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TOP SECRET

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C. (53) 324

18th NOVEMBER, 1953.

CABINET

UGANDA PROTECTORATE: THE PROVINCE
OF BUGANDA

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies

Buganda is one of the four provinces of the Protectorate of Uganda and economically as well as geographically it is the keystone of the whole country. Its African inhabitants - the Baganda - numbering about one million, are the richest and most advanced tribe in the Protectorate and have long been intensely nationalist. Their hereditary Ruler is called the Kabaka. He is assisted in his local government of the Province by a Council (the Lukiko) and three Ministers - the Prime Minister, Treasurer and Chief Justice.

2. The relations of Her Majesty's Government with the Kabaka are governed by an Agreement made in 1900. The relevant articles of this Agreement are:-

- (a) Article 3 which provides that Buganda "shall rank as a Province of equal rank with any other provinces into which the Protectorate shall be divided".
- (b) Article 6 which reads in part as follows:-
"So long as the Kabaka.... shall co-operate loyally with Her Majesty's Government in the organisation and administration of the said Kingdom of Uganda, Her Majesty's Government agrees to recognise the Kabaka of Uganda" as Ruler of the Province.
- (c) Article 20 which reads in part "Should the Kabaka, Chief or people of Uganda pursue at any time a policy which is distinctly disloyal to the British Protectorate, Her Majesty's Government will no longer consider themselves bound by the terms of this Agreement".

3. Recently the Kabaka addressed a letter to me in which he made three requests:-

- (i) An assurance that there would never be a Federation of East African territories.
- (ii) Transfer of Buganda affairs to the Foreign Office (they were handed over to the Colonial Office in 1902 after the pacification of the country).
- (iii) "Independence" for Buganda.

On my authority he was given a reply by the Governor at an interview to the following effect:-

- (i) A detailed assurance that no plan of East African federation is at present contemplated and that for the distant future all organs of local opinion will be fully taken into account.
- (ii) A transfer of Buganda affairs to the Foreign Office would be constitutionally inappropriate.
- (iii) The request for independence was refused on the grounds that it would be neither in the interests of the Baganda themselves nor of the inhabitants of the rest of the Protectorate. The accepted policy of Her Majesty's Government is to promote the self-government of Uganda as a unitary state. (This policy was endorsed by the Kabaka himself as recently as March this year when in connection with certain reforms which confer considerable local autonomy on the Provincial government in such spheres as education, health and agriculture he publicly affirmed Article 3 of the Agreement on the future of Buganda as a component part of the Protectorate.)

4. The Kabaka has expressed himself satisfied with (i), agreed to drop (ii) for the time being but refused to accept the reply on (iii). Similar requests have been put forward by the Lukiko and made public. They have been and are still the subject of considerable Press comment in the territory and public discussion in which the issue of independence for Buganda is much confused with that of self-government for Uganda. The Kabaka has expressed his intention, if the above reply is given to the Lukiko on point (iii), of opposing this decision of Her Majesty's Government publicly in the Lukiko. Despite the best efforts of the Governor and his advisers at long interviews he has remained obdurate in this determination.

5. In the Governor's view, if the Kabaka were permitted to voice this public opposition to Her Majesty's Government's policy it would almost certainly precipitate riots and bloodshed which might require sizeable forces to subdue. In 1945 and in 1949 riots broke out among the Baganda more suddenly than anyone expected or anticipated. These were organised against the Kabaka's authority. If he himself were to instigate the trouble the results might be much more serious.

6. The Attorney-General has advised that the declared intention of the Kabaka amounts to a clear breach of the 1900 Agreement.

The Governor has recommended the following course of action. He would summon the Kabaka and inform him of my re-affirmation of my reply on point (iii). He would ask him whether he is prepared to accept it and loyally abide by it; if the Kabaka says no he would inform him that this refusal must be referred back to me. Not more than four days later he would summon the Kabaka again and hand him a note with my authority withdrawing recognition from him. Immediately afterwards the Kabaka would be served with a notice of deportation from Uganda and escorted to an aeroplane, previous arrangements having been made for his journey to the United Kingdom. Thereafter the Lukiko, when the time was judged ripe, would be invited in accordance with custom to elect a successor. The Governor would expect that, when this coup d'etat became known trouble would break out among the Baganda which might need limited military action in support of the Police but on nothing like the scale on which it might be needed if the Kabaka were permitted to embark on an open trial of strength with Her Majesty's Government.

7. General Erskine has agreed to make available one battalion of the King's African Rifles which is now moving into Uganda ostensibly as a routine transfer. He has also agreed to have a reserve battalion standing by at three days' notice but if this or any further reinforcements were called upon he might have to ask additional assistance from the United Kingdom.

