

EAST AFR. PROT

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Governor
Belfield
Conf
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LOAN EXPENDITURE
SURVEY AND CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS

1915

5th January

Submits explanations as to cost of roads in Prot: and states roads which will under present conditions most quickly reimburse Govt for expd on construction. Remarks on alternative suggestion for the construction of light railways.

Last previous Paper.

36127/14

Mr. Belk. Sir G. Fiddler.

The question of motor transport came up in connexion with Uganda cotton. I was once told that it was impossible because the roads were not good enough to stand the rains or heavy traffic together. Sir H. Belfield evidently takes a similar view. Since he votes for a very small better road, but Sir J. Jackson has expressed the view emphatically that the Uganda roads are quite good enough ⁵⁰⁰⁰ for motor transport.

In the E. A. P. case - I doubt if it is worth while to go fully at present into the relative merits of motor and light railways transport, but if roads are to be on in 1885 I think a good case could be made out for the road as a much better business for the Govt.

Ans Cont 9 April 15

Subsequent Paper
39769

not need more expansion, if any, for the farmer. The Governor's argument as to remote & scattered districts loses much of its point if a road has to be constructed at great expense before the motor can run.

But the main point seems to me to be that we have only a very limited amount of money available for roads and that we shall have to expect to wait a very long time before it can borrow any more. The choice seems to lie between

- (a) About 300 miles of roads
- (b) About 50 miles of first roads
- & (c) a still smaller mileage of light railways which however could be expected at least to pay for its maintenance.

Under (a) 300 is probably below the mark - it is any case it does not contemplate any reduction in cost of survey, or the alignment ought to be as carefully chosen as if a first class road could be constructed at once.

^{of a} programme of second class roads of the kind capable of carrying light waggon traffic without undue damage. I feel sure it would be helpful more quickly towards the development of the country than a few really first class roads which would only lead to demands for similar treatment in other parts of the country which could not possibly be complied with in a reasonable time.

As regards the Governor's argument from cost of maintenance, a saving of £25 a mile per year, if it can be kept up

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capable of carrying light wagon traffic
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few really first class roads which
would only lead to demands for similar
treatment in other parts of the country
which could not possibly be completed
in a reasonable time.

Regarding the Governor's expenditure
of a million of maintenance, it amounts to
£25 a mile per year, which could be halved

57

for 30 years, represents a present value
of about £830, so that the £830 road
is equivalent to a second class road of
about £450 a mile. This is more than 161
Myasaland is paying & a good deal more
than Uganda.

It will I think be desirable, without
pressing the Gov. to reconsider his principles
in the matter of roads, to impress on
him that no prospect of further
borrowing can be foreseen and that it
is not so much a question of what is
the best kind of road as of the mileage
of roads which is essential at an early date.

Und. 29/3/15

H. J. R.

29/10/15

30. 3. 15-

at once
Oct 31 3 15

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
BRITISH EAST AFRICA

CONFIDENTIAL No. 8

15th January 1915.

Sir,

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I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Confidential despatch of the 13th of October last on the subject of the sum which will be available for the survey and construction of roads out of the new Imperial Loan to the East Africa Protectorates.

2. The figure of £833 a mile, referred to in paragraph 3 of your despatch, is not merely an estimate, but is the actual cost of building roads of the same construction as, but narrower than, certain thoroughfares which have already been completed in Nairobi. These roads consist of a heavy hand-packed stone layer on prepared and consolidated foundations, which is then steam-rolled, and provided with a wearing surface of tough black trap. The Director of Public Works is convinced that nothing inferior to this class of work can be relied upon to provide a line of communication which can be utilized in all weathers.

3. It is perhaps the case that this figure is higher than that quoted by other

Protectorates

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LEWIS HARCOURT, P.C., M.P.
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Protectorates in Africa, the road construction has not been so extensive as in the case of the Protectorate of Uganda, where a much lighter and less expensive class of road is sufficient for all requirements. It is unlikely that any thoroughfare in these two Protectorates is called upon to bear such heavy traffic as, for instance, the Kisumu-Mumias road in this country, and I desire to point out that the gradual improvement of this road has been accompanied by large increases in the Uganda Railway traffic returns. It is in this manner that I trust it will be found possible to carry on and extend the work in successive years, as the construction of roads to densely populated areas may be relied upon to produce a large increase in revenue.

