

**The Sultan of The Arab State of Zanzibar
and The Regent 1902 - 1905**

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the relations between Seyyid Ali Bin Hamoud, the Sultan of the Arab State of Zanzibar and Mr. Rogers, his First Minister and Regent from 1902 till 1905. The motives that led the British Government to install Seyyid Ali as Sultan and the establishment of the Regency are thoroughly dwelt with. The study highlights the gradual relationship between the Sultan and the Regent and the circumstances that led the Sultan to seek the abolition of the Regency. More light is cast upon the attitude of the British Government towards the Sultan's efforts and their ways and means to impose their policy in Zanzibar. Lastly, the study analyzes the circumstances that led the British Government to end the Regency.

INTRODUCTION

In 1890 Seyyid^(*) Ali bin Said Al-Bu Saidi was appointed by the British Government as the Sultan of the Arab State of Zanzibar. The appointment was preconditioned by his agreement to declare the Arab State a British protectorate, and to submit to many financial and administrative concessions in order to stay in power. On March 1893 the Sultan Seyyid Ali died and Seyyid Hamid bin Thuwaini was appointed by the protection Government as the Sultan of Zanzibar⁽¹⁾. The new Sultan like his predecessor did not stay in power for long. He died in 1896. An attempt by Amir Khalid bin Bargash - the son of Sultan Bargash bin Said (1870 - 1888) - to seize the throne failed and the British Government appointed Seyyid Hamoud bin Mohammed as the Sultan of Zanzibar.

Nomination of Seyyid Ali as Sultan of Zanzibar and establishment of Regency.

The Sultan of Zanzibar Seyyid Hamoud was well aware that a struggle for succession would break out between the claimants to the throne of Zanzibar after his death. Therefore, he requested Sir Lioyd Mathews, his First Minister before his departure to England, to take up the question of succession with the British Government. The Sultan Seyyid Hamoud hoped that her Majesty's government might be induced to recognize prince Ali, his only son, as his successor⁽²⁾.

Sir L. Mathews assured the Sultan that he would do all he could to help Seyyid Hamoud. The Sultan and Sir Mathews has a very close relationship. The latter, had served for long time in East Africa and especially at Zanzibar. He conducted the post of First Minister to the Sultan and they worked together in harmony. Mathews believed that the Sultan Seyyid Hamoud had always acted most loyally to the British Government⁽³⁾. In fact, Seyyid Hamoud was "devoted to the English; his only desire was to please them and to do all that they wished"⁽⁴⁾.

In keeping his promise Mathews sent a memorandum dealing with the succession question to the Foreign Secretary on April 23, 1900. In that Memorandum, Mathews emphasized that Seyyid Hamoud, the Sultan of Zanzibar had always acted most loyally to the British Government. He also pointed out that the Sultan played a leading role concerning the decree of the abolition of the Legal Status of Slavery of 1897⁽⁵⁾. Moreover, Mathews pointed to the cooperation of the Sultan in the establishment of the new native courts. Therefore, he urged the Foreign Secretary to give careful consideration to the Sultan's son in succession of the throne⁽⁶⁾.

Mathews was well aware that the induction of Prince Ali to the succession of the throne would mean ignoring the claims of the Sultan's brother Seyyid Khalid bin Mohammed. The latter was the eldest male of the royal family and he expected to succeed to the Sultanate. According to the local law, a ruler was followed by his brother or the oldest person of the royal family. In dealing

with this point, Mathews believed that "time had now arrived when the old tradition might be wisely be broken"⁽⁷⁾. In reality the old tradition was broken long ago by the British Government policy of divide and rule.

In returning to the Memorandum, Mathews summed up his arguments by stating that the young prince Ali's public school education, his knowledge of English language; and his English sympathies - made him the more suitable candidate⁽⁸⁾.

In reality the Sultan Seyyid Hamoud was forward looking in that the English education of his son might enhance his son's prospects of one day becoming Sultan⁽⁹⁾. The argument of Mathews was so convincing that it led the Secretary of the State to issue an instruction to Basil Cave, the British Consul at Zanzibar in October 1900, that in the event of the sudden death of Seyyid Hamoud, while his son still a minor, the latter should be proclaimed Sultan, and a Regent should be appointed until he attained his majority⁽¹⁰⁾.

The Prince Ali bin Hamoud had been informed by his father, some months before his death that the British Government had promised that he should be the next Sultan. The promise had been unconditional⁽¹¹⁾. The Sultan Seyyid Hamoud had made a certain proposal to Her Majesty's Government under the terms that his son was to succeed him, but the arrangement had not been concluded, and no definite understanding had ever been given⁽¹²⁾. In October 11, 1901, Sir L. Mathews died, and the post of First Minister was offered to and accepted by Mr. A. Rogers. The latter was well known in East Africa and had a long experience of coastal administration chiefly at Witu and Lama⁽¹³⁾. It is worth saying that the British Government on one hand believed that Prince Ali might be like his father who served the interest of the British Government. On the other hand, the British government might also have thought using the minority of Prince Ali to enhance their influence. As far as the establishment of the Regency, one could say that this system was well known in the modern history of the Arab world and can be traced to early Islamic history. Yet, the Arab State of Zanzibar had not witnessed the adaptation of this system during its history and more precisely in its modern history.

