Restricted.

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SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL FILING

ETHIOPIAN INTERNAL SITUATION / RELATIONS

ETHIOPIA

Part 1:
DECEMBER 1982.

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
~~21.12.82~~		~~15.2.90~~					
~~28.3.83~~		~~25.3.91~~					
~~22.11.84~~		~~21.5.91~~					
~~28.11.85~~		~~23.10.91~~					
22.5.86		31.10.91					
~~23.7.85~~							
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~~28.1.88~~							
~~24.3.88~~							
~~16.5.89~~							
~~18.5.89~~							
~~22.8.89~~							
~~12/9/89~~							
~~19.10.89~~							
30.11.89							

Part ends

PREM 19/3307

Dd 533270 5M 2/78 8362633 JET

PART 1 ends:-

FCO to JSCU 31 10 91

PART 2 begins:-

Pun to Pres. Ethiopia 1.11.91

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

31 October 1991

Dear Stephen,

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ETHIOPIA

Further to John Duncan's letter of 23 October, I enclose a draft letter from the Prime Minister to send in reply to President Meles Zenawi's letter of 15 October.

Yours ever,

(S L Gass)
Private Secretary

J S Wall Esq
10 Downing Street

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

HE Mr Meles Zenawi
President of the Transitional Government
of Ethiopia

Thank you for your letter of 15 October, brought to London by your Minister of Mines and Energy.

My Government and the British people will fully support your efforts to consolidate peace and restore effective democracy in Ethiopia. We will continue to help you in alleviating poverty and hunger, and we would certainly like to play a part in your longer term plans for economic recovery and development, both directly and through the contributions we make to the Non-Governmental Organisations and multilateral agencies now working in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's economic policy is obviously a key factor. We were encouraged to see, in the draft economic programme you published recently, proposals for privatisation, the establishment of free markets and increased liberalisation. We hope to see further moves in this direction. I know Lynda Chalker, our Minister for Overseas Development, discussed this point with Izedin Ali and your Health Minister, Dr Adanech Kidane-Mariam.

I hope you will keep in touch as your plans evolve.

Tone

ODA

Overseas Development
Administration

94 Victoria Street, London SW1E 5JL

Telephone 071-917 0409

From The Private Secretary

J S Wall Esq CMG
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

23 October 1991

Dear Stephen

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ETHIOPIA

During a call yesterday on Mrs Chalker, by the Ethiopian Minister of Mines and Energy, she was given the enclosed letter to the Prime Minister from the President of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi.

The letter makes a plea for British assistance in the task of rebuilding Ethiopia after thirty years of civil war. I am asking the relevant ODA department to produce a draft reply as soon as possible. I am also copying this letter to Simon Gass in the Foreign Secretary's Office.

Yours ever
John

John Duncan
Assistant Private Secretary

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T253819/1

SUBJECT
MASTER
CDS
FILED ON:

15 October 1991

Your Excellency,

I would like to convey the greetings of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia and those of my own to you, Mr. Prime Minister, and, through you, to the people of the United Kingdom with whom our country has the privilege of enjoying long-standing and friendly relations.

You are no doubt following the far-reaching political transformation currently underway in Ethiopia which, we are convinced, will open a new chapter of mutually-beneficial co-operation between our two countries.

Inasmuch as the civil wars in our country have stopped after thirty years, Ethiopia is now at peace not only with itself but with its neighbours as well. As a result, an opportunity never before seen is at hand to rehabilitate the society and build a democratic future.

The Transitional Government , which has recently been established as a result of the decision of the July National Conference, is committed not only to bringing peace and democracy to the long-suffering people of Ethiopia, but also to rekindle their hope for better material conditions. Over the next two to two and a half years, the Transitional Government will be taking up the task of addressing the fundamental concerns of the people of Ethiopia, at the center of which is the protection of individual human rights and the guaranteeing of basic civil and political freedoms.

Furthermore, the Government is currently discussing a draft for a new economic policy which will institute much needed liberalization and, in the process, free the creative energies of the people to accelerate national growth and development. In the short-term, emergency measures are being carried out in favour of the very large number of victims of war, drought and other similar disasters.

.../

Your country, Mr. Prime Minister, has always been an important partner for Ethiopia, particularly in promoting the well-being of its people. However, the negative policies pursued by the previous regime and the absence of peace have hitherto impeded effective cooperation between our two countries.

I am confident that the new situation prevailing in our country will provide us with a better opportunity for greater cooperation as well as for your country to assist Ethiopia in both immediate recovery efforts and long-term development programmes. I cannot emphasize enough the fact that the efforts to consolidate peace and nurture democracy in Ethiopia rest to a large extent on the success achieved in economic recovery and development.

I hope, therefore, that I can count on you, Mr. Prime Minister, to obtain for Ethiopia the active and timely support of the people and Government of the United Kingdom in the noble task of national recovery and development.

I am sending you this message in the hands of Mr. Izedin Ali, our Minister of Mines and Energy, with instructions to further elaborate on the matters raised in this letter.

In expressing once again the desire of my Government to open a new chapter in relations with the United Kingdom, I wish to extend to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration and esteem.

Meles Zenawi
President of the Transitional
Government of Ethiopia

His Rt. Honorable John Major MP,
Prime Minister, First Lord of the
Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service
L O N D O N

የኢትዮጵያ የሽግግር መንግሥት
ፕሬዚደንት ጽሕፈት ቤት

ጥቅምት 4 ቀን 1984 ዓ.ም

ክቡር ጠቅላይ ሚኒስትር፡—

በኢትዮጵያ የሽግግር መንግሥትና በአራቱ ሶም ለአርበኞችና በአርበኞች በኩል የብዙ ዘመን ወዳኝ ግንኙነት ስናራምድ ለቆየነው ለታላቁ ብሪታንያ ሕዝብና መንግሥት የአክብሮት ሰላምታዬን ላቀርብ እወዳለሁ።

ለሁለቱ አገሮቻችን የጋራ ጥቅም አዲስ የትብብር ምዕራፍ ይከፍትልናል ብለን የምንተማመንበትን በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ በመካሄድ ላይ ያለውን ሥር ነቀል የፖለቲካ ለውጥ በቅርብ እንደሚከታተሉት እንጠራጠርም።

በሀገራችን ለሠላሳ ዓመታት ቢካሄድ የቆየው የርስ በርስ ጠርነት አብቅቶ እነሆ በአሁኑ ወቅት ኢትዮጵያ ከራሷ ጋር ብቻ ሳይሆን፤ ከጉረቤትም ጭምር ሰላምን መሥርታ ትገኛለች። በዚህም መሠረት የነብረ ተሰቡን የተናጋ ኦሮ መልሶ ለማቋቋምና የጷሞ ክራሲን መሠረት ለመጣል ከዚህ በፊት ታይቶ የማይታወቅ ዕድል አጋጥሞናል።

አ.ኤ.አ. በጭላይ ወር በተካሄደው ብሔራዊ ጉባዔ ውሳኔ መሠረት በቀርቡ የተቋቋመው የኢትዮጵያ የሽግግር መንግሥት ዋና ዓላማ ለከፋ ተኛ ችግር ለዘመናት ተጋልጦ ለቀየው የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ ሰላምንና ጷሞክራሲን ማጉናፀፉ ብቻ ሳይሆን፤ ለተሻለ የኦሮ ሁኔታ ተስፋው አንደገና እንዲያንሠራራ ማድረግ ጭምር ነው።

.../...

በሚቀጥሉ ከሁለት እስከ ሁለት ዓመት ተኩል ቢሉት ጊዜያት የኢትዮጵያን ሕዝብ መሠረታዊ ችግሮች ለመቅረፍና ከነዚህም መካከል ዓይነተኛ የሆነውን የግለሰቦችን የሰብዓዊ መብቶች መከበርንና የፖለቲካ ነፃነቶች መረጋገጥን እውን ለማድረግ የሽግግሩ መንግሥት ይጥራል::

የኢህኖሜውን ይዘታ ነፃ በማድረግ የሕዝቡ የፈጠራ ችሎታ ያለገደብ የሀገሪቱን ዕድገትና ልማት እንዲያፋጥን የሚያስችለው አዲስ የኢህኖሚ ፖሊሲ መንግሥታችን አውጥቷል:: እንደዚሁም ሰፊር ነት፣ ለድርቀና መሰል አደጋዎች ለተጋለጡ ዜጐቻችን የአስቸኳይ ጊዜ ዕርዳታ እንዲደርሳቸው አርምኝ አየተወሰደ ነው::

ከሶር ጠቀሳይ ሚኒስተር ሀገርዎ ለኢትዮጵያ ዕድገት፣ በተለይም ለሕዝቧ ደህንነት መጠበቀ ከፍተኛ ተጨባሪ ሆና ቀይታለች:: ሆኖም የቀድሞው መንግሥት ሲያራምዳቸው የነበሩት አፍራሽ ፖሊሲዎችና በሀገራችንም ሰላም መታጣት በሁለቱ አገሮቻችን መካከል የነበሩት ትብብሮች የተፈለገውን ያህል ውጤታማ እንዳይሆኑ መሰናክል እንደፈጠረ ግልፅ ነው::

ባሁኑ ጊዜ በአገራችን ያለው ሁኔታ ለሰፋ ተብብርና ቢስቸኳይ ጊዜ የመሰሰ ማቋቋም ተግባራትም ሆነ በረዥም ጊዜ የልማት ፕሮግራሞች አገርዎ ሊተዮጵያን ለመርዳት እንዲተችል የተሻለ ዕድል እንደፈጠረልን አተማመናለሁ::እንደሚታወቀው ሁሉ ሰላምን ለማስፈንና ዲሞክራሲን ለማጐልበት በኢትዮጵያ የተጀመረው ሂደት ሥር መሰደድና መጠናከር የሚችለው በኢህኖሚ ተሰድሶና በልማት መሰክ የምናደርገው ጥረት ግቡን ሲመታ ነው::

.../...

ስለሆነም ለጀመርነው የብሔራዊ ተሐድሶና የሰማተ ክቡር ተግባር የታሰቃን ብሪታንያ ሕዝብና መንግሥት ወቀታዊና ሰፊ ተብብር ለማግኘት አንድገቸለ የክቡር ጠቀላይ ሚኒስተር ድጋፍ አገደማይለየን ተስፋ አደርጋለሁ::

ይህንን መልዕክተ አንዲያደርስልኝና በውስጡ ያሉተን ነዋቦች አንዲያበራራልያተ ስባፈሳጌውን መመሪያ በመስጠተ የማዕድንና የኢነርጂ ሚኒስተራችንን አተ ሲዘቋን ዓሌን ልኬያለሁ::

ከታሳቃ ብሪታንያ ጋር ስዲስ የግንኙነት ምዕራፍ ለመክፈተ የመንግሥቱ ጽኑ ፍሳጌተ መሆኑን በድጋሚ በመግለጽ ለክቡር ነተያ ያለኝን ከፍተኛ ግምተና ለክብሮተ በዚህ አጋጣሚ አቀርባለሁ::

መለስ ዜናዊ

የኢተዮጵያ የሽግግር መንግሥተ

ፕሬዚዳንተ

ለክቡር ሜጀር ጅን ሚጀር

የታሳቃ ብሪታንያ ጠቀላይ ሚኒስተር

ለንደን

4a-b

Jp 01434

MR WALL

c Sir Robin Butler

Prime Minister

Mengistu Flees

Over the past few days, the rebel groups in Ethiopia have stepped up their military activity; they have retaken Ambo (some 50 kilometres west of Addis Ababa) and cut the roads to Asmara and the key port of Assab. These developments appear to have finally brought it home to Mengistu that the military situation was unwinnable.

2. Early today, President Mengistu fled Ethiopia and flew to Zimbabwe, where his family had already gone and where his uncle is the Ethiopian Ambassador. The Vice President, General Tesfaye Gebre Kidan, has become acting President. And Tesfaye Dinka has remained Prime Minister.

3. The Ethiopian Government contacted our Embassy this morning. They requested that the UK ask the rebel groups for an immediate ceasefire, and exhort the rebel representatives to attend the US-arranged peace talks planned for 27 May in London, despite Mengistu's departure.

4. If the peace talks go ahead, the atmosphere will be entirely different. The major obstacle to progress at the talks has vanished. But the talks may not be a simple affair. The rebel groups will feel that they can demand more from the Government. Furthermore, differences and frictions that have long existed between the rebel groups may come to the fore. Their recent co-operation has been of operational necessity to apply greater combined military pressure.

5. We are also aware that some senior military figures, at least until recently, believed that, without Mengistu's

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interference in military operations, the army might be able to defeat the rebels. Acting President Tesfaye's team may therefore be subject to internal divisions when it comes to making concessions to the rebel groups.

PERCY CRADOCK

21 May 1991

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

25 March 1991

ERITREA: LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT

Thank you for your letter of 25 March enclosing a letter from the leader of the EPLF to the Prime Minister.

I agree that it would be best for Simon Hemans to reply on the lines you propose.

STEPHEN WALL

S L Gass Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 March 1991

Dear Stephen,

Eritrea : Letter to the Prime Minister from the Secretary General of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF)

The leader of the EPLF has written the enclosed letter to the Prime Minister via our Embassy in Washington about the outcome of his talks under American auspices with Ethiopian Government representatives.

We have not had any contact at Ministerial level with the EPLF, which is engaged in a bloody and prolonged rebellion against the Ethiopian régime. The EPLF is in origin a Marxist organisation and is believed to have had the backing of the Iraqis at least at an earlier stage.

However, in the interests of promoting negotiations between the two sides for a peaceful solution, we have had contacts at senior official level with the EPLF. We propose, if you agree, to reply to Mr Afwerki at official level in the terms of the enclosed draft.

Yours ever,

(S L Gass)
Private Secretary

Stephen Wall Esq CMG
10 Downing Street

DRAFT LETTER FROM SIMON HEMANS,
ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE, FCO

TO:
Mr Isaias Afwerki
Secretary General
Eritrean People's Liberation Front
PO Box 65685
Washington DC 20035
United States of America

I have been asked to reply to your letter of 12 March to the Prime Minister informing us of your views on the outcome of the recent talks between the Eritrean People's Liberation Front and the Ethiopian Government in Washington under American auspices.

We have read your letter and its enclosures with great interest. In our view, negotiations between the two sides on a realistic basis and in a spirit of compromise offer the only opportunity to end the misery arising from the conflict and to achieve a lasting solution of the Eritrean question.

We therefore urge you most strongly to persevere with the talks on which you are already embarked and to be ready to explore all avenues which they may offer, including United Nations involvement in a solution which would of course require the agreement of the Ethiopian Government. The British Government is open minded about the UN involvement.

I should very much welcome the opportunity of following up the discussion we had last October, and hope that you will be passing through London so that we may explore all these issues in greater depth.

ህዝባዊ ግንባር ሓርነት ኤርትራ
ፖለቲካዊ ቤት ጽሕፈት

الجبهة الشعبية لتحرير أرتريا
المكتب السياسي

ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT
POLITICAL BUREAU

ዕለት March 12, 1991 ..... التاريخ
Date

H.E. The Rt. Hon. John Major
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
10 Downing Street
London
England SW1 2AH

Your Excellency:

I wish to seize this opportunity to appraise you of the latest developments in the peace process to resolve the Eritrean-Ethiopian conflict.

At a time when, in the aftermath of the Cold War, the international community as represented by the United Nations, is expressing a profound desire matched by earnest efforts, to resolve regional disputes, and above all following the successful defence made to save Kuwait from an expansionist invasion, we entertain the hope that the United Nations will shoulder its responsibility and play a role to resolve the 30-year old Eritrean-Ethiopian armed conflict which has been conveniently forgotten and which is still causing bloodshed. We also hope that your government will take a positive and supportive stand in this regard.

As Your Excellency is no doubt aware, various attempts have been made to settle the Eritrean case in a peaceful way. After the unsuccessful attempt of President Carter, the United States government has been making a serious contribution, through the good offices of Mr. Herman Cohen, to maintain and continue the peace efforts. So far, two preliminary meetings have been held in Washington--the first one on October 4, 1990 and the second on February 21-22, 1991. In the first meeting the Ethiopian side stated that they have and will later formally table a new and substantive proposal while the EPLF presented a paper expressing its views on future peace talks. It was agreed that a subsequent exploratory meeting will be arranged by Mr. Herman Cohen in which the two sides will submit their proposals formally.

In view of the importance of presenting concrete and practical proposals during the second meeting of the exploratory process held on February 21-22 in Washington, we

have presented in some detail, the manner by which we believe the case can be justly settled. Although it is clear from the attached document, its content may be summed up in the following points:

1. In order to secure the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination by means of a referendum, the United Nations should shoulder its responsibility and initiate the process of a referendum forthwith.

2. Because the process of implementing the right to self-determination and of organizing a referendum will take time, the United Nations should, in the interim, deploy a peace-keeping force in Eritrea.

3. In the interim, because it will not be adequate to deploy a peace-keeping force only, the UN should establish its own provisional its own provisional and neutral administ Any other administration or arrangements will only create complications, and will be ineffective and time wasting.

4. In order to implement the process of referendum without obstacles, and more particularly in order to enable the Eritrean people--the final arbiter of the issue--to determine its future in an atmosphere of freedom, free of any pressure, the Ethiopian occupation forces garrisoned in Eritrea and all allied institutions of repression, should evacuate from Eritrea. The process of evacuation should be completed when the UN peace-keeping force has been established in Eritrea.

5. The attainment of peace is a responsibility of the United Nations in the fundamental sense, not just for procedural considerations; important though the latter may be. And ultimately, following the end of the preliminary process, all the proceedings of the talks should be carried out under the UN auspices. This is so, because the United Nations bears responsibility for the implementation of the process leading to peace and is answerable for and guarantor of the outcome.

As the EPLF's working paper presented at the February 21-22 meeting in Washington has proven, it appears that the preliminary stage has lapsed and therefore the time has come for the United Nations participation to which reference was made above.

I would like to take this opportunity to state that the EPLF would have no objection in the resumption of contacts or talks to be made under UN auspices (legal umbrella) with Mr. Herman Cohen acting as chairman and representing the US government, and with the participation of the Soviet government and others.

Your Excellency:

Allow me to mention, in passing, the fact that the Ethiopian government did not present any meaningful working paper. What never fails to astound us, and would have a negative impact in the attempts to bring about a peaceful resolution, is the fact that the government of the Derg is stricken with fright at the mere mention of the United Nations' role and the obstacles it creates to prevent the effective participation of the United Nations. As always, the pretext that the government of the Derg gives in support of its unholy attitude is the opportunity Ethiopia had to annex Eritrea, exploiting US government's policy during the Cold War era, on one hand, and on the other hand, exploiting the silence of the international community, including the United Nations, capitalizing on the recognition it received vis-a-vis its illegal annexation of Eritrea.

If the desired peace is to be achieved there must be justice. And if there is to be justice, there has to be a true and proper judge and guarantor. In the case of Eritrea, there was no judge and guarantor, other than the international community represented by the United Nations. A resolution of the Eritrean case is unthinkable without the full participation of the United Nations. And all attempts made to impede the UN participation are not right and are therefore unacceptable.

In view of the above mentioned realities, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front deems it necessary to reiterate that active and effective participation of the United Nations in the peace process and in securing peace is inevitable and non-negotiable. I, therefore, call upon Your Excellency, to actively support the participation of the United Nations. Not mere participation for its own sake, Your Excellency, but in the sense of stopping bloodshed and bringing about a lasting solution.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to extend to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Isaias Afwerki
Secretary General
Eritrean People's Liberation Front

REPORT ON THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXPLORATORY TALKS FOR PEACE NEGOTIATIONS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Eritrean People's Liberation Front
February 1991

NOTE

The summary minutes of the deliberations of February 21-22, 1991 in Washington, D.C. is prepared by and under the full and exclusive responsibility of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). As this is not a verbatim report, it is possible that the wording and details, in some areas, might not be exact but the essence is there. Please be advised that emphasized texts by way of underlining and/or highlighting are done by the EPLF.

MEETING BETWEEN
THE ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT
AND
THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT
THROUGH THE FACILITATION OF
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Present:

EPLF Delegation:

1. Mr. Isaias Afwerki
   Head of Delegation
2. Mr. Ali Said Abdella
3. Mr. Ahmed Tahir Baduri
4. Mr. Gebre Sellasie Yosief
5. Mr. Hagos Ghebrehiwet
6. Mr. Tesfai Ghermazien

Ethiopian Delegation:

1. Mr. Ashagre Yigletu
   Head of Delegation
2. Mr. Billilign Mandefro
3. Mr. Fisseha Yimer
4. Mr. Tibebu Bekele
5. Mr. Tesfuhunegn Maasho
6. Mr. Ejel Abdurahman
7. Mr. Sidrak Hizkel
8. Mr. Araya Seyoum
9. Mr. Getachew Kitaw
10. Mr. Sahlu Wolde-Giorgis
11 Mr. Fisseha Zewde
12. Mr. Akalu Geleta

US Government Representatives:

1. Mr. Herman Cohen
   Asst. Secretary for African
   Affairs, Dept. of State
2. Mr. Robert C. Frasure
   Dir. for African Affairs
   National Security Council
3. Mr. Irving Hicks
   Deputy Asst. Secretary
   for African Affairs, Dept.
4. Mr. John Davidson
   Dir. East Afriican Bureau
5. Mr. James Lesedman
   Asst. Dir. East African Bur.
6. Mr. John Hall
   Desk Officer for Ethiopia
7. Mr. John R. Byerly
   Asst. Legal Adviser for African Affairs

Asst. Legal Adviser for African Affairs

FIRST SESSION

Date: February 21, 1991
Time: 14:00 Hours

Assistant Secretary Herman Cohen opened the meeting by a lengthy statement in which he welcomed the two delegates, expressed his thanks for their coming to Washington

He pointed out that he had assumed responsibility for organizing the current meeting last October and suggestted an informal and flexible approach and a three session format for the talks. He stressed that the United States were not mediators but only facilitators and advised that the two sides maintain a spirit of compromise in the talks.

Mr. Robert Frasure then further elaborated on the issues raised in the opening statement. He stated that the challenges facing the two day talks was not whether the two parties were to make credible negotiations nor to make progress on substance. He explained that the United States "was not expecting too much out of the next two days". He further advised that it was incumbent on the two sides to table a way out of the destructive war. Assistant Secretary Cohen then called on the leader of the EPLF delegation to make a statement.

Secretary General Isaias stated that as it was an opening session, it would not be appropriate to make statements on substantive as well as irrelevant issues and therefore proposed for the ending of the session.

Deputy Prime Minister Ashagre thanked Mr. Cohen and the United States for their efforts. He said that the two sides have met many times in the past, but there was now a difference as the United States was mediating and the two sides were talking on substantive issues. He then stated that the Ethiopian view was that "the United States play a key role as a full fledged mediator".

Asst. Legal Adviser for African Affairs

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Cohen then said that they have given their ideas to the two sides and that the parties will be given the opportunity to talk when the meeting gets to the discussion of the five points.

Isaias then replied that the EPLF will not talk on the 'five points' paper and that this position had been clearly communicated to Mr. Cohen by the EPLF delegation at the last meeting. He further stated that the EPLF had expected, in accordance to what was previously agreed upon, to discuss the papers which were to be presented by the two sides. He also explained that he had refrained from commenting on the opening statement because he did not wish to enter into negotiations right away.

Cohen subsequently inquired whether the EPLF has a paper to present and upon getting an affirmative reply, he posed the same question to the Ethiopian side and received a positive response. He then proposed that the opening session be adjourned and expresssed his desire to meet with Secretary General Isaias, explaining that they have not had an opporrtunity to talk.

SECOND SESSION

Date: February 22, 1991
Time: 11:30 Hours

Cohen opened the second session by, again, thanking and welcoming the two sides. He then suggested that the session move directly to the presentation of the papers and he requested that instead of only presenting the papers, the two delegations also explain them. He further suggested that as the "Ethiopians had stated in the first session that they have a firm proposal in the form of federalism that they present their paper first".

Ashagre: Mr. Cohen and representatives of the EPLF, I would like to first of all express my pleasure at the fact that we are able to meet at such a high level and address the problems of our country. Although we have met many times in the past, we had not been able to go beyond matters of procedure. On the other hand, the conditions of the war have been extremely costly in terms of human and material losses. Because of the continuing war, we have social instability, drought and famine. We, for our part, believe that the solution cannot be found on the battlefield but only through peaceful negotiation. Thus, I wish we all exert our energy at peacefully resolving the conflict. And as chairman Cohen pointed out yesterday, it is essential that our proposals should not only be directed at bringing the two conflicting sides together, but also in providing **a solution to our people in terms acceptable to the world community.** The resolution of the problem should be beneficial, not only to Ethiopia alone but it should also bring peace and stability to the region. We have, therefore, come up and will submit a proposal which we have not put forward in the past 30 years. We are now proposing federalism as a solution to the conflict. A solution which will not only meet the demands of the problem but also that of the prevailing situation in the world. It is a proposal which will address the concerns and preoccupation of both sides and the challenges of the conflict.

We take seriously the proposal made by Mr. Cohen that the solution should not address the needs of one side be satisfying to both sides and incorporate

compromises. It is the hope of my delegation that our proposal will receive the positive consideration of the EPLF and will also be seriously considered by the chairman. Our proposal gives an outline in general terms of the parameters of the solution. Once we agree on the federalism framework, the details will be worked out by both sides. With respect to the detailed elaboration of the solution, my delegation is prepared to deal with it both in this meeting, we are conducting in Washington, and in future meetings that may be held here or elsewhere. This is what I have to say for now. Thank you. (He then handed out the Ethiopian proposal which is appended.)

Cohen: Thank you. Mr. Issaias, the floor is now yours.

Isaias: I will read the working paper prepared by the EPLF, and the explanation which may be required--we will be willing to elaborate and present later.

(EPLF's statement proposal as read by Secretary General Isaias is appended herewith.)

Cohen: Thank you very much. You haven't had it before Ashagre. You may need to ask questions but you haven't read it. So maybe we take a break of 10 minutes. Mr. Issaias.

Isaias: I think we should take 10-15 minutes break to read the proposals.

15 minutes recess

Cohen: Is there any one who seeks clarification. Then, I should like to ask a question about number four of the EPLF proposal. It does not seem to go with number one.

Isaias: May be the 4th point should have come first. We believe that a peace solution needs the legal guarantee of the United Nations. We believe that the exploratory stage is consumated and therefore, the subsequent stage of the peace negotiation should be conducted under the umbrella of the United Nations.

Cohen: When you are stating that, are you saying that there is a basis for negotiations?

Isaias: Yes. Since both sides have submitted their papers, we believe that there is a basis for negotiations.

Cohen: When you say the United Nations, does it mean the Secretary General of the UN?

Isaias: Not necessarily the Secretary General personally, but it could be his office.

Cohen: I think they are involved in other places such as El-Salvador and I think they can do it here too.

Isaias: When we are talking about the umbrella of the UN, we mean a morally binding presence or involvement of the UN. A legally binding presence of the UN is essential.

Cohen: I would like to ask the two sides if they have questions to ask each other. Then, I want to ask Ashagre how genuine autonomy or the question of choice could be implemented or dealt within the basis of the 5 points?

Ashagre: On our part, before responding to your question, it is difficult to respond to the EPLF proposal, because **we do not find in it a new set of proposals** or anything new that has not been repeatedly submitted. No consessions or compromises. Our understanding of the October 4 talks was that in subsequent talks, ideas will be tabled that will accomodate the preoccupations and needs of both sides.

Regarding Cohen's queries as to the questions of choice submitted on our paper, negotiations could be held once the general frame is settled. I think, once there is a basis for the two sides to continue, it is something that can be worked out in the process.

Cohen: Mr. Isaias, any questions?

Isaias: I think we should have a common understanding on what we mean by compromise. There are things one can compromise on and there are others in which one cannot or should not compromise. When somebody takes something from you, you do not compromise on that thing which has been taken from you. Similarly, you **cannot compromise when it comes down to the right of a nation or the right of a people.** When you violate the right of a nation and the human rights of a people you do not ask them to compromise on those basic rights. **The international community did not compromise on Kuwait.** I am trying to state our understanding of the concept of compromise. We cannot compromise on the right of a people or a nation. Nobody has the right to do so. I wish you would appreciate our views on compromise. We can talk about mutual interests and their accommodations and about future relations.

Here, we are sitting and telling each other, that there are nothing new in the respective proposals. I don't want to repeat what Ashagre said about there being nothing new in the EPLF proposal. We did not come here to talk about new things.

We have previously heard a lot about political systems. But the issue at hand is not about political systems or forms of governments, but about the fundamental rights of the people. The realization of these rights is not something to be offered by the Ethiopian side as a prescription or something to be formulated and imposed in Addis or by the Ethiopian side. We are not talking about forms of government. This is something which should be addressed later. What we mean by or how we define future relations, sovereignty, form of governmet, etc. could be dealt at a later stage. First and foremost, it is the issue of the right of the people that should be settled. **We did not fight for 30 years to change the form of government in Addis.** If this was our objective, it could have been done earlier. The concepts of 'federlism' and 'confederalism' are issues that could be discussed after our basic right as a people is observed. Otherwise, if our right as a people is not recognized and realized, then we are not even eligible to discuss about federalism or confederalism.

Cohen: When you say basic right, does it not mean you are talking about the choice of the people? The right of the people to decide or choose their destiny and that this cannot be compromised?

Isaias: You got 80-85% of what I meant.

Cohen: What am I missing? I understand that you are talking about the choice and freedom to decide their destiny, how they should be governed and by whom. I think Ashagre is willing to consider the issue of choice. I don't think you are far apart. The Eritrean and Ethiopian people had historical association. You have not rejected association?

Isaias: I think we should be clear about association. **We mean free association.** The concept of free association should have to come later. **First, we must be free. Our freedom must be guaranted first. Then we can talk about association.**

Cohen: Would you grant choice to the other side?

Isaias: Why not?

Cohen: When you say choice, does it mean referendum?

Isaias: Yes.

Cohen: When does it have to be implemented? Could you talk about the span of time?

Isaias: Yes. We can talk about the time span. We have proposed an interim period. The length can be negotiated. We can talk about mutual interests and when to do what.

Cohen: How about the sequences? Does it mean that the fighting will stop and then after the interim period the Eritrean people will decide?

Isaias: Yes.

Cohen: Have you done any thinking on association with Ethiopia?

Isaias: Yes. But this is secondary. First, our right must be ascertained. This is premature at the moment. **When we talk about association we are talking about mutual interests**, such as economic, political and cultural interests. We are talking about a free set up that will lead to peace and stability in the region. There is the question of access to the sea, which is always hidden in the background and not raised. We must raise this issue and bring it into the open and talk about what arrangements could be made. We must continue to negotiate; it must be an ongoing process. **Association could be achieved in a free, peaceful manner and resulting in a gradual integration after our basic right is ascertained and settled, and where both sides have the right to choose. Without ascertaining our basic right, we cannot talk about association.**

Cohen: Ashagre, do you have any questions?

Ashagre: No. Our understanding was that certain procedural issues can be accommodated. But from the expose` given by my colleague, Isaias, I have nothing to say.

Cohen: Then, I will ask. You say there is going to be an interim period before the Eritrean people decide and as you know, the international community recognizes Ethiopia as one country. Therefore, as the world considers Eritrea part of Ethiopia, what will be the status of Eritrea in the interim period?

Presumably, there are those who believe in unity with Ethiopia, so will you allow them to campaign as in free election?

Isaias: Yes. But to come to your first question; a change of attitude in this aspect is required not from the international community, but from the government of Ethiopia. And this attitude is complicating negotiations and therefore, it must change. **The reference point of the negotiations should be**

the right of the people. Let me suggest a compromise on this question. Let the international community look on Eritrea as part of Ethiopia (as the Ethiopians considerr Eritrea as part of Ethiopia), and let Eritreans also consider themselves as not part of Ethiopia and let the referendum decide the issue.

Cohen: You are saying that each group look at it the way it wants? You are also saying that the UN will be the government in the interim period?

Isaias: Yes. You see, we don't want to complicate the situation. And therefore in the interim period, the UN will administer Eritrea, but the Eritrean people will be free to express their wishes. Our desire is to simplify the issue. To this end, we see a neutral administration, the UN or someone acting on its behalf. No one will put any pressure on any solution. There will not be military coercion on any citizen.

Cohen: Then, according to your proposal, the Eritrean people will not have their own administration in the interim period?

Isaias: Yes. But when the UN comes, it is not going to be some foreign body or colonial power but only a guarantor; and this will avoid any wrangling.

Cohen: Does anybody have any questions? Then, we will soon go for lunch, but we will still have to decide as what to say to the press. There are three choices--a common statement by both parties, a statement by the chairman, or separate statements by each of the parties. If you feel there is a basis for continuing the negotiations, I am prepared to be the chairman.

