

1925

E. AFRICA
GENERAL

C. O.
36947
12 AUG 25

FROM
COLONIAL OFFICE, SECRET

DATE
12th August 1925

101

RE CIRCULATION

RAILWAY AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT IN THE EMPIRE.

Cabinet Conclusion on Unemployment Policy
and Trade Revival which would be assisted by -

M: F. D. ...
U.S. of S
Max ...
S. ...
6/11/27
11/12/27
18/20

Previous Paper

MINUTES

Complete notes for memo received from ...
7 10 25 ...

~~SECRET~~

I now annex the complete memo for
Cabinet with two copies. The copy on
stock paper might find Private Secretary to
send to Colonial Office ~~...~~
as steering that efforts are being
made to push forward with development scheme
in Tropical Africa in so far as is consistent
with the resources & requirements of those territories

W. B. Williams
9.10.25 C.S. 19.10.25

Subsequent Paper

Approved by ...
T. T. ...
15.10.25

Mr. Williams

It should be noted that the memorandum prepared on this paper was never circulated to the Cabinet. It seems that Mr. Howarth came over and saw the Secretary of State who directed that a second memorandum, confined to West Africa, should be prepared in a rather more elaborate form showing what works were in progress and in immediate contemplation and approximately what portion of the cost would be spent in this country. Mr. Edgcombe passed these instructions on to Mr. Strachey with the result that Cabinet Paper 490 (25) was prepared and circulated to the Secretary of State on November 27th, 1925.

4th December 1925

AK Johnson

The last letter is attached to 3117

OSR 25/11/25

2.12.25

Atter
Wicks

~~...~~

~~...~~

and how far... J. M. G. 12

~~...~~

The Commission's recommendations which, as will have been seen, comprise a programme of works extending over a period of years have been approved in principle by the Secretary of State. They involve, however, expenditure which is beyond the unaided resources of the Colonial Governments concerned. The Commission therefore recommended the issue of a loan for transport development in East Africa to the amount of £10,000,000 guaranteed as to principal and interest by the Imperial Government, and this suggestion will shortly come before the Cabinet for consideration (vide Cabinet paper 434(25)).

Mr Edgcombe.

In sending this Memorandum to the Secretary of the Unemployment Cte, Mr A. Han should explain in the covering letter how the question of the War Office's guaranteed funds. In Mr Han's note A. explain's

J.H.

27.10.75.

112

SECRET

104

Extract from Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet
held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons,
on Friday August 7th, 1925.

UNEMPLOYMENT
POLICY AND TRADE
REVIVAL.

The Cabinet agreed --

(a) Railway Development in Africa

That the Secretary of State for the
Colonies should prepare proposals in
regard to railway construction and other
developments in the Empire.

SECRET

*Mr. Atkinson
Mr. Wilson has seen
Mr. August 1925*

Extract from Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the
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EMPLOYMENT
POLICY AND TRADE
TREATY

12 195

The Cabinet agreed --

(d) Railway Development in Africa

That the Secretary of State for the Colonies should prepare proposals in regard to railway construction and other developments in the Empire.

The Borden

106

This note was prepared when
the Cabinet decision was sent to the
Dept. but I held it up as unless the
notes from other Depts were ready in
fuller not to be
be near line (which was not the case)
it seemed clear desirable for you to
see it in your return.

W. H. Allen

16/9/20

W. H. Allen

This is all right. It
is for you to E. D. to keep for
other Depts' names?

Exd 16.9.20

E. D.

"You have seen names
from the other Depts
since"

236

For ~~Edgar~~

On Co 136947/25. ¹⁰⁰ a Cabinet
Conclusion of 7th August 1925. La
been circulated, as follows:-

100

" Railway development in Africa.

That the SOs for the C.O. should
prepare proposals in regard to
railway construction and other
developments in the ^{the} Empire.

(* Agreed that by this is intended
railway development in Africa)

I annex some notes as regards Tan-

zania. ~~They are not~~ We are not I think in a
position to put forward any proposals
as regards Nyasaland and N. Rhodesia

(H.D.)

