

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Communicated to the
Council and Members
of the League.

C.155.M.93.1936.VII.

Geneva, April 14th, 1936.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION TRANSMITTING
A MEMORANDUM ADDRESSED ON MARCH 2nd, 1936, BY THE ETHIOPIAN
NATIONAL RED CROSS SOCIETY TO THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS
COMMITTEE.

(Translation)

Geneva, April 10th, 1936.

To the Secretary-General.

I would ask Your Excellency to be good enough to
communicate to all the Members of the League of Nations the
memorandum dated March 2nd, 1936, addressed by the Ethiopian
National Red Cross Society to the International Red Cross
Committee, Geneva, a copy of which I have to-day sent to the
League of Nations Secretariat.

I have the honour, etc.

(Signed) WOLDE MARIAM,

Minister of Ethiopia.

MEMORANDUM

(Translation)

M. Max Huber,
President of the International Red Cross Committee,
Geneva,

Addis Ababa, March 2nd, 1936.

Sir,

We have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your
circular No.323 of January 23rd, 1936, to the Central Committees
of the National Red Cross Societies containing the letter sent
by you on January 7th, 1936, to His Excellency M. Benito Musso-
lini, Head of the Italian Government, together with his reply
of January 16th, and two letters annexed thereto from the Pre-
sident of the Italian Red Cross, dated January 11th and 16th.

After a thorough study of these various documents, we
beg to submit herewith a few comments on them and would ask you, as
a reciprocal service, kindly to communicate them to the National
Red Cross Societies. The Ethiopian Red Cross appeals to the
impartiality and neutrality of the International Red Cross Com-
mittee and the sister Societies and asks them to judge who has
violated the conventions - the Ethiopian Government or the Govern-
ment which has just accused it of disloyalty to the lofty prin-
ciples which it should be the sacred duty of us all to respect.

In your letter of January 7th, 1936, following
upon the bombing at Dessie and Malka Didaka of Red Cross units,
after asking the Head of the Italian Government to cause
the necessary arrangements to be made to prevent the

recurrence of incidents likely to do serious harm to Red Cross work, you mentioned that you would like to obtain such information as he thought he could supply you with on the point and as would reassure in particular the national societies concerned. We do not feel certain, however, that the particulars given in the above-mentioned letters from the Head of the Italian Government and the President of the Italian Red Cross are likely, in view of their vague and indefinite character, to reassure the national societies whose ambulances have suffered from Italian air attacks.

After stating that the airmen "make a point of respecting the Red Cross emblem" the Head of the Italian Government remarks that, at the same time, Red Cross units are often unintentionally involved in military operations, and he adds; to quote his own words: "No one deploras such a possibility more than the Italian Government. It will do its best to see that it does not recur". The Ethiopian Red Cross would point out that, actually, the Italian Government is merely promising to prevent accidental bombing but not to stop intentional bombing.

Passing over the few observations suggested by a perusal of this letter, let us examine the letter from the President of the Italian Red Cross.

He begins by saying, to use his own words, that he wishes to send the International Committee a note summarising and explaining incidents which have recently occurred in connection with the dispute between Italy and Abyssinia. Yet it would be useless to look, in his letter, for the summary, explanations or information which are to be regarded as a reply to the very definite inquiry made by you. It must accordingly be concluded that certain definite undeniable facts have made it impossible for the Italian Government to offer any justification. In point of fact the President has not supplied the statement of facts which we would have been entitled to expect. To sum up, his arguments are based on the following allegations:

1. That the Ethiopians do not understand the meaning of the Red Cross.
2. That the Ethiopian Red Cross is non-existent
- and 3. that Red Cross units by their very nature run the risk of bombing from the air.

The argument that Ethiopians do not know the meaning of the Red Cross is so weak and illogical that the Ethiopian Red Cross need not reply to it at length. It will be sufficient to compare two passages which stand side by side in the Italian memorandum and which are mutually exclusive. After referring to the alleged use of the Red Cross emblem on brothels, it is claimed that, during air bombardments, certain Ethiopian troops took shelter under the Red Cross emblem. If this were true, though the Ethiopian Red Cross formally denies it, it would be precisely a proof of the Ethiopian troops' understanding of the immunity conferred by that emblem.

Referring to the alleged protest made by the French Consul at Harrar against abuses of the Red Cross emblem on the part of Dedjazmatch Nasibu, we are astonished that the Italian Red Cross, with the approval of the Head of its Government,

should have ventured to attribute to this Consul a démarche which, as the following letter of February 14th, 1936, from His Excellency the French Minister in Ethiopia shows, he never made:

The Legation of the French Republic in Ethiopia to the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Addis Ababa,
February 14th, 1936.

