

at once. This I was most anxious to accomplish at the earliest possible moment, both to hasten the structure of an Ethiopian State which might eventually stand on its own legs, and to get the fullest use out of the patriot movement in conjunction with my forces which were still engaged with the enemy, thus compensating to a small degree for the loss of troops and equipment being sent up to Middle East.

It was, however, quite impossible to allow the Emperor back until I had settled the various internal security questions in Addis Abeba and disarmed the Italians. I had some difficulty with the Emperor on this question, and he appeared distrustful of our future intentions towards him. I was, however, in a position to let him in on 5th May on which day he ceremoniously entered the city on the anniversary of the entry by the Italians exactly five years before. In view of the complete disarming of the city there were no major incidents. Considerable credit was due to Brigadier M. S. Lush, M.C., the D.C.P.O., who was in charge of the civil administration, for this happy result.

83. Meanwhile political officers were being sent to the main centres and were engaged in administering the country as far as possible through the local Ethiopian officials and chiefs. The Duke of Harrar, Prince Mackonnen, arrived in Harrar to be the Governor of that Province.

84. The political situation at that time as far as E.A. Force was concerned was that I was Military Governor of Italian Somaliland, British Somaliland, and those parts of Abyssinia in which my troops were in occupation, as far north as Dessie and the Gojjam. D.C.P.Os. were functioning under my orders in Italian Somaliland at Mogadiscio, and as already stated in Addis Abeba for Abyssinia. British Somaliland was placed under a separate Military Governor, Brigadier A. R. Chater, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., under my general direction. In order to avoid for the moment any difficulties with the Somalis in connection with the Emperor's return, Italian Somaliland as delimited by the Italians, and not in accordance with the old boundary, was kept under the D.C.P.O. in Mogadiscio, or in other words, the whole of the area including the Ogaden and southwards from it, was kept under the D.C.P.O. Italian Somaliland, and this area was known as Southern Somalia.

85. At this period considerable trouble was still being given over most of the occupied area by the many armed deserters from the Italian Army who had formed themselves into marauding bands. It was clear that my main object was the defeat of the Italian forces, and therefore I was quite unable to provide the large number of troops which would have been required in the vast area under my control, to establish law and order with efficiency and despatch. I explained to my political officers that they would have to do the best they could with the few garrison battalions I could spare and what they could raise in the way of gendarmerie and police from local resources, and that I quite appreciated I would have to accept a degree of lawlessness until such time as I could spare troops to enforce the law. I have to thank them for the loyal way in which they accepted this position, and the efficiency with which they established a considerable degree of law and order with the assistance of the small military resources available.

86. The general question of military political control in E.A. Force was, however, most unsatisfactory. Owing to operations it was necessary for me to have my Headquarters in Harrar. Under these conditions I was separated from my three administrators in Addis Abeba, Mogadiscio and Hargeisa, by many hundreds of miles. I had no political staff myself. The D.C.P.Os. dealt direct with the Chief Political Officer, Middle East, who had meantime left Cairo and had opened his Headquarters in Nairobi. All political action was presented to me as a fait accompli, and hence though I was responsible, I had no means of exerting authority, of knowing what was going on or even of laying down the policy for the area for which I was responsible. For instance, although I was the authority for confirmation of death sentences I had no independent legal adviser. Again, I eventually found that the militarily most important offence of concealing arms was being dealt with by the death sentence in one area, and mere internment in another; I had no machinery by which I could ascertain the details of the administration, or to see that a general policy was being applied throughout.

The situation was considerably eased by the move back of my Advanced H.Q. to Nairobi on 18th June, a move which was made possible by the fact that by the above date military operations in the Galla Sidamo had been reduced to a scale which enabled them to be undertaken wholly by the Commander of 11th (A) Division.

It was, however, recognised that the normal O.E.T.A. organisation could not apply over the large area for which I was responsible, and a scheme is now in hand by which I will be relieved of all purely civil administrative responsibilities.

Evacuation.

87. It had always been my view, and indeed, that of my political advisers, that before any form of Ethiopian control was permitted in Abyssinia it would be necessary to evacuate all Italians, lock, stock and barrel. I expressed this view to the C.-in-C. with the suggestion that by far the best solution would be repatriation to Italy if it could possibly be arranged.

As soon as it was possible to arrive at some estimate of the numbers involved and the accommodation and transport facilities available, the problem was examined in detail. The numbers of civilians to be evacuated were estimated at 55,000 though to this figure some 70,000 prisoners of war had to be added. Women and children were estimated at 11,000 and 7,000 respectively. It was immediately apparent that total evacuation, even if shipping were available, must be a very long process, probably extending over at least six months. It would, moreover, entail the complete stoppage of all essential services in Abyssinia and the many technical institutions and factories introduced by the Italians and entirely supervised by them. I felt, therefore, that I was forced to revise my previous views on the subject of evacuation, and was confirmed in this opinion by the remarkable restraint shown by the Ethiopians up to that time from avenging themselves against the Italians. I decided, therefore, that evacuation should be started as soon as possible, but should be carried out by categories in the following order,