mogadishu.

*. . . When I think carefully of the world while people sleep,*

*When I observe constellations and portents,*

*When I take up the telescope and look on all sides,*

*The clouds are running against the moon and the world is unsettled,*

*Our land has been sold to aliens by aliens,*

*And this has been done without any justice,*

*And Somalis are denied the land where they should have enjoyed fresh milk.*

*The only thing that remains is for them to take all of us together. . . .*

*The peoples of the world are amazed today,*

*And looking at us to see whether we will react.*

*Unless we work hard and all go to war,*

*Unless men and women all wear the band of mourning and revenge,*

## INTRODUCTION

*Unless we watch out and protect our interest and fight,  
Our land will be inherited by others.  
Other nations have enclosed their countries with defensive  
walls,  
But the Somalis are robbed because they are lulled,  
And we always fall into traps set for us. . . .  
The whites have not gone and the adders are lying in our  
houses.  
You have made it your faith to enjoy pleasure and bars,  
Strolling along the seashore and going to the Lido\*  
Many-storied and luxurious houses and comfortable beds  
Will, I swear in the name of my religion, become as  
bitter as aloes.*

The two Somali broadcasting stations are the focal points of Somali national interest and they are eager listeners. Short-wave transistor radio-receivers can pick up the broadcasts from any part of the Somali plateau. There may not be much affection for the government behind the radio, but nevertheless the call to prayer each day; the sentiments expressed, of national pride and purpose; the manifestations of respect and consideration paid to the Somali people by foreign governments; the Somali language itself, these are all potent unifying factors. They are all the more important to a nation which can as quickly fragment into personal and clannish quarrels as it can coalesce in times of stress. The speed with which seemingly disparate personalities and communities can unite like quicksilver is a characteristic of their social system. It tolerates the independence of the smallest family unit one day and will call for clan solidarity to face an emergency the next.

This flexibility, or fission and fusion, has its strength as well as its weaknesses, especially among trans-frontier clans whose integrity, under the threat of expulsion, can be sorely tried. The first explorer on the north-east of the Somali plateau, Speke, observed this when he wrote in his diary<sup>u</sup>

\* Mogadishu night club.



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

(1855): "Nothing is more dangerous than to influence in any way the . . . balance of power between these tribes, . . . by throwing our weight on one side (we) might do them incalculable mischief. . . ."

It is a unique social system, tailor-made for the hard conditions of nomadic life but totally at variance with systems that have developed among sedentary peoples; especially in the administration of justice, which is applied with different legal precepts to each of the Somali occupied territories administered by foreign powers. A first principle of traditional Somali law is that no family should be punished by depriving it of the services of one of its members. Every able-bodied man and woman is needed, especially in hard times, to keep the livestock in good condition. The absence of one person for a long period can throw the livelihood of a family into jeopardy. To overcome this problem, Somalis have a system of compensation for criminal acts and civil wrongs which permit the family of the accused to offer livestock, according to an elaborate tariff, as compensation to the aggrieved. The accused cannot offer anything for himself because his assets are the assets of his family. Thus the responsibility for remedying a grievance and for exercising control over individuals rests with the family. Conversely, an aggrieved party must share any compensation that he may receive with his family. This principle operates irrespective of international boundaries.

Sometimes the central government police forces intervene to arrest offenders but the police are usually at a disadvantage because they cannot always rely upon 'public spirit' to produce the necessary evidence. The family of the guilty person does not wish to lose him and the complainant would prefer to be compensated by material rather than by moral redress. Accordingly, the identity of the criminal is often concealed and unless the police are unduly harsh, the traditional procedure for the administration of justice takes its course. With the relatively recent appointment of 'chiefs', to which we

## INTRODUCTION

shall shortly refer, central government administrations have left the door open for the exercise of sanctions, backed by the government, should the parties to a dispute fail to remedy their grievances. The advantages and disadvantages of such indirect government interference cuts both ways; but when clans utilise territory on both sides of an international frontier, government intervention is impeded and 'the other side' becomes a haven for fugitives.

In serious cases, such as murder, the absence of trans-frontier administration is a serious matter and can lead to endless feud and bloodshed to the regrettable delight of those governments whose interests are not served by any manifestation of Somali unity. The Somali system of redress in these cases is for the family of the deceased to claim 'blood-money'—one hundred female camels (or the equivalent in cash) for the death of a male, and half that amount for a female. As this is beyond the resources of the ordinary family, remote relatives, by a previous contract or treaty, are obliged to pay their share, although they have had no control over the actions of the accused, and have thus to suffer unnecessarily. But they are also entitled to receive a share of the proceeds in reverse should one of their number be killed by a member of another clan. Death can become a chattel of commerce, especially for the money collectors, and this is deplored by the Somali Government and the people alike, and for such serious crimes central government investigation is now an accepted and necessary practice, where it can be applied.

Any form of government intervention, to be successful, requires the co-operation, or at least, the acquiescence, of influential clan leaders. This does not of course, apply where disputes cut across international boundaries, and government sanctions cannot be imposed. There the administration of justice, at government level, goes by default. Either the case is settled by violent retribution or the clan leaders attempt to apply their own machinery for the settlement of disputes.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

These leaders are not 'chiefs'. One of the many inconveniences that alien rulers have been confronted by in the past, has been the absence of the time-honoured African chief. Somalis do not recognise the principle because authority, in Somali eyes, is not vested in any one person but in all males from the time of their birth to their death. Authority has been delegated to 'chiefs' in the past, by Italians, British, French and Ethiopians, and presumably Kenya will follow suit, but the exercise of this authority has always been conditional on clan acquiescence. The prop of a modern government, and the forces of law and order, certainly give 'chiefs' much influence but the measure of clan co-operation with the 'chief' is usually in proportion only to the reciprocal value of the 'chief' to the clan in his relations with the central government.

Some Somali clans have their own sultans, but as I. M. Lewis points out,<sup>12</sup> they are ideally arbitrators and peace-makers, "concerned with the maintenance of clan solidarity". During arbitrations, or indeed any council meeting of clansmen, no male members, of whatever age, can be precluded from the meeting. In practice the younger men leave it to the elders and expect to hear a comprehensive report at the end of the day. If judicial proceedings are contemplated, the elders appoint a panel of judges. They either arbitrate in the event of wrongful admission, or conduct a trial requiring evidence of proof before judgment is delivered. The object is to establish that the aggrieved has a legitimate complaint and to ensure that he is compensated from the right quarter before he and his family take the matter into their own hands and become violent. The judges, who rely solely on precedent and on common equity, are chosen for their piety, impartiality and experience. "We beseech thee, O God," they pray before delivering judgment, "that should we have inadvertently favoured one party against the other, we will not be punished for any lack of knowledge on our part, but only because of human failings."



## INTRODUCTION

Some wrongly believe that an over-democratic and decentralised system such as this must inevitably lead to anarchy. Ironically, Somali history has demonstrated that serious disorders have often been traced, not to any malfunction of the Somali system of authority, but to the unimaginative application of alien systems of government which have inadvertently undermined it. A notorious example of this was legislation enacted in the former British Protectorate of Somaliland in 1950 which conferred upon clan elders the ambiguous title of 'Local Authority' with the "duty of maintaining order, and the power to make certain orders relating to local administration". It was doomed from the start and provoked endless disturbances until the provision was conveniently dropped.

This does not mean, of course, that development of centralised governments during the first half of this century has been injurious to the pastoralist. Somalis who have won their independence naturally rejoice in the fact. They welcome the hospitals and veterinary services, and the opportunities for work, trade and education that modern systems of government have brought to a few of them; but, apart from the appearance of motorised infantry, aircraft or police in most Somali occupied territory, the central governments and their development plans scarcely impinge on the nomad's day-to-day life; yet the fire of nationalism burns fiercer among them than among many Somalis who have yielded to the passions of urban life, and have forgotten the spirit that once moved them.

Emphasising the strictly democratic nature of Somali government and society and the part that this plays in uniting the Somali people, the Somali President, Adan Abdulla Osman, said in a speech<sup>13</sup> at Mogadishu on August 16, 1962.

"Our ancestors developed a society which respected every man's right to play his part, according to his ability, in the affairs of his country. They scorned the man who attempted to be superior to his fellow men, and quelled the ambitions

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

of potential dictators. Compromise and tolerance brought peace, prosperity and happiness. . . .

"After two years and more of our independence, we are proud to be exercising the same democratic ideals as we inherited from our forefathers. It is this factor, among others, that gives us, the Somali people, the irresistible urge to live with each other and to look after each other, irrespective of the artificial boundaries that divide us.

"It is not surprising therefore that Somalis, not only in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya, but in French Somaliland and in Ethiopia, have a longing in their hearts to be reunited. Nor is it surprising that we, in this Republic, are impelled by the same spirit to go out and to give succour to those who are in need of us."

Peace and justice are what the Somali nomad prizes, above all else; not just peace from feud and hostility, but peace of mind from the problems of a harsh and unmerciful terrain made more difficult by idiotic boundaries; problems of their own volatile temperaments; problems of distrust about other people's motives; problems of living generously and fairly in a land which had less than a fair share of the riches of the world. But to all Somalis, their biggest problem is to turn a dismembered nation into one state without actually going to war with their neighbours.

As for justice, they have learnt from long experience that power in the hands of an individual, beyond certain limits and duration, cannot be fairly practised for the common benefit of all without the risk of abuse. No wonder, then, that in the history of the Somali people no one in authority has succeeded in rising above his fellow men for any length of time. The advantage of this democratic totality among pastoralists, in the Somali Republic at least, is that life is free from political tyranny, and, adapted to more modern conditions, their social system promotes a form of local government with which every male person can identify himself directly, and which secures for him an acceptable stan-



## INTRODUCTION

dard of human rights and justice. But this has also been a disadvantage to the Somali nation because the lack of any centralised political direction opened the door to eager partitioners during the scramble for Africa in the nineteenth century.



# 1

## THE 'SECOND SCRAMBLE'

In 1897, the three rival powers in the Red Sea and Aden Gulf, namely, France, Britain and Italy, sent their representatives, within a few days of each other, on a four-week mule journey to Addis Ababa in order to squeeze concessions out of King Menelik II of Ethiopia. They little realised that their missions were to be the forerunners of endless strife on the Somali Plateau.

They were in pursuit of a desert which they already held. They were on a second scramble for the same arid lands within a decade. Britain had been confident that her hard-won Somali frontiers with France and Italy, in 1888 and 1894 (Map 2), would stick; but the decisive defeat of the Italians by the Ethiopian army at Adowa in 1896 turned Menelik into a new and formidable figure. With firearms provided by France and Italy to facilitate their former expansionist aims, this unrivalled ruler of Ethiopia was now expanding his own frontiers. None of the three powers wished to take him on. None wished to abandon territory to the other. It became imperative, therefore, that they should at least obtain Menelik's formal recognition of their neighbouring acquisitions and of their mysterious frontiers with Ethiopia.

France was still anxious to continue her development of

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

the port of Jibuti, in competition with Aden, and to link it with her possessions in Equatorial Africa. Italy wanted to colonise Somalia and Eritrea. Britain, after some initial hesitation, decided to retain a foothold on the northern Somali coast to ensure the continuity of meat supplies for her garrison in Aden. She was hesitant because of unexpected obligations she had incurred by her treaties of protection with Somali clans between 1884-6, following the withdrawal of the Egyptians from Harar and the Somali coast. The duty to protect the independence and the territory of these clans against increasing encroachments by Ethiopian armed bands was proving expensive and embarrassing. In fact, Britain had bitten off more than she could chew.

In the instructions<sup>1</sup> issued to Rennell Rodd, Queen Victoria's Special Envoy to King Menelik, he was advised that if it was necessary to make concessions on the Somali frontier these should not prejudice "the main object for which the Protectorate was assumed, viz. the securing of adequate supplies for the support of Aden, and the administration of the Protectorate itself on a basis which shall as far as possible be at least self-supporting...". Rodd was also instructed to secure the King's alliance and co-operation against the Dervishes in the Sudan; to come to a "definite understanding as to the frontier between Abyssinia and the Protectorate", and that, "wherever the possessions of the two countries are close to one another", it would be preferable that the "frontiers should be coterminous". This last provision reflected Britain's concern to seal off French access to the headwaters of the Nile.

It must have come, therefore, as a pleasant surprise to Rodd, on his arrival in Addis Ababa, to find that M. Lagarde, the French representative who preceded Rodd by a few days, had reached an agreement<sup>2</sup> with Menelik to withdraw the French frontier (in violation, incidentally, of their 1885 treaty<sup>3</sup> with the Somali Issa Clan) to about one hundred kilometres inland from the Somali coast. This gave



Britain the advantage of being able to negotiate a contiguous boundary with Ethiopia, but it was also an unfortunate precedent for retrenchment. A further difficulty was that the existing boundary between Britain and Italy encroached on territory claimed by Ethiopia. Thus any curtailment by Britain of this part of the frontier could prejudice Italy's boundary negotiations which were then pending. Although Rodd was empowered to make territorial concessions on both the Sudanese and Somali frontiers with Ethiopia, in order to conciliate Ethiopia during the last phase of the Khartoum campaign, he was reminded<sup>4</sup> that the recognition of Abyssinian territorial claims should only be made in so far as British-Egyptian rights were concerned. But the concessions that he was authorised to make fell far short of the territory actually claimed by Menelik, as Rodd was later to discover.

At an early meeting with Menelik, Rodd was confronted for the first time by a letter from King Menelik, which had been received and ignored<sup>5</sup> by the British Government in 1891. It outlined the King's territorial claims which spread beyond even present-day frontiers of Ethiopia. "Whilst tracing today the actual boundaries of my Empire," wrote<sup>6</sup> Menelik. "I shall endeavour, if God gives me life and strength, to re-establish the ancient frontiers of Ethiopia up to Khartoum, and as far as Lake Nyanza with all the Gallas." This six-year-old claim covered more than half of the then British Protectorate.

"His Majesty's attitude," complained Rodd,<sup>7</sup> "was distinctly Oriental. England was a great power; could we not cede these small parcels of territory, which meant so little to us and so much to him?" Rodd showed Menelik a map to demonstrate that the existing boundaries were a reasonable and just division, but the King replied that he could not understand maps sufficiently to judge. He preferred a line drawn parallel to the coast one hundred kilometres in depth.

Having secured an assurance,<sup>8</sup> however, that Menelik

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

would prevent the passage of arms and ammunition to the Mahdists, whom he declared to be the enemies of his Empire, Rodd was freer to negotiate the Somali Protectorate boundaries without having to pay undue attention to Anglo-Ethiopian relations on the Sudanese frontier. But the details of geographical definition proved difficult for Menelik because of his lack of local knowledge. He agreed, however, to an exchange of letters. One of these<sup>9</sup> was an assurance that "Somalis who may by boundary arrangements become subjects of Ethiopia shall be well treated and have orderly government". Thus, when Rodd proposed that the negotiations on the Somali frontier should continue with Menelik's cousin, Ras Makonnen, the Governor of Harar, he was already committed to having to make some concessions.

Two weeks later, Rodd rode into Harar to begin a round of "most wearing and trying" negotiations with Makonnen. After Rodd had repeated the grounds on which the British claims to the territories were based, the Ras "produced a small and very inaccurate Italian map, on which a line was drawn in red chalk marking out a sphere about 100 kilom. in depth parallel to the coast similar to that accepted by the French . . .". Rodd rejected this outright. The Ras then drew a line half way between the coast and the 1894 Anglo-Italian boundary. Indignant, Rodd wrote to Lord Salisbury that he was "quite unprepared to consider a proposal of this kind . . . disposing with a piece of red chalk half of our Protectorate".<sup>10</sup>

In spite of these protestations, Rodd finally surrendered to Ethiopia (Map 2) the most fertile grain producing regions in the west of the British Protectorate and important spring and autumn pastures in the south. As we have seen, the region to the south of the northern plateau is occupied seasonally by nomads and their livestock which move to and fro across the border. The Rodd-Makonnen agreement had no immediate effect on the people because no attempt was made by the Ethiopian Government to administer the area.

It was now the turn of the Italian representative, Major

Nerazzini. He had passed Rodd on the caravan route to Addis Ababa, as Rodd was making for Harar. Rodd learnt from him that the Italian government did not intend to abandon the seaboard south of Cape Guardafui and that they were to remain neighbours. Whether either of them could forecast with confidence how their respective negotiations might develop is not recorded, but it seems possible that this chance meeting influenced the course of their subsequent discussions.

Rodd had written in a despatch<sup>11</sup> from Harar that Makonnen had referred to the 1894 boundary with Italy "as indicating the furthest limit of British claims on the territory in question . . . and the regions beyond the British limit to the west appeared to be generally acknowledged as remaining under Italian influence". It is also more than of just academic interest to observe here that, although Rodd was at liberty to acknowledge, on behalf of Britain only, Ethiopian territorial claims, he so worded the provisions of the Treaty concluded with Makonnen that they only involved "Abyssinian recognition of our Protectorate without in any way admitting recognition on our part of a cession to Ethiopia".<sup>12</sup>

This was directed presumably towards ensuring that Nerazzini's negotiations with Menelik would not be prejudiced, rather than towards any respect for the former treaties of protection with the Somali clans. Though nonetheless important, the only account taken of the future destiny of Somalis affected by these border arrangements, apart from Menelik's assurance that they would be well treated, was another assurance<sup>13</sup> that they would be at liberty to cross the new frontiers and graze their cattle, and that neighbouring wells would remain open to them.

Menelik's peace treaty with Italy in 1896 generously envisaged future boundary settlements on condition that Italy in the meantime would not cede any territory which she had previously acquired, or, if she wished to abandon territory, would restore it to Ethiopia. Major Nerazzini's



mission to Menelik was to conclude a settlement. His arrangements, however, for a boundary delimitation were of a most informal kind. He and Menelik merely drew a line on two copies of von Habenicht's map of 1891. The two Governments retained a copy of each of the maps, but they have both since disappeared and no one to this day can be certain about the precise agreement reached.

Contemporary evidence at the time, as to what might have been agreed, is a report, on Nerazzini's return to Italy, by the Stefani News Agency. It announced that the "delimitation line runs at a distance of 180 miles from the coast". This line would meet the former Anglo-Italian boundary at the 47° meridian (Map 2). Nerazzini's report to his government stated that he obtained a delimitation "which gave us, from the intersection of our frontier with that of British Somaliland, a zone of absolute possession parallel to the coast extending about 180 miles inland and terminating on the Juba river at the Don der Decken cataracts . . .".<sup>14</sup>

Rodd's readjustment with Menelik of the former Protectorate boundary converged on the same point. This seems to lend some support to the theory that the starting point of this boundary may well have been at the 47° meridian, especially as Makonnen seems to have acknowledged that the "regions beyond the British limit to the west appeared to be generally acknowledged as remaining under Italian influence". But the evidence is flimsy. The Ethiopians claim that the boundary in question was much nearer to the coast (Map 2).

A convention between Italy and Ethiopia in 1908 did little to clear the matter up. It merely pledged that a boundary dividing migratory pastoralists between Italy and Ethiopia should be delimited on the ground, and that the boundary from the river running north-eastwards should follow "the line accepted by the Italian government in 1897". The point of intersection with Kenya, however, was established at Dolo, following a payment by Italy of some three million lire to Menelik, and an Italian-Ethiopian Boundary



Commission in 1911 delimited the border thirty km. northwards, but got no further because of the imprecision of the 1908 convention.

The total effect of the 1897 agreements on the Somali people during the years to follow will be discussed later. But at this point in the history of the Somali frontiers it would seem correct to assume that, in spite of Britain and France's earlier treaties with Somali clans, which clearly denied to both of them the right to cede Somali territory,<sup>15</sup> Menelik's military victory over the Italians had so altered the balance of power in the area, that Britain, likewise France and Italy, were perhaps fortunate to have been able to retain any foothold at all on the Somali coast. The fact that they did has led, over the course of some sixty chequered years, to the independence so far of at least two million Somali people under one flag out of a total population of about three to four million. It could also be argued that had Ethiopia assumed sovereignty over the entire Somali nation, a claim which she has often made in the past, the proud and intelligent Amhara people, who rule Ethiopia today, might have found some irksome competition from their Hamitic brothers.

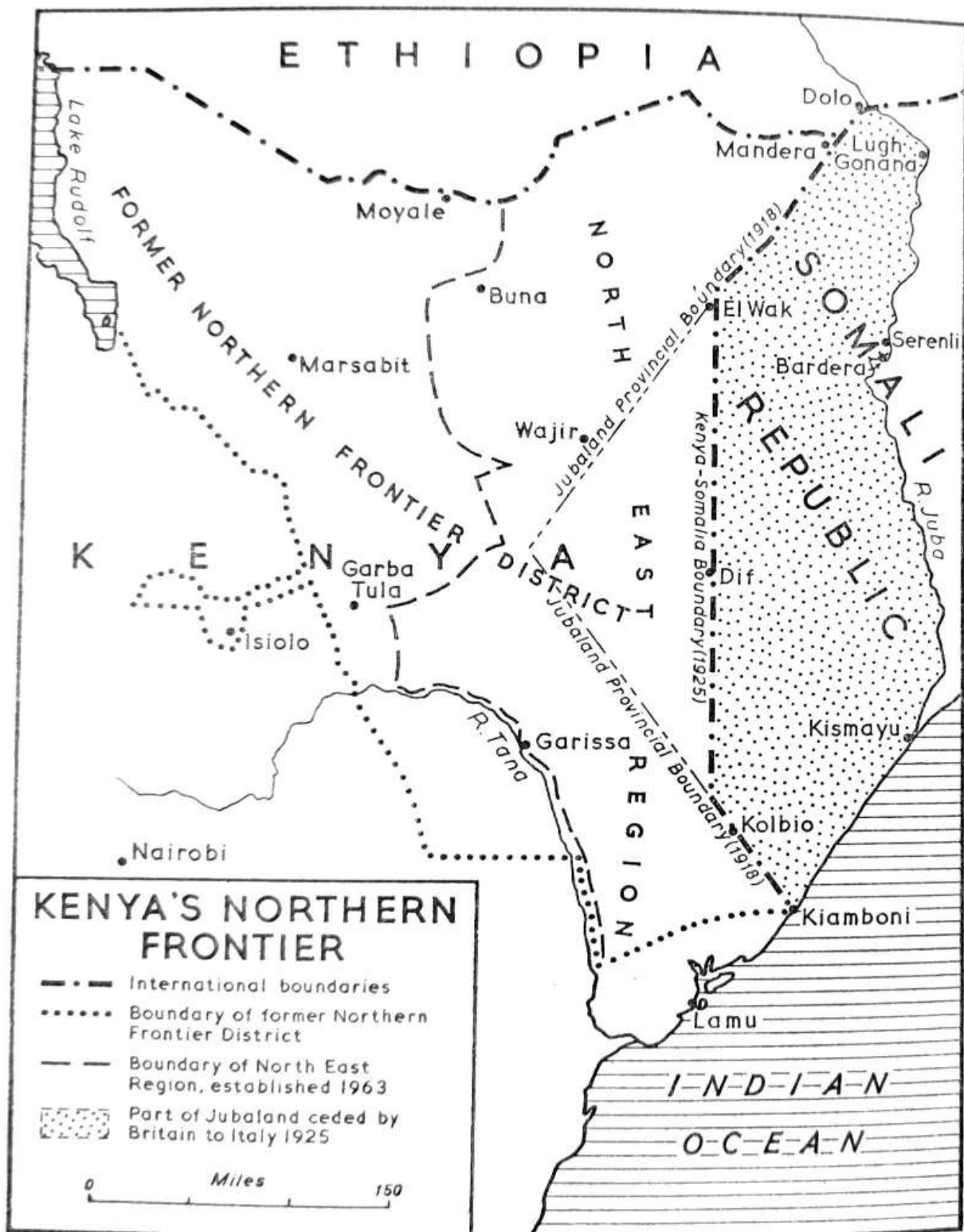
Hypothetical arguments do not, of course, help to mitigate grievances. Two comments drawn from the pages of history reflect, first, a contemporary British view of the Somali lands, and, secondly, a Somali view of the British in occupation of their land.

When Rodd returned to England he had an interview with Lord Salisbury. Recalling this afterwards, he wrote<sup>16</sup> that Salisbury "was not much preoccupied about Abyssinian encroachments in Somaliland. He was never much concerned with the fate of 'light lands in Africa'."

A Somali view was expressed a few years later by the Somali rebel leader Sheikh Mohamed Abdille Hassan, the 'Mad' Mullah, who ran circles round the British Army for twenty years. In a letter addressed to the 'English people' in June 1903 he wrote: "... If the country [Somaliland] was

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

cultivated, or contained houses or property it would be worth your while to fight. The country is all jungle and that is no use to you. If you want wood and stone you can get them in plenty. There are also many ant heaps. The sun is very hot. All you can get from me is war, nothing else. . . .”<sup>17</sup>



## KENYA'S NORTHERN FRONTIER

Looking westwards beyond the plantations and the tangled vegetation in the valley of the Juba river, the Somali Plateau resumes its characteristic appearance of thorn scrub and limestone. Like the border that separates the Northern Regions from the Haud, the Somali Republic is divided from Kenya by a long, straight, dusty track carved through the bush on either side. But unlike the Haud border, there are no settlements along this track. More typical is an isolated fort at El Wak, a camel-watering centre half way between Mandera and Wajir, a few miles inside the Kenya border (Map 3). It was built in haste by the Kenya administration when they feared trouble in 1960, the year Somalia and British Somaliland became independent and united as one Republic. It is similar to the fort in Wajir which Lady Reece describes as "everyone's image of a Foreign Legion fort, so much so that a film company filmed Sahara scenes there".<sup>1</sup>

Cattle move westwards across the border without restriction and in great numbers to be slaughtered for the Kenya market. With the rapid construction of the Kismayu port and a meat canning factory, developed by Americans and Russians respectively, the cattle trade may change direction and compete with the Republic's bananas, at present forty-four per cent of the export trade.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

According to I. M. Lewis<sup>2</sup> the first recorded inhabitants of this area were the Somali Ajuran and their allies the Madanle, who were closely followed by another Somali clan, the Dabarre. The Ajuran had been driven southwards from their stronghold on the lower reaches of the Shibeli river, following the Somali invasion of the Arabised city of Mogadishu in about 1624. "The Galla Boran now appeared on the scene and in alliance with the Ajuran came to occupy the area lying between Buna in the NFD [Northern Frontier District (Map 3)] and Liban in Ethiopia at the expense of the Dabarre who replaced the Madanle near Wajir. These in turn were soon displaced by an influx of Galla Warday from the Juba area. And by 1850 these new Galla immigrants dominated the whole Tana river region. . . . In 1870 the Ajuran and Boran Galla jointly drove out the Warday from Wajir."

Lewis<sup>3</sup> also suggests that the area between the Shibeli and the Juba was formerly occupied by a mixed Negroid and Bantu population, described by Arab geographers as 'Zenji'. 80,000 of them still survive and are employed principally on banana and sugar plantations. About the tenth century AD the regions to the north of the Shibeli were occupied by the Hamitic Galla, with a fringe of Somali on the coast opposite the Gulf of Aden; but by the end of the seventeenth century the Somalis had driven their Hamitic kinsmen south-westwards.

Somali expansion was eased by the successful invasion of Christian Abyssinia in 1527 by Ahmed Gran and his Muslim army of Somali and Danakil warriors. Although he was defeated by a combined Portuguese and Abyssinian army fifteen years later, he had opened the gates to the Abyssinian highlands through which the Galla flooded in, overrunning the Kingdoms of Bali, Dawaro and Fatajar, and swarming into the provinces of Shoa. By 1563 one-third of Abyssinia had been occupied by them.<sup>4</sup>

The Galla of the northern frontier of Kenya live to the west of the North-East Region (Map 3). Like Somalis they



## KENYA'S NORTHERN FRONTIER

are pastoralists, though predominantly cattle-rearing, and belong to the same Cushitic group of languages.<sup>5</sup> However, "although the Somali are today all Muslims following the Sunni rite, the ancient Cushitic religious system based on the worship of the sky god Waq still survives amongst the Galla in the NFD even though many have now accepted Islam".<sup>6</sup> The Galla are divided north and south of this region by a wedge of Rendille in the Marsabit District, who "show a considerable range of cultural variation, some being similar to the Galla and Somali, and others closer to the neighbouring Nilo-Hamitic Samburu".<sup>7</sup>

The Galla to the north of the Rendille, between Moyale and Lake Rudolf, spread into Ethiopia as far as Harar, Addis Ababa and the southern banks of the Blue Nile. Those of Borana origin are worshippers of the sky god Waq whose descendant, Qallu, resides in Ethiopia.<sup>8</sup> It is to Qallu that the Boran look for spiritual guidance, and, as we shall discover, to Ethiopia, rather than to the Somali Republic, for political guidance. The Boran to the south of the Rendille in the Isiolo District, cut off from their spiritual leader Qallu, have, on the other hand, accepted Islam and the Somali way of life. Their attitude in this frontier dispute will also be discussed later.

The present frontier between the Somali Republic and Kenya was a historical accident, dating from Britain's treaty with Italy in 1891 which partitioned the Sudan and East Africa from Ethiopia and the Somali plateau into respective zones of British and Italian influence (Map 2). The southern part of the boundary followed the Juba river northwards into Ethiopia across the Blue Nile to the shores of the Red Sea. Italy declared a Protectorate over the vast area to the east of this line as far as the French and British zones on the northern Somali coastline. To the west of this line, Britain declared her interest, safeguarding in particular the source of the White Nile which she had successfully secured from her German rivals by treaty the previous year. The port of

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

Kismayu lay to the west of the mouth of the Juba and thus remained in the hands of the Imperial British East Africa Company which occupied the port for four disastrous years on a lease from the Sultan of Zanzibar.

In his history of the King's African Rifles, Moyse-Bartlett writes that "from the time when the administration of Kismayu was taken over by the Imperial British East Africa Company in August, 1891, to its conquest from the Italians fifty years later, Jubaland was the scene of frequent campaigns. . .".<sup>9</sup>

From the beginning the Company ran into trouble. The Company's administrator, J. Ross Todd, was a young Scotsman of twenty-four with more burdens than he could carry. He had received no letters from home for two months and had to pay dearly for cables to his family seeking assurances that all was well. He was not in the best frame of mind to handle disputes with Somalis over the title deeds to plots in the town. Todd was adamant that all unoccupied plots belonged to the Company under its treaty with the Sultan of Zanzibar. The Somalis were already in a state of unrest over the division of blood-money which the administrator in Mombasa had sanctioned as a conciliatory gesture.<sup>10</sup> The Somalis became increasingly suspicious, insolent and resentful. Todd finally called their elders to a meeting. He took the precaution, however, of arranging in advance for HMS *Widgeon*, lying off shore, to land a party of bluejackets and marines if the flag on the Residency was lowered.<sup>11</sup>

Count Lovatelli, a Lieutenant in the Italian Navy who had recently arrived from Italy on a voyage of exploration, accompanied Todd to the meeting. Shortly after it had begun, the Somalis got wind of the proposal to land marines and showed signs of considerable agitation. As Todd rose to his feet, the Somalis did likewise. Thinking that they were about to attack Todd, Lovatelli fired his revolver. Pandemonium broke out, Todd was stabbed in the neck and fell to the ground. HMS *Widgeon* was signalled to carry out a

bombardment and the Somalis ran from the town and occupied the surrounding country.

In the meantime, W. G. Hamilton, the superintendent in charge of fifty soldiers who had mutinied, established himself, with a few locally recruited ex-slaves, on Turki Hill at the mouth of the Juba. His stronghold was overrun at night by combined forces of Somalis, Indians and Arabs. Hamilton was wounded by a poisoned arrow and afterwards shot at close range. At dawn, the rebels swept into the town and attacked the Residency. After three hours' fighting they were repulsed by the local garrison under command of Count Lovatelli who was awarded the CMG for this action.<sup>12</sup> The Somalis returned to the bush and all contact with them was lost. Todd resigned and in 1895 Jubaland was placed under British Government control and proclaimed a Protectorate.

