

UNITED NATIONS  
TRUSTEESHIP  
COUNCIL



PROVISIONAL

T/PV.1190  
3 July 1962

ENGLISH

Twenty-ninth Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ELEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 3 July 1962, at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. BINGHAM

(United States of America)

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

- (a) Annual report of the Administering Authority [5c]
- (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.1190 and will be subject to representatives' corrections.

AGENDA ITEMS 5c AND 5a

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

- (a) ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY (T/1539, 1599, 1600; T/L.1039)
- (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. de Robert, Head Chief of Nauru, took places at the Trusteeship Council table.

The PRESIDENT: I am advised that the Head Chief is now prepared to reply to the question put to him yesterday by the representative of the United Kingdom.

*copy of report to WH*  
Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): I thank you for allowing me to speak again, Mr. President. I also thank the representative of the United Kingdom, Sir Hugh Foot, who is a trusted friend of the Nauran people, for giving me time to study the question which he asked me at yesterday's meeting of the Council.

The question, as I understood it, was whether I, as a leader of the Nauran people, do, on behalf of those people, welcome in general the propositions of the 1962 Visiting Mission to Nauru, as stated in paragraphs 53 and 54 of the Visiting Mission's report.

In respect of paragraph 54, I say without hesitation that we do not only welcome in general the proposition, but heartily support it. The explanations of this proposition as given in paragraphs 88 to 95 of the report are highly commendable, and I should like to take this opportunity, with the Council's permission, to place on the record my Council's and the Nauran people's sincere feeling of indebtedness to the Visiting Mission for its kind and fair views.

(Mr. de Roburt)

In respect of paragraph 53, I am somewhat unable -- despite my sincere efforts in the time allotted to me -- to reply to the proposition stated there in the same manner as I have replied to the proposition stated in paragraph 54. The dilemma which faces me, as I see it, in regard to the proposition in paragraph 53 is this: If I should say on behalf of the Nauru Council and the Nauruan people that I welcomed this, I fear that it might have the effect of negating the value, the sincerity and the authenticity of the proposals which we have just submitted, on 12 June -- last month -- to the Australian Minister for Territories. I greatly fear creating such an effect for two reasons. First, I have no authority to adopt here a course which might give rise to an effect such as that I have mentioned. Second, I believe that the Nauruan submission of 12 June to the Minister contains very feasible propositions which do not clash with those of the Visiting Mission and which could be put into practice if the Australian Government wished to be really generous. The people of Nauru trust, expect and hope that the Australian Government will be really generous in respect of those wishes and aspirations. However, we understand that it is open to the Australian Government at the request of the Trusteeship Council to submit proposals on the lines of those suggested in the report; and these would be examined by the Nauruan people.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): At this stage I merely wish to express my gratitude to the Head Chief for the reply which he has just given. As I expected, that reply reflected the thoroughness and responsibility which the Head Chief shows in representing his people. I am greatly encouraged by his reply, which included the categorical assurance in regard to the representation of the Nauruan people in all activities affecting their current life and their future. I am also delighted that he has indicated to us that the proposals made in our report are in no way in conflict with the recent proposals which he has made to the Australian Government. He has indicated, I think, that it is

(Sir Hugh Foot,  
United Kingdom)

perfectly possible for his proposals to be given full weight and taken into full account but that, nevertheless, our proposals that the next move lies with the Australian Government, in putting specific propositions to the people of Nauru on the different courses which might be followed, are also entirely feasible.

Therefore, so far as these main matters which I raised with the Head Chief are concerned, I for one am fully satisfied with his reply, and I very sincerely thank him.

The PRESIDENT: We shall now continue with the questioning of the representatives of Australia.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First, the Soviet delegation would take this opportunity to express its gratification at the fact that during this session of the Council the Head Chief of the Trust Territory of Nauru, Mr. de Roburt, is present and actively participating in our work.

The Soviet delegation wishes to put a few questions which arise in the first instance from the fact that the Visiting Mission has presented various hypotheses in its report in regard to the most important problems facing the Territory. The Mission has proceeded from various premises. The Council now has before it definite proposals reflecting the will of the indigenous population of Nauru. We therefore wish to put the following questions.

The Nauruan proposals are contained in document T/1600; we regard them as extremely important. This document is the basis for our discussion on this Trust Territory and for our decisions. The proposals of the Nauruan people are particularly important since earlier plans and propositions have been rejected by that people, and no new proposals have been presented by the Administering Authority. Thus, I repeat, the proposals in document T/1600 must become the basis of our discussion.



The United Kingdom representative has attempted at the very outset of our discussion, before the general debate has begun, to reconcile the proposals of the Mauruan people with the proposals made by the Visiting Mission in its report -- and it must be noted that that Mission was not able to take the proposals of the Mauruan people into account when it wrote its report. We shall have some particular comments to make on this attempt by the United Kingdom representative. For the moment, I would only say that the difference between the proposals of the people of Maura and those of the Visiting Mission is obvious.

In their proposals (T/1600) the Mauruan people definitely pose the question of the creation of a sovereign Mauruan State. They use the words "our separate and sovereign State" (T/1600, page 11). They say that the Mauruans wish to be sovereign and to govern themselves freely. In the concluding part of the document it is again emphasized that the Mauruan people wish to create their own separate and sovereign State.

(Mr. Cberemko, USSR)

And then there is a text which makes provision for this very basic requirement, namely, that of creating a separate, independent sovereign State of Mauru. What was proposed by the Visiting Mission, namely, the creation of a national centre for Mauruans on the territory of Australia, is of course a proposal which differs radically from the proposal made by the Mauruan people. I think that the representative of the ...

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the United Kingdom on a point of order. What is the point of order?

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): The point of order I should like to raise is that the representative of the Soviet Union has misrepresented what was stated in the recommendations of the Visiting Mission. I would not wish to raise the point further now except to point out that he has misrepresented what the Visiting Mission proposed.

The PRESIDENT: The representative of the Soviet Union will please proceed.

Mr. CBERENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, I should like to find out from you, Mr. President, what in fact was the point of order of the previous speaker.

The PRESIDENT: I find that there is nothing for me to rule upon as a point of order, and I ask the representative of the Soviet Union to proceed.

Mr. CBERENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. President, I agree entirely with you that there has been no point of order in fact, but we shall apparently have to forgive the representative of the United Kingdom for his unfamiliarity with the rules of procedure. He is still a relative newcomer to the Trusteeship Council. Perhaps he will have time to study the rules of procedure properly.

(Mr. Cherenko, USSR)

In order that the representative of the United Kingdom may have a clearer picture also of what is written in the report of the Visiting Mission, I shall simply quote from that report and then perhaps he will recognize his own error as regards this matter. Paragraph 79 of that report states:

"The Mission consequently feels that as an alternative to the proposal for an island home, a proposal should be worked out and set out in detail for the establishment of a single community centre for the Nauruans in Australia..." (T/1595, page 20)

That is what I just stated. Of course the Mission did propose other courses of action and at the same time they immediately cast doubts on them. We have doubts as regards this proposal, namely, the setting up of a so-called single community centre for the Nauruans on the territory of Australia. Why do we have doubts about this proposal? Because the people of Nauru have come forward with another proposal, to the effect that it be given another island for the setting up of a separate and sovereign State and not a kind of settlement or village somewhere on the territory of Australia. That is where the radical difference lies. In connexion with these mutually exclusive proposals, we should like to put a question to the representative of the Administering Authority. Since there is a clearly stated and precise desire of the Nauruan people to set up its own sovereign and separate state and in view of the fact that the General Assembly, as early as 1960, adopted a Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples and in view of the fact that the provisions of that Declaration are universally recognized as applying fully and completely to the Trust Territory of Nauru, we should like to know when the Administering Authority intends to transfer power to the Nauruan people in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Declaration of the General Assembly of 14 December 1960?

