

1933

3153

1933

3153

KENYA
CO533/436

Nairobi Anecdome.

Previous

4001/33 EA.

Subsequent

23001/34

Leg 47	29/4
Mp. Brewster	20/4
Dr. Brewster	20/4
297	29/4
Run. 511	5/5
298	1/5
297	5/5
Mp. Brewster	
297	

1. Governor Byrnie 183 _____ 22 Jan. 1933
States would prefer to repay loan of £1,000 for the improvement
of Nairobi aerodrome by equalized annuities & proposes to make
arrangements in 1934 & nine following years. Estimates for a sum of £124,400.

I submit a draft

J.H.S. P. [Signature]
2674/33

2 To [unclear] - [unclear] - [unclear] - 27.4.33

4. Encl. 2

3 To C.D.A.C. (WAC 2) 18/6 } 11/5/33
B.A. (WAC 2) 18/10 }

(4) [Signature]

5 Treasury _____ 6 May 33
Concern on proposal to approve repayment of loan for
the improvement of Nairobi aerodrome by loan equalized annuities
of £124,610.

6 To Gov. 333 (Answered) 15 MAY 1933

7 Governor Byrnie 211 _____ 14 April 33.
Trans. notes of a meeting held during Sir E. Giddes
visit & comments on the improvement of Nairobi aerodrome
& suggestion that Nairobi will cease to be an hub on the
direct Cape to Paris route.

(Original on 2001/33 - copy attached for record.)

Note a [unclear] taken on to complete record

KENYA.
NO. 211

Chy original on 11/10/31

143

4 APRIL, 1931.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward, for your information, the accompanying copy of a note of the proceedings at a meeting convened in January last during the visit to Nairobi of the chairman of Imperial Airways Limited. A copy of a note of the meeting, taken by the private secretary to Sir Eric Geddes, is also enclosed.

2. It will be observed that discussion chiefly centred upon the demand made by the chairman of the Company for improvements to the aerodrome at Nairobi. The representations made in this matter convinced me that existing conditions during wet weather were not satisfactory and that the stalante type of aeroplane would have serious difficulty in landing and taking off unless suitable runways were made. As you are aware opportunity was taken of the presence in Nairobi of Sir Basil Blackett of ascertaining the probable views of the Colonial Development Advisory Committee upon any application to grant the necessary funds to this Government and, with his support, my telegram No. 7 of the 9th January was despatched. This Government appreciates the assistance so promptly accorded, which has enabled the necessary work to be well advanced before the rains.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,
MAJOR SIR PHILIP CURLIFFE-LISTER, C., G.B.E., M.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET,
LONDON S.W.1.

3-1

3. Reference is made, in the notes of proceedings, to the fear of this Government that with the introduction of the new type of machine the Company might desire to shorten the route between Cairo and Cape Town by cutting Nairobi out of the route. It will be seen that the request for the improvements being undertaken at Nairobi aerodrome was only acceded upon an assurance being given by Sir Eric Geddes that Nairobi would continue to be served during the period of the agreement and that he considered that no further capital expenditure would be necessary.

4. Whilst the Chairman of Imperial Airways Limited could not say that his Company would not make any further demands he could not guarantee that no further expenditure would be required of this Government in connection with the Cairo to Cape Town Air Service.

I view with some concern the lack of any safeguard against the Government of Kenya being called upon to improve the existing aerodromes and emergency landing grounds in the Colony in the event of any change of policy on the part of the Company.

5. The extra capital expenditure on Nairobi aerodrome has been necessitated by the decision to introduce onto the route the Atlantic type of aircraft. It is agreed that the aircraft previously in service on the route urgently required to be replaced by more modern aeroplanes but I consider that some consultation with the Governments concerned as to plans proposed for

the/

- 3 -

the new type might have been advantageous. If such an opportunity had been afforded it might have been possible to point out the handicap which an aircraft of the Alantals type would suffer, owing to its low clearance, when manoeuvring upon the average East African landing ground in wet weather.

6. A further change of policy on the part of the Company, namely the decision to use the Langibel type of aircraft as far south on the route as Kisumu, has meant that the slipway hanger accommodation and other facilities provided at the public expense in connection with the use of seaplanes by the Company has become redundant.

of the £47,000 granted to this Government from the Colonial Development Fund for construction of an aerodrome and seaplane base at Kisumu the approximate amount of £5,200 was expended upon the slipway and seaplane accommodation. It will thus be seen that the grounds which justified this expenditure from the Colonial Development Fund at the time have been largely modified, not to say nullified, by this change in the Company's policy. It is a point which might with advantage be brought to the notice of the Colonial Development Fund Committee.

