ETHIOPIA

PRINCIPAL POLICIES AND PROBLEMS IN THE RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES WITH ETHIOPIA

110.15 Mo/2-2150

President Truman to the Emperor of Ethiopia (Haile Selassie)¹

WASHINGTON [undated].

GREAT AND GOOD FRIEND: I am sending you this letter by Mr. George C. McGhee, Assistant Secretary of State in charge of African affairs, who is making a visit to your country as a representative of this Government.

The excellent relations which presently exist between our two countries are most gratifying to me. I take this occasion to reaffirm to you the whole-hearted desire of my Government to maintain and strengthen these relations.

We in the United States have followed with interest and admiration the continued progress of your country, since the end of the war. I have been particularly impressed with your personal interest and success in expanding the educational facilities of Ethiopia. In this regard, I am informed that a new university is now in the process of being established. You have my sincere best wishes that upon its completion it will serve as a monument to your splendid efforts in this field.

I avail myself of this opportunity to wish you much continued success and good health.

Faithfully yours,

[HARRY S. TRUMAN]

¹This draft letter was transmitted on February 21 by Secretary Acheson to President Truman for his signature (110.15 Mc/2-2150). Presumably the President signed the draft and McGhee delivered it to Emperor Haile Selassie during his audience on March 15, McGhee had arrived in Addis Ababa on March 14 after serving as chairman of the Conference of U.S. Diplomatic and Consular Officers in West and East Africa held in Lourenço Marques, Mozambique, from February 27 through March 2. Prior to the conference McGhee had visited Liberia, where he delivered a similar letter to President Tubman.
FOREIGN RELATIONS, 1950, VOLUME V

Aide-Mémoire Prepared by the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

AIDE-MÉMOIRE OF THE AUDIENCE HELD ON 15TH MARCH, 1950 AT THE
IMPERIAL PALACE, ADDIS ABEBA, GRANTED BY HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY
to the Honourable George C. McGhee, Assistant Secretary of
State for African Affairs

Present: His Excellency Ato Aklilou Abte Wold, Minister of
Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, and the Honourable George
S. Merrell, American Ambassador, Addis Ababa.

His Majesty wished, first of all, to express His deep appreciation
for the assistance which the American Government has continuously
accorded Ethiopia as regards the Eritrean question.1 This assistance,
in so far as Eritrea is concerned, has been total and all that His
Majesty could have desired. His Majesty repeated His most sincere
expression of appreciation.

2) As regards the question of Eritrea, since the problem had been
studied in 1947 by the Commission of Investigation of the Four Great
Powers which visited that territory, the conditions have changed even
more clearly in favour of Ethiopia. In the first place, the new Com-
misson of the United Nations has already been able to determine that
the followers of union with Ethiopia, with the exception, perhaps,
of the Western Province, have a clear majority everywhere, even at
Massawa, where recently it has been demonstrated and noted by the
Commission itself that a very clear and in fact, an overwhelming
majority exists in favour of Ethiopia. On the other hand, the op-
ponents of union, under Italian pressure, had united in the so-called
"Independence Front". However, scarcely had that Front been estab-
lished than the Eritreans themselves came to realize that they had
been made the dupes of the Italian Government, and, in consequence,
they did not fail thereupon to withdraw from this so-called Front
as is evidenced by the establishment of the new Moslem League in
the Western Province, the independent Moslem League in Massawa
and by the recent defection of the liberal progressists. These defections
had been promoted by the fact that the Italian system of bribery
had become a matter of public notoriety. All the members of the Com-
misson, the British Government, the Unionists, and His Imperial
Majesty possess such undeniable and striking proofs of that bribery
that no one attempts now to deny it. It has become an open secret.
These activities on the part of Italy have disgusted the majority of
the Eritreans, and have had as a result the practical break-up of the

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1 For documentation on Eritrea, see pp. 1640 ff.
Independence Front. On the other hand, they have likewise been largely responsible for the disturbances of the peace in Eritrea. Not only has Italy sought to purchase the votes of the population, but also through her adherents to the so-called Independence Front she has provoked acts of violence in Eritrea, which in their turn have led to reactions of indignation on the part of a population, outraged by these actions of violence and of bribery.

3) His Imperial Majesty criticized sharply the attitude of Guatemala and Pakistan who refuse, as always, to recognize the realities of the situation. However, the other members of the United Nations Commission seem to be convinced of the strength of the demand for union in Eritrea. His Imperial Majesty recognized that Pakistan and Guatemala are simply playing the Italian game as they had done at the United Nations and that they would do everything in their power by fair means or foul to oppose union with Ethiopia.