18/9/25

Genl. Dept

H.C.

17/9/25

employment
sub-committee

Mr. Ellis
Gen Dept

Note as regards Nigeria
herewith

A. J. Hardie

30/9/25

And as regards G.C. Dept
(than other figures from the Commission
specie) Adm

9/10/25

I am just quite clear what
Cabinet contemplate
The position as regards the Colonies
in this division is that they
are not in a position to undertake
any further large works of develop-
ment at present. But in
the Treasury in order to save money
on the whole is prepared to make
grants as to land money given
of interest. There is doubt as to
if Capt. J. P. Stone could work
schemes which would allow to
be profitable. Whether this
is

Memorandum on Railway development and
other large public works in British Colonies,
Protectorates &c., in Tropical Africa.

KENYA and UGANDA.

109

The railway systems of Kenya and Uganda, including the steamer services on Lakes Victoria, Kioga and Albert, are under the single administration of the Uganda Railway, and railway development proposals in these two territories may be considered together.

Put very briefly, the railway lines comprised in the system are as follows:-

A. Main line, Mombasa to Kisumu on Lake Victoria, (587 Miles) completed 1902; the cost (£25,500,000) being provided by the Imperial Government without interest or sinking fund.

B. Present branches and those now being completed:-

(a) Voi Kaha, (92 miles), connects with Tanganyika Northern railway which runs down to the sea again at Tanga.

(b) Magadi, (91 miles), built by the Magadi Soda Company for its traffic.

(c) Nairobi - Thika (32 miles), now being continued to the Tana River, (49 miles), and on to Nyeri, (32 miles).

(d) Vasin Gishu line, Nakuru - Turbo (148 miles) now practically completed at a cost of

£2,000,000.

£2,000,000. From this branch, which is destined to become the main line to Uganda, two further lines are being built to Kitale (43 miles) (£145,000) and Solai (30 miles) (£95,000.) 110

(e) In addition, lines run in Uganda from the shores of Lake Victoria as follows:-

1. Busoga Railway, from Jinja to Lake Kioga (61 miles).
2. Port Bell - Kampala (7 miles).

C. Under the loan of £5,000,000 provided by His Majesty's Government in 1924 the following extension of the system is being undertaken:-

(a) Continuation of Uasin Gishu line from Turke to Tororo (75 miles) and from Tororo to Mbulmamuti (110 miles) where it will link up with the Busoga Railway.

This extension will provide a through line for traffic to and from Uganda and will, in particular, offer a speedier outlet for the heavy and continually increasing cotton traffic in the eastern provinces of Uganda, in respect of which the most acute congestion has been felt during the past cotton season through delays, due in great measure to labour and other difficulties at the trans-shipment ports on Lake Victoria of Jinja and Kisumu. (At the present time cotton from the neighbourhood of Lake Kioga has to be brought down by rail to Jinja and then

then carried by steamer to Kisumu to be placed on rail again on the main line down to Mombasa.)

(b) From this line when completed it is proposed to run branches

(1) to the North Kavirondo reserves, tapping the most fertile of the native areas of Kenya, and

(2) from Tororo in a northerly direction to Mbale which will open up further cotton growing country in Uganda.

111

Future work contemplated.

The question of further railway construction in Kenya and Uganda was taken very carefully into consideration by the Parliamentary Commission to East Africa. The recommendations of the Commission as regards Kenya were as follows:-

"Until this programme of construction (i.e. that outlined under C. above) is completed, entailing as it will a very large demand on the available labour supply, it is premature to consider further branch extensions. There are, however, two further extensions for which local demand is being made, firstly, a branch from the neighbourhood of Gilgil to Thompson's Falls (about 50 miles), and, secondly, one from the neighbourhood of Max Summit to Kericho (about 35 miles). Both these branches will present considerable engineering difficulties and will be expensive. Before either of them comes within the range of practical politics we are of opinion

opinion that very careful surveys will be needed."