Meeting broke for lunch at 12:45 hours

THIRD SESSION

Date: February 22, 1991
Time: 14:45 Hours

Cohen: In opening the third and final session, Secretary Cohen said that there is need to talk about two subjects, i.e. the handling of the press and secondly on whether or not there was need to pursue the negotiation in this format further. He stated that he had reread the 'five points' paper during the recess in order to refresh his memory and expressed that it was a framework and not a solution. He then analysed the proposals submitted by the two parties from the perspective of the five points. He was joined in by Mr. Robert Frasure, in this venture, who reformulated the two papers in terms of three basic points: 1) International umbrella, 2) The period of implementation and its contents or the length and substance of the interim period, and 3) The question of choice. Mr. Frasure also pointed out that on the basis of his experience in Namibia and Angola, that once agreement was secured on the basic and substantive issues, the people involved in the negotiations were really surprised as to how easy they found it to agree on other outstanding issues.

Isaias: I would like to state that we prefer to speak on the basis of the proposal we made, and not on the basis of the five point proposal. I propose a compromise that **each side stick to its paper and to let the five point paper float as a catalyst.**

Ashagre: **I would, first, like to state that the five point paper can serve as an initial paper.** It can assist. But this does not mean that each side has to drop its own paper. They should be retained. Regarding the issue as to which comes first--association or choice--I would say that as the origin of the conflict is that of disassociation, it is only natural that we deal with association first and then deal with choice later.

Isaias: I was listening to what both Bob Frasure and Cohen were stating. Our position is that we will stick to our papers and use the five points as a

catalyst. We have noted the three points and we need time to digest them. We can talk now about what to do with the press.

Ashagre: If you can give us in writing, we can digest them.

Cohen: Then you will get in touch with us?

Isaias: Regarding the questions about the umbrella of the UN, our idea is that the US continue to chair the meetings while the UN serves as the guarantor. At the same time, other sides such as the Soviet Union and also other interested parties could be invited to serve as observers.

Cohen: I need a mask to hide my happiness. I don't foresee any problem regarding observers as you had already agreed on observers before. Who were they?

Ashagre: We agreed on UN as an observer.

Cohen: Who were the other countries?

Ashagre: Senegal, Zimbabwe, Kenya.

Isaias: No. No. We are not talking about the previous agreement. We are talking about the Soviet Union and other interested parties who could also be involved.

Cohen: How should we proceed on this then?

Ashagre: With respect to this, we can proceed in tow ways. First, we must address who the observers should be and secondly, what their role should be.

Cohen: No surprises! This is the Cohen way! No surprises.

Isaias: We do not want to enter into detailed discussion on procedural issues. When we talk about the umbrella of the UN, we do not have in mind the

physical presence of the UN, but rather that the UN endorses the process and serve as a guarantor.

Cohen: How can we do that?

Isaias: I can give you a detailed elaboration if you want.

Cohen: I am looking as to how the UN can be involved. I don't have a lawyer on the UN with me.

Frasure: It is possible but not certain. If an agreement is reached the UN can be brought in to play some role, or we can keep informing the UN in the interim.

Cohen: I presume we can inform the Security Council.

Ashagre: Excuse me. There seems to be some confusion. **We came here believing that the US will play the role of the mediator and will be in the chair**. It is not clear to us how we can bring in the UN. And it is being talked about bringing some other parties as observers. So we believe that until we have a clear understanding of the situation we suggest that we proceed as usual under your chairmanship.

Isaias: **Our proposal to involve the UN is not a matter of procedure.** It is not a procedural issue. We are talking about the need for an international guarantor. **We want the UN, not as an observer, but as an international guarantor**. So if, in the final analysis, there is going to be an international guarantor to oversee the implementation of the agreement, then **it must be involved from the beginning**. The UN either directly or by mandating somebody will have to oversee the implementation of the agreement. With regards to the role of the US, portraying the US as a mediator at this stage will only complicate the process. I, therefore, suggest that we don't get involved in that issue now.

Cohen: Do you want the US to chair?

Isaias: We have no problem with that.

Ashagre: When we need a guarantor, we will address that issue. Now, let us continue the informal talks with your chairmanship.

Isaias: Put that way, i.e. "continuing the informal talks with you chairing the meetings". It is OK with us.

Cohen: So both sides will **reflect over the five points and then give us a signal when you are ready so that we can organize another meeting.**

As to the press, we have drafted a statement which, if approved by both sides can be delivered by both sided together; each side separately or by the chairman.

At this stage, a draft press statement , which is appended herewith, was distributed to the two sides.

Cohen: Any comments on the draft?

Isaias: Yes. We have a comment on the last line. **We do not use the phrase "free choice" with respect to our position.**

Cohen: Do you have any alternatives?

Isaias: Yes. **We prefer "referendum"**

Cohen: Any other comments?

Ashagre: No comments.

Isaias: So, it is understood that we have the free choice to interpret the statement?

Cohen: Yes, also to spread rumours. No one expected that agreement will be reached. Nevertheless this meeting was useful as we made some progress and had attained a better understanding of each other.

The meeting came to a close at 15:45 hours.

After the end of the meeting, a US representative informed the EPLF delegation, in the corridors, that the Ethiopian delegation wanted to change the already approved press statement by substituting "GPDR's emphasis on the nature of the future association between the Ethiopian state and Eritrea" with "GPDRE's emphasis on Ethiopian unity" in the last sentence. The EPLF delegation responded that the head of the Ethiopian delegation had accepted the draft press statement as amended by the EPLF without any reservation or opposition and that if the Ethiopians make those changes, the EPLF wanted the phrase, "The EPLF emphasis on referendum", to be substituted by "the EPLF emphasis on independence" in the same last sentence. Subsequently, the Department of State was forced to delete the whole sentence from the press release due to the backtracking of the Ethiopian side.

EPLF Opening Statement
at the Washington Exploratory Talks for Peace

First and foremost, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Mr. Herman Cohen and through you to the Government of the United States of America, for the serious interest shown and the efforts exerted to resolve the Eritrean-Ethiopian conflict.

It is gratifying and engenders hope for the prospects of peace that after almost more than four decades, the United States government is seeking a solution to the imposed arrangement which has caused the Eritrean people, who were denied (after the Second World War) the right to decide their destiny due to strategic considerations prevailed at that time, to suffer continuous genocide and repression.

The Twentieth Century, which has entered its final decade, has witnessed destructive military conflicts and political upheavals that are unequalled in history. Nevertheless, events that are being manifested in the last years of the century do provide a cause for a more hopeful future.

The struggle waged by man in the past decades throughout the world for peace, justice and human rights, against colonialism and expansionist aggression and repression, and the significant successes achieved in this venture, albeit through a heavy price, coupled with the fact that man is pursuing his struggle for a world of stability with vigour and perseverance makes the Twentieth Century quite distinct in history.

The crises and political movements which we are observing in the Soviet Union (in the Baltic States, in Soviet Central Asia, in the Ukraine, Georgia...etc.) are not, as some would have us believe, foreign instigated or the results of foreign intervention or of a narrow outlook but rather the clear and simple opposition of oppressed people to medieval dreams cloaked in Twentieth Century ideas. The movements which have emerged in Eastern Europe (Yugoslavia, Romania, Albania...etc.) are undoubtedly of a similar nature. The conflicts and political and social crises evident in other regions and corners of the world are also caused basically by aggression, domination and repression.
The global and regional crises that have ensued as a direct consequence of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (as we had indicated in our paper of October 4, 1990) is another current

and important example which should probably be repeatedly raised. Although attempts are being made to provide all kinds of justifications and obfuscations, no one can be confused that this destructive invasion arose out of expansionist greed. It would not also be difficult to surmise that, had not the world community so expeditiously put a stop to it, it would no doubt have gone out of control and resulted in immense carnage.

That there exists in the present world, aside from the unresolved conflicts caused by expansionist aggression, domination and repression, and those that have emerged quite recently, other potential ambitions in different regions cannot be overlooked. If the international community represented by the United Nations does not provide an effective and timely deterrent to all such expansionist and repressive aggression which cause instability (and we hope the stand taken in the Iraqi aggression will serve as an example in this regard), the result will be chaos, and moreover, all short term solutions and attempts to silence will only delay peace and prolong suffering.

The Eritrean people have fought for almost half a century and contine to fight for their basic right and for peace and justice while being subjected to incomparable suffering, victimized, not only by an expansionist aggression but also by an international conspiracy of silence. And in this times of super-power rapprochment, reactivation of the role of the United Nations and when the international community has joined hands for peace and justice, the Eritrean people's aspiration and hope for a durable peace and for justice has soared.

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front cognizant of the above mentioned truths desires to reiterate the following as a reminder. We all know and remember that all previously attempted peace talks were fruitless. It is not our desire to go back and enter into a detailed discussion as to why they failed. It is neither our wish that past mistakes be repeated. Therefore, as we embark on this new exploratory stage for peace talks, we wish to make it clear that we have not come to play the game of negotiation, to buy time, to engage in maneuvers, and/or to bargain. For the simple fact that the issue at hand is one of the right of a nation and an issue of human rights. This being the case, our goal in our unswerving efforts for peace is to secure a permanent solution through the simplest and shortest path. And in this spirit, we herein submit our proposal.

Eritrean People's Liberation Front
February 21, 1991

Appendix 2

Eritrean People's Liberation Front Paper To the Exploratory Talks for Peace Negotiations Held Through the Facilitation of the United States Administration

1. The United Nations in order to resolve the Eritrean case in accordance with the will of the Eritrean people, on the basis of their rihgt to self-determination through a referendum, commence the process, i.e. the process of referendum, immediately.

2. Until the issue is permanently resolved in accordance with the choice of the Eritrean people through a referendum, the United Nations deploy a peace keeping force in Eritrea and form an administration for the interim period.

3. Ethiopia's army of occupation and all institutions of repression totally withdrew before the referendum is conducted, and the withdrawal process of the occupation army and apparatus of repression start immediately after the United Nations peace keeping force is established.

4. Once the ongoing exploratory stage is consummated (the Eritrean People's Liberation Front believed that it has) all subsequent process of the talks be conducted under the legal umbrella of the United Nations.

Eritrean People's Liberation Front
February 21, 1991

Proposal of the PDRE on the Peaceful Resolution of the Problem in Eritrea

Council of State
PDRE
Feb. 1991
Addis Ababa

Proposal of the PDRE on the Peaceful Resolution of the

Problem in Eritrea

Recalling that the northern part of Ethiopia had been the centre of the Ethiopian State throughout its long history and that the people of the region have made their own outstanding contribution thereto:

Recognizing that the history and culture of the Ethiopian people which had developed in this northern region of the country remains the national embodiment of the pride and honour of the Ethiopian people as a whole:

Recalling further the historical fact that the national unity of the Ethiopian people has withstood repeated external aggression. internal strife and the machinations of various external forces:

Conscious of the resppnsibility of the present generation of Ethiopians in bringing about peace and stability in the country by putting an end to the untold damage in life. property and the national psyche caused by the civil strife in the Eritrean Autonomous Region over the past thirty years:

Cognizant of the need to pursue the peace effort which the Ethiopian Government has persistently followed over the past sixteen years:

The Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia hereby submits the following proposal with a view to a peaceful resolution of the problem in Eritrea:

1. Organization of the Ethiopian State

1.1 The Ethiopian State shall be organized on the basis of a federal system.

1.2 the Ethiopian State shall have a democratic Constitution based on a federal system of Government.

2. Status of the Eritrean Autonomous Region

2.1 The Eritrean Autonomous Region shall be a constituent member of the Federal State.

2.2 The Eritrean Autonomous Region shall have internal self-government in conformity with the Federal Constitution. It shall have its own democratic Constitution which will provide the basis for its internal self-government in the region.

3. The Federal Shengo

3.1 The Federal State shall have a Shengo which shall be the supreme organ of state power in the country.

3.2 The Federal Shengo shall have the power to enact legislation applicable throughout the Federal State.

4. Other organs of the Federal State

4.1 There shall be a Federal Government and Federal Judiciary whose functions shall be the implementation of the Federal Constitution and laws enacted thereunder.

4.2 There shall be organs of the Federal Government in the Eritrean Autonomous Region which shall have the responsibility of ensuring the implementation of the Federal Constitution and laws issued pursuant thereto in the region.

4.3 The people of the Eritrean Autonomous Region shall have the right to participate in the Federal Government, the Federal Judiciary and other organs of the Federal State.

5. Powers and functions of organs of the Federal State

5.1 the Federal Shengo, the Federal Government and the Federal Judiciary shall have powers and duties as prescribed in the Federal Constitution and laws issued thereunder.

5.2 In particular, the organs of Government of the Federal State shall have powers and duties over the following:—

a) Defence and national security
b) Foreign Affairs
c) Citizenship
d) Currency and Banking
e) Federal taxes, duties and service charges
f) Foreign Trade
g) Port administration, international and national transportation
h) Development and conservation of natural resources.
i) Mines and energy
j) Trade, transport and communications activities and services between autonomous and administrative regions and between these and the Eritrean Autonomous region.

6. Organs of authority in the Eritrean Autonomous Region

6.1 The Eritrean Autonomous Region shall have its own Shengo as the supreme organ of authority in the region.

6.2 The Shengo in the Eritrean Autonomous Region shall, within the limits of its jurisdiction as prescribed by law, have the power to enact legislation applicable in the region.

6.3 Any legislation enacted by the Shengo of the Eritrean Autonomous Region inconsistent with legislation issued by the Federal Shengo shall be null and void. Any question arising under this sub-paragraph shall be decided by the Federal Supreme Court established under the Federal Constitution.

7. The Shengo of the Eritrean Autonomous Region

7.1 the Shengo of the Eritrean Autonomous Region shall consist of representatives elected by the people of Eritrea on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

7.2 The interests and aspirations of the various segments of the population in the Eritrean Autonomous Region shall be duely represented in the Shengo of the Region.

8. Other organs of authority in the Eritrean Autonomous Region.

There shall be organs of Government and Judiciary in the Eritrean Autonomous Region which shall be responsible for the implementation of the Constitution and laws enacted by the Shengo of the Region.

9. Powers and duties of organs of Government of the Eritrean Autonomous Region

9.1 The Shengo of the Eritrean Autonomous Region. the Government and the Judiciary shall have powers and duties as prescribed under the Federal Constitution. the Constitution of the Eritrean Autonomous Region and laws enacted by the Shengo of the region pursuant to the respective Constitutions.

9.2 In particular. the organs of Government in the Eritrean Autonomous Region shall have powers and duties over the following within the Autonomous Region:–

a) Civil law. Criminal law and Commercial law
b) Administration of Police and internal security
c) Public service and labour relations
d) Local taxation
e) Local budget
f) Public health
g) Education
h) Agriculture
i) Local transport and communications

10. Citizenship

10.1 There shall be a single federal citizenship.

10.2 Citizens of the Federal State shall. on the basis of equality under the Federal Constitution. be guaranteed the right to engage in any lawful activily in any part of the Federal State.

11. Rights and freedoms of citizens

11.1 The rights and freedoms of citizens shall be guranteed in the Federal Constitution.

11.2 In particular, citizens shall have the right to freedom of religion, expression, assembly, association and other fundamental rights and freedom in accordance with the Federal Constitution and laws issued thereunder.

12. Languages

12.1 Amharic shall be the working language of the Federal State.

12.2 The people of the Eritrean Autonomous Region shall have the right to use the working language or languages of their choice as determined by the Shengo of the region.

13 Guarantee

13.1 The various interests of the population of the Eritrean Autonomous Region and the agreements reached under this document shall be duly reflected in the Federal Constitution and the Constitution of the Eritrean Autonomous Region.

13.2 Amendments to the Federal Constitution and the Constitution of the Eritrean Autonomous Region Shall be provided for in the respective Constitutions.

14. Miscelloneous

Both parties shall, by mutual agreement, take various confidence building measures with a view to ensuring the success of the peace talks and facilitating the establishment of the Federal system.

Appendix 4

DRAFT PRESS STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES

Delegations representing the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front met in Washington, February 21-22, 1991, for a second round of exploratory talks facilitated and chaired by the United States. The GPDRE delegation was led by Dr. Ashagre Yigletu; the EPLF delegation by Mr. Isaias Afwerki; and the U.S. delegation by Assistant Secretary Herman Cohen.

As earlier agreed, each side presented a written proposal at this round. These written proposals were clarified and discussed. Despite significant differences between the positions of the two sides, there was agreement that it is essential to reach a settlement permitting the conflict to be brought to a peaceful conclusion as soon as possible. Furthermore, both sides agreed on the paramount importance of continued relief activities and other humanitarian confidence building measures.

It was agreed that the United States would convene further meetings of the two sides to explore the possibilities for a peaceful settlement. In this connection, the U.S. delegation asked the two sides to consider paths for reconciling the GPDRE's emphasis on the nature of the future association between the Ethiopian state and Eritrea, and the EPLF's emphasis on free choice by the people of Eritrea.

Washington, D.C.
February 22, 1991

Appendix 5

APPROVED PRESS STATEMENT

Delegations representing the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front met in Washington, February 21-22, 1991, for a second round of exploratory talks facilitated and chaired by the United States. The GPDRE delegation was led by Dr. Ashagre Yigletu; the EPLF delegation by Mr. Isaias Afwerki; and the U.S. delegation by Assistant Secretary Herman Cohen.

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Washington, D.C.
February 22, 1991

3(A-B)

Jp 0978

MR POWELL

c Sir Robin Butler

16/2

Ethiopia: Rebel Offensive in Eritrea

In a new development the Ethiopian armed forces are now being challenged on three fronts. On 8 February the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) launched an offensive against Government forces in Eritrea (see map attached). They captured most of Mitsewa, on the Red Sea, and are now attacking the garrison at Keren. Adverse weather conditions are preventing the Ethiopian air force - normally a key element in the armed forces' defence - from conducting resupply operations to Eritrea. In central Ethiopia the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is also conducting operations, probably designed to tie down Government forces in and around Dese; while in the south-west the pressure of a sizable (5,000) force of the Oromo Liberation Front, aided by the EPLF, may prevent Addis Ababa from deploying large numbers of personnel from that area to Eritrea.

2. The Eritrean offensive follows a year's *de facto* ceasefire, during which the EPLF and the Government pursued (inconclusive) diplomatic negotiations. President Mengistu had withdrawn some of his best troops from Eritrea to cope with rebel threats elsewhere.

3. If Keren and all of Mitsewa fall - as now looks possible - the EPLF will be able to by-pass the provincial capital, Asmera, and move to cut the road from Aseb, on the coast, to Addis Ababa. The Government can still airlift reinforcements into Asmera - but this would be the only way to resupply troops in Eritrea. The capture of Mitsewa will also disrupt the delivery of food aid.

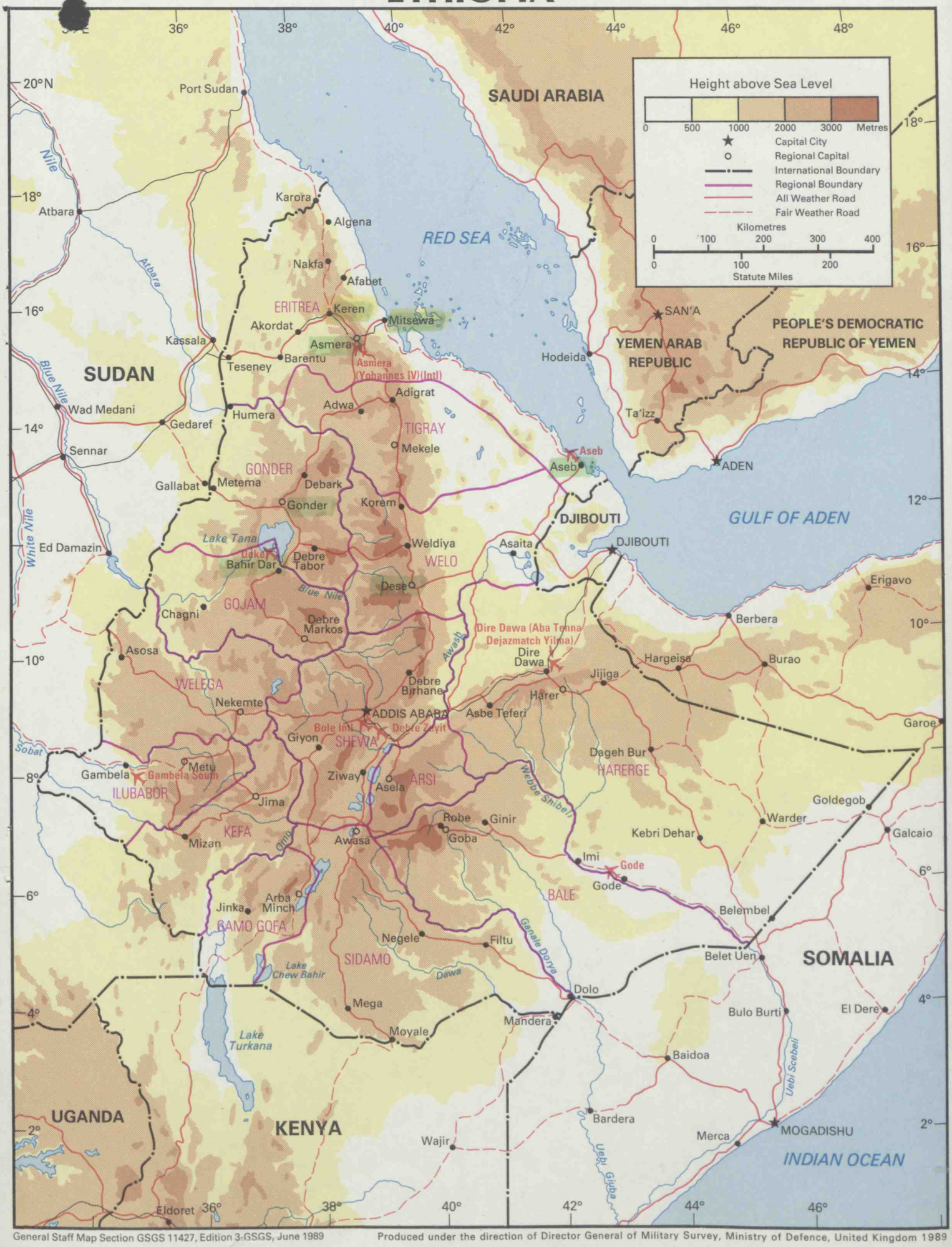
B

4. The JIC are keeping the military situation under close review.

PERCY CRADOCK

15 February 1990

ETHIOPIA



General Staff Map Section GSGS 11427, Edition 3-GSGS, June 1989

Produced under the direction of Director General of Military Survey, Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom 1989

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ESM

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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

30 November 1989

ETHIOPIA

Bob Geldof telephoned the Secretary of State for the Environment today with some ideas for dealing with the present famine in Ethiopia. On Mr Patten's advice, he subsequently spoke to me.

Bob Geldof said that he hoped the occasion of the meeting between President Bush and Mr Gorbachev in Malta could be taken to get some action on famine relief in Ethiopia. He had two specific ideas: first, that the two Presidents should issue a joint statement calling for access to be granted to relief agencies to the areas affected by famine, and also agree to bring pressure to bear on Mengistu to co-operate; secondly, the US and the Soviet Union might co-operate in a relief operation - the Soviet Union had plenty of aircraft in Ethiopia and the Americans had food supplies.

He had discussed these ideas earlier in the day with a representative of the Vatican and later with President Mitterrand. Both had been supportive and it was likely that the Pope would mention them to Mr Gorbachev tomorrow. He had also spoken to General Scowcroft in Washington, who had said that some twenty minutes of the agenda in Malta had been set aside for discussion of Africa, but it was not at present the intention to cover Ethiopia. Bob Geldof thought that it would be very helpful if the Prime Minister could convey his proposals to President Bush.

I said that I thought these ideas were imaginative and that the Prime Minister would be happy to see them conveyed to the Americans as a positive contribution to dealing with the present difficult situation in Ethiopia. I also gave Mr Geldof an account of what we were doing to help.

I think the best way forward would be for our Embassy in Washington to tell the Americans that we, like them, have been informed of Bob Geldof's proposals; that there seems to us attraction in at least some reference to the problem of famine in Ethiopia at the Summit and joint action with Mengistu; and that this would have the support of the Prime Minister. But if you would prefer me to send a message to General Scowcroft, I would be happy to do so.

I am copying this letter to Roger Bright (Department of the Environment) and to Myles Wickstead (Overseas Development Administration).

CHARLES POWELL

J. S. Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

RESTRICTED

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 October 1989

Dear Dominic,

Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF)

The Secretary General of the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF) has addressed the enclosed letter to the Prime Minister giving an assessment of their recent talks with the Ethiopian Government in Atlanta. The letter covers a copy of a detailed record of proceedings, which I am not forwarding.

Our policy is that Ministers do not normally answer letters from dissident organisations. As in the case of previous letters from Issayas Afeworki we recommend that no reply be sent.

It is encouraging that preliminary talks have taken place, given the history of mistrust between the two sides. We have informal contacts with the EPLF which we shall continue to use to urge them to pursue the negotiations.

Yours ever,

Richard Gozney

(R H T Gozney)
Private Secretary

D C B Morris Esq
10 Downing Street

RESTRICTED

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الجبهة الشعبية لتحرير أرتريا
المكتب السياسي

ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT
POLITICAL BUREAU

ዕለት .... التاريخ
Date

Date: October 3, 1989

Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister
The United Kingdom

Dear Mrs. Prime Minister,

Allow me to use the occasion to brief Your Excellency and through you Your Government on the outcome and our assessment of the preliminary talks in Atlanta between the EPLF and the Addis Abeba Government. As much as I regret the length of the memorandum, I ask Your Excellency to lend it your patience and precious time.

I must underline from the outset that we consider the convention of the preliminary talks as an achievement in itself. The fact that agreements were reached on publicity, working language, handling of records, venue, rules of procedure, time, place of next meeting, matters regarding delegates etc. further constitute additional non-negligible achievement. I will not dwell much on these matters, however, as they have been broadly resolved.

A proper account of the outstanding differences is of course vital in order to gauge and resolve future hurdles and ensure the success of the peace process. In this spirit, and in the hope that the effort will enhance the effective role of Your Excellency and Your Government in the peace process, we are hereby presenting the issues of difference in Atlanta as well as our views. (A summary of the minutes and other relevant documents are attached for more detail).

May I first underline, in passing, a general observation before going into the relevant details. We were disappointed to find out that the Addis Abeba regime had come to the Atlanta talks empty handed despite its claims of "comprehensive and integrated preparations". The Ethiopian side did not indeed present any paper with substantive content throughout the talks. Its response was reactive and limited to seeking loopholes in our proposals and exploiting discrepancies/divergencies that may crop up between us and President Carter and his staff.

Chairmanship

The Ethiopian delegation found the question of chairmanship as "a new concept incompatible with the talks" when the EPLF initially submitted its view on the matter through a written document. "The irrelevance of a chairman" subsequently became an issue of argument.

The Ethiopian delegation later accepted the need of a chairman when it realized that its initial procrastination was tenuous. But then, it opposed President Carter and insisted on an African Chairman (President Nyerere) under the bluff of "Africa and African solution to an African problem". President Carter would be an assistant or co-chairman in this new arrangement. Again later, when it realized that its tenuous argument was unacceptable, it pushed for a second chairman (co-chairman) with equal functions with President Carter. Their last alternative was President Mugabe to serve as the co-chairman if President Nyerere was not acceptable.

For the EPLF, chairmanship was primarily essential in order to facilitate the technicalities of the talks. President Carter was the obvious choice to be entrusted with the task because he was the originator of the initiative, unencumbered by government functions, and had rich experience in the field. President Carter had earlier informed the EPLF, when the initiative was at its early stages, that he could not devote full time to the job and that he may need the assistance of President Nyerere. The EPLF in turn informed President Carter that it was not opposed to the idea in principle but preferred to first meet with President Nyerere in view of certain reservations it held. As it was not possible to hold the desired meeting with President Nyerere before Atlanta, the EPLF made known its reservations to President Carter while accepting the envisaged role of President Nyerere as assistant.

There were no convincing reasons put forth in Atlanta to make the EPLF change its views. Under the circumstances, we had to maintain our original stance on the matter. When the issue of co-chairman became unduly important, we suggested the leaders of the venue countries as assitants. The underlying reason was that venues are not chosen for mere convenience but for several and obviously important factors. It is also clear that the governments and leaders of the venue states would have some contribution in the process. We further suggested that the function can be delegated by the concerned Head of State of the venue to a person of his choice in the event that he is impeded by his duties of government. It would of course be logical and possible to nominate another chairman if President Carter were unwilling to undertake the task. Since President Carter had readily accepted to carry out the function however, we saw no valid reason to designate another Chairman with parallel functions. Problems of continuity and effectiveness cannot arise as these were adequately attended by the provision of a permanent staff and secretariat.

The simple issue of Chairman, however, proved elusive due to the deliberate obstacles crated by the Ethiopian delegation coupled with a certain laxity displayed by President Carter and his staff.

Mediation

The issue of Chairmanship became intractable when the question of mediation arose. This was provoked by the views put forth by the EPLF on the functions of the Chairman. The Ethiopian delegation did not, otherwise, have views on the matter originally. The controversy was spurred when President Carter and his staff argued for "the chairman to have a mediation role". The Ethiopian delegation which were previously arguing that "they did not understand the concept of chairman...chairman is not necessary" soon exploited the divergence to favour "a strengthened role of chairman that allows mediation". The Ethiopian side clang to this "strong point" to the end for obvious motives.

When the issue of mediation arose, the EPLF argued - details in written submission - that the concept was flexible involving overt and discreet processes in which different forces interacted through different methods. It was not otherwise a limited function that can be resolved by one individual. Moreover, as the solemn issue of the fundamental rights of a people, the Eritrean cause is not a matter of mediation to be entrusted to the benevolence of one chairman. The chairman obviously constitutes one of the actors that can bring about a solution, but he can neither substitute nor overrule the main protagonists. For all these reasons, the EPLF had to firmly maintain its stance.

Observers

The Addis Abeba regime and its delegation are anathema to observers despite their pronouncement on "negotiation with the participation of observers". Their real intention is indeed to patch up a solution preferably without third parties and if forced to allow this by circumstances, ensure that the "observer" group is pack with their reliable allies and friends.

And in Atlanta, the only side that put forward views on observers was the EPLF. The list we presented was trimmed to the minimum possible. As such our main preoccupation was the exclusion of certain interested parties and not its "inflated" size. The EPLF views were rejected by the Ethiopian side out of hand. The first reason given was their inflated number. Later they objected to the "presence of international and regional organizations". "Logistical problems" were further cited. "Africa and African observers" then became the convenient pretext. All these excuses were transparent and unsatisfactory. Indeed, the real reason was Addis Abeba's enduring apprehension "against the inclusion of the Eritrean cause in international and regional agendas". The obsession does not need elaboration. The EPLF deemed it untimely and inappropriate to put the matter in the hands of the UN in this preliminary phase for obvious reasons. The misconceptions held by several quarters that

accepted the Dergue's allegation accusing the EPLF of "interest in publicity and internationalization of the issue" was invalid. The EPLF nonetheless felt that as important organizations of the world community, it was incumbent upon the concerned international and regional bodies (UN, OAU, Arab League) to participate in the negotiations from the outset as observers, or at least as listeners, irrespective of when they may be legally seized on the matter.

When the compromise solution of seven observers (two by each side; three by common consent) was put forward by President Carter, the Ethiopian delegation insisted on the right of expressing reservation on the EPLF choices. This position was advanced in the knowledge that public reservations by either side on any nominee was tantamount to a veto hampering acceptance by the candidate. They accordingly blocked agreement on the issue.

The EPLF was not satisfied (detail in submitted paper) by the reasons given to reject the original choice of observers. Still, it suggested another alternative in the hope of surmounting the obstacles. It requested assurances against reservations from any side on the choice of the other party on the agreed numbers of observers - seven or any other number. Again, the Dergue's delegation rejected this proposal rendering agreement impossible.

Staff/Secretariat

The EPLF's view of this body was not of a technical staff limited to facilitate routine chores. The notion was for a permanent body that will play an effective and influencing role in articulating, researching and formulating points and agreement papers in the process of negotiations. In order to ensure diversity in the presentation of views and methods as well as to avail of different experiences, its composition was desired to be from the Sudan, the OAU and the Carter Centre.

The main differences that emerged on this issue were not with the Dergue's delegation but with President Carter and his staff. President Carter insisted on a Secretariat that would participate on their individual capacities and accountable only to him. Predictably, the Dergue's delegation sought to widen the gap and coupled with other issues, this matter too ended without agreement.

As referred above, the failure to obtain the desired results in Atlanta was not only due to deliberate obstacles posed by the Ethiopian delegation. The lack of rigour on the part of President Carter and his staff was partially responsible for the outcome. Impatience, the tendency to close issues prematurely, lack of adequate time for exhaustive discussion, unnecessary interference,

mixing up of topics, and the attempt to rigidly apply the experiences of previous negotiations were some of the obvious shortcomings of the Carter Centre.