4) His Majesty pointed out that three factors therefore contributed to the tense situation existing in Eritrea as well as on the southern frontiers of Ethiopia. There was in the first place the very marked increase in force of the unionist movement in Eritrea. On the other hand, there was the anxiety created throughout East Africa by the presence of Italy in Somaliland. Finally, there is the almost fanatic opposition of the Eritrean population to the Italian activities being carried on there under the formula of independence. These factors have produced such a state of tension in Eritrea that if the Commission of Investigation or the Interim Committee of the General Assembly itself under pressure from Pakistan or Guatemala or from the Secretariat of the United Nations which for some time has been seeking to influence the Assembly in favour of a United Nations Trusteeship, should fail in June to recognize the realities of the situation in Eritrea, the situation, now already critical, will become intolerable. In such a situation, without Ethiopia’s having the least degree of responsibility or initiative in the matter, there would certainly be a general uprising of the population now fanatic in its demand for union as a result of long delays and frustrations. His Imperial Majesty remarked that certainly the Honourable Assistant Secretary of State was in possession of reports on conditions in Eritrea and would certainly interpret the situation in the same way.

5) For all of these reasons, His Majesty has constantly been prepared to listen to all advice which the American Government—a government which His Majesty considers as animated by the most sincere feelings of friendship—may desire to furnish. Notwithstanding His Majesty’s pessimism stemming from Italian activities in Eritrea, he had never refused to examine the situation together with the Ameri-
cans. However, one cannot ignore the fact that the Italian Government rejected the American formula for agreement presented at the end of January. It is time that the latter finally commence to recognize that, unless she immediately makes a volte face, she alone will be responsible for the uprising of the population and for a total impasse in the efforts to establish peace in East Africa. For these reasons and notwithstanding these instances of bad faith on the part of Italy, His Majesty feels that it would be highly desirable that the American Government should attempt now to settle the situation in favour of Ethiopia, a solution the necessity of which has already been recognized by the majority of the United Nations Commission, that is to say, by Norway, Burma, and South Africa.

6) Another question which His Majesty wished to raise with the Honourable Assistant Secretary of State was the granting of loans by the Export Import Bank and assistance under Point Four of the Truman Programme. It was pointed out that the Assistant Secretary certainly did not ignore the fact that notwithstanding war devastations in the country, Ethiopia has been able to maintain a sound currency. Ethiopia, for example, has been the only country in the Middle East not to devaluate its currency with reference to the American dollar. Moreover, it is a rather striking fact that since the war, exports from Ethiopia to the United States have taken the first place in the foreign trade of Ethiopia far exceeding exports to other countries of the Middle East and to Europe. It is believed that this development is a healthy trend in international trade, and has been a cause of great satisfaction to His Imperial Majesty, the more so in that it strengthens the ties existing between the two countries. Ethiopia, however, stands in need of greatly increasing her means of production and of transportation and, certainly in this respect, the United States is in the best position for aiding in this development, by experts and capital. Already the Sinclair Petroleum Company is pursuing its activities in Ethiopia in complete freedom and tranquility. Also the Ethiopian Air Lines which is under American administration has already acquired an enviable reputation abroad. His Imperial Majesty is, therefore, confident that, with the co-operation of the United States through the investment of capital by the Export Import Bank and through Point Four of the Truman Programme, Ethiopia will enter upon a period of great economic development. In this connection, the problem has been carefully and fully studied during the past five years by American experts and detailed reports and plans have already been submitted to the American Government.

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2 For documentation on the Point Four Program, see vol. i, pp. 846 ff.
The time has now come to place them into operation in the industrial and especially in the transport fields. This need is the more urgent in that His Majesty desires that Ethiopia endeavour without delay to bring about a simultaneous development of the two ports of Massawa and Assab as well as of the roads linking these two ports with the interior. Massawa is certainly the port which entails the greatest importance for Ethiopia, but Assab should not be ignored inasmuch as it should serve as the outlet for the pipeline which the Sinclair Petroleum Company would eventually wish to construct in Ethiopia.

