

In communicating to your Imperial Highness the text of the British note, I am to express the hope that the Abyssinian Government will find the notes acceptable to them, and I am authorised to offer to you full and frank explanations if you should be in doubt as to the meaning of any points in the British note when I return from England. In the meantime I trust that Your Imperial Highness will consider the notes sympathetically.

Sir Austen Chamberlain directs me to add that he hopes that the text of the enclosed note will be sufficient to dispel any misconceptions or malicious rumours which may be current regarding the alleged intentions of His Majesty's Government. Further, Sir Austen Chamberlain directs me to assure Your Imperial Highness of the continued friendship of His Majesty's Government and to express the hope that the Abyssinian Government will find in this exchange of notes only further proof of that friendship, inasmuch as the object which the exchange has in view will, it is hoped, prove to be as beneficial to Abyssinia as to the other countries concerned.

(Signed) C. BENTINCK,
His Majesty's Minister.

APPENDIX

Letter from the British Ambassador at Rome to the Italian Prime Minister

ROME, December 14th, 1925.

Your Excellency is well aware of the vital importance to Egypt and the Sudan of maintaining and, if possible, increasing the volume of water for irrigation purposes available in those countries from the Blue and White Niles and their tributary streams. Various schemes for the purpose have been carried out or are projected, and you are informed of the negotiations undertaken at Addis Ababa by His Majesty's Government, acting in a fiduciary capacity for the Sudan Government and mindful of Egyptian interests in the matter, in order to obtain a concession from the Government of Abyssinia for the construction of a barrage at Lake Tsana with a view to storing its waters for use in the Blue Nile. So far these negotiations have led to no practical result.

In November 1919 the delegates of the Italian Government then in London were good enough to offer Italian co-operation in this question in the following terms:

"1. In view of the predominating interests of Great Britain in respect of the control of the waters of Lake Tsana, Italy offers Great Britain her support in order that she may obtain from Ethiopia the concession to carry out works of barrage in the lake itself, within the Italian sphere of influence, pending the delimitation of the extent of the territorial zone to be recognised as pertaining to Great Britain in respect of the latter's predominant hydraulic interests, and pending a just consideration of the reservation on behalf of Italy by the