This is not to say that the EPLF is without blame. As President Carter appropriately stated in the Press Conference given at the end of the session, there was perhaps an element of "naivety" on our part. We are not ashamed to admit this; indeed we like it. We are also prepared to learn from experience.

What can we expect in Nairobi

Negotiations are not smooth by nature. They take time. They require patience and cooperation. On our part, we do not only wish to make the Nairobi talks successful to conclude the preliminary phase in the shortest possible time, we are prepared to do our utmost with sincerity. We will also correct our shortcomings.

The main obstacle to the talks is however the Addis Abeba regime. If it persists on the same attitude, the process will again be intractable in Nairobi. The task will not be made simple if President Carter and his staff repeat the shortcomings displayed in Atlanta. This is also another issue of concern.

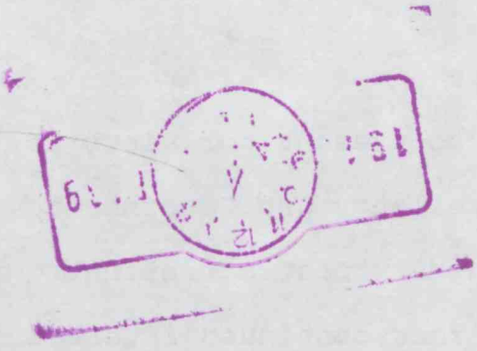
We have tried, through this long letter, to present our views of the true picture of the situation to Your Excellency and Government. We earnestly hope that Your Excellency will give utmost attention to the points raised and that this will help in Your continued interest and untiring efforts towards peace. Our confidence on Your effective role is boundless.

Yours sincerely,

Issaias Afewerki

Secretary General

Eritrean People's Liberation Front.



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Jp 0870

MR POWELL

c Sir Robin Butler

13/5

Cuban Troop Withdrawal from Ethiopia

On 7 September, the Cuban Armed Forces Ministry announced that, the external threats to Ethiopia having receded, the Cuban and Ethiopian Governments had agreed that Cuban "combatants" would be withdrawn from Ethiopia, beginning on 9 September. The Cuban Embassy in Addis Ababa has said that 100 soldiers have already left.

2. In November 1977, after Somalia invaded Ethiopia's Ogaden region, Cuban combat forces deployed to assist Mengistu's own troops played a major role in Mogadishu's defeat. Since the end of the Ogaden War, the number of Cuban combat troops has been reduced from about 18,000 to about 1,500-2,000 men, in the Ogaden. There are also estimated to be between 1,500 and 2,000 military advisers and about 1,000 civilian advisers and technicians in Ethiopia. The Cuban move has been expected for some time. The reference to the removal of combatants leaves open the possibility that some military advisers will be left behind.

3. Apart from Angola (where the Cuban troop withdrawal is proceeding on schedule) and Ethiopia, Cuba has no combat troops in Africa. The announced withdrawal from Ethiopia underlines Cuba's intention to reduce its presence in Africa. Unlike Angola, the Cuban military presence in Ethiopia is a relatively low-key affair. The Cubans have not engaged in combat since 1978 and have never become involved in fighting the rebels in Eritrea or Tigray. (The withdrawal will not therefore affect the military situation in those provinces.) Relations between Somalia and Ethiopia have now improved (a peace agreement was signed

last year); and Cuba and Somalia recently agreed to renew diplomatic relations. Other factors leading to the intention to pull out are likely to have been the cost of maintaining a military presence in Ethiopia and the reported unpopularity of the Cuban troops among the local population.

PERCY CRADOCK

12 September 1989

13.09 A'189

CONFIDENTIAL

Dcc: Mr C Powell
NO 10

UNITED KINGDOM MISSION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
845 THIRD AVENUE
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

22 August 1989 (2)

Prime Minister

CDP
20/8.

W R Tomkys Esq CMG
Deputy Under-Secretary
W 35
FCO

Dear Roger,

ETHIOPIA

We discussed the complex of Ethiopian problems when you visited New York at the beginning of May. Since then a lot has happened here and there: from the abortive military coup against Mengistu to current Ethiopian efforts to win back international respectability and negotiate with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF).

2. I am not fully up to date with our own thinking and role in current moves, and what follows may therefore be out of perspective: if so please forgive me. For what it is worth I report a conversation on 21 August with a leading Ethiopian dissident, and another today with the officer responsible in the US Mission here. They are not inconsistent.

3. My Ethiopian friend is Berhane Deressa who was a professional Ethiopian diplomat, with particular experience of UN affairs, who defected in 1986. Before then he was the Deputy Commissioner for International Relations within the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) and has contacts throughout the existing Ethiopian Government. He now works for the Ethiopian People's Democratic Alliance (EPDA) which tries to bring together a democratic pan-Ethiopian alternative to the present regime.

He was when we were in Zimbabwe before his letter.

4. Berhane Deressa said that since the aborted military coup against him, Mengistu had been desperately trying to re-establish his relations with the West, in particular the United States, and to reach some accommodation with the EPLF. He was being pushed into this by the Russians who were anxious to shed some of their own responsibilities for the Mengistu regime, both financial and political. For that reason Mengistu had set out to woo the Americans and, for the first time, allowed discussions to open with the EPLF. Berhane Deressa feared that the net result of any help from the West would be to give oxygen to the Mengistu regime just as it was being deprived of it by the Russians.

5. Berhane Deressa said that the present lull, filled with the buzz of negotiating missions sent hither and thither, and the prospect of the Atlanta meeting under ex-President Carter's Chairmanship in early September, constituted an admirable opportunity for Mengistu to win some time. According to Berhane Deressa, Mengistu was now reconstituting his Fifth Army with between 60,000 and 80,000 men, largely from forcible conscription in southern Ethiopia. The Russians were apparently replenishing Ethiopian stocks of arms (whatever they might tell us). Mengistu wanted to separate the Eritrean and Tigrayan resistance movements, and to spin things out until the army was ready. He would then seek as a first objective to recover Tigray from the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) before tackling the more ambitious task of recovering Eritrea.

6. Berhane Deressa said that his main plea to us, as to the Americans, was to ask us to sup with a long spoon, and realize the uses which the Mengistu regime could make of us. He was sure that in spite of his present manoeuvres Mengistu would not survive very much longer. He was deeply unpopular with all classes of society, including the Army (although the Generals opposed to him had of course been purged). Anyone who helped Mengistu at the present juncture would risk being tarred with his brush when he fell. He was sure that would be soon.

7. Berhane Deressa also said that he sometimes wondered if we and the Americans knew about the extent of the executions and abuse of human rights which had been intensified since the exposure of the plot. There had been a massacre of those directly involved, with Generals' heads being carried round on poles; and prisons round the country were packed with political prisoners. The Americans sometimes complained about the number of political prisoners in Nicaragua; but the numbers in Ethiopia were many orders of magnitude higher, and the number of Ethiopian refugees was only second to the Afghans. Was this the kind of regime which anyone should want to associate with?

8. The story from Cameron Hume in the US Mission was broadly as follows. First the Mengistu regime was trying hard to secure full restoration of diplomatic relations with the United States. The Ethiopian Ambassador to the United Nations had pressed my US colleague hard on 27 June, and Mengistu himself had pressed Hank Cohen (the Assistant Secretary concerned in the State Department) when Cohen had visited Addis Ababa between 4 and 6 August. The United States had so far refused, and had stood firmly back from the Carter initiative for talks in Atlanta.

9. Hume said there had been several discussions between the Americans and the Russians about Ethiopia. The Russians had told the Americans that they had pressed Mengistu to mend his fences with the Americans, and generally improve their international position. They had not

/shown

shown enthusiasm for discussion of the Horn of Africa by the Five Permanent Members. I put this idea myself when I was in Moscow in early July, and had a non-committal response. For their part the Americans had decided not to press the issue on the grounds that the US and Soviet strategic interests were diametrically opposed, the French had a somewhat maverick role (which the Americans suspected derived from their naval presence in Djibouti), the British position was similar to that of the Americans, and the Chinese did not matter.

10. Hume said that the Ethiopians had made every effort to make Cohen's visit a success. They had laid out the red carpet, and Mengistu had given Cohen one of his well known historical disquisitions. For his part Cohen had pressed the Ethiopians on the need to stop conscripting child soldiers (which Mengistu had denied) and to permit the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit Ethiopian jails (also I gather without success). The State Department was of course fully informed about Carter's mediatory efforts, but while encouraging an end to the civil war had stood well back from them.

11. Hume said that there were substantial differences between the approaches of the Ethiopian Government and the EPLF to the forthcoming Atlanta meeting. The Ethiopians had acted more quickly than the EPLF had expected, and wanted to deal as much as possible with the EPLF directly. In late July there had been a secret three day meeting between representatives of the Government and the EPLF in Rome. Even now with the preparations for Atlanta well advanced, the Ethiopians were keeping their lines open to Eritrean dissident movements as a whole. For their part the EPLF were now insisting that Carter should be their intermediary, and were no longer ready to deal directly with the Ethiopian Government. The EPLF was standing pat on its insistence that there should be a referendum on independence in Eritrea, and that the Ethiopians should commit themselves to respect the result.

12. Finally Humementioned Carter's recent contacts with the new President of the Sudan. The latter had told him that the Sudanese and Ethiopian Governments had reached agreement to cooperate, a point confirmed by Mengistu to Cohen. The Sudanese had also reaffirmed their willingness to deal seriously with Garang and the Sudanese People's Liberation Front (SPLF) in the south.

13. These accounts from Berhane Deressa and Cameron Hume present the picture of a regime in deep trouble. It seems to me very far from our - or the American - interest to give it other than

/humanitarian

humanitarian help. A test will be the outcome of the Atlanta meeting now, I believe, arranged for 7 September. But more important tests will be what is happening in Ethiopia itself. I return to what I said when we last met to the effect that we should be thinking hard about what kind of successor regime we would like to see in Ethiopia, and what if anything we can do to give history a helping hand. I leave further distrubution of this letter to you, but in view of his interest a copy goes to Stephen Wall.

Yours ever

Crispin

Crispin Tickell

cc: Private Secretary, FCO

CONFIDENTIAL

317

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

31 July 1989

CD 1/8

Dear Dominic,

Letter from the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front EPLF

Thank you for your letter of 13 July to Bob Peirce enclosing one from Mr Issaias Afewerki, Secretary General of the EPLF, to the Prime Minister.

We recommend that you do not reply to this letter. It is our practice not to acknowledge communications from rebel groups such as the EPLF. We have long had discreet informal contact with EPLF, especially in Khartoum, and with Afewerki personally since October 1988. We are considering increasing the frequency of these contacts. EPLF are thus well aware of our views, particularly on the need for them to respond positively to the Ethiopian peace initiative of 5 June.

FCO officials met Afewerki informally on 3 July to sound out EPLF reaction to the peace initiative. As in his letter, Afewerki had clear reservations about Mengistu's sincerity, but said that the EPLF were nevertheless ready to talk to the Ethiopians. The main hopes for peace now centre around the Carter initiative. Ex-President Jimmy Carter has been seeking since April to bring the two sides together. They agreed to meet under his auspices in Atlanta, Georgia on 12 July, but this fell through. Carter will visit Ethiopia later this month to try to take matters forward. He hopes to act as broker between the two sides, and obtain their agreement to the start of talks in presence of a mutually acceptable observer, possibly OAU Chairman President Mubarak or (more likely) ex-President Nyerere.

We have long pressed for peace talks in Ethiopia, and have urged both sides to respond constructively. We are in close touch with the Americans and Russians, and the Twelve. On 23 June the Twelve issued a statement welcoming the peace initiative (copy attached). Both sides have commented favourably.

Yours,

Stephen Wall

(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

Dominic Morris Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

STATEMENT BY THE TWELVE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ON ETHIOPIA, 23 JUNE 1989

The Twelve recall their stated position that problems in the region can only be solved by peaceful means. In this context, they welcome the initiative taken by the Ethiopian Assembly (Shengo) to invite all parties to participate without pre-conditions in negotiations at which a mutually acceptable observer would be present. They consider that the initiation of such negotiations would represent an important step towards the achievement of peace.

The Twelve intend to continue playing a constructive role in the promotion of peace in the region and reiterate their conviction that only the conclusion of a political settlement between all parties will make it possible to bring about an end to the conflicts.

Therefore, they call upon all parties concerned to take advantage of this opportunity and to engage seriously in negotiations leading to lasting solutions in the area.

1. AFEWERKI

27/7

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

13 July 1989

I attach a copy of a letter the Prime Minister has received from Mr. Isaias Afewerki, Secretary General of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front.

I should be grateful if you could let me have a draft Private Secretary reply, to reach us by Thursday 27 July.

Dominic Morris (DCP)

Bob Peirce Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT
Europe Office

الجبهـة الشعبية لتحرير اريتريـا
مكتب دائرة اوروبـا

Please forward any communication to:

EPLF - Europe Office
140 Battersea Park Road
Park House, Unit 14/1
London SW11 4NB

With Compliments

140 Battersea Park Rd, Park House, Unit 14/1, London SW11 4NB ☎ 738 8477; Telex: 925676 ERINFG; Fax: 738 8452

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الجبهة الشعبية لتحرير ارتريا
المكتب السياسي

ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT
POLITICAL BUREAU

ዕለት
Date .....

التاريخ .....

Date: July 5, 1989 ✓13

Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister
The United Kingdom of Britain

Dear Mrs. Prime Minister,

We are pleased to note that Your Excellency's Government is giving appropriate attention to the opportunities and need for bringing about peace to the 28-year old war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In this regard, we have been heartened and we gladly welcome the EEC Statement of 12 - although we would have liked it to be more clear and bold - that endorses the starting of negotiations between both sides that are without preconditions, open and in the presence of observers as a third party. As a passing remark, we feel it is important to make it clear from the outset that prescriptions on the part of external parties, as certain quarters tend to do, on the solution of the conflict or the desired outcome of the negotiations are unwarranted, will not be fruitful, and can only confound the peace process.

In the EEC statement, it also appears that the three requirements that are essential for serious negotiations to take off the ground are attributed to the Ethiopian Parliament. We would like to point out, as a matter of historical record but especially because of their practical significance in the forthcoming negotiations, that these are basic requirements that were originally spelt out by the EPLF in 1985 and that we have consistently been calling upon the other side to accept.

For valid reasons. In both instances in the past ten years when we held talks with the Addis Abeba regime (first in East Berlin from 1977-78; then in European capitals from September 1982 until March 1985) the meetings were secret,and without the presence of an impartial third party (in Berlin, the mediators were not neutral). All these restrictions were the demands of the Ethiopian government; we went along with these strictures because we did not want to leave unexplored all avenues to peace.

The net result of these talks were not only utter failure but lack of incontrovertible evidence - that can only be provided by a neutral third party - for identifying the culpable side, and more importantly, for enhancing conducive conditions that could constructively influence the progress of peace. It has infact meant that the party that was obstructing peace could not be amenable to

positive international influence since the facts themselves remain ambiguous in the recriminations that follow any deadlock.

Today, the Ethiopian regime which has so far been shying away from these requirements seems to have accepted them. This is a step to be welcomed. But there are several pitfalls ahead. To begin with, both in the preamble to the Shengo Statement , and in the Press Conference delivered by the Ethiopian leader, Colonel Mengistu , the next day on June 6th, there are explicit references to the non-negotiability of Ethiopia's "unity and territorial integrity". These are clear preconditions which violate the spirit of open negotiations. The regime has indeed already embarked on an intensive diplomatic campaign to procure an endorsement of these preconditions from obliging governments in order to later obstruct and preclude open-ended negotiations.

Our reservations and precautions do not stem, moreover, from the ambiguous verbal pronunciations of Ethiopia's leaders or from their subsequent diplomatic manoeuvres. We realize the domestic and international conditions that have pushed them to seek talks on the basis of the requirements that were on the table for years. We have been so much disappointed by their practice in the past to use peace talks only at moments of military weakness so as to buy time, that we cannot help to be wary of pitfalls, to make sure that we do not, again, squander precious time in meaningless manoeuvres.

In our mind, the best guarantee against attempts of obstructing serious negotiations will be the presence of third parties which can constitute as arbiters, as moderators to influence the progress of the peace-talks. It is in this regard that we have welcomed the Statement of the EEC 12 since Europe's collective voice and willingness to contribute in the peace process can have a far-reaching constructive role in the whole endeavour.

Our position on the negotiations is without ambiguity. We are asking both sides to enter into negotiations without preconditions; the Eritrean side not to insist that Ethiopia first recognize Eritrea's historical and legal rights to nationhood while Ethiopia should not stipulate that its "territorial integrity" is non-negotiable. We believe that negotiations can only be meaningful when both sides sit together with an open mind and all possible options/formulas for settling the conflict are put on the table.

We have not moreover limited ourselves to clarifying these issues so that the process starts without initial stumbling blocks. We have already gone a step further. In the past few days, we have asked, through appropriate channels, the Ethiopian side to send delegates to a mutually acceptable venue for a ceremonial meeting in which both sides will publicly acknowledge the opening of peace talks under the above stated terms. The Ethiopian regime has yet to respond.

We would like to again stress that we have no time to spend in unworthy endeavours or publicity stunts. The burden we are shouldering has been heavy; we do not have the slightest wish to postpone peace by a single minute. Since the role of the international community, and in this respect Europe, in accelerating the peace process is substantial, we appeal to the EEC and Your Excellency's Government to closely follow events and to do your utmost, on a bilateral or EEC level, so that the peace process starts and proceeds on a correct footing.

Yours sincerely

Isaias Afewerki

Secretary General

Eritrean People's Liberation Front.

CONFIDENTIAL
FM ADDIS ABABA
TO DESKBY 181200Z FCO
TELNO 206
OF 180915Z MAY 89
INFO IMMEDIATE NAIROBI, KHARTOUM, MOGADISHU, MODUK, ACTOR
INFO PRIORITY SANA'A, KAMPALA

MY TELNO 203: ATTEMPTED COUP

1. WE HAVE HEARD THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS OF 16 MAY FROM A RELIABLE ETHIOPIAN CONTACT WITH MILITARY CONNECTIONS.

2. ACCORDING TO THIS ACCOUNT THE COUP WAS PROPOSED DURING A MEETING OF MANY OF THE SENIOR GENERALS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHICH BEGAN IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE DURING THE MORNING OF 16 MAY. THE SPOKESMAN FOR THE COUP PLOTTERS WAS MAJOR-GENERAL ABERA ABEBE (LAST RECORDED BY US AS HEAD OF OPERATIONS IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE) WHO SAID THAT THE ARMY HAD SEEN 15 YEARS OF WAR AND NOW OWED IT TO THE PEOPLE TO REJECT THE LEADERSHIP OF MENGISTU, WHO HAD FAILED TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS.

3. MOST OF THOSE PRESENT SUPPORTED THE COUP, BUT MAJOR-GENERAL HAILE-GIORGIS HABTE-MARIAM, MINISTER OF DEFENCE, SAID HE WOULD NOT SUPPORT THE OVERTHROW OF MENGISTU. MAJOR-GENERAL ABERA THEN SHOT HIM AND MAJOR-GENERAL HAILE-GIORGIS SUBSEQUENTLY DIED IN HOSPITAL. MAJOR-GENERAL ABERA'S ACTION ALIENATED SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY SUPPORTED THE PROPOSED COUP.

4. LIEUTENANT-GENERAL TESFAYE GEBRE-KIDAN, FORMER MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND CURRENTLY ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL FOR ERITREA UNDER THE STATE OF EMERGENCY, HAD NOT BEEN PRESENT AT THE MEETING ALTHOUGH HE WAS IN ADDIS ABABA. GETTING WIND OF IT, HE ORDERED INTO ADDIS ABABA THE TANKS WHICH ARRIVED AT 1600 HOURS. HE AND TESFAYE WOLDE-SELASSIE, THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS (WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURITY), TOOK CONTROL OF THE SITUATION AND ARE SAID TO BE THE MEN RESPONSIBLE FOR DETAINING THE VARIOUS GENERALS AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE. MAJOR-GENERAL MERID NEGUSSIE AND MAJOR-GENERAL AMHA DESTA, THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS BEHIND THE COUP, COMMITTED SUICIDE WHEN THEY REALISED THAT THEIR PLANS HAD BEEN FOILED. (THEY WERE

NOT KILLED AS THE LOCAL MEDIA HAS REPORTED.)

5. MAJOR-GENERAL KUMILACHEW DEJENE IS SAID TO HAVE ARRIVED FROM ASMARA WITH A LARGE GROUP OF MEN IN SUPPORT OF THE COUP. THEY SET THEMSELVES UP AT THE ARMY AVIATION HEADQUARTERS. MAJOR-GENERAL KUMILACHEW AND AT LEAST SOME OF HIS MEN WERE SAID TO BE STILL AT LARGE ON 17 MAY, WHICH IS THOUGHT TO ACCOUNT FOR THE SHOOTING THAT CONTINUED ON THAT DAY.

6. THE SAME SOURCE REPORTS THAT MAJOR-GENERAL DEMISSIE BULTO, COMMANDER OF THE SECOND ARMY IN ERITREA, HAS DONE A DEAL WITH ISSAYAS AFEWORK, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE EPLF, OFFERING A FEDERAL ARRANGEMENT FOR ERITREA UNDER A FUTRUE REGIME.

7. COMMENT. THE CURIOUS ASPECT OF THIS VERSION OF THE COUP ATTEMPT IS WHY THE PLOTTERS SHOULD HAVE FAILED TO MAKE MILITARY PREPARATIONS TO DEAL WITH ANY RESISTANCE TO THEIR PLANS. IT OFFERS NO EXPLANATION FOR THE SHOOTING REPORTED TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE - UNLESS THIS WAS THE ATTACK ON THE DEFENCE MINISTER.OUR INTERLOCUTOR WAS QUITE CERTAIN THAT MAJOR-GENERAL HAILE-GIORGIS WAS DEAD.

WALKER

YYYY

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MR TOMKYS
MR FAIRWEATHER

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CONFIDENTIAL
FM WASHINGTON
TO DESKBY 180900Z FCO
TELNO 1374
OF 172320Z MAY 89
INFO IMMEDIATE ADDIS ABABA, MOSCOW

ETHIOPIA - US ASSESSMENT

1. WE ASKED STATE FOR THEIR ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA. DAVISON (HEAD, EAST AFRICAN OFFICE) SAID THAT A QUOTE GEOGRAPHIC STAND-OFF UNQUOTE SEEMED TO HAVE DEVELOPED. FORCES LOYAL TO MENGISTU APPEARED TO HAVE REGAINED CONTROL OF ADDIS ABABA, BUT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE ARMY UNITS WERE THROWING IN THEIR LOT WITH OFFICERS IDENTIFIED AS LEADERS OF THE COUP. THERE WERE ALSO REPORTS THAT IN ERITREA THE SECOND REVOLUTIONARY ARMY HAD FORMED AN ASSOCIATION OR ALLIANCE WITH THE EPLF.

2. DAVISON SAID THAT MENGISTU WAS ON HIS WAY BACK TO ADDIS ABABA AND SEEMED LIKELY TO TRY TO LAND THERE TONIGHT (17 MAY). BUT THE US DID NOT CONSIDER THAT HE HAD MUCH CHANCE OF RE-ESTABLISHING HIS AUTHORITY NATIONWIDE WITHOUT UNACCEPTABLE BLOODSHED. STATE WOULD BE KEEPING A CLOSE WATCH ON THE SITUATION FOR THE NEXT 24 - 48 HOURS, BUT WOULD NOT BE CONSIDERING ANY ACTION UNTIL THEY HAD MORE INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS. THEY HAD SPOKEN TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, BUT THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO MAKE ANY SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT ABOUT POSSIBLE REACTIONS IN MOSCOW.

3. DAVISON SAID THAT THEY WERE CONCERNED TO ENSURE THAT US DIPLOMATS AND NATIONALS IN ETHIOPIA WERE SAFE. THEIR CHARGE HAD REPORTED THAT FOREIGNERS IN THE CAPITAL HAD NOT BEEN HARMED AND WERE GATHERING AT THE HILTON HOTEL.

4. HANK COHEN (WHO HAS NOW BEEN CONFIRMED) HAD INTENDED TO VISIT THE HORN NEXT WEEK. THIS TRIP HAS BEEN POSTPONED. HE WILL STILL TRAVEL TO SUDAN, AND WILL MAKE SOME ADDITIONAL STOPS IN EUROPE, INCLUDING LONDON ON 22 MAY, WHERE HE HAS ASKED THE US EMBASSY TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS FOR HIM.

COMMENT

5. DAVISON SAID THAT THE US WANTED TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE UK OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS. THEY WOULD PARTICULARLY WELCOME ANY INFORMATION ON REACTIONS AND INTENTIONS IN MOSCOW. THE COUP HAD CHANGED THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY LANDSCAPE IN ETHIOPIA, AND THE WEST WOULD NEED TO CONCERT CLOSELY TO ENSURE THAT WE HAD SOME HAND IN WHATEVER MIGHT EMERGE FROM THE UPHEAVAL.

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MR FAIRWEATHER

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Ja.02809

CHARLES POWELL

cc Sir Robin Butler

A MILITARY COUP IN ETHIOPIA?

We have received a number of unconfirmed reports that a military coup may now be under way in Ethiopia. The reports refer to gunfire in government buildings, troops on the streets and aircraft flying low over the city. President Mengistu is said to have left for Addis Ababa at noon (local) today for East Germany.

We recently (4 May) assessed that the army remained essential to Mengistu's survival;

Once more information becomes available, the CIG will meet and produce an Immediate Assessment, bearing in mind particularly the visit to Ethiopia of the Princess Royal who plans at present to arrive in Addis Ababa on 29 May (see our separate threat assessment, also of 4 May).

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT.

Christopher MacRae.

A C D S MacRAE

16 May 1989

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17 PRINCES GATE
LONDON SW7 1PZ
01-589 7212

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Embassy of the People's Democratic
Republic of Ethiopia
London

8/FCO/88

The Embassy of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia presents its compliments to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and has the honour to inform the latter of instructions received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Addis Ababa in connection with the intended visit to Ethiopia towards the end of the month of Mr. Christopher Patten MP, Minister of Overseas Development. It is with regret that the Embassy has to advise the Foreign and Commonwealth Office that this visit has had to be postponed for the time being due to unforeseen circumstances. The visit will take place at a mutually convenient date in the future.

The Embassy has the honour to convey to the Foreign Office the Ministry's concern for any inconvenience caused to Mr. Patten by this unexpected change of plan.

The Embassy of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Foreign and Commonwealth the assurances of its highest consideration.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Downing Street West
SW1A 2AL

22 April 1988

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PM 3 8

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cc: FCO

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

28 March 1988

Dear Prime Haile Selassie,

Thank you for your letter of 7 March about the continuing imprisonment of ten of your relatives in Addis Ababa.

You may rest assured that we continue to raise the cases of the Royal prisoners with the Ethiopian authorities at every opportunity. Mr Patten, Minister of State for Overseas Development, raised the matter with the Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister, Tesfaye Dinka, in Addis Ababa in January. Tesfaye said that many political prisoners had already been released, and the question of the Royal Family was under review. Mr Patten will be raising the issue again when he next visits Ethiopia, probably in a few weeks' time. Mrs Chalker's Parliamentary Private Secretary, Mr David Harris, received similar assurances during a visit to Addis Ababa, made in his capacity as a representative of the Speaker of the House, last September; and Mrs Chalker herself raised the subject with senior Ethiopian Ministers in Addis Ababa last April.

As you may know, a British member of the European Parliament, Mrs Margaret Daly, has tabled a resolution about the Royal prisoners at the APC-EEC Joint Assembly, to which the Ethiopian Government will have to respond. Mrs Daly

plans to visit Addis Ababa in April at the invitation of the Ethiopian Government, and hopes to see the prisoners. She has our full support. Mrs Daly will be staying with our Ambassador, Mr Walker, whose advice will thus be at her disposal.

The Ethiopian Government can be in no doubt about the concern in this country about the fate of the Royal prisoners. We shall keep up the pressure until they are released.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Prince Merd Azmatch Asfa Wossen Haile Selassie

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

24 March 1988

Dear Charles,

I enclose, as requested in your letter of 9 March, a draft reply to one of 7 March from ex-Prince Haile Selassie.

Ex-Prince Haile Selassie's relatives, whose condition is movingly described in the enclosures to his letter, have been imprisoned without trial by the Ethiopian Government since 1974.

On 16 March, Sir Bernard Braine announed at a press conference the formation of a new action group, called Addis Release, to spearhead a co-ordinated campaign for release of the Royal prisoners.

The Ethiopian Government's reaction to our representations has been ambivalent. While they have from time to time held out hope of early release, they have also questioned our consistency. They have alleged, for instance, that the Royal prisoners for whose welfare we are concerned themselves showed little regard for the human rights of their oppressed subjects before the Revolution. they have also claimed that the prisoners were being detained for their own protection.

We shall continue to press the Ethiopians for progress. the fact that Article 44 of their new Constitution contains a habeas corpus provision gives us an additional ground for doing so.

TEMPORARILY RETAINED

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT.

Yours ever,

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

JJTADV

DS 1 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM: The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

BUILDING: ROOM NO:

Reference

Your Reference PO8AAU

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Restricted
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TO:

Prince Merid Azmatch Asfa Wossen

Haile Selassie

82 Portland Place

Copies to:

SUBJECT:

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The Ethiopian government can be in no doubt about the concern in this country about the fate of the Royal prisoners. We shall keep up the pressure until they are released.

CM

CCPC

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

TELEPHONE 01-218 9000
DIRECT DIALLING 01-218 2117

MO 19/2E

21st March 1988

BJT/ Kuwait FCO Myrs
a

Dear Geoffrey,

Thank you for your minute of ~~4th~~ 8th March about the possibility of RAF aircraft assisting once more in Ethiopian famine relief operations.

I am grateful for your advance warning of the deteriorating situation in Ethiopia and the likelihood of increasing pressure to offer RAF assistance. As you know, my strong preference, as yours, is that we should avoid becoming involved in a further RAF operation in Ethiopia if at all possible, not only because of the penalties to our defence commitments, but also because we would then be establishing a powerful precedent which I suspect would become almost impossible to break in the foreseeable future, so long as relief operations continue to be necessary. There is the danger too that these could also extend beyond Ethiopia.

I have nonetheless considered carefully what we might be able to provide, against the background of the heavy commitments, which I know you appreciate, facing our Air Transport Force during the period in question. My conclusion is that whilst any operation, even in the early part of the year, would cause some pain in terms of its effects on operations and training in all three services, it would be possible to provide assistance of the order of Op Bushel (that is, two Hercules in theatre with supporting personnel). This could

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP

begin soon (for preference we should need three weeks notice) and last until early mid/August. But I must stress the importance of our being able to withdraw the aircraft at that stage. Otherwise the operational difficulties are likely to be severe, in a period that includes some very major and politically high profile defence commitments. I would wish to make it clear from the outset that any RAF involvement would be a temporary and short term diversion of scarce resources from important defence tasks.

As far as funding is concerned, I believe that we must, in accordance with the established interdepartmental agreement on funding disaster relief, look to ODA to reimburse all the extra costs arising on defence votes as a result of the operation. It was made clear at the time that the previous cost sharing agreement was exceptional. It is, of course, entirely up to you to seek other sources of funding but I must make it clear that my Department will expect ODA to reimburse Defence Votes directly and promptly.
I should add that the figure of £5,500 per RAF Hercules flying hour you mention in your minute appears to be the full cost rate (around £5,000) plus some additional costs. The "extra cost" rate which would apply in this case would be around £2,500 which compares well with the costs charged by other operators you mention.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Yours ever,

George.

George Younger

ETHIOPIA: Relations Dec 82.

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

No ack 9 March 1988

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Haile Selassie, Crown Prince of Ethiopia.

I should be grateful for a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, to reach this office by Wednesday 23 March.

Charles Powell

Robert Culshaw, Esq., M.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS
MERD AZMATCH ASEA WOSSEN HAILE SELASSIE
CROWN PRINCE OF ETHIOPIA

The Right Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,
10 Downing Street,
London,
W.C.1.

7th March 1988

Dear Prime Minister,

With the best of good health to you Prime Minister and Mr. Thatcher, it gives me and my family great pride and pleasure to inform you of our family's deep felt thanks for all the efforts of Her Majesty and Her Majesty's Government, and all our good friends here in Great Britain who are concertedly and individually exploring every avenue towards the speedy release and ideally "simultaneous exile abroad" of our ten relatives that have been imprisoned in Addis Ababa's "End of the World" jail for almost 5,000 days next month.

These prisoners, two mothers with their seven children and one other cousin, making seven women and three boys have, as you know, been incarcerated since 1st September 1974 in very bad conditions. My own eldest daughter died in jail the first victim, arising from the deliberate medical neglect, as are the remaining prisoners who presently suffer from various acute ailments that is now endangering their very lives and has harmed their health terribly badly.