"Monsieur le Ministre,

"In letter No.154 of February 13th, Your Excellency was good enough to ask me to enquire from the French Consul at Harar how far the report that he (the consul) had urged Dedjazmatch Nasibu to remove the Red Cross emblem, placed on warehouses inside the Guebi and containing war stores, was correct.

"The French Consul at Harar has just assured me that he never addressed such a remark to Dedjazmatch Nasibu. The report in question doubtless arose from a distorted version of a conversation which a French medical man, Dr. Féron, Acting Consular Agent - not French Consul - at Harar, had with the Dedjazmatch last September. During this conversation our compatriot would appear to have pointed out to the Military Governor of Harar that he would do well to use the Red Cross emblem as little as possible, as it would only be respected in so far as it was not abused.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) A. Boëard,

French Minister."

In the second place, the Italian Red Cross reproaches the Ethiopian Red Cross with being a new organisation, founded only just before hostilities began. The Italian Red Cross modestly compares with it its seventy year old record and its experience acquired in previous wars. The Ethiopian Government, particularly since entering the League of Nations, has so constantly cherished illusions of a lasting peace that, until the recent menaces from Italy, it felt it unnecessary to accede to international conventions concerning the laws of war. This explains its delay in acceding to the Geneva Convention of 1929 and in creating a National Red Cross to help the wounded and sick of the armies in the field. When the President of the Italian Red Cross states that "the Italian Red Cross has no Ethiopian Red Cross opposite to it", this is perhaps meant to justify the numerous bombardments of our ambulances. Nevertheless, the Ethiopian Red Cross, which he says does not exist, is a properly constituted society recognised by the International Red Cross Committee.

Thirdly, the President of the Italian Red Cross points out that as they operate in the actual fighting area, the members of Red Cross ambulances and medical units inevitably

run the risk of bombing from the air. He says that Red Cross missions should "be stationed at well-marked points away from places where troops are concentrated," and he adds - perhaps as an excuse for the shameful bombing by Italians of our Red Cross units - that "all the reports of the bombing of medical units from the air start off by being catastrophic, are then reduced by successive denials to much smaller proportions, and end up by admitting that these units were in the vicinity of military works". The President of the Italian Red Cross apparently overlooks the two bombardments of the Swedish Red Cross ambulance, which was five kilometres away from the nearest troops, and, inter alia, the two bombardments of No. 1 Ambulance of the Ethiopian Red Cross, which was entirely outside the town of Dagabur and, further, the bombing at Waldia, an open town containing not a single soldier, and of the Liaison Unit of Ambulances Nos. 2, 3 and 5 of the Ethiopian Red Cross. We notice also that the President of the Italian Red Cross has himself destroyed his third argument by admitting in a previous paragraph of his memorandum that "the staff of the Red Cross is not a staff which conceals itself; it is a staff which does its duty at the point where the danger is greatest and the fighting hardest and is, therefore, inevitably exposed."

It is only in a second letter, dated January 16th, attached to the Italian memorandum, that the Italian Government at last comes to deal with the question of violations of the Red Cross. But the Italian Red Cross does not reply to the questions put to it or endeavour to disprove the charges against the Italian forces of committing the violations in question: on the contrary it passes over this issue in silence, while endeavouring to impute other violations to the Ethiopian forces. There are, however, two facts in this annex which are self-evident. The first is the very small number of cases - two, in point of fact, - where the Italian Red Cross accuses the Ethiopian forces of abuse of the Red Cross emblem. The two cases seem insignificant in comparison with the now habitual violations committed by Italy. Moreover, even in the case of the two alleged violations by the Ethiopian troops, it is easy to show that the charges are without foundation.

It is certainly astonishing that the Italian Government should cite as its first case of violation of the Red Cross the bombardment of Dagabur, the very place where Italian airmen ruthlessly bombed and machine-gunned the Ethiopian Red Cross ambulance which was two kilometres away from the nearest troops. It is also astonishing that the Italian Red Cross should venture in the teeth of these established facts to assert that "the airmen abstained from firing in the vicinity of the ambulance". The Ethiopian Red Cross formally denies that "armed Ethiopians" sought shelter in the ambulance encampment, which was in fact at a distance from any bodies of troops.

As regards the second alleged violation of the Red Cross, the Italian Government asserts that to the south of Lake Asharghi "armed Ethiopians", directly they perceived Italian aircraft, spread on the ground three large Red Crosses and collected round them. In the first place it is impossible for aircraft flying at the height from the ground at which the Italian aircraft were flying to know whether human beings

on the ground are "armed" or mere peasants. In the second place, the Ethiopian Red Cross is in a position to say that (1) these so-called "armed Ethiopians" were Austrian and Irish members of Ambulance No.3 of the Ethiopian Red Cross and Ethiopian stretcher-bearers attached to the same, (2) the military escort was at the time two kilometres distant from the ambulance, and (3) it was not until the end of the day, after the Italian aircraft had gone, that messengers arrived from the Ethiopian forces on the other side of a mountain from the ambulance to ascertain whether the ambulance staff were friends or enemies. This latter circumstance is sufficient proof that up to this point there had been no contact between Ambulance No.3 of the Red Cross and the nearest Ethiopian troops. It also proves that the latter were entirely ignorant of the presence of the ambulance, and so disposes of the supposition that troops were present in the ambulance encampment.