Mr. HOOD (Australia): We are at a somewhat delicate stage of the deliberations on this matter. It may not be helpful for any representative here in this Council to raise questions of fundamental significance which have no relation to the item on the agenda. The item on the agenda refers, in the first

(Mr. Hood, Australia)

place, to the "Annual report of the Administering Authority" and in the second place to the "Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territory of Nauru". I thought that we were in the process of discussing these matters.

I have no reply to make at this point to the kind of question which was raised by the representative of the Soviet Union. With all respect, I would refer you to the formal item on the agenda. We are discussing the recommendations, in the first place, of the Visiting Mission against the background of the report of the Administering Authority and, furthermore, in the light of certain views which have been expressed freely by the Head Chief of Nauru who is here by invitation of the Council. I suggest that further questions should be confined to the framework of the actual agenda item.

Mr. CBERENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I cannot conceal my surprise at this attempt to provide a reply. The representative of Australia asserted that this question on the implementation of the Declaration in regard to this Trust Territory does not come within our agenda at all. I should like to call the attention of the representative of Australia to the fact that he has perhaps fallen somewhat behind the times. The Declaration was adopted two years ago and in the report of the Visiting Mission, to which the representative of Australia made reference and which he has permitted to be discussed here in the Council, we see in Section I (T/1595) the following:

"The terms of reference of the Visiting Mission were laid down by the Trusteeship Council in resolution 2105 (XXVII) adopted at 1173rd meeting. By that resolution, the Mission was directed...(2) to investigate and report as fully as possible on the steps taken in the Trust Territories of Nauru and New Guinea towards the realization of the objectives set forth in Article 76 b of the Charter, and to pay special attention -- I stress this and draw the attention of the representative of Australia to these words -- "to the question of the future of the two Territories in the light of the relevant sections of the Charter, the Trusteeship Agreements and the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960..."

In order that the representative of Australia may have a better idea of what I am referring to I will explain that resolution 1514 (XV) is the Declaration that I refer to.

(Mr. Oherenko, USSR)

How can one say after this that our question does not fall within the agenda? In view of these explanations, therefore, and since the Council has already entrusted to the Visiting Mission the task of paying special attention to this subject -- apparently the Council likewise intended to pay special attention to this subject -- I would request the Special Representative of the Administering Authority to provide an answer to the question I have asked.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): I have little to add myself to what has been said by the head of my delegation. The whole question of independence for the Nauruan people -- the degree of independence for the Nauruan people, as set out by those people themselves -- is a matter which does not lend itself to any immediate solution, in view of the fact that the Nauruan proposals have not yet been considered by the Governments concerned and since these proposals are not related to any particular spot or place. Therefore, I cannot give any precise information along the lines requested by the representative of the Soviet Union because the whole matter is still in the realm of indecision since no place has been specified by the Nauruan people and since their future depends on the development of such a place.

Mr. OBERENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We see that the unwillingness of the representative of Australia to answer this question in fact was a screen for a negative answer.

We would now wish to put a few questions to the Members of the Visiting Mission and to its Chairman, if he wishes to answer our questions. In order to clarify what the Visiting Mission had in mind when it came out with the recommendation in paragraph 146, to the effect:

"We further recommend that from now on the Nauruan people should be given full participation in their own government and in all decisions of the British Phosphate Commissioners which affect Nauruan interests."

(T/1595, page 40, para. 146)

we would wish to know whether the Visiting Mission intended to recommend the implementation of those immediate measures that are provided in paragraph 5



(Mr. Cberemko, USSR)

of the Declaration of the General Assembly when the Visiting Mission had stated:  
"... that from now on the Nauruan people should be given full participation in their own government ..." (T/1595, page 40, para. 146)

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom) (Chairman, Visiting Mission): The answer to the question is quite clear. In the body of the report we have made plain what we consider what the participation should be in the Government. If our friend from the Soviet Union will refer to the remainder of the report he will discover exactly what we recommended.

Mr. CBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): That is why we are putting the question, because in paragraph 146 reference is made to "full participation" in their own government, whereas in the body of the report we somehow were at pains to find anything referring to full participation. We wish to know whether here in paragraph 146 it is contemplated to have a recommendation which would correspond to paragraph 5 of the Declaration of the General Assembly, and which deals with the full handing over of full authority to the Nauruan people, in accordance with that Declaration, without any qualifications or restrictions; or, was something more limited contemplated? Then, that would imply that it would not be full participation. We would wish to make this point clear. Perhaps other members of the Visiting Mission have a clearer picture of this paragraph than its Chairman.

The PRESIDENT: Is the representative of the Soviet Union directing a question to someone? If he is, I am not clear to whom he has addressed his question.

Mr. CBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I understand that the representatives of Bolivia and India were members of the Visiting Mission. If they wish to cast light on this subject, we would be very grateful.



Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): I understand the question of the representative of the Soviet Union as being as follows: He knows full well that on the island of Nauru the Nauruan people do not have full and total participation in the political management of the interests of the island. He knows full well what the powers of the council are. They still do not have full executive powers; obviously, the council and the administration have been able to work together continuously. In many aspects the Administering Authority is present. In the portions of the report that we have read, it is shown that there are three separate entities existing in this Territory: the Administering Authority, the Phosphate Commissioners and the people of Nauru. I might go on to say that we state in the report that these are three more or less separate entities, although the relations are very cordial among these three entities.

These are the facts. The representative of the Soviet Union knows this problem very well. He knows perfectly well that at various sessions of the Trusteeship Council we have asked for the possibility of an increase in the function of the Nauruan Local Governing Council; now, we are rehashing all these problems again.

But I think that the question of the Soviet Union goes even a bit further. He has asked the Administering Authority really whether it is possible to apply -- and here, if I am wrong, I hope my friend will correct me if I wrongly interpret his comments -- General Assembly resolution 1514 forthwith to the Territory. I believe that is his question. If so, I hope the representative of the Soviet Union will permit me to depart somewhat from the report because this is a question which is relevant in more than one respect to our various powers.

I would put this question to myself -- and I am glad to see that the Head Chief of Nauru is here. However, there is an exceptional problem confronting us: the possibility that the Council would accept the evolution of a nation that starts out with 2,500 inhabitants. I would carry the Soviet Union point even to a further extreme. If we are talking about total independence, the representative of the Soviet Union must accept or must read the views expressed in this paper that has been submitted to us by the Chief of the Nauruan delegation -- this problem of course, is a new issue -- and which states as follows:

(Mr. Salamanca, Bolivia)

(continued in English)

"In brief the Nauruan people propose the creation of a sovereign Nauruan nation governed by Nauruans in their own interest but related to Australia by a Treaty of Friendship ..." (T/1600, page 2)

(Mr. Salamanca, Bolivia)

(Continued in Spanish)

In other words, the people of Nauru do not envisage ~~a possibility~~ for their inhabitants to consider a full measure of their functions as if they were free and sovereign. We know full well that the treaty of friendship would place Nauru -- and this is the technical term used in international law -- in the position of a vassal State.

Now, I would ask the representative of the Soviet Union the following question: Is this possibility adjusted to the meaning of, and consonant with, the meaning of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)?

I leave this question pending because I think we have to clarify the limits and extremes of our terms of reference and our duties; and I am taking the floor here at this particular time because we are dealing with a problem which was not touched upon by the Visiting Mission, because this proposal presented by the Head Chief on 12 June was not raised in the course of our visit to the Territory.