7) It is for these reasons that His Imperial Majesty desires to see the earliest possible consummation of the loan by the Export Import Bank of a sum sufficient to constitute a serious and important contribution to the development of the country in the industrial and transport fields. As regards Point Four of the Truman Programme, His Majesty welcomed with great satisfaction the news that the Department of State had recommended to Congress the allocation of an important sum for a detailed programme of assistance in Ethiopia. His Majesty, therefore, wishes that the Assistant Secretary of State might bring his influence to bear for the prompt execution of this programme. It is the view of His Majesty that the assistance involved under Point Four might best be effected by arrangements concluded directly between the two countries in question rather than by the intermediary of third parties or of international organisations such as the United Nations.

8) His Majesty then raised the question of the request addressed to the American Government for permission to purchase certain arms and war materials as well as a small quantity of fighter planes. It was recalled that the Ethiopian Government had sought permission to purchase approximately thirty fighter planes called Hell-Divers fully equipped and armed. It would appear, however, that the American Navy has been unable to grant the requested permission. In view of this difficulty, the Ethiopian Government has been obliged to seek for other types of fighter planes, likewise equipped with their armaments as, for example, the fighter plane called the “Corsair”, which would appear to be particularly well adapted to Ethiopia’s needs and to the programme of instruction being followed at the aviation school at Bishoftu. The Ethiopian army is now well trained and the military aviation is a cause of great satisfaction. With the increase in national and international responsibilities resulting from the

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3 The Embassy in Addis Ababa was approached on March 6 by Ato Zande Gabre Hetwot, Director General of the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with a request for assistance in procuring surplus military aircraft from the United States. (Telegram 46, from Addis Ababa, March 6, 775.5622/3-650).
eventual return of Eritrea, it is necessary that these purchase orders in the various fields of armament and aviation be completed with the least possible delay. His Majesty would, therefore, be grateful for such steps as might be taken to expedite these purchases.

9) In closing, His Majesty again reiterated his profound and sincere appreciation for the continued assistance and support which Ethiopia has received from the American Government dating from the dark period of the Italian occupation, when the United States was one of the few countries to refuse to recognize the Italian regime. Since then, through Lend-Lease and other means of economic as well as social and cultural assistance, the American Government has never failed to demonstrate its friendly attitude towards Ethiopia. The recent months during which the Department of State has so loyally supported the Ethiopian Delegation at the United Nations is therefore a period which His Majesty contemplates with the greatest satisfaction and which calls from Him the renewed expression of His sincere appreciation.


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*For documentation relating to the Ethiopian request for Lend-Lease assistance, see ibid., 1943, vol. iv, pp. 82–128.

110.15 Me/4-2750

Aide-Mémoire by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (McGhee) to His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Sélassie

CONFIDENTIAL

The Assistant Secretary of State wishes to express his sincere appreciation to His Imperial Majesty for granting him an audience on March 15, 1950, at the Imperial Palace in Addis Ababa for the purpose of discussing current political and economic issues of concern to the Governments of the United States of America and Ethiopia.

1. With reference to His Imperial Majesty's statement concerning Eritrea, the Assistant Secretary assured His Imperial Majesty that the United States Government has not changed its point of view with respect to the future status of this territory and that it continues to support the cession to Ethiopia of all of Eritrea except the Western Provinces, which it feels should be annexed to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. However, since the General Assembly at its last session established a Commission to investigate Eritrea and to submit a report
with recommendations on the future of the territory to be considered by the Interim Committee and the General Assembly, Mr. McGhee said the United States will, of course, have to take the report of the Commission into consideration.

2. Mr. McGhee stated that the United States appreciates the action taken by the Ethiopian Government in using its influence to suppress tendencies on the part of those sympathetic to the Ethiopian point of view to engage in civil disorders in both Eritrea and Somaliland. Mr. McGhee also expressed the hope that the Ethiopian Government will continue to follow this policy until such time as a full settlement of the Eritrean problem can be reached.

3. His Imperial Majesty was assured that the Department would continue to support Ethiopia's request for loans from the Export-Import Bank for projects which meet the standards set up by that organization. In this regard, His Imperial Majesty was further assured that similar requests made by the Ethiopian Government for loans from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development would also receive the Department's sympathetic consideration and support.

4. On the subject of Point IV assistance, His Imperial Majesty was assured that such assistance for Ethiopia had been included in the plans drawn up by the Department of State and that when the program is approved by the Congress of the United States the Department will be glad to enter into discussions with the Ethiopian Government on the details of implementing the Point IV program for Ethiopia.