The Sultan Seyyid Hamoud requested Rogers to allow his son to attend at Rogers office for two hours a day in order to gain an insight into the detail of the administration⁽¹⁴⁾. The Prince was encouraged by his father and Rogers to take an interest in affairs concerning his father's subjects, and to continue his European education. The Sultan also in 1897 sent prince Ali on a four month tour of South Africa to observe British institutions functioning in a major colony⁽¹⁵⁾.

Prince Ali who was in England at a public school at Harrow returned to Zanzibar at the end of the summer course of 1901. In early 1902 Prince Ali reached the age of seventeen, and his father chose for him one of the Princesses. The marriage ceremony was celebrated. The Prince did not stay for long at Zanzibar. his father, the Sultan, sent him to England to represent him for the coronation of King Edward VII. He was accompanied by Mr. Basil Cave, the British Counsel at Zanzibar⁽¹⁶⁾.

The Sultan Seyyid Hamoud's health condition had caused considerable concern to his medical advisors. His health condition worsened shortly after Prince Ali's departure to England and on July 18, 1902 the Sultan died at the age of fifty-five⁽¹⁹⁾.

Mr. Rogers, the First Minister took immediate measures to secure the Palace of the Sultan. He ordered the closure of the palace doors and posted troops in the square outside and at the British Consulate. He also issued orders to the troops to guard the northern and southern approach of the town. Further more, the Bazaar was patrolled and a request was sent to the merchants to close their shops⁽²⁰⁾.

According to Rogers who became the Regent that when Seyyid Ali was called to the Sultanate, the Arabs practically resented it, but he did not say how. Furthermore, he stated that "the Arabs complained that it was entirely at variance with all their tradition that the son of a Negro should be placed on the throne"⁽²¹⁾. But what Rogers did not say that almost all the Sultans of Zanzibar who ruled the state since the death of Said bin Sultan in 1856 were the sons of Surry and Concubines.

Rogers attributed the acceptance of the succession of Seyyid Ali to the Sultanate without any disorder arising as only due to the loyalty of the Arabs to His Britannic Majesty and the object-lesson learned at the bombardment of 1896⁽²²⁾. It is worth noting that Rogers might be right in the second part of his attribution, but he was not that accurate in the first part. Loyalty could not be achieved by bombardment.

The First Minister, in taking these immediate measures was well aware of the disturbances that had broken out on the death of Seyyid Hamid bin Thuwaini in 1896. Therefore, he wanted to prevent the repetition of this experience. On the other hand, the British Counsel and Prince Ali, the Heir chosen by the British Government were not in Zanzibar. They were traveling together to England as mentioned earlier, and their steamer was not due to arrive for more than a week⁽²³⁾.

In Zanzibar, no incident was reported, and on July 20, 1902, the proclamation of Prince Ali as the new Sultan of Zanzibar took place at the Baraza. The proclamation was announced by the Acting British Counsel, and attended by the leading Arabs and senior admiral and naval officers⁽²⁴⁾. Mr. B. Cave, the British Counsel broke the news of the death of the Sultan to Prince Ali when they reached Jibouti. Mr. Cave then told the Prince that he was chosen by the British Government to succeed his father as the Sultan of Zanzibar. The Prince was also told that Mr. Rogers, the First Minister Would be the Regent until he reached the age of twenty-one⁽²⁵⁾.

It was not until July 20 that the steamer carrying the British Counsel and the new Sultan reached Zanzibar. They were greeted by the Regent and the new Sultan was escorted to the Palace. The Sultan was welcomed by his uncle Seyyid Khaled bin Mohammed and leading Arabs⁽²⁶⁾. At the Palace a few days later the Regency was formally proclaimed in the presence of the leading Arabs of Zanzibar including the Sultan's relatives. It was also published in the Zanzibar Gazette⁽²⁷⁾.