At the outset of this debate I spoke up and said this only because I thought that this question put the Visiting Mission in a difficult position and would make problems for our report, and I certainly was not mistaken when I made this statement.

I am replying to the representative of the Soviet Union in very clear language indeed. I would like to know whether it is really possible that this Council should believe that a nation with full rights, with complete independence, could consist of 2,500 inhabitants. In other words, do we consider, within the most restricted terms of the economy of the nation, that 2,500 inhabitants can produce judges and a council, an administration, ministries, maintain foreign relations -- and here I am talking not about a State subordinate to Australia. I want to know who these people would be. Who would be the governing class?

These are problems which, of course, are of the utmost simplicity; and if I may think aloud, they are somewhat of a footnote to the problems with which we are dealing; they are somewhat of the same nature as the questions we have to deal with. In this issue, we find ourselves dealing with a problem

(Mr. Salamanca, Bolivia)

that has arisen only recently. The Head Chief of the Nauruan people says he accepts the possibility that we should consider and envisage three alternatives. I say this to my friend, Mr. Oberemko, with the utmost candour that, in my judgement -- and I believe the Head Chief of the Nauruan people could accept this as well -- that the Australian Government has never made any specific, clear proposals to them; and this is the central issue.

For this reason, the Visiting Mission had to offer alternatives, because the people of the island are not the ones who are going to find an ideal island for their resettlement, nor the possibility to resettle in New Guinea, nor the possibility -- which has not been accepted by the Nauruans -- to become integrated into the Australian community.

I apologise for speaking at such length on this question, but I must say that this indecision on the part of the Administering Authority, although it is imbued with good will to provide the necessary funds for effective resettlement, has led to the development of this conflict. Now, this problem is in the hands of the Council, and I do believe that I have answered, with the utmost clarity, advancing my personal views to meet the problems raised by Mr. Oberemko.

The PRESIDENT: I am informed that the representative of Australia has asked for the floor. I recognize him on a point of order.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): It is a point of order arising, in a sense, out of a previous point of order made by my colleague from the United Kingdom. I would merely direct attention, if I may -- and I am sure this is well in your own mind -- that, as I thought, we were engaged in the phase of questioning, and by your invitation the Head Chief of Nauru is at the table precisely in order to answer questions directed to him. With all respect to the representatives who have spoken, it would seem to me that we are, in his presence, engaging in a debate on substance and principle. This, I know, is with the best intentions, but can we please come back to the phase of actual questions, and then being furnished with the replies of my colleague from Nauru and the Special Representative of the Administering Authority we shall be in a better position, perhaps, to discuss these matters.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for his point of order. I think it does refer to a problem that is perhaps the fault of the Chair. The Chair has been quite lax up to now in insisting that the members follow precise procedure. I think, both yesterday and today, members have been quite casual in their handling of the questions, and it is true to a degree, as the representative of Australia has just pointed out, that if the representatives are not careful, the question-and-answer-period tends to disintegrate into a kind of debate. Of course, there will be opportunities for the representatives to make their statements in the debate at a later time.

Therefore, I would appeal to the members -- those who are asking questions -- to limit the comments involved in those questions to the minimum and to the stating of their questions; and to those who are answering questions, to limit themselves, in so far as possible, to the precise matter covered by the question.

I would like to point out, however, to the representative of Australia, that it is my understanding that the members of the Visiting Mission and the Chairman are available at the present time, and it is quite in order for members to address questions to them.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)(interpretation from Russian): Thank you for giving the opportunity to continue my questioning, and we agree fully with you that these questions may be addressed to the representatives of the Administering Authority as well as to the members of the Visiting Mission. We are grateful to Ambassador Salamanca, the representative of Bolivia, for the answer which he has given to the question, although we, of course, cannot agree with some of the aspects of that reply.

I would not wish, in any sense, to comment at this time on that answer, but the matter is so important that we do wish to determine all of its after-effects and consequences, and first of all we wish to ascertain the essence of the proposals of the Visiting Mission and those of the Nauruan people.

The representative of Bolivia, in answering our question with the candour that is always his own, and with his customary clarity, had indicated that,

(Mr. Oberenko, USSR)

in the event that a friendship agreement is concluded between Nauru and Australia, then, if I properly understood him in the Russian interpretation, that would place Nauru in the position of a vassal State. That is a very important aspect of the matter to which the representative of Bolivia is drawing attention here. He visited this territory and is better informed on the substance of the matter than those members who have not had the opportunity of conferring with the members of the Administering Authority and who have not visited the territory. From what we have been able to determine, from the documents that have been presented to the Trusteeship Council, the Nauruan people do not intend to conclude an agreement on the creation of a vassal State.



(Mr. Oberenko, USSR)

They have in mind the conclusion, if necessary, of a friendship agreement, along the lines of the agreement concluded between Western Samoa and New Zealand. When we discussed the question of Western Samoa at that time attempts were made to convince us -- although I do not know whether we were convinced -- that it was not an agreement involving any vassalage. As a matter of fact the General Assembly adopted a resolution concerning the independence of Western Samoa, and recommendations were presented at the time of the discussion of this whole matter to the effect that Western Samoa should be admitted as a Member of the United Nations if it desired. So certainly the General Assembly did not visualize the creation of any vassal State then, and the representatives of the Nauruan people do not think of the matter in those terms now. I wish to refer to the concluding part of their proposal where they say:

"These matters and other matters of friendship and co-operation we believe would be possible without, in any way, breaching the sovereignty of either Australia or the Nauruan nation." (T/1600, page 11)

Thus the representatives of the Nauruan people, as we understand it, call for -- justly in our view -- the creation of a separate sovereign State, not a vassal State. And since we have the Head Chief with us we should like to ascertain whether we understand correctly the wishes of the Nauruan people. Does this really involve the creation of a separate independent State -- and of course we realize that it would be a very small State -- or is something else contemplated? We should like an explanation on this point from the Head Chief of Nauru.

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): My answer to the question put by the representative of the Soviet Union is "Yes". I say this because it is the considered statement manifested in this submission of the Nauruan Local Government Council which was presented to the Minister on 12 June last.

Mr. OBERENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We are very grateful to the Head Chief for that very brief but, at the same time, very clear answer. It puts an end to all doubts, we hope, and definitely betokens the fact that the people of Nauru are striving for the creation of a separate and sovereign State. Thus we have obtained full satisfaction on that question and would like now to come to the next.

(Mr. Oberemko, USSR)

*Nauru Local Council*  
*ECC*

We should like the Head Chief to tell us what are the tendencies in the Nauruan Local Government Council and what is the mood among the people of Nauru generally with regard to the resettlement plan. Has any definite decision been adopted by the Nauruan people to the effect that they wish to leave the island of Nauru for resettlement elsewhere? Do they realize that in certain conditions it might be possible to remain on the island --for instance, if a new technical survey were to be carried out and it were determined that the soil could be restored; if other branches of the economy, such as the fishing industry, for example, were developed; if the Nauruan people were given ownership of the property and assets of the British Phosphate Commission so that they would mine their own phosphate and dispose of it in whatever way they saw fit, deriving all the profits therefrom; and if a more rational and businesslike method of exploiting the phosphate deposits were found -- if, for instance, not 1 million or 1,600,000 tons of phosphate but a smaller amount were mined each year so that the reserves could be stretched over a century and a half? This, of course, as I say, would be subject to the condition that all profits from this processing and from the operation of the phosphate industry were to be given to the Nauruan people. I should like to know whether these possibilities have ever been considered.

