

EAST AFR. PROT.
N. E. RHODESIA
S. AFRICA

DOMESTIC

No. 12801

12801

REG'D
POST OFFICE

Date - Individual.

Post Office

1905

April

Previous Paper.

See previous paper.

See previous paper.

See previous paper.

See previous paper.

(Subject.)

Proposed telegraph line between ~~Monrovia~~
+ Tanga.

States the question whether the proposed line
can be justified depends on local conditions. Remarks
on the bearing of proposal on the scheme for the
Sale to Louis Telegraph.

Mr. Reid ^{replies} ~~see my memorandum~~
on November the German Consul Taff
stated that his Govt. were prepared
to run a telegraph line from Tanga
to the British frontier of ~~approximately~~
~~25 miles~~ of N.W. ~~front~~ world
extending it from the frontier
to Monrovia (40 m), thus connecting
the German & British
East African Telegraph systems
= about The outcome as suggested
by Mr. Goring & the local P.M.C.
will be referred with the local
German officials and by the
Government
Details can now be add'd after the
various countries have been consulted.

The scheme would do, would be to give
an alternative route between the two
first provinces (as addition to the
existing route via Zanzibar) at
a rate of 8/- per m^t instead of 1/-.
The U.P.O. would add the 8/- rate
would pay.

But if the governors will consent
to form a Province of their land
between Tabora and Uluguru or
the Tanganyika, the border
line of it will connect
Tanga with the Trans-Egyptian
with the Trans-Egyptian
line & give onward connexion
between the Cape & Mombasa
and Naddodi on the Nile.

It is doubtful whether I can't
make this line as suitable
as a land line or even the
former Imperial part of
from the U.P.O. point out, but,
now, as the U.P.O. point out, let
us assume that may be, the Trans-
Caterinabah Co. have already
thought of carrying this line through
Uganda to connect with the
line to Naddodi. So the
U.P.O. suggest one might argue
of this Co. whether they

get the
other
as well
the prop
for the
use of
the
line of

intend to make
one stand before
the last day of work
Tough you will ride out for
a week or two
the completion of which
will be

as follows
If you have nothing to
do you may pass the time.

A. R.
28/4
Whereas
I have nothing to do
Aug 27

With the Company as you

C. P.

27/4 since

16/10
intend to send thousands of them over to
any future Army I may command
to the last two weeks. Moreover
I do not think
Tonga Tonga I do not think
different are to be used on other
inexpensiveness of sending over

Mr Johnson
If you have no objection to
make, please pass on to my dear

L.A.R.

Whereas

22/4

I have nothing to add
for 22/4

Write to the Company as proposed

C.P.C.

27 at once

C O
12801

72

GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON.

17. April 1905.

SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 17th ultimo respecting a proposal of the German Government to erect a telegraph line between Mombasa and Tanga to connect the telegraph systems of British and German East Africa, I am directed by the Postmaster General to offer the following observations, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The question whether the cost of the proposed line is justified by the administrative or commercial requirements of the Colony must depend mainly on local conditions (such as those advanced in the interesting report of the Postmaster General of British East Africa) on which the Postmaster General is not in a position to offer an opinion. He would merely observe (1) that the revenue from the proposed line is based on the assumption that British East Africa will enjoy as much as 7d. out of a total charge of 8d. (or 5d. out of a total charge of 8d.) - a disproportion to which the German Government, in view of the fact

Under Secretary of State,
FOREIGN OFFICE.

that the telegraphic systems of the two colonies are described as being of approximately the same extent might make exception difficult as regards a estimated revenue of £200 on the capital outlay no allowance was made for maintenance and repair of the line or for the cost of working the proposed new telegraph office on the frontier.

But it was of importance how far the proposed line was bearing from the steamer for the Cape to telegraph.

Mr. Godwin said that a line between Tanga and Foumou, in connection with a new line from Mombasa to Tabora, would provide auxiliary links in a chain extending from Mombasa to Kisheneh (an latter point being stated to be in connection with the telegraph system of the Soudan).