With the transfer of the administration to the British Government a series of punitive expeditions into the interior were planned to secure tribute from the Somali chiefs.<sup>12</sup> "War was declared against the Ogaden," wrote Sir Charles Eliot, the Commissioner for East Africa, "and a costly expedition was despatched. It gained no success proportionate to its size and expense, for it was unable to capture or force a battle on the light-footed nomads, who vanished before it in a scrubby wilderness, well known to them, though pathless to strangers, while it was on the other hand exposed to sudden attacks from fanatical desperados."<sup>13</sup>

By assuming the responsibility for the 'protection' of these clans, the administration found itself increasingly involved in attempts to defend one clan from another and to protect them all against bands of armed marauders from Ethiopia. A forward policy was made all the more compelling by the action of the administration to disarm Somalis. Thus, between the years 1895-1912, the British administration reluctantly penetrated further into the Northern Frontier District for two reasons: to counter continuing Somali westward expansion against the Galla, and to prevent Ethiopian



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

armed raids on the livestock and inhabitants of these regions.

It was not until 1909 that the Somalis reached the Tana River and drove the Boran Galla from Wajir. "In a period of some three centuries the wheel of fortune had turned full circle. The first Hamitic settlers in the north of Kenya had been the Somali Madanle and Dabarre; these had been ousted by the Warday Galla; and the latter were eventually beaten and harried by the Ajuran and Boran Galla and later Somali immigrants."<sup>14</sup>

Wajir was occupied by British forces in 1912 but hastily evacuated four years later after eighty people had been killed following a surprise attack by Somalis on Lieutenant Elliott's Constabulary at Serenli in the upper Juba. The NFD came under effective administration for the first time when Moyale and Wajir were garrisoned by regular troops in 1919.

Sir Charles Eliot was convinced as early as 1902 that the country was not "worth the money spent upon it" and that the advantages of a strip on the Juba could not seriously be set against the "enormous military expenditure".<sup>15</sup> Lord Milner was presumably in the same frame of mind when he concluded a convention with Signor Scialoja in April 1920 ceding 33,000 square miles of Jubaland to Italy (Map 3). Britain's commitment arose out of a secret undertaking (Treaty of London), between Britain and Italy in 1915, that "in the event of Great Britain increasing her colonial territory in Africa at the expense of Germany, Her Majesty's Government would agree in principle that Italy might claim some equitable compensation".<sup>16</sup>

Lord Milner, however, had made a written reservation to the effect that the 1920 convention could only become effective as part of the general settlement of all the issues raised at the Peace Conference. Complaining that Italy had advanced more extensive territorial claims in Jubaland than Britain was prepared to accept, the Foreign Secretary told the House of Commons on February 20, 1924, that "any settlement will, of course, have to include an equitable



arrangement respecting the connected question of the ultimate status of the Dodecanese". In making a further statement on February 24th the Prime Minister explained that "the inhabitants of these islands ethnologically belong to Greece, and that their continued severance from that country is hardly conducive to that general tranquillity which Her Majesty's Government have so much at heart . . .".

Some members of Parliament were not satisfied, and in answer to a question concerning the welfare of the inhabitants of Jubaland, the Foreign Secretary told the House on March 3, 1924, that "no condition as to the consent of the inhabitants was made in the Treaty of London . . .". "Surely," asked Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy, "this is a departure from the principle of self-determination?" There was no reply.

The Treaty was signed in July 1924, but the cession of Jubaland to Italy did not in fact take place until June 29th the following year.

Kenyans today claim that Britain was morally wrong to have ceded Jubaland. Certainly Britain could only justify the action on the same principle that she applied to the conditional transfer of the Dodecanese Islands to Greece, in which case she should have made a clean breast of it and transferred the whole of Somali territory in Northern Kenya to Italian Somaliland. She seemed to be partially conscious of this when Mr Amery, in a statement to the House of Commons on December 18, 1924, said ". . . the reason for the cession of the territory as a whole is to keep these tribes together as a single unit, and give them the full use of their natural grazing ground . . .". In addition, the Earl of Onslow (Under Secretary of State for War) said in the House of Lords on March 5, 1925, "I may say that the whole of this country is inhabited by a small population of nomad Somalis, and the line has been drawn as closely as possible in accordance with racial divisions."

## ETHIOPIA'S EASTERN FRONTIER

A short excursion at this stage into Ethiopian history at the beginning of this century and during the First World War may help to shed some light on events that follow. It will be recalled that the three European powers, France, Italy and Britain, hastily concluded treaties with King Menelik in 1897 following the King's unexpected victory over the Italians in the previous year. In 1906, however, the monarch had a stroke and his able cousin Makonnen died. Doubt was thus thrown on the future stability of this loosely knit Empire.

This air of uncertainty brought the three European powers together to conclude a pact of mutual assurance, for each power wished to safeguard its own interests in the event of a political collapse in Ethiopia. Accordingly, a tripartite treaty was signed in December of the same year which declared that the common purpose of the three powers was to maintain the political and territorial *status quo* in Ethiopia; to preserve Ethiopia's integrity if the *status quo* was disturbed, and to respect each other's interests. These were: Britain's interest in commanding the waters of the Blue Nile; Italy's interest in linking Somalia with her colony in Eritrea; France's interest in completing the railway line from Jibuti to Addis Ababa.

## ETHIOPIA'S EASTERN FRONTIER

Three years later, the ailing Menelik chose as his heir the son of his favourite daughter: the young Lij Yasu, a boy of thirteen years, whom he presented to the notables "with an impassioned plea for their loyalty".<sup>1</sup> This was not, however, readily given by the Shoans or by the Coptic Church because Yasu was the son of a powerful Gall chieftain and former Muslim, Ras Makiel, alias Mohammed Ali, who could raise an army of eighty thousand from the predominantly Muslim province of Wallo. But when Menelik died in 1913, Yasu succeeded to the throne without trouble.

At the outbreak of the 1914-18 war, the young Emperor was encouraged by his father and by German and Turkish diplomats to adopt Islam and to revive Muslim-Galla predominance in Ethiopia. He first placed the eastern half of Ethiopia under his father's control, and then divorced his Christian wife and married the daughters of Danakil and Galla Muslim chiefs. He adopted Muslim dress and customs, and lived in Harar. He built mosques in Diredawa and Jijiga. In 1916 he sent the Abyssinian flag, embroidered with a crescent, to the Turkish Consul-General and "officially placed Abyssinia in religious dependence upon Turkey".<sup>2</sup> But more important to our narrative were his cordial relations with the Somali rebel leader, Sheikh Mohamed Abdille Hassan, who by this time had kept the British troops at bay for sixteen years, and was completing the construction of the largest of thirty stone forts in the eastern part of the British Protectorate.

Yasu was a useful source of firearms and ammunition for the Sheikh. In return, the Emperor could rely on the Sheikh's support in the event of war in Christian Abyssinia. The Sheikh had no reason to be well disposed towards Abyssinia. Menelik had joined Britain, sometimes with as many as fifteen thousand soldiers, in successive expeditions against him and his Dervishes. It was during one of these expeditions that the Dervishes captured a maxim gun from the British which the Sheikh subsequently presented to Lij Yasu. One of

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

Yasu's more curious consignments to the Sheikh was a fair-haired German typewriter mechanic, Emil Kirsch, who, through the good offices of the German consul in Ethiopia, contracted in 1916 to make ammunition in the Sheikh's fortress at Taleh, an isolated spot on an arid gypsum plain to the east of the Protectorate.

Although this contract was for five months only, Kirsch soon discovered on arrival that once established in his armoury at the top of a thirty-foot tower there was no question of returning to Ethiopia. With the aid of a rope and a grappling iron, he and his faithful Nyasa servant, Ali Ahmed, made good their escape and walked barefooted across the gypsum plains for six days without food or water. Kirsch died from the ordeal but his servant staggered on to find pools of water not far distant from where his friend lay. Ali, who was rescued by friendly Somalis, explained that Kirsch had only a hazy idea of the geography of the land, and was attempting to surrender to the Italians at Alula because he felt ashamed at having to give himself up to the British.

Meanwhile, Lij Yasu had issued a summons to all Somalis, some of whom regarded him as the Mahdi, to follow him in a Jihad against the Christians, and went to Jijiga to collect an army.<sup>3</sup> The Shoan chiefs immediately demanded from the Abuna, the Egyptian head of the Coptic Church, a proclamation deposing Yasu. This the Abuna readily acceded to and declared Menelik's daughter, Zawditu, Empress, and Ras Tafari, Regent and heir to the throne. The Ras was Makonnen's son, the present Emperor Haile Selassie.

On hearing of his deposition, Yasu sought and received asylum from the Somali Bartiri and Abascul clans round Jijiga and a fierce battle between them and the local Ethiopian garrison was fought in the hills to the south-west of the town. At the same time, Yasu's father, Ras Makiel, advanced on Addis Ababa with eighty thousand Galla but they were repulsed and defeated by Ras Tafari. Yasu fled to Wallo and then to the Danakil country where he remained



until his arrest in 1921. After a brief spell of liberty in 1925, having escaped from his prison chains, Yasu was imprisoned at Garawa, south-west of Harar, where he died mysteriously ten years later on the eve of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. *Yasu died*

As Regent, Ras Tafari was modern and progressive and did much to dispel the anxieties which the three European powers surrounding Ethiopia understandably felt after five years of Yasu's erratic reign. The overthrow of Yasu was particularly encouraging to the British forces who were still engaged in their war with Sheikh Mohamed. This was expressed in a letter<sup>4</sup> to the Sheikh which offered him immunity from punishment if he surrendered. In this letter the Governor wrote . . . "Lij Yasu has gone and Ras Tafari, who is a friend of mine, rules in his place. He and I make arrangements in agreement, and you know you cannot fight against us." An account<sup>5</sup> given by one of the messengers who delivered the letter, spoke of the Sheikh having taken great exception, not to the 'birds' whose 'droppings' fell on the top of his white canopy, but to the Arabic leaflets, scattered by the aircraft, which made a damaging imputation about his ancestry. "My origin has apparently been forgotten," complained the Sheikh, "I am the son of Ras Mikhail's brother, and I am the cousin of Lij Yasu, the Prince of Abyssinia."

This was not, of course, correct, but it reflects the only occasion in the long history of Somali-Ethiopian (Shoan) relations that a Somali nationalist<sup>6</sup> has identified himself and Somali interests with an Ethiopian Emperor.

Part of the explanation, of course, is that Yasu was not a Shoan of Abyssinian origin, to whom Somalis apply the appellation 'Amhara', but a Galla and a quasi-Muslim. His aim of uniting Ethiopia under Muslim-Galla domination was foredoomed, but it accelerated the processes of minority assimilation to which the Amharic-speaking Shoans were devoting so much effort for fear of a resurgence of Galla nationalism. This process has almost been completed today, although some observers maintain that an undercurrent of

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

defection among the Galla and Muslim Eritreans who comprise nearly half the total population of Ethiopia, is bound to make itself felt after the inspiring leadership of the present Emperor, Haile Selassie, comes to an end. But the million or so Somalis who inhabit the lowland areas to the east and south-east of the Ethiopian massif seem to be almost completely untouched by this active process of absorption, in spite of the extensive use of the Amharic language in their schools and in government offices.

In a speech to the Ogaden in 1956 the Emperor was critical of having to make use of a Somali interpreter and urged the Somalis to learn the Amharic language. In the same year, an UNESCO expert visited the Jijiga schools, on behalf of the Ethiopian Government, to study Somali folk music with a view to 'integrating' it with the more characteristic music of the Ethiopian highlands. No progress was made. Indeed, any form of cultural assimilation, other than a sophisticated European type, seems to be resisted by Somalis. "When Somalis settle," complained an Ethiopian Governor of Jijiga some years ago, "they enjoy a higher standard of living than they can really afford, and it exceeds our own."

Somali resistance to Ethiopian culture equals their resistance to Ethiopian nationality. This was of no account, at first, especially in the Ogaden scrub where the Amhara had no particular desire to live. It was hot and uncomfortable and could not yield any noticeable profit from its arid soil. The area to the north-east of Jijiga, however, which had been abandoned by Rennell Rodd in his negotiations with Makonnen, was relatively fertile and attracted a higher rainfall than most regions on the Somali Plateau. There was much to be gained here for the Ethiopian Governor of Jijiga in this remote outpost of the Harar Province.

It was perhaps not an accident that Fitaurari Tekle Hawariat, who had received agricultural instruction in Russia, was appointed Governor of Jijiga in 1918. He was

## ETHIOPIA'S EASTERN FRONTIER

described by Captain J. L. Berne, the British District Commissioner in Hargeisa, as "a more or less cultured Abyssinian". His knowledge was soon harnessed to the system of land tenure then in operation. This was based on a system of serfdom in support of the State. Peasants tilled the land and offered grain in return to sustain the Governor, his staff and his soldiers. Grain supported the soldiers, the soldiers supported the tax collectors, who, in turn, kept the wheels of the 'administration' turning.

Thwarted by Somali aversion to serfdom, Tekle brought Gallas to cultivate the rich pasture lands to the north of Jijiga. Each family received one hundred and twenty acres and paid a tithe of one-tenth of their produce to the Governor. The grain was buried in pits and distributed daily to the Governor's household and soldiers. Tekle was succeeded by Kenyazmach Galagorgis who penetrated further eastwards towards the British Protectorate border and settled Amharas on the lands belonging to the Somali Gadabursi and Issa clans. Neither of these clans consented to the intrusion of colonisers which was exacerbated by the erection of Coptic churches, and the seizure of Somali livestock on the pretext of tax collecting. The Ugaz (sultan) Nur Robleh whose clan was first affected by the forward advance of Amhara settlers and 'tax collectors' paid a number of bulls each year to the Governor of Jijiga to forestall further acts of colonisation.

The Ugaz and his clansmen also appealed to the British government for help. Their appeals were met with much sympathy but little else; although surprisingly a British Consul had been posted to Harar in order to settle such complaints in what was then known as a Consular Court. But he was inevitably confronted with the ambiguity of the international status of nomads migrating to and fro across the border. On the one hand, the British Protectorate administration would claim that their subjects had been ill-treated by the Amhara, and, on the other, the Ethiopians would claim that they were merely acting on the authority of Somali



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

'chiefs' who declared that their people were Ethiopian nationals; or else the British authorities would complain that a Somali clan under Ethiopian jurisdiction had carried out a rapid raid on livestock belonging to a British protected clan enjoying seasonal grazing rights in Ethiopia. The Ethiopians would make counter-claims on behalf of Somalis under their jurisdiction.

It was a classic situation for the intriguer who liked to play off the British against the Ethiopians, and vice versa. On the issue of nationality, for which some Somalis had no serious conscience (provided they remained Somali) there was much scope for profit. Some would even accompany Amhara soldiers on tax-collecting expeditions, made all the more exciting when the exact limits of the Protectorate border could not be identified on the ground. There was a case in 1921, recorded in the Borama District book, which must rank high in the annals of duplicity.

In that year the town of Borama was established by the British administration close to the western border with Ethiopia because of the ever-growing number of complaints about Ethiopian 'tax collectors' seizing livestock and encroaching on British soil. It was then that the grandson of the Ugaz came from Ethiopia to reside in Borama, professing allegiance to the British Crown. He was given rank and distinction, and spent much of his time energetically establishing, with the assistance of a willing District Commissioner, the British interpretation of the border line with Ethiopia. Having also learnt that the Protectorate Police were no longer permitted to cross this border, Dodi again transferred his allegiance (and that of his clan) to Ethiopia, confident that his 'tax-collecting' parties could continue ravaging the property of other clansmen on the Ethiopian side of the border without British interference.

Acts such as these were clearly not in the interests of the Somalis themselves, but, of course, many sophisticated people, whose loyalties have been subject to the threat of



## ETHIOPIA'S EASTERN FRONTIER

imprisonment or economic reprisals, have also become susceptible to rewards which pervert their better judgment, and Somalis are no exception. The shame was not so much the absence of moral rectitude but the artificial conditions that created it.

It should not be thought that all the activities of the authorities in Jijiga were necessarily sanctioned by the Governor-General of Harar. It is most improbable, for instance, that Ras Imru, the respected Governor-General, approved of an ambush on Sir Geoffrey Archer's caravan when he was on a hunting trip in 1921 with the Maharajah of Kutch. In 1925, Kittermaster complained to Imru of further border violations by Jijiga 'tax collectors' during which a man was killed. Imru consented to a joint enquiry, acknowledged the violation and paid compensation. But this was rare. Violations continued, culminating in an incident about the time that the Duke of Gloucester was to attend the Emperor's Coronation in 1930, in which both the Ethiopian Governor of Jijiga, Fitaurari Tafassa, and the Borama District Commissioner Walsh were involved.

Walsh had arranged to meet Tafassa, the new Governor of Jijiga, to discuss 'border affairs'. The meeting was to be held in the border region near Borama where Ethiopian 'tax collectors' had recently crossed into the Protectorate and seized some livestock. Tafassa, protesting his ignorance of the exact limits of the border, reluctantly agreed to hand over the stock. As Walsh and his escort approached the Ethiopian camp, shots rang out and the two sides exchanged fire. Mules bolted and loads were scattered in all directions. Two Ethiopians were killed. Tafassa refused to conduct an enquiry and demanded Walsh's arrest. The incident hastened consultations for a joint Anglo-Ethiopian boundary commission to delimit the boundary on the ground.

## THE WAL WAL INCIDENT

An Anglo-Italian commission started work in 1929 on demarcating the eastern boundary of the Protectorate with Italian Somaliland. The point of significance, which we will come to later, was a boundary mark laid on the cross section of the  $8^{\circ}$  parallel with the  $47^{\circ}$  meridian (Map 2). This mark purported to represent the tri-junction point between Ethiopia, Britain and Italy. The commission concluded its labours with an agreement in London on June 1, 1931.

This was followed by an Anglo-Ethiopian commission which set about clearing the bush on either side of the 1897 Anglo-Ethiopian boundary and erecting stone pillars embedded in concrete. There was an immediate outcry from the clans occupying the grazing areas on either side of the border. They maintained that their customary grazing grounds had been ceded to Ethiopia without reference to them and they feared that restrictions would be placed on their trans-frontier migrations, as had been imposed by the Italians following the conclusion of the Anglo-Italian boundary commission. Violence broke out, boundary pillars were destroyed or defaced, and the British authorities promptly introduced a special ordinance declaring this illegal. Serious trouble again broke out at the tri-junction point with French Somaliland. The survey beacons were

21/31  
Ethiopia

## THE WAL WAL INCIDENT

destroyed and a German assistant commissioner, Herr Emil Beitz, was assassinated by rebellious clansmen. In spite of this the boundary demarcation was completed in 1934 and a track with a few broken pillars remains to this day.

The Anglo-Ethiopian commission was also charged with the duty of reporting on "the areas in which the tribes settled on either side of the frontier should be permitted to graze". This reflected the provision in annex 3 of the Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1897 which permitted the "tribes occupying either side of the line" to have "the right to use the grazing grounds on the other side . . .". Progress with this part of the commission's duties, which started in July 1934, was slow. The Ethiopians at first opposed the idea of visiting the areas in question and wished to hold discussions in Jijiga only. Subsequently they agreed to a joint enquiry in the grazing areas south of the boundary, but not to the west. The reservations expressed by the Ethiopian Commissioners had substance, for no sooner had they begun their work than they found themselves deeply involved in an incident which kept the League of Nations talking for nine months and finally killed it—the Wal Wal incident.

The camel-watering centre of Wal Wal (Map 2) had some three hundred wells, and had been permanently occupied by the authorities of Italian Somaliland since 1930. According to P. B. Potter,<sup>1</sup> the Ethiopian arbitrator, all the documentary evidence available at the time indicated that the frontier between Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland in this region lay one hundred or more kilometres east of Wal Wal, yet the Ethiopian government had never protested to Rome about its four-year occupation.

On November 22, 1934, an Ethiopian force of about six hundred troops advanced on Wal Wal as a "protective escort" for the Anglo-Ethiopian commission which was due to arrive on the following day. The Italians had a garrison in Wal Wal of one hundred and sixty Somalis. On their arrival at Wal Wal the Ethiopians began to take over the wells,

which were being guarded by Somalis, who fell back, leaving some of the wells in Ethiopian hands. The joint commission arrived the next day and agreed, in consultation with an Italian officer, to establish a provisional line separating the two opposing forces. During the conference, however, two Italian aircraft flew low over the Anglo-Ethiopian camp and Colonel Clifford, in charge of the British contingent, became indignant at this "provocative demonstration"<sup>2</sup> and decided to withdraw the British mission. Both missions left Wal Wal the following day with their respective escorts of thirty and fifty men.

Reinforced, the Ethiopian troops at Wal Wal now numbered over one thousand men. For ten days they remained in their positions facing the Somalis. By December 5th both sides had been reinforced, and that afternoon, following a shot from one side, fierce fighting broke out. On hearing the firing, the Italian Officer who was visiting Warder, a neighbouring settlement, ordered two tanks and three aircraft to leave for Wal Wal. Arriving that evening, he found his Somali troops, numbering five hundred, had been forced back and their ammunition practically exhausted. At dawn the next morning fighting broke out again and the Ethiopians were routed, with the aid of tanks, leaving one hundred and thirty dead and a large number of wounded. The Somalis lost thirty killed and one hundred wounded.

Meanwhile, the Anglo-Ethiopian commission, although shaken by these events, continued to take evidence from witnesses about the grazing limits of clans from the British Protectorate. The western boundary areas were not visited, at the request of the Ethiopians, but evidence collected independently by both sides was in mutual agreement. The facts were collated in one report and approved by both Governments in March 1935. The agreement was not, however, ratified but the report formed the basis of an important agreement between Britain and Ethiopia in later years.

The non-ratification of the Grazing Agreement was due



## THE WAL WAL INCIDENT

presumably to the long drawn-out dispute between Italy and Ethiopia as a result of the Wal-Wal incident. Italy had signed a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Ethiopia in 1928, in which both Governments undertook to "submit to a procedure of conciliation or arbitration disputes which may arise between them".<sup>3</sup> But Italy declined recourse to this procedure on the grounds that arbitration was a "humiliating admission of her equality with Ethiopia which was to her intolerable and unthinkable".<sup>4</sup> The Italian Government demanded material and moral satisfaction—cash payments, apologies and a salute to the Italian flag.

Ethiopia, for her part, demanded only that the dispute should be inscribed on the agenda for the next meeting of the League of Nations because it threatened to disturb international peace. Inexplicably, France and Britain supported Italy's objection to this application in spite of the tripartite Agreement of 1906 in which all three nations had agreed to maintain Ethiopia's integrity. Thus Italy, with the assistance of France and Britain, succeeded in preventing any discussion of the dispute by the Council. Italy yielded, however, to the principle of a settlement under the terms of her 1928 treaty with Ethiopia.

In January 1935, Italy began to draft troops and military equipment to Eritrea and Italian Somaliland in large numbers. By March, Ethiopia had again appealed to the League, this time under Article X, "to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League". The sympathies of the League were running in Ethiopia's favour and in May, Italy accepted arbitration; but the terms were ambiguous on a vital question—the location of Wal Wal in relation to the Italian Somaliland-Ethiopian boundary. Without establishing this fact the question of responsibility for the outbreak of fighting at Wal Wal could not properly be decided, but Italy objected to "frontier questions" being brought into the discussion. Ethiopia took the opposite view.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

The Council voted in favour of Italy and the "legal interpretation of the agreements and treaties concerning the frontier" were excluded from the commission's terms of reference. Subsequently, the commission held neither side to blame for the Wal Wal incident and could not pronounce on the question of sovereignty.

The sterility of the arbitration commission and the increasing likelihood of war persuaded Anthony Eden, Britain's Minister for League of Nations Affairs, to take a proposal in June of that year to Rome. This envisaged the cession to Ethiopia of a narrow tract of territory in British Somaliland, including the port of Zeila, in compensation for substantial Abyssinian concessions to Italian demands. These included the unconditional annexation by Italy of all non-Amharic territories and an Italian mandate for the rest of the country. As a further inducement towards finding an amicable settlement, Italy was to receive a slice of territory in the eastern half of the British Protectorate, including part of the Nogal valley.

Viscount Templewood, who, as Sir Samuel Hoare, was then Foreign Secretary, records in his memoirs that "a Sunday newspaper published the outline of the plans, and what is more serious, a Cabinet inquiry discovered that the information had been given by the Parliamentary Private Secretary of one of the Ministers. . . . The disclosure at once excited an agitation against the transfer of any British territory to the Italian dictator, even though it was desert in Somaliland."<sup>5</sup>

Eden told an agitated House of Commons on July 4th that his proposals were put forward "as a constructive contribution to the settlement of the dispute between Italy and Abyssinia". Asked whether Somali consent for the proposed transfer of their land had been obtained. Mr Malcolm MacDonald, Secretary of State for the Colonies, said that ". . . it would not be necessary to have the consent of the tribes concerned, but, of course, we were bound to consult

## THE WAL WAL INCIDENT

their interests . . .". In another statement to the House four days later, MacDonald drew a distinction between Britain's partial sovereignty and full jurisdiction, in relation to her earlier treaties of protection with Somali clans, and maintained Britain's right to transfer Somali territory to another State. "British Somaliland is not British territory," he declared, "but is a Protectorate. His Majesty does not possess full sovereignty there, but has for many years possessed full powers of administration and jurisdiction by virtue of usage and sufferance as well as under the treaties of 1884. . . . Had circumstances arisen which required further consideration to be given to the suggestion made tentatively by my Right Honourable friend the Minister for League of Nations Affairs consultation would have taken place with the tribe affected with a view to the transfer to Ethiopia of the necessary rights in the area concerned."

Undeterred by Parliamentary objections to the cession of 'British' territory in Somaliland, the Government persisted in the belief that a formula on the lines that they had proposed stood the best chance of success. A Conciliation Committee of the League reported on September 18th that League advisers should in future direct the administration of finance, justice, education and public health in Ethiopia; and provide a corps of police to suppress illicit traffic in arms and frontier raids. The report concluded that Britain and France were ready to facilitate territorial adjustments between Italy and Ethiopia by offering Ethiopia, if necessary, "certain sacrifices" [*sic*] in the region of the Somaliland coast. Ethiopia accepted the report but Italy rejected it.<sup>6</sup>

Mussolini was by now convinced that Britain would not intervene if she attacked Ethiopia. He had already requested the British Government for a statement of their interests in Abyssinia. A report by a Foreign Office committee of specialists had been completed and the British Government were studying its implications. This did not, however, prove to be necessary because the Italian secret service succeeded



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

in photographing the report in the British Embassy at Rome. It disclosed the fact that British experts "were not worried over Italian predominance in Abyssinia so long as the head waters of Lake Tsana were safe".<sup>7</sup> The report strengthened Mussolini's belief that the British were playing a double game.

Italy invaded Ethiopia on October 3, 1935, with the most modern weapons at her command, including mustard gas. The Ethiopians fought with exceptional valour. Typical of the many recorded acts of heroism was the grim stand made by the Director of Jijiga, Afewerk Woldesmeat, with six hundred soldiers at Qorahay, in the Ogaden. He built an encampment round Sheikh Mohamed Abdille's old fort where he placed an Oerlikon anti-aircraft gun which he handled himself. Ignoring a severe leg wound, which he had received during the first air attack on November 2nd, Afewerk continued to fire his Oerlikon at attacking aircraft for three days until he was fatally wounded. He was the first Ethiopian to be awarded posthumously an Ethiopian title, that of Dedazmach. In 1956, the Emperor dedicated a monument to him at Dagabur in the Ogaden Province.

Still searching for a compromise solution, Hoare left for Paris early in December and agreed a proposed settlement with Laval which, according to L. S. Amery, Mussolini accepted in a telegram to his Ambassador in London on December 18th. But in view of Hoare's unexpected resignation because of another public outcry in Britain over the cession of territory, following a leak of the terms of the Hoare-Laval agreement in the French press, the Ambassador declined to deliver the message.<sup>8</sup>

The terms were that Ethiopia should receive an effective outlet to the sea with full sovereign rights. In exchange for this outlet, Ethiopia should cede some, but not all, of the territory in Tigre occupied by Italy, and carry out a frontier rectification in the east and south-west. Italy, acting under the League, would have the monopoly of economic



## THE WAL WAL INCIDENT

development in a large zone in the south and south-west. Ethiopian sovereignty would be maintained over all except the districts actually ceded to Italy. The plan was to be referred to the League for approval or rejection.

Clement Attlee's comment in Parliament on December 19, 1935, seemed justified: ". . . the trouble with the Government's foreign policy is its duality; the fact that you have not a single line of policy but the constant interweaving of the imperialist and the League of Nations policies . . .".

Winston Churchill in *The Gathering Storm* wrote: "If ever there was an opportunity of striking a decisive blow for a generous cause with the minimum of risk it was here now. The fact that the nerve of the British Government was not equal to the occasion . . . actually played a part in leading to an infinitely more terrible war."

## THE WAR YEARS

'Tax collecting' forays in the Somali Ogaden country were called off as early as 1915 after the massacre of one hundred and fifty Ethiopian soldiers in January of that year. Since that was the only profitable element in the provincial administration of the Ogaden, this zone, which also included territory to the south of the Somaliland border, was barely occupied by the authorities before the Wal Wal incident.

British district commissioners from the Protectorate ignored the presence of the boundary in their cautious efforts to administer migrating pastoralists who were now well equipped with firearms following the twenty years' war with Sheikh Mohamed. Between clans, firearms upset the balance of power, and, with the sanctuary that the border afforded to the guilty, the customary machinery for settling disputes had been weakened. The smaller clans, and those nominally under Ethiopian rule in these border areas, relied increasingly on the effectiveness of the British Protectorate government to maintain the *status quo*. But in this thankless task, officers of the administration unavoidably appeared to be supporting one clan against another, and, from their point of view, the practical problems of administration were aggravated by the almost total absence of Ethiopian administration on their side of the southern boundary.

## THE WAR YEARS

Yet this was preferable, at first, to the rigid attitude of the Italian authorities, who administered the Ogaden after their conquest of Ethiopia. Under pressure from competing Ogaden clans, they wished to minimise the trans-frontier movement of Protectorate clans by introducing an impractical system of entry permit for each nomad.<sup>1</sup> The position was made worse by Britain's *de facto* (and subsequently *de jure*) recognition of Italy's occupation of Ethiopia, because it then became uncertain whether the Anglo-Ethiopian treaty of 1897, with its trans-frontier grazing provision, still operated. There was a further complication when Italy decided to incorporate the Ogaden with their colony of Somaliland. An uneasy agreement, however, was reached between Britain and Italy in 1937 which secured the Somali grazing rights in exchange for certain facilities at the port of Berbera. Nevertheless the Italians refused to be bound by the grazing provisions in the 1897 treaty with Ethiopia.

In succeeding years, mutual confidence between Italian and British administrators grew as practical experience of common problems was gained. For their part, the British welcomed an administration which could act promptly in the interest of the nomads concerned, and this continued until the outbreak of war. One of the many advantages was a reciprocal agreement to disarm the clansmen on either side of the boundary. Another advantage, to the Somalis at any rate, apart from some rapid economic improvements, especially in the construction of roads, was the restoration of their land on the western boundary from Ethiopian colonisers.

