

No. 272 NAI DFA 5/220

Despatch from Eamon de Valera to J.H. Thomas (London)  
(No. 89) (Copy)

DUBLIN, 6 August 1935

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the people of Somaliland, 1934, (Colonial Report No. 1707) printed and published by H.M. Stationery Office.

2. On page 26 of this report, in the second paragraph, the following two sentences occur:

'In this condition the Somali may be compared with the traditional Irishman when well primed with the liquor of his country. The latter brandishes his shillelagh and looks for heads to crack; the Somali sharpens his spear and begins to think of blood-feuds to settle and flocks to loot.'

3. My Government feel obliged to protest that such an example of extreme bad taste and mean racial propaganda in relation to this country should have been allowed to appear in an official British report.

4. The Government of Saorstát Éireann had believed that the attitude revealed by this quotation belonged to another age, and they hope that the Government of the United Kingdom will take steps to discourage the spirit of which the offending sentences are a manifestation.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

[stamped] (Sgd.) EAMON DE VALERA  
Minister for External Affairs