5. Mr. McGhee commented on the good impression made in the United States by the cordial relations existing between the Ethiopian Government and those American firms now operating in that country. Mr. McGhee expressed the hope that the climate for the investment of American capital in Ethiopia would continue to be favorable and that it might be further improved through the negotiation of a Treaty of Commerce and Friendship between the two countries.

6. His Imperial Majesty was assured that the Department will re-examine Ethiopia's request for fighter planes for its Air Force and will assist in every appropriate way the officers of the Ethiopian Government to find suitable planes through commercial channels. Mr. McGhee suggested that when the Ethiopian Government finds it possible to obtain the type of planes they require, the Department will endeavor to expedite the granting of licenses for the export of these aircraft.

In conclusion, Mr. McGhee assured His Imperial Majesty of the importance which the United States attached to Ethiopia as a stabiliz-
ing influence in its part of the world, and of our desire to assist Ethiopia in its development. He expressed his keen satisfaction with the cordial relations which now exist between the two countries, and expressed his belief that this long standing friendship would continue to be maintained and strengthened.¹

[WASHINGTON, April 13, 1950.]

¹A copy of this aide-mémoire was transmitted as an enclosure to instruction No. 10 to Addis Ababa, April 13, not printed (775.00/3-1550). Ambassador Merrell delivered the aide-mémoire on April 27 to the private secretary to the Emperor. (Despatch 80, April 27, from Addis Ababa, not printed; 110.15 Mc/4-2750). A summary of the discussion between the Emperor and McGhee and copies of the two aide-mémoires were sent to Secretary Acheson as attachments to a memorandum from McGhee which stated in part as follows: "In view of the present excellent relations which exist between Ethiopia and the United States, the growing interest of American business seeking to enter Ethiopia and the strategic location of that country, I believe that the substance of this conversation will be of interest to you and the President." (110.15 Mc/4-1950). On April 27 Secretary Acheson left a copy of the summary with the President. (Memorandum for the President, April 27, not printed; 110.15 Mc/4-2750).

775.00/S-1250 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Ethiopia (Merrell) to the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL PRIORITY ADDIS ABABA, August 12, 1950—3 p.m.

45. Emperor's private secretary called and left following memorandum with me this morning:

"His Imperial Majesty has expressed his will to help the friendly government of US in its struggle in Korea on behalf of UN.

"As Ambassador is probably aware, principal difficulties which have prevented His Imperial Majesty from carrying out what he has in mind are the limited transport and total lack of port facilities of Ethiopia for the sending of troops and the continuous provisions thereafter of rations and supplies.

"Ethiopia has respected her international obligations and has been and continues to be a firm believer in collective security. The stand Ethiopia took in 1935 and 36 against Fascist invasion is proof of this. He still believes in justice of UN and collective security and does not swerve from this belief. His Imperial Majesty is guiding the international affairs of Ethiopia along these lines. The assistance so far accorded Ethiopia by US has not enabled Ethiopia to do as much as she would have liked in carrying out these sacred principles. Ethiopia will always be found at side of democratic Governments either in war or peace, and particularly at side of her friends, US and UK and she is hopeful of receiving assistance from these governments in order to carry out her desires in this respect. His Imperial Majesty, informed of the assistance given to other countries, does not wish to conceal his surprise at Ethiopia not having received comparable assistance from US to enable him to carry forward his economic development plans."
Italy, who yesterday violated her obligations to the League of Nations and the principles of collective security and made a war of aggression against Ethiopia, and who today presents herself as another Italy, has received considerable military and economic assistance from America, in order to save herself from sinking into sea of Communism. But Ethiopia, who has held constantly to the same principles in the past and present and who nevertheless was victim of aggression, has not received any such assistance in her military and economic recovery from aggression. Italy has been allowed to return to Somalia, about which Ethiopia protested before UN and is now parading her tanks and airplanes in this neighboring territory as a threat to Ethiopia. His Imperial Majesty’s Government has not been able to buy such airplanes with armament from US.

Various propaganda reports and foreign comments have suggested that Ethiopia provides an open field for Communist infiltration. Although this problem has been left entirely to Ethiopia, and it is the duty of Ethiopia to suppress Communism, His Imperial Majesty considers that suppression of Communism depends upon successful carrying out of his program of economic development however, Ethiopia’s needs for economic assistance have been relatively ignored by US.