In thanking all the individuals and officials concerned I and my family would like to wish, particularly, the dedicated humanitarian efforts of Mrs. Margaret Dally, M.E.P., a great success and pray that through her membership to the European Parliament's joint assembly of the ACP/EEC forum, she would be able to crack the nut, so to speak, with the expressed strong support of all the Heads of State of the E.E.C. member countries and the African Associate Members under the Lome Treaty.

We have every confidence, Prime Minister, that you would furthermore add to Mrs. Dally's efforts, your great blessings by using again your continued influence to bare on the other leaders of the E.E.C. countries and that of the United States of America, and if you consider it productive of Mr. Mikael Gorbachov himself or his wife, as a mother.

We are, Prime Minister, most deeply thankful, not only of the great efforts and goodwill that presently exists between the Great British people and our poor country today, but also, as in the past we are full of good memories and most hopefully anticipate with all confidence your country's friendship and support in all matters for our common interest that shall become more apparent in the very near future.

Cont/....

At the same time we would like to thank the great efforts of all our good friends, and, particularly those who have contributed mostly behind the scene such as Mr. Roy Mcdowell - who I believe has retired and Mr. Peter Beckingham, who regrettably is I believe moved out of the East African section before Mrs. Dally's mission to Addis Ababa is complete. There are numerous other friends who have for a long time endeavoured diligently to bring about a humanitarian release of our relations, to whom we are very much indebted, and of whom we would mention them to you in due course.

We pray and wish, Prime Minister, for your continued good health, prosperity and success in all your efforts for the great cause of freedom in our part of the world.

I particularly want to endorse the love and high regard that all our unfortunate Ethiopian people hold towards the generous people of the FREE WORLD, and specifically the long standing friendship of Great Britain and the United States of America.

Yours very sincerely

MERID AZMATCH ASFA WOSSEN HAILE SELASSIE

CROWN PRINCE OF ETHIOPIA

P.S. Enclosed is the fact sheet of the prisoner's condition for your information and use.

c.c. Mrs. Margaret Dally M.E.P.
The Foreign and Commonwealth Office
The Home Office
Sir Bernard Brain M.P.

FCS/88/042

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

Ethiopia Famine: Air Transport Operations

1. Since it became clear that 1988 would see famine in Ethiopia on the scale of 1984/85, there have been Parliamentary and public calls for Britain to send the RAF again. We have so far resisted these on the grounds that present needs for air operations are being met effectively by an airlift using chartered aircraft. However, there is a strong possibility that the pressures on us will increase. We therefore need to consider how we should respond.

2. The need for air operations has so far been largely confined to airlifting food into the most seriously affected provinces of Tigray and Eritrea, where civil war is making it impossible to move sufficient quantities by road. Five Hercules are at present engaged in this, together with a number of smaller aircraft. Two Hercules are chartered by the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordiator (UNDRO) from the Belgian Air Force and the American firm Southern Air Transport (SAT). ODA has contributed £2 million towards the cost of this operation. Two further SAT Hercules are being operated by a group of charities funded by the European Community through the voluntary agency CARITAS. The fifth Hercules is operated by the Red Cross and chartered from the Belgian Air Force. This operation is working well. As long as the requirement for aircraft remains confined to airlifting into Tigray and Eritrea, I believe that this

/can

can probably continue to be met by extending the present arrangements. I expect to offer a further contribution to UNDRO for this purpose as soon as they make a final appeal. This air operation will probably need to be maintained at least until the next harvest in October/ November.

3. However, it is now becoming evident that a separate airdrop operation may be needed further south in the inaccessible mountain region of northern Shewa. The number of famine victims in this area is expected to treble over the coming months to at least half a million. Food is currently being transported by a number of small Stol aircraft using rudimentary airstrips, which will not be usable during the rainy season from June to September. The amounts of food which can be airlifted in by these aircraft is barely sufficient to meet current needs: no stockpiling for the rainy season or to cope with increasing demands is possible. The United Nations Special Representative in Ethiopia, Mr Michael Priestley, has already asked us informally if the RAF could undertake this airdrop. He knows we have been reluctant to commit the RAF, and has not so far made a public appeal, but argues that the RAF would be best able to do the job. (The civilian operator, SAT, lacks experience of airdrop work, the Belgian Air Force is said to be fully committed in Eritrea and Tigray, and the Luftwaffe has only Transalls, which, even if available, carry less food than a Hercules.)

/4.

4. The Ethiopian Government has now written to ask us to provide Hercules aircraft "for airlift and airdrop". We intend to reply by expressing willingness to provide further funding for the UN airlift. However, this line could become difficult to maintain if the requirement for airdropping firms up, and if political pressure for sending the RAF increases. The House of Commons' Select Committee on Foreign Affairs (FAC) is visiting Ethiopia this week as part of its enquiry into the UK response to the famine. We may need to respond rapidly, and as positively as possible. I should therefore like to explore the possibilities with you.

5. I think we are both agreed that we should much prefer not to become committed to a further RAF operation in Ethiopia. The likely costs, and the difficulty of withdrawing the aircraft once they are there, are obvious problems. There is also the question of security. The conflict between the Ethiopian army and the rebel movements has intensified recently. However, Shewa, where the airdrop is likely to be needed, is not in the disputed area, and rebel activity has not been a barrier to relief efforts there. Even in Eritrea and Tigray, the rebels have not shown any sign of wishing to disrupt the relief airlift, and commercial air traffic is still able to operate safely.

6. I understand that the RAF Hercules squadron may have some spare capacity for periods during the early summer, but is heavily committed from late August to October with exercises in South-East Asia and the Australian Bicentennial, as well as a continuing commitment to the

/Gulf

Gulf. Nevertheless I should be grateful to know whether, if necessary, RAF Hercules aircraft could be found to help in Ethiopia this year. If it is impossible to provide aircraft for the whole period until October/ November, a Hercules operation starting soon and continuing until mid-August might still be worth offering. This would enable substantial quantities of food to be moved into Shewa before the rains make operations difficult.

7. If there were to be any serious question of sending RAF Hercules to Ethiopia we should need to consider carefully the costs, and how these would be apportioned. We might explore the possibility of trying to get other donor governments, either through the UN or the EC, to share the costs (the European Commission has indicated that this might be a possibility). It would be necessary to work out a method of collecting these contributions and transferring them to the MOD, but I have no doubt that this could be managed. What may be a more substantial problem, and one which may prove to be an insuperable obstacle to getting either the UN or EC to pay, is the very high cost of the RAF - about £5,500 per flying hour compared with about £2,000 for the Belgian Air Force and about £3,000 for SAT. The contrast between the figures is very striking. I would be grateful therefore if you could consider whether there is any scope for reducing this cost. If cost did prove to be the stumbling block, we could find ourselves facing a good deal of public criticism, whether or not the airlift went ahead.

/8.

8. Even if, whatever the cost, we could get others to contribute, there is little doubt that a major part of the cost of any operation would have to be met by HMG. In 1984/85 the costs were borne equally ODA and MOD. Even so, this placed an enormous burden on our limited aid budget. HMG was heavily criticised, not least by the FAC, for failing to make additional money available. I would hope that, if a further RAF operation proves inevitable, it would be possible to finance it in ways which did not disadvantage the remainder of the aid programme as much as last time.

9. During the Ethiopian emergency this year, we have so far managed to retain the political initiative on the home front and avoid the impression that we are being driven reluctantly into each humanitarian gesture by public opinion. I am keen that we should continue to be well up with events and believe that we may therefor need to take some quick decisions in the next month or so on this issue. We may still of course be able to avoid this coming to a head.

10. I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, and, in view of the financial implications, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

4 March 1988

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Prime Minister
Perhaps you should
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ETHIOPIAN FAMINE: ASSISTANCE BY THE SOVIET UNION

1. THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN DETAILS OF A DONATION FROM THE SOVIET UNION OF 250,000 (REPEAT 250,000) TONNES OF WHEAT TO BE DELIVERED TO ETHIOPIA IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. THE SOVIET UNION IS ALSO AIRFREIGHTING 200 TENTS TO STORE GRAIN. THE DEPLOYMENT TO ETHIOPIA OF THREE SOVIET AIRCRAFT AND FIVE HELICOPTERS FOR FAMINE RELIEF IS TO BE EXTENDED BY A YEAR AND 50 SOVIET SPECIALISTS ARE TO ARRIVE SHORTLY FOR A ONE YEAR PROJECT TO HELP SUPPLY WATER TO DROUGHT-AFFECTED AREAS. THREE DRILLING RIGS ARE TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE SOVIET UNION HAS ALREADY SENT 15 TONNES OF MEDICINE TO ETHIOPIA AND SMALL QUANTITIES OF FOOD CONCENTRATES AND CHILDRENS FOOD.

2. ANNOUNCING THE ASSISTANCE THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR SAID THAT QUOTE THE PRESENT COOPERATION PROVIDED EVERY REASON FOR THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN CONFIDENCE ON REALISTIC ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT OF TRUE FRIENDS ON THE BASIS OF THE PRINCIPLES OF PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM IN TIMES OF DIFFICULTY UNQUOTE.

3. MORTON (WFP REPRESENTATIVE) HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE SOVIET EMBASSY AND CONFIRMS THE RUSSION PLEDGE AND THE ARRIVAL OF THEIR GRAIN DURING THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. THE RUSSIAN GRAIN WILL BE CHANNELLED THROUGH THE RELIEF AND REHABILITATION COMMISSION (RRC). SO FAR THE RUSSIANS HAVE SAID NOTHING ABOUT INTERNAL TRANSPORT COSTS AND MORTON THINKS THE RRC MAY WELL HAVE TO SELL A PROPORTION OF THE GRAIN TO FINANCE THE TRANSPORTATION OF THE REST. HE HAS ASKED THE RUSSIANS TO LIAISE CLOSELY WITH WFP OVER THE ARRIVAL OF THEIR GRAIN SO AS NOT TO INCREASE CONGESTION AT THE PORTS.

4. WITH THIS PLEDGE THE RUSSIANS HAVE BECOME THE LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR OF FOOD AID TO ETHIOPIA FOR THE 1988 FAMINE, BEATING THE AMERICAN PLEDGE OF 248,000 TONNES (THE EC IS THIRD WITH 116,000 TONNES FOLLOWED BY THE UK). INCLUDING THE RUSSIAN

PLEDGE, CONFIRMED PLEDGES FOR 1988 ARE NOW 873,000 TONNES.

5. THE RUSSIAN PLEDGE IS IN MARKED CONTRAST TO THEIR MISERLY CONTRIBUTION OF FOOD AID IN 1984/85 (MORTON THOUGHT THIS TOTALLED ONLY ABOUT 20,000 TONNES). IT SEEMS FROM THE REMARKS OF THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR THAT ONE MOTIVE IS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT ETHIOPIA CAN COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF THE SOVIET UNION IN TIME OF NEED. EVIDENTLY THE RUSSIANS DO NOT WANT TO BE LEFT BEHIND IN THE TIMELY AND GENEROUS RESPONSE TO THE 1988 FAMINE BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. PRESUMABLY THEIR SURPRISINGLY LARGE PLEDGE MAY ALSO BE THE RESULT OF CHANGES IN RUSSIAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS EXTERNAL RELATIONS UNDER GORBACHEV, BUT MOSCOW WOULD HVE TO COMMENT ON THIS ASPECT.

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SEIFU MICHAEL ZEWDE

TEMPORARILY RETAINED

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT.

Confidential

Mrs. Margaret Daly, M.E.P.
For Somerset and Dorset West,
The Old School House,
Aisholt,
Spaxton,
Bridgewater,
Somerset,
TA5 1AR.

12th November 1987

Dear Mrs Daly,

Sorry for this belated letter. It took us longer than I expected because of my desire to get the "Fact Sheets" rechecked and updated by our sources and ex-fellow "inmates," so to speak, of the "prisoners of conscience" - for no better classification of the women and boy prisoners that are held in Addis Ababa's "Alem Bekagne" (the end of the world) prison for over 13 years now.

Most of the detailed outrageous psychological conditions of the prisoners and the up-and-down account of the state of their health, in particular the women prisoners, is too graphically personal and very difficult to emphasise adequately, as it would appear to equally trivialise the otherwise deep spiritual and physical discomfiture and the feeling of despair and helplessness that is being continuously felt by them during their long period of incarceration. This is without a doubt mainly due to the calculated and deliberate criminal neglect and adverse discriminatory humiliating treatment meted out on these poor women and boy prisoners with cold blooded vengeance, unnecessarily and inhumanly.

It merely suffices to say, Mrs Daly, that one who is free, can not have any moral integrity or credible honesty as to even vaguely consider the conditions these prisoners are in as in any way tolerable or humane, let alone attempt to justify such incasceration in the so called interest of the prisoners themselves. It is an outrageous shame. How much, dear Mrs Daly, could one feel, say or do, for those whose freedom is hindered and their human rights taken away by other men for such a long time? It is a cruel injustice!

It should be said, "enough is enough" and it has long been overdue. Please, please, ask, if not demand, to set them free immediately, and let them rid themselves of the pretence of responsibility for the safety and health-care of these long term poor women and boy prisoners by simultaneously exiling them to the West as has been done to many Soviet prisoners of conscience. But in no way should they be allowed to remain in prison any longer. Ethiopia today very

Cont/....

badly needs her friends specially during these re-occuring tragic famine and draught periods; and similarly it is about time that the leaders show in return some friendly humanitarian gesture in letting the prisoners free and exile them abroad.

Otherwise, the E.E.C., and all other donor countries should stop the hypocrital long term economic aid and assistance to the blatant oppressor regime of Ethiopian people, but continue to help openly, the war and famine victims, the prisoners of conscience, exiled and displaced millions who need the help of all humanity desperately. And equally it will evem be more sound policy to condemn publicly the perpetrators of the genocide of the Ethiopian people, without fear or favour.

If you act decisively with human and moral justifications that it very much deserves, we shall always remember in our hearts your convictions in justice and humanity, which sentiments will echo resoundingly amongst all Ethiopians all over the world unreservedly.

On behalf of the prisoners, I thank you and may God bless you.

Yours sincerely

SEIFU M. ZEWDE

Enc: "Fact Sheets"

FACT SHEETS

RE: THE LONG TERM WOMEN & BOY PRISONERS IN ETHIOPIA

Facts:

I Conditions of their imprisonment

(1) The women prisoners are kept in isolation in a single room roughly 20 ft. by 10 ft.

(2) They have never been allowed visitors as a right for over 13 years now; even on Sundays like the rest of the other prisoners in the same jail.

(3) Friends and relatives of the women prisoners provide them on rotation* from their own sources,* with their meals once a day between 9.00-12.00 a.m. only when food deliveries are handed out from the gate before they are firmly closed. On Sundays food deliveries are made from an inside prison enclosure. Nothing is provided or any allowances given to the prisoners or their helpers by the prison administration.

(4) The women prisoners sleep on the cold damp cement floors on mattresses provided by friends earlier on.

(5) There is no bed or chair in the room, except the folded and rolled up mattresses which they use to sit on during the day.

(6) All laundry is taken out and washed at friends houses in turn every two weeks at their own expense.

(7) There is no bathing facility or shower available for the women prisoners.

(8) They wash themselves with cold water and some heated water from a kettle in the corner of the same single room where they all live, dine and sleep in.

(9) The same single room is used for storing their daily food and leftovers, as dining room and as pantry. There is no kitchen, and they use a bowl as a washing basin in the same single room.

(10) One corner of the same single room enclosure is used as a turkish toilet and a small wash basin has lately been added to it with occasional running cold water from a single tap.

(11) There are vermin and insects of all types such as bugs, fleas, lice, mice, cockroaches and insects in the room, to add to the misery of the ladies.

(12) The roof of the women's prison is made of corrugated iron sheets with no ceiling, which makes it very hot during the day and freezing cold at night.

(13) The single front door of the prison room is open from 5.00 a.m. till 6.00 p.m. leading out to a rectangular high fence enclosure where the women prisoners pace up and down one side of the fence to exercise which is guarded on both ends preventing them from contacting or seeing anyone else from inside or outside of the prison's third enclosure compound.

(14) The women prisoners constant requests are for insecticide, dettol, air freshners, warm clothing, shoes, more food parcels, and pilla for constipation, headache, arthritis, cold and sore throat tablets such as Optalidone, Librax, Ampiciline, etc., etc.

Contacts with the outside world

(15) The prisoners are occasionally taken out to hospitals in groups or alone in prison vans for dental checks and other rudimentary medical treatments, which after being stopped through no fault of theirs for the last six months has now been restarted again.

(16) The treatment they receive from the constantly changing prison wardens is erratic but has improved gradually and is generally polite.

(17) The prisoners were allowed in the last two years to celebrate mass at St. Michael's Church situated inside the second enclosure within the prison compound, for Christmas, Easter and recently on Sundays.

(18) The prisoners are given Ethiopian Newspapers only and are allowed to write a short opened notes, (which are censored before being delivered) requesting certain needs and thanking those who have asked about them and donated towards their food and clothing expenses and gift parcels.

(19) None of the ladies in prison have held public posts and even though most of the women prisoners were private sponsors and headed various domestic and international charities and humanitarian agencies, none of the agencies have attempted to campaign openly on their behalf or highlighted their contributions for fear of reprisals.

Note 1* = Rotation of helpers and) See separate confidential chart
2* = sources and management of resources) and observations.

II Conditions of the boys imprisonment and outside contact

(1) The boys are kept within the general prison precinct together with all other non-political prisoners.

(2) They follow the same regime of other prisoners, and share the general facilities of the prison which entails usually paying some fees.

(3) They sporadically receive food parcels very irregularly from friends outside and lately, they seem to receive food deliveries once a week only. They mainly rely on what is obtainable inside the prison's flourishing "market", at a price which they pay themselves. They are therefore constantly short of cash.

(4) They are allowed visitors on Sundays like all other prisoners even though it was interrupted for six months lately.

(5) They sleep in the communal dorms with "other" prisoners and feel very much insecure; as there are various criminal elements amongst the prisoners.

(6) They use the prison shower rooms, exercise, television and handicraft workshops at a price.

(7) They also sleep on the cold cement floors on mattresses.

(8) They are taken out occasionally for medical and dental treatments.

(9) They experience shortage of food and clothing and are short of cash constantly.

(10) They are allowed reading materials of various kinds available in the prisons and some on approval.

(11) They are the most frustrated and depressed, sad and energetic young boys who have grown to middle age in jail. The youngest Bede Mariam was only sixteen when they were imprisoned. He is now thirty years old.

(12) They have various health complaints mostly malnutrition, dental and early rheumatism with depressive symtoms and eye complaints.

(13) Except Paul (Wossen Seged) no one has held a public position, and even Paul was only a titular head for a few years as a Ducke of Harrar which post he inherited from his father, before he was under house arrest even during the Emperor's time and was then formally jailed by the new military regime together with his brothers and mother. Michael, his younger brother was a farmer and Bede, the youngest of all was merely a high school student at the French Lycé. Imprisoning these boys is a great waste of human life.

HEALTH CONDITIONS AND BRIEF MEDICAL & OTHER BACKGROUNDS

THE PRISONERS IMPRISONED SINCE 1974

(The longest held prisoners in Ethiopia)

The Women

Tenagnework Haile-Selassie - Aged 73, daughter of the late Emperor Haile Selassie, a widow - her husband died in exile in 1982. He son Eskinder was executed in 1974. Her four daughters are imprisoned with her (see below). She suffers from very severe stomach ulcers, constipation, headache and chronic rheumatism and severe dental problems. She was president of the Ethiopian Women's Welfare Association and sponsored other charities.

Aida Desta - Aged 58, daughter of Tenagnework Haile-Selassie and granddaughter of the late Emperor. She has six children, all refugees abroad. She was president of the Tigray branch of the Ethiopian Women's Association and was educated at Newham College, Cambridge. After a major brain operation in 1962 she has never enjoyed full health. Suffers from chronic migraine and high blood pressure. She has had at least 2 dangerous attacks in the last 2 years.

Hirut (Ruth) Desta - Aged 56, daughter of Tenagnework Haile-Selassie and granddaughter of the late Emperor. Educated in Britain. Was Headmistress of a Secondary Girls School in Addis Ababa. She has had various illnesses during her imprisonment. She has had surgery for skin cancer and feet problems. She is very under weight and the skin cancer still needs good medical attention.

Seble Desta - Aged 55, daughter of Tenagnework Haile-Selassie and granddaughter of the later Emperor. Her husband, Kassa Wolde-Mariam, former President of the H.S.I. University and Minister of Agriculture, was also detained in 1974, but is now feared to have been killed after he "disappeared" from detention in 1979. She has five children, all refugees abroad, the youngest just 14. She was Vice-President of the Ethiopian Women's Welfare Association and was educated at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. She has also suffered from ill health, such as numbness in her fingers and dental problems.

Sophie Desta - Aged 51, daughter of Tenagnework Haile-Selassie and granddaughter of the late Emperor. She was educated at the Froebel Institute, Roehampton. She ran an elementary school in Addis Ababa. She has a daughter in exile abroad. She has had a major gynaecological operation and should follow up with proper medical attention. Suffers from backache and swollen elbow. She teaches in the prison's infants school.

Sara Gizaw - Aged 52, a widow daughter-in-law of the late Emperor. Three of her sons, Wossenseged Mekonnen, Michael Mekonnen and Bedemariam Mekonnen, are imprisoned in another part of the same prison. She has suffered from a number of illnesses including hepatitis and has had a gynaecological operation with constantly reoccurring throat infection. She was trained to be a nurse in Scotland.

Zuriashwork Gebre-Igziabeher - Aged 56, a relative of the late Empress and widow of Prince Asrate Kassa, who was executed in 1974. Two of her daughters and three sons released in 1983. Another daughter and son are refugees abroad. She had been active in charities such as the Ethiopian Red Cross, the Ethiopian branch of UNICEF and founded the Tsige-Mariam School for Blind Girls in Addis Ababa. She has suffered from various illnesses, including severe depression, with reoccurring headache.

The Boys

The other members of the family imprisoned are, Bede-Mariam Mekonnen 30, Michael Mekonnen 38, Wossen Seged (Paul) Mekonnen 42. Sons of Sara Gizaw and grandsons of the late Emperor. Michael Mekonnen has been hospitalised several times for a liver complaint and Bede-Mariam has a chronic eye infection which has gone on dangerously too long untreated. Paul has a chronic dental problem and seems to have lost his teeth believed from malnutrition.

It is evident that the military government did not consider the health care of the women and boy prisoners as a priority in the past, as evidenced by the most avoidable death from post peritonitus operation in 1977 of the late Princess Ejigayehu Asfa Wossen, the eldest daughter of the Crown Prince, Asfa Wossen Haile-Selassie who is in exile in London after suffering a stroke in 1973. The late Ejigayehu's illness was evidently diagnosed very early but immediate medical care was unavailable until allergic and acute pain symptoms were manifest, where by being taken to the Police hospital and undergoing emergency operation, died soon after due to criminal neglect and careless blood poisoning in February 1977.

Similarly the late Princess Yeshashwork Yilma, who was aged 76, cousin of the Emperor, also died in August 1981 within a few months of her release from the same prison cell after she was administered glucose drips to a known diabetic patient in a coma. It is to be strongly noted that today most of the women prisoners are under several perhaps potentially critical ailments if adequate care and medical treatment is not quickly and sufficiently administered and their basic conditions of their imprisonment is not radically improved or better still allowed to go free on humanitarian grounds.

It is obviously true that the prisoners today are very heart broken and almost all are very depressed. They all feel very insecure, and are preoccupied pleading for care to be taken, as they are very worried of any possible causes to worsen their situation. For example because of an escape of a prisoner from the main prison, they were all denied hospital and dental check-ups for over six months lately. And any indiscipline or wrong doings by others reflects on the loss of the prisoners meager priveleges specially that of the boys at the main prison and feel very insecure specially at night, where they sleep with non-political prisoners. Their desperate plight could not be summed up better than the latest plea of the women prisoners themselves after the infamous September again:-

"Dear God! Does everyone want us to stay here forever?"

Conclusions

There are various support groups and helpers of the prisoners but seem to be not well co-ordinated as a consequence or lack of direct contact with the prisoners and their supporters who are getting old and tired in general. Help and assistance has nevertheless trickled down to the prisoners on a very tight budget without a central body to direct and control it. The prisoners seem to be experiencing shortages of various basic needs including warm clothing, and shoes apart from not getting adequate food and medical supplies, particularly the boys, who depend mainly on purchases in the prison.

Attempts to get the prisoners freed have been multi-directional and limited, and all the pressures and appeals made both by individuals and government bodies have not until recently been done publicly in the open, with deservedly sufficient force and publicity it could have inspired for various reasons. Silence is evidently counter productive. The occasions when public protest was made openly, it has invariably resulted perhaps in stopping far worse situations from taking place. Even though it is hard to carry the arguments rationally, various Governments and private agencies were reluctant to pose the issue forcefully, and secure the prisoners release sooner as there has never been no known justifications or reasonable assumptions to be made in condemning these helpless women and boys behind bars this long. They have never held policital or public offices in their entire lives, and all those personalities who have had public offices were either released or were executed earlier on.

The women and boy prisoners can never pose as a threat to the regime for being family members of the Emperor either, as there are more directly involved and

numerous members of the Royal family abroad, if that was simply the case. On the contrary, the women prisoners have been known to be private sponsors and patrons to various charities and humanitarian organisations and several other causes for which their contributions is a living example of their Christian endeavours in all fields.

Please intensify your help and assistance for these long term helpless women and boy prisoners of conscience. What is left of their poor lives should be lived in FREEDOM.

Mr Powell

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

At the instigation of Geoffrey Tucker, public affairs consultant, I saw last night Mrs Hannah Yilma-Deressa, an Ethiopian exile who fled the country when Haile Selassie was toppled and has since been organising resistance to the Marxist Government. She said she was the daughter of a former Minister in the Ethiopian Government, and of a diplomatic family.

Apparently Mr Tucker is trying to help Mrs Yilma-Deressa, having first met her through the good offices of Sir Crispin Tickell. She said she was well known to the ODA and the FCO (William Marsden).

At the end of 25 minutes' discussion Mrs Yilma-Deressa left the attached note. I said that I would of course pass on the information. I said I assumed that she would treat the meeting as confidential.

In the course of the discussion she made the following points by way of elaboration:

- the EPDA, the organisation she represents, was broadcasting for an hour from the Sudan in three languages; its broadcasts were listened to by a large number of people. Judging from her account, the broadcasts seemed to be aimed at informing the people how badly they were faring under the existing regime. They were financed by the Sudanese and she professed not to know their source of finance. But lack of money was threatening their continuation;

- the Ethiopian people were leaving the country in droves because the Government took no interest in feeding them. There were now more Ethiopian doctors in the USA than in Ethiopia itself. Many, but not all, Ethiopians would return if the present regime were replaced;

- the time was now ripe for a coup, but she said it would not come about on its own. It would have to be induced. She was not forthcoming about the identity of any future alternative leader of Ethiopia;

- she argued it was in the British interest to see Mengistu toppled. That would be a major defeat for the Soviets and be of considerable strategic importance;

- essentially the only people who could now help were the British.

Today, Geoffrey Tucker rang to thank me for seeing her. He (surprisingly) did not turn up with her, as arranged. He said that Mrs Yilma-Deressa would no doubt be able to secure money in the United States, "especially if she were able to say Mrs Thatcher backed her movement". I did not respond.

Mrs Yilma-Deressa is a woman, I would judge, of about 40. She was extremely well dressed and sophisticated. She spoke excellent English and very fluently, with hardly the trace of an accent. She said she had lived in Britain for 12-13 years but had connections with the country going back to childhood. She travelled frequently to the Sudan and had been there for 7 months this year. She appeared to be very single minded and was at pains to emphasise that if what she felt needed to happen in Ethiopia were to take place, it would require organisation and money.

I made no comment whatsoever on her representations.

BERNARD INGHAM
28 October 1987

1. The West, Partly with unparalleled generosity, has fed Ethiopia through ~~mainly~~ man made famines, and another such disaster is imminent.

2. Similarly, the U.S.S.R. has given virtually no food aid at all, but has heavily armed its satellite.

3. Today, Ethiopia has a classical Marxist constitution, nominally headed by Ethiopia but under the actual total dominance of the East. The hand of friendship has not paid any dividends in the West at all. Indeed the converse is true.

4. The U.S.S.R. is using its base in Ethiopia to destabilise its neighbours - the Sudan, Somalia and even Kenya and Zambia are not exempt.

5. The U.S.A. is, through circumstances, unlikely to take the lead for which one would normally look, and the challenge inevitably therefore faces the United Kingdom.

6. My organisation, The Ethiopian Peoples Democratic Alliance ("EPDA") from all its sources is irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that the situation can only get worse, and that the Russian tentacles will extend further and further from their Addis Ababa base and that every move be more threatening to the wellbeing of the United Kingdom and its allies.

7. EPDA has made progress with numerous overseas offices in friendly countries, and with a radio beamed to Addis Ababa broadcasting daily in the three principle languages, but the good offices of Britain are needed for the next stage.

8. The government of Mengistu must be dislodged, which means subourning the army, and that needs money. If Britain could use its good offices with friendly neighbouring states such as Saudi Arabia, Oman and the Gulf Shiekdoms, to see if such funds could be forthcoming.

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OUR TELNO MODEV 185 (NOT TO BRUSSELS): DROUGHT IN ETHIOPIA

SUMMARY

1. ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT SAY THAT INITIAL ESTIMATE OF FOOD DEFICIT IN 1988 AS RESULT OF FAILURE OF 1987 MAIN RAINS IS 950,000 METRIC TONNES (SAME SCALE OF FOOD SHORTAGES AS 1984/86). UN RES REP SUPPORTS ETHIOPIAN APPEAL FOR HELP AND URGES IMMEDIATE ACTION BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IF WIDESPREAD SUFFERING TO BE AVOIDED. RECOMMENDATION FOR EARLY PLEDGE OF UK FOOD AID FOR 1988.

DETAIL

2. THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF THE RELIEF AND REHABILITATION COMMISSION (RRC) HAS FOLLOWED UP HIS PRESENTATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF 14 AUGUST ABOUT THE FAILURE OF THE MAIN JUNE/JULY RAINS WITH A LETTER DATED 5 SEPTEMBER DESCRIBING THE OUTCOME OF THE FIELD ASSESSMENTS PUT IN HAND AS A RESULT. THE COMMISSIONER SAYS THAT A PRECISE CALCULATION OF THE LIKELY CROP DAMAGE HAS NOT YET BEEN POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, DESPITE SOME RECENT IMPROVEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF RAINFALL THERE WILL STILL BE A CONSIDERABLE SHORTFALL IN FOOD PRODUCTION. ALTHOUGH THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT ARE DOING ALL THEY CAN TO MINIMISE IT, HE CONCLUDES THAT 950,000 MT OF FOOD ASSISTANCE WILL BE REQUIRED AS AT THE END OF DECEMBER 1987 FOR THE YEAR 1988. DETAILED REQUIREMENTS WILL BE FORWARDED ONCE 1987 PRODUCTION IS KNOWN. IN THE MEANTIME SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF ETHIOPIA'S FOOD NEEDS IS URGED.

3. PRIESTLEY (UN RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE) CIRCULATED TO ALL DONORS THE SAME DAY CONFIRMING THAT THE UN AGENCIES FULLY SUPPORT THE RRC APPEAL. WHILE RECOGNISING THAT THE ESTIMATE OF THE 1988 DEFICIT HAS BEEN MADE EARLY, PRIESTLEY SAYS THAT THE SITUATION IS SUFFICIENTLY THREATENING TO MAKE SWIFT ACTION ESSENTIAL IF WIDESPREAD STARVATION AND SUFFERING ARE TO BE AVOIDED. HE STRONGLY URGES DONORS TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO MAKE NEW PLEDGES OF FOOD

AID FOR 1988 AND TO ADVANCE SHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 1987 PLEDGES.

4. PRIESTLEY GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT HAVE ASKED THE FAO ONCE AGAIN TO CONDUCT A NATIONAL CROP ASSESSMENT IN NOVEMBER IN ORDER TO CALCULATE MORE PRECISELY THE 1988 FOOD DEFICIT AND THE NUMBERS LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED. HE STRESSES HOWEVER THAT THE URGENCY OF THE SITUATION AND THE 5-7 MONTHS IT TAKES TO TURN PLEDGES INTO DELIVERIES MEANS THAT DONORS SHOULD NOT (REPEAT NOT) WAIT UNTIL THESE MORE ACCURATE ASSESSMENTS ARE AVAILABLE. PRIESTLEY SAYS THAT SIMPLE CALCULATIONS DONE BY THE UN WITH THE RRC, SOME NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND OTHERS SHOW THAT ON THE BASIS OF PREDICTED AVERAGE MONTHLY RELIEF DISTRIBUTION AND PRESENT PLEDGES RELIEF FOOD STOCKS WILL BE AT THE DANGEROUSLY LOW LEVEL OF 122,000 MT BY THE END OF 1987 WITH NOTHING SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN 1988. MOREOVER, THE RRC CALCULATION OF A 1988 DEFICIT OF 950,000 MT IS A NET FIGURE WHICH ALREADY ASSUMES THE USE OF THIS CARRY-OVER OF 122,000 MT FROM 1987, THE FOOD SECURITY RESERVE AND THE 1987 AGRICULTURAL MARKETING CORPORATION PROCUREMENT.

