



TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

Thirty-first Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

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President: Mr. F. H. CORNER (New Zealand).

Present:

The representatives of the following States: Australia, China, France, Liberia, New Zealand, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; World Health Organization.

Examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of Nauru: annual report of the Administering Authority for the year ended 30 June 1963 (T/1619, T/L.1072/Rev.1) (continued)

[Agenda item 4 (c)]

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. KING (United Kingdom) said that Articles 76, 87 and 88 of the United Nations Charter provided all the necessary criteria for determining whether or not the Administering Authority was carrying out its obligations in respect of the Trust Territory of Nauru. That Territory, however, constituted a special case, owing to the impending exhaustion of the phosphate deposits on which its now relatively prosperous economy depended, and its consideration by the Council consequently involved two distinct aspects, namely, the administration and objectives of the Administering Authority, and the proposals for the future of the Nauruan people.

2. The report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territories of Nauru and New Guinea, 1962 (T/1595 and Add.1) showed that in many ways existing conditions were quite favourable. The supply of food, in particular, had been described as ample, and the Administering Authority had taken further steps since then to improve it. He hoped that progress would continue. With regard to education, the Visiting Mission had stressed that all the island's population

were literate and that the facilities were being continually expanded; it was clear from the special representative's statements to the Council that commendable progress was being made. Young Nauruans should be given particular encouragement to avail themselves of scholarships—the number of which was not restricted—for higher education and technical training in Australia.

3. In public health, too, encouraging progress had been made. The Administering Authority's measures against tuberculosis were bearing fruit, and the special representative had been able to state that no epidemic diseases had occurred in the period under review. His delegation would be interested to know what steps had been taken to implement the World Health Organization's suggestion concerning a long-range nutrition education programme in Nauru (T/1614, para.10). It was apparent that the occasional water shortages in the island were due not to any depletion of the water supply resulting from phosphate-mining operations, but to the growth of the island's population and the increased individual consumption resulting from a rising standard of living. His delegation had been gratified to note the steps that had been taken recently to increase the amount of water available without charge to the Nauru Local Government Council.

4. In conformity with the Council's recommendations, the Administering Authority had considerably extended the powers and responsibilities of the Local Government Council in the executive and financial fields. His delegation welcomed the changes made, which afforded concrete evidence of the Administering Authority's confidence in the Nauruan people. It was clear that, aside from the phosphate-mining operations, the island's administration was now largely in the hands of the Nauruans. Since the previous session of the Trusteeship Council, a number of important public service functions had been taken over by the Nauruans, and more Nauruans were being trained to fill other high positions, both in local government and with the British Phosphate Commissioners. While the Trusteeship Council was rightly anxious to encourage Nauruan participation in the Public Service, prudence demanded that that should not be done at the expense of existing standards.

5. The Australian Government, which had implemented virtually every United Nations recommendation with respect to the Trust Territory and had often gone beyond what had been proposed, was more than fulfilling its obligations under the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement. The question of the future of the Nauruan people posed a difficult problem. While remaining always ready to proffer advice, the Council should refrain from disturbing the negotiations in which the parties were engaged. The offer of Curtis Island appeared to meet all the Nauruans' requirements. It included an undertaking to ensure self-government and equality of standards with the Australian people for the Nauruans, while preserving intact all their characteristics as a people.

The Administering Authority could hardly go further, and it would be unreasonable to expect it to relinquish sovereignty over Curtis Island altogether. The offer was being considered by the Nauruans, and the Council should avoid even the appearance of attempting to influence them in a decision which they alone could make. Nor should any stand be taken on the question of the sovereignty of the Trust Territory until the Nauruans had finally decided the question of their future home. He hoped that the two parties would come to a fully satisfactory agreement, based on their firm friendship and mutual interests, within a reasonable time. In the meanwhile, the Administering Authority was to be commended for having taken steps to reserve Curtis Island for the Nauruans pending the outcome of the discussions.