The second fact brought out by the annex to the Italian memorandum is that the Italian Government, owing to the weakness of its arguments, has changed its tactics, and instead of examining the question which it had set out to deal with in this memorandum, namely the observance of the Geneva Convention of July 27th, 1929, it makes accusations as regards alleged violations of other conventions. Although drawing attention to this point, the Ethiopian Red Cross, confident in the justice of its cause, will not refuse to meet the Italian arguments even on this ground.

For example, an item of Annex 11 to the Italian memorandum concerns the use of dum-dum bullets by the Ethiopian troops. We do not pretend to deny absolutely the possibility that certain Ethiopian soldiers may, in isolated cases, have used cartridges containing dum-dum bullets, which before hostilities broke out may have been in the possession of hunters, afterwards enlisted in the Ethiopian army, or even, as we shall prove later, may have fired such cartridges captured from the enemy or taken from the bodies of Italian soldiers killed in battle. We categorically deny, however, that Ethiopia has ever imported such ammunition or supplied it to her army. Owing to the embargo imposed by the manufacturing countries on the despatch to Ethiopia of munitions of all kinds - an embargo which remained in force until after the invasion of our territory and which made it impossible for the Ethiopian Government to supply the troops going to the front with an adequate quantity of cartridges - it is not surprising that soldiers called to the colours should have procured cartridges of all kinds, or should have brought with them sporting cartridges which they had in their possession.

In the first paragraph the Italian Government makes an extremely vague allusion to small arms picked up in the Tigre. There is nothing to prove that these arms did not belong to the Italian troops or were not abandoned by the latter when they retreated, since they were not taken from the enemy as booty. This possibility appears the more likely inasmuch as the number of dum-dum bullets possessed by the Italian forces is known. The Ethiopian Red Cross is astonished that the Italian Government should have felt justified in accusing the Ethiopian armies of using dum-dum bullets on the strength of

1358 cartridges found in the Tigre and mentioned in the paragraph in question, when the same Government sent in a single consignment on December 11th, 1935, in the "ANTONIETTA", which passed through the Suez Canal at 4.45 p.m., no fewer than 400,000 dum-dum bullets in cases marked "G.A.1931" proceeding to Massawa. Consequently, there is every reason to suppose that these few cartridges found in the Tigre belonged to the hundreds of thousands of cartridges with dum-dum bullets despatched by the Italian Government to East Africa. This conclusion is the more inevitable inasmuch as all the arms and ammunition sent to Ethiopia undergo extremely strict supervision in the adjacent countries, in accordance with the Convention of 1930. Consequently, the importation into Ethiopia of illicit ammunition such as dum-dum bullets of British manufacture as alleged in the Italian memorandum is quite out of the question.

The Ethiopian Red Cross draws attention to the United Kingdom Government's protest of February 4th, 1936, sent to the League of Nations and published by the latter on February 6th, 1936, as document C.86.M.31.1936.VII.

Paragraph 2 of this protest, which completely refuted the Italian accusations with regard to the supply of dum-dum bullets by British firms, reads as follows:-

"I am directed by Mr. Secretary Eden to deny categorically that any firm in the United Kingdom has supplied the Ethiopian Government with so-called dum-dum or explosive ammunition for military purposes. In support of this statement I am to remind you that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom exercise the strictest possible control over all exports of munitions and implements of war from the United Kingdom, each consignment of which must be covered by an export licence. As a result, the competent authorities of His Majesty's Government are in a position to see that such munitions as are exported for military purposes conform strictly to international regulations and standards."

Lastly, apart from the 1358 bullets alleged to have been dum-dum bullets, the Italian memorandum mentioned cartridges for Gras rifles with lead bullets, and other cartridges also with lead bullets. The Ethiopian Red Cross would point out that there is nothing in the Italian memorandum to show that these bullets were dum-dum bullets. The only description of these bullets is that they were lead bullets and therefore quite ordinary bullets - as if it could be regarded as an offence to employ even ordinary bullets against the Italian troops.

The Italian Government then gives a list of soldiers alleged to have been wounded by dum-dum ammunition. Here a preliminary observation must be made, namely that the alleged cases of wounds caused by dum-dum bullets and the alleged atrocities committed by Ethiopian troops under the following heading relate in exactly half the cases, namely six out of twelve, to the same encounters, and the four bodies of soldiers killed on December 3rd are counted twice, first, as regards wounds caused by dum-dum bullets and, secondly, as regards atrocities alleged to have been committed by the Ethiopian troops.