The message of the President US to Congress on 19 July was gratifying to all small countries such as Ethiopia, and it is good to note that Congress has approved content of message. Ethiopia does not wish to delay her assistance to the democratic governments and wishes to be at their side in order to share their fortunes or misfortunes and His Imperial Majesty would wish to make the following inquiries:

“(a) To what extent would US be able to assist in equipping and arming a unit of approximately 1,000 officers and men and to transport them to and supply them at the fighting front?

“(b) To what extent is US prepared to assist in further equipping and strengthening the Ethiopian Armed Forces in order that Ethiopia may be able to increase her usefulness in the common defense of democratic institutions and her friends and allies?

“(c) What practical steps may be taken by Ethiopia to obtain US financial assistance to enable her to develop more rapidly her economic resources for her own needs and the needs of the world in peace and in war?

“His Imperial Majesty would be grateful to the American Ambassador if he would convey this message to US Government and obtain its reply.”

MERRELL

Editorial Note

In telegram 41 to the Embassy in Addis Ababa, August 22, not printed, the Secretary of State instructed Ambassador Merrell to inform the Emperor that the Ethiopian offer of troops for Korea constituted “striking evidence” of Ethiopia’s continued belief in ob-
taining justice through collective security under the auspices of the United Nations, and to suggest that, since military operations in Korea were being conducted as a result of decisions taken by the United Nations Security Council, the offer be communicated to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. If the offer were accepted, representatives of the Ethiopian Government might meet with officials of the Defense and State Departments to discuss details of training, equipment, supplies, and transportation. The Secretary noted that the Ethiopian offer of troops would be an outstanding example to other nations of the importance placed on carrying out its international and United Nations obligations by a small country which was formerly a victim of aggression. (795b.5/8-2350) In telegram 55, from Addis Ababa, September 5, not printed, Ambassador Merrell reported on a further conversation with the Emperor concerning the details of the unit proposed for Korea. (775.00/9-550)

795b.5/9-550; Telegram.

**The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Ethiopia**

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, October 4, 1950—9 p. m.

69. Your discretion inform HIM that US appreciates desire obtain equipment and improve ability participate actively in collective security measures. Re govt's desire obtain arms equipment for two or three divisions by purchase (urrtel 55 Sep 5) you have recd Depcirtel Sept 21 which, in conjunction with FMACC doc described therein and being punched to you, explains legal basis on which country may be eligible for reimbursable mil aid from US. In case Ethio such eligibility, if at all, will rest upon clear demonstration that ability Ethio defend herself or participate in defense of area of which she is a part is important to security of US. Such determination by this govt will be made only upon clearest demonstration politically and militarily. Shld determination be made, which is extremely unlikely, certain assurances detailed in refd FMACC doc will also have to be obtained from Ethio. You shld make it clear HIM that all countries seeking reimbursable aid under Sec. 408(e) PL 329 as amended must fully reach requirements of law.

FYI even if Pres determination will indicate advisability extending Ethio reimbursable aid, present US requirements and prior commitments may preclude US furnishing in foreseeable future quantities equipment desired by Ethio.

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1 Not printed, but see editorial note, supra.
2 Not printed.
Furthermore, Mil Assistance Act prohibits long-term purchase arrangements if by long-term is meant cash payment later than actual receipt of trans. In most cases such cash payment wld be by law required well in advance trans.

No connection between subj this tel and Ethio offer Korea forces discussed Deptel 65 Sep 27.\(^a\)

\(^a\) Not printed.

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775.00/11–1550: Telegram

_The Ambassador in Ethiopia (Merrell) to the Secretary of State_  

ADDIS ABABA, November 14, 1950—6 p.m.

102. Garretson,\(^1\) American adviser to Foreign Office tells me Emperor is much worried about lack of military assistance. Emperor feels strongly presence of American planes and other equipment in Somalia and American assistance elsewhere in Africa. Although we do not know exactly what he fears, Garretson believes he is apprehensive that in case of general holocaust Ethiopia would become forgotten corner and prey to anyone who comes along. Emperor feels keenly criticism of younger elements of country for his lack of preparedness in 1935 and for what they consider too real a stand re Somalia and Eritrea.

Garretson says Emperor intends renew his request for planes and equipment (Deptel 69, October 4)\(^2\) and both he and I would like to avoid this since good case cannot be made considering legal provisions and prior commitments in US and repetition would put Emperor who is sincere in desiring security and welfare of country in fatuous and undignified light and might be _contra producente_. He is being told that Italy is reducing troops in Somalia before the end of fiscal year (June 30, 1951) from 5916 to 1400, 3200 of whom will have departed by end of 1950, but that is not enough.