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): The question which has just been put to me is a very difficult one. It is not one simple question but a combination of several very searching questions which I could not deal with in one reply. Some of the possibilities touched upon by the Soviet Union representative have in fact been discussed at various times and in varying degrees of seriousness by our Council on Nauru and by the people of Nauru. No decision has been arrived at on any of them apart from what has been conveyed to the Administration and to this Trusteeship Council by various documents we have presented to them in the course of the last few years. Apart from that I am afraid that I am unable to say more in reply to the question put to me by the Soviet representative.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): At previous sessions the question of the possibility of restoring the topsoil on the island of Nauru was examined to some extent and the representatives of the Administering Authority referred to the technical surveys that had been conducted earlier. They said that even if topsoil were brought there it would nevertheless still be washed away -- because the soil is porous, or for whatever other reason. Yesterday, however, we saw a film on the island of Nauru and, as the members of the Visiting Mission also can confirm, there is vegetation there. There are beautiful palm trees, and other types of vegetation are in evidence, all of which, presumably, grow on some kind of soil which so far appears not to have been washed away. Accordingly, a doubt arises with regard to the arguments adduced against the possibility of restoring the topsoil. We should like to know from the Head Chief whether the Administering Authority has presented to the Nauruan Local Government Council any report on the technical surveying that was carried out in Nauru, whether the question has been discussed in that Council, and whether such a report, if it exists, is in a form in which the Trusteeship Council might familiarize itself with it.

Mr. de ROBERT: I know of one report which was submitted by the Administration to the Council before the commencement of my term as Head Chief. I do not recall whether that report, in giving the views of the experts who made the survey, contained the statement that the soil would be washed away if the mined-out quarries were to be filled in with soil again. But I do believe that a report was made by the CSIRO people to the Administration which, in turn, submitted that report to the Nauru Local Government Council before the start of my term.

Mr. OBIEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to ask the representative of Australia whether at least one copy of that report could be made available to the Trusteeship Council, so that we may familiarize ourselves with its contents.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): This matter, of course, has been referred to in earlier sessions of the Council. I am not sure of the date of the latest report of the CSIRO but perhaps the Special Representative knows it.

Mr. MCCARTHY (Special Representative): As this Council knows, the report referred to was conducted by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization through its soil survey section. This organization is recognized in this Council, as it is in scientific circles throughout the world, as a scientific organization of world standing.

An investigation into this very matter was conducted by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, I believe in 1953. Since 1953, as has been reported to this Council, renewed application has been made to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization as to whether any recent developments have occurred which would modify the findings of the original investigation carried out by that organization. The reply has been in the negative. The latest development in this matter has been that a letter is on its way to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, inquiring of them whether, since that report was formulated, any new developments in soil restoration have occurred in the United States or other parts of the world which would alter the findings of that report or which should be taken into consideration. That is the present situation with regard to that report.



Mr. OBERENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I think that the members of the Trusteeship Council would find it useful to have a text of the previous report and its conclusions, since this matter has a direct bearing upon the problem under consideration.

We would be interested to know the views of the Head-Chief of Nauru regarding the sovereign rights of his people to all of the natural resources of the island. The Soviet delegation has always considered, and continues to believe, that the people of his or any Territory or country have an inalienable sovereign right of ownership to all the natural resources of the island, including phosphates. The phosphates have been exploited since, I believe, 1906. Since that time, 28 million tons of phosphate have been shipped from the island and, as is pointed out in the report of the Visiting Mission and in the documents presented by the Nauru Local Government Council, these are high-grade phosphates, the mining of which is done at one of the lowest costs in the world.

Therefore, Australia, New Zealand and those countries which use these phosphates have acquired substantial profits and benefits from the exploitation of these phosphate deposits. The Soviet delegation feels that the time is long past due when all of the equipment, property and assets which are now owned by the British Phosphate Company should be returned to the Nauruan people. We believe that the Nauruan people could adequately exploit their own resources and operate all of the facilities for the mining and processing of phosphate. We should be interested to hear the opinion of the Head Chief of Nauru on this matter.

Mr. de ROBERT: We certainly would like to have the ability to exploit the natural wealth of our island ourselves. But as my colleague, Councillor Gadabu, pointed out to this Council last year, we do not have the necessary technical skill to accomplish this.

Secondly, the present phosphate company has full legal right to the exploitation of the phosphate deposits on Nauru, which the Nauruan people do not have.

Mr. OBERENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Our delegation posed this question precisely because this British Phosphate Company took these rights for itself and retains them up to the present time. But we believe that the rights to the exploitation of the phosphates should be restored to the Nauruan people; we consider that such a restoration would be just. However, in accordance with the request of the President, we shall refrain from any comment at this time and shall express our views in the general

*Lower office  
referred*

(Mr. Oberemko, USSR)

My next question refers to the statement in paragraph 144 of the Visiting Mission's report. The text of this paragraph is somewhat contradictory even as it stands. It is stated that the Administering Authority solicitously guards the interests of the people and that the Nauruans are now living under favourable conditions. But, then there is the immediate qualification that these conditions are both temporary and illusory. Furthermore, in annex IV to the report of the Visiting Mission-- and here I wish to point out that the most interesting and valuable part of that document is to be found in the annexes, since it is here that we see ~~expressed the views of the indigenous~~ population of Nauru -- in annex IV we read the following, which is part of the memorandum submitted to the Visiting Mission by the Nauru Local Government Council:

"To us the indigenous people of this land, it appears that the object of paramount importance in the whole set up in this island is the B.P.C. and all that it stands for.

"Sometimes, it makes us feel that we the indigenous people are being looked upon as a bit of a nuisance and a humbug and should have been somewhere else away from this phosphate island.

"Therefore, we submit that the island is being exploited primarily for the benefits of countries and people other than the island itself and its indigenous people.

"We request then, that our interests be placed before all other interests and that whenever clashes of interest occur, ours be given first consideration." (T/1595/Add.1, Annex IV, page 2)

I should like to comment that this concluding part of the memorandum of the Nauru Local Government Council does not tally at all with the statement contained in paragraph 144 of the Visiting Mission's report, where it is asserted that the Administering Authority carefully watches over the interests of the indigenous people. Perhaps the explanation of this contradiction is very simple, but we do feel we wish to draw the attention of the Council to this glaring discrepancy.

If there are no further comments forthcoming on this statement of the Visiting Mission, we can regard our questions at the present stage as having been exhausted. We wish to express our thanks to the Head Chief of Nauru as well as to those representatives who have found it possible to answer the questions put to them.



Mr. KIDWAI (India): In our examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of Nauru we are particularly fortunate this year in having the report of the Visiting Mission, which gives us a very good idea of the conditions obtaining there. This report has been ably written and well presented and it gives us a good idea of the background of conditions in Nauru. I am particularly grateful to the Visiting Mission for this report.

Besides this, we have before us the Special Representative of Australia and the Head Chief of Nauru, whose presence here makes it particularly interesting and easy for us to know and understand conditions in the Trust Territory.

Certain questions which have come to our mind in going through the report we would like to put to the Special Representative and to the Head Chief in order to have a clearer perspective on the report and the conditions in the island.

Regarding the resettlement of the islanders themselves, certain questions have just now been asked by the representative of the Soviet Union, and the answers have been given. I will not go into them very much except to point out that the report has countered with the view that "... the settlement of the Nauruan people in a new home is unavoidable". (T/1595, page 17) If this view is accepted, the question then arises as to the type of island that would be best suited to the genius of the people of Nauru for resettlement. In 1955 the Administering Authority had reported that efforts to find new, unpopulated areas where the Nauruans could be resettled without difficulty had proved unsuccessful, areas where they would be able to engage in the pursuit of fishing and have easy access to avenues of employment. In his statement yesterday the Special Representative, quoting from the report of the Visiting Mission, said that

"With steadily improving education it can hardly be expected that they will ever wish to go back to the restricted and isolated life of a remote island without the peculiar advantages of the island they now occupy."