After making this preliminary observation, the Ethiopian Red Cross begs permission to reply to these unjust accusations. The first refers to the case we have just mentioned, namely the four soldiers of the Second Blackshirt Division killed in the Tigre on December 3rd, whose bodies are alleged to have shown "wounds made by dum-dum bullets among other wounds". The Ethiopian Red Cross relies on the Italian Government to supply its own refutation, which it duly gives a few paragraphs later in the same memorandum, when it acknowledges that the bodies "were quite unrecognisable at first sight". Thus any ascertainment of wounds, and still more any distinction between wounds caused by dum-dum bullets and ordinary bullets, must have been absolutely impossible.

The second case reported deserves still less consideration. It is stated "that an Eritrean Askari was wounded by an explosive bullet". The memorandum does not venture to assert that this was a dum-dum bullet. It is probable that this explosive projectile was a shell, particularly as the 73rd Italian Communiqué dated December 15th and referring to the Dembeguina fight does not claim that dum-dum bullets were used. Hence it must be concluded that the Italian Government, after reproaching the Ethiopians with shooting at the Italian soldiers with ordinary bullets, is now reproaching them for having fired shells at them.

As regards the soldiers wounded in the Abbi Addi fights on December 18th and 22nd, it should be remarked that the Italian Government does not venture to assert that their wounds were caused by dum-dum bullets. Moreover, the wounds described are exactly the same as those caused by an ordinary bullet. We venture to quote the relevant passages of "Chirurgie de Guerre" by Mauclair, Paris, 1918, pp. 15 and 17, with regard to the wounds caused by ordinary bullets:

"There is a sort of shattering of all the tissues and a veritable focus of mortified tissue all along the track of the wound. This focus of necrosis of the soft and hard parts is complicated by infiltration of the blood in the thickness of the muscle and by bone splinters projected to a great distance through the soft parts; the zone of attrition thus extends very far and these mortified tissues become easily infected.

"The study of the dynamic properties of bullets has shown that, at close ranges of 100, 200 and 400 metres, an ordinary projectile may cause a very serious 'explosive' wound."

As regards the three cases which follow and which relate to the battles of Tansoca, Hananlei and Areri, with the exception of the case of the soldier who is alleged to have had the top of his skull blown off by a dum-dum bullet "fired point-blank", the facts are reported too vaguely to deserve a reply. It is asserted, for example, that "during the battle of Hananlei on November 11th last, the Abyssinians made free use of dum-dum bullets." The number of killed or wounded is not given. As regards the exception mentioned, the photograph attached shows clearly that the gaping hole might just as well have been caused by a sword cut, a shell fragment or even an ordinary bullet. The Italian Government itself indicates that the wound might have been caused by an ordinary bullet, for it states that the projectile was "fired point-blank". According to the passage just quoted, however, an ordinary bullet fired at close range not exceeding 400 metres may cause a very serious "explosive" wound.

Lastly, even assuming that all the cases of alleged wounds, 13 in number, mentioned in the Italian memorandum, were really caused by dum-dum bullets and even if the accusation regarding the 1558 dum-dum bullets alleged to have been picked up in the Tigré were admitted, which on the contrary the Ethiopian Government categorically denies, it would be excessive to conclude, as the Italian memorandum does, that "all these facts constitute a chain of indisputable evidence that cartridges containing prohibited bullets are being systematically used by the Abyssinian troops."

Before dealing with the third heading, namely the "other atrocities committed by the Abyssinian troops", the Ethiopian Government and the Ethiopian Red Cross venture to draw attention to a fact which the Italian Government had already brought to the attention of the League of Nations in a letter from M. Aloisi dated December 17th, 1935, Document C.505.M.273, but which it did not mention in its memorandum to the Red Cross, probably realising that the accusation would not stand even a superficial examination. This refers to a wound supposed to have been received by Sergeant Dalmazio Birago while returning on board machine Ca.101 after the bombing of the open town of Mai-Meshitch on November 18th, 1935 (see annex to the present memorandum, page 27). This wound was only received after the bombing and before returning to the Asmara aerodrome. According to this report, to which several photographs were attached, fragments of bone and lead were found in the sergeant's wound, the lead fragments "varying from 1 cm. in diameter to the size of a grain of corn". Although, according to the report, the wound in itself revealed nothing which could not be explained as the effects of an ordinary bullet, it nevertheless claims that no explanation could be given of the presence of the metal fragments. Accordingly it concludes that the wound received by Dalmazio Birago was caused by an explosive projectile. The Ethiopian Government and Red Cross entirely agree with this remark. The projectile in question was the shell of an anti-aircraft gun, a weapon everywhere employed against bombing aeroplanes. The Italian Government itself proved in its report that the projectile in question was "explosive" (cf. bottom of p.2 of the Italian report) i.e. a shell. The Italian Government states, in fact, that the fragments of metal varied from 1 cm. in diameter to the size of a grain of corn.