It is therefore suggested as best present means of satisfying Emperor who is good friend of US and with whom American prestige has been steadily increasing in last few years, but which may now be reaching point of decline, that an outstandingly well-known and high-ranking American general be sent here, perhaps accompanied by some small show of force such as two or three medium bombers in his flight, (1) to explain to the Emperor, what we conceive Ethiopia’s role to be in general matter of defense of non-Communist world, (2) if feasible, to assure him that US would not permit Ethiopia to

\(^1\) Albert H. Garretson, an American citizen, was legal adviser to the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.  
\(^2\) _Supra_.

be aggressed against, (3) to discuss possibility of sending military mission to Ethiopia similar to those sent number other countries, and (4) to dissuade him from military expense beyond economy of country. Garretson, who had discussed these matters extensively with Emperor, Acting Minister Foreign Affairs and Emperor’s private secretary has been informed by all three that such a visit would be most welcome and promising. It would also be consistent with recent visits of General Sir Brian Robertson, Commander-in-Chief Middle East (Embel 101, November 12), Gaston Palewski, De Gaulle, Lebder, and December 1947 visit of Field Marshal Montgomery.

In view of desirability of warding off repetition of plea for military assistance, embarrassing to both countries, urgent consideration of foregoing is requested.

Merrell

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* General Sir Brian H. Robertson, Commander-in-Chief, British Middle East Land Forces, spent three days in Ethiopia in November.
* Not printed, but see footnote 6, p. 1704.
* Gaston Palewski was a leader of the French political party Rassemblement du Peuple Français.
* Not further identified.
* Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, Chief of the British Imperial General Staff, 1946-1948.
* In telegram 110, to Addis Ababa, November 22, not printed, the Secretary of State acknowledged the suggestion contained in this telegram, noted that it would require careful study with the Department of Defense, and promised to keep the Embassy informed on the matter (775.5-MAP/11-1450).

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775.00/12-650: Telegram

The Ambassador in Ethiopia (Merrell) to the Secretary of State

RESTRICTED

ADDIS ABEBA, December 6, 1950—3 p. m.

122. Emperor declared national holiday yesterday to celebrate UN decision on Eritrea. Populace genuinely happy about decision. Emperor gave huge luncheon “on occasion of UN decision to restore Eritrea to Ethiopia”, during which steady stream of women (Eritrean, according to Prime Minister at whose table I sat) approached Majesties and kissed their feet.

When I congratulated Emperor’s private secretary and said what a fine thing decision was, he replied, “yes, and it is all due to you”, naturally meaning my country.

When I congratulated Emperor, he requested with obvious emotion that I convey his deepest thanks to my government for all its assistance. Acting Minister Foreign Affairs and Minister of Commerce also expressed their warmest appreciation and made it clear that in their opinion credit for solution was mainly due US.

Merrell
TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] December 11, 1950.

Subject: Visit of the Ethiopian Foreign Minister.

Participants: Ato Akililou, Foreign Minister of Ethiopia
             Mr. John Spencer, Adviser to the Ethiopian Government
             Assistant Secretary McGhee
             AF—Mr. Bourgerie
             AF—Mr. Cyr
             AF—Mr. Wellons

Discussion:

His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Ethiopia called on Mr. McGhee to thank him for the United States contribution to the solution of the Eritrean problem. He stated that he was returning to Addis Ababa soon and that he could not do this without indicating to his friends in the State Department how grateful he and the Emperor are for the untiring efforts of the United States representatives, Mr. McGhee in particular, in behalf of Ethiopia. He was particularly grateful, he stated, for the good offices of the United States representatives in bringing together Mr. Brusasca and himself at a luncheon recently. He indicated that he and Mr. Brusasca have had long and constructive conversations on the question of resuming diplomatic relations. He asked Mr. Brusasca that any questions which may arise in the minds of the Italians on Italo-Ethio relations be frankly and fully presented to the Ethiopians for explanation, and stated that he on his part would do the same thing. For example, he had mentioned to Mr. Brusasca the fact that persons from Somalia had been detected smuggling hand grenades across the so-called Ethio-Somalia border. He had mentioned this to Mr. Brusasca as a friend and not as a complainant.

