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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ELEVEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Monday, 2 July 1962, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. BINGHAM

(United States of America)

Examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of Nauru (continued)

- (a) Annual report of the Administering Authority [3c]
- (b) Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission  
to the Trust Territory of Nauru [5a]

Note:

The Official Record of this meeting, i.e. the summary record, will appear in provisional mimeographed form under the symbol T/SR.1189 and will be subject to representatives' corrections. It will appear in final form in a printed volume.

## AGENDA ITEMS 3c and 5a

## EXAMINATION OF CONDITIONS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY OF NAURU (continued)

- (a) ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY (T/1589; T/L.1959)
- (b) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSION TO THE TRUST TERRITORY OF NAURU, 1962 (T/1595 and Add.1)

At the invitation of the President, Mr. McCarthy, Special Representative for Nauru under Australian administration, and Mr. DeRoburt, Head Chief of Nauru, took places at the Trusteeship Council table.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to announce that immediately following this meeting there will be shown in this Chamber a short film on Nauru which has been provided by the delegation of Australia.

The Council will now proceed with the questioning of the representatives of Australia.

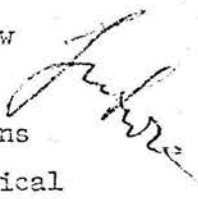
Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (interpretation from French): I should like to ask some questions of the Special Representative and the Head Chief, whom we are happy to welcome here. I ask these questions all the more because last year some of our statements were either misunderstood or distorted, and I therefore wish to make our views absolutely clear. I shall begin with the questions which seem to me less important, although they do have some importance.

My first question concerns the public administration. I am struck by the figures in this respect. The report states that the number of officials is 479. This proportion of 479 officials out of a population of 4,539, of which 2,500 are Nauruans, seems to be rather large for a State or a collectivity. Generally speaking, the proportion of officials is much less. There probably is a reason for this high percentage in Nauru.

I should therefore like to ask the Special Representative if this figure for officials includes the employees of the administration of the Phosphate Company and if there is a special reason for the high proportion of officials in relation to the total population.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): The phosphate operations are quite distinct as this Council knows, from the operations of the administration. Employment with the phosphate commission is a separate matter from employment with the administration, so that officials listed as employees of the administration are in fact just that. They are not employees of the phosphate commissioners, which is a separate figure.

As to the second part of the question regarding the apparently high rate of employment in the administration in Nauru, I do agree that in relation to the comparatively small size of the administrative problem the administration figures are perhaps higher than would normally seem to be warranted. Nevertheless, this is probably explained best I think, by the fact that even in a small territory such as Nauru, all the functions of administration and government have to be carried out. The administration, as it exists at the moment could no doubt, without proportional increase, carry out the functions of administration for a much larger population. But the answer, I think, does come back to the fact that even on this small island, virtually every function of government, as we know it, has to be represented.

Mr. KCSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (interpretation from French): I now come to the principal problem which was stressed in the excellent report of the Visiting Mission and which was mentioned again in several interventions this morning, especially by the representative of Bolivia, that is, the political future of the Nauruans. 

The first hypothesis was the resettlement of the Nauruans on another island off the Australian coast. The matter was discussed, but no choice was made. The possibility of settlement on the Fraser Island and the Prince of Wales Island was considered.

Are there many other desert islands, to the knowledge of the Australian Government, of this kind existing? On the one hand, if these islands are deserted, is it not because they are unfit for human habitation? In fact, it seems to me that if there was an island which had resources similar to those sought by the Nauruan population, it would be known.

If I ask these questions it is because the Trusteeship Council has to take some decision on this matter, and it is also because the Nauruans will have to make a decision. Without such a preliminary and exhaustive investigation, it would be difficult for us to find the right solution.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): I would say that that appreciation is generally correct. It is true to say that any island -- and there are many off the Australian coast -- which offers possibilities of development are already occupied. It is no part of the purpose of the Australian Government, or the other Governments for that matter, to attempt to settle the Nauruans on an island which offers them no hope of the things which are properly theirs and which they can hope for. That is in fact one of the difficulties of the situation: that although these islands do exist off the Australian coast, those which are habitable and productive are already inhabited and are being made productive.

Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (interpretation from French): The second hypothesis we recall was the resettlement of the Nauruan population on the Australian continent. This proposal, which originally came from the Australian Government, was rejected by the Nauruans, at least in its original form. We should like to know what the Special Representative thinks of the suggestion of the Visiting Mission on pages 23 and 24 of its report, which echoes -- while modifying it -- the Australian offer that the Nauruans would keep their identity and their collectivity and that they would be progressively settled but in a sort of model village so that they would keep their national identity. How does this possible solution which repeats the Australian proposal although changing it somewhat, fit in with the views of the Australian Government? If that Government is not yet able to reply to me on this matter, of course, I shall wait until it is in a position to give the reply at another time.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): It is quite true that the original offer made by the Australian Government did envisage the resettlement of the Nauruans on the mainland of Australia. It is also true that in its continuing search to meet the wishes of the Nauruans the Australian Government does not rule out the possibility of Nauruan resettlement in some part of the mainland in Australia in a form which may perhaps approach more closely the Nauruan wishes as now expressed than the form in which the original offer was made. No decisions, however, have yet been made by the Australian Government in the relation<sup>1</sup> to any particular position on the mainland or off it. Decisions in that connexion and consideration by the Australian Government will be the result of the continuing effort which is going on to determine, having regard to all the circumstances, where the most suitable area or areas might be. I cannot give the Council any commitment on the part of the Australian Government in regard to any particular area simply because their search is going on and a Governmental decision must have regard to a particular place or places before it is made.

Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (interpretation from French): I should like to put the same questions, perhaps in a somewhat different form, to the Head Chief who, of course, is the principal party concerned in the solution of this difficult Nauruan problem. I have read with attention in the annexes the point of view and proposals of the Local Governing Council of Nauru concerning the future settlement area of the Nauruan people. I have read on page 13 in particular that the Council had laid down a certain number of conditions to its resettlement on an island. The "felicitous island that they look for should have ample natural fresh water supplies". One should not find there "man-eating animals, poisonous insects, vermin and reptiles." It should be "land with mild seasonal changes...fertile, with good prospects for agriculture and potential for growing suitable sustenance and cash crops...with plenty of fish in its surrounding seas...have mineral sources...". (T/1595/Add.1, Annex I, pages 13-14)

These, of course, are optimum conditions, and if such an island could be found, it would certainly be a Godsend for the Nauruan population. But we are, of course, obliged to consider the case where this "felicitous island" would not be found, and we then come to the second hypothesis. I would very much like, if it is not asking too much, to have the view of the Head Chief on this question.

Mr. deROBERT (Head Chief): The question of the representative of France as I understand it, hinges on a very original submission made by our Council, explaining the wishes of our people as to what island we would prefer to resettle on if the time for resettlement is arrived at. The conditions we laid down, we understand, may not be available, collectively, on any particular island. But I think I will be very correct in saying that the next best island having most of those conditions would be quite acceptable to our people. I hope I have answered the question of the representative of France.

Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (interpretation from French): I wish to thank the Head Chief for his reply. It is, of course, certain that if this island were to be discovered, then the question would not arise, and I think the Australian Government could but view with favour a resettlement of this kind.



(Mr. Kosciusko-Morizet, France)

Then there is the second hypothesis pending. If the island in question were not to turn up, if I have understood correctly what is stated in the report on the wishes of the population of Nauru, it is as an overall community that the Nauruan population visualizes its resettlement and not as individuals. The Nauruan population intends to set itself up somewhere, be it on an island or in the absence of an island, on the Australian continent, but definitely as a collective community. Is that the way in which one must understand the wishes of the Nauruan population?

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): The best way I can answer that I think is to say this: The Nauruan Governing Council and the people of Nauru wish to retain their racial identity, their entity as a community, and as well to control their own affairs. By that last term I mean to have sovereign independence. This statement I have just given has in fact been given in more detail in the statement which I presented to the Minister for Territories before I came to New York.

Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (interpretation from French): That reply is clear. It appears evident that the Nauruan community wishes to be resettled together, one way or another -- preferably on an island, although we do not know whether that particular solution is feasible materially. The Head Chief has referred to the concept of independence and sovereignty. Within that line of thought on independence and sovereignty does he visualize that it would include foreign affairs? I ask this because I read in the annexes to the Visiting Mission's report:

"We are not fully conversant with what the Australian Government's attitude is towards the question of External Affairs. It would seem as if it could well handle this on our behalf, at least in the initial stages of our independence, but on the fullest consultation with our government on all events as necessary and with which we will be concerned. That is, provided that on the other hand, the Australian Government is willing and we will have the funds to meet costs, in case it was decided to charge us for such services." (T/1595/Add.1, Annex I, Page 9)

This is, of course, one among a number of questions dealing with independence and sovereignty. The taking over of a certain number of branches of government is, naturally, a costly matter, and it is a community of 2,000 persons that we are dealing with here. On the other hand, conditions would be somewhat different if the Nauruan community were to be settled on an island, as opposed to being settled on Australian soil, so that if possible I should like to know whether the Head Chief could give us somewhat ampler details on the manner in which he visualizes the exercise of this sovereignty within the framework of independence, which is a matter of fact that nobody challenges.

Mr. DeROBERT (Head Chief): I think that is a somewhat difficult question for me to answer very fully verbally. I am pleased to inform the representative of France, however, that my Council's proposals which were submitted to the Minister before I left Australia covered the details which he is seeking. Since I arrived in New York a copy of those proposals has been made available to the Chairman of this year's Visiting Mission to Nauru.



Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (interpretation from French): I thank the Head Chief for that reply, although it does indicate that there will be some delay before we obtain the information. I think that subsequent debate will cast further light on this question, which is extremely important so far as we are concerned in connexion with our giving further consideration to the future of Nauru.

Mr. KIANG (China): I wish first to say to the Head Chief how much we welcome him here. I had the pleasure and privilege of meeting him four years ago in Nauru, but this time we have him here working together with us in the Council. Also, of course, I want to welcome Mr. McCarthy. I am quite sure that he has all the answers to all the questions we are going to put to him, although sometimes he may hesitate to give the replies which he actually has in his mind.

I am very glad that the representative of France has focused our attention at the moment on this future Nauruan community, and I shall pursue the same subject. First of all, I should like to invite the Special Representative's attention to a certain paragraph in the Visiting Mission's report in which, concerning that question, it is stated:

"The Mission considers that this investigation should include islands off New Guinea, and should not exclude the inhabited islands of New Guinea. For instance the Mission was told that in New Britain and New Ireland there are large stretches of unoccupied land and uncultivated land which could possibly be made available for settlement of a community of the size of that of Nauru." (T/1595, para.77)

I assume that the Visiting Mission was told this by the Administering Authority, and if my assumption is incorrect I am sure that the Chairman of the Mission will so inform me.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom) (Chairman, Visiting Mission): I am not sure that the information referred to on this point came from the Administering Authority. I think that it came from many sources in the course of our travels in the districts to which the representative of China referred. But the fact which is stated comes, I think, from information received from many quarters, and I do not believe that it can be in any doubt.

Mr. KIANG (China): I can very well appreciate that answer because four years ago, when we were in the territory, we also heard reports to that effect. As a matter of fact, some of us raised ourselves this question whether one of the islands could be used for the future Nauruan community.

I should like to know from the Special Representative which are the places in New Britain and New Ireland referred to by the Visiting Mission. The Special Representative himself must, I think, know which are the places in those two islands where, in his opinion, there would be land for the settlement of a community such as that of Nauru, and I should like him to indicate them to me. I have the map here.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): I should not like to indicate at this stage -- for it would be only a matter of personal opinion -- what areas in New Britain, New Ireland or other parts of New Guinea might or might not be suitable for the resettlement of the Nauruan people. There are so many factors involved in the situation as set out in the paper from which the representative of France has just quoted in relation to meeting the needs of the Nauruan people, and though they are set out as optimum factors they are, nevertheless, the indication of what the Nauruan people requires. There is such a variable set of conditions in New Guinea and its islands, larger and smaller, that, without a special examination on my part, I could not answer the question asked by the representative of China.

Mr. KIANG (China): I thank the Special Representative for that reply, although he knows, of course, that I am certainly disappointed. The next question I should like to ask him is this. The Visiting Mission said that the investigation should include islands off New Guinea and should not exclude the inhabited islands of New Guinea. This may be a very academic question, but I should like very much to know from the Special Representative himself whether he knows of any island off New Guinea, inhabited or not, which the Administration would consider exploring in connexion with the possibility of resettling the Nauruan people, regardless of whether or not that would be acceptable to the Nauruans themselves.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): The Administering Authority has studied closely the whole of New Guinea and the islands off New Guinea in its attempt to find a place which might be suitable for Nauru and resettlement. One of the great stumbling blocks is, of course, that most of the places in New Guinea which are suitable for human settlement are already settled; and there are obvious disadvantages in attempting to resettle one group of people in an area which is already occupied by another group, because one immediately runs into the dangers of solving the problem of one group and creating exactly the same problem for the other. Clearly, a group of people living on an island will have the same attachment to that island as the Nauruans have to their own island.

Having regard for all factors which must be considered in this question, it is our present belief that there are no islands off the New Guinea coast, no part of the New Guinea mainland, which, up to the present, have ever been offered for resettlement. It may well be that as a result of continuing examination, in light of the further clarification which is constantly occurring with respect to the Nauruans' own wishes, and in light of all the other circumstances, that re-examination of the islands of New Guinea will produce possibilities. But at the present moment the situation is as I have described it.

Mr. KIANG (China): With special reference to the new proposals the Nauruan people have submitted to the Administering Authority, I would like to ask one question of my friend, the Head Chief. That is, I think he was aware that some of us in the Council, including our delegation, have urged the Administering Authority, when it makes investigations and explorations of this kind, that it would be much better to have the benefit of the participation of the Nauruan people themselves. We did suggest that, in any future investigations, the Nauruan Local Government Council should be afforded the opportunity to be closely associated with the efforts of the Administering Authority. We are very glad to hear from the Special Representative that, in the recent inquiry, the Nauruan Local Government Council was represented and was consulted, in so far as I know.

(Mr. Kiang, China)

I do not know whether it is fair for me to ask the Head Chief, in the Council, whether he was satisfied with the extent to which the Nauruan Local Government Council participated in such investigations thus far.

Mr. DeROBERT: We are satisfied with the extent of participation granted to us by the Australian Government on the issue of its offer of islands for possible future resettlement of our people.