Anglo-Italian relations on the Kenya border were also cordial. A month before the outbreak of war with Germany in 1939 the War Office telegraphed the Northern Brigade of troops in Kenya that the British Government regarded Italian neutrality as 'preferable' and forbade military dispositions on the frontier.<sup>2</sup> But nine months later when Italy declared war, soldiers on the Kenya-Somaliland frontier were placed on a war footing and contact with Italians of

course ceased. Frontier skirmishes on Kenya's northern frontier began as soon as war with Italy had been declared. The Italians captured Moyale in July 1940 but made no further attempts to exploit this success. They wished first to acquire British Somaliland which was potentially a more dangerous base for allied operations against Ethiopia.

According to Moyse-Bartlett,<sup>3</sup> pre-war plans for the defence of British Somaliland assumed French participation from Jibuti. The Protectorate's defences were thus greatly weakened when the new governor and commander-in-chief of French Somaliland, General Germain, promptly came to terms with Italy on his arrival in Jibuti on July 22nd. The British Protectorate was left to defend itself, a territory the size of England and Wales, with 568 soldiers of the Somaliland Camel Corps and the 1st Battalion of the Northern Rhodesia Regiment. Berbera, Hargeisa and Zeila were bombed and Italian troops from Jijiga occupied Borama in the west of the Protectorate. Reinforcements from Britain, Kenya and India quickly took up positions on hills overlooking the main Hargeisa-Berbera road. Meanwhile a division of Italian troops, massed on the Protectorate's southern border in three formidable columns of lorry-borne infantry, supported by tanks and artillery, advanced towards Berbera on August 11th. After heavy fighting the campaign ended seven days later with the evacuation of British troops.

Britain's departure from Somaliland had the advantage of placing the majority of Somalis under one administration. But seven months later they were to see a change in their nationality once again. The attack on Italian Somaliland by the British forces in Kenya began in January 1941 and moved swiftly through to Mogadishu and Jijiga, by-passing British Somaliland from which the Italians had already withdrawn. An expedition from Aden, including two Indian battalions, seized Berbera on March 19, two days after the Nigerians had occupied Jijiga. The former Protectorate was quickly reoccupied and placed under British military admin-



istration. By the time the Emperor marched into his own capital on May 5, 1941, Ethiopia, like the whole of former Italian Somaliland, also came under military administration.

The occupation of Ethiopia by British forces presented the British Government with problems in their relations with the Emperor. Having lived in exile, he claimed that he had not renounced his sovereignty and wished to take over the administration of his country immediately. But outside assistance was needed because the machinery of his government, the public services and the finances of the State, had collapsed with the Italian surrender. Moreover, there were some 170,000 Italian prisoners of war for which the British army was responsible; and the recent entry of Japan into the war rendered East Africa strategically important. A compromise, limiting the Emperor's jurisdiction without at the same time infringing his sovereignty, was sought.

In a policy statement to the House of Commons, Mr Anthony Eden, the Foreign Secretary, said on February 4, 1941, "His Majesty's Government would welcome the reappearance of an independent Ethiopian State and recognise the claim of the Emperor Haile Selassie to the throne. The Emperor has intimated to His Majesty's Government that he will need outside assistance and guidance. His Majesty's Government agree with this view and consider that any such assistance and guidance in economic and political matters should be the subject of international arrangement at the conclusion of peace. They reaffirm that they have themselves no territorial ambitions in Abyssinia. In the meanwhile the conduct of military operations by Imperial forces in parts of Abyssinia will require temporary measures of military guidance and control. These will be carried out in consultation with the Emperor, and will be brought to an end as soon as the situation permits."

From the Somali point of view, this statement bedevilled any hopes of an easy adjustment of their frontiers with Ethiopia after the war, since the government reaffirmed that

it had no territorial ambitions in Ethiopia. We do not need to go into other problems that subsequently arose out of this statement, and which placed so severe a strain on Anglo-Ethiopian relations, but, as an illustration of these difficulties, albeit a humorous aspect of an otherwise lamentable scene, it is perhaps worth recounting a story by Sir Philip Mitchell, the chief political officer, in his *African Afterthoughts*. "Towards the end we even had sharp arguments because the Emperor wanted to retain in the country more Italian civilian technicians than the commander-in-chief thought safe; the Italians wanted to stay and hundreds slipped away and were hidden in Ethiopian houses. As I was by way of saving these people from a horrid fate at the hands of the Ethiopians . . . I found this last act in the comedy, for comedy it had in great part become, more than a little tiresome."<sup>4</sup>

In spite of the comedy, an important agreement was reached between Britain and Ethiopia on January 31, 1942. It restored to Ethiopia full sovereignty but retained under a military convention the administration of two areas in Somali occupied territory, the Ogaden and the Reserved Area. The former, which stretched from the north-east corner of Kenya to the southern boundary of British Somaliland, was still administered as part of Italian Somaliland for the sake of administrative convenience. The Reserved Area, which included Jijiga and the grain producing areas to the west of the Protectorate boundary, encompassed also the railway from Diredawa to the French Somaliland border. The reason for retaining the Reserved Area, which was conceived as a series of military cantonments, was to safeguard the railway and to continue operations against the Vichy French in Jibuti. Whilst the area of the Ogaden was to remain intact during the currency of the agreement (two years), the Reserved Area could have been enlarged or reduced according to the military situation at the time.

Ever since the capture of Diredawa in March 1941, French

Somaliland had become isolated from Italy and its supplies were somewhat limited. The governor, as we have seen, supported the Vichy régime, and he possessed a garrison of six Senegalese battalions. Instead of fighting it out, the British forces decided to blockade the colony. An East African Brigade was given the task of watching the frontier from Zeila to Lake Abbé to stop Somalis from sending livestock into Jibuti and to prevent Vichy agents entering British occupied territory. A sea blockade was also maintained but this had to be lifted as soon as Japan entered the war in December 1941. A French submarine from Madagascar then ran supplies into Jibuti which rendered the land blockade useless.

Moyse-Bartlett writes that "it was quite beyond the grasp of the Askaris, as they kept their monotonous watch around the barren frontier of French Somaliland, to understand why the army that had so rapidly destroyed Italian power in East Africa should hesitate in the face of a handful of Frenchmen, or for what strange reason there were apparently two kinds of French, one good and the other bad."<sup>5</sup>

With the successful landings of allied troops in North Africa and the fall of Madagascar in November 1942, French Somaliland was no longer confident of a German-Italian victory and the commander of the 1st Senegalese Battalion, Colonel Raynal, defected across the border with one-third of the Jibuti garrison. The acting governor, General Dupont, asked for negotiations with the British commander but since he could only offer an economic agreement and declined to support General de Gaulle, an invasion was planned. Colonel Raynal, supported by British armoured cars, crossed the French frontier on Boxing Day. The governor capitulated and the colony was taken over by an non-Vichy administration.

The restoration of friendly relations with French Somaliland rendered the continued British occupation of military cantonments in the Reserved Area superfluous. The Emperor



was already irked<sup>6</sup> by the presence of a British administration in the Ogaden and Reserved Area and wished to terminate the 1942 agreement. The French collapse in Jibuti gave him the opportunity and on May 25, 1943, he asked that a new agreement be negotiated.

British officers had by now experienced for three years some of the administrative problems concerning nomads in these three regions. They were (and still are) problems that are important to people who live precarious lives from one long drought to another; people who must follow the rains in one season and orbit round wells the next; people who have their own unique system of social security and administration of justice. These people also need, from time to time, the intervention and assistance of a modern centralised government to regulate and control water and pasture; to extract underground water intelligently so that it does not upset the delicate balance between migrations, pasture and water; to bolster their judicial system which artificial boundaries destroy; and to restore equilibrium between clans by a policy of disarmament.

Firearms were a symptom of insecurity with a significant historical background. Until the rise of Sheikh Mohamed at the beginning of the century, Somalis were unarmed, and the balance of relative strength between clans was assessed according to their numbers. It was the Amhara who were legally armed, through the ports of Jibuti and Massawa, by Ethiopia's accession to the Brussels General Act of 1890. Somalis were denied the import of arms and were defenceless against armed raiders from Ethiopia.

The Earl of Rosebery admitted in 1893 that Britain "cannot with justice withhold from the Somali tribes under our protection such limited supply of arms as may suffice to enable them to protect themselves against the incursions of predatory bands of Abyssinians".<sup>7</sup> Nothing in fact was done, indeed to have attempted to have armed some clansmen and not others would have upset the delicate balance of power.



This happened in 1910 when the British Government, having been forced to withdraw to the coast because of the expense of continuing the campaign against Sheikh Mohamed and his Dervishes, mistakenly issued arms to the 'friendless' in order that they should defend themselves against the Sheikh. The result was catastrophic as it led to the total breakdown of the clan system of maintaining peace and order, and was a help rather than a hindrance to the Dervishes.

Thus, as the British administrators assumed control of the vast Somali plateau in 1941, it was soon evident that a programme of disarmament, which both the Italians and the British had introduced just before the war, was an important factor in restoring normal conditions. The attempt was made, but it was not entirely successful for reasons that need not be discussed here. Nevertheless, a measure of equilibrium was restored and the many officers, who had had an opportunity of studying this and other problems of administration on the ground, recognised the obvious need for the Somali provinces to be administered by a central authority with a common policy. Indeed, this prompted Mr Ernest Bevin after the war to encourage the concept of 'Greater Somalia'. A cynical view of this was taken by both Russia and the United States at the peace conference in 1946 when they accused Britain, in putting forward such proposals, of empire building.

The Emperor appears to have been of the same mind when he re-negotiated the 1942 agreement and was reluctant to permit Britain's continued occupation of the Ogaden and Reserved Area; yet his own administration, in particular the police and the army, was clearly not in an adequate state of preparation to control this region. A compromise was finally reached. The Reserved Area was to be reduced in size, to cover only the western districts adjacent to the Protectorate boundary, including Jijiga. All official buildings in this area, and in the Ogaden, would fly the Ethiopian flag alongside the British flag. To entrench still further Ethiopia's

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

sovereignty over these two contiguous regions, Article 7 of the agreement emphasised that Ethiopia's sanction for a continuation of British military administration was "in order as an Ally to contribute to the effective prosecution of the war, and without prejudice to their underlying sovereignty . . .".

It is difficult to see how these arid regions, far distant from the coast, could in any way have contributed to the war effort. One explanation of this anomaly is that Ethiopia wished to buy time, having safely secured her sovereign rights in the area. As for Britain, the agreement deferred the thorny problem of former Italian Somaliland's undelimited boundary with Ethiopia, and the problem of British protected clansmen grazing their livestock on the Ethiopian side of the Protectorate border. The agreement was signed on December 19, 1944, and had two years to run. This carried it beyond the end of the war when the vexed question of the 'disposal' of ex-Italian Somaliland became an international issue.

## AFTERMATH OF WAR

The disposal of ex-Italian colonies after World War II was of considerable interest to Ethiopia. There was Eritrea to the north of her and Somalia to the east, both former Italian colonies now under British military administration. Ethiopia claimed them both. In leaflets showered over Eritrea by the Royal Air Force in 1941, Emperor Haile Selassie called upon the "Eritrean people and people of Benadir" to deliver themselves from "alien slavery". "I have come," declared the proclamation, "to restore the independence of my country, including Eritrea and the Benadir, whose people will hencefore dwell under the shade of the Ethiopian flag."<sup>1</sup>

Benadir is a province of Mogadishu and is an ancient name for that part of the coast line. It was acquired by Italy in 1889 from the Sultan of Zanzibar. The colony of Eritrea was artificially created by Italy after she had acquired the port of Assab in 1880 and Massawa in 1885. Ethiopia claimed both territories on historical grounds. "Prior to the race of the European Powers to divide up the continent of Africa," the Ethiopian government stated in a Memorandum<sup>2</sup> to the United Nations, "Ethiopia included an extensive coast-line along the Red Sea and Indian Ocean."

In her book on *The Government of Ethiopia*, Miss Margery Perham challenges Ethiopia's claim to Eritrea and

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

former Italian Somaliland as "lost provinces" of Ethiopia. She states that this claim, which appears in an official memorandum of the Ethiopian government to the Foreign Ministers' Conference in 1945, is based "upon some indefinite reference to early history and migrations, almost every sentence of which cries out for comment or correction".<sup>3</sup> Miss Perham concedes that Ethiopia exercised an overlordship over much of the Horn of Africa in the early middle ages, but points out that even then her control was not unbroken. "It is most improbable," she adds, "that a kingdom struggling to assert itself in the northern mountains against local Hamitic groups was able to exercise any continuous or effective government or import her culture over the vast, distant, surrounding lowlands." But Miss Perham maintains that Ethiopia was right on historical, cultural and religious grounds to claim that part of Tigrinya-speaking Eritrea, formerly known as *Bahrnagash*, which was "the cradle of her power and culture and contains some of her oldest Aksumite relics and famous monasteries which are still centres of Ethiopian Christianity".<sup>4</sup>

As for Ethiopia's claim to Italian Somaliland, Miss Perham remarks: "In so far as such an ancient claim of a kind that would give Italy to Germany and parts of France to England, or vice versa, has any validity, it surely applies much more to the nearer and more useful French and British Somalilands. In the latter the Ethiopians almost certainly at times in the middle ages controlled the port of Zeila."<sup>5</sup> Miss Perham concludes, however, that there is little basis to the Ethiopian claim to most of the vast semi-desert region of Somalia "which threw off at least five centuries ago such overlordship as Ethiopia exercised over parts of it".

At the end of World War II, the Four Powers, Britain, France, Soviet Russia and the United States, were unable to find common ground on the disposal of ex-Somaliland. France suggested the continuation of Italian rule, the United States wanted direct international administration, and



Britain proposed a British trusteeship for a "Greater Somalia". Mr Bevin, Britain's Foreign Secretary, made this proposal to his three colleagues on the Four Power commission in April 1946. He qualified it with the obvious reservation that Ethiopia's agreement would also be necessary, but nevertheless the proposal was not received well.

Commenting on it in the House of Commons on June 4, 1946, Mr Bevin said that it was unjust of Mr Molotov to state that Britain was "trying to expand the British Empire at the expense of Italy and Ethiopia". In an incidental passage recalling that the Horn of Africa had been divided between Great Britain, France and Italy in the latter part of last century, Mr Bevin added that "at about the time we occupied our part, the Ethiopians occupied an inland area which is the grazing grounds for nearly half the nomads of British Somaliland for six months of the year. Similarly, the nomads of Italian Somaliland must cross the existing frontiers in search of grass." Ethiopia did not, of course, occupy this area, nor was it in fact ceded to Ethiopia, as we have seen. Giving details of his proposal, Bevin explained to the House that the British government had "proposed that British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, and the adjacent part of Ethiopia, if Ethiopia agreed, should be lumped together as a trust territory, so that the nomads should lead their frugal existence with the least possible hindrance and there might be a real chance of a decent economic life, as understood in that territory".

However naïve Mr Bevin may have been to have supposed that the Ethiopians would have agreed to this proposal, his luminous sincerity was without question. "All I want to do," he said, "is to give those poor nomads a chance to live . . . it is to nobody's interest to stop the poor people and cattle there getting a decent living." But Mr Bevin's chances of persuading the Emperor to forgo his sovereignty over this area, so soon after Britain had, for the first time, formally recognised it in the agreements of 1942 and 1944,

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

required a reciprocal gesture on the part of Britain, but without the reservation that she should be appointed the administering power. This slender opportunity for uniting all the Somali territories under a United Nations Trusteeship was lost because Bevin's sensible initiative was not matched by a willingness on Britain's part to apply to herself the logic of her own compelling arguments. Needless to say Ethiopia rejected outright the suggestion that she should renounce her sovereignty over the Ogaden.

The chief administrator of Somalia and the military governor of British Somaliland, Brigadiers Wickham and Fisher, could not have been ignorant of these events. It would appear to have been more than fortuitous that they planned a joint 'durbar' of Ogaden and Protectorate clansmen on June 14th, ten days after Mr Bevin spoke in the House of Commons. The 'durbar' was attended by a large gathering of Somalis from all over the plateau. They were told publicly of Britain's obligations under the 1897 treaty with Ethiopia. Assurances were given to clans from the Protectorate that the treaty remained unchanged and continued to guarantee their grazing and watering rights. But the 1944 agreement was then running out.

It would not be unreasonable to suppose that, in view of Mr Bevin's plea for a 'Greater Somalia', the Ethiopians may have sought, against Britain's will, an early termination of the 1944 agreement, which was due to expire that year. It would undoubtedly have helped to assuage Ethiopia's anxieties if the administrators in charge of the Somali regions were to make this joint statement in public emphasising Ethiopia's continuing sovereignty. This was all the more necessary because the military administration had decided from the start of the 1944 agreement that it would be preferable not to fly any flags in the Ogaden, rather than to fly both the British and Ethiopian flags side by side. Ethiopia's sovereignty was therefore not evident to the nomads on the ground, and since only an inkling of it had

been experienced by them before it was totally withdrawn in 1935, there was some reason for reminding the nomads of its existence on paper.

Britain's proposal for a 'Greater Somalia' and France's support for Italy's return to her former colonial possessions prompted Ethiopia to intensify her claim to ex-Italian Somaliland. With her remarkable capacity for diligent and vigorous lobbying she made a good impression at the United Nations Assembly which had much sympathy for a member to whom the League of Nations felt in any event morally indebted. The Ethiopian government also carried her lobbying into the streets of Addis Ababa by staging demonstrations outside foreign embassies to impress upon foreigners the nation's opposition to the return of Italian administration to Somalia and the affection that Somalis had for their mother country, Ethiopia.

Meanwhile, in Mogadishu, the Somali Youth League (SYL) heartened by the Bevin proposals, organised their party to resume pressure for the unification of all the 'Somalilands' to be placed under United Nations Trusteeship. They were opposed to the return of Italian administration as strongly as they were opposed to Ethiopian pretensions. The SYL grew from strength to strength and its membership spread to the British Protectorate, to Jijiga and the Ogaden, and to the Northern Frontier District of Kenya. There was, however, a substantial group of Somalis, for the most part those who lived in the Shibeli and Juba regions, supporting the return of an Italian administration. The two factions clashed during a visit to Mogadishu by the Four Power commission in January 1948.

The commission came to ascertain the wishes of the people as to their future and to investigate the political, economic and social conditions of the territory. A week after the commission arrived, it asked that those political parties that wished to do so should be permitted to hold public demonstrations. Accordingly, the SYL sought and



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

received such authority. At the same time an unauthorised counter-demonstration was staged by Italians and their Somali supporters. Matters got out of hand and widespread disturbances followed, resulting in the death of fifty-one Italians and seventeen Somalis.

Britain had by now opened discussions with the French Government with a view to exchanging with Ethiopia the port of Zeila, in return for the grazing areas to the south and west of the Protectorate boundaries. France was consulted because of an obligation under the 1906 Treaty. The proposal, however, floundered for two reasons: France would not sanction the construction of a railway to Zeila, and, secondly, when it became clear that the United Nations would recommend that Eritrea should be federated with Ethiopia, the latter would in any case acquire ample port facilities at Assab and Massawa. Britain was now resigned to the inevitable return of the Ogaden to Ethiopia, but she was anxious to retain control over those parts of the Reserved Area and the Ogaden which the Anglo-Ethiopian Boundary Commission had jointly agreed in 1935 were the grazing limits of clans from British Somaliland. This was subsequently known as the "Haud and Reserved Area", which continued under military administration until 1955.

Plans for the evacuation of the Ogaden and Jijiga were discussed in Addis Ababa early in 1948. Ethiopian officers began to take over the administration from British officers between May and July of the same year. The last burst of overt Somali nationalism occurred in Jijiga when Major Demeka, the governor-designate of the Ogaden Province, requested the British military administration, which was still in charge, to remove the SYL flag flying from party headquarters. It had been run up to give offence to the Ethiopians and was in fact illegal. As the leaders refused to pull down their flag, the police brought it down with a machine gun mounted on an armoured car. Disturbances followed, during which a policeman was killed and another



## AFTERMATH OF WAR

wounded by the explosion of a hand grenade thrown from the roof of the SYL headquarters. The police opened fire on the crowd, killing twenty-five of them and that was the end of the final act of defiance by the SYL before it was proscribed, as are all political parties in Ethiopia.\* Thus, after thirteen years, Ethiopian administration of Jijiga and Dagabur was resumed. Ethiopian district governors were then despatched to Gabridare, Qalafu and Warder, and the eastern part of the Ogaden was administered by Ethiopian officials on September 23, 1948, for the first time in its history.

The negotiations preceding the protocol to withdraw, which was signed on July 24, 1948, posed the question of Ethiopia's boundary with Somalia. This was fixed provisionally in the protocol "as being without prejudice to the international frontier between Ethiopia and former Italian Somaliland". It started at the south-eastern tip of the Haud in the village of Galadi and took a somewhat zig-zag course<sup>8</sup> to Mustahil on the river Shibeli, and then followed the existing provisional boundary to Dolo (Map 2).

It is perhaps significant that this boundary lay a little more than one hundred kilometres from Wal Wal, the area which all documentary evidence available at the time of the incident in 1934 pointed to as the accepted boundary. Indeed, if the mean of the line Mustahil-Galadi is extended to the Protectorate border it meets it at about the 47° parallel and not 48° (Map 2), which was the subsequent adjustment made by the British military administration on its withdrawal from Somalia in 1950. It so happens that the area to the east of Galadi, which was later excised by the present provisional line, is now an oil prospecting region for which a West German company has been granted a concession by the Ethiopian Government. Economic potential adds another dimension to this disputed territory. On the other hand, it is

\* Surprisingly the party was also proscribed in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya from 1948-60.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

difficult to see how the oil, if it was to be found, could be economically exported without some arrangement with the Somali Republic.

In September 1948, the Four Powers had to refer the disposal of ex-Italian colonies to the United Nations General Assembly as they had failed to find an agreed solution. In a memorandum<sup>7</sup> to the Secretary General, the Somali Youth League, and the Somali National League, the foremost political party in the Somaliland Protectorate, stated that the majority of Somalis wished "to be united as one Somali Nation" and were willing "to be placed under United Nations control on a Four Power basis". The memorandum concluded "we do not pretend that we can stand on our own feet at the moment, but ask the United Nations Trusteeship Council to decide questions relating to the formation, boundaries, and administration of a Somali Trust Territory to be known as Somalia, this Territory to consist of all areas at present predominantly populated by Somalis . . .".

In view of Britain's withdrawal from the Ogaden and Ethiopia's firm attitude to no secession, the General Assembly could not have been expected to take the proposal for a 'Greater Somalia' any further, although the Somalis were not unsupported. Sir Zafrullah Khan, the Pakistan delegate, urged the Assembly to recognise that ex-Italian Somaliland was only a segment of the Somalilands, which should all be united to form an independent political entity.<sup>8</sup> Ethiopia could not subscribe to this view, nor did she abandon her claim to Somalia,<sup>9</sup> but she appeared to have somewhat modified her attitude in a statement by the Ethiopian delegate to the Deputies of the Foreign Ministers' Conference in Paris which declared that Ethiopia "as the State most directly concerned, will accept any solution freely expressed and desired by the inhabitants of that territory."<sup>10</sup> The Ethiopian representative also told the United Nations that his country profoundly felt the justice of their claim which is "based on the principle of self-determination of

## AFTERMATH OF WAR

peoples. If the peoples concerned wish to be united, union is not incompatible with the principle of self-determination."<sup>11</sup>

It is evident that Ethiopia only supported the Somali desire for unification provided the territories formed part of her empire, as occurred with Eritrea. Ethiopia still persisted in this view even after the Assembly had agreed on November 21, 1949, to place Somalia under United Nations Trusteeship for ten years, with Italy as the administering authority. Ethiopia was, of course, perfectly justified in criticising the decision on the grounds of Italy's former conduct, because no boundary had been delineated between the two territories and this could again threaten her security. But there was strange logic in the Ethiopian view that the principle of self-determination should have been applied to Somalia to conform with her own desire for expansion. On the other hand, a more generous view is that Ethiopia may have advocated that the principle be applied merely to ensure that Italy did not return to Somalia. This was certainly the purpose of the Emperor's telegram to the Secretary General on September 20, 1950. "... in overriding the principles of self-determination of peoples so clearly expressed by the Somali people . . . the fourth General Assembly failed in its responsibility for reaching decisions urgently required in the interests of peace and justice. . . ."<sup>12</sup>

Britain handed over the administration of Somalia to Italy on April 1, 1950, having established the new provisional boundary line (Map 2) to which reference has already been made. It was an unilateral arrangement by Britain, of an entirely provisional and non-prejudicial character, to which both Ethiopia and Italy expressed their strongest reservations.

## THE 'HAUD' FIASCO

Having approved the Trusteeship Agreement for Somalia on December 15, 1950, the United Nations General Assembly recommended that the Ethiopian and Italian governments should negotiate a settlement of their old boundary dispute. If this failed, they should agree to mediation, and, if they were unable to accept the recommendations of the mediator, to proceed to arbitration. Thus, from Ethiopia's viewpoint, the absurdity of continuing to withhold the exercise of her sovereignty along that part of her disputed border with Italy, which was still under the control of the British Military Administration in the Haud, must have been evident. In any event, the war was long since over, and the presence of a British military administration on Ethiopian territory, as a contribution to "the effective prosecution of the war", could hardly have been sustained. It is not altogether surprising, therefore, that Ethiopia asked Britain in 1954 to withdraw from these grazing grounds, and that, in view of Britain's anxiety to retain some authority in the area, the key to the timing of Britain's withdrawal lay in a projected state visit by the Emperor to London in October of the same year. The agreement reached between Ato Aklilou and Mr Eden during that visit was signed in London on November 29, 1954. It was greeted by Somalis in the British Protectorate and in



## THE 'HAUD' FIASCO

Mogadishu with an outburst of indignation.

The agreement terminated the 1944 agreement which provided for the continuation of a British Military Administration in the Haud and Reserved Area without prejudice to Ethiopia's sovereignty. In its place, the 1954 agreement reaffirmed the "full and exclusive sovereignty" of Ethiopia over the Haud and Reserved Area and, equally, the rights of tribes from both sides to cross the frontier for grazing, and bound both parties to protect tribal grazing rights. Other provisions in the Agreement included the establishment of a British liaison officer and his staff to reside in the Haud and Reserved Area; likewise the 'tribal organisation' of chiefs, elders and tribal police for the purpose of maintaining law and order. Medical, veterinary and educational services from the Protectorate were also to continue in the area. The agreement was to last fifteen years, but its eventual termination was not to affect the grazing rights established under the 1897 Treaty. The agreement was published in January 1955.

The Somalis were outraged by this agreement on the general grounds that their territory had been ceded to Ethiopia without their knowledge or consent. All political parties in the Protectorate combined in a National United Front and sent a delegation under the able leadership of Mr Michael Mariano to Britain, and subsequently to the United Nations, to protest. The burden of the Somali argument was that in their treaties with Britain in 1884-85 they did not transfer territory to the British Crown, but sought, on the withdrawal of the forces of the Khedive of Egypt, arrangements with the British Government which would effectively maintain their independence and the preservation of order. In return, the Somalis agreed not to cede any portion of the territories inhabited by them. Further treaties in 1886 invited the British Government to undertake the protection of their territories. Thus, Somalis considered that the 1897 Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty (likewise the 1894 Treaty with Italy) and

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

the more recent 1954 agreement, were violations of the 1884-86 Anglo-Somali treaties, and, in so far as the treaties with Ethiopia purported to transfer Somali territory to Ethiopia, they were invalid, the action of Great Britain was therefore unlawful.<sup>1</sup>

In a statement to the House of Commons made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on February 23, 1955, he said that the Haud and Reserved Area had been Ethiopian territory in international law since the Treaty of 1897 and that no British territory [*sic*] was being transferred to Ethiopia. The Minister added that he had no alternative but to inform the delegation that the government must abide by their obligations in international law. "It appeared to us," concluded the Minister, "to be more important, while not disputing the undeniable Ethiopian sovereignty, to concentrate on getting protection of the grazing rights. . . . We have now got the grazing rights guaranteed in perpetuity, with a number of other important rights."

On the question of the inconsistency of the 1897 Treaty with the Somali treaties, the Secretary of State said that "the 1897 Treaty is an international instrument, whereas the other agreements are not". Thus, according to D. J. Latham Brown, "the Minister regarded the later agreement as binding by virtue of its superior status in international law, by reason of the constant acquiescence of the British Government in the legal position which it established, since he also remarked that 'the Ethiopians attach immense importance to their sovereignty which, in a number of successive treaties, we never disputed' ".<sup>2</sup>

The argument did not, however, rest there. The Minister was challenged when he said that he regretted "the Treaty of 1897 but, like much that has happened before, it is impossible to undo it", adding that "the 1897 Agreement [Treaty] defined Ethiopian territory in these areas and I have no right to go back on that". Mr Willey, MP, argued that as no territory had been transferred by the Somalis to Britain "it

## THE 'HAUD' FIASCO

was not in our power to give away that which we did not possess".<sup>3</sup>

Whatever the legal merits of these arguments, one disquieting feature in particular emerged, namely the apparent indifference, or ignorance, of the British Government of the content of the diplomatic despatches of this period. It will be recalled that in 1897 Rennell Rodd specifically stated in his despatch to Lord Salisbury of June 4, 1897, that in accordance with his instructions it was necessary for him to find a form of words, in drafting the exchange of letters with Makonnen, "which would only involve Abyssinian recognition of our Protectorate without in any way admitting recognition on our part of a cession to Ethiopia". He added, "I succeeded in getting rid of any phraseology which necessarily implied a recognition of Abyssinian rights beyond our frontier".<sup>4</sup>

In view of this, it is difficult to see how the Minister could claim with such confidence that the Haud and Reserved areas had been "Ethiopian territory in international law since the Treaty of 1897"; or that "the 1897 agreement defined Ethiopian territory in these areas". As further evidence that the Government, before reaching a decision on the future of this area, had failed to consult the original diplomatic records, it is only necessary to refer to the statement in the House of Commons made by the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs on February 5, 1955. Speaking of the frontier adjustments agreed between Rodd and Makonnen, the Minister said, "it was then recognised that this line had the unsatisfactory effect of cutting across the traditional grazing areas of the Somali tribes, and letters were accordingly annexed to the Treaty providing that the tribes on either side of the frontier were free to cross that frontier for the purpose of grazing".

The only inference that can be drawn from this statement is that Rodd unknowingly agreed to a transfer of territory which he subsequently found to be unsatisfactory and



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

attempted to remedy it by an exchange of letters providing for free access across the border. The nomadic movements to and from the Haud had been carefully studied by Captain Swayne, one of Rodd's advisers on the Mission, five years previously when the 1894 boundary with Italy was being considered. In a despatch from India at that period, Lord Lansdowne, the Governor General, wrote that "the recent surveys by Captain Swayne and his brother show, however, that the tribes on the north of the Haud within the British Protectorate graze within the Haud, and under these circumstances we are of the opinion that it would be more expedient to include within the British zone of influence that part of the Haud to which the said tribes usually resort".<sup>5</sup>

Rodd was certainly under no illusion about the territory that he was about to abandon. In the same despatch of June 4, 1897, describing his negotiations with Ras Makonnen, he wrote, "I tried very hard to bring the boundary from Arrhan Arrhe down to the northermost wells of Milmil, but the Ras on his side fought for the 9th parallel as the boundary line right away to its intersection with the 48th meridian, cutting off from us some of the best food-supplying country to the west, and the negotiations appeared once more to be menaced, so that I agreed to a certain compromise which, in Captain Swayne's opinion, would not involve the abandonment of any districts of particular importance to us\* so long as grazing rights and access to water on the far side of the line were secured".<sup>6</sup>

To what extent ignorance of the background to the 1897 treaty negotiations affected the refusal of the British authorities to sponsor or support a Somali National United Front appeal to the United Nations to refer the dispute to the Court of International Justice, cannot be judged. In a Colonial Office publication, describing the Haud problem, it

\* In the same despatch Rodd wrongly predicted that "the Abyssinians will not come into the country themselves . . . and they cannot remain in the plains".