7. The position at Kisumu coupled with the recent demand for improvements at Nairobi aerodrome has led me to have grave fears that further demands may be made by the Company which this Government would not be able to meet. That such fears are not altogether groundless is evidenced by the fact that the Manager of the Southern

Section/

Section of Imperial Airways (Africa) Limited at Johannesburg, in a letter dated the 14th March, has approached this Government suggesting that half the large hangar at Kisumu be re-erected by Government at Nairobi, so as to allow of the Hannibal type aircraft being flown as far south as Nairobi. Since the proposed provision of a hangar by this Government at Nairobi was excluded from the agreement at the wish of the Kenya Government it is clear that the request now made must be met by a refusal.

In a further letter, dated the 22nd March, the Manager of the Southern Section has requested the preparation of emergency landing grounds at Kotik and Marok, which are situated off the main route Kisumu - Sekura - Naivasha - Nairobi chosen by the Advance Survey Party before the commencement of the service. He states that experience gained to date definitely indicates that better weather conditions are invariably experienced when flying between Kisumu and Nairobi by the southern route via Kotik and Marok. If it is decided to meet the Company's request, in the event of suitable landing sites being available, the capital expenditure upon existing landing grounds at Sekura and Naivasha may prove to have been largely wasted.

6. I have considered it advisable to take this opportunity of informing you of the difficulties that may arise if the Company is permitted to take up the position that every time a change in route or policy is made, no doubt for excellent technical or commercial reasons, it is entitled to make monetary demands upon the territory directly concerned in order to give effect to it, without prior warning or consultation. The service is already very heavily subsidised by this Government, and while I

as most anxious to do all in my power to promote the Imperial air route, it must be realized that the Colony's financial resources are strictly limited, and cannot, I submit, be equitably called upon to finance developments which were never in contemplation at the time the existing agreement was entered into. I should be glad, provided you see no objection, if the substance of this despatch could be conveyed to the Air Council.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

J. BYRNE.

BRIGADIER GENERAL.
GOVERNOR.

COPY.

NOTES OF A MEETING HELD AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NAIROBI.
ON 8TH JANUARY, 1933.

- PRESENT:
- His Excellency the Governor.
 - The Hon.Colonial Secretary,
(Mr. H. M.-M. Moore, C.M.G.)
 - The Acting Principal Colonial Secretary,
(Mr. Juxon Barton, O.B.E.)
 - The Hon.Postmaster General,
(Mr. T. Fitzgerald, O.B.E.)
 - The Hon.Director of Public Works,
(Mr. H.L.Sikes)
 - The Director of Meteorological Service,
(Mr. A. Walter).

-
- The Rt.Hon.Sir Eric Geddes, P.C., G.C.B., C.B.E.
(Chairman,Imperial Airways Limited).
 - Mr. Woods Humphery,
(General Manager,Imperial Airways
Limited).
 - Mr. Reay Geddes.

Sir Basil Blakett, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.
(Chairman, Advisory Committee, Colonial
Development Fund).

The Private Secretary.

HIS EXCELLENCY invited Sir Eric Geddes to say if there were any points in connection with the development of the Imperial Air Route which he wished to raise.

SIR ERIC explained briefly the policy of the Company emphasizing that the development of an imperial asset was of more importance than actual money making. In fact Imperial Airways had actually incurred a loss up to the present in operations on the through Africa route.

He/

He stated that under the agreement they were going to place aeroplanes of the Atalantas class on the Cairo to Cape route and wished also to supplement these machines with some of the Hannibal class. He believed that 80 passenger air liners (probably flying boats) would in due course be constructed for long distance flights. Sir Eric maintained that his Company was fulfilling all that they could be asked to do under the contract and that they could do nothing beyond. He maintained, however, that the Colony had yet to improve the Nairobi aerodrome to make it fit for machines (Atalantas) specially constructed under the contract for the tropical African Route. He pressed for the following improvements:-

- (1) Existing runway to be lengthened to 1,000 yards.
- (2) A second runway (1,000 yards) to be constructed at an angle of approximately 60° off the first.
- (3) One circular turning point at the end of the first runway.

MR SIKES estimated the cost of this work if done to the present standard (murrum) at about £2,000. If it were necessary to lay a bituminous surface on both runways, this would probably cost a further £3,000.