THE REGENT'S CONDUCT

The Sultan Seyyid Ali began to conduct the affairs of the Sultanate and his

relationship with the Regent went smoothly and very well, but not for long. As time went on, the Sultan realized the real meaning of the Regency. He found that he was just a figurehead and had no power in his hands and the one really conducting the affairs of the Sultanate was Mr. Rogers, who combined the offices of First Minister and Regent. Furthermore, the Sultan was so astonished by the lack of respect from the Regent. In this regard, he realized that he was not consulted on affairs of State and that regulations were issued by the Regent, and were not seen by the Sultan until they appeared in the local Gazette; it is worth noting that the Regent issued many reforms, the most important of these were the placing of the Sultan's plantations in both the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba under the control of the Agricultural Department. The income of the plantations would be paid directly to Treasury, In addition, the Regent issued that the annuities to various members of the Royal Family should be paid by the Treasury and not by the Sultan himself. Furthermore, the Regent also transferred the administration of the House of Treasury to the Government; important executive appointments were made without consulting with the sultan, and that officers, when they arrived, were not even presented to the Sultan⁽²⁸⁾. Moreover the Regent left Zanzibar without communicating with the Sultan, or letting him know who was to remain in charge of the Administration; also the Regent on an occasion insisted on the Sultan awakened after midnight, when he had returned to rest, that he might be informed of a visit which three portuguese officers proposed to make to the Palace on the following day⁽²⁹⁾. In addition, the Regent, whilst refusing demands made by the Sultan on the public revenue, had built himself a "palace" at a large cost, although the house occupied by the late Sir L. Mathews was placed at his disposal; the Regent had pulled down 120 native huts to make himself a garden, and had used the electric access line of the Sultan's palace without asking the Sultan's permission⁽³⁰⁾.

As the Sultan became aware of the extent of the Regency, he hoped to hear from the Foreign Office in London about his position, but the Sultan failed in his effort. Therefore, he expressed his wishes to go to England for the purpose of consulting the British Government. The Sultan was informed that the funds of his state would not allow him to do so⁽³¹⁾.

It is worth saying that since 1896 the British officers in Zanzibar assumed more direct control over the financial department of the Government. Furthermore in 1903, the foreign Office appointed a British financial Consultant to supervise and enhance the protectorate economy⁽³²⁾. It was the minority of Sultan Ali that provided the British a fine opportunity for this trend. The consequences of this were a diminution of the Arab and Indian role in the higher echelons of the Government service⁽³³⁾.

SULTAN'S PROTEST AGAINST THE REGENT

The Sultan did not accept this state of affairs. Therefore, on January 13, 1904 he sent a letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne. In his letter the Sultan complained that he had some objections and wished to come to Enland to tell the Marquess that that things with him in Zanzibar were not as they should be. The Sultan went on in expressing his feelings in the way he was treated by saying that it was impossible for him to put everything on paper. As he could not himself come to England, the Sultan stated that he wished to send a representative who would explain the Sultan's grievances to the Marquess. The Sultan pointed out that he thought he could rely upon the Marquess to do the best that he could for him as he had always been most kind to him in person and had the interest of the Sultan's country at heart. At the end of his letter the Sultan assured the Marquess that things had come to such a pass as to be unbearable and that the British Government could never have meant him to be treated as he was⁽³⁴⁾.

THE SULTAN'S ENVOY AND THE REGENT'S REACTION

The Sultan in pushing forward his grievances chose a very close associate named Yorab bin Suliman bin Ali Drumkey to be bearer of his letter to the Marquess. Yorab, an Arab educated in England, was for some time an assistant master at Highborn School in England⁽³⁵⁾. The object of Yorab's mission was to petition for the immediate abolition of the Regency. Therefore the Sultan sent a letter to the Marquess on February 13, 1904 in which he asked the Marquess to accept Yorab as the Sultan's deputy to represent certain matters which the Sultan wished to place before the Marquess with reference to his country. The

Sultan wished the Marquess to grant Yorab the honor of an interview⁽³⁶⁾.

In countering the Sultan's effort to put his case before the Marquess, the Regent, Mr. Rogers, on February 18, 1904, sent a confidential letter to Mr. Sinclair (the Chief Secretary). He pointed out that he was aware that the Sultan had been very anxious for the last six months to visit England and the Sultan had frequently asked to be allowed to do so, but Mr. Rogers had endeavored to influence the Sultan to abandon the idea. The Regent explained his reason for doing so based on the age of the Sultan and his desire that the Sultan should visit India instead to obtain some insight into the manner in which native states were administered⁽³⁶⁾.

One could argue that the age was not an obstacle especially as we mentioned earlier the Sultan, before the death of his father, was his representative in the Coronation of King Edward VII. As far as visiting India, it was known that the British Government in many occasions sent Princes of the Al Bu Saidi family to Bombay for the purpose of learning methods of administration. However, the real reasons for preventing the Sultan from visiting England and accomplishing his mission to petition for the immediate abolition of the Regency might be based on political and economic reasons. These two reasons were in fact mentioned by the Regent in his memorandum.

Firstly the political aspect, the Regent point out that the Sultan's only reason for visiting England was his desire to see his old friends which was viewed by the Regent as "undesirable" because the Sultan would not be under the immediate control of any responsible officer which in the Regent's mind was "most necessary" owing to the instability of the Sultan's character. Not only that but, the Regent believed that the Sultan since his return from Mecca somewhat "exaggerates" ideas of his own importance. He stated that the Sultan had been a source of trouble to him and he had some difficulty in prevailing upon the Sultan in relations and with the influential Arabs to attend his official receptions. Here one can understand that what the Regent wanted from the Sultan; the Sultan was to be just a figurehead with no power, or, in other words, an obedient Sultan whose only job was to agree to the orders of the Regent. It is worth

noting that the Sultan at the beginning of 1903 performed the pilgrimage to Mecca. In Jeddah, the Sultan was the guest of honour of the Governor General of the Hijaz and by the British Counsel. He was also received with honour in the holy city of Mecca during his sojourn by the Grand Shereef. In dealing with this point, Hollingsworth (1953) stated that "the flattery the Sultan received from high Turkish dignitaries during the pilgrimage not unnaturally increased the young Sultan's feeling of self-importance"⁽³⁷⁾.

