

League of Nations. Should you desire the question to be placed on the agenda of the next session of the Council, which opens at Geneva on September 2nd, 1926, I would call your attention to the desirability of furnishing me by telegram with all further particulars that may be of assistance in this matter.

(Signed) NITOBÉ,
Secretary-General ad interim.

III. LETTER FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

LONDON, August 3rd, 1926.

I am directed by His Britannic Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of July 22nd with which you were good enough to transmit copies of the letter addressed to Sir Eric Drummond by His Imperial Highness Ras Tafari, together with a protest in regard to the notes exchanged between the British and Italian Governments in December 1925 undertaking to afford each other mutual support when the consent of the Abyssinian Government is sought for the construction in Abyssinia of certain public works defined in the notes.

2. His Majesty's Government regret that, in spite of the assurances conveyed to the Abyssinian Government by the British and Italian Ministers at Addis Ababa when communicating the text of the Anglo-Italian notes, their purport should have been misconstrued and intentions attributed to the British and Italian Governments which they have never entertained. The Abyssinian protest is so worded as to imply that the British and Italian Governments have entered into an agreement to impose their wishes on a fellow-Member of the League, even if against the latter's interests. Members of the League are asked to state whether it is right that pressure should thus be exerted on Abyssinia which they would doubtless repudiate if applied to them.

3. There is nothing in the Anglo-Italian notes to suggest coercion or the exercise of pressure on the Abyssinian Government. Sir Austen Chamberlain has stated in Parliament that the agreement was certainly not to be used and could not be used for the purpose of coercing the Abyssinian Government. He believed the agreement to be in the interests of all three parties, but added that, of course, the Abyssinian Government had a perfect right to judge of what was in the interests of Abyssinia. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires was instructed by telegraph on July 14th to bring these statements to the knowledge of Ras Tafari.

4. As to the suggestion that the British and Italian Governments are trying to force the Abyssinian Government to yield to their requests in a hurry and without being afforded time for reflection and study of the