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In March 1870, the authorities of the S.A.Republic on its western borders again called upon Molema, who was now permanently at Mafikeng to pay taxes to their goverment. Again he refused and was supported by Montshiwa in the formula that the Barolong were independent and "If, said in no way liable to taxation by the S.A.Republic. Montshiwa, "there is not soon made an end to this lawless matter, I shall be obliged to hand it over to Her Brittanic Majesty's High Commissioner, Sir Philip Wodehouse, with the ernest request to arbitrate between and my most noble allies. Shortly after this (Sept) Montshiwa and Pretorius had an interview during the course of which each saw a chance of receiving further proof of his right to the diamondiferous district to which the desire of the world was now turned, and as the question of ownership of the diamond fields between the Harts and Vaal rivers had given urgency to boundaries they agreed that a conference between a commission of the S.A.Republic and all the chiefs concerned should be convened near Mafikeng with a view to coming to a final settlement.

In July 1870 Montshiwa gave a wide publicity to the demands of the s.A.Republic, his reputiation of their authority to tax him, and his claim to his country the limits whereof he again refined.

The conference was duly held at Buurmansdrift on the 15th of November 1870. The S.A.Republic was represented by Fres. M.W.Pretorius, Comm-Gen Pual Kruger, Hendrik Greef, Jacobus sent Snyman and five others, while the African chiefs present were Montshiwa, Moroka, Molema, Izaak Motlhabane, Makgobi, Phoi and Matlabe of the Barolong; Moilwa of the Bahurutshe at Marico; Gaseitsiwe of the Bangwaketse at Kanye, and Adries Rey representing chief Dav id Massow of the Korana at Manusa, and the Rev.J.Ludorf as interpreter, besides about twenty counsellors.

In the conference, Montshiwa claimed for all the Barolong clans the territory bounded on the North by the Molopo River in the whole of its course and also from its source to the source

repudiation

64

junction with the Harts River. This territory immediately acquired enhanced value and new importance and the S.A.Republic at onit ce claimed in terms of the Sand River Convention. It was probably in pursuance of this claim that Presindent M.W.Pretorius issued his proclamation of April 1868.

There were, however five other claimants besides the S.A.Republic to the territory above the confluence of the Vaal and Harts Rivers in which diamonds had been discovered. These were (1) the Barolong, (2) the Batlhaping, (3) the Griquas of Waterboer, (4) the Koranas, (5) Orange Free State.

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trek gear, a horse with a saddle, bridle and saddle cloth, a rifle and 800 sheep. Van Niekerk sold the diamond for £11,250 to Lilienfeld Bros. of Hopetown, they in turn sold it for £18,000 and it was again sold for £30,000, and is today known as the Star of South Africa and constitutes one of the Royal Crown gems, and would now probably fetch more than a million pounds (R.H.Henderson: An Ulsterman in Africa pp.38,39). By the end of 1869, it was proved that the northern bank of the Vaal was rich in diamonds, for about 50 miles above its junction with the Harts River. This territory immediately acquired enhanced value and new importance, and the South African Republic at once claimed it in terms of the Sand River Convention.

There were, however five other claimants besides the South African Republic to the territory above the confluence of the Vaal and Harts Rivers in which diamonds had been discovered. These were (1) the Barolong, (2) the Batlhaping, (3) the Griquas of Waterboer, (4) the Koranas, and (5) Orange Free State.

As stated in a previous paragraph, the Sand River Convention (1852) guaranteed the independence of the emigrant Dutch north of the Vaal River but did not worry to define the boundary of their territory on the north, east and west. Nor, indeed, could the British authorities define such boundary in as much as they had no right in those latitudes. The Transvaal authorities therefore conveniently assumed that all territory on these points of compass was open to them for expansion. To put the matter beyond question, and immediately to gain control of the Tati gold, the Missionaries road and the Vaal River diamonds for the South African Republic just now in the throes of financial depression. Presindent M.W. Pretorius immediately sent messengers to Macheng, chief of the Bangwato at Shoshong, and to Mzilikazi the Matebele potentate at Inyati in whose respective districts these discoveries were made, inviting them to become subjects or allies of the South African Republic. Without waiting for their answers, however, he on the 29th April 1868 issued a proclamation extending the western boundary of the South African Republic just/new/in/the/threes/of/financial/depression to/a straight line from Lake Ngami on the north to the Langenberg on the Orange River at a point where the 22° East Longitude crosses it , to include nearly the whole of British Bechuanaland, while the northern boundary swept from Lake Ngami in an arc to Limpopo River where it is crossed by the border of Portuguese East Africa, to include the newly discovered goldfields. / One cannot but admire the alertness and energy of this man.

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PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand Location:- Johannesburg ©2012

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