Secondly, the economic aspect, Rogers indicated that the Sultan's request to be allowed 6,000 Rupees for a visit of three months was considered "inadvisable". Rogers also stated that Seyyid Ali since the death of his father had been quite indifferent to the welfare of his state because his "only idea (was) oriental extravagance". Furthermore, Rogers said that Seyyid Ali had the same allowances as were made to his father but he was constantly applying for increases which in many instances Rogers had been obliged not to sanction. But, what really worried Rogers most was what Seyyid Ali said to members of his household that when he comes of age he intended to abolish the treasury and take all financial matters into his own hands. Not only that, but Seyyid Ali also said that he would dispose of all Crown property in accordance with his own wishes⁽³⁸⁾. These financial aspects touched by Seyyid Ali were taken very seriously by Mr. Rogers the Regent, and he and the British Government after him would not allow this to happen. It was an indication of distrust between the Regent and the Sultan. It also shows that the Regent was widely opening his eyes and ears even to the talk of the household of the Sultan.

In dealing with Yorab, the Sultan's representative to Marquess of Lansdowne, the Regent asked that in the interest of Zanzibar, Yorab should not be given any encouragement and that Seyyid Ali should not receive any support from his friends in England. The Regent had no hesitation in stating that it would lead to Seyyid Ali behaving in such a manner as would make his succession to the throne "undesirable". Not only that, but the Regent pointed out that unless Seyyid Ali showed considerable improvement in the future, he would be totally unfitted to be entrusted with the Sultanate⁽³⁹⁾.

The memorandum put forward by the Regent shows the lack of respect for the Sultan and the way the Sultan was treated even to the extent of threatening to dispose him of the Sultanship.

The Sultan did not keep silent to the behavior of the Regent and pressed his case to its limit. Therefore, he sent a letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne on February 25, 1904⁽⁴⁰⁾. In his letter he complains of the lack of respect by the Regent towards him. The Sultan indicated that it was his intention not to report anything officially till Yorab bin Suliman, his representative had taken the Marquess advice. The Sultan wanted to avoid unpleasantness with the Regent. He gave one example as to show how affairs were conducted in Zanzibar. The Sultan pointed out that on February 12, the Regent called at the Palace, but the Sultan had gone to see his family. Here, the Regent did not wait, but sent for one of the Sultan's attendants who was at home. The Regent uttered threats to the attendant directed towards the Sultan. The Regent told the Sultan's attendant that the Sultan should be sorry if he did not give up the steps he was taking to send a representative to England. The Sultan hoped that an end should be put to this state of affairs⁽⁴¹⁾. The Regent also threatened Yorab bin Suliman, and stated that "he can't go"⁽⁴²⁾. The Regent in a letter to the Sultan told the latter that the visit of Yorab bin Suliman is of an official nature; therefore, he should have consulted him as His Britannic Majesty's Representative⁽⁴³⁾.

The Sultan ignored the Regent's letter because he was aware that the Regent was the one who was taking all trouble to prevent him from communicating with the Marquess of Lansdowne and his friends in England. Besides the Sultan's communications were against the behavior of the Regent towards the Sultan and for the hope of abolition of the Regency.

PETITION FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE REGENCY

The Sultan's representative Yorab bin Suliman arrived in London. Yorab's efforts to meet the Marquess failed. However, he had an interview with Sir Clement Hill (Foreign Office) and Basil Cave (The British Counsel). Yorab bin Suliman explained to them the object of his mission, namely to petition for the immediate abolition of the Regency. He was advised by Sir C. Hill to send

a memorandum of the Marquess of Lansdowne explaining his arguments and objectives. Yorab accepted the advice and sent a memorandum to the Marquess⁽⁴⁴⁾. In this memorandum he pointed out that Seyyid Ali, the Sultan of Zanzibar, instructed him to bring to the notice of the Marquess of Lansdowne the following. 1. The proclamation of Seyyid Ali, as Sultan on the second day after the death of his father, with Mr. Rogers as Regent till the former attained the age of 21 was not witnessed by Sir Charles Eliot (H.M. Diplomatic Agent and Counsel General in Zanzibar) nor Mr. Cave (British Counsel), both of whom were not present at Zanzibar at that time. Furthermore, no member of Al bu Saidi family or any of the principle Arabs were consulted. 2. Seyyid Ali was again proclaimed Sultan after his arrival in Zanzibar from Europe, but was not aware of a Regency being established until some days after. 3. The Sultan hoped to hear from the Foreign Office about the Regency, but he failed in his efforts. 4. The Sultan's desire to come to England for the purpose of consulting her Britannic Majesty's Government but he was informed that the funds of his state would not allow him to do so.