With regard to Uganda the chief problem in the future development of the transport system of this Protectorate is, in the opinion of the Commission, to reach the navigable basin of Lake Albert by means of a continuous rail connection with Mombasa. The Commission discussed alternative routes for such an extension of the existing system as follows:-

(a) Crossing the Nile at Mbulamuti and proceeding in a direction slightly north of west to Lake Albert itself and

(b) to continue the branch proposed from Tororo to Mbale (see C.b.(2) above) in a north westerly direction via Soroti, Lira, and Gulu to some point on the navigable Nile between Nimule (in the southern Sudan) and Lake Albert. The Commission preferred the latter route, in spite of its greater length, as it would pass through actual or potential cotton country throughout, and the average cost of construction per mile would almost certainly be lower.

It is possible that the first portion of this projected line (Mbale to Kumi, 35 miles) may prove to be covered by funds provided under the 1924 loan of £3,500,000.

The Commission, while stating that their object in urging the construction of this line was primarily to secure an effective economic development of Toro Bunyoro and the western district of Uganda, were also attracted by the possibility of providing a

means

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means of access via Mombasa and Lake Albert, to the north eastern Belgian Congo, in which both mineral and agricultural development is proceeding rapidly.

The definite recommendation of the Commission was that sanction and the necessary financial assistance should be obtained for the construction of the continuation of the Uganda Railway from Mbale through Soroti to Lira at the earliest possible moment and that in the meantime the Government of Uganda, in conjunction with the Uganda Railway Department, should set up a Commission of Enquiry as to the best route to be followed by the railway from Lira onwards to the Nile.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies, in despatches dated the 12th of August, has asked the Officers Administering the Governments of Kenya and Uganda to furnish him with a report as to the surveys with which they propose to proceed immediately, in the light of the Commission's report; bearing in mind the desirability of providing a continuous programme of work, subject to leave requirements, for the survey staff. Until these reports have been submitted it is not possible to give any indication whatever as to the estimated cost of the new lines proposed, and any attempt to frame an approximate estimate on the average cost of construction per mile of previous branches would have no practical value until the nature of the country to be traversed has been surveyed.

The only sea-port terminus of the Railway systems of Kenya and Uganda is the harbour of Mombasa, and any extension of the railway system will inevitably lead to an increase of the pressure at that port, which has for some time been serious. In the past the only method of discharging and loading cargo has been by lighters, but the construction of two deep-water berths at Kilindini, on Mombasa Island, is now approaching completion.

These two berths are not, however, sufficient to cope with existing traffic, and the addition of further berths has already been urged. It is not possible to indicate any limit to the additional works which will be required, but the cost of an extension of the present berthage accommodation by 1000 feet has been estimated at rather more than £500,000 and, as a preliminary step and pending further consideration of the whole question, the Contractors for the present work are being invited to submit a tender for such an extension.

TANGANYIKA TERRITORY.

The existing railway system of Tanganyika consists of

- (i) the Central Railway from Dar-es-Salaam to Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika (780 miles), and
- (ii) the Sanya line from Tanga to the Sanya River (237 miles);
- (iii) there is also a narrow gauge line in very bad condition 90 miles long in the hinterland of Lindi.

In the Report of the East Africa Commission the following railway works have been recommended.

A. A line from Ngerengere (kilo 145 of the Central Railway) to Vanda in Analis Bay on Lake Nyasa.

This proposed railway with a length of about 400 miles, would provide access to the Southern Highlands of Tanganyika, and link up with Lake Nyasa. A preliminary survey of the route has, however, shown that, though the country through which the line would run is fertile, the lack of population is an obstacle; and an alternative route through more densely populated country, which would also give access to North-eastern Rhodesia, is now about to be surveyed. Until the result of this survey is received with the Governor's views and recommendations, it is not possible to estimate the cost of the work.