Since, however, the largest bullet at present employed in the Ethiopian armies measures 7.92 mm. in diameter, and since a single fragment in the case in question measured no less than 10 mm., it is quite obvious that the wound was inflicted by a small shell and that the hypothesis of dum-bum or explosive bullet is completely ruled out.

Lastly, we have the cases of the so-called atrocities committed by the Ethiopian troops. The first case concerns an Askari who is said to have been killed and afterwards to have been disembowelled and had his skull split by the Ethiopians. This requires only a brief reply. The photograph which the Italian Government attaches to its accusation suffices to show that, although the jaw, but not the skull may have been fractured in some way or other, time and the jackals have done their sinister work well, judging by the advanced state of decomposition of the body.

Next comes the case of the four soldiers killed in an ambush on December 31st, 1935, in the province of Tigré. The Italian Government is indignant because the bodies were found naked and abandoned in a stream. From the very fact that the Italian military authorities found these bodies, however, they admit not only that they were in possession of the battlefield but also that as possessors they were responsible for burying all the bodies on the ground held by them. Consequently this accusation should be laid at the door of the Italian military authorities and not of Ethiopian forces.

As regards the mutilated body of a lieutenant killed on December 18th at Abbi Addi, the Italian communiqué No. 76 of December 21st referring to this battle states that only a non-commissioned officer and not an officer was killed. Moreover, the Italian Government which, in the four cases that follow, sent photographs in support of its allegations, has not been able to do so in the case of this lieutenant, who, according to its official communiqué was not killed.

As regards the four cases mentioned above in which the Italian Government sent photographs, we refuse to admit that there were any mutilations. The photographs of the bodies of Privates Amato and Frangioso show that the ravages of the wounds and the decomposition which has occurred preclude any possibility of establishing the alleged mutilations. In the case of Private Mazzeo, it is not possible to tell from the photograph whether there has been any mutilation. Lastly, in the case of Corporal Cerceda, there is nothing to prove that the photograph was not faked. We recall the fact that the Italian Government did not hesitate to act in this way on the occasion of its memorandum to the League of Nations of June 21st, 1935, as was clearly shown in M. van Molle's letter of September 10th, 1935, sent to His Excellency Baron Aloisi and published in the official journal of the League of Nations of November 1935, p. 1587. The same observations apply to the cases of the Italians said to have been mutilated after the battle of December 28th in the Makale district.

The Italian accusations in regard to atrocities cite finally the case of the Italian pilot Tito Minniti who is said to have made a forced landing at Dagabur, where he was taken prisoner by the Ethiopian troops, and decapitated, his head being carried in triumph to the headquarters of the officer commanding the military area. The following are the facts. The aeroplane in question landed at a distance from the town of Dagabur and at a distance from any military post or concentration of troops. The aviator Minniti was captured and killed on the spot by local nomads, who live by raising cattle. They do not belong to the Ethiopian army, and they are much incensed against the Italian airmen who never cease bombing and machine-gunning their peaceful villages and flocks (see Annex, page 28). Such incidents may be deplored, but they do not constitute any justification for the Italian attempt to saddle the Ethiopian army with the responsibility for their occurrence, or for the claim that the officer in question was at any time a prisoner of war. After the continual bombing of open towns and the burning of the peasants' huts - not to mention the hecatombs of herds and flocks for which the Italian airmen are responsible - is it not too much to ask of the most reasonable person not to lift a hand against the very individuals

who have mowed down from the air with impunity by means of bombs and machine-guns every living creature within their reach? It is not even a question of reprisals, but of just indignation held up for months against the authors of such savage acts. If the Italian airmen propose to continue their atrocities, is it surprising that they should reap the consequences when they fall into the hands of peaceful peasants or shepherds? These peasants and shepherds may not have a profound knowledge of the rules of a modern and "civilising" war; but they are possessed with a profound and ineradicable conviction that people who make war in this way deserve punishment.

Having studied the alleged grievances of the Italian Government and Italian Red Cross, the Ethiopian Red Cross is constrained to protest in the name of the elementary principles of international law. In drawing the attention of its fellow Red Cross societies to the violations committed by the Italian forces against the immunity of the Ethiopian Red Cross ambulances, the Ethiopian Red Cross Society is protesting, not merely against the aggression from which its own ambulances have suffered, but also against the aggression inflicted on neutral ambulances which have endeavoured from humanitarian motives to alleviate the sufferings involved in the unjust war into which we have been forced.

On the morning of the day on which Italy began hostilities Italian airmen bombed the hospital in Adowa - as a precursor to the numerous violations of the Red Cross which they were subsequently to commit.