Mr. KIANG (China): I also wish to make it very clear that, in our previous interventions in the Council, we have welcomed the generous proposals of the joint Administering Authority for the ~~resettlement~~ of the Nauruans possibly on the mainland of Australia. I must tell the Head Chief that we do urge and hope that the Nauruan Local Government Council will give fullest consideration to that generous offer from the Australian Administering Authority.

I come now to the new proposals we just heard this morning from the Special Representative. The ~~proposals~~ were outlined to us in his opening statement, and I rely on the text of the statement distributed by the Australian delegation.

I gather, from one of the replies the Head Chief gave in answer to a question of the representative of France that the Nauruan Local Government Council had fully considered those new proposals which the Head Chief, himself, has submitted to the Administering Authority. Would the Head Chief be good enough to tell us as much as he can as to how the members of the Local Government Council -- some or all of them -- reacted to those proposals? Are they all in agreement; and did the Local Government Council ascertain, in any manner, the wishes of the Nauruan people? In other words, did the Nauruan Local Government Council consult the people before this proposal was put forward to the Administering Authority?

Mr. DeROBERT: On the broad aspects of the question, we did consult the people, but as to details, we did not. It is not usual for us to consult the people on every small detail of a large issue to be presented by the Council to the Australian Government.

Mr. KIANG (China): I come now to some of the specific questions with respect to those proposals, and first of all, I ask both the Special Representative and the Head Chief to forgive me if I put the question in a very disorganized manner.

I should like very much to see a copy of the proposals, and I certainly would appreciate it if such a copy were made available to us; but in the meantime, of course, we have to rely on those parts of the proposals mentioned in the opening statement of the Special Representative.

It was mentioned at the very beginning that the Nauruan people propose the creation of a sovereign Nauruan nation governed by Nauruans in their own interests, but related to Australia by a treaty of friendship, details of which are yet to be developed. Now, I think that any one of us who knows Nauru will immediately be interested in knowing what the Nauruan people suggest doing with respect to the operation of a phosphate company when Nauru becomes a sovereign nation. I would like to know of any special arrangement that the Nauruan Local Government Council would like to make with Australia -- and I think it would be more appropriate to say "Joint Administering Authority" -- in connexion with the operation of a phosphate company after Nauru becomes a sovereign and independent nation.

May I make it easier for the Head Chief and ask what was in the minds of the Nauruan Local Government Council when they proposed this treaty of friendship in so far as their plans in that respect, upon becoming independent.

Mr. DeROBERT: It has never been considered by our Council as yet.



Mr. KIANG (China): It seems to me that if the Nauruans resettle on the mainland of Australia, it will certainly not be possible to establish a sovereign Nauruan nation. If they resettle on any other island, then the question of the sovereignty of that island will arise. If the island on which the Nauruans settle is owned by Australia then of course the Australians, being very generous, will perhaps wish to cede the island to the Nauruans or to sell it. Therefore, resettlement presents not only a very interesting legal problem but also a practical one.

For purposes of clarification, I should like to inquire from the Head Chief whether this particular aspect of the problem was considered when the very important and progressive proposals were made by the Nauru Local Government Council to the Administering Authority. If either the Australians or the Nauruans themselves discover an island, then the problem will be solved. But unless an island is discovered which is neither occupied nor owned by somebody, how will it be possible to set up a sovereign nation on that island without a transfer of sovereignty?

Mr. de ROBERT: Thus far in the course of our negotiations with the Australian Government on this specific point which is being raised by the representative of China, we have no reason to doubt that Australia will be good enough to consider granting us one of its uninhabited islands, if one is found which is suitable for the resettlement of our people.

Mr. KIANG (China): I should like to ask both the Special Representative and the Head Chief whether it would not be much easier simply to establish a sovereign nation on the island of Nauru.

Mr. de ROBERT: With regard to the question of sovereignty on the island of Nauru itself, there has never been any reason to doubt that both the Administering Authority and the United Nations would agree to such a concept. There has never been any indication in all of our negotiations with Australia that sovereign independence would be a difficult thing to accomplish. Therefore, we have not given any serious consideration to that question.



Mr. HOOD (Australia): In order to clarify any confusion on this point, I would refer the representative of China to paragraphs 66 and 67 of the report of the Visiting Mission of which, no doubt, he has been thinking. It is quite explicitly stated there that both the Head Chief and the other leaders of the Nauruan people were emphatic on the point "that a new home must be found for the Nauruan people, and that there must be no going back on that basic decision". (T/1595, page 17) There is no point, therefore, in reviewing that question because it is a basic fact in the situation.

Mr. KIANG (China): My very good friend is much quicker than I am because the next point to which I was about to come is this most fundamental question. Is my understanding correct that at least the younger generation of Nauru wants to be resettled outside of that island? If I am wrong in this impression, I should appreciate it if the Head Chief would so inform me.