6. Mr. Chiping H.C. KIANG (China) said that, although it was by far the smallest of the Trust Territories, Nauru presented the Trusteeship Council with a complicated and unique human problem. Since it was impracticable to rehabilitate the worked-out phosphate lands, there would be no possibility that the surviving coral pinnacles could be used on a sufficiently wide scale to maintain the fast-growing Nauruan population. The Council could best assist the Nauruans by helping to allay their uncertainty about their future.

7. The Administering Authority's scheme for resettling the Nauruans on Curtis Island had been well thought out. The fact that the Australian Government had already taken steps to reserve Curtis Island for the Nauruans provided evidence of its sincerity. If they settled on Curtis Island, in close proximity to, but separated by less than a quarter of a mile of water from, the Australian continent, the Nauruans would have easy access to the established educational institutions and economic opportunities. The negative attitude adopted by the Nauru Local Government Council towards the proposal was prompted not by any shortcomings in the site but, apparently, by dissatisfaction with a political arrangement not involving full sovereignty. The Trusteeship Council had still to be informed of the precise nature of the Local Government Council's counter-proposals.

8. The search for a solution to the problem of resettlement would be materially assisted if there were an advisory committee set up in accordance with the recommendations of the 1962 Visiting Mission (T/1595 and Add.1, para. 89), which could make recommendations in connexion with the implementation of the Nauru Local Government Council's proposal that it should be replaced by a legislative council. The ensuing consultations with the Australian Government, which should embrace the whole question of the legislative and executive authority in Nauru, would enable the Nauruans' proposals to be viewed in a realistic perspective.

9. It was the belief of the Chinese delegation that once Nauru had attained self-government in the form of full Nauruan participation in the legislative and executive administration of the island, the question of resettlement would assume a more normal character. His delegation was therefore pleased to learn from the Australian delegation that the Nauruan leaders responded favourably to the suggestion that Nauru might become a self-governing entity, but associated with a larger independent community.

10. His delegation welcomed the steps which had been taken to increase Nauruan participation in the island's administration by widening the powers of the

Local Government Council, and especially the fact that the exercise of that Council's powers was not subject to any form of control. It also noted with satisfaction the holding of the first annual consultations between that Council and the British Phosphate Commissioners, which should enhance understanding and co-operation between the parties; and the measures taken to reorganize the Public Service. It was particularly important that Nauruans should be prepared to take over positions of the highest responsibility, and in view of the unsatisfactory results achieved by the Administration's recent recruitment drive, it appeared that the training of Nauruans for specialized activities would have to be intensified. In that connexion, it was to be hoped that special attention would be devoted to training Nauruan teachers at the professional level. Among recent or proposed improvements in the field of education, the final integration of the primary school system for children of all races and the establishment of a teacher-training centre were most welcome. His delegation noted in particular that the apprenticeship school planned by the British Phosphate Commissioners was likely to prove of practical benefit to the Nauruan community.

11. Mr. NORRISH (New Zealand) said he had been struck by the special representative's comments on the expanded powers of the Nauru Local Government Council and on the appointment and promotion of Nauruans to all but forty of the posts in the Public Service. Contrary to the claims of the Soviet Union representative, such matters lay at the heart of political progress. Everything possible was being done to hasten the day when the Nauru Public Service would be entirely in Nauruan hands. The training Nauruans were being given by the Administering Authority and the experience they were gaining in the management of their own affairs would be valuable for all the Nauruan people, particularly in their efforts to grapple with the overriding issue of resettlement.

12. No doubt the Council would have liked to see more definite arrangements made for resettlement; but the Administering Authority and the Nauruan leaders were right to proceed with proper deliberation when faced with such a grave decision. The appointment of a Director of Nauruan Resettlement revealed the seriousness with which the Australian Government regarded that problem. Its efforts had been designed to help the Nauruans to visualize the nature of their new home and hence to think concretely about the institutions they would need. Painstaking efforts of that kind did not always bring quick results. Nevertheless in the past two years much ground had been covered. Step by step, each major point had been settled until now all that remained to be agreed was the exact nature of the political arrangements under which the Nauruans would administer their new island.

