

KENYAZMATCH ABEBA

Let peace rest on the Empire of Ethiopia.

We thank our Lord God who restored the freedom of Ethiopia so that she may live in her large territories with her liberty. We further thank Him for having broken the strength of her enemy.

Our will is to be under the Ethiopian Government in loyalty. Great harm has befallen us under the British administration. Life has not remained for us. We have been looted of our cattle and property. Some of our men have been killed, others arrested.

We like the Ethiopian Government because we were under it before and in addition our colour and skin are the same. We read in our sacred records that the Ethiopian Government is permanent in the world and will exist until the end.

We pray to our Lord to keep our Government and to crush our enemy. In the letter which you have forwarded to us we are informed of your coming and we are awaiting it with pleasure. If we come to you the English will arrest our wives and children.

We have not received a reply to the letter we sent you. We beg you to write us everything in detail. I also beg to convey my best wishes to the Governor of Harar Province. Please write to us and tell us everything.

I am sending this letter by the hand of my brother. I could not come personally for fear of the English. My brother will explain to you the condition of my country.

(Signed)

SHIEK ABDUL UHAB SHIEK YUSUF,

Clan of Rer Abduli Chief Shiek,

I address this letter to the generous and peace-loving Governor Dedjazmatch Tassou Walalou. (Vice-Governor of Harar Province).

Let not peace depart from you as long as the world lasts.

I have desired for some time past to come to see you in Harar, and I have a desire that you take me before the Emperor.

You know that there was a solemn oath between my father and the Emperor. I desire there will be the same kind of oath between you and me. I have heard that you are labouring to ameliorate the lot of the people living in these parts.

I am ill in bed, and I and my people who are with me are in great difficulty. I have been strictly forbidden to come to see you and I am afraid you will have returned to Harar before I recover.

I have heard that you have enhanced the prestige of the Ethiopian flag. It is my earnest prayer that you and the great Emperor will be strengthened. Send me a reply to this letter. You will know that my state is as described above.

We desire strongly to live united with you.

This is my letter and I am expecting a reply to it.

(Signed)

UGAZ MOHAMED UGAZ OMER.

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SOMALI YOUTH LEAGUE

The first news of a Somali political movement to pass the frontiers of the colony was a Press agency communication that a "Somali Youth Club" had been formed on the fifth of May, 1943. The Club had obtained an interview with the Chief British Administrator, Brigadier Wickham, and had demanded union to Ethiopia "claiming the Emperor Haile Sellassie as their King." The fifth of May, 1943, was a significant date, being the second anniversary of Ethiopian liberation. Though the Emperor Haile Sellassie had re-entered Addis Ababa on May 5, 1941, Ethiopian Government had not been resumed until February, 1942. Hence it was only by the second anniversary of the actual re-entry to the capital that news of the educational and other reforms rapidly being developed in Ethiopia could reach Italian Somaliland. The interview with the Chief Administrator was reported in the Press telegrams as having resulted from a demonstration of unrest arising from economic hardship, which had been brought to a point of crisis by the rumour that new taxation was about to be imposed by the British Military Administration. There was an element of stone throwing, and the possibility of more serious turbulence. The Chief Administrator had received the demonstrators and pacification had followed.

Apparently there were changes in the policy and purpose of the Youth Club. Moreover the formal foundation of the Club was subsequently claimed to have been effected on May 15, ten days after the first demonstration. The organisation was reconstituted on April 1, 1947, as the Somali Youth League.

Starting as a movement of Youth the organisation seems to have represented a spontaneous response by the long-oppressed people of the Somaliland colony to the widespread propaganda of liberation for the peoples of the former Italian Empire, which had been industriously disseminated by British war propaganda in 1940-41. This movement of the Somalis was not purely political; it represented an urge for education and progress and the status of a free people. Its statutes did not make any formal reference to the future of the Colony. Its aims were defined thus:

(1) *To unite all Somalis, particularly the youth, and to eradicate harmful prejudices which cause communal and tribal friction.*