B. The completion of the line which is already under construction from Tabora to Kahama and its extension via Shinyanga to Kwanza on Lake Victoria. The Shinyanga district is one of the richest, most densely populated and progressive native areas in the

whole territory, while between Shinyanga and Mwanza lies a promising cotton area. The total distance from Tabora to Mwanza by the route proposed is approximately 260 miles. 116

The railway from Tabora to Kahama will be completed this year. The extension from Kahama to Shinyanga which is estimated to cost £225,000 has been sanctioned and will be completed next year.

As regards the section from Shinyanga to Mwanza, preliminary surveys are available and the Governor estimates that, if sanction is given promptly, £627,500 will be spent next year. It is important that expenditure on material for this section should be sanctioned at an early date in order that there may be no break in construction work.

C. A line connecting road at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro with Dodoma on the Central Railway (280 miles) with a view to connecting the Uganda Railway with the Tanganyika Central Railway:-

The Governor of Tanganyika has been asked for his observations on this proposal.

D. The extension of the Tanga line from the Sanya River to Arusha:-

The Governor has asked for authority to spend £250,000 on this extension next year, but little progress can be made unless sanction is given soon.

In addition to these new lines, the Governor wishes to spend £272,000 on capital improvements to the existing

existing railway system, including 292,000 on rolling stock, which it is desired to order immediately.

Harbours. Apart from minor works at the smaller ports, improvements are being carried out at Dar-es-Salaam, on which £50,000 will be spent next year. The rapid increase of traffic shows that much increased harbour accommodation will soon be required, and alternative schemes are now receiving consideration.

NIGERIA.

The programme of large public works which started after the War is approaching completion. This consisted of

- (a) The completion of the Eastern Railway (expected to be finished in 1926 or 1927) with a branch to Bukuru (less forward). Total cost about £6,000,000.
- (b) The relaying with 80 lb. rails of the Ido-Ibadan section (completed). Cost £995,000.
- (c) Railway Workshops at Ebeute Metta (£2664,000) and Enugu. (completed.)
- (d) Apapa (£376,000) - in progress but contractors for wharves much behind time.
- (e) First section of 1050 feet Port Harcourt wharfage scheme. (£486,000 - completed).

(f) Electric Light and Power Station at Iddo (Lagos) 2507,000 (completed). 113

(g) Electric Light and Power Station at Enugu (completed)

(h) Coal and Petroleum Wharf Iddo (completed).

More recently (i) a second section of wharf (Estimated cost 2249,000) and a coal bin (Estimated cost 262,500) at Port Harcourt have been approved.

Proposals for (j) an Electric Power Station at Port Harcourt for lighting the town and wharves and working Harbour and P.W.D. machines (estimated cost 250,000) is under consideration of the Consulting Engineers.

All these works have been or will be paid for from the proceeds of Nigerian Government loans.

The Nigerian Government are engaged in traffic and engineering reconnaissance surveys for a number of branch lines of railway. So far we have received reports on two - one from the Western Line a little north of the Niger towards Sokoto. This has been shown not to be a paying proposition, passing as it would through sparsely populated country. The other (k) a line from Zaria to Gusau (about 114 miles through good cotton growing country), to cost about 2627,000.

With Sir Graeme Thomson's concurrence the Secretary of State has approved the construction of this line and of the Officer administering the Government going ahead with it as soon as staff is available from Eastern Railway. The Legislative Council will be asked to sanction the scheme as soon as possible. Surveys for other branch lines are going to be made this year and next,

next, so that Sir Graeme Thomson will be placed in a position in 1926-7 to submit his recommendations as to which other lines should form part of a new programme of extending the Nigerian Railway system by building branch lines.

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In addition the Nigerian Government is lending £220,000 to the Lagos Town Council for a housing scheme on the mainland to relieve overcrowding, causing unsanitary conditions in the native quarters of Lagos.

GOLD COAST.

The programme of large Public Works which was started after the War is approaching completion.

(a) Tafo-Kumasi Railway £2,128,185.

This railway which links the Sekondi-Kumasi Railway to Accra has now been open to traffic for two years.

(b) Sekondi-Kumasi deviations. The line from Sekondi to Kumasi has been realigned and relaid throughout. Sekondi-Obuasi cost £1,673,250, and work is approaching completion on the last Section (Obuasi-Kumasi) which is estimated to cost a further £141,000.