13. The decision to resettle, as the Head Chief had previously stated, was the fixed point of the Nauruans' plans for the future. The Nauruans' wish to resettle as a people presupposed an island and special arrangements for administering it. Their stated requirements (T/1595 and Add.1, annex I, appendix A) were not easy to find. But after an intensive search, an astonishingly close approximation had been found. The Nauru Local Government Council had also set out its desiderata for political arrangements (T/1600). There was, however, one obvious difficulty in meeting these in full. Curtis Island was a mere stone's throw from the Australian mainland. The legitimate wishes of the

Australian Government must therefore be weighed against the Nauruans' understandable desire for independence. No other Government represented in the Council would be willing to establish a sovereign and independent State within its own boundaries. Nevertheless, as the special representative had stated at the 1232nd meeting, Australia was prepared to allow the Nauruans to manage their own affairs to an extent which might fairly be described as self-government.

14. Although the generous and unprecedented offer made by the Australian Government seemed to go very far towards meeting the substance of the Nauruans' wishes, no agreement had yet been reached, a situation which gave no cause for alarm. There was ample room for an accommodation between the requirements of Australian constitutional law and the basic wishes of the islanders. Already, it was to be hoped, the process of compromise had begun. It seemed reasonable to expect positive results from the discussions between the Australian Government and the Nauruan leaders which were to begin in July 1964. The real issues had now been clarified and serious discussion could start. Until the question of the future home was settled, the present and the future were dissociated and development could not be properly focused. With clear aims before them, however, the Nauruans could move forward confidently to ensure their continued prosperity and their birthright as a distinct community.

15. Mr. DOISE (France) said the basic problem facing the Nauruans and the Trusteeship Council was that of resettlement. For its solution the Council should have confidence in the Australian Administration which, acting in close contact with the Nauru Local Government Council, had worked out in great detail a plan for emigration. Curtis Island, which seemed to have become the choice of the Nauruans, would offer great advantages. However, the final decision had not yet been taken, and in requesting international sovereignty over Curtis Island, an integral part of the territory of Australia, the Nauruans had posed a very complex problem. As already pointed out by the French delegation, the concept of sovereignty should be introduced only with the greatest caution for the size of the Nauruan community must always be borne in mind. The question must be settled in conformity with the United Nations Charter and the principle of self-determination. It was to be hoped that a realistic and humane solution would be found in the course of the July negotiations.

16. All other problems in the Territory must be viewed in the light of its inhabitants' future. His delegation had noted with interest that the powers of the Nauru Local Government Council had been extended. Moreover, the Nauruans had suggested that a committee should be set up to study the constitution of a legislative council to replace the existing Local Government Council—a suggestion that the Australian Administration should certainly examine closely. His delegation had also noted with interest the reorganization of the Public Service and the increasing number of Nauruans in the Service.

17. Also noteworthy was the progress being made in public health and education. In the former field the phosphate dust was the only remaining problem while in the latter field the recent inauguration of a local programme of technical education was highly significant.

Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Trust Territories: report of the Secretary-General (T/1622)

[Agenda item 10]

18. Mr. FOTIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted that the United Nations scholarship programme for inhabitants of Trust Territories had been established in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 557 (VI) of 18 January 1952 and 753 (VIII) of 9 December 1953. The General Assembly had requested Member States to offer scholarships to students from Trust Territories for post-primary education and special training as well as for higher education.

19. Fourteen years had passed since then. Many Member States had offered the necessary funds and displayed readiness to help the inhabitants of the Trust Territories, including those in the Pacific, to obtain knowledge, including that at university level. Thus Member States had volunteered to assist the Trust Territories in training the personnel they lacked for their progressive advancement to self-government and independence.

20. The Secretary-General's report (T/1622) showed that the United Nations scholarship programme had been ineffective in the case of the Trust Territories in the Pacific. That situation had resulted from the resistance of the Administering Authorities to the educating of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories, particularly to their obtaining university education, despite their desire for knowledge and despite the need of the Trust Territories for trained personnel, which could be in part satisfied through scholarships offered by Member States. His delegation had stated more than once in the past that the Soviet Union did not approve of that policy of the Administering Authorities and considered that that state of affairs should not remain unchanged.