On December 6th nine aircraft bombed the hospital of the American Adventist Mission, together with the Ethiopian Red Cross ambulances at Dessie. The statement attesting this violation by Dr. Belau, Dr. Loeb, Dr. Dassios and Dr. Bayen as well as by a number of journalists and photographers and the representative of the International Red Cross Committee makes it unnecessary to dwell on the facts of this case. But the following circumstances should be borne in mind. In spite of the affiliation of this hospital to the Ethiopian Red Cross, which was duly notified to the enemy, and in spite of the big Red Cross emblems clearly painted on the roof of the building and the tents of the ambulances together with other Red Cross's spread out on the ground, this hospital full of sick persons was hit by five bombs which did serious damage to one of the wards. Other bombs completely destroyed the operating tent of Ambulance No.2.

Nine days after the attack on Dessie the fourth bombing took place of the Ethiopian Red Cross at Neghelli.

This bombing was followed on December 22nd by a first attack on the Swedish ambulance at Malka Didaka; and the same ambulance was again bombed eight days later on December 30th in the same place. On the morning of December 30th ten aeroplanes flying 200 metres high bombed and machine-gunned the Ambulance in question. Not less than 100 bombs were dropped, and they were followed by machine-gun fire. All the tents were destroyed. The operating tent alone was pierced by 450 machine-gun bullets: 28 patients were killed; and the Swedish mechanic Lundstrom

was seriously wounded and died the following day. Dr. Hylander, the Head of the Ambulance, was also wounded. The nearest troops were 5 kilometres away. In spite of these undisputed facts, to which Dr. Hylander and the representative of the International Red Cross Committee bore witness, Italy has attempted to justify her aggression on the pretext that it was a case of reprisals for the alleged decapitation of an Italian airman. If so, it is hard to see why the Italian airmen should have directed their attacks against an ambulance of the Swedish Red Cross, which was a very long way from the place where the alleged decapitation is said to have taken place. Realising the weakness of its argument, the Italian Government subsequently asserted that only one bomb was dropped. But authentic evidence is available to prove that no fewer than 100 bombs were dropped on the Ambulance. The Italian Government also avers that the bombing was a matter of pure chance. The 450 machine-gun bullet holes in the operating tent made by shots fired at a height of 200 metres, and the fact that there were no troops within a radius of 5 kilometres that could have been the object of the bombing, are sufficient to refute such a contention. The Ethiopian Red Cross need not dwell further on these details, an official report of the attack having been drawn up by one of the representatives of the International Red Cross Committee in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Red Cross ventures to express a hope that this report will be published and communicated to all national Red Cross societies.

On the same day when these atrocities were committed three Italian aeroplanes flew over and bombarded the Egyptian Red Crescent ambulance at Bulalé and again on the following day, December 31st. Five bombs were dropped near the Ambulance on the first occasion, the farthest being 100 metres away.

Quite oblivious to the disgust created by these attacks on December 30th, the Italian aeroplanes proceeded on January 4th following, i.e. five days later, to bombard No.1 Ambulance of the Ethiopian Red Cross at Dagabur, which consisted of one Egyptian medical officer, one Egyptian orderly, two English attendants and Ethiopian stretcher-bearers. After dropping their bombs the airmen machine-gunned the Ambulance in question. At least fifty bombs were thrown, not only on the Ambulance itself but also on the personnel which had taken shelter in the trenches at a distance from the Ambulance. The pince-nez of one of the doctors which he was holding when he jumped into a trench was pierced by a shell splinter. The Ethiopian Red Cross is in a position to assert that the Ambulance was 2 kilometres away from the town bombed and not near any collection of soldiers; furthermore, no shots were fired from the site of the Ambulance at the aeroplanes before, during or after the bombing.

On January 15th the Liaison Unit of Ambulances No.2, 3 and 5 of the Ethiopian Red Cross was bombed at Waldia. Though there were troops outside Waldia, which is an open town, there were none near the unit nor in the town which was also bombed on the same occasion and on several occasions later.

Three days after this bombardment, i.e. on January 18th, No.3 Ambulance of the Ethiopian Red Cross was bombed south of Makale.

The Red Cross camp was situated in a tiny valley forming a triangle with sides fifty metres long at the foot of the plateau which rises in front of Makale.

The Ambulance itself was situated at the apex of this small valley and marked by a Red Cross flag. A similar flag was fixed right in the middle of the valley and a third stood at the base of the triangle.

On January 17th, the day before the bombardment, a member of the Ambulance staff standing beside the middle flag suddenly noticed a big triple-engined plane flying about 200 feet above the Red Cross camp. At this distance he discerned one of the crew looking out of the cabin. The member of the Ambulance staff immediately pointed out to him the flag beside him and signalled to the airman not to bomb the Red Cross camp. The latter signalled an acknowledgment.

