



## TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

Thirty-third Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Wednesday, 13 July 1966,  
at 3.25 p.m.

NEW YORK

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*President: Mr. Francis D. W. BROWN*  
*(United Kingdom of Great Britain*  
*and Northern Ireland).*

*Present:*

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

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

## AGENDA ITEMS 4, 6 AND 9

Examination of annual reports of the Administering Authorities on the administration of Trust Territories for the year ended 30 June 1965:

*(a) Nauru (continued) (T/1648, T/L.1108)*

Examination of petitions listed in the annex to the agenda *(continued)* (T/PET.9/L.1)

General Assembly resolution 2111 (XX) on the question of the Trust Territory of Nauru *(continued)*

QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE TRUST TERRITORY AND REPLIES OF THE REPRESENTATIVE AND THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY AND OF THE ADVISERS TO THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Leydin, special representative of the Administering Authority for the Trust Territory of Nauru, and Mr. De Roburt and Mr. Detsimea, advisers to the special representative, took places at the Council table.*

1. The PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to question the representatives of the Administering Authority on conditions in Nauru.

2. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) asked whether the Administering Authority denied that ownership of the phosphate deposits on Nauru was inherently vested in the Nauruan people and, if so, on what basis.

3. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) recalled that that question had been raised at the 1965 Canberra discussions between representatives of the Administering Authority and the Nauruan people, when the Nauruan representatives had submitted a statement questioning the Administering Authority's legal right to work the phosphate deposits. That statement had been placed before the Council by the special representative when he reported on those discussions at its thirty-second session (1256th meeting), together with the conclusions of the Solicitor General of Australia.<sup>1/</sup> According to the Solicitor General, the Administering Authority's right to work the deposits was derived from the concession granted to the Jaluit Gesellschaft by the German Government, which had been transferred, first to the Pacific Phosphate Company Ltd., and then to the British Phosphate Commissioners. The Solicitor General had concluded that there was a sound legal basis for the rights exercised by the Commissioners and that the legal objections to the validity of those rights were without substance.

4. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) said that he respected the Solicitor General's opinion, but since all Germany's overseas property had been liquidated after the First World War, it would seem that in accordance with internationally accepted principles, all property rights relating to Nauru should then have reverted to the Nauruans.

5. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) recalled that after the First World War a Mandates System had been set up by the League of Nations, under which certain responsibilities with regard to Nauru had been transferred to Australia. After the Second World War, Australia had voluntarily accepted the obligations of the International Trusteeship System. The matter of property rights on Nauru was, however, a separate question.

6. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) inquired what position the Administering Authority took with regard to Mr. De Roburt's statement at the 1285th meeting that if the Nauruans gained control of the phosphate industry they would pay compensation for the equipment on the island and use the British Phosphate Commissioners as managing agents, for a fair fee.

7. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that he was not in a position to express an opinion on those

<sup>1/</sup> See T/1643, annex II (mimeographed).

questions, which would be taken up at the discussions between representatives of the Administering Authority and the Nauruan people on the future operations of the phosphate industry, which were to resume in the autumn of 1966.

8. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) asked whether financial statements on the principal and interest of the phosphate royalties paid to the Nauru Landowners' Royalty Trust Fund, the Nauru Royalty Trust Fund and the Nauruan Community Long Term Investment Fund—which he assumed were invested in Australia—were made available to the Nauruans concerned.

9. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that those funds were indeed invested in Australia, and financial statements were made available from time to time to the Nauru Local Government Council. In addition, the Administering Authority had always held detailed consultations with the Local Government Council on the types of investment to be made and the amounts to be invested in each type. All interest was compounded and added to the funds. With regard to the Nauru Landowners' Royalty Trust Fund, each block of investments matured over fifteen years, and the principal and interest were then paid to the landowners concerned.

10. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) asked Mr. De Roburt for his views on the provision of the Nauru Act according to which an ordinance made by the Governor-General prevailed over one made by the Legislative Council.

11. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that the Nauruans were not happy about that provision, but had been informed in the discussions preceding the drawing up of the Nauru Act that it would be used very rarely. Furthermore, it was his understanding that when the Governor-General disallowed an ordinance made by the Legislative Council he must account for his action to the Australian Parliament within a specific period of time, which would give the Nauruans an opportunity to express their views.

12. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) asked Mr. De Roburt what concrete expectation he had on behalf of his people and country from the Trusteeship Council at its current session.

13. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) recalled that in his statement at the 1285th meeting he had said that the Nauruans would expect the Council's support if, in its considered view, their cause was just and they were entitled to the things they sought.

14. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) recalled that in the statement to which he had just referred, Mr. De Roburt had said that the Nauruans wished to remain on Nauru; they felt that the Administering Authority should be responsible for the rehabilitation of the island, but were willing to contribute two thirds of the cost. He asked for the Administering Authority's views on that request, which he considered a very fair one.

15. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said that the question of the rehabilitation of Nauru had occupied the Council's attention for some years. As the special repre-

sentative had said in his opening statement (1285th meeting), the matter had recently been studied by a special committee, and he could not express an opinion pending consideration of the Committee's report by the Legislative Council of Nauru and the Australian Government.

16. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) recalled that the representative of Australia in the Trusteeship Council had often stated that it was for the peoples of the Territories which it administered, and for them alone, to say when they were ready for independence. The Nauruan people had decided that they wanted independence, and he would like to know the Administering Authority's views on that point.

17. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that it was significant that the question of independence did not appear on the agenda of the current talks between the Administering Authority and the Nauruan representatives, which had been agreed to by both sides. The reason for that omission was clear: the matter had been discussed at the 1965 talks, when the Nauruan delegation had sought the establishment of a target date for independence. On that occasion the Administering Authority had stated that in its view it would be unwise to set such a date until the Legislative and Executive Councils had had an opportunity to acquire further experience. The Nauruans hoped for further discussions in 1967, while the Administering Authority felt that they should take place two or three years after the establishment of the Councils, but Mr. De Roburt had said at the 1285th meeting that he did not anticipate any problems in that connexion.

18. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia) said that his delegation felt that there was no reason why the Nauruan people should not be granted their independence. He asked for the Administering Authority's views on operative paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2111 (XX).

19. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) felt that that question had been covered by an earlier question and answer. In his opening statement (1285th meeting) he had sought to explain in detail the steps taken by the Administering Authority since the Council's last session to reach the objectives laid down in the Trusteeship Agreement.

20. Mr. PEABODY (Liberia), recalling that the official members of the Legislative Council had refused to serve on the Select Committee which was to report on the question of independence, asked upon whose instruction they had acted.

21. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that he regretted that he was unable to give the Liberian representative a direct answer, since any instructions which the official members might receive were confidential. It was his understanding, however, that the Liberian representative also wished to know what reasons the official members had given for their refusal to serve. Four of the five official members had spoken on that question in the Legislative Council. The first had considered the proposal to establish the Select Committee premature, because the Administering Authority and the Nauruan representatives had agreed in principle that a certain amount of time should elapse between the establishment of the Legis-

lative Council and discussions on further political developments, in order to enable the Nauruans to acquire additional political experience. The second official member had felt that for the time being the Legislative Council could not go beyond the Administering Authority's statement at the 1965 Canberra talks, which had been attended by plenary delegations. The third official member had said that the question of independence should not be brought before the Legislative Council at all, but should be discussed directly by representatives of the Administering Authority and the Nauruan people. He had also suggested that the Legislative Council should be given time to function efficiently with its present powers before further powers were sought. The fourth official member had agreed that it would be inappropriate for the official members to discuss a matter which was already being discussed at a higher level, and had recalled that at the 1965 talks the Administering Authority had stated that it did not consider it appropriate to establish any specific target date for independence or complete self-government before the Legislative Council had acquired practical experience.

22. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) recalled that, in his opening statement (1285th meeting), Mr. De Roburt had said that the Nauruan people wanted to achieve independence by 31 January 1968. He wondered how that date had been fixed and whether the Legislative Council had formally endorsed that target.

23. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) explained that, by January 1968, the Nauruans would have had two years' experience of government at the level of the Legislative Council and the Executive Council. The date of 31 January was significant because it was the date when the Nauruans sent to Truk by the Japanese during the war had been liberated by the United States forces and brought home to Nauru.

24. The Legislative Council had not actually taken a decision on that subject but its members were aware of the wishes of the Nauruan people. The Legislative Council had followed up a proposal of the Nauru Local Government Council and appointed a Select Committee to study the most suitable means by which Nauru could achieve complete independence by January 1968.

25. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) asked whether the idea of resettling the population of Nauru had been abandoned.

26. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) replied that, when the Nauruans had decided that they could not resettle on Curtis Island and that there was no other possible site which would enable them to retain their national identity, the Australian Government had abandoned its plan to acquire Curtis Island. Australia had offered the Nauruans full citizenship rights on Curtis Island but had been unable to agree to the establishment so close to the Australian coast of an enclave having no allegiance to the Australian Government. It had taken pains to ensure that the Nauruans would have controlled the most essential aspects of their affairs on Curtis Island. Freehold ownership of the land had been proposed as one way of protecting Nauruan people against what they regarded as the dangers of assimilation.

27. The offer of Curtis Island had been the culmination of arduous efforts by the Australian Government over a number of years. It had been made after the Nauruan people had declined an offer to admit them, with full and equal rights as citizens, to any of the three countries which jointly administered the Territory.

28. The Australian Government still believed that resettlement offered the best guarantee for the future welfare of the Nauruan people and was ready actively to pursue any further inquiry which the Nauruans might wish to make along those lines.

29. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that, when in 1964 the Australian Government had not agreed to the form of resettlement which they desired, the Nauruans had been left with no alternative but to remain on Nauru. In deference to the wishes of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territories of Nauru and New Guinea, 1965, however, the Nauruans had not closed the door on the idea of resettlement. The Administering Authority had agreed actively to pursue the question in co-operation with the Nauruan people and to seek a solution in accordance with their wishes. The Nauruans were seeking a permanent home on Nauru, which would have to be rehabilitated, but would be glad to study any proposals made to them by the Administering Authority.

30. Mr. Chiping H. C. KIANG (China) inquired whether there was a possibility that, after they had attained independence, the Nauruan people might further examine the question of resettlement without abandoning their Nauruan homeland.

31. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that at the moment Nauruans were concentrating on the present and the immediate future. If it became necessary to reconsider the question of resettlement, the Nauruan leaders would do so. Some Nauruans would no doubt leave the island, if the population outgrew the available space, but that would be emigration and not resettlement, in the sense in which it had been discussed over the past few years.

32. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) asked for information about the findings of the Committee of Experts set up to study the question of restoring the worked-out mining land on Nauru.

33. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) replied that the Committee had submitted its report to the Australian Government and the Legislative Council for the Territory of Nauru on 8 June 1966. The Council had not yet had an opportunity to study the report. It would therefore be premature to disclose any information about the conclusions reached by the Committee.

34. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) requested details about the different funds into which the phosphate royalties were paid. He would welcome information about the amounts deposited in the various funds and the purposes for which they were used.

35. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) explained that part of the royalties were paid directly to the landowner and part were held in trust and invested for the landowner. In addition, the royalties were

paid into two funds: the first was intended to provide the Nauru Local Government Council with the money it needed for its various activities; and the second, the Nauruan Community Long Term Investment Fund, had been established to assist in the resettlement of the Nauruans and contribute to their continued welfare when the phosphate deposits were exhausted.

36. The recent substantial increase in phosphate royalties applied retroactively, and in 1965-1966 a total of approximately \$A2,600,000 or just under \$US3 million had been paid out. That sum included retroactive payments for 1964-1965 and excluded the retroactive payments still to be made to the Long Term Investment Fund, which amounted to about £A440,000 or \$US900,000. The balance in the Nauru Landowners' Royalty Trust Fund had been \$A1,224,600, or approximately \$US1,350,000, some weeks previously, and the balance in the Long Term Investment Fund had been \$A2,743,000, or approximately \$US3 million. He did not have the figures for the Nauru Royalty Trust Fund, but he wished to point out that it was a working fund for the Local Government Council and was used to meet current expenses.

37. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) said that he presumed the phosphate problem would be the main item on the agenda of the talks to be held in the autumn of 1966 between the Administering Authority and a Nauruan delegation. In the view of the French delegation, that was a vital problem requiring mutual concessions on the part of those concerned; the question of independence could not be settled if the problem of the phosphates was not resolved.

38. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that the forthcoming talks would deal with the question of rehabilitation and the report of the Committee of Experts on the possibility of restoring the worked-out mining lands and on future arrangements for the phosphate industry.

39. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) recalled that Mr. De Roburt had said (1285th meeting) that a viable economy was an essential ingredient for independence. The phosphate deposits would soon be exhausted and it was therefore reasonable to consider the future of the island's economy. There was the question whether the profits derived from the phosphate industry should be used to rehabilitate the land or for some other economic activity that would be more productive than agriculture—for example, industrial activity. He wondered if any organ had been established to study the problem of Nauru's economic future and, if so, whether it was planned to give it the benefit of the advice of experts from United Nations bodies such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

40. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that no organ had yet been established to plan the future economy of the island. The Committee of Experts which had studied the question of rehabilitation had touched upon that matter briefly in its report.

41. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) asked what was the legal status of the non-European immigrants in Nauru. He wondered whether they intended to return home when their contracts expired or, if they were per-

manent residents of Nauru, whether they enjoyed civil rights and could vote.

42. He asked Mr. De Roburt what would become of those immigrants when independence was proclaimed, since independence was primarily designed to safeguard the Nauruan community.

43. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) replied that about half the population of Nauru consisted of immigrants. There were 900 Chinese—labourers, and their families, who had been recruited in Hong Kong to work on the phosphate deposits. Often they returned home when their contracts expired after one year, but the contracts were sometimes renewed. There were 446 Europeans, mainly Australians and New Zealanders, who had also come to work in the phosphate industry. The Chinese and European immigrants enjoyed all rights except the right to vote in elections for the Legislative Council. There were 1,481 immigrants from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands; they were workers and their families who had come to Nauru under one-year contracts, which were often renewed. A few Gilbert and Ellice Islanders lived as Nauruans.

44. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that the expatriate employees who had come to Nauru under contracts of employment were not citizens of Nauru and there would be no problem when the country gained independence.

45. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) asked whether the Administration intended to levy an income tax and whether there was at present any tax on commercial profits.

46. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) replied that the matter had been mentioned in discussions between the Nauru Local Government Council and the Administrator but that there was no immediate intention of imposing direct taxation. There was some limited taxation in the form of customs duties.

47. He would point out that, in so far as they were not provided by limited local revenue, the funds which the Administration required for all its services—education, health, social services and the like—were furnished by the British Phosphate Commissioners under an agreement between the three Governments constituting the Administering Authority.

48. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) noted that, according to the annual report of the Administering Authority,<sup>2/</sup> communications between Nauru and the outside world, apart from radio, were maintained by means of a few chartered aircraft and, primarily, by the phosphate ships. He asked Mr. De Roburt whether the Nauruan people regarded that as a satisfactory situation and whether it might not even eventually become necessary to improve the island's airport, which at present could be used only by conventional aircraft of the DC-4 type.

49. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that the Nauru Local Government

<sup>2/</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, *Report to the General Assembly of the United Nations: Administration of the Territory of Nauru, 1st July 1964 to 30th June 1965* (Canberra, A. J. Arthur, Commonwealth Government Printer). Transmitted to members of the Trusteeship Council by a note of the Secretary-General (T/1648).

Council and the Nauruan people shared the view expressed by the French representative. Although he was unable at present to give any details, he could state definitely that consideration was being given to the practical steps to be taken in the future to improve that situation.