## THE 'HAUD' FIASCO

was stated that the government, though pressed to do so, were unable to support this Petition on the grounds that "the Protectorate having been established in 1887, HMG had been fully entitled to conclude the Treaty of 1897".<sup>7</sup> This, of course, was the very issue which the Somalis wished to refer to the international court for an advisory opinion under Article 96 of the United Nations Charter. But they themselves had no recourse to the international court and could only appeal to a member of the United Nations to move a resolution inviting the General Assembly to ask for an advisory opinion regarding their claims, as was done in the case of South West Africa. This Britain refused to do.

Neither the Ethiopian authorities nor the British liaison staff in the Haud and the Reserved Area liked the 1954 Agreement. Apart from its purpose of safeguarding the Protectorate's grazing rights, it was also an experiment in international relations, which, by the terms of the agreement, was bound to fail. It was an intolerable encroachment on Ethiopia's sovereignty, which their officers in the field bitterly resented, and it sorely tried the patience of the liaison officers and their staff.

The Haud and Reserved Area has twenty-five thousand square miles of thorn bush, variable pasture and almost no water. Up to three hundred thousand herdsmen, with many thousands of camels, sheep and goats, enter the Haud from former British Somaliland (and Somalia) in the spring and in the autumn. Some remain in the Haud five or six months each year, depending on the rain, others will drive their herds beyond the Haud to the Ogaden wells and will stay with their kinsmen for nine months or more on a basis of mutual benefit. For example, Ogaden clansmen export their livestock through the port of Berbera and require a measure of co-operation from northern clansmen. Thus the use of Ogaden wells is sometimes offered to northerners in reciprocity.

There is, of course, much competition during the wet

season for the pastures of the Haud. Clansmen from the north streak down to it as soon as the rains break; likewise clansmen from the Mudug (Galkayu) region of former Somalia who move into the Haud from the east. Ogaden clans also move into the periphery of the Haud from the south. But to the north-west, the Reserved Area is partly cultivated by semi-nomadic families, some of whom live a nomadic life with their cows and camels, orbiting round wells on either side of the border. Others squat on the land during the harvesting season, or otherwise engage in trade and commerce on both sides of the border.

What then was the problem? It centred on one question. Were nomadic or semi-nomadic Somalis citizens of Ethiopia or of the Somali Protectorate? This question was never answered in the 1954 agreement with Ethiopia. Why was it important? It was important because the agreement gave the British Protectorate government authority over British clans in the Haud and Reserved Area, and, by the exercise of this authority, the Ethiopian government was giving tacit recognition to the fact that the territory was occupied, albeit temporarily, by non-Ethiopian subjects. This, the Ethiopians felt, might be the thin end of the wedge in any future claims that the Somalis (or Britain) might make to this territory. Not unnaturally, therefore, Ethiopian officials claimed every Somali, who spent more than an aggregate of six months in the territory during the course of one year, as an Ethiopian subject. "Were not some of them born in Ethiopian territory?" asked the Ethiopian authorities legitimately. They could not, though, be identified individually; thus clans or sub-clans would be claimed as a whole.

As the "tribal organisation" from the British Protectorate, consisting of clan leaders, government-appointed 'chiefs' and three hundred armed police, moved into this territory with their clansmen, the Ethiopian authorities would claim the clansmen as their own subjects. To add weight to their claim, they would appoint from among these clans their

own chiefs, known as *balabat*, who were given rank and distinction, and assurances that those clansmen who followed them would be given special treatment. Thus, only those who gave allegiance to a *balabat* could be certain of their livestock being recovered by the Ethiopian authorities if, for example, it were seized by Ogaden raiders. Indeed, their grazing and watering interests would also be protected by Ethiopian soldiers from the "colonialist tribal organisation" of the British Protectorate. All that they were asked to do was to sign a document acknowledging Ethiopian nationality.

On the British side, the liaison officers, some of whom were Somalis and the ablest of civil servants from the Protectorate, had no executive authority, but could pass instructions from the Protectorate Government to the "tribal organisation". The instructions that the organisation (300 armed policemen known as *illalos*) were expected to carry out concerned "internal tribal and inter-tribal matters" and the maintenance of law and order among British protected clansmen. But this was subject to the jurisdiction and administration of the Ethiopian Government "without prejudice to the full powers of arrest on the part of the Ethiopian police". Although cases between British clansmen could be tried in British courts, cases involving Ethiopians and British clansmen were tried in Ethiopian courts. This provision was the cause of much friction between the two authorities, and led to such absurdities as a Protectorate tribal policeman being arrested by an Ethiopian policeman, and tried for arresting a Protectorate clansman whom the Ethiopian authorities claimed as an Ethiopian subject!

It should be said, however, that there was a sincere desire on the part of the two governments to put this agreement into effective operation and in the friendliest manner possible, and this was reflected, to begin with, by the officers of both administrations in the field. But, in the absence of any definition of the respective jurisdiction of the authorities



concerned, national pride was easily wounded, both sides asserted their rights, armed forces clashed, armed clansmen paid off old scores, and many lives were lost.

The Protectorate government (through their liaison staff) and the Ethiopian authorities both sincerely believed that what they were doing was in the best interests of their respective countries. Yet in the background, the inter-action of both governments was playing havoc with customary Somali institutions, and straining beyond endurance the conflict between Somali national pride and clan loyalties. In artificial circumstances such as these clan loyalties were bound to take precedence because of the practical hardships of earning a livelihood in precarious circumstances of drought and severe competition for scant pastures. But, as a clan aligned itself with one government, and then with the other, shifting according to the expediency of the moment, each government would be provoked into action to preserve its dignity, and would intensify the competitive struggle for the nationality of the clan in question.

After a series of academic and fruitless discussions on these issues between representatives of both governments in 1956, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr Dodds-Parker, visited Addis Ababa in April in an attempt with the Ethiopian government to narrow the field of differences over the conflicting interpretations of the 1954 agreement. A limited success was achieved, but on the question of the nationality of Somali clans the Ethiopian government remained intransigent. As a possible solution, Mr Dodds-Parker, on behalf of the British government, offered to purchase the "Haud and Reserved area", but this suggestion received a hostile reception, and aroused even more suspicion, particularly among Ethiopian officials in the area, as to Britain's real intentions. Ethiopia could not understand the dilemma facing Britain. Either Britain was for Ethiopia or against her. Evidently it was the latter.

This was confirmed, in the Ethiopian mind, by a state-



ment of British policy on May 29, 1956, by the Under-Secretary of State in the Colonial office, Lord Lloyd. He made his statement in front of Somali political leaders in Hargeisa. It indicated early internal self-government as the aim, and undertook to offer certain financial commitments to prepare the country and the people for it. As to the future, it revealed a sympathetic attitude to the known aspiration of the British Somalis for ultimate union with Somalia. In the words of an official description of the occasion "the Somali political leaders, particularly those of the National United Front, received this generous and promising statement with no applause, but with indignation and apparent dismay; it was immediately established that this was due to the absence from it of any mention of the Territories [Haud and Reserved Area]. They had been hoping against hope, that HMG would announce some new development or agreement with the Ethiopians, producing at least the *status quo ante* the agreement."<sup>8</sup>

The effect of this statement on the Ethiopians was to increase their anxiety about the future independence of British Somaliland and its possible merger with Somalia. The Emperor flew to the Ogaden and in a public speech on August 25th he neatly turned the concept of 'Greater Somalia' to his advantage. "Our country would thereby become yet stronger and larger," he announced. Speaking of the forthcoming independence of "ex-Italian Somaliland", the Emperor said "we are confident that they will also remember that unity is strength, even as the Eritreans recognised that unity is strength. Not only they, but the whole world will recognise that we are united by race, colour, economics and that we all drink from the same great river. . . . As to rumours of a greater Somalia, we consider that all the Somali peoples are economically linked with all Ethiopia and, therefore, we do not believe that such a state can be viable standing alone, separated from Ethiopia. We will speak of this more fully when the proper time comes."<sup>9</sup> The

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

speech was received in Somalia and in British Somaliland with annoyance and derision. Among Ethiopian officials in the Haud and Reserved Area it stirred them to greater efforts of patriotic zeal.

A staff correspondent from *The Times*, accompanied by Ethiopian officials, visited a grazing area called Harti Sheikh in the Haud at this period, and in a despatch he gave this account of the situation as he saw it on October 26, 1956. "Under the rain-washed sky, this fresh green expanse merges into a cool mist at the foot of the distant hills, like a Chinese watercolour. . . . For the nomad it is an earthly paradise, a pause for the constant search for grazing, when there is dancing at night and the only anxiety is overfeeding by the camels. At least it should be, but instead a state of war exists here, and there is no happiness. . . .

"It looks peaceful enough by day. Some 50,000 camels are almost lost in this vast prairie as they graze freely and gracefully—they have none of the absurd ungainliness of camels seen in the streets of Aden and Karachi—and only a few boys can occasionally be seen. They are herded back in the encampment at dusk, and as the boys gather round the cooking pots for the first meal since sunrise, the fighting men, armed with spears, file back. The entire day they have perambulated round the herds, on guard against tribal raiders. The camels are packed between the huts, and after the evening meal of camel's milk and boiled millet, the night sentries take up their post in the scrub.

"It is difficult to relate this scene with the dispute between Ethiopia and British Somaliland and polite conferences in London, Addis Ababa and Harar. Tribal raiding is no new development here, and normally the British Somalis are no better behaved than the Ethiopian [Somali] tribes. . . . Both are impatient with authority, British or Ethiopian, and willing to play off one against the other. But Ethiopian pressure has, for the most part, closed their ranks and made them more dependent than ever before on British protection.

## THE 'HAUD' FIASCO

"It is no less difficult to understand the Ethiopian threats and pressures, unless the objective of forcing these British tribes to accept Ethiopian nationality is kept clearly in mind. . . . The Ethiopian authorities have threatened to deny them grazing, and at the same time have showed they are not prepared to allow them to cross over into British Somaliland. The tribe has been exposed to attack, in that while British tribal policemen have diligently returned about 2,000 stolen camels to the Ethiopian tribes during the past eight months, not one of the thousands seized by the Ethiopians has been returned. Soon after your correspondent arrived here, some guards brought before the Sultan four Ethiopian tribesmen caught stealing camels. They were handed over to the Ethiopian police, but with no expectation of their being punished.

"Individual tribesmen have been brutally treated (it is not possible to describe the intensely painful and humiliating torture) and Ethiopian police have attacked the tribal women. British liaison officers have been threatened by armed police, and attempts have been made to overwhelm and disarm the British tribal policemen. The most recent and serious development has been a blatant attempt to suborn the British tribes. In the case of the Habr Awal, the Ethiopian authorities tried to foist upon it some settled and partly detribalised members as Sultan and elders, a plan that strikes at the roots of the tribal organisation and loyalty. At the same time, an inter-tribal meeting was called without notifying the British liaison officers, and Ethiopian officials, alternating between threats and promises, tried to persuade the tribesmen to accept Ethiopian nationality. . . .

"The attempt failed because of the resistance of the tribe and the firm measures taken by the British Somaliland administration. Extra tribal policemen were attached to the tribe, the legitimate tribal leadership exerted itself, and under the direction of a [Somali] liaison officer, the tribe, with its herds, began to move slowly towards the frontier with British



Somaliland. They have been followed by a strong contingent of Ethiopian armed police, now encamped about one mile from here, but heartened by this display of British leadership the tribe is more determined than ever to resist. This has been acknowledged as a victory in this strange undercover war, and it was achieved without breaking the terms of the 1954 agreement, under which the tribes should be able to visit their traditional grazing grounds in the Haud without molestation."<sup>10</sup>

Looking back on this incident, and across the whole spectrum of cause and effect, and of the successive crises of a similar character, which were so harmful to all concerned during the five years that the agreement lasted, one factor dominates the rest. Instead of making futile attempts to purchase this region from Ethiopia, the British Government should have had the courage to take the dispute over nationality to the International Court of Justice, where the validity or otherwise of this and previous agreements with Ethiopia could have been settled by the Court concurrently and indirectly. She would not have created thereby a precedent permitting the validity of other treaties with her non-selfgoverning territories being challenged by the Court.

As it was, the agreement created more problems than it solved, postponing the inevitable day when Britain had in any event to withdraw completely from the Haud and Reserved Area (on Somaliland's independence) throwing into jeopardy a whole host of people who had endangered their future livelihood by toeing the British line, and leaving the independent Somali Republic with problems of the utmost gravity.

Having said that, it should also be recorded that British, Ethiopian and Somali officials in the area, none of whom was party to the original agreement, did their duty to their country honourably, convinced that they were making the best use of a bad document. But the cards were stacked against the Protectorate, and, as the Colonial Office official



## THE 'HAUD' FIASCO

history of events concludes, "it would not be right to leave this chapter of history without paying tribute to the patience of the Protectorate Government: to the persistence, skill and bravery of the British and Somali liaison staff, with the chiefs and *illalos* of the British tribes; and the fortitude and moderation of the British Somalis, and their most responsible leaders."<sup>11</sup>

## THE INTRACTABLE FRONTIER

For the first half of Somalia's ten-year period of trusteeship under Italian administration, the United Nations urged at each session that the Ethiopian and Italian governments should speedily resolve their dispute over Somalia's frontier with Ethiopia. This frontier, it will be recalled, was traced on two maps in 1897 by Major Nerazzini and King Menelik. Neither map could subsequently be found and no living person can testify to the exact nature of the agreement. Today, the border is still undefined, still disputed, and this sector of the frontier between the Somali Republic and Ethiopia, though provisionally drawn, has no legal basis.

The background to this dispute is that in 1908 a convention was drawn up between Italy and Ethiopia "for the settlement of the Frontier between the Italian Possessions of Somalia and the Provinces of the Ethiopian Empire". The first three articles of the convention describe the border from Dolo to the Shibeli river (Map 2) as a line drawn between various Somali clans, some of whom are dependent on Ethiopia and others are dependent on Italy. Article 4 states that from the Shibeli river "the frontier proceeds in a north-easterly direction, following the line accepted by the Italian government in 1897, all the territory belonging to the tribes towards the coast shall remain dependent on Italy; all the

territory of the Ogaden, and all that of the tribes towards the Ogaden, shall remain dependent on Abyssinia." The two governments undertook, in Article 5, to delimit the border on the ground. We have seen what took place thereafter.

When Somalia became a Trust Territory in 1950, the Trusteeship Agreement stipulated that the boundary in question "shall be those fixed by international agreements and, in so far as they are not already delimited, shall be delimited in accordance with a procedure approved by the General Assembly".

In order to resolve any differences arising in the course of such negotiations, the respective parties were urged to agree, at the request of either party, "to a procedure of mediation by a U.N. mediator to be appointed by the Secretary-General and, further, in the event of the inability of the parties to accept the recommendations of the mediator, to a procedure of arbitration".

A limit of ten years had been imposed for the duration of the trusteeship, and a speedy settlement of this dispute was clearly in everyone's interests. It was not, however, until 1955 that a real start to negotiations between Italy and Ethiopia began, but the impetus soon flagged when the Ethiopian government declined to permit Somalis to join the Italian delegation as experts. A Somali spokesman told the United Nations Fourth Committee in November 1955 that "agreements made between alien powers without the consent . . . of the inhabitants are unacceptable to us".<sup>1</sup> Ethiopia subsequently agreed to the inclusion of Somali experts but objected to the possibility of mediation.

As A. A. Castagno has observed, "the arbitral technique is favoured by Ethiopia because it contends that the dispute is restricted to different interpretations of the 1908 Convention".<sup>2</sup> The Somalis wanted the more flexible technique of mediation. A further problem was posed, in the words of an Ethiopian review, "by the revival of an old Italian claim, that has been advanced, in exactly the same words, by the

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

government of Fascist Italy in its dispute with Ethiopia at the League of Nations in regard to this territory. This sought to establish that the boundary should be determined primarily in accordance with the principles of *de facto* occupation prior to the year 1935 . . . and only secondarily on the basis of the Convention of 1908":<sup>3</sup> But this stand, according to another official Ethiopian narrative, was "completely abandoned in the course of the discussions and Italy further recognised the obvious truth that agreements concluded by Italy with a third state (UK) were without legal validity as regards Ethiopia".<sup>4</sup>

Again, according to an official Ethiopian account,<sup>5</sup> both parties agreed to adopt the principles that the 1908 Convention should be the "sole criterion" for the delimitation of the boundary; that no third party agreements should apply; that the interpretation of the words of the convention should first be agreed upon before delimitation on the ground; that this interpretation should be reached through a juridical process; that no compromise was possible on juridical principles; that the interpretation should relate to the situation prevailing in 1908 and to the intentions of the negotiators of the convention; and finally that their respective juridical positions were capable of dealing with the problem.

To avoid lengthy negotiations, the Ethiopian government proposed a compromise.<sup>6</sup> She would accept the existing provisional boundary and thereby renounce "more than 47,000 square kilometres of territory to which she was entitled on the basis of the Convention of 1908" (Map 2). The Italian delegation rejected this on legal grounds and because it "did not meet the needs of the local population".<sup>7</sup>

Both parties then offered their respective views on the crucial phrase in the 1908 Convention: *starting from the Webi-Shebeli, the frontier proceeds to the north-east, following the line accepted in 1897 by the Italian Government*. The Italians considered that the line followed the coast at a distance of 180 miles to meet the Protectorate border at the



## THE INTRACTABLE FRONTIER

47° meridian (Map 2). Their evidence was drawn from four main sources: the report referring to the 180 mile limit which Major Nerazzini made to his government on his return to Italy after concluding the 1897 agreement with Menelik; the newsagency report on August 9, 1897, also referring to a delimitation of 180 miles from the coast; a telegram from the Italian government to Menelik accepting the line agreed upon by Nerazzini; and an Ethiopian memorandum submitted to the League of Nations in 1934 which referred to a line of delimitation "which runs at a distance of 180 miles parallel to the coast of the Indian Ocean".<sup>8</sup>

For their part, the Ethiopian Government contended that the line in question (Map 2) was far nearer to the sea. Supporting evidence consisted of nine maps published mainly in Italy between 1912-35, all of which showed the frontier to be east of the 47° meridian. Ethiopia also attached much importance to a statement by the Italian Foreign Minister on June 16, 1908, in which he said that sovereignty over the "territory bounded by the Lugh and Bardera lines" remained with Ethiopia, but during the 1908 negotiations an area of about 50,000 sq. km. was purchased from the Emperor for three million lire, pushing the border northwards to Dolo. Thus it was *before* 1908 that the southern part of the frontier, at any rate, had characteristics in common with Ethiopia's present interpretation of the boundary. Evidence from other sources included a British map, and others reproduced in Italian publications, particularly in Caroselli's *Ferro e Fuoco in Somalia* which, unlike the other maps, deliberately set out to interpret the Nerazzini line. This work carried authority because of a preface by General de Bono, formerly an Italian Minister for the Colonies.<sup>9</sup>

As Y. Jama observes,<sup>10</sup> of all the maps only one was prepared originally for the purpose of identifying the elusive boundary; that of Caroselli, which supported the 180 mile theory but favoured the tri-junction point on the Protectorate boundary at 48° and not at 47°. The value to the Ethiopian

delegation of the other maps was not that they purported to trace the line of the 1897 frontier, but that all boundaries shown met at the 48° tri-junction point on the former British Somaliland border.

The Ethiopian delegates also argued that the Amharic version of Article 1 of the 1908 Convention reads that the frontier "starts from Dolo . . . proceeds eastwards by the sources of the Baideba . . .", and that Baideba is the same as Ischia Baidoa (Map 2). The Italians claimed that Maidaba and not Baideba was meant and that the southern sector of the present provisional line is substantially in accord with this view.<sup>11</sup>

In December 1957 both parties reported to the General Assembly that direct negotiations had failed and the Italian delegation proposed that the two parties should proceed to mediation. Ethiopia favoured immediate arbitration and the Assembly approved this course on the grounds that "a final settlement can be achieved more expeditiously by a procedure of arbitration".<sup>12</sup> The arbitral tribunal, by a resolution the previous year, was to consist of three jurists, one to be appointed by Ethiopia, one by Italy and the third by agreement between the jurists so appointed. Failing agreement, the third jurist was to be appointed by the King of Norway. The tribunal would delimit the frontier in accordance with terms of reference to be decided upon by the two governments, with the assistance, if necessary, of an 'independent person' mutually acceptable to both parties.

In August 1958 the tribunal was formed with Dr Bolla, former President of the Swiss Federal Court; Professor Radojkovic, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Professor of International Law at Belgrade University. Professor Castren, Professor of International Law at Helsinki University, was nominated as the third jurist by the two arbitrators.<sup>13</sup> Ethiopia and Italy, meanwhile, attempted to reach agreement on the terms of reference for the tribunal. They were unable to agree on an 'independent person' to assist them with the framing

## THE INTRACTABLE FRONTIER

of the terms of reference, but nevertheless they were still able to exchange draft *compromis*.

The focal point of the dispute over the terms of reference was Italy's departure from the previously agreed basis for negotiation. According to the Ethiopian Government,<sup>14</sup> the Italian delegation did not consider that the basis arrived at during the early stages in negotiation was necessarily relevant to arbitration and that there could be other applicable agreements concerning this territory. Italy wished the tribunal "to give its decision on the basis of all the international conventions relating thereto and of the interests and well-being of the populations, in harmony with the principles of the United Nations".<sup>15</sup>

Ethiopia objected to these proposals. She maintained, as she had done during the earlier negotiations, that the arbitration tribunal should confine itself strictly to an interpretation of the 1908 convention only and that "no other issues or questions for decision . . . may be proposed . . .".<sup>16</sup> Evidence of facts which existed on or before May 16, 1908, could be brought before the tribunal, but facts subsequent to this date were only relevant if they assisted in clarifying facts which existed before that date. Political factors occurring after 1908 and all questions relating to the well-being of the inhabitants concerned were excluded from the purview of the tribunal. Neither third parties, nor representatives of other governments or organisations could appear before the tribunal. A number of escape clauses were also included. For example, differences which may have arisen out of an interpretation of the terms of reference were to be settled by the parties to the dispute, and not by the tribunal, likewise any differences arising out of an interpretation of the tribunal's award. Moreover, this award would only be binding after the frontier had been delimited by both parties and duly ratified in the appropriate legislatures.<sup>17</sup> This last provision was presumably inserted to ensure that the future Somali government was also bound by the arbitration award.



The Ethiopian Government also objected to Italy's inclusion in her draft *compromis* of "international conventions", other than the 1908 convention, and of matters relating to "the interests and well-being of the populations, in harmony with the principles of the United Nations". They protested that the agreements referred to in the Italian draft *compromis* "were the imperialist third party agreements, carving that territory into spheres of influence . . .".<sup>18</sup> As for taking into account the interests and well-being of the people, the Ethiopian Government made the rejoinder that "Italy apparently persisted in looking upon African territories as subject to a rule of colonial law which can be modified to fit political *desiderata*". Ethiopia also resented the inclusion of non-legal concepts, such as those of the "interests (undefined of course) and welfare (undefined of course) of the populations, in harmony with the principles of the United Nations"; and added that "it is apparent that the principles of the Charter have no conceivable application to the precise problems of delimitation which alone are involved . . .".<sup>19</sup> She maintained that Italy's attitude was designed only to delay a solution to the problem.

As the two parties failed to agree on an 'independent person' to assist with the resolution of the terms of reference for the arbitration commission, the King of Norway, in accordance with a resolution of the General Assembly, appointed Mr Trygve Lie, the former United Nations Secretary-General, to undertake this task in August 1959, ten months before Somalia's independence.

In their submissions to Mr Trygve Lie, the Ethiopian Government held to their former draft *compromis*, but the Italian delegation submitted a new draft "based on the general principles and model rules on arbitration adopted by the General Assembly at the thirteenth session".<sup>20</sup> The Italians insisted that the tribunal should not only examine relevant international instruments but should rule as to the admissibility of evidence and as to the probatory value of



same. Moreover, legal effect should be given to the arbitration award, as soon as it was announced, and should be binding on both parties without reservation. Ethiopia rejected the Italian draft *compromis* for three reasons: it ignored the agreement reached by both parties during preliminary negotiations; it required the tribunal to consider international agreements concluded with third parties; it would empower the tribunal to consider the well-being of the inhabitants as if there had never been a frontier agreement and "as if the tribunal was a legislator".<sup>21</sup>

Mr Trygve Lie's proposals threaded their way through both points of view. Ethiopia offered twenty-one amendments to these proposals, of which Italy accepted six (three with reservations), but rejected the remainder. Italy offered ten amendments to the draft but there is no record of Ethiopia's comment on these amendments. At that point the arbitration came to an end; and at the fourteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the last session before Somalia's independence on July 1, 1960, no resolution was passed as the Fourth Committee was unable to make a recommendation.<sup>22</sup> Thus Somalia moved into independence with five hundred miles of frontier undelimited and hotly disputed.

Without entering into the relative merits of the positions taken up by the Ethiopian and Italian delegations during these years of abortive negotiations, some aspects of this dispute are relevant to Ethiopia and to the Somali Republic on whom this legacy has fallen since her accession to independence in 1960. The first question to be answered is whether both countries wish to settle this dispute, and, if so, in what manner?

The Somali Republic claims that all Somalis living on her frontiers are entitled to the right of self determination; that she would accept the results of a plebiscite, provided it was conducted impartially, and that inter-state boundaries should be delimited accordingly. In other words, the Somali

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

Republic does not wish to conduct negotiations on the basis of ancient treaties or conventions made between colonial powers and Ethiopia. This includes that part of the Republic's border with Ethiopia which was negotiated in 1897 between Rodd and Menelik. This Treaty was not recognised<sup>23</sup> by the Somaliland Government when they attained independence on June 26, 1960, in spite of the grazing agreement which forms an integral part of this treaty.

Leaving aside, for a moment, Ethiopia's attitude to the frontier question with the former Trust Territory of Somalia, it will be recalled that the Anglo-Ethiopian agreement of 1954 was abrogated on Somaliland's independence. This reaffirmed the grazing rights of clans from the former Somaliland Protectorate in the Haud and Reserved Area. The grazing rights were entrenched, however, in the 1897 Treaty; but on June 5, 1960, three weeks before Somaliland's independence, it was reported from Addis Ababa that the Ethiopian Government had announced that, as from June 26th, it would regard the provisions of the 1954 agreement relating to the grazing rights as automatically invalid.<sup>24</sup> As D. J. Latham Brown points out, however, this announcement in no way calls into question the frontier demarcation of 1897. "There is," he concludes, "an implicit distinction in its terms between the frontier provisions and those relating to the grazing rights. Hence it would seem that, in the opinion of the Ethiopian Government, the 1897 frontier delimitation is capable of surviving a succession of states in Somaliland, whereas the grazing rights are not, at least without a fresh agreement between the successor state and Ethiopia."<sup>25</sup>

Ethiopia did, however, modify this attitude in a speech by the Emperor, reported<sup>26</sup> to have been made two days before Somaliland's independence, in which he intimated that, so long as the Somali Republic was willing to accept the 1897 frontier, Ethiopia would continue to allow Somali clans to cross the border and make use of the grazing lands in Ethiopian territory. This uneasy arrangement remains to

this day as a permanent source of anxiety to the nomads concerned, who are frequently in armed conflict with Ethiopian authority, and as an acute irritation in relations between the Republic and Ethiopia, to say nothing of the problems of maladministration and injustice which these absurd conditions create. Threats of closing the border are still made by the Ethiopian Government, which regards the granting of these facilities as a favour to the Somali Republic. The Ethiopians complain that the Republic sends armed men across the frontier under the guise of nomads. But, as Latham-Brown observes, "if the Ethiopian Government expects to retain the fruits of what some observers might describe as an 'unconscionable bargain' made in 1897, they must be prepared to continue to pay for those fruits".<sup>27</sup>

To return now to the Republic's undefined western border. Ethiopia regards the issue as a simple matter of delimiting the boundary in accordance with her 1908 Treaty with Italy. We have already seen that Ethiopia, in her negotiations with Italy, followed an exclusively juridical approach which discounted the interests and well-being of the inhabitants. There would be some sympathy for this view if the inhabitants concerned were a settled people without common ties across the border, but it scarcely seems an appropriate attitude to adopt in the circumstances of nomadic people. Since neither party appears to have broached the subject yet, it can only be assumed that, for their part, the Ethiopian Government, in their official account of *Ethio-Somalia Relations*, are sincere when they state that in regard to "the demarcation of the frontier between the two countries, the Ethiopian Government are ever ready and willing as in the past, to consider just and honourable proposals for mutual agreement by the two governments concerned".<sup>28</sup> Yet, when such protestations of good will are seen against the background of Ethiopia's uncompromising stand with Italy over the interpretation of the 1908 agreement, which declined to take into account the well-being of the people concerned, it is not



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

perhaps surprising that the Somali Government have failed to respond. Moreover, Ethiopia's concern to exclude "imperialist third-party agreements" is absurd and only weakens her case with the Somali Republic. As Castagno observes, "Somalis protest that if this is a valid point, then there is no reason why they should be bound by any agreements at all, since none of them was drafted with Somali consultation".<sup>29</sup> At present the issue lies between the Somali view that a plebiscite should be held, on the basis of self-determination, and the Ethiopian view that the boundary should be delimited according to the 1908 Convention with Italy. If a third factor, oil,<sup>30</sup> should enter into the dispute, the *status quo* is unlikely to be preserved.

But before we leave the Somali Republic's northern frontiers and turn towards Kenya, we should look briefly at another baffling problem: the future of French Somaliland, France's last African possession. Some Frenchmen believe that the economic incentives for a continuing French presence in the territory are so great that a concerted demand for independence among its divided inhabitants<sup>31</sup> is unlikely in the foreseeable future. Whilst it is true that the thirty thousand or so who live in the flourishing little port of Jibuti owe their salary scales (twice those of neighbouring territories) and a high percentage of employment, to French capital, management and foresight—the Somali and Danakil inhabitants of this territory are not political freaks, although their political and economic interests often conflict.

Ethiopia is still dependent on her railway link with Jibuti as an outlet for foreign trade, in spite of her newly acquired, and developed, Eritrean ports of Massawa and Assab. She has special facilities in the port of Jibuti and is a major partner in the ownership of the Franco-Ethiopian railway, which, according to reports,<sup>32</sup> is to be extended to the Sidamo Province to the south of Addis Ababa. Clearly, the future status of this little French Protectorate will be influenced largely by the attitude of Ethiopia, for she could exert for-



## THE INTRACTABLE FRONTIER

midable economic pressure on Somali and Danakil politicians by threatening to switch her trade to Assab.

Yet the Somali Republic is still the focus of much nationalistic feeling, and if the unlikely choice had to be made, without prejudicing economic links with Addis Ababa, it is probable that majority opinion would favour some form of political association with the Somali Republic rather than with Ethiopia.<sup>33</sup> But the more likely course of events is neutrality and independence with close links with France. It is doubtful, though, how long this vulnerable and divisive little country, half-Danakil and half-Somali, could maintain its independent status with acquisitive and rival nations at its gates.

## LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS

As constitutional changes in British Somaliland during the late nineteen-fifties showed signs of catching up with the neighbouring Trust Territory of Somalia, which was self-governing in 1956, Ethiopia became increasingly alarmed. The possible union of the two territories was a step towards the goal of 'Greater Somalia', for which Ethiopia blamed Britain. Criticising an article in the British weekly review *The Economist*, the government newspaper, *The Ethiopian Herald*, wrote sneeringly in August 1958 of the "so-called British 'commitment' given in 1956 to the principle of some kind of federation between the Trust Territory and British Somaliland after 1960". *The Ethiopian Herald* continued, "a greater Somaliland under 'benevolent' British protection has long been visualised by United Kingdom policy makers in the Foreign Office as Britain's last hope for retaining some semblance of influence and authority in the Horn of Africa".