The following day, January 18th, at 7 a.m. three triple-engined planes proceeded to bomb the camp for an hour. The first plane which dropped bombs bore the number 7, and the airman aimed specially at the Red Cross flag in the middle of the camp, the very flag which had been pointed out to the plane the evening before. The various bombs and marks of machine-gun bullets round this flag are evidence of the fact. Furthermore, eight Ethiopian women who were in the camp were wounded.

Later, about 2 p.m. three triple-engined planes flew over and bombed the ambulance for two and a half hours. After they left, 30 bombs were found near the Red Cross flag in the centre of the camp and there were also many traces of machine-gun bullets.

In this case there were two clearly premeditated bombardments. In the first place, the Italian airmen were undoubtedly aware of the presence at this place of a Red Cross Ambulance, since it had been pointed out to them during their reconnaissance flight on the previous day. Further, there were no troops in the neighbourhood to excuse the bombing. On the contrary, a member of the staff of the Ambulance in question had seen and heard Ras Mulugheta before the first bombardment formally forbid any soldier to go near the Red Cross camp. It should be observed that throughout both bombardments not a single shot was fired on the planes from any firearm in the neighbourhood. There can only be one conclusion: both bombardments of this ambulance were effected with the deliberate object of annihilating the Red Cross Ambulance and its staff.

On the morning of February 9th the hospital plane of the Ethiopian Red Cross, parked in a field several kilometres away from the town of Dessieh was bombarded by Italian planes from a height of 200 metres. It should be noted that a description and photograph of this hospital plane had been sent to Rome through the International Red Cross Committee.

Finally, on February 11th and 12th, two days after the last-named bombardment, the Ambulance of the Egyptian Red Cross was bombed at Bulale. Five planes dropped eleven bombs on it during the first, and twenty-two during the second, bombardment. These bombs fell within five metres of the ambulance, which was also hit by machine-gune fire. It should be observed that the ambulance was flying not only the Egyptian flag but also the flags of the Red Cross and the Egyptian Red Crescent. The bombing of this Ambulance were thus deliberate.

These are the attacks made not only on the Ambulances of the Ethiopian Red Cross but also on those of the neutral countries which have come to the aid of Ethiopia under Article II of the Geneva Convention. The Ethiopian Red Cross would be failing in its duty if it did not register a formal protest against these savage violations of the immunity granted to the Red Cross, violations which have been deliberately and cynically organised and carried out in the most barbarous fashion.

Relying on the devotion and impartiality which have always characterised the International Red Cross Committee, the Ethiopian Red Cross requests you to convey to national sister societies its reply to the unjust attacks made upon it.

I have the honour, etc.

(Signed) Belaton Gueta HERROUY,

President of the Ethiopian Red Cross.

BOMBING OF RED CROSS UNITS.

The Ethiopian Red Cross does not profess, in the following list, to enumerate all the occasions on which hospital formations of the Ethiopian and foreign Red Crosses were bombed. A complete list would also have to include the occasions on which hospital formations were bombed without suffering damage. In that category mention should be made of the bombing of the Ambulance of the Netherlands Red Cross on February 9th at Dessie, and that of the Ambulance of the British Red Cross on its way to Aworam on February 11th.

ADOWA	October 3rd	Red Cross Hospital
DESSIE	December 6th	American Adventist hospital attached to the Ethiopian Red Cross for the duration of hostilities.
NEGELLI	December 15th	Ambulance No. 4 of the Ethiopian Red Cross.
MALLA DIDALA	December 22nd	Ambulance of the Swedish Red Cross.
MALKA DIDAYA	December 30th	Ambulance of the Swedish Red Cross.
BULALE	December 30th	Ambulance of the Egyptian Red Crescent.
BULALE	December 31st	Ambulance of the Egyptian Red Crescent.
DAGABUR	January 4th	Ambulance No. 1 of the Ethiopian Red Cross.
WALDIA	January 15th	Liaison unit of the Ethiopian Red Cross Ambulances on the northern front.
MAPALE (to the south of)	January 18th	Ambulance No. 3 of the Ethiopian Red Cross.
DESSIE	February 9th	Ethiopian Red Cross aeroplane.
BULALE	February 11th	Ambulance of the Egyptian Red Crescent.
BULALE	February 12th	Ambulance of the Egyptian Red Crescent.

BOMBING OF OPEN TOWNS.

The Ethiopian Red Cross called the attention of National Red Cross Societies to the following facts:

The Press Secretary of the Italian Embassy in London stated on October 4th, 1935:

"I can assure you that Mussolini gave express instructions to our armies that centres of civilian population were on no account to be bombed."

According to a message broadcast from Berlin on October 24th, 1935, Count Ciano, Minister of Propaganda, stated at Asmara that:

"The Italian army has always endeavoured to spare the civilian population and it is easy for Italian armies to recognise the Ethiopian fighting forces, which usually camp outside the inhabited areas."