5. PRIESTLEY POINTS OUT THAT A QUICK RESPONSE IS REQUIRED TO AVOID THE REOPENING OF SHELTERS: TO THIS END IN-COUNTRY FOOD STOCKS NEED TO BE MAINTAINED AT LEAST AT PRESENT LEVELS IN EXCESS OF 150,000 MT. HE ASKS DONORS TO BE FLEXIBLE WITH THE EARMARKING OF DONATIONS, TO CONSIGN THE MAXIMUM QUANTITY TO THE RRC AND TO PROVIDE INTERNAL TRANSPORT COSTS.

6. PRIESTLEY ADDS THAT THERE WILL BE AN INEVITABLE REQUIREMENT FOR SUBSTANTIAL SUMS TO BE SPENT ON TRANSPORT, PORT IMPROVEMENTS AND SPARE PARTS, AN AREA CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW BY A MULTI-DONOR MISSION.

7. PRIESTLEY CONCLUDES BY URGING DONORS TO MAKE IMMEDIATE PLEDGES AND SHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS SO THAT RELIEF DELIVERIES AT THE LEVEL REQUESTED BY THE RRC ARE AVAILABLE TO COVER THE PERIOD UP TO JUNE 1988 PENDING THE RECEIPT OF MORE ACCURATE FORECASTS IN DECEMBER.

8. PRIESTLEY HAS REPORTED ALL THIS TO NEW YORK (AND EXPECTS AN APPEAL BY THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL TO BE MADE SHORTLY). HE TELLS HIS HQ THAT REPORTS FROM UN FIELD OFFICERS, NGOS AND SATELLITE IMAGERY CONFIRM THE VERY SERIOUS SITUATION. HE EXPLAINS THAT ALTHOUGH THE ESTIMATE OF A NET DEFICIT OF 950,000 MT DOES NOT INCLUDE COMMERCIAL PURCHASES THESE ARE NOT EXPECTED TO EXCEED 200,000 MT. HE DRAWS ATTENTION TO DISTURBING REPORTS OF RAPID PRICE RISES FOR GRAIN IN SOME ENDEMIC FAMINE AREAS AND REPEATS HIS VIEW THAT EARLY PLEDGES ARE NECESSARY IF FEEDING CAMPS ARE NOT TO

REAPPEAR.

9. COPIES OF THE RRC RELIEF COMMISSION LETTER, PRIESTLEY'S APPEAL AND HIS REPORT TO THE UN FOLLOW BY BAG TO EAFD.

COMMENT

10. THE TIMING OF THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT APPEAL PRESUMABLY SHOWS THAT THEY ARE SENSITIVE TO THE FACT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN UNFORTUNATE IF THEY HAD BEEN SEEN NOT TO COME UP WITH A DEFICIT FIGURE FOR 1988 IN ADVANCE OF THE CEREMONIES INAUGURATING THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA (PDRE) 9-13 SEPTEMBER.

11. IT IS CLEAR EVEN IN ADVANCE OF THE MORE DETAILED ASSESSMENT THAT CAN ONLY BE MADE AFTER THE HARVEST IN THE AUTUMN THAT THERE WILL BE A SERIOUS SITUATION IN 1988 IF FOOD AID IS NOT FORTHCOMING ON A LARGE SCALE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. THE 950,000 MT PREDICTED SHORTFALL FOR 1988 COMPARES WITH 400,000 MT IN 1987, 900,000 MT IN 1986 AND 1.1 MILLION MT IN 1985. IN OTHER WORDS THE FOOD SHORTAGE WILL ON CURRENT ESTIMATES BE ON THE SAME SCALE AS IN THE FAMINE YEARS 1984/86.

12. THE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA WAS SET UP PRECISELY TO PREVENT ANOTHER 1984/86 TRAGEDY BY ALTERTING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN TIME. WE WOULD IGNORE THIS PRESENT TRIGGERING OF THE SYSTEM AT OUR PERIL. I RECOMMEND THEREFORE THAT URGENT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO AN IMMEDIATE AND GENEROUS PLEDGE OF UK FOOD AID FOR 1988. AT THIS STAGE WE NEED NOT DETERMINE HOW IT WOULD BE DISTRIBUTED. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO SHOW THAT WE APPRECIATE THE NEED TO GET MOVING. WE WILL REPORT THE REACTIONS AND INTENTIONS OF OTHER DONORS AS SOON AS THESE ARE KNOWN (THERE IS TO BE A MEETING OF THE WESTERN DONORS GROUP ON 8 SEPTEMBER). SWIFT ACTION ON THE PART OF THE UK HAS HOWEVER IN THE PAST HAD A USEFUL STIMULATING EFFECT ON OTHER DONORS.

WALKER

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MR CAINES (ODA)
MR AINSCOW(ODA)
MR BUIST(ODA)MR HUDSON(ODA)
SIR D MIERS
MR BRAITHWAITE

ADDITIONAL 2

AFRICAN DROUGHT

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

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CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister

I see no reason why you should send a message. It is an appalling regime & the changes are entirely cosmetic. Its no argument to say that Mengistu sent you a message — you won an election, & anyway he was just trying to achieve respectability which he does not deserve. Agree no message?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 September 1987

Dear Charles

Establishment of People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

No message = no

The People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) is to be established, and the new National Assembly (Shengo) will hold its first session, on 9 September, following a national referendum earlier this year approving a new Constitution and the election of representatives for the new National Assembly. The Assembly will, inevitably, "elect" Colonel Mengistu as the President of the Republic rather than Chairman of the Provisional Military Government. It remains to be seen whether the exercise will be more than cosmetic. Our Post in Addis Ababa has recommended that the Prime Minister should send a message of good wishes on the occasion of the new Republic.

It goes against the grain to congratulate the Ethiopians in this way. Nevertheless the Foreign Secretary thinks that it would be appropriate for the Prime Minister to send a short message. A text in correct yet cool terms is attached. Although the establishment of the PDRE marks a further step in the socialisation of the country along East European lines, our policy remains to keep in touch with the regime (you will recall Mengistu's warm message to the Prime Minister in June after the elections). The UK and the Twelve are having some success, notably in making EDF and World Bank aid conditional on substantial economic and agricultural reforms in the agreements with the Ethiopians. We have also pressed for an improvement in Ethiopia's human rights record, and the release of the ten royal prisoners, which high level Ethiopian sources have indicated may take place at the time of the inauguration of the new Republic.

If the Prime Minister is content, we shall arrange for the transmission of the message to Addis Ababa: it would be transmitted at the appropriate time by the Ambassador. The House of Commons is being represented by Mr David Harris MP, who will transmit a separate message to the Speaker of the Shengo from Mr Speaker.

Yours ever

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

AMB 7

OUT TELEGRAM

		Classification	Caveat	Precedence
		RESTRICTED		PRIORITY

ZCZC	1	ZCZC
TC	2	RESTRICTED
CAVEAT	3	
FM	4	FM FCO
TO	5	TO PRIORITY ADDIS ABABA
TELNO	6	TELNO
OF	7	OF Z SEPT 87
AND TO	8	
	9	
	10	1. Please arrange for the following message from the Prime
	11	Minister to be conveyed to His Excellency Colonel Mengistu
	12	Haile Mariam, President of the People's Democratic Republic
	13	of Ethiopia:
	14	BEGINS
	15	On the establishment of a People's Democratic Republic of
	16	Ethiopia I extend my congratulations to you, your new Prime
	17	Minister and Ministers. I also send my best wishes to all
	18	the people of Ethiopia, on this important step in your country's
	19	history.
	20	ENDS
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OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
ELAND HOUSE
STAG PLACE LONDON SWIE 5DH
Telephone 01-213 4819

Sir Crispin Tickell KCVO
Permanent Secretary

18 December 1986

SIR CRISPIN TICKELL'S ETHIOPIA REPORT DECEMBER 1986

There has been some confusion over the amendments of paragraphs 5 and 15 of the above report.

This is to confirm that:

Paragraph 5 line 8 should read: 3,000 men not 300,000 men.

Paragraph 15 line 2 should read: 600,000 over two years not 200,000 over two years.

Anne Curran
PS/Sir Crispin Tickell

ETHIOPIA ; Relations: Dec. 1982

file PUMAGF

cc. PC

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 September 1987

ESTABLISHMENT OF PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

Thank you for your letter of 3 September recommending that the Prime Minister should send a brief message on the occasion of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

The Prime Minister declines to do so. I can expand on the reasons, but you can probably imagine them.

C. D. Powell

R. N. Culshaw, Esq., M.V.O.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Mr Powell — a revised version

with compliments

SIR CRISPIN TICKELL
Permanent Secretary

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
ELAND HOUSE, STAG PLACE,
LONDON SW1E 5DH

Telephone 01-213: **4819**
or Switchboard 01-213: 3000

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cc PC

FROM: Sir Crispin Tickell
DATE: 9 December 1986

cc PS/Mrs Chalker
PUS
Mr Fergusson
Mr Reeve
Mr Marsden
Mr Wallis
Mr Ainscow
Mr Vereker
Mr Hudson
Dr Healey
Dr Osborne
Mr Ireton

1. PS/Mr Patten

2. Private Secretary

ETHIOPIA

Flag A Attached is a report on my visit to Ethiopia last month, together with some recommendations for future policy.

2. Aid is only one of the components in policy towards Ethiopia, but it well brings out the dilemmas. Nearly all Western aid donors including the European Commission, have felt the need for greater clarity and consistency, not least because it will be more difficult in future to avoid association with the notorious Ethiopian policies of villagization and resettlement as these are better established. My visit, which coincided with our Presidency of the Community, was designed to look at the situation on the ground and enable some judgements to be made.

3. Mr Patten promised his colleagues at the meeting of the Development Council on 11 November that they would be informed of the results. At his request I have since spoken to his French and German counterparts and to the Head of USAID (OECD Paris
Flag B Telno 48), and have promised them a written report. The report below is of course for consideration here, but it can easily be adapted or bowdlerized for the French, Germans and Americans, and still further for other members of the Community.

Crispin Tickell

9 December 1986

Crispin Tickell

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL

ETHIOPIA

Report on a Visit, and Recommendations for Policy

I visited Ethiopia from 13 to 19 November 1986. My purpose was to assess the extent of the country's recovery from the famine of last year, the political and economic circumstances in which the Ethiopian Government was approaching future needs, and the framework within which Western, European and British policy towards Ethiopia should be established.

Background

2. During my visit I saw the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Central Planning, the Commissioner of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), and the First Secretary of the Workers Party of Ethiopia in Harerge province. I also saw the Acting Minister of Agriculture, the Vice-Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs, and senior officials in the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC); European Community Heads of Mission, the US Chargé d'Affaires, and the Delegate of the European Commission; the UN Special Representative, the representative of the World Bank, and representatives of the main non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in Ethiopia.

3. The Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner provided me with an aircraft to make two rounds of visits outside Addis Ababa. Over four days travel I was able to visit five provinces: Shoa, Harerge, Wollo, Gonder and Gojam. The places I saw included a model producers' cooperative, a feeding centre in the mountains, three villagized villages, and the Belas-Tana development project near Lake Tana designed to support massive resettlement. This intensive programme gave me the opportunity to hear many points of view about current events in Ethiopia, to argue out difficult issues with the Ethiopians themselves, and to gain material for judgement on the lines of future policy towards Ethiopia. This has since been augmented through contact with some of the principal recent defectors from the régime, including the former

RRC Commissioner. They gave me an invaluable account of the internal workings of the régime.

4. As one of the poorest countries in the world, Ethiopia has become in the West a symbol of famine and dereliction. The sufferings of its people have evoked strong feelings and will probably continue to do so. But public emotion has tended to obscure the political and strategic issues underlying relations between Ethiopia and the West. Ethiopia has one of the largest populations in Africa (some 40m). In spite of its mountain isolation, almost as an island in Africa, it has long influenced, or in some areas dominated, its neighbours in the Sudan, Somalia and the Yemens. In the past its influence, as the site of the Organization of African Unity went wider, and could of course do so again. It has large armed forces, second in Africa south of the Sahara only to those of the Republic of South Africa.

5. The Ethiopian Government is dependent for its existence on Soviet support, and is under strong Soviet influence. That influence is concentrated in the military and security field. The Russians and their allies, including the Cubans, East Germans and North Koreans, have given massive military assistance (according to report at one time to the value of some US$ 1 billion a year) in the form of equipment, advice and training; a force of over ~~300,000~~ 3,000 men equipped with tanks, armoured personnel carriers, trucks and helicopters is deployed by the old airport in Addis Ababa to provide emergency support if required; Ethiopian foreign policy follows the Soviet prescription; and continuing Ethiopian interference in the affairs of neighbouring countries can be interpreted as serving Soviet purposes. There are occasional signs of strain in the relationship, and some, including the former RRC Commissioner, believe that the Ethiopian Government is in some ways an expensive embarrassment to the Russians, who generally try to be inconspicuous. The Russians may be happy for the civil war to continue as a means of keeping the Government in its place, and for that purpose have allegedly

/joined

joined others in giving covert help to the regional liberation movements. But as a country of strategic importance with the capacity to become - if it is not already - a base for the expansion of Soviet influence, Ethiopia represents a threat to African stability and Western interests throughout the continent.

6. Ethiopian society falls into three main groups. First is the mass of the people whose conditions are reminiscent of medieval Europe. Living for the most part in ragged clothes in grass huts which they share with their animals, the main aim of the Ethiopian peasant during the recent famine was to stay alive. In many of the highland areas population density visibly exceeds the carrying capacity of the land, and even without drought, famine conditions are a constant danger. At the feeding centre I visited some 50 km from Harar, the CARE representatives told me they saw little prospect of long term stability. Here as elsewhere the effects of the population increase of recent years are painfully evident. Conditions of this kind are scarcely new. Ethiopian peasants have maintained their dignity and a serenity derived from historical traditions through many past adversities. But the drought has brought into relief the imbalance in the distribution of population as well as living conditions which most would now judge intolerable.

7. The second group comprises the small middle class and the administration. Most of its members are relatively well educated, with inclinations, tempered by national pride, towards the West, in whose civilization they have mostly been brought up. English is the second language. The bureaucracy is generally civilized, subtle, and efficient. But its members feel politically powerless. They carry on with the business of running the country because they see no alternative to doing so. Implicitly, and occasionally explicitly, they are critical of the régime. One Vice-Minister told me that now that Gorbachov was adopting privatization, he had little doubt that Ethiopia would do so too before too long. The principal concern of such people is to look after

/themselves

themselves and their families in the hope that in some unspecified way the régime will eventually come to an end. But the rising generation has a somewhat different orientation. Its members have more radical views, and we cannot be assured that existing traditions will be maintained.

8. The third group consists of a small number of dedicated Marxist-Leninists who, with the Army leaders, have their hands firmly on the levers of power. The Workers Party of Ethiopia is said to contain between 40,000 and 60,000 members. Its authority in relation to the regular administration has recently increased. The Chairman of the Politburo Colonel Mengistu is to all intents and purposes a dictator, who according to those who used to work with him listens to almost no-one and allows little argument. He and his colleagues manage what is in effect a police state with arbitrary imprisonment, execution without trial, tight censorship over press, radio and television, control of movement of individuals, and an efficient secret police service.

9. Since the revolution eleven years ago, some 2 million Ethiopians have fled the country, and a succession of eminent defectors, including most recently the Minister of Foreign Affairs, have taken refuge in the West. More are probably on the way. Propaganda is crude: in Addis Ababa and to a lesser extent elsewhere there are plywood triumphal arches containing such slogans in English and Amharic as "Workers of the World Unite" and "Long Live Prolitarian Internationalism". One Ethiopian remarked sourly that for the educated they were grotesque and for the illiterate meaningless. But perhaps the most interesting aspect of this propaganda is how shallow its effects seem to be. Only the First Secretary of the Party, whom I met in Harar, and possibly the Acting Minister of Agriculture, seemed actually to think in Marxist-Leninist terms.

10. The armed forces divide between these three groups. The army itself consists of some 300,000 men (some 8 to 10 times larger than in the time of the Emperor). Many of the army leaders may have a vested interest in preserving their own position.

/It is

It is said that when Mengistu has to choose between the Party and the Army (and local conflicts are frequent) he usually chooses the Army. There may well be discontent in the middle ranks, as there was in the Emperor's time, and it is hard to believe that they could wholly be relied upon. As for the ordinary soldiers, conscription is unpopular, and the civil war is hardly being fought with enthusiasm. The attitude of individual army leaders may be the key to the future of the régime.

11. To the visitor, the atmosphere in Addis Ababa seemed different from elsewhere in the country. In the foreign community there are constant rumours about events at the top, some of them perhaps put about by the top people themselves. Access to key Ethiopians is difficult. The most regular source of information for educated Ethiopians as well as foreigners is apparently the BBC. Foreign observers, particularly those from NGOs in the field, were unanimous in doubting whether the régime could last. None believed that the regional dissident movements could bring down the régime, nor that the régime was capable of extirpating them. None could identify an available pan-Ethiopian alternative to the régime. And none would hazard how the régime would come to an end. The best hypothesis was that eventual conflict between its members would eventually cause it to collapse on itself.

Villagization and Resettlement

12. There can be little doubt that the ultimate aim of the Ethiopian leadership is collectivization of agriculture as the country's principal economic activity. Instructions to party cadres contain advice on how over time peasants should be weaned from desire for personal gain or advancement. The Acting Minister of Agriculture told me that in the long term the Government's aim was to socialize production and distribution as a superior economic mode. The recent famine has served to promote this aim through the policies of villagization and resettlement. On both, Ethiopian Ministers and officials were highly defensive in their discussions with me claiming that their actions had been misinterpreted, and that even if mistakes had been made the policies were necessary and justified by results. The Minister

of Planning countered my reference to Stalin's forced collectivization of the 1920s and the failure of the Tanzanian experiment in African socialism by saying that Ethiopia had only Ethiopian solutions to its problems.

13. Briefly villagization, which has only taken place in some provinces, consists of bringing together by fair means or foul the present scattered rural population into villages, which ideally should not be more than 2.5km from existing cultivated land. I saw one model village, a producers' cooperative, near a lake by Harar, complete with North Korean advisers. I saw another, chosen by me at random, not far away, where the people in huts they shared with their animals seemed more bewildered than anything else. Conditions were dreary, dirty and regimented. The armed guard who accompanied us confirmed reports that every village had its own militia. By contrast a village at Ansokia, supported by the American charity World Vision seemed successful. The inhabitants had been persuaded rather than coerced from their homesteads in the surrounding mountains, and under guidance from the volunteers had already increased agricultural production and introduced new crops. Elsewhere we drove past a squalid village near Dire Dawa whose inhabitants had, I was told, mostly returned to the hills. From the air I saw many others of straw or tin roofed huts in rows: scattered dwellings around seemed to have been abandoned or in some cases burnt. Both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Planning insisted that peasants could return to their former homes if they so wished, and took credit for their freedom to form producer cooperatives according to choice.

14. Obviously it is the coercive aspect which has aroused most international concern. No-one can object to the creation of villages as such, and where outside capital and support are forthcoming, villagization can be made to work. But the régime has described villagization as people's control, and political motives seem to have been as important as economic ones. Even apologists for villagization admitted that it was a vehicle for political education and that the immediate price might be

a fall in agricultural production. One Red Cross official told me that in one or two areas he had seen, villagization had represented a manmade disaster.

15. Resettlement has consisted of a Government directed movement of people - some 600,000 over two years - from the long cultivated highlands to the largely uncultivated lowlands. In some parts of the highlands recent drought has combined with erosion caused by over population of people and their animals to exhaust already precarious soils. CARE officials running a feeding centre at Corfachale did not see an end to the need for relief in that region. I visited the Belas resettlement areas south west of Lake Tana. They form part of a US$230 million mega-project, financed by the Italian Government, to dam Lake Tana, divert the course of the Blue Nile, and develop 250,000 hectares of forest or scrub land. When the Italian contractors arrived to begin work on the infrastructure to support resettlement, they found that 75,000 people from Wollo were already there in poor conditions and an unfamiliar environment. The resettlement programme was in fact suspended for most of 1986, but the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner informed me that the Government planned to resettle another 60,000 a year for the next 3 years. Prospects for the long term viability of the Belas project, and its ability to sustain itself, remain doubtful.

16. Again the issue for the West has been the measure of coercion. In many areas resettlement may have been necessary. It has certainly been in progress for a long time. But the way in which the present programme has been carried out, substantially by the army, has given settlers no room for choice. Each representative of the voluntary organizations on the ground seemed to have his own horror story of suffering and abuse of human rights. The Minister of Foreign Affairs attempted to justify some compulsion to me by asking whether the British Government's evacuation scheme from the cities in 1940 had been voluntary. He went on to ask for development aid to make resettlement sustainable over the long term. He and other Ministers acknowledged the need for more careful preparation in the receiving areas, and

/said

said that lessons had been learnt from the experiences of the last two years.

Levers of Western Influence

17. To all who asked for long term development aid, I gave a standard answer: that before considering such aid, we had to be sure that the Ethiopian Government's policies would provide the right framework for the country's economic development. A good measuring rod was in the agricultural part of the indicative agreement between the Ethiopian Government and the European Community under the Lomé Convention. The Acting Minister of Agriculture showed that he was far from happy about the three essential elements in that agreement: price incentives to peasants, greater freedom to private traders, and marketing of grain across provincial boundaries. Indeed as the former RRC Commissioner pointed out to me, the agreement went clean contrary to the régime's policy, intentions and provisions in the new constitution. The last Minister of Agriculture had, he said, been transferred for his role in relation to it. By contrast the Minister of Planning said that he attached particular importance to working with the European Community, and would make sure that the agreement was honoured one hundred per cent.

18. From discussion of the detail with the staff of the European Commission and the World Bank, it was clear that it would indeed be hard for the Government to honour the agreement without going a considerable way towards a genuine market economy in agriculture. This would in turn introduce some measure of inflation into what is at present an artificially rigid economy. Linked with application of the agreement will be World Bank conditionality on future lending which, according to the World Bank representative, will apply to such issues as the exchange rate (at present tied to the US dollar), industrial policy, tariff protection, population policy, and allocation of State resources. In short the West has two powerful levers of influence: the Lomé agreement amounting to US$ 221m (230m Ecus) over the next 5 years; and Bank - or rather IDA - lending of potentially still greater value over an indeterminate period.

19. But use of these levers to bring about a more market oriented economy and society raises wider policy issues. In recent years the West has provided most of the aid to a Soviet dominated régime. That aid, which has caused more than US$1.5 billion to pass through the hands of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, has had significant macro-economic effects, and saved the Government from what would otherwise have been effective bankruptcy. For its part the Eastern Bloc has provided the arms which has enabled the régime to survive and to constitute the base for Soviet influence in Africa. The régime may retain some measure of independence. It is certainly ready to play off one side against the other. But on the assumption that it wants to continue to make use of Western aid to bolster its own power and run the economy the way it wants, we should look carefully at the main options for Western policy. In doing so we must reckon with the likelihood of the continuing pressure of public opinion to maintain aid programmes to Ethiopia.

20. In broad terms the options are: to shun the régime as far as possible and make clear our preference for an alternative, while continuing with emergency relief as necessary; to try to cooperate more closely with the régime in the hope of influencing and persuading it with Western help to switch course and free itself from the Soviet grip; and to work on the system through imposition of firm conditions on future aid so as to maintain Western influence on Ethiopians outside the ruling group, and to push the country towards a freer and more market oriented economy. These options are not mutually exclusive. My own view is that the second is not realistic, and we should go for a mixture of the first and third.

Recommendations for Policy

21. My recommendations are:

- We should continue to avoid displays of friendliness towards the régime. Visits should not be at a high

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level, and the emphasis should be on business rather than friendly relations. We should be ready to let the régime know that our attitudes will be directly affected by its policies in and towards its neighbours in the Horn of Africa.

- The European Community, through the Commission, should insist on the letter of the Lomé III indicative agreement. The Commission Delegate in Addis Ababa was confident of his ability to monitor it. He will need support from his authorities in Brussels in doing so. Its application should be by performance-related stages. The Community should be ready to suspend it on the Ugandan precedent if the Ethiopian Government were to renege on its terms.

- The World Bank should maintain equally firm conditionality in its lending programme, and continue to work closely with the Community.

- Donor governments, the European Community, and the World Bank should give no direct help to the present villagization and resettlement programmes, and should make this clear to the Ethiopian government. In carrying out its obligations under the Lomé Convention in the field of rural development, the Community should focus its efforts on new programmes or projects which can be carried through from the beginning and which stand on their own merits.

- Donors should not consider giving any long term development aid unless and until the Ethiopian Government fulfils its agreement with the Community and the conditions required by the World Bank. In the meantime aid should be directed to relief and rehabilitation on a case by case basis with priority to humanitarian considerations. Full use should be made of non-governmental organizations and the voluntary agencies. Donor governments should cooperate more closely in their bilateral programmes to ensure consistency.

- New emphasis should be laid on technical assistance, university contacts, and English language training with the aim of maintaining visible Western intellectual influence and activity. The role of the BBC is of critical importance. We should do more to encourage Ethiopian students to train in the West.

- We should train more Amharic speakers for service in our Missions in Addis Ababa. At present there is an astonishing lack of such speakers, which contrasts sharply with the Soviet effort and inhibits the range of our contacts with the Ethiopians.

- The United States, French, German and British Governments should create a policy coordinating mechanism, which might among other things commission contingency planning against the possibility of the collapse of the régime and look at eventual alternatives to it. How should we react in different circumstances, for example if the Russians intervened to protect their clients?

Conclusion

22. Ethiopia is too important to the West for either malign or benign neglect. Its present régime could do a lot of damage to Western interests. The longer it is in power, the more it can entrench itself and influence generations to come. Ethiopia may not be lost for ever, but it could be lost for a long time if we do nothing about it. We need an active, long term and consistent effort to bring it back.

8 December 1986 Crispin Tickell

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ETHIOPA
SUMMARY

1. IN THE MARGINS OF THE OECD DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE'S HIGH LEVEL MEETING YESTERDAY, SIR CRISPIN TICKELL SEPARATELY BRIEFED AURILLAC (FRANCE), KOHLER (GERMANY) AND MCPHERSON (UNITED STATES) ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO ETHIOPIA, AND CONFIRMED THAT HE WOULD LET THEM HAVE A WRITTEN NOTE AFTERWARDS. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT CERTAIN LINES OF POLICY MIGHT FOLLOW FROM HIS CONCLUSIONS.

DETAIL

2. TO EACH TICKELL GAVE BROADLY THE SAME ANALYSIS. HE HAD SEEN A RANGE OF ETHIOPIAN MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS AND VISITED DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. ETHIOPIAN SOCIETY COULD BE SEEN IN THREE LAYERS: THE MASS OF THE PEASANTRY WHO WERE STILL LIVING IN THE MIDDLE AGES: THE EDUCATED AND SOPHISTICATED MIDDLE CLASS OF OFFICIALS: AND A MINUTE GROUP OF COMMITTED MARXISTS IN THE DERG AND PARTY. THE ARMY WAS DIVIDED HORIZONTALLY ALONG SIMILAR LINES. THE VENEER OF MARXISM WAS VERY THIN, AND THE DERG'S APPARENT COMMITMENT TO COLLECTIVISATION WAS PROBABLY NOT SHARED BY THE BUREAUCRACY.

3. THE VILLAGISATION PROGRAMME WAS HAVING MIXED RESULTS. TICKELL HAD SEEN VILLAGES RANGING FROM A MODEL ONE ENJOYING FULL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT, TO ONE THAT SEEMED VIRTUALLY TO HAVE BEEN ABANDONED. WHERE OUTSIDE HELP AND CAPITAL WERE FORTHCOMING AND WHERE COERCION HAD NOT BEEN USED, VILLAGISATION COULD BE MADE TO WORK. THE COST OF RESETTLEMENT WAS MUCH HIGHER. THIS MIGHT BE NECESSARY IN CERTAIN AREAS. BUT THE WAY IN WHICH IT HAD BEEN DONE HAD INVOLVED ABUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. FOR EXAMPLE SOME 75,000 PEOPLE HAD BEEN MOVED FROM THE HIGHLANDS TO UNCLAIMED LOWER LAND IN THE BELAS PROJECT BEFORE THE ITALIANS HAD EVEN BEGUN WORK ON THE NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE.

4. MOST OBSERVERS FROM THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND OTHERS IN ADDIS ABABA SEEMED TO THINK THE REGIME COULD NOT POSSIBLY LAST, BUT NO ONE COULD PREDICT HOW IT WOULD END. MILITARY DEFEAT WAS UNLIKELY. THE ARMY COULD NOT DEFEAT SCATTERED AND INTERNALLY DIVIDED REGIONAL DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS, AND THE DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS COULD NOT DEFEAT THE ARMY. THE RUSSIANS SUPPORTED THE REGIME WHICH PROVIDED THEM WITH A BASE FROM WHICH TO THREATEN WESTERN INTERESTS IN AFRICA. BUT THEY WERE PROBABLY ALSO KEEPING THEIR LINES TO THE INSURGENTS. IF AND WHEN THE REGIME FELL, IT MIGHT DO SO FROM WITHIN ITSELF.

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5. THE MOST EFFECTIVE LEVER FOR APPLYING PRESSURE ON THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT WAS PROBABLY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S INDICATIVE PROGRAMME UNDER LOME 3. THE ETHIOPIAN PLANNING MINISTER HAD SAID CATEGORICALLY THAT ITS VITAL AGRICULTURAL PROVISIONS WOULD BE CARRIED OUT TO THE LETTER. IF THIS WERE SO, THEN PRICE INCENTIVES FOR PEASANTS AND MOVEMENT OF GRAIN ACROSS PROVINCIAL BOUNDARIES WOULD, BY INTRODUCING A MARKET ECONOMY FOR AGRICULTURE, HAVE PROFOUND EFFECTS ON ETHIOPIAN SOCIETY. IT MIGHT ALSO CREATE SOME MEASURE OF INFLATION IN WHAT WAS AT PRESENT AN ARTIFICIALLY RIGID ECONOMY.

POLICY CONCLUSIONS

6. TICKELL SUGGESTED THAT THE FOLLOWING LESSONS FOR POLICY MIGHT FOLLOW:

- THE EC COMMISSION SHOULD INSIST ON RESPECT FOR THE LETTER OF THE LOME 3 INDICATIVE AGREEMENT. THE COMMISSION DELEGATE IN ADDIS ABABA WAS CONFIDENT OF HIS ABILITY TO MONITOR IT, PREFERABLY ON A STAGE BY STAGE BASIS:

- THE WORLD BANK SHOULD CONTINUE TO ACT IN CLOSE COOPERATION AND SUPPORT:

- THE EC SHOULD BE READY TO SUSPEND THE AGREEMENT IF THE ETHIOPIANS RENEGED ON ITS TERMS:

- DONOR GOVERNMENTS SHOULD GIVE NO DIRECT HELP TO VILLAGISATION OR RESETTLEMENT:

- AID FOR RELIEF AND REHABILITATION SHOULD CONTINUE ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS WITH PRIORITY TO HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS:

- THE AMERICANS, FRENCH, GERMANS AND BRITISH MIGHT CONSIDER SOME CONTINGENCY PLANNING AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF THE EVENTUAL COLLAPSE OF THE REGIME. HOW, FOR EXAMPLE, SHOULD WE REACT IF THE RUSSIANS INTERVENED TO PROP UP THEIR CLIENTS?

7. IN RESPONSE ALL WELCOMED THIS ANALYSIS AND EXPRESSED BROAD SYMPATHY WITH THE CONCLUSIONS. THEY WOULD WISH TO CONSIDER THE POSITION CAREFULLY WHEN THEY SAW THE WRITTEN REPORT. AUPILLAC EXPRESSED PARTICULAR APPRECIATION. KOHLER AGREED THAT AID AGENCIES SHOULD REFRAIN FROM POLICIES WHICH MIGHT ENCOURAGE THE REGIME TO CONTINUE ITS VILLAGISATION AND RESETTLEMENT POLICIES, AND THAT THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION SHOULD INSIST ON RESPECT FOR THE LOME 3 AGREEMENT. MCPHERSON ALSO AGREED. HE SAID THAT THE US WOULD HELP IN ENCOURAGING THE WORLD BANK TO TAKE A TOUGH LINE IF THE ETHIOPIANS SHOWED SIGNS OF RENEGING ON THE LOME 3 AGREEMENT.