MR. MOORE stated that before any further expenditure were considered he would suggest that it should be clearly stated whether there was a chance that Nairobi would cease to be an air port on the direct route.

SIR ERIC was emphatic in saying that Nairobi must remain on the main route during the term of the Agreement. He could not speak as to what might happen afterwards. He hoped Imperial Airways Limited could continue to operate the route after the expiration of the Agreement, but he could say no more than that.

Asked whether he considered the construction of runways of murrum would be suitable in all weathers, Sir Eric said that his experts (who however were flying experts not engineers) were of opinion that murrum runways in Nairobi were quite satisfactory, and he did not think any further capital expenditure would become necessary during the term of the Agreement, but he could not guarantee this.

As the Atalanta machines would shortly be in operation over the Kenya section His Excellency pointed out that no time must be lost in coming to a decision and, if the capital could be procured, in carrying out the improvements before the long rains, i.e. by the end of March.

It was decided to work on the £2,000 estimate. Sir Eric was emphatic that the Company could make no contribution.

SIR BASIL BLACKETT on being asked whether the Colonial Development Fund could help stated that he would undertake to recommend to his committee that a free grant of £1,000 should be made and a loan of £1,000 on easy terms. He thought his recommendation would carry more weight if some contribution was made by Imperial Airways such as the imposition of a landing fee on passengers landing at Nairobi, but Sir Eric strongly urged that Kenya, the first British possession on the route, should not do this. He favoured a royalty on petrol, but this His Excellency stated would not be tolerated in Kenya at the present time. Both suggestions were dropped.

It/

It was finally agreed that the Hon. Colonial Secretary should draft a telegram for immediate despatch to the Secretary of State asking him to make application to the Colonial Development Fund Advisory Committee, and stating that Sir Basil Blackett supported the application.

Copy.

MEMORANDUM OF

MEETING HELD AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE

NAIROBI 8.1.33.

PRESENT:	H.E. Sir Joseph Byrne, K.C.M.G., &c.	Governor of Kenya.
	Rt. Hon. Sir Eric Geddes, G.C.B., &c.	Chairman, Imp. Airways.
	Sir Basil Blackett.	Chairman, Co. Dev. Fund Committee.
	G.E. Woods Humphery.	Man. Dir. Imp. Airways.
	H.M. Monk-Mason, M.C., C.M.G.	Colonial Secretary.
	T. Fitzgerald, O.B.E.	P.M.G.
	H.L. Sikes.	Dir. Public Works.
	Juxon Barton, O.B.E.	Act. Prin. Asst. Col. Secretary.
	Mr. Walter.	Dir. Met. Service.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Major Wells.
R.M. Geddes.

Private Sec. H.E.
" " " Chairman.

The Meeting took place at Government House, Nairobi, and lasted from 11 a.m. to 12.45 p.m.

His Excellency, after asking that technical matters should not play a part in the discussions, said that he had called the meeting together to discuss the question of the Nairobi aerodrome, the condition of which Imperial Airways had raised as a question of immediate importance. His Excellency then invited Sir Eric to tell the meeting what he (Sir Eric) had told His Excellency of the development of Imperial Airways, leading up to the question of the aerodrome at Nairobi.

Sir Eric outlined the policy and aims of Imperial Airways at some length, and explained that the main object of his visit was to convey personally his respects, and those of the Board, to the various Governors and Governments along the route, and to thank them for their support, and the confidence/

confidence they had placed in the Company. Sir Eric said that the Africa service was part of an Empire scheme, and by agreement with the Governments concerned it had commenced with machines which were used on the India line, and although at the inception of the service dislocations occurred, due to unsatisfactory aerodrome conditions, the service had since run very regularly, but at a loss to the Company. He also said that he did not wish the discussion to centre around the agreement, but as that had been mentioned he felt that he ought to point out that under the agreement it was contemplated that new machines, superior to those used at first, were to be brought to the African route, having been designed specially for section C3 of the route, which included Nairobi. The first of these specially designed 'planes, "Atalantas", from which the class took its name, was on its way down at the moment. The cruising speed was higher than previous machines, and this, together with their greater weight, necessitated an improved runway for taking-off and landing - which brought Sir Eric to the concrete point of the Nairobi aerodrome. At the moment, there was one runway, not long enough for Atalantas, and since the machine had been built according to the agreement, for section C3 of the route, Sir Eric was asking that the aerodrome be improved: a request which he thought justified by the wording and intention of the agreement, which provided for the provision and maintenance to the reasonable satisfaction of the Company of a landing ground at Nairobi. Owing to the rapid growth of traffic, Atalanta capacity was no longer alone sufficient enough, and two new 'planes of the Hannibal size had been ordered, which should come into service during the year. Hannibals would operate the service from Cairo to Kisumu or, as Sir Eric hoped, from Cairo to Nairobi, which again brought him to the same aerodrome difficulty as concerned the Atalantas.

