

# UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL



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## PETITIONS CONCERNING THE TRUST TERRITORY OF NAURU

### Observations of the Australian Government as Administering Authority

Note by the Secretariat: These observations refer to the following petitions:

<u>Section:</u>	<u>Page:</u>
1. Petition from Mr. Danang (T/PET.9/15) . . . . .	1
2. Petition from Mr. Fritz Gaunibwe (T/PET.9/16) . . . . .	2
3. Petition from Mr. H. Aggi (T/PET.9/17) . . . . .	2
4. Petition from Mr. Victor Eoaiio (T/PET.9/18) . . . . .	3
5. Petition from Mr. Apadinuwe (T/PET.9/19) . . . . .	3

#### 1. Petition from Mr. Danang (T/PET.9/15)

Mr. Danang, who is incapacitated and states that he cannot fend for himself, desires to be considered for compensation to enable him to live.

The petitioner, who is fifty-two years of age, is said to have been wounded during a shelling of Nauru in 1944 or 1945. As a result of injuries, his left arm was amputated at the elbow. At the present time he conducts a branch store of the Nauru Co-operative Society and is assisted by relatives. He has two sons who are in employment at Nauru and receives some income from the sale of poultry. Before the last war Mr. Danang did not follow any employment.

The whole question of war damage compensation for Nauruans was considered by the Australian Government on the basis of the general welfare and rehabilitation requirements of the Nauruan community. A substantial re-housing scheme has been carried out at a cost of £504,000 and a fund of £15,000 made available to provide furniture for the new homes.

The question of disabilities generally has been considered in formulating a Nauru Social Services Ordinance which it is expected will be made shortly. When this Ordinance comes into operation, Mr. Danang's position will be examined in relation to the Ordinance.

2. Petition from Mr. Fritz Gaunibwe (T/PET.9/16)

This petition refers to a claim for the value of a motor car which Fritz Gaunibwe says he sent to Australia through the Nauru Co-operative Society in 1940 for repair and which was lost when the vessel on which it was being returned to Nauru was sunk by a German raider.

The Nauru Co-operative Society advises that it has no knowledge of the car as all its records were destroyed during the Japanese occupation. The Society cannot say whether the car was insured against war risk. Mr. Fritz Gaunibwe wrote to the Native Affairs Officer in 1947 and the then Head Chief Detudamo took the matter up with the Nauru Co-operative Society. The Society denied that it had ever received any such claim and no further action appears to have been taken by it. The Administration has now taken the matter up and, as a result, inquiries are being made from the Society's agent in Melbourne in an attempt to determine whether the car was insured against war risk.

3. Petition from Mr. H. Aggi (T/PET.9/17)

The petitioner has asked that a house be allotted to him under the housing scheme. He is an unmarried man of about sixty years of age, and has not previously applied for a house.

The Administration has constructed 350 houses for Nauruans, the allocation of which has been placed in the hands of the Nauru Local Government Council. The petitioner should submit an application to the Local Government Council which will consider his request in relation to the general needs of the Nauruan community.

4. Petition from Mr. Victor Eoao (T/PET.9/18)

Mr. Victor Eoao has petitioned for consideration to be given to the adequacy of the wage margin received by him over and above the basic wage rate.

The wage margins for Nauruan employees of the Administration are determined by the Administrator having regard to the responsibility undertaken by the employee and the degree of skill or competence shown in carrying out his duties.

The petitioner is employed at the Administration Hospital as a Laboratory Technician and acts as an assistant to the Pathologist. His margin for skill was increased from £0-36 to £40-100 last year with effect from 23 December 1954. This compares with margins of £80-180 for the Dispenser and £40-140 for the X-Ray Technician who are both in charge of sections.

In the opinion of the Administrator the knowledge and experience of Mr. Eoao and the degree of responsibility he carries as Laboratory Technician are far below that of the Pathologist. It is not considered that there is any justification at present for a revision of his margin.

5. Petition from Mr. Apadinuwe (T/PET.9/19)

Mr. Apadinuwe has petitioned on three matters:

- (1) Increased financial assistance from the Administration.
- (2) Suitable employment.
- (3) Assistance in expediting payment of royalties on phosphate land owned by him at Ocean Island.

The following observations are furnished:

- (1) Since October 1953, the petitioner has received an ex gratia payment of £6 per month from the Administration. In addition, he receives weekly supplies of foodstuffs free of charge from the Nauru Co-operative Society, and is assisted by relatives from time to time. The Administration has kept this case under regular review but it is not considered that any further assistance is warranted at present.

(2) The Administration has previously considered the possibility of finding employment for Mr. Apadinuwe but could discover no suitable work in Nauru. This aspect of the petition is being given further consideration.

(3) Since this matter was brought up in 1953, the Administering Authority has been making inquiries on behalf of Mr. Apadinuwe. The Administration has ascertained that royalty on Ocean Island land is paid into a Trust Fund, the capital monies of which will be used for the development of the Banabans' new home at Rambi, Fiji. Only interest on the sums invested therein are payable to former landowners. The Administration has agreed with the Banaban Adviser to receive Mr. Apadinuwe's interest and pay it to him on behalf of the Banaban Community. The Banaban Adviser has recently advised that the work of checking land records is not yet complete but that a cheque for £54.19.3 (Fijian) in payment of Mr. Apadinuwe's entitlement to the end of 1955 is now being forwarded to the Administration. This will be paid to the petitioner as soon as it is received.

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