In February of the following year, 1959, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr Alan Lennox-Boyd, made a statement in Hargeisa in which he said that "... Her Majesty's Government is aware of the desire expressed by many Somalis of the Protectorate, that there should be a closer association between this territory and Somalia. If, therefore, when Somalia has become independent, the Legislative

## LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS

Council of the Protectorate formally resolves that negotiations with the Government of Somalia be instituted to determine the terms and conditions on which a closer association of the two territories might be achieved, Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would be ready to transmit this resolution to the Government of Somalia and enquire whether that Government would be willing to enter into negotiation. If so, Her Majesty's Government would arrange for negotiations of a suitable nature to take place. . . ."

This announcement was warmly received by Somalis everywhere. But the Ethiopian Government reacted by intensifying their anti-British propaganda campaign in the Press and over the Radio. The theme of their broadcasts was that Britain had no intention of granting Somalis their independence and that she had no other aim but to bring the Horn of Africa under her hegemony. In an illuminating passage on February 4, 1959, the daily newspaper *Voice of Ethiopia* declared that "Ethiopia has fought and will fight, if need be, to preserve her integrity. But when a proposal against the wish of the Protectorate inhabitants and against the interest of Ethiopia is propounded the aims will be negative for all the years to come. It is time Colonial powers learned the meaning of NO and devised better and humane proposals instead of insisting on unfavourable schemes."

In a magazine, *Ethiopia in Review*, published the same month, the Protectorate political parties were urged to examine their new self-governing constitution, as it excluded finance, defence and foreign affairs. "Can a country with these important government departments out of its hands be called independent?" it asked. It went on to make the familiar assertions that the "Ethiopian Government had been generous in allowing all Somalis to graze their cattle in the Haud area" and that "Ethiopia has no intention of forfeiting the territorial rights of its own citizens". The article concluded, "who would be so naïve as to believe that it is the thinking of the British protectors to relinquish their hold on

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

the strategic Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden strip?"

In the meantime, the Prime Minister of Somalia, Mr Abdillahi Issa, and the leaders of the two main political parties in the Somaliland Protectorate, Mr Michael Mariano of the National United Front and Mr Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal of the Somali League, despatched telegrams to the Emperor protesting at the attitude of his government towards the future union of their two countries. In reply, the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs denied that Ethiopia wished to stand in the way of Somali union, and explained that Ethiopian complaints were not directed at Somalis or their independence, but at the Colonial powers who were supposedly undermining Ethiopia's integrity.

United States' support<sup>1</sup> for the British policy statement aroused the Emperor's suspicions that America too was conspiring to dismember Ethiopia; and, in what appeared to be a fit of pique, he flew to Moscow and secured a \$100 million loan. This diplomatic manoeuvre, after some three years of hard-hitting anti-British propaganda from Addis Ababa, ever since the British Government had offered in 1956 to purchase the Haud, obviously made an impact on Whitehall; for in April 1960 the Prime Minister, Mr Macmillan, made a significant statement in the House of Commons on the 'Greater Somalia' issue, a statement which was later to play an important rôle in Britain's policy towards Somali secessionists in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya.

No one imagined in February 1960, when British Somaliland's newly elected, self-governing legislature met for the first time, that the Protectorate was going to become an independent state within four months. A resolution by the Protectorate Legislative Council on April 6th requesting that "practical steps should be taken forthwith for the immediate unification of the Protectorate and Somalia" was unanimously approved; and a month later it was acceded to by the British Government "which understood the deep feelings underlying the Motion".<sup>2</sup> Thus Somaliland became indepen-



## LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS

dent on June 26th, uniting with Somalia five days later.

Meanwhile, it was evident that Mr Macmillan wished to clarify the position of his government over the one issue that was profoundly disturbing Anglo-Ethiopian relations, namely, Ethiopia's fear that Britain would again support a 'Greater Somalia'. He told the House of Commons that "Her Majesty's Government did not and will not encourage or support any claim affecting the territorial integrity of French Somaliland, Kenya, or Ethiopia. This is a matter which could only be considered if that were the wish of the governments and peoples concerned." The Governor of Kenya made a statement in similar terms on June 1, 1960, to chiefs and elders of the Northern Frontier District of Kenya.

As we have seen, the NFD remained in Kenya after the transfer of Jubaland to Italy in 1925. It was not a natural line of division as nomadic Somalis occupied both sides of the boundary. The land to the west of this boundary, stretching as far as Lake Rudolf in the north, and a little beyond the Tana river in the south, which reaches to the southernmost frontier of the Somali Republic, was known, until March 1963, as the Northern Frontier District, or just the NFD (Map 3).

It has six administrative districts with headquarters at Mandera, Wajir, Garissa, Isiolo, Marsabit, and Moyale. The total population, according to the Kenya Government's provisional census carried out in 1962, is 388,000; of whom approximately 240,000 are Somalis.<sup>3</sup> The rest of the population is divided between the pagan Galla in the north (Boran, Gabra, and Sakuye) and the Muslim Galla (Boran and Orma) in the south. The Rendille in the Marsabit district form a wedge between the pagan and the Muslim Galla. There is also a pocket of former Somali immigrants living in Isiolo, and numbering some ten thousand, but they are separated from their indigenous Somali kinsmen by the Muslim Boran who inhabit an area to the west of the 'Somali Line'. This line runs southwards from just east of Moyale to the Tana

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

river (north of Garissa), and then follows the river to within about fifty miles of the coast. Since Kenya's self-governing constitution was announced in March 1963, the area to the east of the 'Somali Line' has been named the North Eastern Region (Map 3).

Apart from about fifteen thousand riverine Pokomo tribesman, who cultivate land in pockets along the banks of the river Tana, the remainder of the population are pastoralists. For the most part, camel owning Somalis, on the one hand, and cattle or sometimes camel rearing Rendille and Galla on the other. They all speak closely related languages belonging to the Cushitic group, and share many cultural similarities.<sup>4</sup> Their District has been isolated from the rest of Kenya by laws passed in 1902 and in 1934<sup>5</sup> which restrict the movement of all persons entering or leaving the District, and is still in operation. In 1955, the District declined to be represented in Kenya's Legislature unless it could be represented by one of its own members. The Commissioner enquiring into the methods for the selection of African Representatives sympathised with the feelings of the elders "who," he commented, "ethnographically are quite distinct from the Africans in the rest of Kenya".<sup>6</sup>

By 1960 the proscription on the Somali Youth League, imposed in 1948, was lifted, and, with the stimulus of Somali independence across the border, political activity was revived. A new party was formed, the Northern Province People's Progressive Party (NPPPP), which took the lead in a resurgence of Somali nationalist feeling with demands that the NFD should secede from Kenya and unite with the Somali Republic. This feeling was reflected during the preparations for Kenya's 1961 election by a partial boycott of the electoral register. The only nominee was the President of the NPPPP, Mr Ali Adan Lord, who was elected unopposed to Kenya's Legislature on a secessionist ticket.

Towards the end of 1961, the Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs, Mr Reginald Maudling, visited Kenya in

## LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS

preparation for the constitutional conference which was due to begin in London early the following year. He met Mr Lord, who, together with a delegation of chiefs and political leaders from the NFD, presented their case for secession and union with the Somali Republic. Mr Maudling agreed that a delegation from the NFD could attend the constitutional conference and arrangements were made accordingly by the Kenya Government.

Before the conference began, however, Mr Lord died, and at a bye-election, Mr Abdirashid Khalif, a Somali and the Treasurer of the NPPPP, defeated the President of the Party, Mr Alex Kholkole, a Rendille. As a member of Kenya's Legislative Council, Mr Khalif attended the plenary session of the constitutional conference which was held at Lancaster House during a cold spell in February 1962.

At the outset, Mr Khalif told the conference that he was not a member of either of Kenya's two main political parties, the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), and the Kenya African National Union (KANU), but that he was a secessionist. The issue was left in abeyance whilst the conference turned to matters which were obviously more important to Kenya. Meanwhile an official delegation from the NFD flew into London. It consisted of leading figures from each of the six districts of the NFD. They were accompanied unofficially by representatives of secessionist political parties, which now numbered three.

In addition to the NPPPP, which had branches in all six districts, another party, the Northern Frontier Democratic Party (NFDPP), with its headquarters in Garissa, had also been formed in alignment with clan interests in that District. Its President, Mr Yusuf Haji Abdi, represented his party in London, as did Mr Guyo Dube, the President of the People's National League (PNL) whose party represented the interests of the Galla (Orma) people, also of Garissa District.

It is not surprising perhaps that the political leaders of the anti-secessionist movement in the NFD left their case to be



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

handled by their allies in KANU, and did not go to London. There were three main anti-secessionist parties: the Northern Province United Association (NPUA), the Northern Province People's National Union (NPPNU) and the Galla Political Union (GPU). The NPUA was led by Mr Galgallo Godana and found support among the pagan and Christian Galla of Marsabit and Moyale districts. The NPPNU, linked with the NPUA, represented anti-secessionist views among the riverine (Pokomo) tribes and some Galla (Orma) of the Garissa district. The GPU operated in Nairobi. Neither KANU nor KADU had any significant following in the Northern Frontier District, but the NPUA was closely tied to KANU.

By admitting to the conference an official delegation from the NFD, all of whom were pro-secessionist, the British government appeared to give tacit acknowledgement that there was a case to answer. Thus, once again, she put herself in the position of appearing to support the Somali claim to a 'Greater Somalia', opposed this time not only by Ethiopia but by Kenya African leaders as well. Yet could she have ignored the unceasing clamour for secession? Perhaps, if the pressure had only come from the NFD itself, but Britain was also confronted with strong diplomatic pressure from the Somali Republic, which supported the NFD secessionist movement.

No doubt representations against secession were equally strong from the Ethiopian Government, which could reasonably remind the British Government of Mr Macmillan's assurance in 1960 that his government would not "encourage or support" any claim affecting the integrity of Kenya unless it were "the wish of the governments and peoples concerned". In this case, it would certainly have been argued that it was the wish of the peoples concerned, but was it the wish of the governments concerned? It was evidently the wish of both the British and Kenya governments to invite pro-secessionist leaders to state their case at the conference, but to what extent this was encouraging any claim affecting Kenya's



## LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS

integrity remained to be seen.

At a number of meetings held with delegates from KANU and KADU, and separately with the Colonial Secretary, the NFD delegation, represented by counsel, pressed their case for secession and union with the Somali Republic on the principle of the right to self-determination. They based their case on the close affinity that the character of the NFD and its people had with the territory and people of the Somali Republic. To emphasise their isolation from Kenya, the delegation observed that Somalis were not amenable to legal process in the African Native Courts and in matters of personal law they were subject to their own code and courts. Moreover, no more than the most tenuous links had been forged between the NFD and Kenya because of the prohibitive 'pass system' that operated (and still operates) in the territory.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, the delegates stressed that "by racial stock and by language the people of the NFD are kindred with the people of the Somali Republic, but alien to the peoples of Kenya"; likewise in the profession of the Muslim faith; and in their pastoral and nomadic life seasonal migration between the Somali Republic and the NFD occurs on a substantial scale. "These features," commented the delegation, "do not appear in Kenya."<sup>8</sup>

They proposed to the British Government that the NFD should be "granted autonomy as a territory wholly independent of Kenya, before any further constitutional changes affecting Kenya were made,"<sup>9</sup> so that the territory may join in an act of Union with the Somali Republic when Kenya becomes independent". The delegation addressed the proposal solely to Her Majesty's Government because they had previously taken a unilateral decision in ceding Jubaland to Italy and because the government had administered the NFD separately from the rest of Kenya. "They were not addressing their proposals to the Kenya political parties who have hitherto been content to accept the separation . . . and who

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

have never visited the territory in question." The delegates rejected the idea that the political parties of Kenya should "control the destiny of the NFD and expected that those who seek implementation of the principles of self-determination for themselves would not deny it to others".<sup>10</sup>

The views of Kenya's leading political party, KANU, were heard at a public meeting in Nairobi on November 21, 1962, when evidence about the future of the NFD was given to an independent commission, to which we will refer later. They were expressed strongly by Mr Jomo Kenyatta and Mr Tom Mboya who reiterated arguments that their party had put forward at Lancaster House. In short, they felt that the people of the NFD, because of their isolation from Kenya, which was no fault of African leaders, could not be expected to express a valid opinion until they had had an opportunity of fulfilling a more positive rôle in Kenya's future and experiencing the benefits of Kenya's national government. Mr Mboya stated that Somalis could legitimately seek a form of local government in which they could play the fullest part, and that other needs could be met by good government. This, he implied, could be offered more convincingly by Kenya's future National Government than by the Somali Republic. The party was strongly opposed to any cession of Kenya territory and reserved the right to raise the question of the return of Jubaland to Kenya if the Somali Government continued to press for secession. As for NFD representation at the Lancaster House conference, KANU claimed that the official delegates did not truly represent opinion in the district.

The NFD question was only one of the many issues before the conference, and, as it dragged on, the possibility of the British Government announcing a date for Kenya's independence receded. There was, therefore, "no need" to decide the Somali claims regarding the NFD.<sup>11</sup> The government did, however, consult the NFD delegation about sending an independent commission to the area to ascertain their opinion.

## LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS

This was accepted by Mr. Khalif, in place of a referendum under United Nations auspices, which his delegation preferred, provided "the policy of Her Majesty's Government, following the Commission's findings, will be acted upon concurrently with or prior to the attainment of internal self-government for Kenya".<sup>12</sup>

Mr Maudling did not, however, rule out the possibility of a plebiscite or referendum, for at the final plenary session of the constitutional conference on April 16th, he announced that, having taken into consideration the views of the NFD delegates, KANU and KADU, a commission would be appointed to enquire into the state of public opinion in the NFD, and, subject to its findings, "it may suggest the holding of a plebiscite or referendum in one or more districts". In answer to a question at a press conference immediately following the final session, Mr Maudling said "as there is no question of fixing a date for independence, we do not need to decide now the Somali claims regarding the NFD. I am setting up some sort of commission to enquire into the problems and see what people's views are. If it seems wise we will find out their views by a series of plebiscites."<sup>13</sup>

It was after the conference had ended that the NFD delegation, together with their two legal advisers, Mr N. Lawson, QC, and Mr M. A. Murgian, had their final meeting with the Colonial Secretary. At this meeting, Mr Maudling presented the delegation with the text of the government's conclusions about their claim. They were told<sup>14</sup> that an investigation would be undertaken in order to ascertain public opinion in the area *regarding its future* and that, for this purpose, an independent Commission would be appointed as soon as possible so that its report could be available before the new Constitution for Kenya was brought into operation.

The delegation was not satisfied that only the report of the Commission would be available to the British Government, and pressed, in conformity with Mr Khalif's previously expressed views, that a "decision on its findings" should also



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

be taken by Her Majesty's Government<sup>15</sup> before the new constitution for Kenya was brought into operation. This undertaking, which was duly accepted by Mr Maudling, was the primary cause of the subsequent misunderstanding which led to the Somali Republic's break in relations with Britain.

There was apparently no doubt in Mr. Maudling's mind, and certainly no doubt in the minds of the NFD delegation, nor their legal advisers, as to what this undertaking meant. It was only capable of one interpretation, namely, that the British Government would send an independent commission to the NFD to ascertain public opinion regarding its political future, and that a final decision, based on the findings of this commission, would be made by Her Majesty's Government before Kenya became self-governing. In other words, before control over Kenya's internal and external affairs passed out of the hands of the British Government.

The British Government was prepared at that stage to act on the principle of self-determination. This was clear from discussions with Mr Maudling; from the appointment of the commission; from the fact that it was to enquire into the political future of the territory (if necessary by a series of plebiscites), and from the acknowledgement that a decision would be taken before the area was wrested from British Government control. It is possible that Mr Maudling, after weeks of arduous negotiation, had unwittingly committed the government rather more deeply than was originally intended. There was some sign of this in a much delayed official communiqué from the Colonial Office which announced on April 9th the conclusions of this part of the Kenya Conference which dealt with the NFD question. The communiqué omitted to mention that the commission would ascertain public opinion in the area *regarding its future*; and omitted entirely the undertaking that a decision on its findings would be made by the government before Kenya became self-governing. Nevertheless, a decision had been made which was either a hoax or an open door to secession.



## LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS

It must have been difficult for the British Government to explain this decision to Ethiopia. Was it not contrary to Mr Macmillan's public assurance in 1960 that Britain would not encourage any claim affecting Kenya's integrity unless it were the wish of the governments and peoples concerned? Why raise hopes by ascertaining the wishes of the people if the governments concerned are opposed to secession? The Ethiopians and Kenyans could legitimately have asked "what if the commission finds that an overwhelming majority of the people demand secession?"

The official text of the relevant conclusions to the conference are set out below. The words in italics were added to the original Colonial Office text at the request of the NFD delegation.

"At the meeting between the Representative Group of the Conference and the Delegation from the Northern Frontier District, the Delegation asked that, before any further constitutional changes affecting Kenya were made, autonomy should be granted to the area which they represented (namely the districts of Isiolo, Garissa, Mandera, Marsabit, Moyale and Wajir) as a territory wholly independent of Kenya, in order that it might join in an act of Union with the Somali Republic when Kenya became fully independent.

"The representatives of KADU and KANU indicated that they were opposed to any measure which would lead to the secession of any part of the Northern Frontier District.

"The Secretary of State informed the Conference that Her Majesty's Government had given very careful consideration to the views which had been put forward by the Delegation and by KADU and KANU. They had come to the conclusion that an investigation should be undertaken in order to ascertain public opinion in the area regarding its future. Accordingly, the Secretary of

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

State proposed to arrange for an independent Commission to be appointed, with appropriate terms of reference, to investigate this matter and report to him. This Commission would be appointed as soon as practicable so that its report could be available *and a decision on its finding taken by Her Majesty's Government* before the new constitution for Kenya was brought into operation. Meanwhile there would be no change in the status of the Northern Frontier District or in the arrangements for its administration."<sup>16</sup>

The NFD delegation returned to their country justifiably pleased with themselves, feeling with good reason that secession was round the corner. Somalis were confident that, since the Kenya Government had included the whole of the NFD in the dispute, by sending an official delegation to the conference from all six districts, they could continue to support the secession of the whole area. Although the Somali Prime Minister was disappointed that a decision had not been reached at the conference, he and his government had legitimate expectations that Britain would stand by the right of self-determination, and that she alone would decide the future of the NFD on this basis. At least there were no positive hints to the contrary.

## AN INVITATION TO MOGADISHU

Radio warfare, recurring border clashes, and Somali demands for the cession of the NFD, to which Ethiopia is strongly opposed, were the main factors affecting Somali diplomatic relations with Ethiopia since the former attained independence in 1960. Seeking to avoid bad relations with Kenya as well, the Somali Government invited independently Mr Jomo Kenyatta of KANU and Mr Ronald Ngala of KADU to visit the Republic with their party colleagues in the summer of 1962.

The two visits took place in July and August respectively, and they provided useful occasions for candid speaking, both privately and publicly, on both sides.<sup>1</sup> The warmth of the reception that both parties received, though stimulated by a natural desire to win Kenya's support for the NFD's cession, was nevertheless genuine; and a timely corrective to those sceptics who believe that "Somali ethnic pride" is incompatible with African brotherhood. Mr Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, the former Prime Minister of British Somaliland, and one of the most eloquent public speakers in the Republic, spoke of Mr Kenyatta at a public gathering in Mogadishu on July 29, 1962, in these words: "... he and his small band of brothers have set their tremendous intellectual resources to the creation of an African personality. They

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

have taken the philosophy of a great American negro, Dr Garvey, and, like the poet, have given it a form and a local habitation, a form in the context of the principles of pan-africanism which every African today urgently and affectionately embraces, and a local habitation in the deep recess of every African heart." Mr Egal was not voicing empty sentiments about either Mr Kenyatta or Africa. There are many Somali leaders like him who feel much the same urge for African unity, especially the President of the Republic. It should also be emphasised that hostility to Ethiopia is not personal; it is their system of government and their attitude of mind towards Somalis that is disliked.

In answer to the charge of being contradictory in their policy of African and Somali unity, the President, Mr Adan Abdulla, said at a state dinner given in honour of Mr Kenyatta on July 28, 1962, "the principle of self-determination, when used properly to unify and enlarge an existing state with a view towards its absorption in a federal system of government is neither balkanisation nor fragmentation. It is a major contribution to unity and stability, and totally consistent with the concept of Pan-Africanism."

In the same speech, the President also spoke of the practical difficulties of African unity and the lessons that his country had learned, following the merger of former British Somaliland and the Trust Territory of Somalia in 1960. He said that:

"a desire for unity must be matched by a willingness to sacrifice a measure of sovereignty, and to remould the machinery of government to absorb new political and administrative methods. I say that, not to alarm or discourage, but because I think it is time that our continent of Africa took a more practical and realistic view of the problems that have been created by the after-effects of colonialism and their relation to a closer political association of African States.



## AN INVITATION TO MOGADISHU

"There are some lessons to be learned from the short but nonetheless profitable experience of this Republic; because we can claim with justice that we have made a unique, practical contribution to African unity by merging two independent African states into one—even against the established prejudices of interested powers. I do not have to enumerate the colonial-made problems that we have encountered in the field of fiscal, judicial, linguistic and administrative integration because they still preoccupy us and are too well known. But I would like to underline three lessons.

"First—as a prerequisite to either a federal system or a total union of states, it is necessary to accept, as we have done in Article Six of our constitution, limitations of sovereignty on conditions of parity with other states. Second—we have learned that the outmoded concept of territorial integrity must vanish from our habitual thinking because its roots are embedded in colonialism, and it is incompatible with Pan-Africanism. Third—we have learned of a cardinal principle underlying the effectiveness or otherwise of a political union between two independent states. It is this: the ordinary person must be able to identify himself and his interests with the new order, on economic, ethnic and cultural grounds.

"It is this last lesson that is perhaps the hardest to learn but, if we Africans are proud to take our place as a democratic people in the comity of nations, we must do more than pay lip-service to the feelings of the ordinary man and woman in our society. We claim, many of us, to be African leaders and socialists. This implies that, through our wisdom and understanding, men will follow us, and, by the equity of our laws, our people will have equal rights and opportunities.

"Regrettably, it is becoming commonplace in Africa today to accept the development of a privileged class

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

of rulers, with the instincts of colonialists, as a substitute for government by the people. This is one of the after-effects of colonial rule. But it is my duty to give this warning to my colleagues in Africa: it will be the unwillingness of African rulers to curb their powers and to lift their artificial colonial boundaries, that will frustrate the hopes and desires of the ordinary people of Africa to be led out of isolation and ignorance into the greater union of African States.

"I am sorry to have had to end on a note of caution, but there is too much at stake, in the prevention of the kind of tragedies that beset our brothers in the Congo, for me to refrain from bringing unpalatable facts to your notice. Of course, I hope these forebodings will not materialise, but they exist for those who have the eyes to see and the care to understand."

As for Mr Kenyatta's views, he was evidently anxious to avoid contentious subjects but hoped that the Somali Republic would join an East African Federation; and some of his colleagues saw a possible solution to the NFD problem within such a framework. Speaking at the President's Reception, Mr Kenyatta said, "... it will not be enough merely to have an organisation co-ordinating the operation of a few selected services. We shall have to go further and create a new federal state of Eastern Africa. It will, therefore, be necessary, as soon as the principle of the inclusion of Somalia and Ethiopia has been agreed, to call a conference of leaders of Central and Eastern Africa to work out the form of federal structure."

Again, in an address to a select audience, including the Diplomatic Corps in Mogadishu, Mr Kenyatta said "We do not want a one-sided federation, but both a political and economic federation, and not one without the other." This comment was significant, particularly in view of Ethiopia's known reluctance to associate in a political federation

## AN INVITATION TO MOGADISHU

because of obvious constitutional difficulties. On the day of his departure from Mogadishu, Mr Kenyatta said "It is our wish, as we know it is yours, that, as soon as Kenya is independent, we should enter into negotiations for an Eastern African federation."

Commenting on Federation, Dr Sharmarkay said in his farewell speech to Mr Kenyatta on July 30, "as for our future in an East African Federation, we visualise a Federation in which all the Somali people will form one federal unit in the wider federation of East and Central African States. From this basis, we look forward to the closer unity of all states in Africa."

He qualified this, however, on August 11th, in a speech at a reception given to Mr Ngala, in which Dr Sharmarkay said

"The Somali Republic, though otherwise more than willing to do so, can only enter into a political federation on the prior condition that the constituent part, comprising Somalis who wish to be united, is established before the Republic enters into the proposed federal relationship. The reason for this is obvious. No state, regional or administrative boundaries within a federation have yet been revised without at least a two-thirds majority in the Federal Legislature. This is a political risk which the Somali people, being in a minority, would not be prepared to take. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that all constituent boundary arrangements should be settled before an act of federation is passed."

Again, sceptics doubt whether Somalis are sincere about joining an East African Federation. If Mr Ronald Ngala's impressions were correct it would seem that he, at any rate, was in no doubt about this. He said in Mogadishu on August 12:

"as for Federation, I am very pleased to hear that you

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

yourself are advocating Federation as something which is indispensable. Now, this gives me a very real hope that in this country, not only the leaders, but the common people in the streets are thinking in practical terms of Federation. It bears out that you have a solid idea about the Federation, and the people have become good disciples to this idea. Now very few countries in East Africa or even Central Africa have started selling this idea to the masses and it is due to your encouragement that I see this situation is existing in this country."

But it was on the question of the NFD that the immediate focus of interest centred. Dr Sharmarkay first broached the subject on the day that Mr Kenyatta was leaving the Republic. Referring to the independent commission that was expected to enquire into the opinion of the NFD people as to their future, the Prime Minister said:

"If the commission reports that the majority of the people wish to become a part of independent Kenya we will not object. . . . Our hope is that the principle of self-determination will be fully respected and applied to the inhabitants of the NFD. . . . It has been applied in recent years to Togo, the Cameroons and elsewhere, and there are valid reasons why it should be applied to the NFD."

Mr Kenyatta was equally frank. Referring to "this very touchy question which we have discussed in a very brotherly and friendly manner", Mr Kenyatta went on to say:

"We, and especially KANU, feel, and we have put it clearly before the Somali government, that we regard the NFD as part of Kenya. We also regard Somalis who live in the NFD and elsewhere in Kenya as our brothers. They are part and parcel of Kenya and we would like



## AN INVITATION TO MOGADISHU

them to live in Kenya in that fashion. . . . This is a question which we can discuss with the Somalis in the NFD, this being a domestic affair of Kenya."

Mr Ngala took a slightly less rigid stand in a speech he made in Mogadishu on August 16: "with regard to the question you raise about the NFD, we have given the people of that area an opportunity to say what they wish, and with further discussions I hope we can come to some arrangements satisfactory to all parties concerned." On the following day he remarked, "autonomous regions, comprising the people who wish to live together in Kenya, and providing for the rights of minorities, can be a solution to the problems of suspicion, problems of fear, problems of insecurity, and even problems of secession. . . ."

In reply, the Prime Minister pointed out that the NFD question was not new; he continued:

"it dates back to 1943 when the Somali Youth League was formed. The League's branches in the NFD were proscribed by the Kenya government five years later because of the vociferous demands by the people of the NFD to unite with their brother Somalis. Many leaders were imprisoned and eight were exiled to a remote corner of the province. They were released only last year. So you see, sir, it is not so much fear of tyranny that drives the people of the NFD towards us (they have experienced that already), but an old and natural desire to unite. A burning desire which neither time nor adversity has stifled. But their patience, sir, is now almost exhausted."

The Somali government's policy towards the people of the NFD was stated at a press conference on August 4, 1962, by Mr Ali Mohammed Hirave, the Minister of Information.

"As for this government's relations with the NFD I

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

must point out that we have a constitutional obligation to assist our people to reunite and we shall not shrink from this obligation. The problem is, of course, one between the NFD and Her Majesty's Government, but, as Her Majesty's Government has admitted, there are international implications.<sup>2</sup> Since we are the only African state with a legitimate interest in this matter, we consider that we have every right to express our point of view and to render whatever assistance is needed by the NFD."

Finally, the Prime Minister clarified his government's policy towards the British government over the NFD issue in a statement made on August 11, 1962. He declared that:

"The British government alone carries the responsibility to do what is just to the people of the NFD and to put into practice the principle of self-determination. By so doing the British government will avoid repeating the grievous errors of the past; when, for example, she twice handed over Somali territory to Ethiopia, thus compromising the relations between these two countries. . . . Since our independence, the consequences of these injustices have brought about the merciless and unprecedented slaughter of many of our subjects by the land and air forces of a neighbouring African State. I must give a solemn warning that, whilst this dispute remains unresolved, it presents an ominous threat to peace in this part of Africa."

It was evident by the middle of August 1962 that the respective attitudes of the Somali and Kenya leaders over the NFD issue were irreconcilable, though relations remained friendly in spite of Mr Kenyatta's obvious irritation that the issue had been raised in public at all. His retort that the NFD issue was a domestic affair annoyed the Somali government,

## AN INVITATION TO MOGADISHU

and it is only fair to comment that if Mr Kenyatta had followed up his intention of discussing the question with the Somalis of the NFD there might have been less cause for concern.

The Somali government's somewhat threatening attitude to Britain was provoked by the long delay in the appointment of the independent commission for the NFD and the ominous news that, in addition to the independent commission, the NFD was to be visited by two other commissions, a Regional Boundaries Commission and a Constituencies Delimitation Commission. The inference was that the British government would not necessarily make a decision exclusively on the findings of the NFD Commission's Report.

## THE COMMISSION REPORTS

At the Lancaster House Conference in April 1962, the NFD delegates were given an undertaking by the Colonial Secretary that there would be "no change in the status of the Northern Frontier District or in the arrangements for its administration" until a decision had been made on the findings of the NFD Commission.<sup>1</sup> It was with dismay, therefore, that the secessionists in the NFD heard of an official visit contemplated by Kenya's Regional Boundaries and Constituencies Delimitation Commissions.

These Commissions were charged with delimiting regional and electoral boundaries for Kenya's forthcoming elections. In other words, it appeared to the NFD secessionist leaders that the Government had decided to ignore their demands and to include their territory in the framework of Kenya's new self-governing constitution, the very process that the NFD leaders had sought to avoid in their meetings with Mr Maudling. Indeed, their counsel were clearly given to understand at the final meeting with Mr Maudling that if the NFD Commission reported that there was an overwhelming desire for secession the British government would accede to the request.

The secessionist political parties addressed a memorandum to the Governor of Kenya protesting that a visit by the



## THE COMMISSION REPORTS

Regional and Electoral Boundary Commissions to the NFD was "contrary to the undertaking that there would be no change in the status of the NFD until a decision on its future had been taken", and that "if it was [the Governor's] intention to draw the NFD into the ambit of Kenya's new Constitution . . . they would not participate in Kenya's general election".<sup>2</sup> In reply, the Governor's office stated that the recommendations of these commissions "cannot prejudice in any way the findings of the NFD Commission nor the British Government's decision based on these findings". This was possible, but to Somalis the likelihood seemed otherwise, as there was still no mention of the appointment of the NFD Commission.

Consequently, their member of the Legislative Council, Mr Khalif, flew to London with his legal adviser to consult Mr Duncan Sandys, who had now succeeded Mr Maudling as Colonial Secretary. It was only possible, however, for Mr Khalif to see a senior official in the Colonial Office, who repeated the assurances given by the Governor's Office, and apparently suggested also that "arrangements for the NFD might be introduced bringing the territory under direct Colonial Office responsibility during the period of self-government".<sup>3</sup> This provoked the retort by Mr Khalif that "it was evident that the British Government's decision on the future of the NFD was already being prejudiced before the NFD Commission had even been appointed".<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the suggestion that the NFD might continue under direct Colonial Office control rekindled flagging hopes, and was at least consistent with the undertaking that the status of the territory would remain unchanged until a decision on its future was arrived at by the British Government.