(c) Central Province Railway £1,320,000. This railway is now about half finished, and should be complete by the beginning of 1927.

(d) Accra Harbour improvements. £100,000. These are now complete, with the exception of the lighthouse.

(e)

(e) Cape Coast Water Supply £100,000. Work on this is in hand.

(f) Accra Electric Light and Power Supply. 120
£100,000. This installation is now complete.

(g) Takoradi Harbour Works. £2,662,242. About half of this amount has already been spent, and it is hoped that the work will be complete by the end of 1928.

As far as any future development is concerned, a survey has been made of the possible railway routes in the Western Provinces of the Gold Coast and Ashanti, and it has been decided that these would not form a paying proposition at the present time. Possible routes to the Northern Territories are now being surveyed.

A

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In the Report of the East Africa Commission the following railway works have been recommended and are under the consideration of the Secretary of State.

A. A line from Ngerengere (mile 140 of the Central Railway) to Manda in Amelis Bay on Lake Nyasa.

This line would pass through the Kilimbero and Pitu Valleys, the former of which is described in the report as a great alluvial plain which could be turned into one of the finest cotton, sugar and rice producing areas in the world, and which by drainage and irrigation could eventually cover approximately 1,000 square miles, and the latter as very fertile and fairly well populated, and the centre of one of the richest potential grain districts of Tanganyika. The total length of the proposed railway from Ngerengere to Manda is 400 miles. A preliminary survey of the route has been authorised, and until the result of this survey is received with the Governor's views and recommendations, it is not possible to estimate the cost of the work.

*the importance of
improving railway, with
of about 400 miles,
providing access to
the highlands of
the north. Evidence
to have been a
survey of the
however, shows
that fields the
through which the
will now be fields
of population is
the land now
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only populated
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The railway from Tabora to Kahama will be completed this year. The extension from Kahama to Shinyanga which is estimated to cost £225,000 has been sanctioned. *and will be completed next year & further* A sum of £25,000 has been provided on the estimates of the Territory this year and the Governor has asked for authority to spend a further sum of £90,000 on orders for rails &c., which should be placed without delay in order to ensure their arrival in the Territory by the date required next year. It has not yet been possible to obtain Treasury approval for this additional expenditure, though approval has been given for the expenditure of £15,000 locally on track formation.

As regards the section from Shinyanga to Mwanza *preliminary surveys are available and the* approval has been given for a survey, pending which an estimate of cost cannot be prepared. It is important that expenditure on material for this section should be sanctioned at an early date in order that there may be no break in construction work, *and that orders for material may be placed in good time*

*estimate
 when in year
 27
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The programme of large public works which started after the War is approaching completion.

This consisted of

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- (c) Railway Workshops at Shute Milla (£664,000) and Enugu (completed).
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Handwritten notes in left margin: "Labour Agent... works at... other parts... are being... of... £50,000 will be... year... the... of... at... recommendation will... up... are... may cover"

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3. Under the loan of £3,500,000 provided by His Majesty's Government in 1924 the following extension of the system is being undertaken:-

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125
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The only serious terminus
of the Railway systems Kenya
and Uganda is the Nairobi

Proposals for Railway Development in
the Tanganyika Territory.

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This line would pass through the Kilombero and Pitu Valleys, the former of which is described in the report as a great alluvial plain which could be turned into one of the finest cotton, sugar and rice producing areas in the world, and which by drainage and irrigation could eventually cover approximately 1,000 square miles, and the latter as very fertile and fairly well populated, and the centre of one of the richest potential grain districts of Tanganyika. The total length of the proposed railway from Ngerengere to Manda is 400 miles. A preliminary survey of the route has been authorised, and until the result of this survey is received with the Governor's views and recommendations, it is not possible to estimate the cost of the work.

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As regards the section from Shinyanga to Mwanza approval has been given for a location survey, pending which an estimate of cost cannot be prepared. It is important that expenditure on material for this section should be sanctioned at an early date in order that there may be no break in construction work.