Akililou said he had also expressed the hope to Mr. Brusasca that the question of the boundary line between Ethiopia and Somaliland could be crystallized in a resolution so that upon his return to Addis Ababa there would merely remain the question of implementation. Mr. McGhee mentioned the resolution drafted on this subject by the

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1 Lot 53D468 contains copies of memoranda and correspondence of Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs George C. McGhee for the years 1949-1951.
2 Elmer H. Bourgerie, Director of the Office of African Affairs.
3 Leo G. Cyr, Officer in Charge of Northern Africa Affairs, Office of African Affairs.
4 Alfred E. Wellons, county specialist in the Office of African Affairs.
5 Giuseppe Brusasca, Italian Under Secretary of State for Africa.
United States, and Mr. Wellons indicated that the reaction of the
Italians to this draft has not been received in the Department.

Mr. McGhee expressed his pleasure at the prospect of the Italo-
Ethio rapprochement and stated that he was convinced of the Italian
sincerity in seeking closer relations with Ethiopia. He expressed con-
siderable satisfaction over the fact that two countries which had been
so far apart could through negotiations resolve their differences. He
said that the negotiations in respect to Eritrea had reestablished his
confidence in negotiations as a means of settling disputes. He said that
the success of the negotiations was attributable to the Italians but
more particularly to the high statesmanship of the Ethiopians and
to the wisdom of the Emperor in allowing Aklilou the necessary
latitude. He sounded a note of caution about placing too heavy a
burden on the new found friendship and urged that an effort be made
to raise as few questions as possible which might have the effect of
straining relations.

Mr. McGhee said that he would like to take advantage of Aklilou’s
presence to mention a few problems. It is our understanding, he said,
that the British Military Mission will soon be leaving Ethiopia. He
wondered whether the Ethiopians plan to replace it with another.
Aklilou replied that he did not know of the plans to withdraw the
British Mission and would cable Addis Ababa about it. Mr. McGhee
said that this was not necessary. Mr. McGhee referred to the draft
treaty of friendship which has been submitted to the Ethiopian Gov-
ernment. He referred to the fact that conditions have changed some-
what since its submission but that despite the world crisis it might
be hoped that relations between the United States and Ethiopia
might be permitted to remain sufficiently normal to witness increased
United States investment under a new treaty of friendship. Aklilou
indicated that upon his return he would expedite consideration of the
treaty because the treaty was proposed in the first instance at the
initiative of the Emperor. Mr. McGhee mentioned also the fact that
a standard form of Point Four Agreement has been forwarded to
Addis Ababa. Aklilou indicated that Point Four has been under
considerable discussion in Addis Ababa but that he would try to
bring things to a head on this subject too when he returns.

Mr. McGhee mentioned in passing United States interest in con-
tinuing to operate Radio Marina in Asmara. He noted a report from our Military Attaché to the effect that one Gabriel Tedros, Direc-

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* In telegram 101, November 12, not printed, Ambassador Merrell reported that the British Ambassador, Daniel W. Lascelles, had informed him that the British intended to withdraw their military mission from Ethiopia (741.58/11–1250).

* Not found in Department of State files.
tor of Radio Communications in the Ministry of PT and T of the Ethiopian Government, had stated that, "we will be very unhappy to have a foreign radio station in our territory." Aklilou did not seem to know Mr. Gabriel Tedros. Mr. McGhee stated that some time before implementation of the Eritrean federation resolution is completed representatives of the United States and Ethiopia should get together to discuss United States interests in a telecommunications base facility at Asmara and in an air and naval base facility at Massawa for use in times of emergency. Aklilou nodded his agreement to such a procedure.

Aklilou agreed that considerable progress has been made in achieving United States-Ethiopian objectives since the time of Mr. McGhee's visit to Addis Ababa in March 1950. The Eritrean federation resolution, the IBRD loan, the passage of Point Four legislation, and the draft treaty of friendship are all evidences of the progress which has been made. Aklilou mentioned, however, that His Majesty will probably raise again the question of why Ethiopia has not been able to obtain military equipment from the United States. Mr. McGhee reviewed the Department's efforts to obtain aircraft for Ethiopia and pointed out that the high cost of reconditioning surplus planes was a matter beyond the control of the United States Government. He referred to the higher priorities of countries now under attack, and Aklilou replied that he personally understands very well the great strain under which the United States procurement agencies are laboring. He merely wished to be able to tell the Emperor of the current status. Mr. Wellons indicated that there have been no developments making Ethiopian efforts to procure military equipment any nearer to success.