Sir/

Sir Eric said that he asked for the extension of the existing runway, the construction of a new one, and the construction of two turning circles.

Mr. Moore said that as these improvements would be entirely for I.A.L. he assured that an assurance could be given that there would be no question of cutting Nairobi out of the route.

Sir Eric: Anything in the future was but a hypothesis, just as he could say nothing as to plans after the expiry of the present agreement after four years, but he could say that there was no question in his mind of cutting Nairobi out of the service unless the Company was forced to go into the condition of the aerodrome.

Mr. Moore raised the question of further demands: they had spent a great deal of money at Kisumu - would it be justified, and would new repair bases be needed? Mr. Woods Humphrey replied that as far as could be foreseen the accommodation at Kisumu was adequate.

To return to the main subject, Sir Eric repeated his request for the improvement to Nairobi aerodrome. H.E. suggested that before it was decided where the money was to come from, he would like to know how much the amount required would be. Mr. Sikes estimated the figures as £1,900 for the new runway, and lengthening of the old one - provided the present width was adequate - and £65 each for the turning points: Unless a bituminous dressing was needed £2,000 would cover the whole. The bituminous dressing would entail the expenditure of another £3,000, but there had been no complaints from I.A.L. staff about the surface, and Captain Attwood did not think the dressing necessary.

Accepting those figures for the moment, H.E. turned

to/

to the question of where the money was to come from. Kenya Colony had no money: Although they welcomed the development of the line, they could not provide the funds, could Sir Basil help? Sir Basil thought the Colonial Development Fund could and would see their way - although, of course, he could not commit the Treasury or his Committee - to providing the sum required, but they would not be pleased if in, say, one or two years, a further request was made for money to pay for the bituminous treatment: further, he would feel more confident in approaching his Committee if he could name possible or definite ways in which the interest and amortisation of the loan could be served. Although against the idea in principle, he suggested a charge on passengers entering the Colony, or a charge on Imperial Airways, which they could recoup by extra duty on the petrol sold on the aerodrome. H.E. said that any extra petrol tax was out of the question, and Sir Eric saw no reason why I.A.L. should be charged, when they had already expended so much money on the fleet. An increase of the fares by such an amount as 2/6d was suggested, but Sir Eric said that if the traffic would bear an extra 2/6d. that would already be charged, with the Company making a loss on the African route as it was. To the suggestion that machine landing charges be increased Mr. Woods Humphrey replied that the fees already in force seemed in excess of the U.K. rates in force at Croydon, which was the maximum as stated in the Agreement. H.E. stressed the urgency of the matter, since the rains would start in April, and Mr. Sikes required two months for the work, once it was put in hand. Sir Eric reminded H.E. that, in his interpretation (Sir Eric's) of section 4. of the agreement, the Company was entitled to compensation if the aerodrome's physical condition was such as to prohibit its use, to the amount of loss caused, not including profit.

Mr. Moore suggested that the Government had not been informed fully of developments, but were provided with a 'fait accompli' - finished aircraft which needed special facilities.

Sir Basil said that the British taxpayer could not stand the whole of the advance, and repeated his request that I.A. should help Kenya Government: Sir Eric repeated that he saw no justification for such a call on I.A., who has fulfilled the letter of the agreement, and in the spirit of it, as he saw it, I.A. were to provide the Air equipment and the Governments the Ground equipment: By helping Nairobi aerodrome in such a way, he saw the Company saddled with the provision of aerodromes all over the world. Sir Eric added that any charge on passengers or freight amounted to charge on I.A., why not charge small machines who use the runway, for it is their tail-skids which would tear it up very much more than I.A. wheels.

H.E. Will this £2,000 finish the demands?

Sir Eric. There are four years left of the agreement: we want the aerodrome fit for Atalantas for four years, and nothing more within this agreement.

Mr. Juxon Barton. The maintenance of the aerodrome was £125 last year, and will be £250 this year. Owing to the urgency of the matter, it was agreed that a telegram should be sent to the Colonial Office, saying that Sir Basil was prepared to recommend the scheme to his committee, and then, if all went well, work would be finished before the rains.