8. There are three reasons why firm and prompt action is desirable:-

- (i) The Kabaka is already suborning the other three minor Rulers whose districts comprise the Western Province to follow his example of non-cooperation with the Protectorate Government. If the Kabaka is handled firmly it is expected they will promptly back down.
- (ii) Elections to a new Lukiko take place at the end of this month. On the recommendation of the new Lukiko the Kabaka will choose new Ministers. The present ones are believed not to be in favour of his defiance of Her Majesty's Government in this matter and it is hoped to retain their loyalty even in the face of his deportation.
- (iii) The longer confused public discussion of the issue is allowed to continue the greater the local tension which may develop.

9. I do not consider, however, that this extreme action should be taken without a personal attempt by myself to bring the Kabaka to his senses. I therefore propose to summon the Kabaka to London early next week for discussions "on grave matters affecting his treaty relationship with Her Majesty's Government". At the interview I shall require the Kabaka in accordance with his treaty obligations to give certain assurances regarding his acceptance of my decision and of his future co-operation with the Protectorate Government. If after a suitable interval for reflection he refuses to comply, he will be notified of Her Majesty's Government's withdrawal of recognition under the Treaty, informed that he will not be permitted to reside in Uganda and assured of an appropriate financial settlement to enable him to live elsewhere.

10. If the Kabaka refuses to come to this country to see me, then I propose to authorise the Governor to put into operation the plan described in paragraph 6 above.

11. A timetable of the pertinent dates and a map of Uganda are attached.

12. I invite my colleagues:-

- (a) to endorse the action which I propose;
- (b) to note the possibility of the need for further reinforcements from Kenya which might lead to a request for their replacement.

O.L.

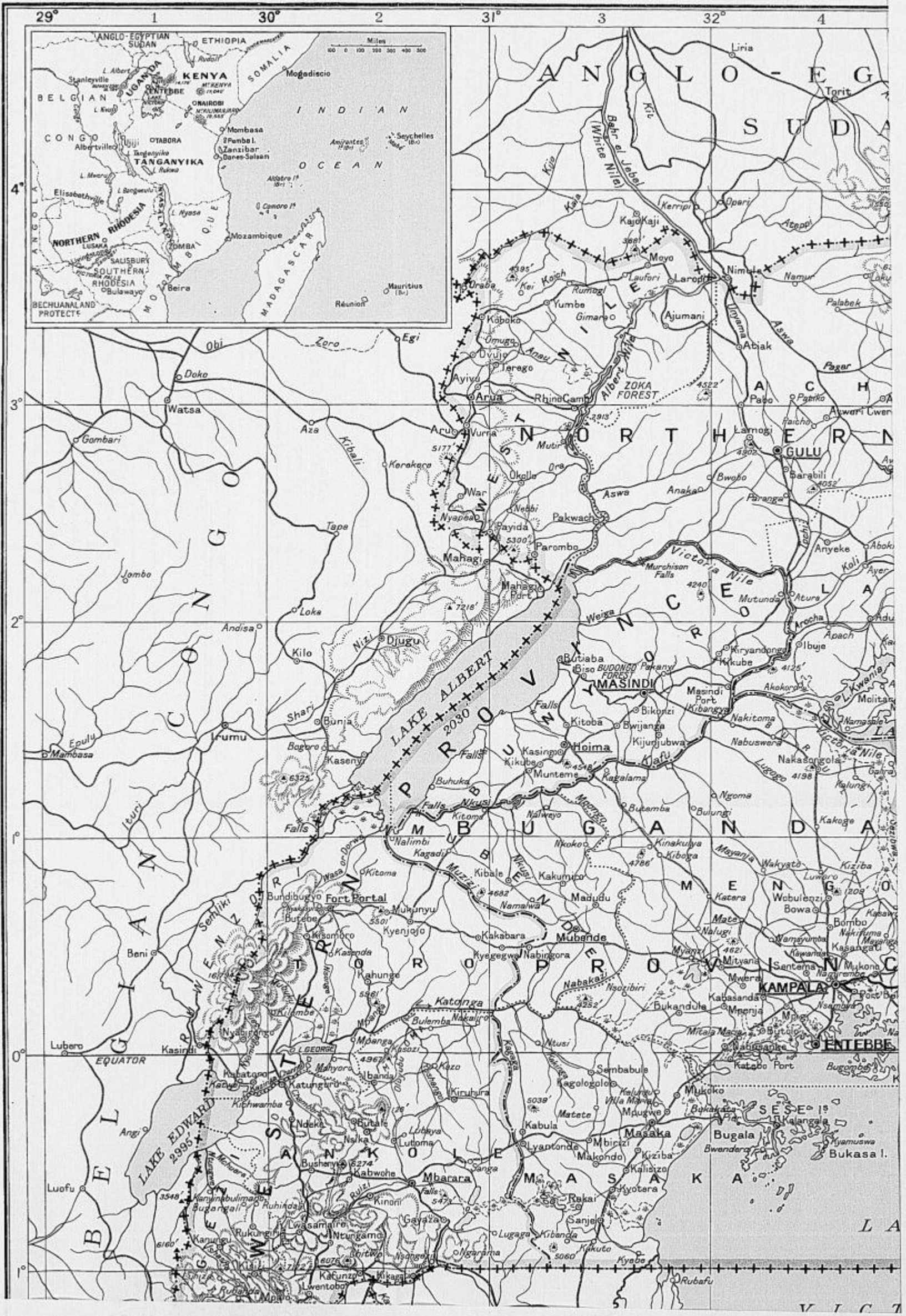
Colonial Office, S.W.1.