(T/PV.1188, page 29)

It would seem, therefore, that the view of the Administering Authority in regard to the suitability of a new home for the Nauruans is not yet fixed, and my delegation would like to know, first of all, what type of island the Administering Authority considers suitable for the Nauruans.

Mr. McCARTHEY (Special Representative): In answer to the representative of India, I would refer to the ideal -- and Nauruans themselves express it only as an ideal -- which has been framed by the Nauruan people themselves. This matter has received particular attention in the mind of the Administering Authority addressing itself to this problem. Ideally, an island in which the Nauruan people could be resettled without loss of the standards which they have achieved over the years and with the hope for the future which is properly theirs, should be an island which gives them ready access to a modern and developing community. It should be an island, therefore, which is not remote but which is accessible to such a centre as the one I have just described. It should be an island which gives them, in the generations which lie ahead, the opportunity of developing their own industries, whether those industries be primary, secondary, or a combination of both. It should be an island of sufficient size to accommodate the rapidly increasing population of Nauru. When you consider these specifications, you have in thumbnail form the type of island which is required for the Nauruans.

(Mr. McCarthy,  
Special Representative)

I do not suggest that this is merely a matter of the Nauruans asking for this island. This is the type of island which the Administering Authority, with a strong sense of justice as to what is due the Nauruans, has itself been searching for. There are many islands in the Pacific, and islands adjacent to Australia, whose sole characteristic is that they are islands. It would be no kindness to the Nauruans to settle them on an island which would perpetuate a remote island economy, giving them no opportunity for their developing people, no opportunity of developing industries of the type which I have mentioned.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): I should like to pursue this matter further and to ask whether, if it were found possible to locate an island which had possibilities of fishing and agriculture, the Special Representative would consider that to be a suitable place for the Nauruans and would feel that the Nauruans would be able to maintain the standard of living which they are now enjoying in such an island.

Mr. MCCARTHY (Special Representative): I myself would look further than fishing and agriculture, for these reasons. Fishing is, in many respects, a precarious industry which, for the most part, offers little more than a comparatively bare subsistence. With regard to agriculture, I would point out that, through the peculiar circumstances of their own island where they live at present, the Nauruans -- who, as far as my knowledge carries me, have never been noted agriculturists because the conditions in their island did not lend themselves to that -- have in recent years, again through the circumstances of their island and the economic conditions in which they live, swung away inevitably from agricultural pursuits and have turned to pursuits of a secondary industrial nature. Therefore, to turn to an island which offers only fishing and agriculture would, on the one hand, offer a precarious living in respect of fishing and, as regards agriculture, would compel the Nauruans, in a very large sense, to retrace the steps of their development to a type of economy with which, I believe, they never were very familiar and with which they have become increasingly unfamiliar in recent years.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): That was the purpose of my question: to bring to light the great changes that are taking place in the island of Nauru. The people, who previously were only agriculturists and fishermen, can no longer be considered able to stick to those pursuits. With the education, training and employment which they are receiving, we hope that the Administering Authority will keep in mind the trend of development in that area and that, when it selects a new island, it will realize that not only fishing and agriculture are important, but that it is necessary to have industries of a kind perhaps more suited to the genius of the people.

My delegation has noted the statement of the Special Representative that the Government of Australia has already clearly demonstrated that ample provision of means for building future homes is not and will not be a stumbling block towards reaching a solution. I should like to have confirmation of the presumption that, so far, that has not been the cause of delay in finding a solution to this problem and will not be a cause of delay in the future.

Mr. MCCARTHY (Special Representative): This has not been a stumbling block. In fact, the proposals, with which this Council is familiar, for the resettlement of Nauruans in Australia or other metropolitan countries, although principally Australia, were to be implemented immediately by the three Governments concerned at a very considerable cost. Had the programme been implemented immediately it would, as I stated in my opening remarks, within the fairly near foreseeable future, have run into several millions of pounds. That was the position; and the Governments, in so far as the supply of money is concerned, have not changed their attitude since that time.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): Now we come to the time factor. It is most important that this question should be solved quickly and with little delay. Time, to my delegation, has become a very important factor. The matter cannot be postponed from year to year. The life of the phosphate deposits is growing shorter and shorter; the Visiting Mission of 1953 considered it to be seventy years, and in 1956 it was estimated at only forty years as a result of increased

production by the Company. In paragraph 115 of the report of the Visiting Mission it is stated that the life of the phosphate operation is only thirty years. With increasing exploitation of the phosphate, it may be further reduced. The question of the Nauruan community settlement has therefore become a very important one. At least twelve years have passed since the Trusteeship Council was seized of this question. The Mission reported in 1950 that it was necessary to settle the Nauruan community abroad. Since then, year after year this question has been considered. At the present session of the Council the Administering Authority has reported that it has not had time to consider the set of proposals given to the Australian Government by the Nauruan leaders. Perhaps there is some good reason for this. At the same time, I should like to point out that we have talked a great deal about the possibility of finding a suitable island for the resettlement of the Nauruan people, but it seems less and less likely that such an island will be found. How many years would it take the Nauruan people to reach the conclusion that the possibility of such an island being found is more or less nil?



Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): I think that the point made by the representative of India in regard to the time factor is a very good one. There is a time factor in this situation and, to my mind, it relates primarily not to the thirty years indicated by the Visiting Mission but to the consideration that, since the Nauruans must have a new home, the sooner that new home is developed the easier the problem will be for the Nauruan people themselves. I am thinking particularly of the process of adjustment on the part of the younger people of Nauru which is involved. The earlier the process of adjustment begins in the life of a person, the more capable he becomes of making the adjustment painlessly, or comparatively painlessly.

The second part of the question related to how long the Nauruan people will take to reach this or that conclusion in their own minds. I myself am not competent to answer that question. That is a matter for the Nauruan people -- particularly, I suggest, in regard to other sets of positive proposals of the kind indicated by the Visiting Mission. They have already had one set of positive proposals. It seems that further sets of alternative positive proposals must now be developed. I would hope that when such proposals are developed the Nauruan people, who are very conscious of the importance of this problem, will take very little time to make up their minds on the issues involved.

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): I associate myself with the statement just made by my colleague, the Australian Special Representative, on the importance of the time factor in this problem.

The specific question directed to the Nauruan people was when they would make up their minds that there is no suitable island anywhere. My answer is this. I do not think that the problem of finding a suitable island is the main stumbling block. I think that the main problem lies in the reconciliation of the wish of the Nauruan people to set up an independent, sovereign State on an island adjacent to Australia with the wishes of the Australian Government in the matter.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): Our main concern and consideration has been and is that this matter should be solved in accordance with the wishes of the people of Nauru. We hope that the necessary conditions for arriving at a decision on this problem will be met in the not too distant future.



(Mr. Kidwai, India)

We would therefore ask the Special Representative whether he can give us some hope that a method will be used which will make it possible to find a solution to the problem in the not too distant future.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): I can assure the representative of India that the Australian Government -- and I know that this is also true of its partner Governments -- is only too anxious to reach a solution to this problem. As I have indicated, the Australian Government is pressing ahead with its investigations. When, in August, the Head Chief returns from this place and his colleagues return from another place in the Pacific, we shall press ahead further with these investigations. The Administering Authority will certainly do everything in its power to bring this matter to a rapid conclusion.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): Finally in this connexion I would draw the Special Representative's attention to paragraph 115 of the Visiting Mission's report, which states that:

"... the strongest obligation rests with the Governments of the countries which have benefited from low-price, high-quality phosphate over the many years of the operation of the Commissioners to provide the most generous assistance towards the costs of whatever settlement scheme is approved for the future home of the people of Nauru". (T/1595, paragraph 115)

The resettlement scheme should be presented to the Trusteeship Council as soon as possible. We shall go into this matter further in our statement in the general debate.