Mr. Yorab stated that the Sultan of Zanzibar considered that the establishment of a Regency under the conditions of age was foremost against the custom of his family. Yorab stressed that the Sultan emphasized that a member of the Abu Said family in Zanzibar of Muscat attains his majority at the age of puberty. He gave an example that Seyyid Said, the Sultan's grand father was only 14 when he took over the reign of government.

Secondly it was against the Islamic religion. In pointing out the Sultan argument, Yorab highlighted that although the various Islamic Doctors of Law do not agree as to the exact age at which a Muslim attains majority, they in no case give it as exceeding 18 years. Yorab, therefore, forwarded documents from the Kadi of Zanzibar giving the age at 15. Furthermore, Yorab explained that Seyyid Ali, the Sultan of Zanzibar had performed the Haj, married and was a father; therefore, according to Islamic law is competent to enter into patrimony.

Lastly, Yorab pointed out that, the Sultan of Zanzibar had at all times shown

himself fully capable of conducting the affairs of the state. He stressed that the Sultan believed that the Regency was created under a misapprehension at the Foreign Office. Therefore, Yorab asked the Marquess if he considers that the Precedent mentioned above does not apply to Zanzibar, the Sultan's case should at least be governed by the local law promulgated and sanctioned by the Regent⁽⁴⁵⁾. Yorab was referring to a regulation issued by the Regent on February 3, 1904, in which "children should be considered minors until they are 20 years of age". Yorab, therefore mentioned that the provision should apply equally to the Sultan and to his Highness subjects⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Marquess of Lansdowne asked B. Cave, the British Counsel General of Zanzibar to give his view before responding to the argument raised by the Sultan's envoy Yorab bin Suliman.

On March 21, 1904, B. Cave submitted a memorandum dealing with this matter. He stated that he had seen the Sultan envoy both in the presence of Sir C. Hill at the Foreign Office and privately to discuss with him the matters he was instructed by the Sultan of Zanzibar to bring to the notice of the Marquess of Lansdowne. Cave, stated that the object of Yorab bin Suliman was to petition for the immediate abolition of the Regency on grounds which were partly general and partly personal to the Regency. Cave stated that as far as the personal grounds in regard to the Regent, they were intended to show a lack of respect in the latter's relations with the Sultan and a failure to realize the only objective which the British Government could have had in view of when the Regency was constituted, namely, the gradual preparation of the Sultan for the more important duties which he would have to perform when his majority attained⁽⁴⁷⁾.

As far as the general grounds put forward by the Sultan's envoy, Cave highlighted that Seyyid Ali's accession to the Sultanate was in itself a direct breach to Islamic customs and that his accession was made conditional on the establishment and continuance of a Regency until he attained the age of 21.

Cave, also pointed out that he personally announced the foregoing conditions to the Sultan at Jibouti a week before his arrival in Zanzibar and he discussed its effect with the Sultan at frequent intervals during the remainder of the voyage.

However, Cave emphasized that the position created by the Regency was a somewhat difficult one and in spite of his observations he stated that he "should be glad to see it brought to an end as speedily as possible".

Cave did not think that such a concession would have a good effect on the Sultan, nor be conducive to the existence of better relations between the Sultan and the Regent. He explained that the Regent appeared to have been somewhat wanting in tact. However, he believed that the abolition of the Regency at the request of the Sultan's representative might affect the influence which as First Minister of the Government he should exercise with the Arabs nor had the Sultan shown any particular aptitude to rule his own subjects or any great interest in the affairs of his country. However, Cave pointed out that the Sultan would be 20 years old in May next year⁽⁴⁸⁾.

The Marquess of Lansdowne after careful consideration sent on March 31, a letter to the Sultan of Zanzibar. He expressed his great regret that a friction should have arisen between the Sultan and the Regent. The Marquess emphasized to the Sultan that the consideration that the Regency was unnecessary and was calculated to lower the Sultan's position in the eyes of his subjects were ungrounded. He also said that the British Government was not able to accept the Sultan's view on this point. The Marquess of Lansdowne reminded the Sultan of the condition upon his acceptance to the throne. He pointed out that in these circumstances the usual practice of appointing a Regent was installed thus relieving the Sultan of direct responsibility and affording him time to familiarize himself with the method of government which the Sultan would ultimately be called upon to apply⁽⁴⁹⁾.

The Marquess stated that the circumstances of Zanzibar and its relations to foreign government were such as to call for great care and circumspection. He added that the finances were only beginning to recover from past extravagances and still required much skillful control. The Marquess insisted that the Sultan had clearly much to learn in regard to these matters and added that he (the Marquess) did not learn from B. Cave or from Mr. Becher (Financial Consultant) that the Sultan had shown any desire to acquire such familiarity especially to foreign relations⁽⁵⁰⁾.

