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XXVIII. Air Attack on American Missionaries in Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (Continued)

(Dept. of State Bulletin, Vol. IV, No. 86, February 15, 1941)

A more detailed note from the Italian Government addressed to the American Embassy in Rome has been received in response to an American protest concerning an attack from the air upon a station of the Sudan Interior Mission at Doro, Upper Nile province, which took place on August 23, 1940. The note verbal, with its enclosure dated January 31, 1941, reads as follows :

“With reference to the Embassy’s letter of November 1, 1940, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the honor to enclose a copy of the report from the competent Italian military authorities regarding the alleged bombardment of Doro. The said authorities after careful investigation state that it is to be excluded that the air action in question was carried out by Italian airplanes and emphasize the point that the Government of the Province concerned had in fact given orders that the two missions whose presence at Doro and Chali was perfectly well known should be left undisturbed where they were.”

The translation of the enclosure with the Italian note verbal follows :

“The careful investigation immediately ordered by the high command in Italian East Africa has given the following results :

“‘At Chali (Kurmuk) there is a group of American missionaries composed of two men, one woman and one boy; another group of American missionaries composed of two men and three women carries on its work at Doro.

“‘These missionaries in due time informed the commander of the Kurmuk garrison that they belonged to the Sudan

Interior Mission and that they were engaged in religious work exclusively.

“The Galla Sidama Government gave instructions that these missions be left undisturbed where they are.

“The report of the bombardment of the said mission as broadcast by the British is in so far as we are concerned unfounded.

“The Galla Sidama Government has caused an investigation to be made and states that it is to be excluded. We have twice bombarded the locality of Daga River Post and there is corroborating proof that this was the locality and not another. Furthermore the dates on which the bombardments took place do not coincide.

“The crews of the planes which carried out this action likewise confirm that the locality bombarded was beyond possibility of mistake Daga River Post (which is easily identifiable because of its location on the Daga River), and not Doro.

“The only matter which is known to us is that during our first bombardment of Kurmuk (then British) on July 13th last a missionary who was in that locality was wounded in the shoulder but not seriously.”