Mr. de ROBERT: That understanding is correct but it does not imply that there will be no people inhabiting Nauru even if the majority moves and resettles elsewhere.

Mr. KIANG (China): We, and I think all members here, understand this very well because last year, when Mr. Gadabu was here, I think he made this point very clear. I am happy to hear it confirmed by the Head Chief himself.

I am afraid I am a little disorganized in my questioning and I hope that I shall be forgiven. The Special Representative made a very pertinent remark in his opening statement in connexion with the various proposals regarding the future of the Nauruan community. In making his point, he asked how any proposal which did not commend itself to the majority could be applied to individuals.

(Mr. Kiang, China)

Last year we discussed what the true reactions of individual Nauruans to the proposals would be and I remember putting this question to the Special Representative. He told me that, before he left Nauru, he had spoken to certain sections of the people but that, of course, there was no way to determine the specific opinions of various individuals in Nauru. However, when the proposals have been worked out in their final form in such a manner as to be acceptable to both the Administering Authority and the Nauru Local Government Council, I am quite sure that they will be submitted to the Nauruan people before a final decision is made.

My question is whether that procedure would be followed by the Local Government Council, irrespective of the opinion of the Administering Authority; in other words, would those proposals be presented to the people for their final decision? I do not wish to use the expression "plebiscite" but I would like to ascertain whether the people will be consulted on this matter.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): I should make it clear at this stage that no proposals have been made to the Nauruans on an individual basis. I did make a statement to that effect in this Council last year, that in discussing the proposals of the Administering Authority there were proposals for the people to consider. But no proposals have yet been made or considered on an individual basis to the Nauruan people. That is the existing situation.

The attitude of the Administering Authority is that they recognize, of course, the authority and leadership of the native Local Government Council, and this is the body through which they are working in relation to these proposals which are made for their consideration and for the people at large and which have not been made to individuals on Nauru.

Mr. KIANG (China): I thank the Special Representative for that answer, although I fear I have not made the meaning of my question very clear. However, I see no point in further pursuing that question.

I believe I have now exhausted my questions so far as the new proposals are concerned and I wish only to know whether the Administering Authority and the Head Chief think it advisable and feasible to let the members of the Council have the proposals verbatim. Also, does the Head Chief wish to add anything to the proposals as outlined by the Special Representative as regards the future of the Nauruan community, or would he be quite content with what the Administering Authority, through the Special Representative, has told us in the opening statement with regard to the new proposals? The reason I ask this question is that we are prepared to comment on both proposals in our general debate and we would like to know whether the Head Chief has anything to add.

Mr. De ROBERT (Head Chief): I do not at this stage wish to add anything to the extract from the latest proposals as embodied in the Special Representative's opening statement. I think, however, that it would be beneficial to the members of the Council if they were to see the full proposals, and with the permission of the Australian delegation I think that could be made available to them, so as to avoid any misunderstanding that might arise from seeing only part of the proposals.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): In response to the implied request of the representative of China, I think we could make available copies of the set of proposals. I would like to have a final consultation with my delegation, but I think that almost certainly we can arrange to have this done at an early, convenient time.

In fact, I am reminded by my colleague that I did in fact intimate something to the same effect earlier today. We can do that.

Mr. KIANG (China): We are certainly very grateful for the answers of both the Head Chief and the representative of Australia, and I now come to the last question.

The Special Representative made reference to certain remarks of the Visiting Mission with respect to the same question, and he quoted from the report of the Visiting Mission where, in paragraph 78, it is stated that "...the Nauruans fear that they will be submerged and lost in the population of Australia". That referred to the original proposal, the proposal made known to the Council last year with regard to resettlement on the mainland of Australia. This remark of the Visiting Mission is a very interesting one indeed, and I very much wish to hear from the Special Representative whether or not he thinks such fears justified.

Mr. McCarthy (Special Representative): The original proposals of the three Governments envisaging the resettlement of the Nauruans in Australia did envisage the absorption -- the inevitable absorption -- of the Nauruans into the larger Australian community. The Australian Government for its part, and its partner Governments of New Zealand and the United Kingdom, felt that this would be inevitable, that it would not be to the detriment of the Nauruans and that it would not be to the detriment of the Australians.

As I stated in this Council last year, in making this offer -- and I speak of Australia directly, and no less, by implication, of the other two Governments concerned -- we were offering to the Nauruans the best that we had to give them. We were offering them a share in our own country, we offering them a share in the Government of that country, we were offering them, to each and every Nauruan, the same equity in every public institution as is available to any other individual Australian. We were, in short offering them everything we had that we could

(Mr. McCarthy,  
Special Representative)

offer them. The result of that would be, over a period of time, that the Nauruans, as a separate and single group, would merge into the larger group and, to a lesser extent, that the larger group would become part of the smaller group. That we envisaged would happen.