The Marquess pointed out to the Sultan that before the time came for the Regency to be abolished he should have shown himself sensible of the great responsibility which would then develop upon him and he would earnestly counsel the Sultan not to deviate himself seriously from the task of preparation. In regards to the relationship between the Sultan and the Regent, the Marquess pointed out that he could not help thinking that there had been some misunderstanding which was capable of being removed by mutual goodwill. The Marquess at the end of his letter to the Sultan stated that he would request the Regent to keep the Sultan fully informed in advance, both personally and through Mr. Becher, of all matters affecting the Sultan's dominion and their administration⁽⁵¹⁾.

The Marquess of Lansdowne also sent on March 31, 1904 a letter to the Regent. In this letter the Marquess pointed out that he fully recognized that the relationship between a youth in the Sultan's position and his First Minister, in the temporary capacity of Regent, must be of a delicate and sometimes difficult nature, requiring the exercise of the greatest tact and restraint on either side. The Marquess stressed that it was "too much to expect that such qualities should be highly developed in an Arab lad fresh from Harrow (School), who was unexpectedly and suddenly called to sovereign rank". The Marquess believed that the task of training such princes was not an easy one and he called for very great care and consideration. He emphasized to the Regent that his position as First Minister when the Regency ceased and the Sultan assumed the function of Ruler would be much weakened if during the Regency his relations had not been cordial. On the other hand, the Marquess stated that it would be strengthened if the Regent were able to acquire the Sultan's confidence and make him rely on him for advice and encouragement⁽⁵²⁾.

On March 31, 1904 the foreign Office sent a communication to Yorab, the Sultan's envoy, informing him that the Marquess of Lansdowne had written directly to Seyyid Ali and to Mr. Rogers concerning the Sultan's complaints and the Regency. Therefore, the Foreign Office on the advice of the Marquess of Lansdowne asked Yorab not to communicate any further on the matter in Great Britain. The Foreign Office pointed out that the Marquess did not think

any good purpose to be served by further communication. Furthermore, that Marquess suggested that Yorab take the Sultan instructions as to his future movement⁽⁵³⁾. Yorab, the Sultan's envoy objected to the Foreign Office communication and he was supported by the Sultan of Zanzibar who sent a telegram to the Marquess of Lansdowne stating that Yorab bin Suliman acted with full authority on his behalf in the matter of the Regency⁽⁵⁵⁾.

On April 5, 1904, Yorab bin Suliman sent a letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne. Yorab enclosed a private letter from the Sultan complaining of the behavior of the Regent toward him. The Sultan mentioned that the Regent used the Sultan's own body-guards which he had never done before and it was quite a new thing. The Regent with this retinue was using all the Sultan's horses and carriages. The Regent also sent for the Sultan's relatives to be present at a reception without telling him and took the Sultan's band and soldiers to give the Regent a reception. Yorab stressed that "the impression left on my mind after the conversation with Mr. Cave was that if the Government did not accede to the Sultan's wishes, it would not be on account of their unreasonableness, but because it would be inconvenient for Mr. Rogers⁽⁵⁶⁾.

On July 2, 1904 the Sultan of Zanzibar wrote a letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne. He regretted that the Marquess could not consent to abolish the Regency in face of the improvement that had taken place. He assured the Marquess in everything he the Sultan, had done he was actuated solely by the interest of his state and people⁽⁵⁷⁾. The Sultan pointed out that he had been informed that it had been given out that he was fighting the British Government and her Representative. Hence, he stated that his late lamented father and his advisors never failed to instill into him the lesson of Loyalty to the throne, the Sovereign and the Government. The Sultan emphasized that he could never have any idea of departing from this line of conduct and the steps that he took were against the conduct and behavior of the Regent personally⁽⁵⁸⁾.

Basil Cave was upgraded to become H.M. Diplomatic Agent and counsel General in the Arab State of Zanzibar in July 1904. The upgrading of Cave and the separation of the Zanzibar Protectorate from the Protectorate of East Africa

allowed the Foreign Office to have strong or direct relation with Zanzibar than ever before⁽⁵⁹⁾, Mr. Cave after his return to Zanzibar sent a letter on July 15, 1904 to the Marquess of Lansdowne. He referred to many subjects. The first subject was the Regency and the reasons for its existence in which he repeated his stand that he had informed Seyyid Ali of his succession to the Sultanate and the establishment of the Regency either at Jibouti in July 1902 or after their arrival in Zanaibar. As far as the reason which had induced his Majesty's Government to maintain a Regency during the Sultan's minority, Cave made it clear that the appointment of Seyyid Ali to the Sultanate was just as much a breach of tradition as the institution of a Regency and that consequently the British Government had been perfectly justified in attaching to it what conditions they thought proper⁽⁶⁰⁾.