With thus such a line, although circuitous, would certain advantages as an alternative route to the steamer be obtained. He recommends that in connection with the negotiations with the Sultan of Zanzibar and Mombasa, the German Government should be urged to construct the line between Mijiji and Tabora.

The original scheme was for a line to be constructed

and worked by the African Trans-Continental Company as a homogeneous system by the shortest route through German East Africa and thence through Uganda to the frontier of the Soudan, where a junction was to be effected with the telegraph systems of the Soudanese and Egyptian Governments.

It was clear that, while the value of such a line from the Imperial point of view was discounted by the fact that it would pass through German territory, it would tend, if efficiently maintained and worked, as was then proposed, at a low rate of charge, to weaken the position of the cable routes which were, and are, regarded as essential to British interests.

These considerations were pointed out in various letters to the Foreign Office from this Department (see specially those

dated the 18th and 20th March 1890) and the Postmaster General understands that, while His Majesty's Government did not consider it to be either necessary or desirable to oppose the scheme, they did not feel justified in giving it their support.

It was accordingly decided not to take any steps to assist

Mr. Rhodes in his negotiations at Berlin; and, as regards Egypt, it was pointed out to the Egyptian Government that the rate

proposed to be charged for the transmission of through traffic over the telegraph systems of Egypt and the Soudan appeared to be unduly low. On the other hand, the Foreign Office intimated, in reply to an official application made by Mr. Rhodes on behalf of the African Trans-Continental Company, that they would be prepared to grant permission to the Company to construct and work their line from the Northern boundary of German East Africa through Uganda and the adjoining territories under British protection to the boundary of the Soudan, on suitable conditions, one of which was that the rates, whether for terminal or through traffic, should be subject to the approval of His Majesty's Government.

As Mr. Sealing points out, it is perhaps scarcely probable that a line passing by the circuitous route via Tabora, Tanganyika and Mombasa and worked by a number of different Administrations would compete effectually with the cable routes; but any proposal to fix lower rates for through traffic via the Cape to Cairo line than those chargeable for transmission over the cables would require careful consideration.

The Postmaster General will be glad to have an opportunity

of

of considering the matter further. But, in the meantime, it appears to him to be essential, before any definite action is taken, that it should be ascertained how far the African Trans-Continental Telegraph Company may be concerned in the present proposal of the German Government. It is understood that, since the death of the late Mr. Rhodes, comparatively little progress has been made with the Cape to Cairo scheme; and it is possible that the Company may have renounced the more ambitious project of a line under their own control. On the other hand it has recently been stated in the public press - see attached extract - that the line is being surveyed northward from Ujiji along the Victoria Nyanza and that it is expected to be completed by 1906. The Postmaster General would suggest that the Company might be asked, with reference to the correspondence which passed between the Foreign Office and themselves in 1896, what progress is being made with the construction of their through line, and in particular whether the Company propose to avail themselves of the permission given to them to carry the line through Uganda.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. R. [Signature]

DRAFT.

The Chairman of the
African Transcontinental
Telegraph Co.
2 London Wall Buildings

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MINUTE.

Mr. This 27/4
Mr. Revd 27

Mr. Ariodius.

Mr. Cox.

Mr. Lucas.

Mr. Graham.

Sir M. Osmanway.

The Duke of Marlborough

Mr. Lytton.

b.p.c.
12801

to Mr. Post

2nd

May
April 05

Sir Will you be ready for
such persons whom
the African Transcontinental
Telegraph Co. of the
F.O. on 1897 from
direct by Mr. Re.
intend to engage
to obtain to bring
the C.
projected line to connect
the Telegraph system
of Portuguese with
that of Egypt, and
in particular whether the
Co. intend to avail them
selves of the permission
given them to carry this
line through the Uganda
Protectorate - Please

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