Mr. KIANG (China): I have no further questions in the political field and I wish to thank the Special Representative, the representative of Australia and the Head Chief for their replies. I also wish to say that my delegation is not prepared to ask any questions in any other field.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): I do not wish at this stage to put to the Head Chief the questions in my mind, but I would like, if I may, to give notice of these questions, and perhaps when we renew our deliberations he may be able to give a considered reply.

The recommendations of the Visiting Mission were summarized at the end of the chapter entitled "General", and I would read the two short paragraphs which summarize the recommendations we put forward, paragraphs 53 and 54. The first of our two major propositions is in paragraph 53, which reads:

"The first is that the time has come when it is desirable to work out in detail, with due regard to the offer already made by the Australian Government, and then put to the people of Nauru specific and definite plans for a new Nauruan settlement." (T/1595, page 13)

We explained in our report that we consider the possibility of settlement in New Guinea or the neighbouring islands or on an island in the neighbourhood of Australia itself, or in the form of a model village adjoining, say, Sydney or Brisbane. The three possibilities should be worked out in detail and specific and definite proposals should be put before the Nauruan people so that they can make up their minds. This was the first and main recommendation that we put forward.



We believe, as a Mission, that the Nauruan people cannot be expected to make up their minds until those specific proposals have been put forward for their consideration, having been worked out in considerable detail.

The first question, therefore, that I should like to put to the Head Chief -- if he will be good enough to reply at his convenience when he has had time to consider the matter further -- is whether he would welcome, as leader of his people, the preparation of the three detailed possibilities so that they can be fully considered by his Local Council, and indeed by all the people of Nauru. To quote from paragraph 54, the second of our two major propositions is "that the time has come for the elected representatives of the people of Nauru to participate more fully both in the administration of the Island and also in the phosphate enterprise". (Ibid.) And in the body of the report we made recommendations on how that participation might be worked out in full consultation with the people of Nauru, both in regard to a legislative and executive council and in the form of an annual conference between the Phosphate Commissioners and the elected representatives of the people.

I would like to ask the Head Chief to tell us, when he wishes to, whether he welcomes in general the proposals which we have put forward for increased participation. The essence of our report is that, in regard to settlement, the obligation rests on the Australian Government to look at all the possibilities and to put forward specific schemes for consideration by the people of Nauru; and the second proposition is that the time has come for the maximum participation of the people in their government, and also in all matters which affect them in regard to the phosphate enterprise.

I would greatly welcome a statement from the Head Chief, representing his people, as to whether those two main propositions are acceptable to him and welcome to him, before one goes any further into closer detail. I do not necessarily ask for my questions to be answered now, because I realize that they are of major consequence, but rather when the Head Chief feels capable of giving answers to those two questions: does he welcome the proposition for specific schemes of settlement to be put to the Nauruans by Australia, and, secondly, does he welcome the specific proposals which we have put forward in regard to participation?



The PRESIDENT: Does the delegation of Australia wish to comment at this time on these questions, or does the Head Chief wish to speak now?

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): The Head Chief would like to have time to prepare a statement in reply to the questions which have been put by the representative of the United Kingdom.

The PRESIDENT: Does the representative of the United Kingdom wish to ask any further questions at this time?

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): No; I wish to express my gratitude. I did not expect the Head Chief to reply immediately, and I am grateful to him for his readiness to do so at another time. There are certain detailed questions which I should like to ask later, but it seems to me to be more important first to know the position of the Nauruan people in regard to these two propositions.

Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): I believe that in the exchange of views which has taken place, touching on the proposal submitted by the Head Chief to the Australian Government, we are getting to the very heart of the problem. If the Council cannot discuss in clear and precise terms the future of the Island of Nauru, it can only discuss matters of detail which, in my opinion, are of a secondary nature. That is why the problem is so important and why I have followed with the greatest interest the questions put by the representatives of France, China and the Chairman of the Visiting Mission. This morning, the Special Representative told us that his Government had no formal opinion on the proposition submitted by the Head Chief of Nauru, which has been partially reproduced. I assume that this is the most important part of the proposition which has been mentioned in the statement of the Special Representative. This proposal is of a general character permitting various means or alternatives in finding an exact solution. In general terms, the proposal eliminates the possibility of resettlement in Australia -- and here I refer equally to the various alternatives. We must suppose that no Government, including the Government of Australia, is going to permit a group or a community to maintain its political independence and sovereignty within another sovereign State. I assume also --

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(Mr. Salamanca, Bolivia)

and this is only an assumption since we do not have the complete document before us -- that this also excludes the possibility of the resettlement of the Maurians in the territory of New Guinea. Is there any possibility of maintaining a definite identity within the identity which exists already in that territory? This, of course, would be with the full consent of the population of Maura. In other words, this general proposal prevents the possibility of an uninhabited island, because it is very difficult to think that we are being asked for full sovereignty, on the national plane, at least politically, and, on the international plane, association with Australia. That is to say, this population is not prepared to accept the possibility of participating in a federation or another form of political community.