Regarding the relationship between the Sultan and the Regent, Cave stated that it appeared to have undergone some improvement; however, there was no great amount of confidence existing between them. The next matter touched by Cave was the mission sent by the Sultan to England in which he pointed out that he stressed on the Sultan what he believed of the correct channel through which the Sultan should approach the British Government on any question affecting the administration of his country or his relations with officers of the Zanzibar Government. In the opinion of Cave, the Sultan might first consult the Regent and First Minister; if not satisfied then approach His majesty's representative and if they are unable to support his view, the Sultan could request him to submit the point in issue to His Majesty's Principle Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; if that request were not complied with, the Sultan then could make a direct appeal to His Majesty's Government. Cave stated that he impressed upon the Sultan that such course should not be ordinarily adopted until the other means at his disposal had been exhausted. Another topic raised by Cave was the appointment by the Sultan of a personal "Legal advisor" in the position of Mr. Lascari a Parsee, a barrister practicing in Zanaibar. Cave pointed out that he had considerable respect for Mr. Lascari's character and judgment and his advice might also serve as useful check on the influence of such persons as the Sultan's late envoy, Yorab bin Suliman who was constantly

at the Palace. Cave also stressed that it was a pity that the Sultan should be subject to any influence other than that of his own officials and His Majesty's Representative, but an attempt to remove it might lead the Sultan to seek advice in other and less desirable quarters and might also arouse in the Sultan's mind that the British Government desired to unduly fetter his independence. Cave also stressed that he would keep in close personal touch with the Sultan, and would hope to regain his complete confidence as to convince him in time that any external advice was unnecessary⁽⁶¹⁾.

As far as the Sultan's general attitude towards the British Government and his local advisors, Cave confessed that he did not share the pessimistic ideas which had been entertained and expressed. He stated the Sultan was at a "somewhat difficult age and in a somewhat difficult position; he is a Sultan and yet no sultan, a man and yet in the eyes of the British officials an infant". Cave also cited many tendencies, but he do not anticipate that there would be any trouble of more serious character. The Sultan in the eyes of Cave was at times a little suspicious and intractable, but he was not vicious and not wholly unreasonable. Cave, ended his letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne by stating that the Sultan might have somewhat exalted ideas of the importance of his own position, but he understood that position depended on his loyalty to the British Government, and he was not likely to endanger it⁽⁶²⁾.

In July 1904, a meeting of some Zanzibar Government officials was held, at which draft rules for a pension scheme were approved and framed. The Sultan received the first intimation of it when the Regent asked for his opinion on the matter⁽⁶³⁾. Hence, the Sultan wrote a letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne to object to the proposed scheme. He pointed out that the scheme was not of an urgent nature. Besides, it concerned the internal government of the State of Zanzibar. He believed it could be conveniently postponed till he attained his majority, and had the opportunity of discussing it fully and with authority with his First Minister and officials⁽⁶⁴⁾.

Mr. Cave received a communication from the Foreign Office on September 30, 1904 dealing with the Sultan's letter to the Marquess of Lansdowne

regarding the pension scheme⁽⁶⁵⁾. The Foreign Office requested Cave to inform the Sultan that Lansdowne was of the opinion that the Sultan in all matters concerning the government of his dominion should turn for advice and opinion to the British Representatives at Zanzibar. However, the Foreign Office on one hand believed that a scheme for the introduction of an entirely new system of pensions should, in the first instance, have been laid before the British Government. But, on the other hand, the Foreign Office advised Cave that some force, would at first sight appear, to attach to the Sultan's remark that a matter so intimately concerning the internal government of the state might have been postponed until he attained his majority⁽⁶⁶⁾.

On September 15, 1904, Mr. Cave sent a letter of the Marquess of Lansdowne⁽⁶⁷⁾. He pointed out that the recent letter from the Sultan to the Marquess dealing with the pension scheme was a sort of "balloon dessai" by which the Sultan hoped to test the advice given to him by Cave with respect to the channel through which he should pass any representations which he wished to submit to the British Government. Cave also stressed that he was afraid that Yorab bin Suliman, Seyyid Ali's "envoy" was exercising "a bad influence at the Palace", although it was "a difficult thing to prove". Cave believed that the Sultan who was educated at England on one the hand "openly looks down on his father and his predecessors as uneducated Arabs" but on the other hand admires Seyyid Bargash (1870 - 1888) and hoped to emulate him in his power and independence. Cave was certain that these ideas were fostered if not actually suggested by Yorab bin Suliman. Cave highlighted that "Yorab's constant presence at the Palace does not make easier or more pleasant our task of persuading the Sultan that his ambitions were impossible of realization". Cave understood that Yorab kept very much in the background, but he believed that it might be a long time before Yorab "gives us a reasonable excuse to go for him". As far as the relationship between the Regent and the Sultan, Cave stressed that it was going smoothly and showed a decided improvement⁽⁶⁸⁾.

THE END OF THE REGENCY

On October 27, 1904, the Sultan of Zanzibar sent a communication to the Marquess of Lansdowne⁽⁶⁹⁾. The Sultan stated that he had communicated with

the Marquess from time to time actuated by no other feeling except his desire to remove abuses and to govern the State for the good of the people. He pointed out to the Marquess that the condition of the people of Zanzibar, both Arabs and Swahili, was "deplorable". The Sultan highlighted that Zanzibar, owed a great deal of its past prosperity to the wealth of the Arabs. Hence, the Sultan pointed out that the wealth of the Arabs had declined and in 1904 there was "no more than ten Arabs in Zanzibar worth a lack of rupess:, there were not a "single" Arab or Swahili employed in the State Service earn more than 200 rupess a month; not had any attempt been made during the last ten years or twelve to train them by education to take part in the higher grades of service; the Arab source of income was their plantations, but they were heavily taxed. He continued by stating that a great deal more than half of the revenue thus derived was distributed in wages and salaries among Indians and others who paid on taxes whatever and contributed nothing towards the Government of the State.