I now wish to put a few questions on other aspects of the report.

In 1919 the three Governments -- of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom -- provided the capital, about £3,500,000, required to purchase the assets of the Pacific Phosphate Company. An agreement was drawn up and signed. What is the Special Representative's view on the fairness of the terms of the agreement under which the Pacific Phosphate Company first acquired the title of the phosphate deposits, before World War I, when the island was under German administration?

BPC

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): At the time this agreement was signed the three Governments felt that it was a proper one. It was in existence at the time of the development of the mandate for Nauru, and it was in existence at the time of the development of the Trusteeship Agreement for Nauru.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): In paragraph 111 of the Visiting Mission's report, it is stated that the percentage benefit to the Nauruans against the value of phosphate at the point of exports is now 24 per cent, and that this is a substantial advance from 4 per cent. We are, however, concerned with the question whether the Nauruan people are satisfied with their share, especially when certain oil-producing countries receive over 50 per cent and in some cases are pressing for more. Hence, although this 24 per cent is a substantial increase over 4 per cent, is it enough? We ask this question both of the Special Representative and of the Head Chief.

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): I can refer with confidence to the opinion expressed by the Visiting Mission in its report regarding the adequacy of that percentage, having regard to all the factors involved. In answering this question, I should like to refer to the fact that the percentage accruing to the Nauruans is not a fixed figure in this sense: that provision has been made for the Nauruan people once during the life of every Council, which is elected for four years, to draw up a new set of proposals, and for those proposals to be considered by representatives of the British Phosphate Commissioners and by representatives of the Australian Government representing the three partner Governments and by representatives of the Nauruan people.

When the last adjustment was made to royalties resulting finally in this figure which has been placed before the Council, it was made as the result of such a negotiation where a set of claims was made by the Nauruan people and where it was considered at a round-table conference in the fashion that I have just described. I would imagine that the Nauruan Local Government Council will take advantage of the provision which has been made for each Council to consider the royalties payable under the various headings to the Nauruan people, to consider the extent to which their just claims are being satisfied by the existing arrangements or not and will make representations accordingly, at which time those representations will be considered in the fashion I have described. So that that figure of 24 per cent, which represents an increasing scale of benefits payable to the Nauruans, is not fixed in any final sense. It is fixed in the sense that it will not go down; I can safely say that. It is not fixed in the sense that it will not go up, having regard to the justice of all the circumstances of this or that particular time.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): Perhaps the Head Chief would like to answer, if he wishes.

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): We the Mauruan people have always said and I still say that we are not getting an adequate price for our phosphates, especially if we take into account the fact that it is about the best phosphate in the world but still the cheapest phosphate in the world. I have hopes, and I express these hopes on behalf of my people, however, that the recommendations made by this year's Visiting Mission to Mauru will be taken into account and that the new arrangements for negotiations concerning the price of phosphates will be satisfactory to us and to the parties we will ask for an increase in the phosphate price and that they will sympathetically consider our request

*labour*  
Mr. KIDWAI (India): There are one or two more questions about the labour problem. A great deal of labour for working the phosphate mines is recruited from outside of Mauru. May we know the view of the Special Representative and the Head Chief regarding the advisability of such an action? Do they feel that such recruitment is in the interests of the Mauruan people?

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): The fact of recruitment of labour from outside Mauru by the British Phosphate Commissioners is a fact of necessity. The Mauruan population itself is insufficient to provide the workforce required for the working of the phosphate operations. The whole of the Mauruans workforce available is of the order of 500 to 600 people. This Council has already been made aware that some 400 odd of that workforce is employed in the administration. The rest of the workforce with the exception of those working in the comparatively small enterprise represented by the Mauruan Co-operative Society, is employed in the phosphate workings. In addition to the approximately 100 Mauruan workers employed in the phosphate workings, there are well over one thousand workers from other places employed in the phosphate workings. So I say that this is a matter of necessity if the phosphates are to be worked. I do not believe that the situation reacts to the detriment of the Mauruan people.

In discussing this matter I should also like to make mention of the fact that I mentioned in my opening statement: whatever disadvantages in this context, if any, may have accrued from the fact that there was a different working week, those disabilities are now removed by the fact that there is a standard working week being implemented throughout the whole island not only in the phosphate workings, but in the administration as well.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): Perhaps the Head Chief also wishes to reply.

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): I have very little to say on that except to support the remarks just made by my colleague, the Special Representative.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): All that my delegation would like to see is that the interests of the Nauruan people are well looked after and that the Nauruan people do not suffer by recruiting from the outside.

I have one final question about the ~~airstrip~~. The Visiting Mission is of the view that the airstrip should be retained. Does the Special Representative think that the above suggestion would prove detrimental to the interests of the Nauruan people? If so, why?

Mr. McCARTHY (Special Representative): This matter of the airstrip is one which has exercised my own personal mind continually over a period of years and has been a matter of close discussion between me and my colleague, the Head Chief, in his undivided capacity as Head Chief of the island.

I would briefly recall the facts of this airstrip situation. There is an airstrip existing on this small island which is otherwise dependent completely for its communications with the outside world on shipping services, which on an average would take about eight days for the single journey from one of the Metropolitan countries to Nauru and sixteen days for the return journey.



(Mr. McCarthy, Special Representative)

This, in our modern age, is hazardous and can be a too slow means of communication under certain circumstances. In recent years, as a result of a deliberate decision by the Australian Government the airstrip of Nauru was brought up to international standards for modern types of aircraft. It was hoped that the development of air services throughout the Pacific would make this airstrip a highly economic and usable proposition through its development as a stopping-off point for regular air services which, unfortunately, due to the large size of the Pacific and its scattered and comparatively small population, have not yet developed. This is not to say that such an air service will not develop in the future although there are, as far as I know, no immediate plans for such a development.

On the island itself, the points of criticism of the island people, which one can well understand, relate to the use or the setting aside of this land on this island, where land is scarce simply because of the small size of the island, for an airstrip which is not regularly used and which indeed, as the Visiting Mission has pointed out, has not been used since the last Visiting Mission was on the island. Here is a problem in which no point of principle is involved. Here is a problem whose solution can only be considered in the light of the individual's own approach to such a problem. I, myself, would be most reluctant, if the power lay in my personal hands, which of course it does not, to eliminate in this age, from this island, a facility which could under certain circumstances prove vital to that island. That is the present view as I understand it of the Australian Government. It is not the view that is necessarily shared by the Nauruan people, although I would say that in the development of a view on this matter the Nauruan people or important sections of the Nauruan people have changed from the view I have just expressed to the view that the airstrip should be eliminated and that the land be given back for housing purposes to the people who require it.

That in general is the situation with regard to the airstrip. There is no point of principle or policy involved. It is a matter of judgement whether in this age, even against the background that little use has been made of this airstrip, this facility should be swept aside and cease to exist.

Mr. KIDWAI (India): I thank the Special Representative and the Head Chief for the answers they have given to my questions. I am very grateful to them.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): If there are no other questions to be raised, I should like to ask two further questions. These questions arise from questions asked earlier. I ask them solely for purposes of clarification and confirmation.

The first question is a vital one and I think it is necessary to come back to it because it was on the basis of our understanding in this matter that our report was written on this vital matter of resettlement. In paragraph 67 of our report we said:

"When the Mission undertook its discussions during this visit the Head Chief and the other leaders of the Nauruan people were emphatic on this main point. They confirmed categorically 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)

I should like the Head Chief, if he would, to tell me whether that understanding on which we proceeded with our work can be confirmed.

