

1922.

KENYA

36816
REC^d
REG^d 28 JUL 22

HOUSE OF COMMONS

DATE

27TH JULY 1922

CIRCULATION:-

SUBJECT

UASIN GISHU RAILWAY

293

Mr. Grindle

Mr H. Lambert

Mr H. Read

Mr J. Masterton-Smith

Mr Wood

Mr Churchill

Provis

Mr. Raffan, — To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the Government will publish, as a Parliamentary Paper, the Report made by Colonel Robertson in which he gave his reasons for advocating the Nakuro route for the Gishu railway, and also the Reports of the technical advisers of the Kenya government as the best route to be followed. [Wednesday 2nd August]

29/7/22

29

61

32/7/22

*For only reply see
see semi official letter below &
return it.*

*As the Gov^t railway advisers
were unanimous in favour of the
Nakuru route and the Ross is
a technical, though not a railway,
adviser, it is reasonable to
conclude that this question
is inspired by his friends.*

Off. reply written

W. Col. 29 7 22

Subsequent Paper

King
2/24

Secretary of

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and by the Consulting
Engineers in this country,
as well as by the Governor of
Kenya with the unanimous
consent of His Executive
Council.

(25685)

Letter from Mr McGregor Ross, 25th June, 1922.

UASIN GISHU ROUTE.

(A separate note is attached on other sheets)

On the map annexed, the black line from Nakuru station shows the route roughly surveyed in 1914/15. The red line leaving the Uganda Railway at Mau is the surveyed Mau route. The approved route follows the black line for the first 32 miles and then crosses, as shown in pencil, to the Mau route. This alternative avoids heavy engineering difficulties and bridging on the 1915 route but involves a climb to 9,130 feet as against 8,000 feet on the 1915 route. This higher summit is crossed on the approved route and to the Mau route.

A route for the Uasin Gishu Railway leaving the Uganda Railway at Mau or beyond has been considered on several occasions since the war and after consideration by the Uasin Gishu Development Committee the instructions to Colonel Robertson, the Officer in charge of the surveys, provided that both routes should be fully examined.

It was not, however, simply a choice between the Mau route and the longer route from Nakuru, as the recommendations for the Mau route were accompanied by a proposal that the first twenty miles of the Nakuru route should be built in order to feed the already existing settlement at and near the Molo River.

Colonel Robertson's estimates were:-

Nakuru

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Colonel Robertson's estimates were:-

Nakuru

Nakuru to Junction
(33.67 mi.)

1,130,091

May to Junction 2,203,723
(10.62 mi.)

... at Nakuru ...
 ... existing Uganda ...
 ... realigning the ...
 ... to 2,203,723 ...
 ... where the whole of the traffic of ...
 ... one set of lines, reconstruction would ...
 ... the distance from Nakuru to May would ...
 ... have to carry both the Lake Victoria traffic ...
 ... Victoria traffic ... estimated the ...
 ... of this ...
 ... in view of this ...
 ... along a ...
 ... the Nakuru route ...
 ... Rose's cooperative figures of 2,792,000 ...
 ... misleading ... 200,000 ...
 ... even for the ...
 ... Robertson's ...
 ... the ...
 ... in connection with the Contractors ...
 ... No ...
 ... one-third ...

as a far more accurate figure than that given
 on the other hand, the figure of £798,000 for
 may be reduced by one-third.

of construction, there remain
 and the comparative traffic
 Mr Robertson arrived at a net
 in favour of the Nakuru route.
 of the two routes were examined
 the Uganda Railway, Colonel Hammond,
 sent out to advise as to Railway
 by the Crown Agents and the Con-
 sultants; and while (as indicated
 in Mr Robertson's figures in details,
 leading the Nakuru route in pre-

ferred to Sir J. Stevenson before
 the Committee approved.

W. Ad. 24.7.22.

*Robertson's report, which was
 further supported by*

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 PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON.

Minor Points Arising out of Mr. Ross's Letter.

(1) We have no evidence of animosity against Mr. Ross on the part of Major Grogan or Lord Delamere.

(2) No "graft" is involved in their advocating a route which will tap their property, nor in the Government choosing a route which is claimed to yield traffic throughout its length.

(3) Any opposition to Mr. Ross on general grounds on the part of Major Grogan or Lord Delamere, may be explained by the fact that the Administration of the Public Works Department was adversely reported on in the Report of a Special Commission last year. These two are the principal unofficial advocates of a policy of economy, and it is reasonable to suppose that the Public Works Department, in view of the Commission's Report, has attracted their attention. (It is fair to add (1) that Colonel Robertson, the Railway Engineer, was the Chairman of the Commission and (2) that Mr. Ross has attacked the findings of the Report.).

(4) In connection with the economy proposals and following on the reduction of the Public Works Department, it is intended that Mr. Ross shall retire on pension (for which he is eligible) and that his Deputy shall succeed him without an increase of salary.