21. In fact the inhabitants of the Trust Territories were unable to decide for themselves whether or not they could utilize the scholarships offered. Australia, for example, continued to adhere to its old policy with regard to the utilization of such scholarships by the inhabitants of Papua and New Guinea; it maintained that only the Administering Authority and its representatives on the spot could decide whether or not the inhabitants of the Territories under its administration could utilize the United Nations scholarships and obtain higher education in other countries.

22. One of the arguments employed by the Administering Authorities to justify their position was that there was no real need for the United Nations scholarships because they themselves were able to meet the needs of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories with regard to university education. As a result, if the inhabitants of those Territories left their countries at all in order to obtain education, they were directed mostly to the higher educational establishments of the administering countries or to a limited number of educational establishments of that particular area, i.e., the Pacific.

23. In his delegation's view such a policy of limiting the number of educational establishments as well as directing the inhabitants of the Trust Territories only to the schools in the Pacific was aimed at narrowing the outlook of the islanders, at preventing them from seeing the world at large outside the limits of their geographic region, as well as at training them to think

in a way that conformed to the wishes of the Administering Authority.

24. His delegation regretted that, despite the criticisms voiced in the Council and the Fourth Committee, the situation remained unchanged. The inhabitants of the Trust Territories should be in a position to use all opportunities of obtaining higher education, including those beyond the confines of the Pacific area. What was general practice for other countries should not be taboo for inhabitants of the Trust Territories.

25. It was also regrettable that the report before the Council did not fully reflect the detailed information submitted by the Permanent Mission of the Soviet Union to the United Nations in its letter of 5 May 1964 in reply to the request from the Secretariat.

26. He hoped that his delegation's views would be reproduced in a suitable form in the report of the Council to the General Assembly at its nineteenth session, and that in that respect a departure would be made from the previous practice.

27. The PRESIDENT said the Secretariat would strive to ensure that the report correctly reflected the Soviet Union's views.

28. He suggested that the Council should take note of the Secretary-General's report (T/1622) and draw the attention of the Administering Authority to the observations made.

It was so decided.

Dissemination of information on the United Nations and the International Trusteeship System in Trust Territories: report of the Secretary-General (T/1623)

[Agenda item 11]

29. Mr. FOTIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said the Secretary-General's report (T/1623) and the material supplied by the Administering Authorities indicated that the latter did their utmost to hush up the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples and the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the reports of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In the material disseminated in New Guinea, Nauru and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands there was not a single reference to the Declaration nor any material about the activities of the Committee.

30. Moreover, during the general debate on New Guinea the special representative had been very hesitant about referring to the Declaration and in the case of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands the Administering Authority was obviously seeking to erase any reference to the right of peoples in Trust Territories to self-determination and independence. The inevitable conclusion was that the Administering Authorities were deliberately trying to keep the inhabitants of the Trust Territories in the dark about their right to self-determination and independence, which was supported by all Members of the United Nations with the exception of a handful of colonial Powers.

31. The agencies of the United Nations concerned with the dissemination of information should pay

particular attention to the dissemination of material on the Declaration and the work of the Special Committee. The Council should request the Secretary-General to ensure that the United Nations Information Centre in New Guinea make the dissemination of such information a matter of priority.

32. His delegation regretted that the Secretariat had again failed to provide, for examination by members of the Trusteeship Council, copies of the basic documents listed in the Secretary-General's report, and hoped that the statements of the members of the Council on this question would be reproduced in the appropriate form and place in the Trusteeship Council's report to the General Assembly at its nineteenth session.

Mr. Doise (France), Vice-President, took the Chair.