Meanwhile, the secessionist political parties increased the momentum of their campaign of strongly worded secessionist propaganda. This was matched by similar anti-secessionist activity by the NPUA. Both sides were equipped with Land Rovers, loudspeakers and party flags, and wherever men

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

assembled radios picked up pro-secessionist broadcasts from Mogadishu or condemnation from Addis Ababa. In the last week of August the KANU Youth Wing joined forces with the anti-secessionists by organising a rally in Isiolo among the peripheral Meru and Turkana tribesmen. The pro-secessionist NPPPP broke up the rally and rioting moved to the centre of the township. A General Service Unit of the Kenya police restored order with the use of tear gas and twenty-eight people were injured.

Apparently the Kenya government took this outbreak of violence seriously for the press announced on August 29th that the prospective visit of the Boundary Commission to the NFD had been cancelled. This aroused as much confident expectation among pro-secessionists as it dismayed their adversaries, and, as a further stimulus for hope, the terms of reference of the NFD Commission were also announced :

“To ascertain, and report on, public opinion in the Northern Frontier District (comprising the Districts of Isiolo, Garissa, Mandera, Marsabit, Moyale and Wajir) regarding arrangements to be made for the future of the area in the light of the likely course of constitutional development in Kenya.”

Mr G. C. M. Onyiuke, QC, from Nigeria, and Major-General M. P. Bogert, CBE, DSO, CD, from Canada, were appointed as members of the commission. They started in the NFD on October 22, 1962.

Meanwhile, the pro-secessionists' leaders prepared a joint memorandum<sup>5</sup> for presentation to the Commission which set out their views at some length. It made three demands: secession from Kenya forthwith, the establishment of a Legislative Assembly, followed by independence and reunification with the Somali Republic by an Act of Union. It explained that the NFD's desire to unite with the Somali Republic was not influenced by considerations of fear or enmity for their

## THE COMMISSION REPORTS

neighbours in Kenya, "with whom they wished to have the friendliest relations". What they wanted was an administration that could match their social and political institutions. "The only country that can help us in this respect," they declared, "is the Somali Republic which will lift us from our colonial status and give us peace and prosperity, pride and purpose, because it is founded on democratic principles and has a constitution and administration consistent with our way of life and common beliefs."

Memoranda presented to the Commission by other interested parties, including KANU, NPUA, NPPN and the GPU have not been published and their views can only be gauged from the report of the commission, to which we will shortly refer.<sup>6</sup> It should be emphasised that the commission was purely fact-finding and had no authority to make recommendations. Moreover, the commission was invited by a confidential memorandum<sup>7</sup> from the Colonial Office, dated October 10th, to direct its enquiries towards ascertaining the wishes of the people in relation to the period of internal self-government in Kenya, and to the period after the independence of Kenya. We shall refer to this significant document again.

The commissioners' arrival coincided with heavy rains in the NFD and they were obliged to fly in light aircraft from one centre to another, having given advance notice of their itinerary. They started at Garissa where they established a pattern of enquiry followed in successive districts. Large numbers of people assembled in the open air to listen to their spokesmen address the commissioners, and by the reaction of the crowd, favourable or otherwise, the commissioners were able to assess their views. It was immediately evident to them, apparently, that the population could be divided into those who held the 'Kenya Opinion' and those who voiced the 'Somali Opinion'. The former, explained the commissioners in their report,<sup>8</sup> was the view of those who wanted the Northern Frontier District to remain part of Kenya after

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

it attained its independence and favoured participation by the Northern Frontier District in any constitutional developments that might take place in Kenya leading towards independence. The other "favoured secession of the Northern Frontier District from Kenya followed by union of the Northern Frontier District with the Somali Republic". The commissioners concluded that "a compromise solution was clearly unacceptable to both sides and, with few exceptions, the adherents of each supported their view with the greatest vigour and determination".

In the Garissa District the commission found that opinion "could be identified with the three main racial groups of this District, the Somalis, the riverine tribes and the Galla (Orma). The Somalis, of course, held the Somali Opinion, the riverine tribes the Kenya Opinion and the Galla (Orma) were of 'mixed opinion'." In the Wajir district, which is exclusively inhabited by Somalis, "all were unanimous in their support of Somali Opinion, likewise the Mandera District".<sup>9</sup>

It was in the Moyale and Marsabit Districts that the commissioners encountered some difficulty. Three-fifths of the Moyale District is occupied by the Somali Ajuran and they were all in favour of the Somali Opinion, likewise the islamised Boran of the eastern part of the District. But the pagan Boran to the west of the District unanimously favoured the Kenya Opinion.<sup>10</sup>

As for the Marsabit District, it is almost equally divided between the Galla (Boran and Gabbra) and the Rendille. The latter, according to the Commissioners, are slightly more numerous than the former. There is also a small population of El Molo, about 150 strong, on the shores of Lake Rudolf. The Commissioners found that the Galla were of the Kenya Opinion. The Rendille were of the Somali Opinion but with reservations which we will come to in a moment. The El Molo chief "supported union with the Somali Republic only if his tribe were not required to leave their homes and move to the Somali Republic!"<sup>11</sup>



## THE COMMISSION REPORTS

In the Isiolo township, the commissioners found that "the majority of the people, being alien Somali, favour the Somali Opinion, but there is a strong minority who support the Kenya Opinion. Outside Isiolo Township, almost all the people in the District being Moslem Boran, opinion tends to favour secession and the representations made to us unanimously supported this; however we were given to understand that there is in fact a tangible element that takes the opposite view."<sup>12</sup>

In the summary of conclusions, the commissioners stated that the District could be divided into three areas of opinion; areas supporting the Somali Opinion, areas supporting the Kenya Opinion and areas of Mixed Opinion. The areas of Somali Opinion, according to the commissioners, "are the biggest in total population and size and are in fact one. They extend from the Somali-Galla Line and beyond to include the grazing lands of the Ajuran" (Map 3).<sup>13</sup>

The Areas supporting the Kenya Opinion were "the grazing lands of the Gabra in Marsabit District, of the non-Moslem Boran in the Moyale District, and the riverine tribes on the banks of the Tana in Garissa District".

The areas of mixed opinion were found to be "Moyale Township and the grazing area of the Sakuye to the east as far as Boran-Ajuran Line, Marsabit Township, Isiolo District, Garissa Township, and the grazing area of the Orma south and west of the Tana River". The Commissioners felt that the Gelubba had no "coherent opinion as to the future government of the NFD" and they were not prepared to accept the opinions of the Rendille "as an accurate reflection of the opinion of the people".<sup>14</sup>

The commissioners seemed to contradict themselves as to precisely what the Somali Opinion was. Speaking of the NPPPP, the commission stated in their report that "... there is little doubt about the unflinching support which it receives from practically all the pure Somali of the three districts of Garissa, Wajir and Mandera . . . and that the Party stands

for secession of the Northern Frontier District from Kenya before it attains independence".<sup>15</sup> . . . Yet in their summary the commissioners stated that the people favoured secession "*when* Kenya attains independence" and that "the Somali Opinion is based on the premise that there can be no question of secession before Kenya gets independence".<sup>16</sup>

The Somalis questioned this apparent dichotomy. The 'premise' on which the commissioners based Somali Opinion was revealed later. The commissioners were, however, consistent in their observation that those of Somali Opinion wished "the NFD to have a period under British authority in which to build up its machinery of government so that it can join the Somali Republic as a self-governing unit".<sup>17</sup>

The pro-secessionist parties in the NFD were critical of certain aspects of the report. In a memorandum<sup>18</sup> to the Colonial Secretary they commented that the Commission "had done its utmost to conceal the true strength of the opinion for secession". They insisted that "the report be accepted as to the facts, without its extraneous interpolations of opinion and distrust. . . . The conclusion which must necessarily be drawn from the commission's own accounts of its investigations are that, of the six districts, five are clearly, by an overwhelming preponderance of opinion, in favour of the Somali view; these are the Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, Moyale and Isiolo Districts." The Somali Government, in a White Paper, calculated this as 87 per cent of the total population of the NFD.<sup>19</sup>

The "extraneous interpolations of opinion and distrust", to which the pro-secessionist parties referred in this memorandum, was directed at the commissioners' reluctance to accept the opinion of the Muslim Boran and the Rendille, all of whom supported the Somali Opinion. In their report, the commissioners stated that they understood "that 90 per cent of the Rendille are pagan, and that, although their language bears some resemblance to Somali, their dress and customs are different and have in fact more in common with

## THE COMMISSION REPORTS

those of the Samburu and the Masai. In view of these differences it seemed strange that they should want to join the Somali Republic but when taxed with this, the Rendille Chief insisted that their customs are like those of the Somali and not those of the Samburu and Masai; he did not mention religion, perhaps the most significant point. . . . We cannot believe that the Rendille people, who have no direct contact with the Somali, genuinely want to join the Somali Republic. The difference in religion between the Rendille and the Somali reinforced this belief. . . ."<sup>20</sup>

After the NFD Commission had begun its enquiries, it was announced that the Regional Boundaries Commission would visit the area after all. On its visit to Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, and part of Moyale districts, this commission reported that "the Somali delegations . . . were unanimous in their desire not to be included in any region of Kenya. Apart from one delegation, which wished the area to remain under British control for the time being, all these delegations wished the NFD to be joined with the Somali Republic."<sup>21</sup> The commission recommended, subject to the disclaimer that it was no part of their duty to decide the issue of Somali secession, that the area to the east of the Somali Line should be incorporated with the Coast Region and the other half of the NFD should form part of a new Eastern Region. The Commissioners stated that they would have liked to recommend that the Somali Districts should be formed into a separate seventh Region, but they were precluded from doing so by their terms of reference which restricted them to dividing Kenya into six Regions only. They left the door to secession open.

## DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES

The Somali Prime Minister, Dr Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkay, paid an informal visit to London on his return from a State visit to America at the beginning of December 1962. Accompanied by Mr Mohamoud Abdi Arraleh, Dr Sharmarkay was received, at his request, by both Mr Macmillan and Lord Home. He took this opportunity to explain in general terms his government's position on the NFD question; but as the report of the NFD Commission had not been completed, there was very little that could be said on behalf of the British government except their desire to reach a 'honourable settlement'. This was the first, and last, opportunity that the Somali government was given to discuss the NFD issue with the British government before a decision was made on the findings of the NFD Commission's Report.

The report, which we considered in the last chapter, was published before Christmas and was studied by the Somali government, together with a delegation of secessionist party leaders from the NFD. It was decided that, in view of the overwhelming support for secession and union with the Somali Republic, as evidenced by the Commission's report, a formal note should be addressed to the British government proposing that a conference be held between the two governments before the end of January. According to a govern-



## DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES

ment White Paper,<sup>1</sup> this request was made, among other reasons, "to pre-determine any pronouncements on the NFD by Mr Sandys during his projected visit to Kenya in March". The note, which was sent to the British Ambassador, Mr Lancelot Pyman, on January 6, 1963, formally accepted the NFD Commission's report "as evidence of the will of an overwhelming majority of the people of the NFD for unity with the Somali Republic". The Note continued, "in recognising the right of self-determination of the people of the NFD", the government was "prepared to accept as its own duty the assumption of sovereignty over the territory and people in question".<sup>2</sup>

The NFD delegates, led by their Member for the Legislative Council, Mr Khalif, also visited Hargeisa in the north and Kismayu at the extreme south of the Republic. They were greeted by large and enthusiastic crowds, which reflected the optimism of Somalis generally as a result of the NFD Commission's Report. The delegates were also received warmly by members of the Legislative Assembly who passed a motion promising the NFD "physical, moral and material" assistance.

In spite of the optimism and confidence that abounded in the Somali Republic and in the NFD the implications of the report on Kenya's regional boundaries had not passed over the heads of either the Somali Government or the NFD leaders. The Kenya Government had approved the recommendations of this Report, which split the NFD into two halves, bringing the NFD within the framework of Kenya's regional system of government. The pro-secessionist parties protested to Kenya's Governor, Mr Malcolm MacDonald, that, in spite of assurances to the contrary, a decision on the NFD Report had indeed been prejudiced by the Government's acceptance of the regional boundaries report. They sought assurances that no change would be made on the status of the NFD before a final decision was taken on their future.<sup>3</sup>

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

In an urgent note to the British Ambassador, on January 17th, the Somali government made similar representations, and protested that there had been an infringement of the undertakings, given at Lancaster House, that there would be no change in the status of the NFD until a decision on the NFD report had been taken. Four days later the Somali government, in a further Note, sought confirmation that the decision on the NFD report would be taken before Kenya's forthcoming election and that none of the recommendations of the regional or constituency delimitation commissions would be implemented before this decision was made.<sup>4</sup>

An interim reply to these Notes was handed to the Somali Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Abdillahi Issa, on January 23rd, by the Ambassador, Mr Pyman. It stated that a "final decision on the NFD is not going to be taken very soon" and that "nothing in the Kenya Constituencies [*sic*] Boundaries Commission's Report prejudices any decision HMG may take on the NFD".<sup>5</sup>

Bewildered, the Somali government again wrote to the British Embassy to ask what was meant by a "final decision" on the NFD not being imminent. Is this "final decision", they enquired, the "decision" referred to at the Lancaster House conference? In other words, the undertaking that the British government would take a decision on the findings of the NFD report before Kenya's new constitution comes into operation? And what, they asked, was the meaning of omitting any reference to the regional boundaries commission in the reply from the British Ambassador? Did this omission mean that the decision on the NFD had already been prejudged?<sup>6</sup>

By February 5th, there was still no reply from the British government to the Somali proposal, now a month old, for a conference before the end of January. The Prime Minister again handed the Ambassador a Note seeking assurances that nothing in the regional boundaries report would prejudice the "decision by Her Majesty's Government on the political future of the NFD".<sup>7</sup>

## DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES

Meanwhile, the Somali government suspected the contents of the 'confidential memorandum' mentioned by the NFD commissioners in their Report. They were perplexed by the distortion of Somali Opinion given by the Commissioners when they stated in their summary that "Somali Opinion . . . is based on the premise that there can be no question of secession before Kenya gets independence". This, they concluded, contradicted the opinion quoted earlier in the commission's report to the effect that the NPPPP party stood for secession *before* Kenya attains independence. Perhaps this premise arose out of the confidential memorandum? They asked to see it.

An explanation arrived on February 11th by the hand of the British Ambassador, together with a reply to the Somali Note of January 6th. To the astonishment of the Somali government they learnt from this communication, for the first time, the British Government's interpretation of Mr Macmillan's announcement in Parliament in April 1960. It was given in a confidential Memorandum to the NFD Commissioners on October 10, 1962, and stated that "Her Majesty's Government regard the statements [made respectively by Mr Macmillan and the Governor of Kenya in April and June, 1960] as precluding any cession of Kenya territory so long as HMG are responsible for Kenya. The statements would not, however, preclude arrangements being made, during pre-independence period, for cession on independence, if that were then the settled policy."<sup>8</sup>

At the same time the Ambassador, Mr Pyman, handed a Note to the Somali Prime Minister, in reply to the Somali government's earlier representations. This gave an assurance to the Somali Government that they would be consulted "before any final decision is taken on the future of the NFD and that these consultations will precede the introduction of an independence constitution [for Kenya]"; that in view of these assurances it was unnecessary to reply in detail to the notes sent by the Somali government; and that nothing



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

would prejudice "the final settlement of the NFD".<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Sharmarkay immediately despatched a telegram to Mr Macmillan. In it he wrote that he was "profoundly shocked to hear officially that Her Majesty's Government has failed to honour the undertaking given personally by former Colonial Secretary Rt. Hon. Maudling on April 6th last to the Northern Frontier District delegation at Kenya's Constitutional Conference. Mr Maudling promised that a decision on the findings of the Report of the Northern Frontier District Commission in Kenya regarding the future of the area will be taken before, repeat before, the new constitution for Kenya is brought into operation. . . ." The Prime Minister then quoted from Kenya's regional commission report which reiterated that "an undertaking was given that there would be no change in the status of the Northern District or in the arrangements for its administration until . . . a decision had been taken on the Somali question".

"I am now officially informed," continued the Prime Minister, "that a decision on the future of the Northern Frontier District is to be postponed until after Kenya's new Constitution comes into operation and that the District . . . is being forced, against the will of the people and in defiance of the undertakings referred to above, to participate in Kenya's new self-governing Constitution."

The Prime Minister concluded his message by saying that if the British Government persisted in postponing a decision on the future of the NFD "the only way in which Her Majesty's Government could avoid an outright and public charge of breach of faith would be to postpone all forthcoming elections in the Northern Frontier District (but not of course in Kenya proper) in accordance with the undertaking that there will be no change in the status of the Northern Frontier District . . . until a decision has been taken on the political future of the territory. I cannot see that a postponement of elections in the Northern Frontier District will in any way prejudice Kenya's constitutional progress towards independence



which we have no desire to impede. . . ."<sup>10</sup>

In the meantime, the Somali Ambassador to London, Mr M. A. Arraleh, protested in an official Note to Lord Home on February 22nd that the assurances that the Somali Government would be consulted before Kenya's independence did not meet the points raised in earlier Notes, as "there is an obligation resting directly upon the United Kingdom to take a clear and final decision on the future of the NFD which will give effect to the will of the majority of the inhabitants there". The Ambassador told Lord Home that the Somali Government could not accept "as a reasonable or appropriate reply to its earlier communications one which not only holds out no immediate hope that Her Majesty's Government will fulfil its duties, but also even seeks to alter the terms of the assurances which Her Majesty's Government has given in the past". Lord Home told the Ambassador that he would have to send this Note to Mr Sandys, who was then in East Africa, before a reply could be expected.<sup>11</sup> No reply was in fact received by the Somali government.

Mr Macmillan replied to the Somali Prime Minister's telegram on February 23rd. He referred to the final meeting with Mr Maudling and the NFD delegation at Lancaster House on April 6, 1962, and stated that Mr Maudling and the NFD delegation had before them a copy of the section which finally appeared as paragraphs 24-26 of Kenya's Constitutional Report, and that Mr Maudling's purpose was to explain the meaning of these sections, in particular that the action which would be taken on the report would be decided before the constitution for internal self-government came into force.

Mr Macmillan then gave the Government's interpretation of the undertaking given by Mr Maudling to the NFD delegation. "The decision referred to," wrote Mr Macmillan, "related solely to action which, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, should be taken as a result of the Commission's findings. There was no undertaking that the decision would

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

relate to the final constitutional arrangements for the NFD." Mr Macmillan ended with assurances that Kenya's internal self-government constitution would not prejudice the final settlement of the political future of the NFD; that the Somali government would be given an opportunity to express their views before any final decision was taken; and that consultations would precede the introduction of an independence constitution.<sup>12</sup>

The Somali Government found this telegram very disturbing. Among other disquieting features, it contained an error of fact. Mr Maudling did not of course have the complete text of paragraphs 24-26 of Kenya's Constitutional Report when he met the NFD delegation for the last time. As we have seen, the delegation were not satisfied with the text and, with Mr Maudling's agreement, an important amendment was inserted. This was that a *decision* on the findings of the Commission would be taken by Her Majesty's Government before Kenya became self-governing. How then, asked the Somali government, could Mr Macmillan possibly say that Mr Maudling's purpose was to explain the meaning of a document which had still to be amended? The amendment was a negotiated settlement in the presence of counsel and referred to one and not two decisions. How can there now be two decisions? they asked.

That apart, the Somali Government could not accept Mr. Macmillan's view that no decision on the political future of the territory was ever contemplated in the Lancaster House agreement. "Since the Commission's findings," stated the Somali Government in a White Paper,<sup>13</sup> "could only relate to 'ascertaining public opinion in the area regarding its future', Mr Macmillan's contention that 'there was no undertaking that a decision would relate to the final constitutional arrangements for the NFD' is sheer double talk and an abrogation of the right to self-determination."

By the beginning of March, Mr Sandys was in Kenya to settle outstanding points in the new constitution. The Somali

## DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES

Ambassador to London, Mr M. A. Arraleh, was recalled and an emergency session of the Somali Legislative Assembly was arranged for March 6th "so that the government could place before it the facts of the situation in so far as they were known".<sup>14</sup> In an opening speech, the Prime Minister referred to "this critical time in the history of our nation" and to the fact that discussions were then taking place between representatives of the NFD and the British Minister for Colonial Affairs. He continued, "although no final decision on the future of the territory is expected for reasons that I shall shortly explain, it is probable that some decisions will be taken and they may gravely prejudice the future of the people of the NFD in particular and the Somali nation as a whole. If this were to be the case it might regrettably become necessary to reconsider our relations with the United Kingdom. . . . Although circumstances are somewhat different today and we have many reasons to be grateful to the United Kingdom for the generous and prompt assistance that she is giving to us, we cannot allow these material considerations either to weaken our resolve to pursue our just cause or to absolve Britain from a series of grave injustices in the past."

The Prime Minister went on to explain his government's interpretation of the undertakings given to the NFD delegation at Lancaster House in 1962 and added: "In our view, and in the view of everyone else that we have consulted both here and abroad, this undertaking clearly implies that there will be no change in the status or administration of the NFD until the British government has taken a decision on the political future of the NFD, and that this decision will be made before Kenya's self-governing constitution comes into operation. The importance of this undertaking, apart from the implied obligation that Britain recognises that she has a duty to respect and apply the right of self-determination to the inhabitants of the NFD, is that a decision on the future of the NFD will be made before Kenya's self-governing constitution comes into operation. This places the responsibility for



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

making a decision on the British Government alone. If, however, the decision is made after Kenya attains internal self-government, the responsibility and authority for taking and implementing such a decision no longer rests exclusively with the British Government. . . .”

After describing the events that had taken place since his return from abroad, the Prime Minister concluded “we will not remain a passive witness of the apparent failure by the British Government to recognise and implement the rights of the people of the NFD. We cannot accept the present policy of the British Government which seeks to alter the terms of the assurances which were given at the constitutional conference last year. We can no longer stand aside and watch a repetition of Britain’s former policies which sacrificed the interest of our people yesterday to gain the favours of Ethiopia, and would sacrifice them today to favour Kenya. This is the third occasion on which this Assembly has debated the NFD. It is the most important issue that confronts us, as can be witnessed by the mass demonstrations that took place the other day. If the British Government fails to carry out its obligation to take the right decision in fulfilment of the wishes of eighty-ninety per cent of the people of the NFD, the Government is pledged to take all appropriate steps to maintain the rights of the people of the NFD and calls upon Parliament and the nation for its unflinching support and for a reaffirmation of their determination to secure these rights.”

Following the Prime Minister’s speech, a motion was passed giving powers to the government “to revise its relations with Great Britain if the latter acts against the express wishes of the people of the NFD to reunite with their motherland”.

Mr Sandys gave his decision in Nairobi two days later.



## RUPTURE

After sunset on the evening of March 8th, radios all over the Somali Republic were tuned in to Kenya's Broadcasting Station to hear a statement by Mr Sandys on Kenya's new Constitution. Troops in Kenya had been alerted to go to the NFD at short notice, and contingents of the General Service Unit had already moved in. A decision on outright cession was not expected, but at the very least it was hoped that the status of the area would remain unchanged until the Somali government had had an opportunity of discussing the matter with the British government. In preparation for the worst, the Prime Minister had warned the public in a speech to the Assembly two days before that, "although no final decision on the future of the territory is expected", it was probable that decisions would be taken that "may gravely prejudice the future of the people of the NFD".

As soon as Mr Sandys' announcement had been made, a furious crowd, striding purposefully down the main streets of Mogadishu, converged on Parliament Square demanding that relations be broken with all western powers. A column making for the British Ambassador's house was turned back by police riot squads, likewise the demonstrators in Parliament Square. Angry demonstrations then broke out on successive days in townships all over the Republic. The British

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

Council building in Hargeisa was sacked; windows of the British Consulate-General were smashed; British women and children were flown out of the country; protective guards were placed outside each 'western' Embassy.

Although the Prime Minister had given advance notice that Mr Sandys would not be making a final decision on the future of the NFD, there was no indication in Mr Sandys' statement that his decision was *not* final. Indeed, his closing remarks could not have been interpreted otherwise. "I hope," he said, "that whatever may be their anxieties and their doubts, the Somali people, when they get experience of the new self-governing Kenya, will find that Kenya is a good place to live in and a country in which they have an honourable part to play."

In the short text of his official statement, Mr Sandys said :

"The Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference of 1962 envisaged the appointment of a Commission to ascertain public opinion in the Northern Frontier District regarding the future of this area, in the light of the likely course of constitutional developments in Kenya. It was stated that a decision on the Commission's findings would be taken by Her Majesty's Government before the introduction of the new constitution to Kenya.

"The Commission presented its report last December and Her Majesty's Government have considered its conclusions. They have also noted the statement in the report of the Kenya Regional Boundaries Commission that, but for their terms of reference, which restricted them to providing six regions, they would have considered it right to create a seventh region, in the general eastern part of the Northern Frontier District, which is almost exclusively occupied by Somalis and kindred peoples.

"The Colonial Secretary has discussed this matter

fully with the Governor of Kenya and with Ministers in Nairobi. He has also received two delegations, one representing those elements of Kenya's Northern Frontier District who advocate secession to the Somali Republic and another representing those who wish it to remain part of Kenya.

"Her Majesty's Government have now decided that, as part of the constitutional arrangements for internal self-government in Kenya, the predominantly Somali areas referred to in the report of the Regional Boundaries Commission (comprising the constituencies 20-24 inclusive\* should be formed into a separate seventh region enjoying a status equal to that of other regions in Kenya.

"The creation of the new region will give its inhabitants greater freedom in the management of their own affairs and more effective means of safeguarding their interests and maintaining their way of life."

The Somali government felt that no purpose could be served by making further representations to the British government. They had proposed a conference in early January and this had been turned down after a month's consideration. They had not been given an opportunity to discuss the matter with the British government in any detail and were thus precluded from putting forward proposals of their own. For their part, the British government missed an opportunity to explain their position frankly to the Somali government. Merely holding out hopes, that an 'honourable settlement' would be reached at some future date, was inadequate; and somewhat misleading, since, as events have shown, the part that the British government was prepared to play in this matter was negligible, once Kenya had become a self-governing colony.

\* 'These constituencies embrace Mandera and Wajir districts, together with the Ajuran area of the Moyale district and Garissa district, less the areas occupied by the Riverine people and Orma.'

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

Although it has no practical significance now, it would be as well to consider the Somali Government's criticisms of Mr Sandys' statement, which were published by the Somali Government in May 1963, because it strengthened the Somali belief that they had been cheated and doublecrossed, and this explains in part the reasons for the drastic action that followed in breaking off relations with Britain. It should also be said that the wisdom of this course of action was challenged by many senior Somali officials who, whilst understanding the reasons that prompted it, felt that it was a tactical error. In the House of Lords on June 26th, the Earl of Dundee spoke of it harshly. "I thought at the time, and still think," he said, "that the action of the Somali Government in breaking off relations was impetuous, foolish, inexcusable and very much against the interests of the Somalis themselves."

In their criticisms of Mr Sandys' statement, the Somali Government noted the opening phrase which reflected the Lancaster House undertaking that the commission would ascertain public opinion in the NFD regarding the future of the area, but attacked the assertion that the constitutional conference also envisaged that NFD opinion should be ascertained "in the light of the likely course of constitutional developments in Kenya". This phrase, they claimed, was an afterthought, included in the commission's terms of reference, but not envisaged at the conference. Again, they noted that the British Government had studied only the conclusions of the NFD report which gave as the Somali Opinion the wish that the territory should secede when Kenya becomes independent. This was not the Somalis' opinion, which was that the principle of secession should be applied *before* Kenya's independence. It was in fact the commission's opinion "based on the premise [confidential memorandum] that there can be no question of secession *before* Kenya gets independence". The relevance of this criticism is that if the NFD had declared that they were not seeking secession until Kenya's indepen-



dence, this would have justified an interim decision on their future. They also observed that Mr Sandys' meeting in Nairobi with secessionist leaders was merely a formality because, when asked if this was his "final decision", he evaded the question.

"The plain and pitiful truth," concluded the Somali Government's White Paper,<sup>1</sup> "is that ever since Mr Maudling gave his apparently fair and straightforward undertakings at Kenya's constitutional conference in 1962, the British government have done their admittedly incompetent best to slide out of the obligation to take a decision on the future of the people of the NFD in accordance with the principles of self-determination to which the British government supposedly subscribes.

"Mr Maudling's pledge has turned out to have been a sedative to keep the people of the NFD quiet. The undertaking that HMG would decide the political future of the NFD whilst she was still in a position to control its destiny was false. It was an undertaking deliberately given and permitted to persist without correction. The solid basis for the undertaking was undermined by the NFD commission's terms of reference and by a confidential memorandum to the commission which apparently gave HMG a shameful opportunity of avoiding a decision on the NFD's political future.

"The British government merely committed themselves to an administrative decision which, in the event, was based solely on the recommendations of the Regional Boundaries Report and not on the NFD Commission's Report." On the evidence available it is difficult to refute these allegations.

On the day following Mr Sandys' statement, the BBC broadcast a Foreign Office communiqué to the effect that Mr Sandys' statement was not a final decision on the future of the area but that consultations would be held later with all interested parties, including Ethiopia. It so happened that in one of these broadcasts, which was transcribed by the Somali Ministry of Information, the wording of the communiqué

was ambiguous and it was interpreted as meaning that consultations would not take place until after Kenya's independence. This, together with all the doubts and misgivings about the British Government's honesty of purpose, left the Cabinet with nothing to offer Parliament other than their own resignations or a break in diplomatic relations to demonstrate their disgust.

During four tense days of debate in the Somali Parliament, some sixty speakers bitterly expressed their resentment at the turn of events; and some demanded, not only a break in relations with Britain, but also with Ethiopia and the United States as well, the latter for having supplied arms to Ethiopia.<sup>2</sup> A resolution approving a break in diplomatic relations with Britain "for failing to recognise the wishes expressed by the overwhelming majority of the peoples inhabiting the NFD" was passed by Parliament on March 14th by a majority of 70 votes to 14. Those opposing the motion, and there were also some abstentions, did so on the grounds that to break off relations now was to close the door to further negotiation. It was also an expression of no confidence in the government.

The debate ended on a Thursday evening, and no action could be taken by the government the next day because Fridays are observed as a public holiday. But that afternoon, to the Prime Minister's delight, he received at his home a communication from the British Ambassador, Mr Pyman. It conveyed the encouraging news that Her Majesty's Government had certain proposals to make to the Somali Government, and that the Ambassador was authorised to say that he expected to be able to put forward these proposals in the next day or so. At half-past eight on the following morning, the Prime Minister, buoyant and hopeful after weeks of anxiety, instructed his staff to inform Mr Pyman that he was quite prepared to postpone a formal severance of diplomatic relations in order to discuss any new proposals, and invited the Ambassador to call on him. Minutes later a

## RUPTURE

senior member of the British Embassy staff telephoned the Prime Minister's office to confess that he was heartbroken. London had telegraphed again that morning to say, with regret, that there were no proposals. Characteristically, the Prime Minister observed "surely no Ambassador has been treated like this before?"

Without rancour and with great courtesy, the Foreign Minister, Mr Abdillahi Issa, handed to the Ambassador on March 18th the formal note breaking off diplomatic relations, and the rupture was complete. The Somali Government gave assurances that British property would be safeguarded and permitted the dismantling of the BBC Arabic-Relay Station at Berbera, the most powerful medium-wave transmitter in the world. Over-flying and landing rights for the Royal Air Force were cancelled. The Republic lost £1.3 million of aid per year. Within a week, the British Consul General in Hargeisa, Mr W. M. Dickinson, and his British staff left the Republic. A week later the staff of the British Embassy departed after, in the words of the Ambassador, "a most civilised rupture".