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8. TICKELL HAS ALSO SPOKEN ON SIMILAR LINES TO FRISCH (COMMISSION) AAND SALLEO (ITALY). WITH FRISCH HE HAS AGREED TO SEE NATALI IN BRUSSELS NEXT WEEK. FOR HIS PART SALLEO EXPRESSED HIS GOVERNMENT'S EMBARRASSMENT ABOUT ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE BELAS PROJECT WHICH HAD BEEN WISHED ON IT BY PARLIAMENT. NOT ONLY DID IT MEAN DIRECT SUPPORT FOR RESETTLEMENT, BUT LIKE ALL MEGAPROJECTS ALSO RISKED BEING A RELATIVE FAILURE.

BAYNE

Sir Crosfield cc

by hand please
- PS/Secretary of State W52
- PS/Mrs Chalker W48
- PS/PUS W15

as soon as possible please
- SENNAN
- Dr Osborne E825
- Mr Freeman E432
- Mr Frost E428
- Mr Meeran E504
- Mr Hudson E847 div
- Mr E. Feugnssan W35
- Mr Reeve WH 231
- Sir David Miers E205

[EAD IFCO, NENAD already have copies]

Mr Powell.

CDP
4/12

with compliments

SIR CRISPIN TICKELL
Permanent Secretary

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
ELAND HOUSE, STAG PLACE,
LONDON SW1E 5DH

Telephone 01-213: **4819**
or Switchboard 01-213: 3000

CCPC.

FROM: Sir Crispin Tickell
DATE: 9 December 1986

cc PS/Mrs Chalker
PUS
Mr Fergusson
Mr Reeve
Mr Marsden
Mr Wallis
Mr Ainscow
Mr Vereker
Mr Hudson
Dr Healey
Dr Osborne
Mr Ireton

1. PS/Mr Patten

2. Private Secretary

ETHIOPIA

Flag A Attached is a report on my visit to Ethiopia last month, together with some recommendations for future policy.

2. Aid is only one of the components in policy towards Ethiopia, but it well brings out the dilemmas. Nearly all Western aid donors including the European Commission, have felt the need for greater clarity and consistency, not least because it will be more difficult in future to avoid association with the notorious Ethiopian policies of villagization and resettlement as these are better established. My visit, which coincided with our Presidency of the Community, was designed to look at the situation on the ground and enable some judgements to be made.

3. Mr Patten promised his colleagues at the meeting of the Development Council on 11 November that they would be informed of the results. At his request I have since spoken to his French and German counterparts and to the Head of USAID (OECD Paris
Flag B Telno 48), and have promised them a written report. The report below is of course for consideration here, but it can easily be adapted or bowdlerized for the French, Germans and Americans, and still further for other members of the Community.

Crispin Tickell

9 December 1986

Crispin Tickell

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL

ETHIOPIA

Report on a Visit, and Recommendations for Policy

I visited Ethiopia from 13 to 19 November 1986. My purpose was to assess the extent of the country's recovery from the famine of last year, the political and economic circumstances in which the Ethiopian Government was approaching future needs, and the framework within which Western, European and British policy towards Ethiopia should be established.

Background

2. During my visit I saw the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Central Planning, the Commissioner of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), and the First Secretary of the Workers Party of Ethiopia in Harerge province. I also saw the Acting Minister of Agriculture, the Vice-Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs, and senior officials in the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC); European Community Heads of Mission, the US Chargé d'Affaires, and the Delegate of the European Commission; the UN Special Representative, the representative of the World Bank, and representatives of the main non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in Ethiopia.

3. The Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner provided me with an aircraft to make two rounds of visits outside Addis Ababa. Over four days travel I was able to visit five provinces: Shoa, Harerge, Wollo, Gonder and Gojam. The places I saw included a model producers' cooperative, a feeding centre in the mountains, three villagized villages, and the Belas-Tana development project near Lake Tana designed to support massive resettlement. This intensive programme gave me the opportunity to hear many points of view about current events in Ethiopia, to argue out difficult issues with the Ethiopians themselves, and to gain material for judgement on the lines of future policy towards Ethiopia. This has since been augmented through contact with some of the principal recent defectors from the régime, including the former

RRC Commissioner. They gave me an invaluable account of the internal workings of the régime.

4. As one of the poorest countries in the world, Ethiopia has become in the West a symbol of famine and dereliction. The sufferings of its people have evoked strong feelings and will probably continue to do so. But public emotion has tended to obscure the political and strategic issues underlying relations between Ethiopia and the West. Ethiopia has one of the largest populations in Africa (some 40m). In spite of its mountain isolation, almost as an island in Africa, it has long influenced, or in some areas dominated, its neighbours in the Sudan, Somalia and the Yemens. In the past its influence, as the site of the Organization of African Unity went wider, and could of course do so again. It has large armed forces, second in Africa south of the Sahara only to those of the Republic of South Africa.

5. The Ethiopian Government is dependent for its existence on Soviet support, and is under strong Soviet influence. That influence is concentrated in the military and security field. The Russians and their allies, including the Cubans, East Germans and North Koreans, have given massive military assistance (according to report at one time to the value of some US$ 1 billion a year) in the form of equipment, advice and training; a force of over 3,000 men equipped with tanks,armoured personnel carriers, trucks and helicopters is deployed by the old airport in Addis Ababa to provide emergency support if required; Ethiopian foreign policy follows the Soviet prescription; and continuing Ethiopian interference in the affairs of neighbouring countries can be interpreted as serving Soviet purposes. There are occasional signs of strain in the relationship, and some, including the former RRC Commissioner, believe that the Ethiopian Government is in some ways an expensive embarrassment to the Russians, who generally try to be inconspicuous. The Russians may be happy for the civil war to continue as a means of keeping the Government in its place, and for that purpose have allegedly

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joined others in giving covert help to the regional liberation movements. But as a country of strategic importance with the capacity to become - if it is not already - a base for the expansion of Soviet influence, Ethiopia represents a threat to African stability and Western interests throughout the continent.

6. Ethiopian society falls into three main groups. First is the mass of the people whose conditions are reminiscent of medieval Europe. Living for the most part in ragged clothes in grass huts which they share with their animals, the main aim of the Ethiopian peasant during the recent famine was to stay alive. In many of the highland areas population density visibly exceeds the carrying capacity of the land, and even without drought, famine conditions are a constant danger. At the feeding centre I visited some 50 km from Harar, the CARE representatives told me they saw little prospect of long term stability. Here as elsewhere the effects of the population increase of recent years are painfully evident. Conditions of this kind are scarcely new. Ethiopian peasants have maintained their dignity and a serenity derived from historical traditions through many past adversities. But the drought has brought into relief the imbalance in the distribution of population as well as living conditions which most would now judge intolerable.

7. The second group comprises the small middle class and the administration. Most of its members are relatively well educated, with inclinations, tempered by national pride, towards the West, in whose civilization they have mostly been brought up. English is the second language. The bureaucracy is generally civilized, subtle, and efficient. But its members feel politically powerless. They carry on with the business of running the country because they see no alternative to doing so. Implicitly, and occasionally explicitly, they are critical of the régime. One Vice-Minister told me that now that Gorbachov was adopting privatization, he had little doubt that Ethiopia would do so too before too long. The principal concern of such people is to look after

/themselves

themselves and their families in the hope that in some unspecified way the régime will eventually come to an end. But the rising generation has a somewhat different orientation. Its members have more radical views, and we cannot be assured that existing traditions will be maintained.

8. The third group consists of a small number of dedicated Marxist-Leninists who, with the Army leaders, have their hands firmly on the levers of power. The Workers Party of Ethiopia is said to contain between 40,000 and 60,000 members. Its authority in relation to the regular administration has recently increased. The Chairman of the Politburo Colonel Mengistu is to all intents and purposes a dictator, who according to those who used to work with him listens to almost no-one and allows little argument. He and his colleagues manage what is in effect a police state with arbitrary imprisonment, execution without trial, tight censorship over press, radio and television, control of movement of individuals, and an efficient secret police service.

9. Since the revolution eleven years ago, some 2 million Ethiopians have fled the country, and a succession of eminent defectors, including most recently the Minister of Foreign Affairs, have taken refuge in the West. More are probably on the way. Propaganda is crude: in Addis Ababa and to a lesser extent elsewhere there are plywood triumphal arches containing such slogans in English and Amharic as "Workers of the World Unite" and "Long Live Prolitarian Internationalism". One Ethiopian remarked sourly that for the educated they were grotesque and for the illiterate meaningless. But perhaps the most interesting aspect of this propaganda is how shallow its effects seem to be. Only the First Secretary of the Party, whom I met in Harar, and possibly the Acting Minister of Agriculture, seemed actually to think in Marxist-Leninist terms.

10. The armed forces divide between these three groups. The army itself consists of some 300,000 men (some 8 to 10 times larger than in the time of the Emperor). Many of the army leaders may have a vested interest in preserving their own position.

/It is

It is said that when Mengistu has to choose between the Party and the Army (and local conflicts are frequent) he usually chooses the Army. There may well be discontent in the middle ranks, as there was in the Emperor's time, and it is hard to believe that they could wholly be relied upon. As for the ordinary soldiers, conscription is unpopular, and the civil war is hardly being fought with enthusiasm. The attitude of individual army leaders may be the key to the future of the régime.

11. To the visitor, the atmosphere in Addis Ababa seemed different from elsewhere in the country. In the foreign community there are constant rumours about events at the top, some of them perhaps put about by the top people themselves. Access to key Ethiopians is difficult. The most regular source of information for educated Ethiopians as well as foreigners is apparently the BBC. Foreign observers, particularly those from NGOs in the field, were unanimous in doubting whether the régime could last. None believed that the regional dissident movements could bring down the régime, nor that the régime was capable of extirpating them. None could identify an available pan-Ethiopian alternative to the régime. And none would hazard how the régime would come to an end. The best hypothesis was that eventual conflict between its members would eventually cause it to collapse on itself.

Villagization and Resettlement

12. There can be little doubt that the ultimate aim of the Ethiopian leadership is collectivization of agriculture as the country's principal economic activity. Instructions to party cadres contain advice on how over time peasants should be weaned from desire for personal gain or advancement. The Acting Minister of Agriculture told me that in the long term the Government's aim was to socialize production and distribution as a superior economic mode. The recent famine has served to promote this aim through the policies of villagization and resettlement. On both, Ethiopian Ministers and officials were highly defensive in their discussions with me claiming that their actions had been misinterpreted, and that even if mistakes had been made the policies were necessary and justified by results. The Minister

of Planning countered my reference to Stalin's forced collectivization of the 1920s and the failure of the Tanzanian experiment in African socialism by saying that Ethiopia had only Ethiopian solutions to its problems.

13. Briefly villagization, which has only taken place in some provinces, consists of bringing together by fair means or foul the present scattered rural population into villages, which ideally should not be more than 2.5km from existing cultivated land. I saw one model village, a producers' cooperative, near a lake by Harar, complete with North Korean advisers. I saw another, chosen by me at random, not far away, where the people in huts they shared with their animals seemed more bewildered than anything else. Conditions were dreary, dirty and regimented. The armed guard who accompanied us confirmed reports that every village had its own militia. By contrast a village at Ansokia, supported by the American charity World Vision seemed successful. The inhabitants had been persuaded rather than coerced from their homesteads in the surrounding mountains, and under guidance from the volunteers had already increased agricultural production and introduced new crops. Elsewhere we drove past a squalid village near Dire Dawa whose inhabitants had, I was told, mostly returned to the hills. From the air I saw many others of straw or tin roofed huts in rows: scattered dwellings around seemed to have been abandoned or in some cases burnt. Both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Planning insisted that peasants could return to their former homes if they so wished, and took credit for their freedom to form producer cooperatives according to choice.

14. Obviously it is the coercive aspect which has aroused most international concern. No-one can object to the creation of villages as such, and where outside capital and support are forthcoming, villagization can be made to work. But the régime has described villagization as people's control, and political motives seem to have been as important as economic ones. Even apologists for villagization admitted that it was a vehicle for political education and that the immediate price might be

a fall in agricultural production. One Red Cross official told me that in one or two areas he had seen, villagization had represented a manmade disaster.

15. Resettlement has consisted of a Government directed movement of people - some 200,000 over two years - from the long cultivated highlands to the largely uncultivated lowlands. In some parts of the highlands recent drought has combined with erosion caused by over population of people and their animals to exhaust already precarious soils. CARE officials running a feeding centre at Corfachale did not see an end to the need for relief in that region. I visited the Belas resettlement areas south west of Lake Tana. They form part of a US$230 million mega-project, financed by the Italian Government, to dam Lake Tana, divert the course of the Blue Nile, and develop 250,000 hectares of forest or scrub land. When the Italian contractors arrived to begin work on the infrastructure to support resettlement, they found that 75,000 people from Wollo were already there in poor conditions and an unfamiliar environment. The resettlement programme was in fact suspended for most of 1986, but the Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner informed me that the Government planned to resettle another 60,000 a year for the next 3 years. Prospects for the long term viability of the Belas project, and its ability to sustain itself, remain doubtful.

16. Again the issue for the West has been the measure of coercion. In many areas resettlement may have been necessary. It has certainly been in progress for a long time. But the way in which the present programme has been carried out, substantially by the army, has given settlers no room for choice. Each representative of the voluntary organizations on the ground seemed to have his own horror story of suffering and abuse of human rights. The Minister of Foreign Affairs attempted to justify some compulsion to me by asking whether the British Government's evacuation scheme from the cities in 1940 had been voluntary. He went on to ask for development aid to make resettlement sustainable over the long term. He and other Ministers acknowledged the need for more careful preparation in the receiving areas, and

/said

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Levers of Western Influence

17. To all who asked for long term development aid, I gave a standard answer: that before considering such aid, we had to be sure that the Ethiopian Government's policies would provide the right framework for the country's economic development. A good measuring rod was in the agricultural part of the indicative agreement between the Ethiopian Government and the European Community under the Lomé Convention. The Acting Minister of Agriculture showed that he was far from happy about the three essential elements in that agreement: price incentives to peasants, greater freedom to private traders, and marketing of grain across provincial boundaries. Indeed as the former RRC Commissioner pointed out to me, the agreement went clean contrary to the régime's policy, intentions and provisions in the new constitution. The last Minister of Agriculture had, he said, been transferred for his role in relation to it. By contrast the Minister of Planning said that he attached particular importance to working with the European Community, and would make sure that the agreement was honoured one hundred per cent.

18. From discussion of the detail with the staff of the European Commission and the World Bank, it was clear that it would indeed be hard for the Government to honour the agreement without going a considerable way towards a genuine market economy in agriculture. This would in turn introduce some measure of inflation into what is at present an artificially rigid economy. Linked with application of the agreement will be World Bank conditionality on future lending which, according to the World Bank representative, will apply to such issues as the exchange rate (at present tied to the US dollar), industrial policy, tariff protection, population policy, and allocation of State resources. In short the West has two powerful levers of influence: the Lomé agreement amounting to US$ 221m (230m Ecus) over the next 5 years; and Bank - or rather IDA - lending of potentially still greater value over an indeterminate period.

/19.

19. But use of these levers to bring about a more market oriented economy and society raises wider policy issues. In recent years the West has provided most of the aid to a Soviet dominated régime. That aid, which has caused more than US$1.5 billion to pass through the hands of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, has had significant macro-economic effects, and saved the Government from what would otherwise have been effective bankruptcy. For its part the Eastern Bloc has provided the arms which has enabled the régime to survive and to constitute the base for Soviet influence in Africa. The régime may retain some measure of independence. It is certainly ready to play off one side against the other. But on the assumption that it wants to continue to make use of Western aid to bolster its own power and run the economy the way it wants, we should look carefully at the main options for Western policy. In doing so we must reckon with the likelihood of the continuing pressure of public opinion to maintain aid programmes to Ethiopia.

20. In broad terms the options are: to shun the régime as far as possible and make clear our preference for an alternative, while continuing with emergency relief as necessary; to try to cooperate more closely with the régime in the hope of influencing and persuading it with Western help to switch course and free itself from the Soviet grip; and to work on the system through imposition of firm conditions on future aid so as to maintain Western influence on Ethiopians outside the ruling group, and to push the country towards a freer and more market oriented economy. These options are not mutually exclusive. My own view is that the second is not realistic, and we should go for a mixture of the first and third.

Recommendations for Policy

21. My recommendations are:

- We should continue to avoid displays of friendliness towards the régime. Visits should not be at a high

/level,

level, and the emphasis should be on business rather than friendly relations. We should be ready to let the régime know that our attitudes will be directly affected by its policies in and towards its neighbours in the Horn of Africa.

- The European Community, through the Commission, should insist on the letter of the Lomé III indicative agreement. The Commission Delegate in Addis Ababa was confident of his ability to monitor it. He will need support from his authorities in Brussels in doing so. Its application should be by performance-related stages. The Community should be ready to suspend it on the Ugandan precedent if the Ethiopian Government were to renege on its terms.

- The World Bank should maintain equally firm conditionality in its lending programme, and continue to work closely with the Community.

- Donor governments, the European Community, and the World Bank should give no direct help to the present villagization and resettlement programmes, and should make this clear to the Ethiopian government. In carrying out its obligations under the Lomé Convention in the field of rural development, the Community should focus its efforts on new programmes or projects which can be carried through from the beginning and which stand on their own merits.

- Donors should not consider giving any long term development aid unless and until the Ethiopian Government fulfils its agreement with the Community and the conditions required by the World Bank. In the meantime aid should be directed to relief and rehabilitation on a case by case basis with priority to humanitarian considerations. Full use should be made of non-governmental organizations and the voluntary agencies. Donor governments should cooperate more closely in their bilateral programmes to ensure consistency.

- New emphasis should be laid on technical assistance, university contacts, and English language training with the aim of maintaining visible Western intellectual influence and activity. The role of the BBC is of critical importance. We should do more to encourage Ethiopian students to train in the West.

- We should train more Amharic speakers for service in our Missions in Addis Ababa. At present there is an astonishing lack of such speakers, which contrasts sharply with the Soviet effort and inhibits the range of our contacts with the Ethiopians.

- The United States, French, German and British Governments should create a policy coordinating mechanism, which might among other things commission contingency planning against the possibility of the collapse of the régime and look at eventual alternatives to it. How should we react in different circumstances, for example if the Russians intervened to protect their clients?

Conclusion

22. Ethiopia is too important to the West for either malign or benign neglect. Its present régime could do a lot of damage to Western interests. The longer it is in power, the more it can entrench itself and influence generations to come. Ethiopia may not be lost for ever, but it could be lost for a long time if we do nothing about it. We need an active, long term and consistent effort to bring it back.

8 December 1986 Crispin Tickell

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ETHIOPA
SUMMARY

1. IN THE MARGINS OF THE OECD DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE'S HIGH LEVEL MEETING YESTERDAY, SIR CRISPIN TICKELL SEPARATELY BRIEFED AURILLAC (FRANCE), KOHLER (GERMANY) AND MCPHERSON (UNITED STATES) ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO ETHIOPIA, AND CONFIRMED THAT HE WOULD LET THEM HAVE A WRITTEN NOTE AFTERWARDS. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT CERTAIN LINES OF POLICY MIGHT FOLLOW FROM HIS CONCLUSIONS.

DETAIL

2. TO EACH TICKELL GAVE BROADLY THE SAME ANALYSIS. HE HAD SEEN A RANGE OF ETHIOPIAN MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS AND VISITED DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. ETHIOPIAN SOCIETY COULD BE SEEN IN THREE LAYERS: THE MASS OF THE PEASANTRY WHO WERE STILL LIVING IN THE MIDDLE AGES: THE EDUCATED AND SOPHISTICATED MIDDLE CLASS OF OFFICIALS: AND A MINUTE GROUP OF COMMITTED MARXISTS IN THE DERG AND PARTY. THE ARMY WAS DIVIDED HORIZONTALLY ALONG SIMILAR LINES. THE VENEER OF MARXISM WAS VERY THIN, AND THE DERG'S APPARENT COMMITMENT TO COLLECTIVISATION WAS PROBABLY NOT SHARED BY THE BUREAUCRACY.

3. THE VILLAGISATION PROGRAMME WAS HAVING MIXED RESULTS. TICKELL HAD SEEN VILLAGES RANGING FROM A MODEL ONE ENJOYING FULL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT, TO ONE THAT SEEMED VIRTUALLY TO HAVE BEEN ABANDONED. WHERE OUTSIDE HELP AND CAPITAL WERE FORTHCOMING AND WHERE COERCION HAD NOT BEEN USED, VILLAGISATION COULD BE MADE TO WORK. THE COST OF RESETTLEMENT WAS MUCH HIGHER. THIS MIGHT BE NECESSARY IN CERTAIN AREAS. BUT THE WAY IN WHICH IT HAD BEEN DONE HAD INVOLVED ABUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. FOR EXAMPLE SOME 75,000 PEOPLE HAD BEEN MOVED FROM THE HIGHLANDS TO UNCLAIMED LOWER LAND IN THE BELAS PROJECT BEFORE THE ITALIANS HAD EVEN BEGUN WORK ON THE NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE.

4. MOST OBSERVERS FROM THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND OTHERS IN ADDIS ABABA SEEMED TO THINK THE REGIME COULD NOT POSSIBLY LAST, BUT NO ONE COULD PREDICT HOW IT WOULD END. MILITARY DEFEAT WAS UNLIKELY. THE ARMY COULD NOT DEFEAT SCATTERED AND INTERNALLY DIVIDED REGIONAL DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS, AND THE DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS COULD NOT DEFEAT THE ARMY. THE RUSSIANS SUPPORTED THE REGIME WHICH PROVIDED THEM WITH A BASE FROM WHICH TO THREATEN WESTERN INTERESTS IN AFRICA. BUT THEY WERE PROBABLY ALSO KEEPING THEIR LINES TO THE INSURGENTS. IF AND WHEN THE REGIME FELL, IT MIGHT DO SO FROM WITHIN ITSELF.

/5.

5. THE MOST EFFECTIVE LEVER FOR APPLYING PRESSURE ON THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT WAS PROBABLY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S INDICATIVE PROGRAMME UNDER LOME 3. THE ETHIOPIAN PLANNING MINISTER HAD SAID CATEGORICALLY THAT ITS VITAL AGRICULTURAL PROVISIONS WOULD BE CARRIED OUT TO THE LETTER. IF THIS WERE SO, THEN PRICE INCENTIVES FOR PEASANTS AND MOVEMENT OF GRAIN ACROSS PROVINCIAL BOUNDARIES WOULD, BY INTRODUCING A MARKET ECONOMY FOR AGRICULTURE, HAVE PROFOUND EFFECTS ON ETHIOPIAN SOCIETY. IT MIGHT ALSO CREATE SOME MEASURE OF INLFLATION IN WHAT WAS AT PRESENT AN ARTIFICIALLY RIGID ECONOMY.

POLICY CONCLUSIONS

6. TICKELL SUGGESTED THAT THE FOLLOWING LESSONS FOR POLICY MIGHT FOLLOW:

- THE EC COMMISSION SHOULD INSIST ON RESPECT FOR THE LETTER OF THE LOME 3 INDICATIVE AGREEMENT. THE COMMISSION DELEGATE IN ADDIS ABABA WAS CONFIDENT OF HIS ABILITY TO MONITOR IT, PREFERARLY ON A STAGE BY STAGE BASIS:

- THE WORLD BANK SHOULD CONTINUE TO ACT IN CLOSE COOPERATION AND SUPPORT:

- THE EC SHOULD BE READY TO SUSPEND THE AGREEMENT IF THE ETHIOPIANS RENEGED ON ITS TERMS:

- DONOR GOVERNMENTS SHOULD GIVE NO DIRECT HELP TO VILLAGISATION OR RESETTLEMENT:

- AID FOR RELIEF AND REHABILITATION SHOULD CONTINUE ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS WITH PRIORITY TO HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS:

- THE AMERICANS, FRENCH, GERMANS AND BRITISH MIGHT CONSIDER SOME CONTINGENCY PLANNING AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF THE EVENTUAL COLLAPSE OF THE REGIME. HOW, FOR EXAMPLE, SHOULD WE REACT IF THE RUSSIANS INTERVENED TO PROP UP THEIR CLIENTS?

7. IN RESPONSE ALL WELCOMED THIS ANALYSIS AND EXPRESSED BROAD SYMPATHY WITH THE CONCLUSIONS. THEY WOULD WISH TO CONSIDER THE POSITION CAREFULLY WHEN THEY SAW THE WRITTEN REPORT. AUPILLAC EXPRESSED PARTICULAR APPRECIATION. KOHLER AGREED THAT AID AGENCIES SHOULD REFRAIN FROM POLICIES WHICH MIGHT ENCOURAGE THE REGIME TO CONTINUE ITS VILLAGISATION AND RESETTLEMENT POLICIES, AND THAT THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION SHOULD INSIST ON RESPECT FOR THE LOME 3 AGREEMENT. MCPHERSON ALSO AGREED. HE SAID THAT THE US WOULD HELP IN ENCOURAGING THE WORLD BANK TO TAKE A TOUGH LINE IF THE ETHIOPIANS SHOWED SIGNS OF RENEGING ON THE LOME 3 AGREEMENT.

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8. TICKELL HAS ALSO SPOKEN ON SIMILAR LINES TO FRISCH (COMMISSION) AAND SALLEO (ITALY). WITH FRISCH HE HAS AGREED TO SEE NATALI IN BRUSSELS NEXT WEEK. FOR HIS PART SALLEO EXPRESSED HIS GOVERNMENT'S EMBARRASSMENT ABOUT ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE BELAS PROJECT WHICH HAD BEEN WISHED ON IT BY PARLIAMENT. NOT ONLY DID IT MEAN DIRECT SUPPORT FOR RESETTLEMENT, BUT LIKE ALL MEGAPROJECTS ALSO RISKED BEING A RELATIVE FAILURE.

BAYNE

Sir Crispin cc

by hand please.
- PS/Secretary of State W52
- PS/Mrs Chalker W48
- PS/PUS W15

as soon as possible please.
- SENNAN
- Dr Osborne E825
- Mr Freeman E432
- Mr Frost E428
- Mr Peterson E504
- Mr Hudson E847 DIV
- Mr E. Fenyssan W35
- Mr Reeve WH 231
- Sir David Miers E205

[EAD IFCO, NENAD already have copies].

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
ELAND HOUSE
STAG PLACE LONDON SW1E 5DH
Telephone 01-213 4819

Sir Crispin Tickell KCVO
Permanent Secretary

16 October 1986

Dear Charles,

I send a copy of a minute I wrote today on one of my favourite subjects. It is for you to know that I still don't take lying down chummy policies towards Transistra. I am particularly looking forward to seeing the place for myself next month.

Yours ever

Crispin

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FROM: Sir Crispin Tickell
DATE: 16 October 1986

cc PS
PS/Mrs Chalker
PS/Mr Patten
Mr Ainscow Mr Fergusson
Mr Hudson Mr Reeve
Dr Healey Mr Marsden

Dr Osborne

ETHIOPIA

The likely resumption of the Ethiopian Government's resettlement programme and the continuing process of villagization already raise questions about our future policy and in particular our aid policy towards Ethiopia. Mrs Chalker will be visiting Ethiopia briefly next month, and I plan to accompany her and perhaps to stay a little longer. I suggest that we should await Mrs Chalker's return before reaching any decisions.

2. In the meantime I was struck by what the Sudanese Prime Minister said today to Mr Patten about the Ethiopian rôle in promoting rebellion in the southern Sudan. Sadiq el Mahdi said that he believed that a settlement of the rebellion had been well within reach until the Sudanese rebels had - perhaps through lack of discipline rather than anything else - shot down the civilian airliner at Malakal. But he feared that the Sudanese rebels were not a free agent. They were essentially controlled from Addis Ababa. There were two main possibilities. The Ethiopians might enter into a deal by which they ceased to interfere in the Sudan, and the Sudanese agreed in return to try and limit the supply of arms to the Eritrean and other resistance movements in Ethiopia. He made it clear that he himself would be willing to look at an arrangement of this kind, a sort of peace pact for the Horn of Africa. The second possibility was that the Ethiopians were seeking to create client buffer zones or states in the Sudan, Somalia and perhaps elsewhere where civil strife could be promoted with the aim of maintaining the integrity of Marxist Ethiopia. He implied that he thought the second possibility was more likely than the first. Hence the prospect of peace in the south was small.

3. In these circumstances, and before we look again at our policy towards Ethiopia, I wonder whether it would not be useful to make a study of the extent to which Western aid currently sustains the Ethiopian Government; what the Ethiopian Government would do if the bulk of Western aid, even short term relief like our own were cut off; from which sources Ethiopia obtains most of its foreign exchange; and the extent of Ethiopia's economic dependence on the Soviet Union and its allies. These questions may not be easy to answer. But at least examination of these should be of help: we need to know whether we are in fact providing a crucial measure of support to a government inimical to Western interests.

16 October 1986

Crispin Tickell

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 June 1986

CDP 6/6.

Dear Charles

Ethiopia: Greetings from Chairman Mengistu

I write to draw your attention to Addis Ababa telno 188 (copy enclosed). You will see that in the course of our new Ambassador's first meeting with Chairman Mengistu, Mengistu asked for the greetings of the Government and people of Ethiopia to be passed to HM The Queen and the Prime Minister.

Yours ever

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

(6)

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27 MAY 1986

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FM ADDIS ABABA
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MY LETTER 020/326/1 OF 22 MAY TO MARSDEN (EAD): UK-ETHIOPIA

SUMMARY

1. WHEN IN A SIMPLE CEREMONY I PRESENTED MY CREDENTIALS CHAIRMAN MENGISTU ASKED THAT THE GREETINGS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA BE CONVEYED TO THE QUEEN AND THE PRIME MINISTER.

DETAIL

2. I PRESENTED MY LETTERS ON 24 MAY. CHAIRMAN MENGISTU HAILE MARIAM WAS ACCOMPANIED BY TIBEBU BEKELE, VICE-MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (THE MINISTER BEING ON A VISIT TO NEW YORK (FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION ON AFRICA), CANADA, GREECE AND ITALY), AND TIBEBU SHIFERAW, HEAD OF THE EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT IN THE MFA.

3. IN THE FORMAL REMARKS CALLED FOR BY THE PROTOCOL OF SUCH OCCASIONS IN ADDIS ABABA MENGISTU SAID (THROUGH AN INTERPRETER) THAT THERE WERE LONG-STANDING AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND ETHIOPIA. THIS WAS A FACT EXPERIENCED AND FELT BY EVERYONE IN ETHIOPIA. THE LATTER'S PAST SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM HAD PROVED OF NO AVAIL: THE NEW SYSTEM HAD CREATED SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND SOME COOLING OF CONTACTS BUT HE HAD NO COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT OR PEOPLE. RELATIONS WERE NOW NORMAL AND INTACT IN SPITE OF THE CHANGES. ALL THE FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS REQUIRED FOR THE DEEPENING OF TIES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES WERE THERE, AND HE HAD INSTRUCTED THE ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR IN LONDON TO APPLY HIMSELF TO THE SPECIFIC DUTY OF STRENGTHENING THE BONDS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. EVERYONE IN ETHIOPIA, FROM HIMSELF DOWNWARDS, WAS COMMITTED TO THIS TASK. HE WANTED TO EMPHASISE THE NEED FOR OPENNESS, CLEARNESS AND FRANKNESS, AND HE WAS READY TO GIVE EVERY ASSISTANCE TO ACHIEVE BETTER RELATIONS. HE ASKED ME TO CONVEY THE GREETINGS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA TO HM THE QUEEN AND THE PRIME MINISTER.

4. THANKING MENGISTU FOR WHAT HE HAD SAID, I REPLIED THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO FEEL PROUD TO BE APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO A COUNTRY WITH SO LONG A HISTORY AND SO UNIQUE A CULTURE. I WAS ALSO PROUD THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF MY COUNTRY HAD RESPONDED TO THE NEEDS WITH WHICH HIS COUNTRY WAS UNFORTUNATELY AFFLICTED, AND THAT IN THE WAR WE HAD PLAYED A ROLE IN THE REGAINING OF ETHIOPIA'S BRIEFLY LOST SOVEREIGNTY. IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO SUPPOSE THAT RELATIONS COULD BE REALLY CLOSE BETWEEN SOCIALIST ETHIOPIA AND DEMOCRATIC, CAPITALIST, BRITAIN. BUT I BELIEF

WAS

WAS POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE A USEFUL, PROFITABLE AND BUSINESSLIKE RELATIONSHIP. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS WERE NOT SO SIMPLE AS THEY HAD BEEN IN THE WAR: NOWADAYS SUBJECTS SUCH AS HUMAN RIGHTS HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THAT HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN CONSIDERED INTERNAL MATTERS. BUT I KNEW THAT MY PREDECESSOR HAD WORKED HARD FOR BETTER RELATIONS AND I COULD BE RELIED UPON TO DO THE SAME. I SHOULD OF COURSE BE GLAD TO CARRY OUT THE CHAIRMAN'S INSTRUCTION TO CONVEY GREETINGS TO THE QUEEN AND THE PRIME MINISTER.