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): I confirm the substance of paragraph 67 of the Visiting Mission's report. I should also like to point out that the decision of the Nauruan Council also envisages the possibility of a number of people choosing to remain on Nauru, and whose welfare must be looked after when the greater majority left for a new home.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): One further question on the important matter of participation, which has been raised, of the Nauruan people in their own government. The question has been asked on this matter. I had the opportunity of saying that the proposals in regard to participation had been clearly set out in the body of the report. I should like to ask the Head Chief to confirm, if he will, the reply which he gave me previously that the proposals in regard to participation, referred to in paragraph 54 are indeed proposals acceptable to him, which would start by a constitutional conference, in effect, between the leaders of the Nauruan people and the representatives of the Australian Government?

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): I confirm, with pleasure.

The PRESIDENT: Does the representative of the United Kingdom have anything further?

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): I have no further questions. I thought, perhaps, before we finished our proceedings, I might say, with your permission, a word on a point of order.

The PRESIDENT: You certainly have the floor on a point of order, if you wish to have it. I have no further names on my list of representatives who wish to put questions. I see that the representative of China would like to ask questions. Does the representative of the United Kingdom have a point of order to make at the present time? I give him the floor.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): I wish to apologize if I have violated, by an intervention earlier in our discussion, our rules of procedure. If it was so, it was done through ignorance. The representative of the Soviet Union rightly referred to it. I pay tribute to his superior knowledge on the questions of the rules of procedure of this Council. I should like to associate myself with that tribute.

The PRESIDENT: So far as the representative of the United Kingdom was addressing the Chair, I assure him that unfortunately in many proceedings in these halls the use of the point of order has become, shall we say, a very flexible instrument. As far as I was concerned, it was certainly no violation of any rule. It was simply that under the rules of procedure it was intended that it would be something for the Chair to rule upon when a point of order is made. I understood that no request was made for me to rule upon anything.

I give the floor to the representative of the Soviet Union in this connexion.

Mr. OBERENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We do not intend to any extent to lengthen this procedural discussion, particularly since you, Mr. President, quite appropriately defined the position we now find ourselves in. As for the questions we put, they referred to the fact that in the report reference was made to "fuller participation", whereas in the conclusion it was stated that "full participation" was visualized. I think that no matter what rule of the rules of procedure you refer to, the difference between "fuller" and "full" is something that does exist. And yet we did not have any answer from the Chairman of the Visiting Mission as to what is meant when it spoke of "full co-operation" -- not "fuller co-operation" -- on the part of the Nauruan people. But we understand that full co-operation will be in harmony with the provision of paragraph 5 of the Declaration. That is how we interpret the expression "full co-operation".

The PRESIDENT: I give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, with the comment that I do not think this is the appropriate time for to discuss the meaning of any of the documents that are before us. This is a for asking and answering questions.

Sir Hugh FOOT (United Kingdom): I asked for the floor merely to agree with and support what you say. I certainly think such a question should be dealt with, not now, but when we come to the general debate.

Mr. KIANG (China): With your permission, I would like to raise a minor point which arises from one of the answers given by the Head Chief. I do this with great reluctance, being aware that I had a share of the questioning yesterday; but I think the point arising from that reply is of great importance and would greatly influence what we are going to say in the general debate.

I would like, first of all, to have confirmation, from the Head Chief, of my understanding of the answer he gave to one of the questions in connexion with resettlement. He said, according to my understanding, that the island, itself, is not a stumbling-block to resettlement, but it is the matter of reconciliation of the wishes of the Nauruan people for the creation of a sovereign Nauruan nation and the attitude of the Administering Authority.

Before I go on to ask my question, I would like confirmation from the Head Chief. Is my understanding correct, in so far as that portion of his reply is concerned?

Mr. de ROBERT (Head Chief): Yes, that was my answer.

Mr. KIANG (China): May I say, I am going to ask very frank questions. Would the people of Nauru be satisfied with the realization of a sovereign Nauruan nation on the island of Nauru, pending the solution of the question of resettlement?



Mr. de ROBURT (Head Chief): That is a topic which, in fact, had been discussed in Nauru on several occasions. Up to the time I left, there had been no decision arrived at on the specific talk. It had been discussed.

Mr. KIANG (China): I come now to the final point: Irrespective of the solution of the resettlement question, how long would the people of Nauru care to wait for the realization of the proposed creation of a sovereign Nauruan nation?

Mr. de ROBURT (Head Chief): I am unable to answer the question.

Mr. KIANG (China): I take note of the last reply. Thank you very much.

#### General Debate

Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (interpretation from French): Our statement will be devoted primarily to the problem which, as soon as one looks at the problem of Nauru, dominates all others: namely, that of the future of the Nauruan community. The Visiting Mission, which has just spent time in the Trust Territory, rightly emphasizes this point.

However, inasmuch as I have just mentioned the Visiting Mission, may I first of all, before turning to the basis of the problem, express a word of praise for the work of the Visiting Mission which was done on the spot. The report it has just submitted to the Council is clear, precise, and drafted with the utmost frankness. This report is understandable by all, including the uninitiated; it is, in addition, well-written, which certainly is no drawback, making it quite rare among the documents of the United Nations, so much so that I think we should most warmly congratulate the Chairman, our friend, Sir Hugh Foot, the members of the Visiting Mission, Messrs. Bhadkamkar, Hucker and Salamanca, and the Secretariat headed by Mr. Lewis.

The Visiting Mission, in paragraph 51 of its report, states as follows:

"It is not too much to say that all the problems of the Nauru people shrink into insignificance beside the main question of their future home."

(T/1595, page 13)

This is, indeed, the problem. For this tiny paradise that is Nauru, this happy island where there are no taxes, where public services and even the cinema are free of charge, is beginning to be obsessed by the fear of the unknown. "The dilemma of the future, like a threatening cloud, already casts a shadow over the sunny scene." This is a quotation from paragraph 47 of the Report. (T/1595, page 13)

Perhaps all of us in this chamber are somewhat responsible for the birth of this psychosis. After all, at the outset, the problem was not so immediate; the Nauruans were not threatened by an imminent cataclysm; the phosphates, from which the population derives the largest measure of its means of livelihood, will be exhausted one day, but not tomorrow. Twenty-eight million tons have been extracted since 1919; but the land still retains approximately 62 million, which, even if the rate of extraction were stepped up, would allow at least a certain respite.

The Nauruans, however, have become concerned about this. There has been developed in them a feeling of insecurity following a process which our colleague from China, who was Chairman of the Visiting Mission in 1959, has analysed quite aptly.

In another era, these problems were settled without great difficulty. This was the case, for example, with the inhabitants of Ocean Island, the similarity of whose situation was not as striking, and who, in the face of the exhaustion of their phosphate deposits, were resettled, without drama, in the Fiji Islands and in the Island of Rembi.

However that may be, the problem now arises in acute form; and as our colleague from India has said, there is a time factor which now comes into play. It is essential to resolve the problem of assuring the future of this so charming Nauruan people, in respect of whom the Trusteeship Council has a special responsibility.

(Mr. Kosciusko-Morizet, France)

It is equally indispensable to retain a sense of proportion in our examination of this problem and to avoid all dogmatism. What is absolutely certain is that, one day or another, the phosphates will be exhausted, and the population which has become seriously aware of this problem has decided to resettle elsewhere, and its decision apparently is irrevocable. "Further indecision can do nothing but harm." (T/1595, page 21, paragraph 83)

What emerges with equal clarity -- and on this point I fully support the view of the Visiting Mission -- is that the time has come for the Australian Government to prepare and examine specific resettlement proposals. This problem is dealt with in paragraphs 74-76. "The Nauruans cannot reasonably be left to do so." (T/1595, page 19). This is a quotation from the end of paragraph 75. They have no means to carry out such an inquiry and the necessary studies, and would run the risk of following a wrong course and of cherishing false illusions.