(5) We have no definite information as to where Lord Delamere's land lies. His address is Elmenteita, which is on the Nairobi side of Nakuru, and he certainly has land running to the north of that place, ^{it is far away from the new railway.} His desire to break up his land into small holdings has been known to us for many years, and if the land crossed by the approved route forms part of his

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his 100,000 acre Concession, it would seem that the breaking up has already been effected. This is indeed the first mention of his name in connection with the Railway route.

As regards Major Grogan, a former Concessionaire, and approved plan, it is the best one dealing with the matter. Further, Major Grogan claimed early in 1924 that to adopt another route would be too faith, as he had spent money on mills etc. in the expectation that the 1915 route would be adopted. Therefore there is no graft in Major Grogan still opposing the adoption of the New route.

(7) As regards Mr E. Northey's family ties, no suggestion whatever has been made to us that Mr. Martin should have any control of Engineering matters. The reference to Mr. Martin's first matrimonial adventure (which took place when he was 19) it can only be said that it is a very old story and it is not an idea that the Government should be concerned with.

17th August, 1922

Dear Sir,

Mr. Marshall of the Admiralty has sent you very
kindly for me a copy of the letter,
which I enclose herewith. It contains an extract of
the information...

Yours faithfully,
[Signature]

unfounded charge, a clean
fight and my official
apex.

It is painful to think
that he should be harassed by

a gang of "frustrators" for trying
to defend the interests of the City
(and the Empire in these critical

days) would it help if I
did submit to you this letter to

John Snow
(D) Frustor 79

24/7/22

Dear Mr Churchill,

I take the liberty

"unbeknown" to Mr Row of

telling you see his letter.

It saved a misery

affairs in King's

the Storrill - false - James while

801

Confidential

of unbounded energy, a clear
figure and my official

It is possible to think
that he should be received by

a group of "friends" for trying
to develop the interest of the living
(and the Empire in these critical
days) would it keep of I

would submit from this letter to
Sir ()
()
Jan 1891
London 78

July 22

Dear Mr. Churchill,

I take the liberty

"unbeknown" to you Ron of

telling you see his letter.

It would a story

appear in Army & Naval

The Standard take some notice

2301

Extr. of file letter to Mr. McGregor Ross to Mr.
J.M. Storer, dated 26th June, 1922.

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"East Africa gets more interesting from day to day. The P.W.D. gets attacked more and more violently every year. A political vendetta, one of increasing and the most relentless sort. Lord Delamere and Major Grogan are two of the most abominable ruffians who are after us more at present. They seem to have secured a very firm hold over the Governor-General Northey and also over the Colonial Secretary (of Kenya) Sir Charles Swire. They have the best of reasons for attacking us just at present. Because we have a piece of the most unworkable graft going on in the colony at present and we require the very person to deliver any sort of task on it. As a result of Government policy altered, to the detriment of Grogan and Delamere, out although they get a severe punishment, their hold over Government grows so strong that they weather the storm and they weather the storm so they get enough to enable them to weather the storm. They got a final decision that the graft was to continue.

The outline of the graft-project is as follows:

We

and extending up the hill at an average distance of
less than 10 miles from the existing line (Uganda Railway).
After 30 miles of a circuitous route reaches the top and is then
crossed in a straight line from Main Summit. These
lines are practical. A line has been surveyed across
the hills. Its length is 130 miles. I could build it for
£1,000,000. There is not a single bridge on it.
The Government has sanctioned the expenditure
of £1,000,000 to build the 33 mile-long piece through the
hills of Delamere and Great Delamere. He has grant
of land free in the early days - on payment of survey
fees only which are a few shillings per square mile.
He has now cut it up into acres of farms which he is
offering at from £2 to £6 an acre. The new Railway can
throw his values up fantastically. He pay no Betterment Tax,
no tax on undeveloped land, no tax on unearned increment
in the value of land at sales. There does exist a
stamp duty of 2% on land sales but it is paid by the
purchaser, not the seller!

The Government recently appointed a "Geddes Committee"
chaired by Mr. Geddes, nominally Chairman, but it is
entirely run by Mr. Geddes and Delamere. They have retaliated

by recommending the abolition of the P.W.D. and the control of engineering activities in future by Governor Northey's son-in-law, an entirely untrained and inexperienced (in Engineering) young man who has been put in charge of the Land Office and who married the Governor's eldest (and divorced) daughter. Happy days!

I do not anticipate (touch wood!) that I shall have any difficulty in putting the son-in-law to sleep. He is a bumptious and incompetent young man and my Engineers have passed a resolution scathing the proposal that they should be expected to work under him.

Apart from keeping up the professional end of a Department that I have been connected with for so long (and incidentally from exposing and defeating graft, if possible) I am indifferent as to the upshot. I was due to retire on pension two years ago and can therefore disappear any time now with 2800 a year or thereabouts, for life. But I am giving the Government a run for their money as long as I can kick on. And when I leave the Service, I shall be able to write some sparkling essays! "