## AFRICAN ARENA

After the break in diplomatic relations, the NFD question fell squarely into the arena of African politics, where no doubt the British Government intended it to go. Mr A. Milton Obote, the Prime Minister of Uganda, communicated with the Somali Prime Minister on March 25, 1963, to say how strongly he felt that African boundary questions should only be discussed with African leaders. He was critical of the Somali Government view "that it would have been proper for Britain, as it were, to give away a part of Kenya's present territory". This, he wrote, would have been the "kind of arbitrary imperial action against which we have struggled to reach our independence". He remarked that "in almost every country in Africa there are minority groups having racial religious or tribal affinities with neighbouring countries" and added that caution should be exercised in considering the revision of boundaries on these grounds alone. Mr Obote felt that the Somali Government's action in breaking off relations with Britain reflected their unwillingness also to discuss the matter with Kenya leaders after the May elections. He proposed that the forthcoming Addis Ababa conference of Heads of States would be "the best possible forum for discussion of such matters".

In his reply on April 14th, Dr Sharmarkay said that his



government also supported "those very principles of self-determination, national dignity and African comity which are the cornerstones of our struggle against imperialism". He went on to describe how Somali territory had been used by Britain "as a bargaining factor in the interest of maintaining its position in relation to the presence of other imperial powers, including Ethiopia". He added that the Northern Frontier District was the outcome of such a series of colonial bargains; that the report of the 1962 NFD commission showed that an overwhelming majority of the inhabitants wished to unite with the Somali Republic, and that they were therefore entitled to self-determination. He referred Mr Obote to French and British Togoland, to the Cameroons, and to the union between former British Somaliland and the Trust Territory of Somalia as recent evidence of the application of this principle. The Prime Minister concluded, "the plain truth is that bad borders make bad neighbours and this is a regrettable post-independence legacy of colonialism which we African peoples have got to resolve as a prerequisite to regional and wider political associations. It is clearly better, where possible, that the colonial powers that created these problems should be brought to an acceptance of their responsibility and the duty to make adjustments, rather than that they should shuffle them off and leave them to poison the relations between independent African countries after independence."

Hopefully, the Somali Government moved the discussions of their frontier problems to the Addis Ababa conference of Heads of State in May. In his address, the President of the Republic, Mr Adan Abdulla Osman, supported the Organisation for African Unity, and made a specific reference to a permanent conciliation and arbitration commission, "which," he said, "should deal with the settlement of territorial and other disputes between African States", and should "consist of a panel of highly qualified Africans who command universal respect". The President went on to say

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

that his country did not subscribe to the view that the adjustment of existing boundary arrangements would aggravate rather than ease the situation, and objected to a suggestion that matters should remain as they are. "It would amount to us condoning actions and policies which we know very well are wrong and unjust," he said. "It would show that we are shortsighted to think that African unity can be achieved by side-tracking contentious issues that are the realities of the African scene."

"It is for this reason," explained the President, "that we seek in the friendliest spirit the indulgence of this great Assembly for a better understanding of the territorial problems which face the Somali people. In doing so our purpose is not to promote discord or hostility between the states involved, but to seek a recognition of the fact that the problems deserve the attention of the whole family of African nations."

Emphasising the uniqueness of the Somali frontier question, President Osman said "no other nation in Africa finds itself totally divided along the whole length of its borders from its own people. . . . By becoming united, the Somali people feel that not only would their welfare be secured, but that as a single entity they would be able to contribute effectively to the ideals of African unity." The President also emphasised that the Somali Government had no ambitions for territorial aggrandisement. "At the same time," he concluded, "the people of the Republic cannot be expected to remain indifferent to the appeal of its brethren. . . . If the Somalis in those areas are given the opportunity to express their will freely, the Government pledges itself to accept the verdict."<sup>1</sup>

Much of the content and purpose of this address apparently became overlaid with emotion when the President referred to Ethiopia as having "taken possession of a large portion of Somali territory without the consent and against the wishes of the inhabitants". The Ethiopian Prime Minister,

Mr Aklilon Habte Wold, called it an "unimaginable attack" on Ethiopia and objected to interference in her internal affairs. He said frontiers have been fixed by international charter, and the dispute had arisen only after Somali independence "with a very powerful campaign for an increase in Somali territory".<sup>2</sup>

The Somali Foreign Minister, Mr Abdillahi Issa, visited Nairobi on his way back to Mogadishu from the Conference of African Heads of State, and, at the invitation of Mr Kenyatta, who had just been appointed Prime Minister, he had private discussions about future relations between the Somali Republic and Kenya, in particular the projected East African Federation. These discussions were interpreted in the press and elsewhere as a softening in attitude towards the NFD by the Somali Government, following the Addis Ababa conference.

The nature of these talks was clarified by the Earl of Lytton in the House of Lords on July 15th when he quoted from an official *note verbale* addressed by the Somali government to the United States Embassy in Mogadishu on June 13th. The United States Government was asked to inform the British Government that foreign press and radio reports had given a misleading interpretation of the recent contacts which the Somali Foreign Minister had had with the Prime Minister of Kenya. They wished to make it clear that the Foreign Minister in his private talks with Mr Kenyatta "did not express any opinion which can be taken to indicate a change of policy by this government on the question of the Northern Frontier District . . .". They still maintained that the British Government "continues to bear the sole responsibility for settling this issue".

As for the Somalis in the NFD, they were bitterly disappointed with Mr Sandys' statement on March 8th. A conference of pro-secessionist chiefs, elders and political party leaders from every district in the NFD assembled at Wajir to consider the next step. The President of the NPPPP, Mr Alex



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

Kholkole, was removed without trial from the District Area and placed under a restriction order. The chiefs resigned and the political party leaders agreed to boycott the forthcoming regional and general elections. They carried out this threat to the apparent surprise of the administration. As the Earl of Lytton said in the House of Lords on June 26th, "in spite of assurances given me by the noble Marquis, Lord Lansdowne, and his officers that they expected no difficulty whatever in getting people to stand for election, in this area, there was a complete boycott." In a broadcast on April 28th, the Somali Prime Minister congratulated the NFD on the boycott. "This comes as no surprise to us," he declared, "this is further proof of the irrefutable decision of the people of the NFD to unite with their motherland and it should enlighten the minds of those who wish to ignore a reality which is as clear as daylight and cannot be suppressed."

No elections were held in the three eastern districts of the NFD where there was a total boycott, but anti-secessionists registered in the three western districts. Their candidates for the most part were unopposed. In Isiolo, however, the election was contested by two members of KANU with minority support in the District from Meru and Turkana tribesmen. The opening of polling booths, twice postponed on security grounds, was delayed on the third day by a clash between groups of electors and Somalis. Tear gas failed to restore order and officers opened fire on the demonstrators who were slinging stones at the police. A number of Somalis, including a woman, was killed and several were injured. Over thirty Somalis were arrested. The Vice-President of the NPPPP, Mr Wako Hapi, a Muslim Boran, and two other political leaders were also removed from the District without trial and placed under a restriction order. By this time, the North-Eastern Region, which comprised the three eastern districts of the NFD, came under the direct administration of the Governor as the Constitution made no provision for the administration of an unrepresented Region.



Tension again rose when the Borana District Commissioner in Isiolo, Mr Wabera, was tragically murdered, together with a pro-secessionist Boran (Muslim) Senior Chief, Gilma Dido, the latter by accident. The incident took place on a sandy road in the western half of the NFD. The District Commissioner was driving a Land-Rover with the chief beside him when they were held up by two Somalis, one with a machine gun, and shot to death. The two assassins, who were residents of Kenya, escaped across the Somali border in their own Land-Rover.<sup>3</sup> A few days later, on July 8th, the police made a dawn raid on the township of Isiolo and arrested thirty-seven Somalis for residing in the District without a permit.

These incidents, and many more besides, were an indirect, if not direct, result of procrastination by the British Government. But there was a reason. The Foreign Office was evidently pinning their hopes on the private discussions that the Somali Foreign Minister had with Mr Kenyatta in Nairobi after the Addis Ababa conference. Speaking about these discussions in the House of Lords on June 26th, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, the Earl of Dundee, said "... I think that, having regard to these discussions, it would be very unwise that we should attempt to intervene at this moment". But, as the Earl of Lytton pointed out in a debate on July 15th, the United States Embassy in Mogadishu, acting on behalf of Britain, had already received the Note of June 13th referred to previously. This maintained that as far as the Somali Government were concerned there was no change in policy and Britain was solely responsible for taking a decision on the future of this area. It is also clear from the Minister's speech that the British Government did not intend to take a unilateral decision. "... The interests of Her Majesty's Government in a final settlement is very great," he said, "although it may be less direct than that of the immediate parties to the dispute."

The date for Kenya's independence (December 12th) had

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

been announced and the last constitutional conference was due to begin in September. Impatient at the delay in reaching a final decision on the future of the NFD, six leading pro-secessionist political leaders from the area flew to London on July 15th to seek an interview with the Secretary of State. They saw Lord Lansdowne a week later, and, according to press reports, they were "very dissatisfied" with the meeting. They were, however, assured that an "honourable settlement" of their demands would be made before Kenya becomes independent.<sup>4</sup> They were also informed that the Somali Government had been invited to Rome to participate in talks on the future of the NFD, but according to *The Times* they say the Kenya-Somali problem as a matter between themselves and the British Government. They did not feel bound by any decision negotiated with the government of the Somali Republic. Nor, in view of past experience, did they have any further faith in assurances by the British Government.<sup>5</sup>

At a Press Conference, according to *The Scotsman*, Mr Degho Stambul, the secretary-general of the NPPPP, said: "We are left with only one course open to us. In order to prevent further bloodshed and discord we must be left alone to settle our own affairs and we shall insist that by August 15th this year all representatives of the British Government and their flag must quit our country . . . our solidarity and determination, as evidenced by our total boycott of the Kenya elections, should not be underestimated."<sup>6</sup> Under an order made by the Governor on November 1, 1963, Mr Stambul was removed to Kajiado, a Masai administrative centre 50 miles from Nairobi. He was the fifth party official of the NPPPP to be restricted without trial.

In a leading article, *The Times* of July 25th observed that the British Government has been repeatedly warned that this situation would develop—even without action by the Somali Republic. It had been hoped that the Addis Ababa conference of African leaders, and then the proposal to create

## AFRICAN ARENA

an East African Federation to which Somalis could adhere, would put off the evil day. They have not. Britain has now to make an interim decision, and, before Kenya becomes independent, on December 12th, a final one. . . . The final decision is whether to recognise the Somali secession. It is unfair that Britain should carry this responsibility alone, though it may have to. . . .”<sup>7</sup>

## ROME AND AFTER

The Conference between the British and Somali Governments was arranged for August 25, 1963. The Kenya Government was also represented and joined the British delegation which was led by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr Peter Thomas. The Somali delegation was led by the Prime Minister, Dr Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkay, and the Kenya Government was represented jointly by the Governor, Mr. MacDonald, and Mr Gichuru the Minister of Finance, together with other Ministers, including Mr Tom Mboya and Mr Joseph Murumbi.

There was evident optimism on the part of the Somali delegation following a statement by Mr Gichuru at Nairobi Airport. Asked if Kenya was still determined "not to budge an inch", Mr Gichuru replied, "I think it would be wrong to say that, we have our own stand and the Somalis have theirs. We hope that Britain may perhaps find a formula."<sup>1</sup> Optimism was soon deflated when Mr Thomas in his opening statement at the conference informed the Somali Government that since Britain would be responsible for Kenya for only a few more months, the British Government considered that it would be wrong to take a unilateral decision about the frontiers of Kenya without reference to the wishes of the government of that country; and that agreement should be



sought by the African governments concerned working and negotiating within an African framework.<sup>2</sup>

The British Government's contribution to the talks, according to statements made by Mr Gichuru and Mr Mboya, was to persuade the Kenya government against its will to agree "to a further round of talks and the possibility of referring the NFD question to the Organisation of African Unity".<sup>3</sup> The Somali Government, for their part, were disappointed to learn at their first meeting "that the British Government had no intention of making any constructive proposals and had only convened the conference to explore the position of the Somali Republic, which was in any case well known to them. As a further rebuttal, the British Government announced that they were, in any event, unwilling to accede to the wishes of the inhabitants of the Northern Frontier District."<sup>4</sup>

The Somalis then asked the British delegates to offer proposals which could form a useful basis for discussion.<sup>5</sup> The British delegation made these proposals:

"In response to the Somali Delegation's request for specific proposals the Kenya members of the British Delegation tabled a draft as a basis for agreement as follows:

1. Primary consideration will be given to the welfare of the inhabitants of the North-Eastern Region.
2. Agreement shall be sought by peaceful and lawful means and all concerned will co-operate to reduce tension in the area.
3. Her Majesty's Government will take no unilateral decision involving a change in the frontiers of Kenya before independence.
4. With these points in mind:
  - A. The Kenya Government recognise the interest of Somalia in the future of any people of Somali origin residing in Kenya.
  - B. The Somali Government and the Kenya

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

Government, taking into account previous contacts, will resume discussions at an early date to be agreed.

C. If these discussions do not result in agreement the Kenya Government accept that the Somali Government will be free after Kenya's independence to bring the matter to the notice of African states within the spirit of the Addis Ababa resolutions.

D. The Government of Kenya, in consultation with Her Majesty's Government, are actively considering what further steps should be taken to provide for the particular needs of the inhabitants of the area."<sup>6</sup>

These proposals "failed to provide a basis for discussion" and the Somali government offered counter-proposals which, according to a press report<sup>7</sup> before the final conference began, were "thought to be a little more than a last fling which will fail to get serious consideration as the Kenyan and British delegation is determined to end the conference tonight".

As a preamble to their proposals the Somali delegation reiterated that:

1. "(a) the Northern Frontier District is, and always has been, historically, geographically, economically, ethnically and culturally a separate entity from Kenya proper; (b) the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of this area expressed to the recent Independent Commission, which ascertained their wishes as to their political future, their desire to unite with the Somali Republic; (c) Her Majesty's Government, having sole responsibility for the disputed area, has an obligation to take a final decision on its political future in accordance with the declared wishes of the people.

## ROME AND AFTER

2. Although the Somali delegation persistently requested at this conference that concrete proposals be advanced which could be used as a basis for discussion for a final settlement of the problem, the United Kingdom delegation failed to do so.

3. The United Kingdom delegation having recognised the interest of the Somali Republic in the disputed area, the Somali delegation likewise recognises the interest of Kenya in the same area.

4. Having regard to these considerations, and in the absence of concrete proposals from the United Kingdom delegation, which would have offered a basis for discussion, the Somali delegation puts forward the following proposals, as an interim measure, pending a final settlement of the problem:

the whole of the Northern Frontier District with its six districts, being the disputed area, should be placed under a special administration. Such administration should be either:

- (i) a joint Somali/Kenya administration, or
- (ii) placed under United Nations administration.

5. If these proposals are agreeable to the United Kingdom delegation, the Somali Government is willing to enter into negotiations at an early date with all interested parties in order to achieve a final and satisfactory solution to this problem.”<sup>8</sup>

According to the Somali delegation's final communiqué issued in Rome on August 29th, these proposals were rejected by the British delegation but the Somalis “considered the proposals were a reasonable compromise offering an appropriate basis for further discussion and that the offer remained open”. In conclusion, the Somali Government stated that it was evident “that the British Government has not only deliberately misled the Somali Government during the course of the last eighteen months, but has also deceitfully en-

couraged the people of the NFD to believe that their right to self-determination could be granted by the British Government through peaceful and legal means. The responsibility for the consequences that may follow this suppression of a fundamental human right lies squarely on the British Government.”<sup>9</sup>

The conference ended in deadlock but the Kenya ministers stated that their offer of direct talks without precondition on either side remained open. On leaving Rome the Kenya Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Mr Mboya, “hailed the conference as ‘a great victory for Kenya’”. He pointed out that for the first time Britain had categorically declared she could not act unilaterally over the NFD and as Kenya would never agree to part with an inch of territory, the issue of secession had been settled once and for all.<sup>10</sup>

Dr Sharmarkay declined the invitation to meet Mr Kenyatta in Nairobi on his way back to Mogadishu.

Chiefs from the NFD were summoned to Nairobi to meet the Prime Minister and five members of his Cabinet for the first time. Only one minister in Kenya’s Government had ever visited the North-Eastern Region. According to the *East African Standard*, discussion centred on the question of secession and development problems in the Region. “After the meeting the President of the Northern Frontier Democratic Party, Mr Yusuf Haji Abdi, issued a statement which said that the talks had ended in disagreement after the Somalis had been told that there could be no secession. ‘The elders informed the Governor that they are not prepared to co-operate with the Kenya Government as long as the KANU Government denies the right of self-determination. . . .’ None of the chiefs made press statements.”<sup>11</sup> Efforts by British administrative officers to persuade them to participate in elections and to form their own Regional Assembly appear so far to have failed. Presumably they await the British government’s ‘final decision’ before Kenya’s independence; or is there to be no final decision after all?



In a reference to the dispute at the United Nations General Assembly, in October 1963, Mr P. Thomas said, on behalf of the United Kingdom, that during the Rome conference the British Government's policy on the NFD "was firmly and frankly stated to the government of Somalia and . . . received the fullest support of the Kenyan ministers who were present". Reiterating that his government "was convinced that it would be wrong for it to take a unilateral and arbitrary decision about the frontiers of Kenya contrary to the wishes of the Kenyan Government, the Minister of State added that "it is in the interest of everyone that a solution should be sought by the African countries concerned, in an African framework. This, I believe, would be in accordance with the views expressed at the Addis Ababa conference. I am confident that it will be approved by the vast majority of nations represented in this Assembly."<sup>12</sup>

In exercising his right of reply, Mr Mohamed Ali Daar, the Somali Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, said:

"the United Kingdom delegation told us yesterday that it did not intend to take a unilateral decision on the issue of the Northern Frontier District. But I find myself at a loss to reconcile the attitude of the United Kingdom Government with the sending by it of an independent commission composed of a Nigerian and a Canadian to the area to ascertain the wishes of the people there regarding their future. What, then, is the underlying motive in sending this commission when it is quite clear that the United Kingdom did not have the slightest intention of acting on its findings, which, as it turned out, showed that 87 per cent of the population opted for union with the Somali Republic? The only conclusion appears to us to be that the United Kingdom merely intended to mislead us and the people concerned by such moves and also to buy time in order to create an explosive situation in the area.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

"The United Kingdom representative had also made reference to the Addis Ababa conference. In that regard I should like only to say this. Having actively participated in the framing of the charter of the Organisation of African Unity, we, of course, totally subscribe to it. In our view, that charter does not in the slightest way conflict with our position on this problem.

"The African charter specifically accepts without any qualification the right to self-determination and freedom for all the peoples of Africa. In fact the very reason that has motivated the African Heads of State and Government meeting in Addis Ababa to create that organisation was their common desire to clean up and correct the shameful legacies left behind by colonialism. This might come as a surprise to the United Kingdom delegation, but the people of the Northern Frontier District are among the African people the charter refers to.

"The United Kingdom delegation accused us of using violent terms, because we spoke the truth. When we described the United Kingdom policy as one of duplicity, we felt we used the words advisedly, and we have been borne out by the United Kingdom's stand yesterday. It has attempted to explain that in this problem it subscribes to the view of the Addis Ababa conference. We welcome the United Kingdom's adherence to the African Conference, but what we find strange is the fact that that government should on the one hand deny the right of the people of the Northern Frontier District to self-determination on the clumsy pretext that the signatories of the African charter would not have approved of the United Kingdom taking a unilateral decision in acceding to the expressed wishes of the people of the Northern Frontier District. At the same time, it is the United Kingdom government that is flagrantly disregarding the resolutions of the Addis

Ababa conference with regard to the supplying of arms to the racist white government of South Africa and in persisting with its unholy protection of the minority white government of Southern Rhodesia.

"We hold the United Kingdom totally responsible for the solution of the problem, because, firstly, it is that government that took the decision to take the people of the Northern Frontier District under protection and later to annex their land territorially within the Colony of Kenya and, secondly, it is the United Kingdom that has laid down the principles by which the administration of the territory and its people should be directed, embodying therein a clear recognition of separation from Kenya and its people. Consequently it is quite obvious where the responsibility lies. It is the United Kingdom that has annexed the Northern Frontier District to Kenya, and therefore there is an inescapable obligation on the part of that government to correct the unlawful usurpation of the territory of the Northern Frontier District."<sup>13</sup>

In the House of Commons on November 22, 1963, twenty days before Kenya was due to become an independent sovereign state, the Colonial and Commonwealth Secretary, Mr Sandys said this: "All of us in the House recognise that, if the Somali problem remains unsolved for very long, it could cause most serious trouble and create a most explosive situation in this part of Africa. We have made clear . . . that, in our view, there can at this final stage in Kenya's political development, be no question of altering her frontiers except by a decision of the Kenya Government. . . ."

Thus ended a sordid chapter in Britain's long history of diplomatic jugglery in the Horn of Africa. It has been an unedifying spectacle, and, more recently, a Dissembler's performance which has suited some and infuriated others, but has earned the respect of none.

What of the future? Somalis consider that the dispute rests



## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

on the application of the principle of self-determination. Others see it simply as a problem of interpreting international conventions; and some do not regard the dispute as a problem at all. The Somali belief is founded on the principle that the right of self-determination does not end with the transfer of power from a colonial to a national government. But they draw a distinction between the creation of new states based on ethnic groupings, which they do not support, and the readjustment of their own frontiers so that the Somali nation as a whole can be formed into one sovereign state. This, they say, can be established by a plebiscite and they would abide by the results.

Most African leaders fear that an acceptance of the principle of any readjustment of former colonial boundaries will inevitably encourage separatist movements, like Katanga, and so destroy political stability on which the wider unity of African States depend. Somalis argue that their particular situation is unique in Africa because of the homogeneity of their nation, and that a readjustment of their boundaries creates no precedent elsewhere in Africa. They add that some sensible accommodation by Kenya and Ethiopia would be a contribution to African unity and not the reverse. In the event of the Republic's neighbours conceding this principle the dispute would be resolved. If not, what then?

Leaving aside French Somaliland, which we have briefly considered elsewhere, Kenya and Ethiopia are faced with an unsubdued, uncooperative, volatile, nomadic people who can move unseen, with pluck and agility, in and out of the Somali Republic, with or without firearms, and in full command of their desert environment. Ethiopia has many times used her land and air forces to quell these nomads, but they refuse to submit. Mr Kenyatta, though fully capable of using the same methods, in spite of the continued presence of British District Commissioners in the area, has wisely adopted a policy of diplomacy with the Somali Republic, rather than force. But only one of his Ministers has visited the



area in question. Mr Kenyatta's personality and his government's policies have not therefore reached the people on the ground, other than through the agency of British administrative, police and military officers, for whom there can no longer be much affection or trust. Kenya is thus only treating with one element in the dispute.

In her relations with the Somali Government, Ethiopia considers that her 1897 boundary with the Republic is valid in international law and that all that remains is a settlement of the 1908 boundary. She has not been willing to consider the dispute in any context other than a strictly juridical interpretation of the 1908 Protocol. The Kenya Government has adopted a more flexible attitude by agreeing, albeit reluctantly, that her dispute with the Somali Republic may be taken, if necessary, to the Organisation of African Unity. A Kenya Minister has been reported as saying that Kenya would consider a readjustment of her boundary if the principle was accepted by other African states.

This is the crucial decision on which much for the future peace of Africa will depend. A test case is currently under discussion by a special commission appointed by the Foreign Ministers' Conference of the Organisation of African Unity which was convened in Addis Ababa during November 1963 following the Moroccan-Algerian frontier dispute. A spokesman of the Algerian delegation to this conference was reported by Algiers Radio<sup>14</sup> to have said that his country is only willing to cooperate with the special commission on the principle of "non-adjustment of present frontiers". The statement also described the commission as an "arbitration commission".

The outcome of this commission's deliberations is clearly of considerable interest and relevance to all parties in the Somali dispute, for this dispute is bound to be considered, sooner or later, by a similar commission, or if it is by then functioning, by the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration which was established under Article XIX of

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity. But if the present, rigid attitude of "non-adjustment of frontiers" continues to dominate African thinking, there seems to be little prospect of fruitful conciliation; and, as we have seen in chapter 8, an agreed *compromis* as a documented basis for arbitration would appear in these circumstances to be exceedingly difficult to conclude, especially as all parties to the Somali dispute have already taken up positions which are excessively uncompromising. To arbitrate without a *compromis*, as the Arbitration Commission attempted to do after the Wal Wal incident in 1934, would not necessarily yield better results. It appears, therefore, that if a solution to the Somali dispute is to be found within an "African framework", or any other framework, the principle of "non-adjustment of frontiers" will have to be relaxed.

A federal grouping of the states concerned has also been mooted in some quarters, and vigorously championed by Kenya's Minister, Mr Joseph Murumbi, as a solution to the Somali dispute. There is much to be said for this view, but if the projected constitution for an East African Federation is to be pre-determined, as it has hitherto, without consultation with the Somali Republic, difficulties are bound to arise. The Emperor of Ethiopia has, of course, for long foreseen the desirability of all the Somali people federating with Ethiopia, but the Somali Republic's experience of Eritrea's federal links with Ethiopia, now liquidated, does not encourage a solution in this direction.

What other course is open? Most African leaders seem to expect the Somali government to sit back, and give up the struggle. This is unrealistic, whatever Somali government may be in power\*, so long as Somalis in neighbouring territories clamour to be reunited with their kinsmen. For three and a half years, since the Republic's independence, the Somali government has argued unceasingly and unsuccessfully with Britain, France, Ethiopia and, more recently, with

\* A general election is due in March 1964.

Kenya. Not unnaturally, and in keeping with political traditions elsewhere in the world, they now find it necessary to parley from strength, and their friends have turned out to be the Chinese People's Republic and Soviet Russia. The former has offered an interest free loan of £6.5 million (in Swiss francs), recoverable over a period of 17 years beginning in 1971, together with an outright grant of \$3 million to offset, presumably, Britain's withdrawal of aid after the break in relations. Soviet Russia has offered £11 million of modern military equipment, including military aircraft. Fifty Somali air force cadets are being trained as jet aircraft pilots in Russia and have been joined by over two hundred of the Republic's best officers and N.C.O.s for military training. What is the purpose? It can be assumed that the Republic wishes to narrow the imbalance of military strength with Ethiopia which has been receiving for years military equipment and aircraft from the United States on a similar scale. Both countries say that they require the arms for internal security and defence.

Speaking of the Somali problem, Radio Accra<sup>15</sup> said on November 22, 1963, "... the Somali problem is a particularly complicated instance of imperialist division of a homogeneous people to suit their greed"; and talking generally of African borders, the broadcast continued "... if the borders are allowed to remain, we shall have endless plots and counter-plots by dissatisfied minorities determined to seek their ethnic, cultural or economic affinities. With time the problem will loom larger and more formidable. They will grow more bitter and violent, as the wrongs of a nation, or a minority in a nation, are not healed by time but only by justice. . . ."

Somali determination to unite as one state has always been underestimated by foreign observers because of the internal fissures which are so characteristic of Somali society; but, as we have seen, these fissures do not snap a deep, underlying spirit of national unity, which, under severe provoca-

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

tion, unleashes considerable emotion. "Real men," they say, "prefer to suffer the anguish of hell, than to endure the pangs of unavenged anger."<sup>16</sup>

The danger is not so much the action of responsible leaders in Kenya, Ethiopia and the Somali Republic, which is tempered by the policy of concordance between African States; but the unauthorised action of zealous patriots with modern weapons of war in the air and on the ground. The Somali dispute cries out for urgent settlement. It cannot, with respect, be achieved by lofty expressions of brotherhood. It must surely be achieved by a more understanding and pragmatic approach than African leaders have hitherto been willing to adopt, and without interference from non-African sources.



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

In writing about the events of the last two years especially, I have naturally drawn upon my experience in the service of the government of the Somali Republic, but in the case of confidential matters, I have, of course, adhered to that code of official discretion which is expected of the civil service. For this reason I have indicated the sources of published material rather more frequently than would otherwise have been necessary. I must also record my gratitude to the Somali Government for having accorded me a position of privilege which I value greatly and which I trust I have not abused.

In addition, I particularly wish to thank Mr Yousuf Jama Ali of the Somali Ministry of Justice for making available to me the useful material he collated at Columbia University and to which I refer in chapters 1 and 8. I am also much indebted to Dr I. M. Lewis, University of London, for kindly reading the proofs and offering valuable comment. His unique contributions to Somali studies, likewise those of Dr B. W. Andrzejewski of the London University School of Oriental and African Studies, are duly acknowledged in the notes.

Finally, I must thank Mr E. Lauterpacht and Dr D. W. Bowett of Cambridge University for sending me material at short notice; Mrs C. J. Parkhouse for undertaking the secretarial work at much inconvenience to herself; and Marjorie Paramore who kindly assisted with the final preparation of the manuscript. My grateful thanks are also due to my relatives at Cove for many kindnesses without which I could not have completed this work in the short time available.

I wish also to acknowledge the helpfulness of the librarians at the Colonial Office library, former India Office library, the London Library, and the library of the Royal Commonwealth Society; and the co-operation of officials at the Public Record Office, London.

J.G.S.D.

Cove, November 1963

## NOTES

### *Introduction: Their Way of Life*

1. Preface to Somali government publication, *The Somali Peninsula: A New Light on Imperial Motives*, London, 1962.
2. For a comprehensive and authoritative study of Somali nomadic society see I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy*, London, 1961.
3. H. B. Gilliland, *The Vegetation of Eastern British Somaliland*, *Journal of Ecology*, Vol. 40, No. 1, February 1952. Many more are listed in P. E. Glover, *British and Italian Somaliland: Trees, shrubs and herbs*, London, Crown Agents, 1947.
4. The most recent study of the alliteration, rhythm and classification of Somali poetry is by B. W. Andrzejewski and I. M. Lewis, *An Introduction to Somali Poetry*, Oxford, 1964. See also B. W. Andrzejewski and Musa H. I. Galaal, *A Somali Poetic Combat*, *Journal of African Languages*, Vol 2, Part 1, 1963, *et seq.*
5. The writer is much indebted to General Mohamed Abshir for bringing this poem to his notice and for assisting him with its translation into the English language.
6. B. W. Andrzejewski and I. M. Lewis, note 4 above.
7. *Vide supra*.
8. Excerpt from *B.B.C. Monitoring Report*, Radio Mogadishu, August 14, 1963.
9. *B.B.C. Monitoring Report*, Radio Mogadishu, September 9, 1963.
10. *Ibid.*, September 14, 1963.
11. An extract from Speke's diary in R. F. Burton, *First Footsteps in East Africa*, London, 1856.
12. I. M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy*, p. 205.
13. See Somali government publication, *The Somali Republic and African Unity*, Mogadishu, 1962, describing visits made respectively by Mr Jomo Kenyatta and Mr Ronald Ngala to Mogadishu during July-August 1962; with texts of speeches.