17th November, 1953.

TIMETABLE OF EVENTS IN UGANDA

- Monday, 16th November. 4th Bn. K.A.R. starts to move back to Jinja from Kenya.
- Thursday, 19th November. Kabaka's birthday and celebrations.
- Friday, 20th November. Opening of Legislative Council: Governor's budget speech and suggested publication of pledge on federation.
- Monday, 23rd November. End of Legislative Council session.
- Saturday, 28th November. Completion of elections to the new Lukiko.
- Tuesday, 8th December. Final date for submission of names of new Lukiko members to the Kabaka for his approval.
- Monday, 14th December. Lukiko meets for following business:-
 - (a) to recommend names for new Ministers to the Kabaka (this can apparently not take place in his absence);
 - (b) to pass their 1954 budget;
 - (c) to hear the Resident's reply to their memorandum.

The Governor proposes to take extreme action, if it be necessary, between 24th November and 8th December, when the old Lukiko is still legally in existence and the present Ministers are still in office. It is during this time that I intend to summon the Kabaka to London.



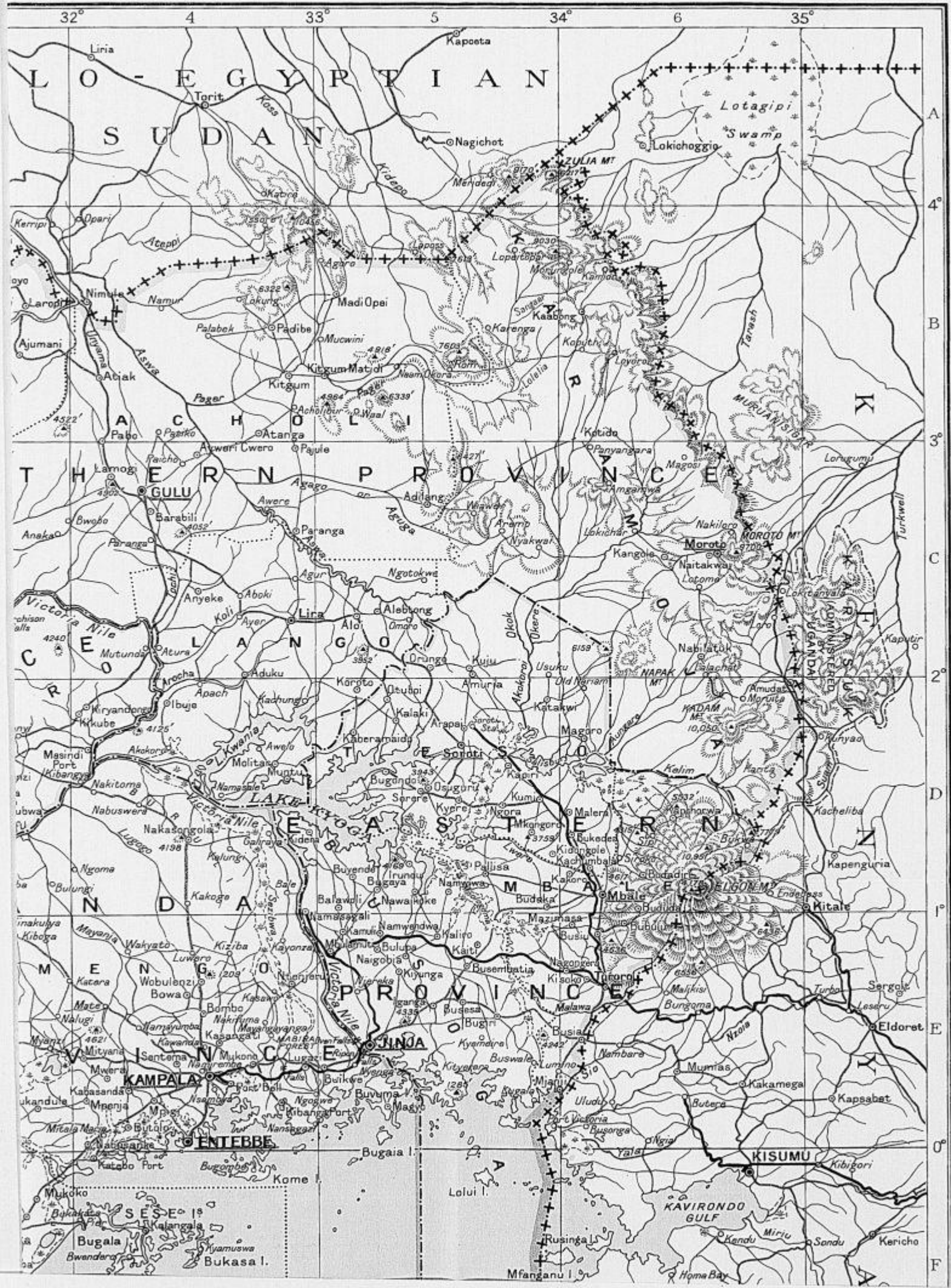
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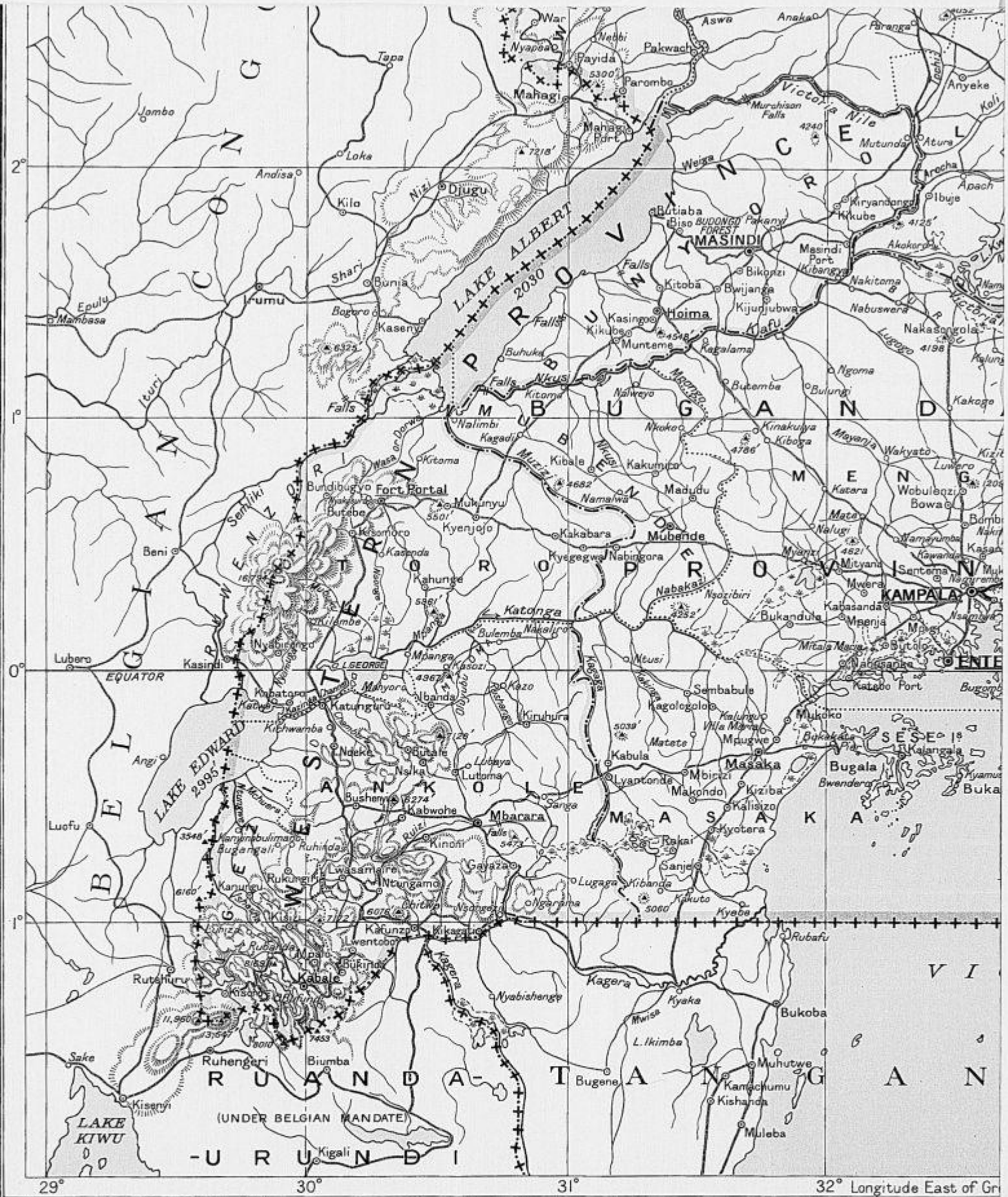


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