As far as the Swahili, the Sultan mentioned that they were over 90 percent of the population and were herded together in thatched huts in a location of a few acres, known as Ngambo or native quarter. In this part of the town, the Sultan highlighted that there was neither sanitation nor lighting of the street. Therefore, the Sultan believed that under the beneficent auspices of the protecting power, it was his earnest desire to be able to do something for his poor people, so they could share in the advantages of a good and just Government. The Sultan also believed that there were many things which could be arranged more satisfactorily in person than in writing. Hence, he asked the Marquess of Lansdowne to allow him to visit England as his majority would commence shortly to settle personally with the government all points in which he wanted guidance⁽⁷⁰⁾. The Sultan added that the visit, if allowed, would be private and that, besides his brother in law, he would be accompanied by only two secretaries⁽⁷¹⁾.

On November 25, 1904, the Marquess of Lansdowne sent a telegram to Mr. Cave authorizing him to inform the Sultan and Regent that he agreed to the visit of the Sultan to England, although subject to these conditions: (1) that the

visit be "incognito", (2) the expense not to exceed a sum fixed by the Zanzibar Government, which should be reasonable, but not admit of extravagances, (3) the approval by Cave and Regent of the brother in law as companion; one secretary should suffice, (4) it was essential that Yorab bin Suliman should not be accompanying the Sultan⁽⁷²⁾. The Sultan of Zanzibar agreed to the above conditions and left Zanzibar on February 1905 for a private visit to England. He met with the Marquess of Lansdowne and Clement Hill, the Superintendent of the East African Protectorate. The Sultan told the Marquess that he had no complaint to make against the Regent and that he was conducting himself as the Marquess desired him to⁽⁷³⁾.

The Sultan of Zanzibar Seyyid Ali bin Hamoud attained his majority in June 1905. Hence, on June 7, 1905, B. Cave H.M. Counsel General announced at the Palace that the Regency had come to an end⁽⁷⁴⁾. The Sultan of Zanzibar after celebrating this occasion, began to conduct the affairs of his country, and his relationship with Rogers, his First Minister went smoothly and very well.

CONCLUSION

The Arab State of Zanzibar was declared by the British Government as a protectorate. Since then, the British played a major role in the succession question. Therefore, the British government in 1902 nominated Seyyid Ali bin Hamoud as Sultan of Zanzibar after the death of his father. The minority of Seyyid Ali was used as an excuse for the establishment of the Regency. The Regent was a British official and the goal of the Regency was to strengthen and enhance the British influence over the Arab protectorate especially since the Regent had also the capacity of First Minister.

The behavior and conduct of the Regent towards the Sultan was contrary to the British government's explanation for the establishment of the Regency, namely to give the Sultan more time to be familiar with the running of the administration.

The Regent, failed in the objection of the Regency. He did not groom the Sultan Ali to become a capable and responsible leader of the Government of Zanzibar. The Regent also did not forge greater alliance with the Arabs of

Zanzibar and His Majesty's Britannic Government. In fact, during his brief period, the Regent created more distrust and distance between the Sultan of Zanzibar and the British Government. The Sultan of Zanzibar on the other hand was in a difficult age and position. He was a Sultan and yet no Sultan a man and according to the British regulations an infant. The Sultan, therefore, tried to change this state of affairs. The Regent was overbearing and dictatorial. His disrespect and ignorance towards the Sultan led the later to complain to the the British government and then send an envoy to london to seek the abolition of the Regency.

The Regent did his best not to allow the Sultan to send an envoy and went as far as threatening the Sultan to depose him of the Sultanship and that his succession to the throne was undesirable. The Regent also threatened the envoy of the Sultan and discouraged the British officials not to support the Sultanate. The personal and general grounds put forward by the Sultan for the abolition of the Regency led the British Government to make it clear to the Sultan that his appointment was in itself a breach of tradition as the institution of the Regency. Furthermore, the British Governmet stressed the fact that they were perfectly justified in attaching to the Regency the conditions that they thought to be proper.

The British government did not accede to the Sultan wishes to abolish the Regency not because of the British Government's unreasonableness but it was to the Regent. Furthermore, the abolition of the Regency might had a bad effect on the influence of their representative in Zanzibar. The British Government succeeded in convincing the Sultan not to seek any external advice other than the British officials and his stay in power depends largely on his loyalty.

In June 1905, the Sultan of the Arab State of Zanzibar Seyyid Ali attained his majority according to the British regulation in Zanzibar. Hence, the British government announced the end of the Regency.

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