COMMENT

5. THE CEREMONY ITSELF WAS BRIEF, DIGNIFIED AND IMPERIAL IN ITS PROTOCOL: APART FROM A PORTRAIT OF MENGISTU ON THE WALL THE FORMAL ROOMS OF THE PALACE LOOK EXACTLY AS THEY MUST HAVE LOOKED IN THE DAYS OF THE EMPEROR. AS I HAD ALREADY OBSERVED WHEN MENGISTU ATTENDED THE INAUGURATION OF STAGE III OF THE ADDIS ABABA WATER PROJECT (FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND), HE PLAYS THE ROLE OF HEAD OF STATE WELL: HE MOVES WITH CALM CONTROL, SPEAKS SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY, SMILES EASILY. IT IS A PITY THAT THE PROTOCOL HERE DOES NOT ALLOW FOR DEBATE DURING CREDENTIAL CEREMONIES: BUT FOR WHAT IT MAY BE WORTH THE CHAIRMAN COULD HARDLY HAVE SPOKEN IN WARMER TERMS ABOUT UK-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS AND I WAS ABLE AT LEAST TO INSERT A REFERENCE TO THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

WALKER

LIMITED
EAD
PROTOCOL D
PLANNING STAFF
PS
PS MRS CHALKER
PS/PUS
MR FERGUSSON
MR REEVE

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 March 1986

Prime Minister

CDP 27/3.

Dear Charles,

Ethiopia: Mr Barder's Valedictory Despatch

The Foreign Secretary believes that the Prime Minister might like to see the enclosed valedictory despatch from our Ambassador at Addis Ababa, Mr Barder.

He considers that Mr Barder has done a good job in difficult circumstances. We have managed to restore some of our influence in Ethiopia (para 5 of the valedictory), largely as a result of capitalising on humanitarian assistance from the UK during the famine. The RAF airlift was outstanding in this respect. Ministerial visits have also helped. Mr Barder describes the underlying goodwill in Ethiopia towards the West, and especially towards the UK as a result of our record as the liberators of Ethiopia from fascism in 1941.

We want to achieve clear objectives in Ethiopia: less dependence on the Soviet Union; economic policies which reduce the risk of further famine; an improvement in human rights; and better relations with the West. Mr Barder admits that so far the political spin-off from our limited influence has been disappointing. The scope for Western leverage has been weakened by divisions within Western ranks. The Italians, who have considerable influence in the area, have been much less inclined than the UK to put pressure on the Ethiopian Government. There is now evidence, however, that UK efforts, both bilaterally and within the EC, in favour of a more forceful and coherent policy, are producing results. France, provoked by public allegations on human rights violations in the Ethiopian resettlement programme, modified its position in a helpful way. The Commission was able to obtain some useful commitments on agricultural policy reform during its recent EDF programming mission. And we have initiated a useful joint policy paper from the EC Ambassadors in Addis Ababa which we aim to have put to Foreign Ministers in Political Cooperation.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

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VALEDICTORY DESPATCH FROM ETHIOPIA

GOODBYE TO ETHIOPIA

SUMMARY

1. Major changes in 3½ years. Britain better placed to help deal with regional problems: ending dependence on food aid, reducing Soviet influence, resolving wasteful and destabilising conflicts. Reasons for Ethiopian dependence on Moscow: need for military help over northern rebellions and threat from Somalia (paras 1 - 3).

2. Pragmatists strengthened and anti-westernism discredited by international famine relief effort. Mutual moves to inject more substance into UK-Ethiopian relations. First ministerial visits since before the revolution. Now need to use the improvement to advance western interests (paras 4 - 6).

3. Country opened up to western media and visitors. Travel restrictions eased. Western, especially British, assets: widespread goodwill, English language, desire to maintain links, hunger for British books: a head start in competition with Russians (paras 7 - 8).

4. Backlash in west and Ethiopia following relief effort: campaign to discredit Ethiopian positions, especially over resettlement programme. Objectionable features of resettlement, but allegations and importance much exaggerated (para 9).

5. Rewarding time to serve here. Tribute to Embassy staff for hard work on relief operation: thanks for response from London. Now for the more complex political challenge (paras 10 - 11).

BRITISH EMBASSY,
ADDIS ABABA.

3 March 1986

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP
LONDON

Sir

GOODBYE TO ETHIOPIA

1. There could hardly have been more changes in the nature of the job and in the character of Britain's relations with Ethiopia than have occurred since I arrived 3½ years ago. Many useful, even important, things have been accomplished: not least, many lives have been saved. But I leave with more pessimism than when I came. Britain has certainly improved its capacity for beginning to tackle, with other like-minded western governments, some of the problems of Ethiopia and the Horn which demand attention on humanitarian grounds and in the pursuit of western interests - the elimination of starvation and dependence on western food aid; the reduction and eventual removal of Soviet influence; promoting progress towards the settlement of conflicts and disputes which perpetuate Ethiopian dependence on Moscow, threaten to destabilise Ethiopia's more pro-western neighbours - Sudan, Somalia, even Kenya - and divert desperately needed resources from the life-and-death task of economic development. We are better placed than before to initiate and take part in an effort to deal with these problems: the need now is to make a start. But it would be wrong to understate the magnitude of the task: Ethiopian resistance to external pressures, and its xenophobia: the extent to which the country has come under Soviet tutelage, almost control: above all the inertial weight of the desperate poverty and backwardness

/of

of these 42 million people, a situation which only an immense international enterprise with the full-hearted cooperation of the Ethiopian government could possibly remedy. It is impossible to feel optimistic about the chances of such an enterprise being mounted, or, if it is, of such Ethiopian cooperation being forthcoming. There is however no acceptable alternative to making the attempt.

2. When I arrived in late 1982 our relations were at a low ebb: no new bilateral aid since about 1978, no ministerial visits or contacts since the 1974 revolution, no basis for access to or contacts with the Ethiopian leadership. We had no real policy for Ethiopia or the Horn apart from distaste for the Derg. Only 5 years earlier the new leaders of the revolution had switched allegiance, or at any rate dependence for military support, from Washington to Moscow (and Havana), their hands still bloodstained from the brief but horrific carnage of the White and Red Terrors. Whether American short-sightedness had forced Mengistu into Moscow's arms, and wherever responsibility for the Terror might lie, the effects were the same: an anti-western, communist-leaning dictatorship, slavishly following the Moscow line internationally, moving - true, with marked reluctance - towards the creation of a communist party and one-party state on the Soviet model.

3. 3½ years later Ethiopia's political alignments and the conflicts and problems of the Horn remain largely unchanged, except that Ethiopia has moved several stages further towards the proclamation of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, with its Workers'

/Party

Party already in place. Ethiopia depends as much as ever on the Russians and Cubans for two fundamental national needs: one, to keep up resistance to the armed rebellions in the north by Eritreans fighting for full independence from Ethiopia, and Tigreans opposed to the domination of the government in Addis Ababa by southerners; and, two, to ensure that it can cope with any fresh military threat from Somalia, which launched a full-scale invasion, nearly successful, in 1977-8 in pursuit of its dream of a Greater Somalia incorporating nearly a third of Ethiopia's national territory. (It is noteworthy, by the way, that no Ethiopian Government could even discuss with its adversaries, still less concede, any of their demands: Eritrean independence, restoration of the political centre of gravity in Ethiopia to Tigray, or the cession of the Ogaden to Somalia. So negotiated settlements of any of these conflicts will require a change in the position of the adversaries of the Ethiopian government, which itself has virtually no scope for promoting peaceful settlements.) Because of the northern Ethiopian rebellions and Sudanese complicity with the rebels, Ethiopian-Sudanese relations are poor and the Ethiopians react by making trouble in southern Sudan. Because of the dispute with Mogadishu over Somali irredentist ambitions, the Ethiopians likewise foment trouble for Siad Barre (as Siad Barre does for Ethiopia). The whole area is permanently destabilised by these frictions: the Soviet Union alone the tertius gaudens.

4. But there have been 2 major developments in relations with the west, and with Britain, during my time here. The first and

/biggest

biggest has been caused by the immense western response to the Ethiopian famine in late 1984 and throughout 1985. I have described this in detail in a separate despatch and need not do so again here. But among the effects have been to strengthen the pragmatists and western-oriented elements in the leadership and technocracy at the expense of the ideologues and hard-liners - whether permanently or temporarily will depend on how the west follows up its initial gains: and to discredit the former party line according to which the United States and the other western "imperialists" were irredeemably hostile, not only to the Ethiopian government but also to its people. Even public attacks on the United States Administration have virtually stopped since the Americans emerged as easily the biggest single donor of food aid to Ethiopia. The western donors have also earned, by their efforts in emergency relief, the right and status to demand a say in future Ethiopian agricultural policies in order to ensure that these effectively encourage progress towards the common aim of the earliest possible food self-sufficiency for Ethiopia, and an end to dependence on external food aid.

5. The major development for Britain has been the progress since late 1982 in making ourselves more relevant to Ethiopia and thus improving our capacity, should we choose in future to make use of it, for influencing Ethiopia in the desired direction politically - for example, if we were to participate in a western effort to tackle some of the regional problems discussed earlier, and to

/enhance

enhance our national effectiveness in the campaign for reforms in Ethiopia's agricultural problems. We have engaged the Ethiopians, starting well before the international relief operation of late 1984, in a series of mutual moves, individually mostly minor but collectively quite significant, to inject more substance into the relationship, to demonstrate our interest, and to restore some of our former status and influence. We cajoled the Ethiopians into a generous settlement of the major British claim for compensation for assets nationalised after the revolution. British companies were awarded lucrative contracts for ships, generators and a big dam-and-tunnel project, the largest ever won by a British company under the European Development Fund. Britain offered modest technical assistance for ELT and medical training, and lifted the ban on a VSO programme. We cancelled Ethiopia's pre-revolution aid debts to Britain, recognising its impeccable payments record. All these cautious but positive steps made it possible for Mr Rifkind, then Minister of State at the FCO, to make in July 1984 the first Ministerial visit to Ethiopia since well before the revolution. Subsequently you, Sir, received the Ethiopian Foreign Minister in London, and Britain's prominent role in the international relief operation, including the RAF's spectacularly successful contribution, gave rise to 3 more Ministerial visits - 2 by Mr Raison and 1 by Mr Stanley. Indeed, it was largely because of the marked up-grading of our relationship and thus of our contacts and access in Addis Ababa that it proved possible to manage the British share of the relief effort with the Ethiopians in a reasonably cooperative

/and effective

and effective manner. At his farewell lunch for me last week the Foreign Minister acknowledged the much increased substance in our relations, and said he now regarded these as having been "normalised".

6. It is of course nice to be able to feel that one has left bilateral relations in somewhat better shape than one found them; but there is little point in better relations, especially with a government as objectionable and disreputable as that to which I have been accredited, unless the relationship can be used to advance our wider interests and objectives. That next stage, I hope, will be for my successor to advise upon and, at this end anyway, to manage.

7. Other things have changed too in my time here. Until late 1984 it was almost unheard-of for western journalists and television teams to be allowed to visit and report from Ethiopia. Since the relief operation began, the country has often been awash with the western press, who can now come more or less freely and write what they like. British television was indeed a hero of the relief saga, having alerted the world to the unfolding tragedy. Eminent western visitors used to be rare birds indeed. But in the past 15 months there has been a stream of household names, some (Ministers of donor countries, for example) with a real contribution to make, some without. The Ethiopian authorities have tirelessly welcomed them all, escorted them all over the country, wined and dined them and in most cases persuaded them that their hosts were perhaps not quite as bad as they were painted.

8. Another major change for the better has been much greater ease

/of travel

of travel within Ethiopia for diplomats and other foreigners. When I came, the bureaucratic obstacles to travel were so aggravating that most of my colleagues never sought to stir outside the capital. In fact, by stubborn persistence and by devising plausible if not actually fraudulent reasons for visiting particular places, my wife and I had managed to visit almost all parts of Ethiopia, even before the relief operation and, especially, the RAF's arrival brought a sudden easing of restrictions. Meeting people in remote areas of this big and sprawling country convinced us of the underlying reservoir of good-will towards the west, and especially towards Britain, waiting to be tapped. Our record as the liberators of Ethiopia from fascism in 1941, the use of English from secondary school up, admiration for (almost) all things British - I say "almost" because sadly I see many more Toyota Landcruisers than landrovers in this rugged terrain which might have been specially designed for 4-wheel drive - and the pressing anxiety to maintain links with us at all levels: the hunger for British books, reflected in the British Council Library's astronomical lending figures - all these things give us a head start in our competition with the Russians for hearts and minds, if we can find the imagination and, on a modest scale, the resources, to take advantage of them.

9. Since the beginning of 1986 we have witnessed the predictable and predicted, backlash, both in the west and in Ethiopia, following the humanitarian glamour of the preceding 15 months. The novelty of helping to feed starving Ethiopians has begun to wear off

(although

(although happily HMG and other western donor governments have fully accepted the need for continued food and other emergency aid at least until the end of this year). Ethiopian gratitude has not quite reached the levels demanded in some quarters. The immediate political spin-off has been negligible, disappointing some unrealistic expectations. The astonishingly emotional, sometimes unscrupulous, anti-Ethiopian lobby has rallied its forces and mounted an effective campaign to discredit the Ethiopian Government, its use of western relief aid, its position in relation to the Eritrean conflict and the Somali dispute, and above all its resettlement programme - the latter becoming in consequence almost an obsession in some quarters in the west, despite its marginal significance. (There have been objectionable features of the way in which resettlement has been carried out, and we have been right to keep our distance from it: but allegations of a new Holocaust, with 80% of those resettled dead or about to die, bear no discernible relation to reality.) But the impact of the relief operation has endured despite the controversies.

10. It has been enormously rewarding to have served here during these years in which Ethiopia has engaged the attention and compassion of the civilised world, and in which we have progressed from detachment to involvement in the affairs of an ancient, proud, independent-minded and tragic people. To have taken some small part in the biggest international humanitarian relief effort ever mounted has been an unforgettable experience, if sometimes a gruelling one, and I have been grateful for that opportunity. Certainly our work in the Embassy has often transcended the day-to-day routines of

/diplomatic

diplomatic work at most times in most places. The burden and demands on my smallish staff, especially at the start of the relief operation, were considerable. They all responded admirably to the challenge, many of them working long and unsocial hours under great pressure, often in the harsh light of international publicity with all its potential pitfalls: I hope we avoided most of them (for the record, we never actually asked for an Embassy swimming pool!). If there is now a hint of anticlimax, especially since the end of the RAF operation, that was always to be expected. There will be more grind and less glamour in the next months and years, but the human and political stakes will be the same. I have greatly appreciated the speedy, sympathetic and perceptive response of Ministers and officials at home, in many Departments, to our often exigent appeals and recommendations in the context of the relief effort: that response has saved lives and won friends. If the response so far to the political challenge and opportunity has been more uncertain or more reserved, that reflects the complexity of a set of problems with no clear-cut solutions, and the difficulty of a situation where any conceivable act is sure to be misrepresented. But at least we have made a start.

11. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Minister for Overseas Development, and to HM Representatives at Khartoum, Mogadishu, Nairobi, Riyadh, Sana'a, Abu Dhabi, UKMis New York, Washington and Moscow.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully

Brian Barder

Brian Barder

The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES PREM 19 PIECE/ITEM 3307 (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract details: Wicks to Fellowes dated 8 January 1986 with attachments	
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TEMPORARILY RETAINED	29/6/2017 G. Gray
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Use black or blue pen to complete form.

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Enter the department and series,
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Enter the piece and item references, .
eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

Enter extract details if it is an extract rather than a whole piece.
This should be an indication of what the extract is,
eg. Folio 28, Indictment 840079, E107, Letter dated 22/11/1995.
Do not enter details of why the extract is sensitive.

If closed under the FOI Act, enter the FOI exemption numbers applying to the closure, eg. 27(1), 40(2).

Sign and date next to the reason why the record is not available to the public ie. Closed under FOI exemption; Retained under section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958; Temporarily retained; Missing at transfer or Number not used.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 January 1986

Dear Nigel,

Crown Prince of Ethiopia

TEMPORARILY RETAINED

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT.

As the Crown Prince made clear in his letter to the Queen, he also wrote to both the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary about his worries. Following these letters an official from the FCO and an official from the Home Office called on the Crown Prince at his home in mid December. The Crown Prince and his family were clearly relieved to have the opportunity to discuss their problems. The officials were able to assure him that the Special Branch had been alerted and would reassess the threat to his family and home carefully. In the light of this assessment, the Home Office will also arrange for the Crown Prince to be given advice on any additional physical security measures which may be necessary.

The Crown Prince also indicated, as he did in his letter to the Queen, that he is planning to take a rather higher political profile while residing here than in the past. Though he was not prepared to be specific about the details, he intends to help orchestrate from London a more active campaign against the present Ethiopian government. Although there would certainly be sympathy for his cause among members of the emigre Ethiopian community, such action would jeopardise the prospects for the members of his immediate family who are still in prison in Ethiopia. (The UK has always been active in pressing for their release and there have recently been some encouraging signs that the Mengistu regime may now be moving towards their early release). We propose therefore to point out to the Crown Prince the dangers in taking a high profile in opposition to the present regime in Addis Ababa.

Yours ever,

(L V Appleyard)
Private Secretary

N L Wicks Esq CBE
No.10 Downing Street

The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES PREM 19 PIECE/ITEM 3307 (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract details: Attachments to Appleyard to Wicks dated 8 January 1986	X
CLOSED UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
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Instructions for completion of Dummy Card

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Enter the department and series,
eg. HO 405, J 82.

Enter the piece and item references, .
eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

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This should be an indication of what the extract is,
eg. Folio 28, Indictment 840079, E107, Letter dated 22/11/1995.
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The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES PREM 19 PIECE/ITEM 3307 (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract details: Wicks to Beddd dated 23 December 1985	X
CLOSED UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
TEMPORARILY RETAINED	29/6/2017 J. Gray
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eg. Folio 28, Indictment 840079, E107, Letter dated 22/11/1995.
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The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES PREM 19 PIECE/ITEM 3307 (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract details: Fellowes to Wicks dated 20 December 1985 with attachment	
CLOSED UNDER FOI EXEMPTION	
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958	
TEMPORARILY RETAINED	29/6/2017 J. Gray
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DOCUMENT PUT IN PLACE (TNA USE ONLY)	

Instructions for completion of Dummy Card

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Use the card for one piece or for each extract removed from a different place within a piece.

Enter the department and series,
eg. HO 405, J 82.

Enter the piece and item references, .
eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

Enter extract details if it is an extract rather than a whole piece.
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eg. Folio 28, Indictment 840079, E107, Letter dated 22/11/1995.
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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

19 November, 1985

Thank you for your letter of 1 November.

The Prime Minister was concerned to learn of your worries about the security of your family and household. The Foreign Secretary has now made arrangements for officials from the Foreign Office and Home Office to discuss the problem with you.

We share your concern at the continued detention of political prisoners by the Ethiopian regime, especially the members of your own family. We have made our views very clear to the Ethiopian Government and have called on them to release your family and other political prisoners without any further delay. I can assure you that Ministers of this Government will continue to press the Ethiopian Government.

We also share your dismay at the suffering endured by the people of Ethiopia under the effects of drought and famine. I hope you will agree that the response of both the people of Britain and the Government to this tragic situation speaks for itself.

(C.D. Powell)

His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Merd Azmatch
Asfa Wossen HS.

cc PC

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 November 1985

Dear Charles,

Crown Prince of Ethiopia

You wrote on 6 November enclosing a letter from the Crown Prince to the Prime Minister about, among other things, threats to the security of the Crown Prince and his family. I enclose a self-explanatory draft reply, which has been agreed with the Home Office. It is drafted as from the Prime Minister although you may prefer to send the response as a Private Secretary letter.

The Crown Prince also wrote a letter in similar terms to the Foreign Secretary, to which he has sent a short acknowledgement.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to William Fittall at the Home Office.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret
Secret
Confidential
Restricted
Unclassified

TO:
His Imperial Highness
Crown Prince Merd Azmatch Asfa
Wossen HS
Flat O, 82 Portland Place London Wl

Your Reference

Copies to:

JAIADF

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

SUBJECT:

Thank you for your letter of 1 November.

I was concerned to learn of your worries about the security of your family and household. The Foreign Secretary has now made arrangements for officials from the Foreign Office and Home Office to discuss the problem with you.

We share your concern at the continued detention of political prisoners by the Ethiopian regime, especially the members of your own family. We have made our views very clear to the Ethiopian Government and have called on them to release your family and other political prisoners without any further delay. I can assure you that Ministers of this Government will continue to press the Ethiopian Government.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

We also share your dismay at the suffering endured by the people of Ethiopia under the effects of drought and

famine. I hope you will agree that the response of both the people of Britain and the Government to this tragic situation speeks for itself.

GM

RLe.

ECL

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 November 1985

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 1 November. We are looking into the matters you raise and I am sure that the Prime Minister will want to reply herself as soon as possible.

(Charles Powell)

His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Asfa Wossen

CHARLES

Whilst speaking to the FCO to check up how you should address the Crown Prince, they said that they have received a similar letter from him. They have not acknowledged and are checking with the Department concerned in the morning.

FCO suggest that it would be wise if you also did not acknowledge at this stage.

Alan Holmes will let us know tomorrow.

LIZ
6/11/85

Refer yes
A

Crown Prince of ETHIOPIA.

20/11.

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

6 November 1985

I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from the Crown Prince of Ethiopia which deals in part with threats to the security of his family and household. I should be grateful if you could let me have a draft reply in conjunction with the Home Office.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to William Fittall (Home Office).

(Charles Powell)

Colin Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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H.I.H. Merd Azmatch Asfa Wossen H.S.
Crown Prince of Ethiopia

CL 6/1

The Rt. Hon. Mrs M. Thatcher
10 Downing Street
Whitehall
London SW1

1st November 1985

Dear Mrs Thatcher

I wish to express my deep gratitude to you for letting my family and I reside in your peaceful country for the last ten years, since the upheaval in Ethiopia and the death of my father, the Emperor Haile Selassie I.

During my stay in England, I have tried to adopt a low profile and not to trouble the British Government with my private affairs. However, I now find myself in a situation in which the security of my family and household are threatened and would be grateful if your Government could offer some assistance. I have tried to contact the police on this matter, but the appropriate response has not been forthcoming. This is understandable, since the police are not directly concerned with the complexities of Ethiopian politics. I feel that I am in need of advice from a different quarter and have also written, in this respect, to Sir Geoffrey Howe, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

The problem has arisen largely because the situation in Ethiopia has recently become highly sensitive due to the critical position of the Marxist Government and the country at large. As a result, I find that even the slightest effort on my family's part to extend the hand of humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia is watched with an intensity and suspicion that is surely unwarranted.

I would be grateful for your support in our efforts to improve the security of my family and to pursue the goals of humanitarian assistance which we have set.

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H.I.H. MERD AZMATCH ASFA WOSSEN H.S.
CROWN PRINCE OF ETHIOPIA

Our countries have always stood together in the past. Through the hard times when Italy invaded my country and Great Britain came to our assistance, and through the good times, when our development process, albeit primitive, first got underway and we hope this close and friendly relationship will continue. We will never forget the help your Government is giving now to our people, though we are saddened to see that, although so much is being given, the aid is not having its full effect because of the awkward regime that resides in Addis Ababa, which seems determined to block the road to peaceful and lasting development.

Before I end this letter, I would like to thank you personally and your Government for your hard efforts to tackle the issue of human rights in Ethiopia and other countries. As you know, ten members of my family are in prison in Addis Ababa and have been there for ten years, including my sister who is seventy-two years old and struggling for life. I am particularly grateful to The Right Honourable Timothy Raison, who, I understand, raised this issue at the O.A.U. Summit in July with some success.

Please accept, Prime Minister, the assurances of our highest considerations

H.I.H. Merd Azmatch Asfa Wossen H.S.
Crown Prince of Ethiopia

H.I.H. Medferiash Work Abebe

Flat O
82 Portland Place
London W1

RESTRICTED

GR 800
RESTRICTED
FM ADDIS ABABA 230620Z JUL 85
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 324 SIC OF 23 JULY
INFO ROUTINE ODA, DAR ES SALAAM, NAIROBI, LUANDA, LAGOS, HARARE
LUSAKA, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, UKMIS GENEVA, KHARTOUM,
MOGADISHU, CAIRO.
INFO SAVING JEDDA, PRETORIA.

VISIT OF LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION AND MRS KINNOCK

SUMMARY

1. MR AND MRS KINNOCK AND PARTY OFFICIALS IN ADDIS TO MEET OAU LEADERS TO DISCUSS DEVELOPMENT ISSUES, MEET UK RELIEF WORKERS AND FLY WITH RAF. USEFUL MEETING WITH ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER. VISIT EVENTUALLY A SUCCESS DESPITE CHAOTIC PROGRAMME CHANGES. MAIN POINTS FROM TALKS.

DETAIL

2. MR KINNOCK HAD TALKS DURING 48 HOURS IN ADDIS ABABA WITH PRESIDENT KAUNDA, GENERAL BUHARI, MR MUGABE, MR VAN DUNEM (ANGOLAN FOREIGN MINISTER - PRESIDENT DOS SANTOS'S AIRCRAFT HAVING LEFT BEFORE MR KINNOCK'S DELAYED ARRIVAL) AND ADEDEJI (EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, ECA) PLUS SENIOR ECA OFFICIALS. HE HAD A BRIEF PRIVATE WORD WITH TAMBO (ANC). ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER INVITED HIM TO PAY COURTESY CALL AND HAD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WHEN HE SAW HIM OFF AT AIRPORT ON DEPARTURE. MR KINNOCK MET WIDE RANGE OF BRITISH AND OTHER RELIEF WORKERS, VISITED RAF DETACHMENT AND WENT ON RAF AIR DROP SORTIE. MRS KINNOCK CARRIED OUT PROGRAMME OF VISITS TO HOSPITALS, CHILDREN'S HOMES, ETC. PRESS ACCOMPANYING VISITORS RECEIVED FAIRLY FULL ACCOUNTS OF ALL MR KINNOCK'S DISCUSSIONS, AND COVERED HIS AND MRS KINNOCK'S VISITS.

3. ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WAS MARKEDLY MORE CORDIAL AND POSITIVE THAN WHEN HE HAD CALLED EARLIER ON MR KINNOCK IN LONDON. HE STRESSED VARIOUS CONSTRUCTIVE ETHIOPIAN INITIATIVES (PARA 5 A-D BELOW) AND ASKED MR KINNOCK TO CONVEY GRATITUDE OF ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT FOR UK RELIEF AID AND GENEROSITY TO BRITISH PEOPLE.

4. CONSTANT CHANGES IN OAU SUMMIT TIMETABLE THROUGHOUT WEEKEND AND IN DEPARTURE PLANS OF RELEVANT HEADS OF DELEGATIONS REQUIRED INNUMERABLE RECONSTRUCTIONS OF MR KINNOCK'S PROGRAMME. HE EVENTUALLY MET ALL WHOM HE WANTED TO, THANKS LARGELY TO PRELIMINARY SPADEWORK BY BRITISH POSTS IN CAPITALS, HELP

OF RELEVANT EMBASSIES IN ADDIS, AND EVIDENT DESIRE OF MR KINNOCK'S INTERLOCUTORS TO SEE HIM. ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT ALSO COOPERATED FULLY, PROVIDING PASSES (NOT USUALLY AVAILABLE TO ANYONE NOT ATTENDING OAU CONFERENCE AS A DELEGATE) TO ENABLE MR KINNOCK TO VISIT PRESIDENTIAL HOTEL SUITES FREELY DESPITE VERY TIGHT SECURITY. AT MR KINNOCK'S REQUEST I ACCOMPANIED HIM ON ALL HIS CALLS EXCEPT FOR BRIEF TALK WITH TAMBO.

5. FOLLOWING WERE MAIN POINTS TO EMERGE FROM DISCUSSIONS:

A. ETHIOPIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HIMSELF RAISED SUBJECT OF ROYAL PRISONERS (SIGNIFICANTLY - FIRST TIME ETHIOPIAN SIDE HAS EVER RAISED MATTER). HE HAD DISCUSSED QUESTION VERY RECENTLY WITH CHAIRMAN MENGISTU AND HAD STRONG HOPES OF RELEASE 'SOONER RATHER THAN LATER'. MR KINNOCK CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD BEEN ABOUT TO RAISE MATTER: STRESSED CONCERN IN UK: POINTED OUT THAT RELEASE ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS WOULD MATCH HUMANITARIAN CONCERN IN UK FOR ETHIOPIAN FAMINE VICTIMS: AND SUGGESTED THAT RELEASE WOULD DEMONSTRATE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT CONFIDENCE.

B. GOSHU SAID MENGISTU HAD SENT MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE VIA SOMALI MINISTER ATTENDING OAU SUMMIT ('FIRST BILATERAL CONTACTS FOR MANY YEARS') OFFERING TALKS ABOUT POSSIBLE JOINT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS TO EXPLOIT RIVER BASINS AND PUTTING AN END TO WASTEFUL CONFLICT, FOLLOWING SOMALI RECOGNITION OF EXISTANCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY.

C. MENGISTU AND HEAD OF NEW SUDANESE GOVERNMENT HAD HAD LONG AND FRUITFUL TALKS ABOUT HOW TO IMPROVE RELATIONS OB BASIS OF MUTUAL ACTION TO SECURE RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER'S SOVEREIGNTY. IN SAME CONTEXT MENGISTU HAD SENT MESSAGE OF GOODWILL VIA AN INTERMEDIARY TO SAUDI GOVERNMENT AND HAD HAD POSITIVE TALKS WITH PRESIDENT MUBARAK ABOUT BETTER RELATIONS WITH EGYPT.

D. NEW DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA, TO BE PRESENTED IN SEPTEMBER TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF WPE, WOULD INCORPORATE OFFER OF EXTENSIVE DEVOLUTION TO REGIONS, NATIONALITIES ETC., IN HOPE OF SATISFYING ERITREAN AND TIGREAN ASPIRATIONS. 'THE OTHER SIDE' WOULD HAVE A CHANCE TO EXPRESS VIEWS AND MAKE PROPOSALS DURING POPULAR CONSULTATIONS ON DRAFT. NEW REPUBLIC WOULD BE INTRODUCED DURING 1986.

E. GENERAL BUHARI SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY SAUDIS WERE RAISING OIL PRODUCTION. NIGERIA WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO INCREASE NET REVENUES BY CUTTING PRICES SINCE THIS WOULD NOT INCREASE SALES SUFFICIENTLY TO COMPONSATE.

/F

F. BUHARI SAID AFRICAN DEBT CONFERENCE PROPOSED BY OAU SUMMIT WOULD SEEK DEBT CANCELLATION FOR POOREST: FOR REMAINDER, RESCHEDULING TO PERMIT 5-YEAR MORATORIUM FOLLOWED BY 15 YEARS TO PAY.

G. MR MUGABE SAID ZIMBABWE COULD NOT CONTINUE WITH CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WERE INHERENTLY INEQUITABLE AND WHICH DID NOT REFLECT WILL OF PEOPLE. CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS INFRINGED SOVEREIGNTY. HE QUERIED MR KINNOCK'S SUGGESTION THAT TO MAINTAIN INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTABILITY OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES HE SHOULD CONSULT HMG (''WHY? WE CAN'T GO BACK TO LANCASTER HOUSE''). MR KINNOCK SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT MUGABE WOULD FIND YOU UNDERSTANDING AND HELPFUL. MUGABE SAID HE WANTED TO ACT CONSTITUTIONALLY WITHIN 2-YEAR AND 5-YEAR TIME LIMITS PRESCRIBED BY CONSTITUTION BUT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO GET SMITH'S CONSENT. WHITES' ATTITUDES THREATENED YEARS OF WORK FOR RECONSILIATION AND COOPERATION.

H. PRESIDENT KAUNDA SAID HE FEARED SOUTH AFRICAN TIME-BOMB WAS ABOUT TO GO OFF. CHANGES IN US CONGRESSIONAL OPINION ON SANCTIONS WOULD SOON AFFECT ADMINISTRATION POLICY. HE HAD HAD ENCOURAGING CONTACTS WITH SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSMEN WHO MIGHT IN SOME CASES ACT CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH OTHERS WORKING TO DESTROY APARTHEID.