H.E. asked whether other services - customs, traffic arrangements, and so on, were satisfactory, and it was replied that no complaints had been received.

To Mr. Moore's question about infection from Yellow Fever, for which the conditions were very favourable at Nairobi, Mr. Woods Humphrey replied that the Company was in constant touch with the Quarantine Board in regard to such questions.

To close the proceedings, H.E. thanked Sir Eric and Sir Basil, the former for his talk, and the latter for his promise.

3153/33 Kenya

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C. O.

DOERING STREET,

15th May, 1933.

Mr. Priestman 11/5

Mr. *Good* 11/5 *gs*

Mr.

Mr. Parkison.

Mr. Tomkinson.

Sir C. Bellomley.

Sir J. Shackburgh.

Parlt. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

Sir,

I have, etc., to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 168 of the 22nd of March ~~1933~~ on the subject of the alternative methods of repayment of the loan of £1,000 granted from the Colonial Development Fund for the improvement of the aerodrome at Nairobi.

With the concurrence of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury I approve your proposal to make provision in the Estimates for 1934 and the nine following years for repayment by *Equated annuities* annuities of £123.5.10d.

I have, etc.,

(Sgd.) P. CUNLIFFE-LISTER.

DRAFT.

KENYA

NO. 333

Gov.

Whitehall
Telephone No.: ~~XXXXXX~~ 1234.

Any reply to this letter should be addressed to—
THE SECRETARY,
TREASURY,
WHITEHALL, LONDON, S.W.1,
and the following number quoted:



TREASURY CHAMBERS.

6 May, 1933.

S.34609/071/2.



Sir,

No 2 I have laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury Mr. Flood's letter of the 27th April 1933 (3153/33) and the accompanying copy of a despatch from the Governor of Kenya regarding the method of repayment of the loan of £1,000 from the Colonial Development Fund approved by Treasury Letter of the 26th January 1933 for the improvement of the aerodrome at Nairobi.

In reply I am to request you to inform the Secretary of State that My Lords concur in his proposal to approve the Governor's recommendation that repayment should be made by ten equated annuities of £123. 5. 10. each starting in 1934.

Copies of this letter have been sent to the

Crown

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

Agents for the Colonies and to the Secretary to
the Colonial Development Advisory Committee.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A. V. David Hopkins

C. O.

2 70

3163/33 Kenya.

- Mr. Priestman 26/4
- Mr. ~~Smith~~ 26/4
- Mr. ~~Parkinson~~
- Mr. Tomlinson.
- Sir C. Bottomley.
- Sir J. Shackburgh
- Perms. U.S. of S.
- Parly U.S. of S.
- Secretary of State

C.D.
 R 26 APR
 D 26

Approved by No 5

27 April, 1933.

Sir,

DRAFT. *Crown*
 THE SECRETARY.
 TREASURY.

(1324007/33)
 EA

I am etc. to refer to the letter from this Office of the 9th of February enclosing a copy of a despatch addressed to the Governor of Kenya inviting his views on alternative methods of repayment of a loan of £1,000 from the Colonial Development Fund for the improvement of the aerodrome at Nairobi.

(1) (4)
 by a D.D.C. D.A.

2. I am now to enclose, to be laid before the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, a copy of the Governor's reply, from which it will be observed that he prefers to adopt the method of repayment by equated annuities commencing in 1934.

*Copy CDAC, CA
 MF 27 mpm
 12, 14 & 4007/33 GA*

3. Subject to the concurrence
of Their Lordships, it is proposed
to notify the Governor that the
above method is approved.

I am, etc.

(Signed) J. E. W. FLOOD



GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
KENYA.

KENYA.
No. 183.

RECEIVED
17 APR 1933
DOL. OFFICE

29th MARCH, 1933.

Sir,

No 11
H001/33
EA

Answered (6)

4th Term 2

With reference to your despatch No. 81 of the 8th February, on the subject of assistance granted from the Colonial Development Fund for the improvement of the aerodrome at Nairobi, I have the honour to inform you that of the alternative methods of repayment of the Loan of £1,000 I would prefer to adopt the first, namely repayment by equated annuities.

2. Subject to your obtaining the concurrence of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury it is proposed to make provision, in the Estimates for 1934 and the nine following years, for a sum of £124 annually.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

BRIGADIER GENERAL.
GOVERNOR.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
MAJOR SIR PHILIP CUNLIFFE-LISTER, P.C., G.B.E., M.C., M.P.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET,
LONDON S.W.1.