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RAILWAYS AND OTHER LARGE PUBLIC WORKS.

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- (a) The completion of the Eastern Railway (expected to be finished in 1926 or 1927) with a branch to Bukuru (less forward). Total cost about 26,000,000.
- (b) The relaying with 80 lb. rails of the Ibadan-Ibadan section (completed). Cost 1,995,000. (c) Railway Workshops at Ebute Metta/and Enugu (completed). (d) Apapa Wharves and the new terminal station at Apapa (2876,000) - in progress but contractors for wharves much behind time). (e) First section of 1010 feet Port Harcourt wharfage scheme. (2420,000 - completed)
- (f) Electric Light and Power Station at Ibadan (Lagos) 2,307,000 (completed). (g) Electric Light and Power Station at Enugu (completed). (h) Coal and Petroleum Wharf Ibadan (completed). (Estimated cost 2,249,000)

N.P.//

More recently ⁽ⁱ⁾ a second section of wharf and a coal bin (Estimated cost 2,200,000) at Port Harcourt have been approved.

Proposals for (j) an electric power station at Port Harcourt for lighting the town and wharves and working Harbour and r.w.D. machines (estimated cost 250,000) is under consideration.

Consulting Engineers. All these works have been or will be paid for from the proceeds of Nigerian Govt loans.

The Nigerian Government are engaged in traffic and engineering reconnaissance surveys for a number of branch lines of railway. So far we have received reports on two - one from the Western Line a little north of the Niger towards Sokoto. This has been shown not to be a paying proposition, passing as it would through sparsely populated country. The other (k) a line from Zaria to Gusa (about 114 miles through good cotton growing country), to cost about 2,627,000. With Sir Graeme Thomson's concurrence the Secretary of State has approved the construction of this line and ^{of} ~~appointed~~ the Officer administering the Government going

going ahead with it as soon as staff is available from
Eastern Railway. The Legislative Council will be asked
to sanction the scheme as soon as possible. Surveys for
other branch lines are going to be made this year and next
so that Sir Graeme Thomson will be placed in a position
in 1926-7 to submit his recommendations as to which
other lines should form part of a new programme of
extending the Nigerian Railway system by building branch
lines.

In addition the Nigerian Government is lending
£220,000 to the Lagos Town Council for a housing scheme on
the mainland to relieve overcrowding, causing unsanitary
conditions in the native quarters of Lagos.

A. J. Harding
30/9/25

Railways - CHERP

started in 1921 and was completed in 1927. The cost was \$1,200,000. The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000. The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000. The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000.

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(Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000. The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000. The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000.

As far as the \$2100,000. The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000. The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000.

(1) Akara Electric Light and Power \$200,000. This installation is complete.

662,242

The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000. The railway is now being extended from Kuna to the coast (Obasi-Kuna) which is estimated to cost a further \$41,000.

Handwritten signature

23rd October 1925.

Secret

Dear Howorth,

You will remember that at a meeting of the Cabinet which was held just before the Recess it was agreed (in connection with Unemployment Policy and Trade Revival) that the Secretary of State for the Colonies should prepare proposals in regard to railway construction in Africa. I now enclose a memorandum which has been prepared on railway development and other large public works in the British Colonies, Protectorates, etc., in tropical Africa.

You will notice that reference is made in this memorandum to the recommendations of the Parliamentary Commission to East Africa. The Commission's recommendations which, as you will have seen, comprise a programme of works extending over a period of years, have been approved in principle by the Secretary of State. They involve, however, expenditure which is beyond the unaided resources of the Colonial Governments concerned. The Commission therefore recommended the issue of a loan for transport development in East Africa to the amount

E. Howorth, Esq.

of

of 210,000,000 guaranteed as to principal and interest
Imperial Government, and this suggestion will shortly be
before the Cabinet for consideration (vide Cabinet Paper
434(25)).

Yours sincerely,

W. G. H.

REGISTERED NO. 38760

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