I. VAN DUNEM SAID ANGOLA WOULD AGREE TO WITHDRAW CUBANS TO NORTH OF COUNTRY (AWAY FROM NAMIBIAN BORDER) FOLLOWING NAMIBIAN INDEPENDENCE. UNITA WOULD WITHER AWAY AFTER IMPLEMENTATION OF 435.

J. ALL AGREED OAU SUMMIT HAD BEEN A TURNING-POINT. SUMMIT HAD ACKNOWLEDGED NEED FOR AFRICA TO PUT OWN HOUSE IN ORDER IF EXTERNAL HELP WERE TO BE FORTHCOMING ON SCALE REQUIRED. ALL NOW REALISE NEED TO GIVE TOP PRIORITY TO AGRICULTURE, AND TO INCENTIVES FOR FOOD PRODUCERS.

FULLER REPORTS BY BAG WHERE NECESSARY.

FCO PASS SAVING JEDDA, PRETORIA.

BARDER

AFRICAN DROUGHT

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST.]

LIMITED

EAD
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MAED
OADS
ECD(E)
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NEWS D
INFO D
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DEFENCE D
PRU
PLANNING STAFF
PUSD
ERD

PS
PS/MR RIFKIND
PS/MR LUCE
PS/MR RAISON
PS/PUS
MR FERGUSSON
MR JOHNSON
SIR C TICKELL(ODA)
MR R BROWNING(ODA)
MR BUIST(ODA)
MR ARBUTHNOTT(ODA)
MR EGERTON

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
AFRICAN DROUGHT

REPEATED AS REQUESTED

RESTRICTED

Crown Prince of ETHIOPIA

6/11

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

29 October 1984

ETHIOPIA

I enclose a copy of a telegram to the Prime Minister from the Crown Prince of Ethiopia. I should be grateful for advice on whether to reply and for a draft if appropriate.

(C.D. POWELL)

C.R. Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

File

DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note ~~xx/xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Private Secretary

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret
Secret
Confidential
Restricted
Unclassified

TO:
C D Powell Esq
PS No 10 Downing Street

Your Reference

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

SUBJECT:

In your letter of 29 October you sought advise about the reply that might be sent to the telegram from the Ethiopian Crown Prince to the Prime Minister. We recommend that you reply on the Prime Minister's behalf. I attach a suggested draft.

/

P.S.
/

31/10.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

(evised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/~~telegram/despatch/note~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

PS NO 10

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret
Secret
Confidential
Restricted
Unclassified

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Enclosures—flag(s).....

TO:

His Imperial Highness Crown Prince
Assfa Wossen Haile Sellassie

82 Portland Place
London W1

Your Reference

Copies to:

SUBJECT:

The Prime Minister has asked me to send your Imperial Highness her thanks for your telemessage dated 26 October about the relief we and others in this country are providing to help combat the effects of the prolonged drought in Ethiopia. She was touched by your kind words.

Mr Wenban-Smith

cc Mr Johnson

Draft reply please. CRBudd 29/10

26 OCT 1984/16

10 DOWNING STREET

1984

From the Private Secretary

29 October 1984

27/10

Dear Colin.

ETHIOPIA

I enclose a copy of a telegram to the Prime Minister from the Crown Prince of Ethiopia. I should be grateful for advice on whether to reply and for a draft if appropriate.

ND HEARTFELT
AND EMERGENCY
THE FAMINE
RNMENT, THE
EAT BRITAIN AND
FOR THE LORDS

Yours sincerely

(C.D. POWELL)

C.R. Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

TO REPLY BY TELEMESSAGE SEE REVERSE SIDE

British TELECOM

26 October 1984

TELEMESSAGE
THE RT HON MRS MARGARET THATCHER
PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON
SW1

227/10

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,
WE WOULD HUMBLY LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR DEEPEST THANKS AND HEARTFELT APPRECIATION FOR THE KIND AND INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE AND EMERGENCY RELIEF THAT IS BEING MOBILISED URGENTLY AND SENT TO THE FAMINE VICTIMS OF OUR COUNTRY ETHIOPIA BY HER MAJESTYS GOVERNMENT, THE VARIOUS CHARITY ORGANISATIONS, THE KIND PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND GENERALLY THE WESTERN WORLD AND GOVERNMENTS. WE PRAY FOR THE LORDS GRACE TO ALL THE MERCIFUL.

CROWN PRINCE ASSFA WOSSEN HAILE SELLASSIE.

TO REPLY BY TELEMESSAGE SEE REVERSE SIDE

British
TELECOM

10, DOWNING STREET,
WHITEHALL S.W.1

EAD.

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

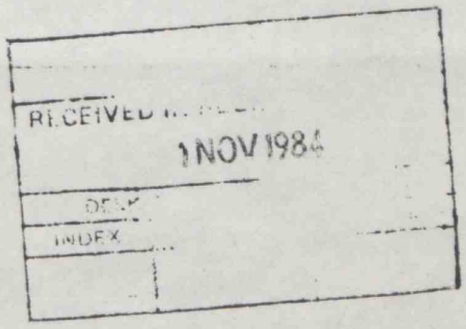
30 October, 1984

With the Private Secretary's Compliments

The Prime Minister has asked me to send your Imperial Highness her thanks for your telemessage dated 26 October about the relief we and others in this country are providing to help combat the effects of the prolonged drought in Ethiopia. She was touched by your kind words.

(C.D. Powell)

His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Assfa
Wossen Haile Sellassie



MEC6237 LLZ9043 PID0230 P83 5504LOND 26 OCT 1984/1607

TELEMESSAGE
THE RT HON MRS MARGARET THATCHER
PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON
SW1

26 October 1984
RECEIVED IN REGISTRY
1 NOV 1984
REGISTRY
Action Taken

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,
WE WOULD HUMBLY LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR DEEPEST THANKS AND HEARTFELT APPRECIATION FOR THE KIND AND INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE AND EMERGENCY RELIEF THAT IS BEING MOBILISED URGENTLY AND SENT TO THE FAMINE VICTIMS OF OUR COUNTRY ETHIOPIA BY HER MAJESTYS GOVERNMENT, THE VARIOUS CHARITY ORGANISATIONS, THE KIND PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND GENERALLY THE WESTERN WORLD AND GOVERNMENTS. WE PRAY FOR THE LORDS GRACE TO ALL THE MERCIFUL.

CROWN PRINCE ASSFA WOSSEN HAILE SELLASSIE.

TO REPLY BY TELEMESSAGE SEE REVERSE SIDE
British TELECOM

19 NOV 1984

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H.I.H. Merd Azmatch Asfa Wossen H.S.

Crown Prince of Ethiopia

8th November 1984

The Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,
Prime Minister,
lO Downing Street,
London SWl.

Dear Prime Minister,

Allow me to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for one of the biggest relief operations you have launched in such a short time to alleviate the sufferings of the victims of the famine in Ethiopia.

The great effort made by the reporters and the media to discover and expose the extent of the disaster that has befallen the Ethiopian people, and the spontaneous response of your people and Government in raising fund, and donation in kind has astounded all of us.

The ability of the various charity organizations to pull their resources together and coordinate their efforts with your Government to launch such a relief operation is stupendous. Without such concerted effort the generous help of your Government and people would have vanished in the hands of the notorious Marxist regime of Ethiopia, who have not only disavowed their duty to protect and preserve the right to life, but made it their sacred duty to exterminate life.

This act of compassion and generosity will be one of the great historical events of our time for which we are all grateful to you and the magnanimous people of the United Kingdom.

The present famine in Ethiopia is the consequence of extended drought and the inhuman experiment of a Marxist regime, such as; nationalization of land, mass executions, mass arrests, conscriptions, and etc; which has dislocated the people from their farm. To avert the inevitable consequences of such a disaster will require such a relief operation for a long time which will be possible only if other E.E.C. member states will

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H.I.H. MERD AZMATCH ASFA WOSSEN H.S.

CROWN PRINCE OF ETHIOPIA

join in this effort. We hope your appeal to E.E.C. member states, which has already shown good results, will continue to make a great impact on your efforts.

Please accept my gratitude and sincere thanks for the generosity of your Government and people.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely,

Asfa Wossen Haile Selassie

Crown Prince of ETHIOPIA

16/11

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

9 November, 1984.

I enclose a copy of a letter dated 8 November to the Prime Minister from the Crown Prince of Ethiopia. I should be grateful for urgent advice and a draft reply.

Charles Powell

C.R. Budd, Esq.,

Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

233-5682.

BM.

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

12 November, 1984

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 8 November. I will place this before her, and a reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

(C.D. Powell)

His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Asfa
Wossen Haile Sellassie.

GR?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 November, 1984

Dear Charles,

In your letter of 9 November you requested a draft reply to the letter of 8 November from the Ethiopian Crown Prince to the Prime Minister. This is the second time in three weeks that the Crown Prince has written to the Prime Minister to express his thanks to the government and people of Britain for their generous response to the Ethiopian drought appeals. Copies of his earlier telemessage and your reply of 30 October are attached. We recommend that you again reply on the Prime Minister's behalf. I attach a suggested draft.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM: PS/No 10

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret
Secret
Confidential
Restricted
Unclassified

TO:

His Imperial Highness Crown Prince
Asfa Wossen Haile Selassie
82 Portland Place
London SW1

Your Reference

Copies to:

FCO AD1

PRIVACY MARKING

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

SUBJECT:

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank your Imperial Highness for your letter of 8 November in which you expressed your appreciation for the spontaneous and generous contributions made by the Government and people of this country to help alleviate the effects of famine in Ethiopia.

It was because of her concern over the drought and famine in Ethiopia that the Prime Minister sent a message to the Irish Prime Minister on 25 October, in his capacity as President of the European Council of Ministers, urging that further assistance be given by the European Community. We shall continue to press the Community to give priority to the needs of countries affected by famine.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

10 DOWNING STREET

19 November 1984

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CHARLES POWELL

His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Assfa Wossen
Haile Sellassie
82 Portland Place
London W.1.

Telemessage

CDP

KEC6237 LLZ9043 PID0230 P83 5604LOND

26 OCT 1984/1607

26 October 1984

TELEMESSAGE
THE RT HON MRS MARGARET THATCHER
PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON
SW1

R 27/10

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,
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CROWN PRINCE ASSFA WOSSEN HAILE SELLASSIE.

TO REPLY BY TELEMESSAGE SEE REVERSE SIDE

British TELECOM

TELEMESSAGE

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CONFIDENTIAL

cc PC MPO

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

22 May 1984

Dear Roger,

ETHIOPIA: MESSAGE TO CHAIRMAN MENGISTU

Thank you for your letter of 21 May. As I told you on the telephone this morning, the Prime Minister is not disposed to send a message to Chairman Mengistu.

Mrs. Thatcher has commented that she objects strongly when foreign visitors to this country use the device of a message from their Head of Government to obtain interviews with her; and she does not believe that we should lend ourselves to this practice.

Yours ever

Charles.

Roger Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Late (1)

Prime Minister.

Can we say that Mr. Rifkind, when he visits Ethiopia, will bring a message to Mengistu from you?

A.F.C. 21/5

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 May, 1984

No - I object strongly to her thus meddling others to me. Probably is leading to more cock-up. Labour.

Yours John,

Message to Chairman Mengistu in Connection with Mr Rifkind's Proposed Visit to Ethiopia

Tensions in the Horn of Africa have for many years complicated our relations with countries in the area and provided scope for Soviet meddling, notably through their present strong position in Ethiopia. The Foreign Secretary considers that we can and should promote our own and Western interests by being somewhat more active in the region. As well as maintaining our relationship with the pro-Western regime of President Siad Barre in Somalia, we have sought, with United States, as well as Kenyan and Sudanese encouragement, to set relations with Ethiopia on a more constructive footing.

There were always two preconditions for this: the compensation of British firms nationalised at the time of the revolution; and the release of political prisoners, especially those members of Haile Selassie's family remaining in detention. On the first point, the major compensation case, involving Mitchell Cotts, was recently resolved on terms which were better than the company expected. On the second, nearly half the detained close associates and relatives of the late Emperor were released in last year's September amnesty, and we have had hints that most or all of the rest may be set free this September, the tenth anniversary of the revolution.

In July, Mr Rifkind is planning to undertake a tour to the area which will include a brief visit to Addis Ababa. The Ethiopian Government have welcomed the visit, which would be the first by a British Minister since 1974. Mr Rifkind hopes to call on Colonel Mengistu while he is there. Without this, the visit is unlikely to be worthwhile. The President does receive some Western Ministers, but normally only if there is a special reason for so doing.

The Ambassador in Addis Ababa has suggested that a message to Mengistu from the Prime Minister would undoubtedly assist in securing access to the President. The message would be addressed to the President both in his capacity as Chairman of the OAU and as the President of Ethiopia informing him of

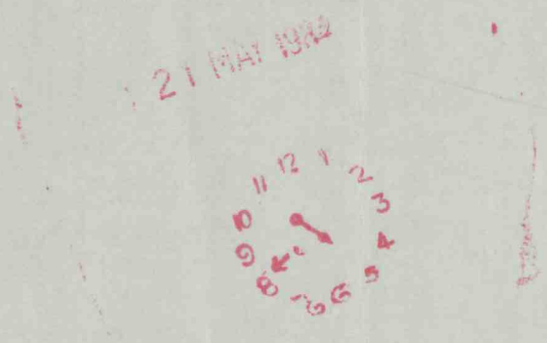
/the

the purpose of Mr Rifkind's visit, ie to build on the present slightly improved climate of Anglo-Ethiopian relations and could make it clear that Mr Rifkind would also be happy to discuss other international issues, such as Namibia and the visit of the South African Prime Minister to Britain, which will by then of course have taken place. (President Mengistu has already sent a telex message to the Prime Minister asking her to withdraw the invitation to Mr Botha, and a reply on this is being submitted separately).

The reason we are putting this to you now is that Mr Rifkind will be seeing Mr Dawit Wolde Giorges, the Ethiopian Commissioner for Relief and Rehabilitation on Tuesday 22 May at 4.30 pm.Mr Dawit has regular access to President Mengistu and it would be very useful if, in discussing the proposed visit with him, Mr Rifkind could say that he is planning to bring with him a message from the Prime Minister to the President, and that he hopes this will enable him to be received by him. We should be very grateful therefore for the Prime Minister's authority for Mr Rifkind to take this line and, if at all possible, to have a reply by early tomorrow afternoon.

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street


21 MAY 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

SIR ANTONY ACLAND

Ethiopian Princesses

Thank you for your minute of 26 November. As you know, there was some discussion with the Prime Minister last night about this matter. Mrs. Thatcher took the view that the best person to approach might be the President of Kenya. I shall let you know whether she has an opportunity to do this.

28 November, 1983

CONFIDENTIAL

The National Archives

DEPARTMENT/SERIES PREM 19 PIECE/ITEM 3307 (one piece/item number)	Date and sign
Extract details: Aclund to Coles dated 26 November 1983 with attachment	
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Instructions for completion of Dummy Card

Use black or blue pen to complete form.

Use the card for one piece or for each extract removed from a different place within a piece.

Enter the department and series,
eg. HO 405, J 82.

Enter the piece and item references, .
eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

Enter extract details if it is an extract rather than a whole piece.
This should be an indication of what the extract is,
eg. Folio 28, Indictment 840079, E107, Letter dated 22/11/1995.
Do not enter details of why the extract is sensitive.

If closed under the FOI Act, enter the FOI exemption numbers applying to the closure, eg. 27(1), 40(2).

Sign and date next to the reason why the record is not available to the public ie. Closed under FOI exemption; Retained under section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958; Temporarily retained; Missing at transfer or Number not used.

OUT TELEGRAM

DB: to note

		Classification and Caveats: CONFIDENTIAL	Precedence/Deskby: IMMEDIATE

ZCZC	1	ZCZC
GRS	2	GRS
CLASS	3	CONFIDENTIAL
CAVEATS	4	
DESKBY	5	
FM FCO	6	FM FCO
PRE/ADD	7	TO IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI
TEL NO	8	TELEGRAM NUMBER
	9	FOR PS/SECRETARY OF STATE AND PS/PM
	10	ETHIOPIA/SUDAN
	11	1. Following is information requested in Coles' letter of
	12	21 November to Ricketts.
	13	2. We have no repeat no evidence to support Sudanese press
	14	reports that 1,000 Ethiopian troops, accompanied by 150 Cubans
	15	have arrived in south-west Ethiopia with the intention of
	16	attacking Sudanese border towns and military posts in the area.
	17	There is, however, some evidence of Sudanese dissidents launching
	18	raids from Ethiopian territory. We are comparing notes urgently
	19	with French and Americans.
	20	3. HM Ambassador Khartoum regards Sudanese allegations as
	21	grossly exaggerated and probably intended to help President
///	22	Nimeiri (in Washington and due to call on President Reagan on
//	23	21 November) convince Americans of his need for military support
/	24	and hardware. Ethiopians have, however, in the past given small-
	25	scale help to southern Sudanese dissidents, whose numbers and

Dawes 22/11

Following

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword: determination
File number	Dept: EAD	Distribution: Limited, NENAD, EAD
Drafted by (Block capitals): N Wenban-Smith		
Telephone number		
Authorised for despatch	22/11	
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

XY 48

	Classification and Caveats		Page
	CONFIDENTIAL		2

<<<<

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determination may be on the increase.

4. We will telegraph any new information that emerges.

HOWE

NNNN

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/

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword

CONFIDENTIAL FILE da

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary 21 November 1983

Ethiopia/Sudan

As I told you on the telephone this morning, the Prime Minister has asked what information we have regarding the overnight reports in the media that Ethiopian forces are being massed on the border with the Sudan.

If you are not able to let me have your assessment before we leave for CHOGM, I should be grateful if it could be telegraphed to me in New Delhi.

BKF

A. J. COLES

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

30 March, 1983

Aid to Ethiopia

The Prime Minister has noted the contents of your letter of 28 March.

A. J. COLES

R. B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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RESTRICTED

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

28 March 1983

Prime Minister

for information.

A.J.C. 25/3

Dear John,

Aid to Ethiopia

At the European Council on 21 March the Prime Minister raised the problems faced by Ethiopia in the present drought and spoke strongly in favour of Community assistance. You may find it helpful to have a note of what is underway.

As regards the European Community, the Commission proposed on 24 March that 5,000 tonnes of cereals (and a quantity of butter oil) should be provided to Ethiopia in the light of the latest reports on the situation there; this is the maximum that can be provided under the emergency procedure rules. The Council had already approved last December a supplementary food aid allocation of 15,000 tonnes of cereals, on top of the regular food programme of 20,000 tonnes of cereals, 2,000 tonnes of milk powder and 1,000 tonnes fo butter oil. Altogether, this brings the total value of Community aid to Ethiopia to approximately £8 million.

You will be aware that there have been recent allegations - most recently in yesterday's Sunday Times - that food aid was being diverted to the Ethiopian army and even to the Soviet Union. The Commission delegate in Ethiopia has on several occasions looked carefully into such claims, but has never found evidence to confirm them, and an article in this morning's Times takes a much more cautious view. The Commission are nevertheless urgently re-examining the allegations and we have asked HMA Addis Ababa for his comments on the Sunday Times article. But whatever the truth of such charges, the latest Commission proposal provides for the new tranche of aid to be administered through non-governmental organisations. It is also, as we have pointed out to the Commission in agreeing to the proposal, for help in only two out of the four provinces seriously affected by the drought - Tigre and Eritrea - both to a significant extent under rebel control.

As far as the United Kingdom is concerned, Mr Raison has just approved a further £300,000 of aid to be channelled through UNDRO, Red Cross, Save the Children Fund and Christian Aid, in addition to the £100,575 previously allocated to Save the Children

/Fund

RESTRICTED

Fund. In addition 27,000 tonnes of ~~corelas~~ cereals are being sent to Ethiopia - which is more than half of the United Kingdom contribution to the World Food Programme and worth approximately £3.3 million.

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

28 MAR 1983

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE DIPLOMATIC REPORT No. 217/82

JEE 014/1 *General/Economic Distribution*

ETHIOPIA
21 December, 1982

"NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH UTOPIA": FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF ETHIOPIA

Her Majesty's Ambassador at Addis Ababa to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

SUMMARY

A wild, beautiful country and a proud arrogant people, terribly poor, trying to preserve their independence from Moscow, the West, the Arabs and Black Africa. The received view: military dependence on Moscow and Havana to sustain conflicts with Eritrean rebels and the Somalis; anti-Western gestures and rhetoric; brutal and bloody repression at home, with collectivisation further damaging an already poverty-stricken economy. Britain's conditions for better relations (paragraphs 1–4).

2. Impressions locally slightly less sombre. Although Mengistu's régime likely to remain on the far Left internationally and domestically, he probably wants to reduce dependence on Moscow, but has no room for manœuvre over Eritrea or Somalia failing some shift by the secessionists or Mogadishu (paragraphs 5–7). Some encouraging features internally: recognition that Western development aid is indispensable, given Ethiopia's atrocious poverty; the régime's genuine efforts to raise levels of literacy, food supplies, popular participation in local and national affairs. Majority of political prisoners (but not members of former Royal Family) released. Growing commercial opportunities and relatively favourable climate for British business. Failure to settle only remaining major compensation claim not exclusively Ethiopia's responsibility. Survival of pro-Western, especially pro-British, sentiment: need to respond to appeals for scholarships in Britain before a Moscow-trained generation takes over (paragraphs 8–10).

3. Conclusions: Ethiopia, though much less unacceptable than previously, not likely to become a congenial figure internationally or domestically: but a clear Western interest in doing more to help Mengistu to escape from further decline into servitude to Moscow, given Ethiopia's relative importance geo-politically, as HQ of the OAU, with second biggest population in Black Africa and at the heart of a potential conflict between the superpowers. There is more we and others could do (paragraphs 11–13).

20996—217 145075—5 A

(Confidential) *Addis Ababa,*
Sir, *21 December, 1982.*

> " I am aware that I have been influenced by a desire to correct the distorted picture of this country which it has been the object of some propaganda to build up in Britain . . . Ethiopia is not to be confused with Utopia . . . it is not a united or homogeneous country . . . its Government is not in all branches enlightened, efficient and successful."
>
> Margery Perham, " The Government of Ethiopia " (1948)

> " Addis Ababa is not a place where great diplomatic reputations are easily won, and the potentates of the Foreign Office do not keep any very keen scrutiny to see how their cadets are shaping in that rare altitude. Who could blame these officials if occasionally there crept into their despatches phrases tending to estimate with some generosity the importance of the land of their exile? "
>
> Evelyn Waugh, " When the Going was Good " (1946)

Not much risk of confusing Ethiopia with Utopia if you go by its current reputation in London. Nor is the risk much greater after three months here. It is—as everyone knows—a wild, beautiful, mountainous country, inhabited by a proud, often arrogant, dignified people, terribly poor, neither African nor Arab, steeped in a strange and ancient culture almost impenetrable to outsiders, fiercely defending their independence as best they can from all the competing pressures of the outside world—from the Russians bearing gifts of arms and instant ideological solutions, from the glittering materialism of the West, from the endless internecine quarrels of the Arabs and from what they see as the primitive and immature posturings of their Black African neighbours. Yet they find themselves forced into reluctant compromises with all of these. In order to judge which will prevail, how far the process of submission to Moscow has gone, and what options are still open to Chairman Mengistu and to the West, I shall look first at the prevailing impression of Ethiopia as viewed from London and then consider how far it corresponds to local perceptions and first-hand impressions.

Ethiopia: the view from home

2. In the conventional wisdom, Ethiopia is already well down the slippery slope to becoming a Soviet puppet. It relies on massive Soviet arms supplies, 11,000 or more Cubans, a thousand Soviet military advisers and hundreds of East German technicians for what is often represented as its bloody suppression of Eritrean and Tigrean nationalism, its military incursions into a far weaker Somalia, and its Libyan-inspired subversion of Sudan. Host to OAU headquarters, it is a pillar of Qadhafi's anti-Western, disruptive grouping in the Organisation. While accepting such Western aid as it can get (*e.g.* from the European Development Fund, the IBRD, the UN agencies, the Swedes and the Italians), it bites the hands that feed it, thus demonstrating that though poor, it is proud and beholden to no man: the EC Commission, the French, the Italians, the Germans, have all had their gestures of help rewarded by expulsions, seizure of premises, closing down of schools, arguments and threats over the small print of agreements. No opportunity is ever lost to vilify—often in language that would make *Tass* blench —imperialism in general and the Americans in particular.

3. The image of the domestic scene is no better. A demoralised and poverty-stricken peasantry and a handful of backwoods towns are seen as being ruled by a clique of ignorant and brutal officers, intoxicated on half-understood

Marxism, stained with the blood of adversaries, allies and colleagues murdered in the birth-throes of the revolution. Ethiopia's rulers today are branded indelibly as the murderers of Haile Selassie, and the brutal gaolers of much of the surviving Imperial family, including princesses and children imprisoned indefinitely with other former persons of quality from the old régime not for what they did but for what they were. Outside, they have imposed a primitive form of Communist-style collectivism on the countryside, where 85 per cent of the population scratch a living, and sweeping nationalisation of industry and commerce—with catastrophic effects on agricultural and industrial production. A system of local soviets (" kebeles ") and peasants' associations appears to repress the people more harshly than ever the landlords and satraps of the Emperor did. The common people are portrayed as groaning under this alien yoke, but too downtrodden (and too discouraged by fear of a recrudescence of the terrible slaughter and terror of 1977–78) to mount any real threat to their new and ruthless masters.

4. These negative but broadly accurate, if somewhat too starkly stated, perceptions of the Ethiopian scene led Her Majesty's Government to state publicly in June our conditions for any improvement in our relations: negotiations rather than military force to solve the Eritrean problem; much more progress in releasing political prisoners and greater respect for human rights; compensation for dispossessed British companies; a " genuine dialogue " between the two governments. (We would doubtless also now demand Ethiopian withdrawal from Somali territory.) We ought to consider how much room for manœuvre Chairman Mengistu has for moving in the ways we require, and whether we can do anything to enlarge his options.

The picture in close-up

5. First impressions after three months broadly confirm the view from London but in somewhat less sombre colours. Access to Ethiopian officials is patchy and difficult; to real policy-makers, impossible. I have had, and expect, no contact with Mengistu. I still await my first appointment with the Foreign Minister, himself an executant rather than an initiator of policy. So judgment has to rely mainly on collective local wisdom, distilled from the large international community and from Ethiopians still able and willing to talk; and from first impressionistic (but illuminating) glimpses of life in Gojam and Gondar Regions in the north-west: collectivised agriculture; the local administration; an EC village water supply project; the literacy campaign; a shelter for re-educating Ethiopians back from Sudan, Eritrea and Tigray; relief and rehabilitation work.

6. I find the scene a little less bleak than one might suppose, although it is important to avoid the temptation, irresistible to many Western and Third World colleagues here, to indulge in wishful thinking. Whatever Mengistu's own private views (and we have no way of knowing for sure what they are), his régime seems irretrievably committed to a position on the far Left both internationally and at home. Short of another massive upheaval (of which there is no sign), Ethiopia will remain for the foreseeable future a collectivist dictatorship at home and a meddlesome radical in international affairs, leaning more readily on most issues to the Soviet than to the Western view of the world. But Ethiopia, even under Mengistu, may not yet be a lost cause. There are signs that Mengistu does not want to be drawn any further into the Soviet camp and that he would like to reduce his dependence on Soviet arms. Externally however there it little he can do to resolve his problems so long as the secessionists in Eritrea and Tigray and the Somali Government continue to demand " self-determination "—a codeword

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for the right of Eritrea and Tigray to secede and of the Ogaden to be transferred from Ethiopia to Somalia. No conceivable Ethiopian leader could even toy with such a possibility. Consolidating, expanding or at least avoiding the disintegration of Ethiopia, even before Eritrea and other now disputed areas became part of it, has been the overriding objective of Ethiopian leaders for centuries. Since neither the secessionists nor the Somalis can defeat Mengistu's forces militarily, and since he cannot afford even to discuss their political demands, the present deadlock looks permanent—unless the secessionists (spontaneously or under pressure from their Arab and other external paymasters) or the Somali Government themselves (under pressure from Washington) make a move to break the log-jam. Continued deadlock means continued Ethiopian dependence on Soviet arms, Cuban troops, East German technicians. So long as the secessionists and the Somalis enjoy powerful overseas (especially American) backing, including military and financial support, Mengistu dare not dispense with Soviet support. However he has made considerable efforts to improve his relations with Sudan by reducing Libyan subversion from Ethiopian territory in exchange (he hopes) for corresponding restraint in Sudanese support for the Eritreans. In Eritrea and Tigray he has shifted the emphasis from attempted military suppression to social and economic reform.

7. Military dependence on Moscow also limits Mengistu's freedom of manœuvre at home. But here too there are some mildly encouraging signs. Mengistu knows that only the West can offer indispensable development aid and technology: Ethiopia is too desperately poor (probably the poorest country in the world after Bhutan and Chad) to generate by its own efforts a food surplus, a bigger cash economy, export earnings and the infrastructure essential for economic growth. Yet for understandable political reasons and the lack of a former Western colonial power as patron, external aid is painfully small. The vast majority of Ethiopians have no access to even the most rudimentary education, medicine, nutrition or even roads. It is hard to defend the termination of our bilateral aid programme in the face of such massive degradation. The régime has made real efforts to raise the level of literacy (with considerable success), to involve ordinary people in the running of their own local and national affairs, and to cope with food shortages caused as much by an erratic climate as by doctrinaire and misguided policies. The Government and perhaps especially the remarkably able and sophisticated group of educated people immediately below the top political leadership deserve some credit for this.

8. On human rights the record is improving. At least 2,000 political prisoners have recently been released, most in the mass amnesties of the last two Septembers; we know from some of those released, and from other sources, that those who remain (we have little idea how many) are held in reasonably good conditions. One large remaining blot is Mengistu's continued refusal to release the 19 or so members of the former royal family, whose fate arouses special concern in Britain and elsewhere. That there is a long-standing tradition on the part of new rulers of keeping potential or past rivals out of circulation (without stigma or punitive intent), as Haile Selassie did with his predecessor Iyasu, may help to explain but not to excuse this continuing inhumanity.

9. The commercial scene is by no means all bad. The national finances are prudently, even conservatively, managed. British companies mostly find Ethiopians good people to do business with: they drive a hard bargain but honour eventual agreement. Multilateral aid provides modest but expanding opportunities for British exports, which are growing steadily. Ethiopia is on

the verge of completing a contract for the purchase of two merchant ships, worth nearly £13 million each, from British yards: valuable for us both financially and for jobs in our hard-pressed shipyards. The problem of compensation is unsolved, but it affects substantially only one British company, and the responsibility for lack of progress towards agreement is not all on one side. Almost all other major Western compensation claims have now been settled.

10. One other positive impression: there still remain many educated Ethiopians, often in positions of influence, who are anxious to preserve and rebuild their links with the West (including especially Britain, for which they often show striking affection and respect). But this is a diminishing asset. Thousands of young Ethiopians are studying in the USSR, Eastern Europe and Cuba. There will be few friends of the West among their generation of future leaders. We receive constant official appeals for scholarships to help young Ethiopians to go to Britain. The time for responding and thus for making a cheap but almost certainly potent commercial and political investment in the future is fast running out.

Conclusions

11. Post-revolutionary Ethiopia is in thrall to Moscow abroad and to a still obnoxious and totalitarian government at home. Mengistu would probably like to reduce his dependence on the Russians but has little room for manœuvre. There is no foreseeable prospect of Ethiopia becoming a comfortable partner internationally or a liberal democracy at home. Its young and inexperienced rulers keep bad company abroad and have in the past built up a terrible record at home of brutal repression and the denial of elementary human rights. They show little sign of being able to cope with their admittedly intractable problems. But in many respects conditions have improved dramatically, and the régime is probably now no more repressive or illiberal than in many other African countries including some with which we enjoy much warmer relations.

12. I respect Evelyn Waugh's warning, quoted at the beginning of this despatch, not to exaggerate Ethiopia's importance. But the Horn is one of the handful of areas in the world where Soviet and American clients confront and periodically fight each other; and it cannot be in Britain's or broader Western interests to acquiesce indefinitely in a continuing Soviet presence in a country which is in some sense the capital of the continent, with the second biggest population in black Africa, standing at the crossroads of Africa and the Middle East. The purpose of this despatch is not to make recommendations on policy but to record my first impressions (and to provide a broadbrush review of 1982, especially when read with my predecessor's valedictory and other parting despatches). But it is a major First Impression that there is more we could do, in concert with other Western governments, to advance major Western interests here, and to help the Ethiopians to expand their options, so as to begin to retrieve their long cherished but now gravely threatened independence.

13. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Mogadishu, Khartoum, Lagos, Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Washington and Moscow, and to the Permanent Representatives to the UN in New York and to the European Community in Brussels.

I am Sir

Yours faithfully

B. L. BARDER.

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