However, the problem will be and is that which was emphasized by the Chairman of the Visiting Mission, and, on this point, I simply wish to corroborate his point of view. The truth is that, up to now, and after many years, no concrete proposition has been submitted to us; no such proposition exists.

The only question which I wish to ask the Head Chief -- and it should not be difficult to reply -- is the following. Is the proposal submitted by the Head Chief to the Government of Australia a definitive one? Is it final? Or can it be modified? Naturally, on this point we still do not know the opinion of the Australian Government.

In any case, the problem, as it has been posed here, creates certain difficulties in our deliberations. How can we express an opinion? In the first place, if we insist on specific alternatives and if we take into account the general proposition, the point of view of the Visiting Mission must be completely revised. This is an entirely new question and touches the very heart of our work.

(Mr. Salamanca, Bolivia)

Agriculturally speaking and from the point of view of the exploitation of phosphate, the island of Nauru has no future.

The Administering Authority tells us that an officer is going to Nauru to study this problem. That is good so far as it goes. But what concrete solutions is the Administering Authority offering to the inhabitants of Nauru? It is precisely because the Administering Authority has offered no such concrete solutions that the Visiting Mission has presented these alternatives. We are stating no definite opinion in presenting these alternatives. The Visiting Mission's report states very clearly that:

"... the time has come when it is desirable to work out in detail, with due regard to the offer already made by the Australian Government, and then put to the people of Nauru specific and definite plans for a new Nauruan settlement". (T/1595, paragraph 53)

The Government of Australia has not taken a final position on the general proposals made by the Head Chief of Nauru. Thus, what are we to discuss here?

I should like to put the following question to the Head Chief. Is the proposal made by the Australian Government a final proposal?

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): It is not my intention to answer that question; I merely wish to clarify some points which seem to have been obscured.

First, the representative of Bolivia said that many years had gone by and that there had been no specific proposals. That, of course, is a misapprehension. The proposals which were reported to the Trusteeship Council last year were very specific proposals indeed, involving details of resettlement in Australia itself.

The second point I wish to make is this. The representative of Bolivia said that there had been a suggestion that an officer should go to Nauru to help the Nauruans. The fact is that that officer has gone to Nauru and has returned. It is as a direct result of that officer's having been placed at the service of the Nauruan people that the proposals to which reference has been made in this Council today have been formulated by the Nauruan people.

(Mr. McCarthy,  
Special Representative)

My third point is the following. These proposals have only now -- literally on the eve of the departure of my colleague, the Head Chief, and myself from Australia -- been placed before the Australian Government. I think that it is therefore asking too much to expect a final reply immediately in relation to such far-reaching proposals. After all, the Australian Government could not act unilaterally in this matter; it must consult its partner Governments. But even the Australian Government alone -- or any Government, for that matter -- could scarcely have had time in these very few days to take a firm and final attitude on the proposals which have now been placed before it.

Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): Far be it from me to discount the time factor in this problem. The Special Representative tells us that last year the Administering Authority submitted some specific proposals. This is obvious to a certain degree. But there was some lack of understanding or clarity about one point connected with the possibility of resettlement in Australia. The Nauruan community was under the impression that it could have full sovereignty within the territory. This point was clarified during some talks in Nauru. But that is not the problem. I realize that these proposals were submitted after the report was written and that the Australian Government did not have time to consider them. This has placed the Council in the position of not being able to know what to decide on the central problem, which is the future of the population of Nauru.

I am not speaking on the merits of these proposals; I am neither for nor against them. I merely wish to ask the Head Chief whether they are final. If they are, we shall again find ourselves in the position of having to search for an ideal island; and, as the representative of France has so well expressed it, the possibility of finding such an island can be discussed endlessly without its ever being found.

Mr. DeROBERT (Head Chief) I think that this will be the best way to answer that question. At the present stage these represent the final proposals on the resettlement question by the Mairu Local Government Council. The document itself sets that out. I do not think that I have the authority to say that that is not the case. I also do not think that I have the right to say that the proposals could not be improved upon if some counter-proposals were made by the Australian Government in reply to these proposals. I hope that I have answered the question.

Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the Head Chief for that reply. I have no further questions. I would only say that the reply given by the Head Chief of Mairu was definite and clear. Now what we need to know -- and I do not say when; perhaps it will not be at this session -- is the reply of the Australian Government.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): I should like to make a comment rather than to put a question. The Head Chief has been good enough to say that, after reflection, he will reply to the question which I put to him -- namely, whether, on behalf of his people, he would welcome the preparation by the Australian Government in detail of the three possible courses which have been suggested. If his answer is that he would welcome that, the course which this Council may take seems to me to be clear. It may well be that the Council will decide to support the recommendations which we have made.

Hence, it seems to me that in this matter the answers which the Head Chief has undertaken to give, when he is ready, to the questions which I put to him will be all important. Indeed, it may help the representative of Bolivia -- whose concern I well understand, and indeed share -- if we have an answer from the Head Chief that he would welcome the action which the Visiting Mission has recommended.



Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to offer a clarification. After having listened to the Head Chief, I should like to say that I am in complete agreement that the Head Chief of Nauru should give us his opinion on the alternatives posed in this report. These, of course, are alternatives suggested by this Council in the desire to find a solution to this complex and difficult problem. But at the same time I very much take into account the reply just given to me by the Head Chief of Nauru. At the same time we are going to study the proposal made by the Australian Government because this proposal that will be made by the Australian Government has an unexpected element for our debate. I agree with what was said by the representative of the United Kingdom to the effect that when Mr. DeRoburt has replied, commented or given his opinion on the suggestion made by the Visiting Mission, then we can form our opinions clearly on this problem.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): I do not want to prolong this discussion, but I should like to put forward a personal view on how we should proceed in this matter. My own strong view, which is shared, I am sure, by the other members of the Visiting Mission, is that we want to decide not on the merits of the various possible solutions which may be considered; what we wish to decide is whether or not the Australian Government should be requested to prepare detailed alternatives along the three possible courses which have been suggested. Indeed, I believe that it might be a mistake, if that view was shared by the other members of the Council, to attempt to pursue at this stage the merits of the three possible courses until the people of Nauru have before them something which is specific and worked out in detail which they can see as a complete set of proposals. That is what we thought. I am sure that we are all strongly of that opinion. I myself, if I may say so, would be inclined to think that it might be a mistake to be led too far into the consideration of the three proposals which are not specific and detailed at this stage. I just wish to put that general point forward because I know that it was the strong view of all members of the Visiting Mission that the next stage should be the preparation of the three possible courses. In our opinion, that is essential before the people of Nauru can be expected to make up their minds. Therefore, I myself would not be in favour of



(Sir Hugh Foot, United Kingdom)

pressing the Head Chief or the Administering Authority or the Special Representative at this stage to comment on the various possibilities which must be vague as they stand at the moment. It seems to me very much more important that we should first consider whether or not the method of procedure which we have proposed is sound. I therefore await the reply of the Head Chief on that matter with very special interest.

The PRESIDENT: Do any other members wish to put questions at this time? I take it then that there are no further questions at the present time.

Tomorrow afternoon we will proceed with further questioning. It would be the hope of the Chair that at that time we would also be able to proceed with at least some of the statements in the general debate.

Mr. KIANG (China): Mr. President, I should very much like to know what you intend to do. You have already said that we would continue the questioning and that some of our colleagues would make their statements. What do you intend to do on Thursday and Friday? I ask for this information for personal reasons; I should very much like to be informed in advance of your plans.

The PRESIDENT: It was the thinking of the Bureau, in answer to the representative of China, that we would try to conclude the statements on Nauru Thursday and then proceed to consideration of the report of the Drafting Committee on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. If possible, although we have not had consultations on this, we would then proceed to have the opening statement on New Guinea. We would, of course, also have to give consideration at the appropriate time to the matter of procedure with regard to the preparation of the report on Nauru.

I may say that the Chair has been urged, and it is the Chair's own disposition, that we should press ahead as rapidly as possible with the session in order to conclude it as rapidly as possible. During the working days of this week, as there are no meetings on Wednesday, we are in the fortunate position of not being in conflict with other meetings except for tomorrow morning. Starting early next week, the Special Committee of Seventeen will be meeting, and this will complicate our task of setting meetings in such a way as to make it possible for representatives to attend. Therefore, if there is no objection, we should like to proceed as rapidly as possible along the lines that I have suggested.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): I simply wish to say that if there is any question as to the business on Friday with regard to the programme that you outlined, Mr. President -- and of course you did say that there would be consultations with those concerned -- I think it would be quite unrealistic to think that we could be in a position to open the discussion on New Guinea as early as Friday or even approximately on Friday. After all, when the statements have been made in the general debate, the Special Representative will be obliged to sum up from the point of view of the Administering Authority. This takes some time. Furthermore, there must of course be time allowed for our own preparation -- I speak for my own delegation -- of the material on New Guinea. This is said merely by way of reservation.

The PRESIDENT: We certainly will bear in mind the problems confronted by the Australian delegation which has an unusually heavy responsibility in these matters. It was our hope that the interruption provided by the consideration of the Drafting Committee's report on the Pacific Islands would offer the Special Representative an opportunity to prepare his closing statement on Nauru.

Are there any other comments at the present time?

I will remind the members of the Council that immediately following the close of this meeting there will be shown in this chamber a film on Nauru provided by the delegation of Australia. The representatives are invited to sit in the Press gallery for that purpose.

May I ask if any representative can now indicate whether he will be ready with a statement in the general debate tomorrow afternoon on Nauru? I see no hands, but I will not take that as a final response. I hope that the representatives will make every effort to do so in order that we can press forward as rapidly as possible with our meetings.

If there are no further comments the meeting is adjourned until 2.30 tomorrow afternoon.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.