## NOTES

### *Chapter 1: The 'Second Scramble'*

1. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 49, quoting Public Records Office (London)—Abyssinia, General Correspondence; Diplomatic—1897 Vol. 32, Salisbury to Rodd (No. 2) February 24, 1897.
2. Rodd to Salisbury (No. 14) Addis Ababa May 3, 1897.
3. Franco-Somali Treaty 1885, Article II, "the chiefs of the Issa hand over their country to France that she may protect it against all foreigners". *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 94.
4. See note 1. Rodd was also reminded in the same despatch that "any recognition of the territorial claims of Abyssinia outside the British sphere of influence, as defined in that Protocol [Anglo-Italian, 1894], should be made on behalf of Great Britain alone, without assuming to deal with claims or rights of other powers". *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 50.
5. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 34, quoting *Red Sea Papers*, No. 149, July 24 and August 22, 1891.
6. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 86, quoting Rodd to Salisbury (No. 15) May 4, 1897.
7. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 54, quoting Rodd to Salisbury (No. 20) May 13, 1897.
8. Rodd to Salisbury (No. 20) May 13, 1897.
9. Exchange of letters annexed to Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty 1897. See text of treaty, Appendix XIV, *The Somali Peninsula*, pp. 112-15.
10. Rodd to Salisbury (No. 35) June 4, 1897, and *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 55.
11. Rodd to Salisbury (No. 35) June 4, 1897, and *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 58.
12. *Ibid.*
13. See note 9 above.
14. Yousuf Jama Ali, *The Ethiopian-Somali Dispute*, unpublished thesis for Columbia University, quoting *Ethiopian Report to the General Assembly, Eleventh Session*, Doc. A/3502. Annex 1.
15. *The Somali Peninsula*, pp. 59, 61.
16. R. Rodd, *Social and Diplomatic Memoirs 1884-1893*, London, 1922.
17. War Office, *Official History of the Operations in Somaliland*, Vol. 1, 1907, p. 192.

### *Chapter 2: Kenya's Northern Frontier*

1. Alys Reece, *To My Wife—50 Camels*, London, 1963.
2. I. M. Lewis, *The Problem of the Northern Frontier District of Kenya*, *Race*, Vol. 5, No. 1, July 1963, p. 54.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

3. I. M. Lewis, *The Somali Conquest of the Horn of Africa*, Journal of African History, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1960.
4. J. S. Trimingham, *Islam in Ethiopia*, London, 1952, p. 94.
5. I. M. Lewis, *The Problem of the Northern Frontier District of Kenya*, p. 52, quoting A. N. Tucker and M. A. Bryan, *The Non-Bantu Languages of North Eastern Africa*, London, 1956. For a short account of Galla dialects in the Northern Frontier District of Kenya see B. W. Andrzejewski, *My Recent Researches into the Galla Dialects*, Accademia Nazionale Dei Lincei, quaderno N. 48, Rome, 1960.
6. I. M. Lewis, *The Problem of the Northern Frontier District of Kenya*, p. 52.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. H. Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, Aldershot, 1956, p. 111.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 7, quoting T. S. Thomas, *Jubaland and the Northern Frontier District* (official publication), Nairobi, 1917.
12. R. Rodd, *op. cit.*
13. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 8, quoting C. Eliot, *The East Africa Protectorate*, London, 1905.
14. Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
15. See note 13.
16. J. Ramsay MacDonald, House of Commons, March 3, 1924.

### Chapter 3: Ethiopia's Eastern Frontier

1. M. Perham, *The Government of Ethiopia*, London, 1948, p. 61.
2. Trimingham, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-1.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 131.
4. D. J. Jardine, *The Mad Mullah of Somaliland*, p. 287.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 303.
6. Sheikh Mohamed had great powers of leadership and mystic appeal, but he also became a tyrant and was fortunate to have survived threats to his life from many of his own kinsmen. Some Somalis dispute whether he was a true nationalist leader or merely a 'tribalist', seeking power and fame for his particular group of clansmen. In the view of the writer, account should be taken of the Sheikh's earlier efforts, which appear to have been genuine, to unite all northern Somali clans. These efforts were frustrated by the support given to the 'friendlies' by the British administration which provoked the Sheikh into massive and cruel



## NOTES

reprisals which tend to distort opinion as to his real motives. The British, for their part, had the choice of abandoning the territory altogether, which was seriously considered, or fighting it out for honour's sake. They chose the latter course and it took many costly years in blood and money.

### *Chapter 4: The Wal Wal Incident*

1. Pitman B. Potter, *The Wal Wal Arbitration*, Washington, 1938, p. 29.
2. Potter, *op. cit.*, p. 179, quoting Report of Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, September 3, 1935.
3. Italo-Ethiopian Treaty, 1928, Article V.
4. Potter, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
5. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 66, quoting Viscount Templewood, *Nine Troubled Years*, London, 1954
6. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 66, quoting L. S. Amery, *My Political Life*, London, 1955, p. 170.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Amery, *op. cit.*

### *Chapter 5: The War Years*

1. The Italians began unilaterally to disarm the Ogaden and could claim with some justice that their unarmed clansmen should be protected from the rifle-owning nomads from the Protectorate. A policy of disarmament can, of course, only be successfully carried out with the co-operation of the respective administrations on both sides of the border.
2. Moyse-Bartlett, *op. cit.*, p. 476.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 494.
4. P. Mitchell, *African Afterthoughts*, London, 1954, p. 206.
5. Moyse-Bartlett, *op. cit.*, p. 571
6. Perham, *op. cit.*, p. 392.
7. *The Somali Peninsula*, pp. 39-40, quoting *Red Sea Papers: Foreign Office to India Office*, July 31, 1893.

### *Chapter 6: Aftermath of War*

1. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 67, quoting E. S. Pankhurst, *British Policy in Eastern Ethiopia, the Ogaden and Reserved Area* (privately published, undated). See also E. S. and K. P. Pankhurst, *Ethiopia and Eritrea*, 1953.
2. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 71, quoting *Ethiopian Memorandum to the United Nations*, A/C. I/W 8, October 20, 1948, para. 16.
3. Perham, *op. cit.*, p. 435.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

4. The United Nations General Assembly ultimately conferred on Eritrea a Federal Constitution in association with Ethiopia, but with Eritrea's own flag and constitutional safeguards preserving fundamental freedoms. By 1958 Eritrea was no longer autonomous when she surrendered her flag; and in 1962 she was wholly integrated with Ethiopia. On neither occasion was a plebiscite held.
5. Perham, *op. cit.*, p. 449.
6. "Via Balli Abdi Ali, Balli God, Ribadleh, El Abred and Ulassan to Mustahil." Galladi and Mustahil were included on the Ethiopian side of the boundary.
7. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 71, quoting Memorandum dated October 18, 1948, paras 25, 27, 28.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
9. Yousuf Jama Ali, *op. cit.*, quoting G. H. Becker, Jr., *The Disposition of Italian Colonies 1941-1951*, Geneva, 1952, p. 123.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 75, quoting E. S. Pankhurst, *Ex-Italian Somaliland*, 1951, p. 333.
12. *The Somali Peninsula*, quoting United Nations Document A/1374, September 20, 1950.

### Chapter 7: The 'Haud' Fiasco

1. These observations are contained in a Petition dated 1955 to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Organisation from Somali Representatives of the former Somali Protectorate (National United Front) requesting that their case be inscribed on the agenda with a view to obtaining an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice.
2. D. J. Latham-Brown, *The Ethiopia-Somaliland Frontier Dispute*, *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, April 1956, p. 254.
3. Quoted by Latham-Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 255 from Hansard, Vol. 537: Session 1954-1955, col. 1679.
4. *The Somali Peninsula*, p. 56, quoting Rodd to Salisbury (No. 35) June 4, 1897.
5. Leo Silberman, *Why the Haud was Ceded*, *Cahiers D'Etudes Africaines*, Paris, Vol. 2, 1961, pp. 68-9.
6. *The Somali Peninsula*, pp. 56-8, quoting Rodd to Salisbury (No. 35), June 4, 1897.
7. *The Haud Problem*, published by the Colonial Office, Africa series, No. 1192, 1956.
8. *Ibid.*

## NOTES

9. Saadia Touval, *Somali Nationalism*, Massachusetts, 1963, p. 142. quoting *Ethiopia Observer*, Vol. 1, No. 1, December 1956.
10. *The Times*, October 27, 1956. For further articles on the same subject see issues of October 23, 25, 28, 1956.
11. *The Haud Problem*, *op. cit.*

### *Chapter 8: The Intractable Frontier*

1. Yousuf Jama Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 30, quoting U.N. Fourth Committee, November 17, 1955.
2. A. A. Castagno, Jr., *Somalia*, International Conciliation (Carnegie Endowment), New York, No. 522, March 1959, p. 388.
3. *Ethio-Somalia Relations*, Ethiopian Government Ministry of Information, Addis Ababa, 1962, p. 15.
4. *The Ethio-Somali Frontier Problem*, Ethiopian Government Ministry of Information, Addis Ababa, 1961, p. 7.
5. *Ethio-Somalia Relations*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
7. Yousuf Jama Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 31, quoting U.N. Assembly Doc. A/3463.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-2.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 33, *et seq.*
10. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 38, quoting U.N. Assembly Doc. A/3753.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 40, quoting U.N. Assembly XII Resolution 1213.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
14. *The Ethio-Somali Frontier Problem*, p. 12.
15. Yousuf Jama Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 42, quoting U.N. Assembly Doc. A/4030.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 45, quoting Article IV (C) of Ethiopian *compromis*.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 42-51, summarising Ethiopian *compromis*
18. *The Ethio-Somali Frontier Problem*, p. 12.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
20. Yousuf Jama Ali, *op. cit.*, quoting U.N. Assembly Doc. A/3859.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-5.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 58, referring to U.N. Assembly Doc. A/4350.
23. D. J. Latham-Brown, *Recent Developments in the Ethiopia-Somaliland Dispute*, The International and Comparative Law Quarterly, January 1961, p. 171, quoting from B.B.C. Home Service news bulletin, 9 p.m., June 26, 1960.
24. Latham-Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 169, quoting from *The Times*, June 6, 1960.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

26. *Ibid.*, p. 170, referring to a report in *The Times* dated June 27, 1960.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 177-8.
28. *Ethio-Somalia Relations*, p. 27.
29. Castagno, *op. cit.*, p. 390.
30. A West German oil company has a concession from the Ethiopian Government in the Galadi region east of Wal Wal between the present Provisional Line and the Italian interpretation of the 1908 Convention (Map 2).
31. Out of a population of some 67,000, half of whom live in Jibuti, the Muslim Somali and Danakil inhabitants comprise just over eighty per cent. The Somalis have a slight edge over the Danakil and the remainder are made up of Europeans, Arabs and Indians.
32. *The Times*, October 31, 1963.
33. The Somali Republic, assisted by Radio Cairo, champions the cause of French Somaliland's independence. Ethiopia is noticeably silent.

### Chapter 9: Legitimate Expectations

1. Touval, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
2. Statement by Prime Minister in the House of Commons on April 11, 1960.
3. Based on approximate Tribal Population ratio per District. See appendix D, *Report of the Northern Frontier District Commission* (Cmnd. 1900), London, 1962.
4. I. M. Lewis, *The Problem of the Northern Frontier District*, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
5. Kenya Laws, *Outlying Districts Ordinance*, 1902, Cap 104, and *Special Districts Ordinance*, 1934, Cap 105.
6. *The Somali Peninsula*, quoting *Report of the Commissioner Appointed to Enquire into Methods of Selection of African Representatives to the Legislative Council*, 1955, para. 70.
7. *The Issue of the Northern Frontier District* (White Paper), issued by government of the Somali Republic, Mogadishu, May 1963, pp. 15-16. (Hereinafter referred to as *White Paper*, 1963.)
8. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
9. *Vide supra*.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
11. Statement made by Mr Maudling at a press conference on April 6, 1962, at Lancaster House, London.
12. *White Paper*, 1963, p. 18.
13. See note 11 above.
14. *White Paper*, 1963, p. 19.



## NOTES

15. *Vide supra*.

16. *Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference*, Cmd. 1700, London, 1962.

### *Chapter 10: Invitation to Mogadishu*

1. See Somali government publication, *The Somali Republic and African Unity*, Mogadishu, 1962. An illustrated booklet describing visits made respectively by Mr Jomo Kenyatta and Mr Ronald Ngala to Mogadishu during July-August, 1962; with texts of some speeches.

2. This was a reference to a comment made by Mr Maudling to the press on his arrival in Nairobi for a short visit in June, 1962.

### *Chapter 11: The Commission Reports*

1. See page 111-12 for the text of the conclusions to Kenya's Constitutional Conference, 1962, as it affected the NFD.

2. *White Paper*, 1963, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

4. *Vide supra*.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 37. In their Report (see note 6 below), the Commissioners observed that the Memorandum "was obviously prepared by some central authority" and they considered it was "less personal than the opinions expressed verbally" (p. 18). The Commissioners also commented (p. 12) that they "saw no reason to find anything improper in the co-ordination by a central authority of opinion within a group of people holding similar views, and considered that such co-ordination might in fact tend to clarify rather than distort opinion".

6. *Report of the Northern Frontier District Commission*, (Cmd. 1900), London, 1962.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

17. *Vide supra*.

18. Memorandum dated February 16, 1963. See *White Paper*, 1963, p. 38.

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

19. On the basis of the Kenya government's population statistics taken together with the percentage population of tribes in the NFD, as given in the *NFD Report* (appendix D), the figure of eighty-seven per cent is realistic, if it includes both the Muslim Boran and the Rendille, which it apparently does.
20. *NFD Report*, p. 19.
21. *Report of the Regional Boundaries Commission* (Cmnd. 1899), p. 8, London, 1962.

### Chapter 12: Diplomatic Exchanges

1. *White Paper*, 1963, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
5. *Vide supra*.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
8. This was disclosed in a press communiqué issued on August 29, 1963, by the Somali Delegation after the Rome Conference had ended. Giving their reasons for this disclosure, the Somali delegation stated that the United Kingdom delegation had omitted to mention during the course of the Conference that Mr Macmillan's statement "did not preclude arrangements being made for secession on Kenya's independence". The UK Delegation did, however, mention the earlier part of the text which precluded any cession of Kenya territory so long as HMG are responsible for Kenya. The Somali delegation considered that the full text should be issued in their press communiqué "since it was misused by the British government at the Conference" and "might also be treated likewise in public".
9. *White Paper*, 1963, p. 53.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-5.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-6.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-7.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

### Chapter 13: Rupture

1. *White Paper*, 1963, *op. cit.*, p. 72
2. According to the American weekly news magazine, *Time*, September 27, 1963, Ethiopia received almost the same value of military aid from the United States in 1962 as the Somali Republic received economic aid, i.e. \$11.7 million and \$11.5 million respectively.

## NOTES

### *Chapter 14: African Arena*

1. Reproduced in the government English language weekly newspaper, *Somali News*, June 21, 1963.
2. *African Recorder*, New Delhi, June 4-17, 1963.
3. The Kenya government requested the extradition of the two alleged assassins, but the Somali government refused on the grounds that to hand them over in the absence of an extradition treaty was illegal.
4. *The Daily Telegraph*, July 25, 1963.
5. *The Times*, July 25, 1963.
6. *The Scotsman*, July 25, 1963.
7. *The Times*, July 25, 1963.

### *Chapter 15: Rome and After*

1. *East African Standard*, August 26, 1963.
2. United Kingdom Delegation's final communiqué at the end of the Rome Conference, issued on August 28, 1963.
3. The *East African Standard* of August 29, 1963, reported that "Kenya's Minister for Finance, Mr Gichuru, and Mr Mboya said today that Somalia had once again in no uncertain terms been told that Kenya would never countenance secession. The government did not want any further discussions but under British pressure had agreed to a further round of talks and the possibility of referring the NFD question to the Organisation of African Unity".
4. Press communiqué issued by the Somali Delegation at the end of the Rome Conference on August 29, 1963.
5. *Ibid.*
6. See note 2 above.
7. *East Africa Standard*, August 29, 1963. This independent daily newspaper's London staff reporter was present in Rome during the Conference.
8. See note 4 above.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *East African Standard*, August 29, 1963.
11. *Ibid.*, September 6, 1963.
12. U.N. Assembly, A/PV. 1237, 60-61, October 1963.
13. *Ibid.*, A/PV. 1239, 74-77, October 1963.
14. BBC Monitoring Report, Radio Algiers, November 18, 1963.
15. BBC Monitoring Report, Radio Accra, November 22, 1963.
16. A Somali proverb; the alliteration indicates its antiquity: *Rag 'iil 'adaab ka doorey*. I am grateful to B. W. Andrzejewski for directing my attention to this.

## INDEX

- Abascul, 42  
 Abbé, Lake, 61  
 Abuna, 42  
 Abdillahi Issa, 102, 132, 145, 149  
 Abdirashid Ali Sharmarkay, 8, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 130, 134, 146, 154, 158  
 Abdirashid Khahf, 105, 109, 123, 131  
 Accra, Radio, 165  
 Adan Abdulla Osman, 21, 114, 116, 147, 148  
 Addis Ababa 25, 26, 29, 35, 40, 42, 69, 70, 98, 99, 102  
     Radio, 124  
     *and see* Conference  
 Aden, 26, 58  
 Adowa, Battle of, 25, 31  
 Afewerk Woldesmeat, 54  
 Agreements, 90  
     Anglo-Ethiopian (1942), 60, 63  
     Anglo-Ethiopian (1944), 63, 64, 67, 68, 75  
     Anglo-Ethiopian (1948), *see* Protocol  
     Anglo-Ethiopian (1954), 74, 75, 76, 79, 80, 82, 96  
     Anglo-French (1888), 25  
     Anglo-Italian (1894), 25, 28, 29, 75  
     Hoare-Laval, 54  
     Italo-Ethiopian (1897), 30, 31, 40, 88, 91, 92  
     Trusteeship, Somalia (1950), 74, 88, 89  
     *and see* Conventions, Protocol, Treaties  
 Ahmed Gran, 34  
 Ajuran, 34, 38, 126, 127, 141  
 Aklilou, Ato, 74, 149  
 Ali Adan Lord, 104, 105  
 Ali Ahmed, 42  
 Ali Mohamed Hirave, 119  
 Ali, Y. J. *see* Yousuf Jama Ali  
 Alula, 42  
 Amhara, 43, 44, 45, 46, 62  
 Amery, L. S., 54  
 Andrzejewski, B. W., 15  
 Arbitration Commission *see* Commission(s)  
     Tribunal (1957-9), 92, 93, 94  
 Archer, G., 47  
 Arraleh *see* Mohamoud Abdi  
 Arrhan Arrhe, 78  
 Assab, 65, 70, 98, 99  
  
 Bali, 34  
 Bardera, 91  
 Bartiri, 42  
 Beitz, Emil, 49  
 Benadir, 65  
 Berbera, 79, 145  
     district, 10, 57, 58  
 Berne, J. L., 45  
 Bevin, E., 63, 67, 68, 69  
 Bogert, M. P., 124



## INDEX

- Bolla, Dr,** 92  
**Boran(a),** *see* Galla  
**Borama,** 46, 47  
     District, 46, 47, 58  
**Bono, General de,** 91  
  
**Castagno, A. A.,** 89, 98  
**Caroselli, Signor,** 91  
**Castren, Prof,** 92  
**Clifford, Col.,** 50  
**Commission(s):**  
     Arbitration, 52  
     Boundary  
         Anglo-Ethiopian (1931), 47, 48, 49, 50, 70  
         Anglo-Italian (1929), 48  
         Italo-Ethiopian (1911), 30  
     Four Power, 66, 67, 69, 72  
     NFD, 109, 110, 112, 118, 121, 122, 123, 124-9, 130, 131, 132, 133, 140, 142, 143, 156  
**Conciliation Committee,** *see* League of Nations  
**Conference(s):**  
     Addis Ababa (Heads of State), 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 159, 160, 161  
     Foreign Ministers' (1945-48), 66, 163, 176  
     Rome, 15-16, 152, 154-9  
**Conventions:**  
     Anglo-Italian (1920), 38  
     Franco-Ethiopian (1897), 26, 28, 31, 40  
     Italo-Ethiopian (1908), 30, 31, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 97, 98, 163  
     *and see* Agreements, Protocols, Treaties  
  
**Daar,** *see* Mohamed Ali  
**Dabarre,** 34, 38  
**Dagabur,** 54, 71  
**Danakil,** 34, 41, 42, 98, 99  
**Dawaro,** 34  
**Degho Stambul,** 152  
**Dickinson, W. M.,** 145  
**Demeka, Maj.,** 70  
**Diredawa,** 41, 60  
  
**Dodecanese (Islands),** 39  
**Dodds-Parker,** 82  
**Dolo,** 30, 71, 88, 92  
**Don Der Decken (Cataracts),** 30  
**Dundee, Earl of,** 142, 151  
**Dupont, General,** 61  
  
*East African Standard,* 158  
*Economist, The,* 100  
**Eden, A.,** 52, 53, 59, 74  
**Egal,** *see* Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal  
**Eliot, C.,** 37, 38  
**Elliott, Lieut.,** 38  
**El Wak,** 33  
**Eritrea,** 26, 40, 51, 65, 70, 73, 164  
*Ethiopia in Review,* 101  
*Ethiopian Herald, The,* 100  
  
**Fatajar,** 34  
**Fisher, Sir J.,** 68  
**Four Power Commission,** *see* Commission(s)  
  
**Gabra,** 103, 126, 127, *and see* Galla  
**Gabridare,** 71  
**Galadi,** 71  
**Galagorgis, Kenyazmach,** 45  
**Galgallo Godana,** 106  
**Galla(s),** 27, 34, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 103, 104, 105, 106, 126, 127, 128, 150  
**Galkayu,** 80  
**Galla Political Union (GPU),** 106, 125  
**Garawa,** 43  
**Garissa,** 104, 105, 125, 127  
     district, 103, 106, 111, 124, 126, 127, 128, 129, 141  
**Garvey, Dr,** 114  
**Gaulle, General de,** 61  
**Germain, General,** 58  
**Gichuru, J.,** 154  
**Gilliland, H. B.,** 10  
**Gilma Dido,** 151  
**Gloucester, Duke of,** 47

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

- Grazing Agreement, *see* Commission(s), Anglo-Ethiopian  
and Treaties, Anglo-Ethiopian  
Greater Somalia, 67, 68, 69, 72, 83,  
100, 102, 103, 106  
Guardafui, Cape, 29  
Guyo Dube, 105
- Haile Selassie, Emperor, 42, 43, 44,  
47, 59, 60, 61, 62, 65, 67, 73, 83,  
91, 96, 102, 164  
Hamilton, W. G., 37  
Harar, 26, 28, 29, 35, 41, 42, 45  
province, 44  
Haud, 9, 33, 70, 71, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79,  
80, 82, 83, 84, 86, 96, 101, 102,  
and *see* Ogaden  
Hargeisa, 58, 83, 131, 140, 145  
Radio, 15, 17  
Harti Sheikh, 84  
Hirave, *see* Ali Mohamed Hirave  
Hoare, S., *see* Templewood  
Home, Lord, 130, 135  
House of Commons, 52, 53, 59, 68,  
102, 161
- Imperial British East Africa Com-  
pany, 36  
Imru, Ras, 47  
Ischia Baidoa, 92  
Isiolo, 127, 150, 151  
district, 35, 103, 111, 124, 127,  
128, 151  
Issa, *see* Abdillahi Issa
- Jama, Y., *see* Yousuf Jama Ali  
Jibouti, 26, 40, 58, 60, 61, 62, 98  
Jijiga, 41, 42, 44, 45, 47, 49, 58, 60,  
69, 70  
Juba, River, 8, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36,  
37, 38, 69, 91  
Jubaland, 36, 37, 38, 39, 103, 107, 108
- Kenworthy, Lieut.-Commander, 39  
Kenya African Democratic Union  
(KADU), 105, 106, 107, 109, 111, 112
- Kenya African National Union  
(KANU), 105, 106, 107, 108, 109,  
111, 112, 124, 125, 150  
Kenyatta, J., 108, 113, 114, 116, 117,  
118, 120, 121, 149, 151, 158  
Khalif, *see* Abdirashid Khalif  
Khan, Zafrullah, 72  
Khartoum, 27  
Kholkole, A., 105, 149, 150  
Kismayu, 33, 36, 131  
Kirsch, Emil, 42  
Kittermaster, Governor, 47  
Kutch, Maharajah of, 47
- Lagarde, M., 26  
Lansdowne, Lord, 78, 150, 152  
Latham-Brown, D. J., 76, 96, 97  
Laval, M., 54  
Lawson, M., 109  
Lewis, I. M., 15, 20, 34  
League of Nations, 49, 51, 52, 69, 90  
Conciliation Committee, 53  
Lennox-Boyd, A., 100  
Liaison Officer (or Staff), 75, 81, 82,  
87  
Liban, 34  
Lie, Trygve, 94, 95  
Lij Yasu, *see* Yasu  
Lloyd, Lord, 83  
Lord, *see* Ali Adan Lord  
Lovatelli, Count, 36, 37  
Lugh Gonana (formerly Ferrendi), 91  
Lytton, Earl of, 149, 150, 151
- Maudling, R., 104, 105, 109, 110, 122,  
123, 134, 135, 136, 143  
MacDonald, M., 52, 53, 131, 154  
Macmillan, H., 102, 103, 106, 111,  
130, 133, 135, 136  
'Mad Mullah', *see* Mohamed Abdille  
Hassan  
Maidaba, 92  
Makiel, Ras, 41, 42, 43  
Makonnen, Ras, 28, 29, 30, 42, 44,  
77, 78  
Mandale, 34, 38

# INDEX

- Mandera, 33  
 district, 103, 111, 124, 126, 127, 128, 129, 141
- Mariano, M., 75, 102
- Marsabit, 127  
 district, 35, 103, 106, 111, 124, 126, 127
- Massawa, 62, 65, 70, 98
- Mboya, T., 108, 154, 158
- Menelik II, King, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 41, 88, 91, 96
- Meru, 124, 150
- Milmil, 78
- Milner, Lord, 38
- Mitchell, P., 60
- Mogadishu, 16, 34, 58, 65, 69, 75, 116, 119, 139  
 Radio, 15-17, 124
- Mohamed Abdille Hassan, Sheikh, 31, 41, 42, 43, 54, 56, 62, 63
- Mohamed Ali, (*see* Makiel, Ras), 41
- Mohamed Ali Daar, 159
- Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, 102, 113, 114
- Mohamoud Abdi Arraleh, 130, 135, 137
- Molotov, M., 67
- Mombasa, 36
- Moyale, 35, 38, 58, 127  
 district, 103, 106, 111, 124, 126, 127, 128, 129, 141
- Moyse-Bartlett, 58
- Murgian, M. A., 109
- Murumbi, J., 154, 164
- Mussolini, Signor, 52, 53, 54
- Mustahil, 71
- Nairobi, 106, 108, 143, 149
- National Province United Association (NPUA), 106, 123, 125
- National United Front, 75, 78, 83
- Nerazzini, Major, 29, 30, 88, 91
- Ngala, R., 113, 116-17, 119
- Nogal Valley, 52
- North Eastern Region, 34, 104, 141, 150, 155, 158
- Northern Frontier Democratic Party (NFD), 105, 158
- Northern Frontier District (NFD), 15, 22, 34, 35, 37, 38, 69, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 149, 150, 151, 152, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161
- NFD Commission, *see* Commission(s)
- NFD delegation (London), 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 122-9, 134, 137
- Northern Province People's National Union (NPPNU), 106, 125
- Northern Province People's Progressive Party (NPPPP), 104, 105, 124, 127, 133, 149, 152
- Norway, King of, 92, 94
- Nur Robleh, Hgaz, 45, 46
- Obote, A. M., 146-7
- Ogaden, 37, 44, 54, 56, 57, 60, 62, 63, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 79, 80, 81, 83, 89  
 province, 70, 71
- Onyiuke, G. C. M., 124
- Organisation for African Unity (*see also* Conference(s)), 147, 155, 160, 163  
 Charter of, 160, 164
- Orma (*see also* Galla), 103, 105, 106, 126, 127, 141
- Osman, *see* Adan Abdulla
- People's National League (PNL), 105
- Perham, M., 65, 66
- Pokomo, 104, 106
- Potter, P. B., 49
- Protocols:  
 Anglo-Ethiopian (1948), 170, 171  
 Anglo-Italian (1891), 35  
*and see* Agreements, Conventions, Treaties
- Pyman, L., 131, 132, 133, 144

## THE SOMALI DISPUTE

- Qabo*, 111  
*Qalafu*, 71  
*Qallu*, 35  
*Qaman*, *see* *Sahid Qaman*  
*Qorahay*, 54
- Radojkovic*, 92  
*Raynal, Col.*, 61  
*Reece, A.*, 33  
*Rendille*, 35, 103, 104, 105, 126, 127, 128, 129  
*Reserved Area*, 60, 61, 62, 63, 70, 75, 76, 79, 80, 83, 84, 86, 96  
*Rodd, Rennell*, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 44, 77, 78, 96  
*Rosebery, Earl of*, 62
- Sahid Qaman*, 12  
*Sakuye (see also Galla)*, 103, 127  
*Salisbury, Lord*, 28, 31, 77  
*Samburu*, 35  
*Sandys, D.*, 123, 131, 135, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 149, 161  
*Scialoja, Signor*, 38  
*Scotsman, The*, 152  
*Sharmarkay, see* *Abdirashid Ali*  
*Shibeli, River*, 8, 30, 34, 69, 71, 90, 91  
*Shoa*, 34  
     *Shoan*, 41, 42, 43  
*Somali Line*, 103, 104, 129  
*Somali National League*, 72, 102  
*Somali Youth League (SYL)*, 69, 70, 71, 72, 103, 119  
*Speke, J. H.*, 17  
*Stefani News Agency*, 30  
*Stambul, see* *Degho*  
*Sweyne, Capt.*, 78
- Tafari, Ras, see* *Haile Selassie, Emperor*  
*Tafassa, Fitaurari*, 47  
*Taleh*, 42  
*Tana, River*, 34, 38, 103, 104, 127  
*Tekle Hawariat, Fitaurari*, 44, 45  
*Templewood, Viscount*, 52, 54  
*Thomas, P.*, 154, 159  
*Tigre*, 54  
     *Tigrinya*, 66
- Times, The*, 84, 152, 153  
*Todd, J. R.*, 36, 37  
 Treaties:  
     *Anglo-Ethiopian (1897)*, 28, 29, 30, 31, 40, 49, 57, 68, 75, 76, 79, 96, 163  
         exchange of Letters, 28, 29, 49, 57, 58, 77, 96  
     *Anglo-Somali (1884-6)*, 26, 29, 31, 53, 75, 76  
     *Anglo-Italian (1915)*, 38, 39  
     *Anglo-French-Italian (1906)*, 40, 51, 70  
     *Franco-Somali (1885)*, 26, 31  
     *Italo-Ethiopian (1896)*, 29  
     *Italo-Ethiopian (1928)*, 51  
     *and see* *Agreements, Conventions, Protocols*  
*Trusteeship Agreement, see* *Agreements*  
*Tsana, Lake*, 54  
*Turkana*, 124, 150  
*Turki Hill*, 37
- United Nations*, 65, 72, 75, 78, 79, 88, 93, 94, 157  
     *General Assembly*, 69, 72, 73, 74, 79, 92, 94, 95, 159  
     *Charter*, 79  
     *Fourth Committee*, 89, 95  
     *Trusteeship*, 68, 73  
         committee, 72
- Voice of Ethiopia*, 101
- Wabera*, 151  
*Wajir*, 33, 34, 38, 149  
     district, 10, 103, 111, 124, 126, 127, 128, 129, 141  
*Wako Hapi*, 150  
*Wallo*, 41, 42  
*Walsh, District Commissioner*, 47  
*Wal Wal*, 49, 50, 51, 52, 56, 71, 164  
*Warday see* *Galla*  
*Warder*, 50, 71  
*Waq*, 35



## INDEX

Wickham, Brig., 68  
*Widgeon*, HMS, 36

Yasu, Lij, 41, 42, 43  
Yusuf, Haji Abdi, 105, 158

Yousuf Jama Ali, 91

Zanzibar, 65  
Zawditu, Empress, 42  
Zeila, 52, 58, 61, 66, 70  
Zenji, 34