33. Mr. YATES (United States of America) pointed out, for the benefit of the Soviet Union representative, that his Government had distributed approximately 5,000 copies of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples in English; some 3,000 copies in Chamorro; 3,000 copies in Trukese; 3,000 copies in Palauan; 3,000 copies in Yapeese; 3,000 copies in Marshallese; and 3,000 copies in Ponapean. A further 7,500 copies of the Declaration in those languages had been distributed locally in mimeographed form. A further 2,000 copies in English and between 500 and 1,000 copies in the six major dialects had been published in local newssheets and in school material. The Declaration had been broadcast in English and the vernacular in the three districts possessing radio stations.

34. The distribution for Trusteeship Council documents was as follows: in English, 3,000; in Marshallese, 3,000; in Chamorro, 3,000; in Palauan, in preliminary mimeographed form, 500; in Yapeese, 500; in Ponapean, 500; and in Trukese, 500. The same distribution had been made for the publications The United Nations and Human Rights (together with a further 1,000 copies in Ulithian), and The United Nations: A World Organization for Peace and Progress.

35. Those documents and pamphlets had been translated with the co-operation of the United Nations Public Information Office. Many thousands of copies had been distributed to schools, libraries and municipalities, posted on all municipal and school bulletin boards, and distributed to school children and adults. All material that had been issued in English and the vernacular had also been used in radio broadcast programmes.

36. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) recalled that he had informed the Council at previous sessions about the constant and regular supply of information to the Trust Territory regarding the operations, decisions and debates of the United Nations through all the media of communication. Daily broadcasts were devoted to United Nations material, with special twice-weekly programmes on its proceedings; United Nations Day was observed throughout the Territory; a special page of the newspapers published in the Territory dealt with the work of the United Nations. The Administration had set up and paid for the United Nations Information Centre at Port Moresby and had provided its Director with personal assistance and a car. The Administration had also given him every facility to travel throughout the Territory for the purpose of informing the people about the work of the United Nations.

37. Copies of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples had been distributed to every district office, sub-district office, and patrol post in New Guinea and had been transmitted to and discussed by all local government councils. Copies had also been distributed to and through schools and formed a basic part of the courses given on the United Nations in the teachers' colleges. Since those were not new facts, he could only conclude that the Soviet representative chose to disregard them for purposes of his own.

38. The entire population of Nauru had been informed of the Declaration, which had been discussed by the Nauru Local Government Council. The sentiments expressed by the Soviet Union representative made little sense when they came from the representative of the Power which had created the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall.

39. Mr. FOTIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that the special representative of the Administering Authority for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands had been unable to give a satisfactory answer to his delegation's question (1232nd meeting) as to why the word "independence" had been omitted from the charter of the legislature of one of the districts of the Territory. Moreover, in resolution 40-1964 of the Mariana Islands District Legislature, quoted in annex I of the report of the 1964 Visiting Mission (T/1620), the Legislature had requested an acceleration of the dissemination of information about the United Nations, the International Trusteeship System and the records of the current meetings of the Trusteeship Council. It was also unlikely that the Secretary-General could have omitted from his report all information regarding the dissemination of such an important decision of the General Assembly as the Declaration on the granting of independence if there was anything to report. He asked the United States

representative whether he could guarantee that the text of the Declaration was displayed in each school in the Trust Territory, as was the case with some other United Nations documents.

40. The Australian representative had sought to find a way out of a hopeless position in an irrelevancy; if that representative wished others to confine themselves to the item under consideration, he must do so himself.

41. Mr. YATES (United States of America), in reply to the questions asked by the Soviet Union representative, said first, that the omission of the word "independence" from the charter of one of the island legislatures had been an inadvertent oversight in a document drafted by a local committee. Had the High Commissioner caught the mistake, he would have inserted the word.

42. With regard to the request for information in the resolution adopted by the Mariana Islands District Legislature, he said that subsequent to the adoption of the resolution the documents requested had been distributed.

43. The information he had just given concerning the dissemination of the text of the Declaration in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands had already been communicated to the Secretariat.

44. Finally, he had been assured by a representative of the High Commissioner's Office that the text of the Declaration had been disseminated to each school in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

45. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take note of the Secretary-General's report (T/1623).

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.