(Mr. Kosciusko-Morizet, France)

That is particularly true with respect to the hypothesis of a resettlement of the Nauruan community on the Australian continent. The original proposal -- the "generous offer" that we discussed last year -- was not accepted by the people, as Mr. Gadabu told us at that time. It comes forward to us now in a new form, on the initiative of the Visiting Mission, which has suggested a form which would safeguard the individuality of the Nauruan community, and in fact that is the problem which gave rise to the most misunderstandings.

We think, and we have already stated, that the solution is probably to be found in such an approach. If the Nauruans see that they are confronted with really concrete and detailed proposals for the creation of a Nauruan community in Australia which would be separate -- on the shore of the ocean, because it seems to us that this is a very important factor for a population that has been accustomed to living surrounded by water -- their apprehensions should gradually be dispelled. For the first assumption, which is undoubtedly the most attractive, remains apparently pure theory. Settlement in another island would give rise to numerous difficulties. Where can one find an island close to the Australian coast or in the same geographic area? If it is not inhabited, will that not be because it is unfit for habitation? If it offers similar conditions of climate or similar living and sociological conditions to those of Nauru it is highly likely to have been densely populated for years. In this respect the conditions set forth by the Nauruan community in Appendix 1/A of the report should be studied very carefully. They undoubtedly cannot be fulfilled simultaneously, and neither the Trusteeship Council nor the Nauruans should allow themselves to be obsessed by the search for this marvellous island. However, the fact remains that Australia should also examine this approach in order to submit to the Nauruans two series of detailed plans corresponding to the two hypotheses contemplated. That inquiry should be conducted speedily, which, as far as we are concerned, means within a period of one year. As a matter of fact, the Nauruans must know what they are faced with. Not that their departure will be hastily undertaken -- fortunately some margin of time is still left -- but the decision for resettlement is a matter which becomes urgent gradually, and the Nauruans must be able to take their decision in full knowledge of all the facts and then prepare for the application of that decision, because under any assumption an adaptation and a retraining of the people will be required for this new life that awaits them.

(Mr. Kosciusko-Morizet, France)

The Special Representative rightly drew attention to that point a few moments ago. It will require time -- precisely the time which remains to the Nauruans before their phosphate deposits are exhausted. According to the conditions of this resettlement of the Nauruan community, some effort should be made -- depending on the natural resources, and so on -- to cope with the problems of young people in respect of education, particularly technical training. Whatever may be the solution chosen, the cost of the resettlement -- which will be carried out not in one day but, fortunately, not in an atmosphere of panic -- should be analysed and considered now. The problem of financing, it would appear, should be met by the income from phosphates, and a special fund should be set up by the Nauruans to that end.

This readaptation and adjustment would also be prepared by increasing the participation of the people in the management of their public affairs. The number of Nauruans occupying leading posts is still not very high in our view, and the number should be gradually increased. In the same way, we think that the Visiting Mission is right when it says in paragraph 67 of its report (T/1595) that the time has come for "a further decisive forward step" with respect to executive and legislative powers entrusted to the people.

Whether the political organization of Nauru before the emigration -- which would be a transitional stage -- is mono-cameral or bi-cameral does not matter very much. What is important is that the constitutional decisions should be worked out jointly. In this respect the creation of the Advisory Committee suggested by the Visiting Mission appears to us to be a minimum step.

As far as we are concerned the essential facts in this problem appear to be as follows.

First, the Nauruan community has become aware of the need to emigrate in the course of the next twenty years. Its decision seems to have been taken;



(Mr. Kosciusko-Morizet, France)

its decision seems to be irrevocable, except perhaps for a very small number of people who could remain on the island. Obviously, if any new technical factors, any miracle, should be brought about this question would have to be re-examined, but it would not appear in the light of the technical studies that have been reported to the Council earlier that this is an eventuality which may indeed develop.

Second, the Nauruan population tends to remain grouped together and to preserve its overall personality.

Third, favoured hitherto by nature, this community enjoys a relatively high standard of living. The development of education and social services is satisfactory. It is quite ready, therefore, to administer its own affairs, at its own level and within the framework of a system of co-operation with Australia.

Fourth, the Administering Authority has the duty, within the near future, to submit to the Nauruans, within a strict and rigid framework, any possible solutions that may in its belief seem to be applicable. It is not by any means a question of maintaining any illusions or prolonging the uncertainty. The decision should be taken as early as possible so that the Nauruans can prepare for their resettlement.

Fifth, it is also in the interests of the Administering Authority as well as in the interests of the Nauruans themselves, that a council of Nauruan government, invested with full autonomy, should have to take the vital decisions affecting the future of its people. The sense of responsibility is sharpened by the exercise of power. The choice will be a difficult one but a final one. It is important that the Nauruans should make this decision with a full knowledge of all the factors and in full freedom.

For the rest, as far as my delegation is concerned we feel that we should be careful not to indulge in too much theorizing. The notion of an independent and sovereign State should be introduced into the debates with a few words of caution, whereas the idea of the management by the Nauruans of their own affairs has a very concrete meaning and could not be called into question by anyone. The Nauruan people wishes to administer its own affairs. That is an obvious fact and everyone should be agreed on the point. But it still does

(Mr. Kosciuszko-Morizet, France)

not appear very clear what should be the future form of the essential relations that it would have to maintain with Australia. Everything will depend on the new home for the Nauruan people. If that home were located on the Australian continent undoubtedly they would proceed towards some sort of free community having an autonomous status within the framework of Australian territoriality. There are many examples of communities of this kind -- whether they be cities, or communities properly so-called -- which have a status that is largely self-governing. Were it to be on another island the size of the Nauruan community should not be forgotten. Undoubtedly a solution along the lines of the solution for Samoa, with all due regard for the definite elements in the problem, would be possible, as the Local Government Council at present contemplates. But any detailed discussion in this field, as well as any discussion of the provisions of any possible treaty of friendship with Australia -- which is a matter for the Nauruans alone after the termination of trusteeship, and not for the United Nations -- seems to us to be premature, and this will come up for serious consideration only after the Nauruans have been resettled.

The traditional analysis of the Administering Authority's report -- which has been very well presented indeed -- seems to me to have been left very far behind by the evolution of the situation in Nauru itself. I might therefore confine myself merely to noting with satisfaction that there is in the island no unemployment, no taxes and no misery, and that in the social field the protection afforded to workers and the medical and social institutions appear to the Visiting Mission to be very satisfactory, while as far as education is concerned it has been compulsory for twenty years and illiteracy has been eradicated.

In the light of the considerations we have just advanced we should like to endorse the conclusions contained in the Visiting Mission's report. We should like also to address our thanks to the Australian delegation, to the Special Representative and, in particular, to the Head Chief of the Nauruan Council whose presence here -- as the man bearing primary responsibility for the Nauruan community -- is particularly valuable at this stage of our labours.

The PRESIDENT: If no other delegation is prepared to speak at the present time in the general debate, let me say that I hope that all delegations that intend to speak in the general debate will be prepared to do so on Thursday morning so that we may then revert on Thursday afternoon to the question of the Pacific Islands and may hear the remaining petitioner concerning that Territory and consider the report of the Drafting Committee. That would leave the closing statement of the Administering Authority for the following day. Let me repeat, then, that I hope that all representatives who intend to speak in the general debate will be prepared to do so on Thursday morning.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.