4. The three main lines of road which will, under present conditions, most quickly reimburse the Government for the expenditure incurred in their construction are:-

- (a) The Machakos-Magadi Junction road, serving the European farms round Machakos and the Ukamba Reserve behind.
- (b) The Fort Hall road, serving European farms en route and leading to the Kikuyu Reserve in the Kenya Province.
- (c) The Kisumu-Mumias road, serving one or two European plantations, and an enormous native population in addition.

5. With regard to the alternative suggestion of light railways, I am of opinion that the construction of any line as heavy as metre-gauge would

would be considerably more expensive than that of roads. The material for the Thika Railway, purchased in a fairly cheap and favourable market, cost £1,111 a mile delivered on site. The line cost £1960 a mile without rolling stock. If the introduction of smaller gauge lines were contemplated as feeders to the main system, it is possible that a line with 2ft.6in. gauge with rails of 30lbs to the yard could be built across difficult country for £1350 per mile, including the provision of rolling stock adequate for construction purposes. With a smaller gauge line and in easier country the cost would be very much less.

6. The advantage of expenditure upon light railways is that, if wisely located, they become immediately and directly reproductive works. The advantages of adhering to a policy of road construction are, firstly, that they provide travelling facilities for which there is an insistent demand and even when railways exist in the same direction. For example, the construction of the Thika Railway has not resulted in any noticeable cessation of traffic on, nor of demands for the improvement of, the Fort Hall road between Nairobi and the Thika. Secondly, the construction of a road allows for the development of motor transport, an industry which is of very suitable application to scattered districts in the early stages of development. As soon as funds will permit the construction of hard wearing surfaces along our lines of communication, I look to the

motor

no doubt
 more road
 port of call
 of people
 the district
 why sales

motor wagon to take the place of ox transport, thus lessening the spread of stock diseases and assisting one of the promising industries of the Protectorate.

7. The question of maintenance must moreover not be lost sight of. Roads of inadequate strength require, when the traffic is heavy, an annual expenditure of at least £40 a mile in order to keep them open for traffic at all. Roads of the type suggested would probably only require maintenance charges of some £15 per mile.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

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GOVERNOR.

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I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble, obedient servant,

H. Louis

GOVERNOR.

For
11079/15

Sir

9 April 1915

Recd 30 Apr 1915

Sir,

I have the hon: to ack.

the recd. of your conf: despatch
(no: 8) of the 15th of January

in the subject of the proposals
for road construction out
of the ~~sums~~ allotted for
that purpose under the new
Imperial Loan.

2. I have no doubt to
oppose the views held by
Your Honors, as to the class
of road which should be

constructed, but I am
satisfied that as the ~~proposals~~
presented would ~~be~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~kind~~
the effect of ~~the~~ ~~proposals~~ ~~is~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~
whether of ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~kind~~ ~~or~~ ~~not~~

DRAFT

AP (Conf)

Mr. Belfield

MINUTE.

Mr. Aspinall 24/4/15

Mr. Rend

Mr.

Mr.

Sir G. Fiddes.

Sir H. Just.

Sir J. Anderson.

Lord Islington.

Mr. Harcourt.

problems to be important
for the East Gate of the East
to take the whole between
more money, you should
full account of the Imperial
loan, has been fully covered
for many years, and the
bonds or the Protectorate
finances are likely to be
sufficient to include
roads construction out of
revenue, with the exception
of the conducting small
sums available from time
to time from the sale of
leaves of Crown lands.
3. It is apparent that
the development of
the country would be best
served by the
construction of a considerable
number of roads, rather
than a few long ones.
Small stretches of road
have been built in
the past for communication

the construction of a considerable
number of roads of 167
any progress is to be made
they are and shall be made
if you will give further
to the matter in the
construction of the
roads, the only way
required will be available
within, say, six years.
4. I do not suggest that
any modification should
be made as regards the
proposals for survey of
road routes, as it is
important that whatever
surface may be decided
upon, the alignment and
grading of the road should
be of the best prepared for
the roads of the Protectorate
which the future progress
may render possible.
Signed L. BARCOURT.