The following passage is part of a telegram sent to the League of Nations by the Italian Government on December 15th, 1935:

"The Italian Government formally denies that any open town has ever been bombed by the Air Force in East Africa, since every action has always been directed solely against military columns and concentrations."

The Ethiopian Red Cross does not claim that the following list enumerates every instance of the bombing of open towns. Apart from such attacks, the Italian aircraft have flown everywhere, both over and behind the fronts, discharging explosive and incendiary bombs haphazard on peaceful peasant villages, massacring livestock by means of machine gun fire, even in provincial districts remote from all military operations or concentrations.

BOMBING OF OPEN TOWNS (Contd.).

ADOWA	October 3rd.
ADIGRAT	October 3rd.
AMBA ALAJI	October 14th.
KEBRI DEHARI	October 25th.
MAI-METCHITCH	November 13th.
GONDAR	December 5th.
ZELEO	December 28th.
ADI REMOZ	December 28th.
KEBTIA	December 23th.
DEBNAT	January 2nd.
AMBA BIRAUTA	January 3rd.
DABAT	January 10th.
SOKOTA	January 10th.
AMBA BIRAUTA	January 14th.
WALDIA	January 15th.
KWORAM	January 16th.
KWORAM	January 18th.
KWORAM	January 19th.
KWORAM	January 30th.
CHILGA	January 30th.
DABEITO	February 4th.
MEGALO	February 5th.
COMBALCHA	February 9th.
SOLELE	February 9th.
WALDIA	February 9th.
KWORAM	February 9th.
ASHANGI	February 9th.
MAI CHOW	February 9th.
KWORAM	February 10th.
ASHANGI	February 10th.
WALDIA	February 10th.
WALDIA	February 11th.
WALDIA	February 12th.
KOBBO	February 12th.
MERTHO	February 13th.
COMBALCHA	February 13th.
LAKE HAİK CONVENT	February 13th.
DONKA MIKAEL	February 13th.
WALDIA	February 13th.
JARRE GUILBO	February 14th.
DONKA MIKAEL	February 14th.
SEGERAT	February 14th.
WARTIA	February 14th.
WALDIA	February 14th.
MEGALO	February 15th.
MEGALO	February 16th.
GUERO	February 16th.
GINNIR	February 16th.
KWORAM. (twice)	February 17th.
KWORAM	February 18th.

BOMBING AND BURNING OF CHURCHES.

DAGABUR	November 14th.
DAGABUR	November 23th.
Churches in the Shire	during the retreat after the defeat of Eda Selassie.
Churches in the Tembien	during the retreat from Tembien.
SOKOTO	January 10th.
ABBI ADDI	January 20th.

The Ethiopian Red Cross begs to draw attention to the fact that the Italian authorities themselves admit to such bombing and incendiarism in the following leaflet, copies of which were scattered on January 15th and 16th during the air attacks on the open towns of Kworam and Waldia;

"Peoples of Eritrea and the Tigre, hearken!

"War brings both good and evil. That being so, it even happens that churches are damaged and destroyed. But do not imagine that such damage or destruction does not cause regret and pain to the Italian Government, which hereby announces that, when by the grace of God peace is restored, every church damaged to whatever extent or destroyed, will be completely restored to an even better state than before.

"(Signed) Commander of the Italian Army
Marshal of Italy."

USE BY THE ITALIAN TROOPS OF ASPHYXIATING, POISONOUS AND OTHER
GASES AND PROHIBITED WEAPONS.

Asphyxiating, poisonous and other gases were employed, more particularly, at the following times and places in violation of the Geneva Protocol of June 17th, 1926, which declaration has been ratified by Italy.

TAKHAZE	December 23rd.
AMBA ALAJI	December 26th.
BORANA	December 30th, neighbourhood of,
MAKALE	December 31st.
SOKOTA	January 10th,
MAKALE	January 21st.
MEGALDO	February 16th.

The Ethiopian Red Cross draws attention to the following consignments of asphyxiating, poisonous and other gases, and prohibited arms, sent from Italy to Eastern Africa.

Between June 25th and December 25th, 1935, there passed through the Suez Canal:

45 tons of mustard gas (Jost-yperite)
265 " " asphyxiants.
7483 gas bombs.

all consigned to Massowa.

On January 4th, 1936, at 6.35 a.m. the vessel "Sicilia" passed through the Suez Canal transporting

4700 bombs containing asphyxiating and tear gases,
3227 incendiary bombs in cases marked T.U.7., all
consigned to Massowa.

On January 19th, 1936, at 9.25 p.m. the vessel "Madda" passed through the Suez Canal transporting 185 flame throwers consigned to Massowa.

On December 11th, 1935, the vessel "Antonietta" passed through the Suez Canal at 4.45 p.m. transporting 400,000 dum-dum bullets in cases marked G.A. 1931, consigned to Massowa.