50. Mr. BASDEVANT (France) said that he had been impressed by the desire of the Nauruan people to attain independence. At the same time, however, he had been concerned about the uncertain economic future of the island after the phosphates had been nearly exhausted. He had been also impressed by the desire of the Nauruan community to preserve its identity, but he had wondered whether, by trying to do so, they were not tending to look inward only. He asked Mr. De Roburt how the Nauruans envisaged their long-term future and whether they were not afraid that they might turn inward too much as a result of their isolation. He emphasized that his purpose in putting that question was not to hamper a political evolution which seemed normal to him but to assist in solving that problem if it did in fact exist.

51. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that he did not think that the Nauruan people were looking inward only. They would soon be in a position to reveal plans which, they were confident, would receive the approval of the Trusteeship Council and of the Administering Authority and which would establish a realistic policy for ensuring the people's future. Capable experts were being engaged in the economic and other fields in an endeavour to lay the groundwork for the future economic well-being of the island.

52. Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America) asked the special representative whether there was at present any emigration from Nauru.

53. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) replied that there was a good deal of movement to and from Nauru by Chinese indentured workers and indentured workers from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. At present there was also a constant movement among the European staff of the British Phosphate Commissioners and, to a much less degree, among the staff of the Administration.

54. The Nauruans who travelled to Australia were mostly children going to school there for the first time or returning after having spent their holidays in Nauru. Other Nauruan citizens journeyed to Australia to take courses or to serve an apprenticeship for some years.

55. In reply to a further question from Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America), Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that there were very few Nauruans who left the island to take up permanent residence abroad. He himself could think of only one case. The movement of Nauruans was generally under the control of the Nauru Local Government Council and a Nauruan who wished to make a journey of that kind normally sought the Council's approval.

56. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that the number was not very significant and that he, too, could think of only one case. Moreover, that person had returned to Nauru.

57. Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America) said that, although there were great cultural differences among countries and peoples, Mr. De Roburt's remark that the young people in Nauru held the same view about their future as the older generation had struck her as somewhat unusual, particularly in view of the difficult prospects facing the younger generation there. She asked whether there were any young members in the elected Legislature and what was the average age of the members of the Nauru Local Government Council. In addition, she would like to know what means the young people had for expressing their political views.

58. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) replied that the average age of the Nauruan Councillors was between his own age and that of Mr. Detsimea.

59. The young people—that is to say, persons of high school and college age—did have a voice. They were invited to attend meetings of the Local Government Council and were given every opportunity to express their views. He could say without any hesitation that they strongly supported the policies which the present Council was pursuing.

60. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that just before leaving for Nauru he had paid a visit to a number of schools in Australia attended by Nauruan students of various ages. Some were about twelve years old and had come to Australia on what was called a lower-age scholarship. Others had left Nauru at perhaps the intermediate level and were in Australia on higher-age scholarships. He had not found a single student in favour of resettlement elsewhere. They liked being in Australia and, indeed, it was a notable feature that a Nauruan eagerly grasped the opportunity of going to Australia for a period. However, the students had all wished to go back and live permanently in their homeland of Nauru.

61. Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America) considered it a great tribute to the people of Nauru and an indication of their feeling of unity and devotion to their homeland that the young people shared the older generation's attachment to the island, fraught with difficulties as it might appear to be.

62. She asked Mr. De Roburt whether he could tell the Council approximately how many Nauruans benefited directly from the royalties paid for the phosphate mined.

63. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that the number varied. The royalties paid related to land which was owned by certain people and which had been mined during the previous six months and the phosphate exported to Australia and New Zealand. As far as he could remember, the number would be between forty and fifty families each time, and there were subdivisions in those families.

64. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that during the year 1963/1964 payment of phosphate royalties had been made directly to 593 landowners. In respect of the number affected by large payments made in the current year, he understood that about 313 Nauruan landowners had been involved.

65. Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America) asked what essential public services were being provided to the Nauruan people by the Administering Authority.

66. Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that under the Housing Ordinance of the Territory, the Nauru Local Government Council was responsible for the maintenance and management of houses built by the Administration, the British Phosphate Commission, and by the Council itself.

67. The Local Government Council purchased electricity in bulk from the British Phosphate Commission and retailed it to Nauruan customers, an activity which was at present being widely expanded because the electricity main circling the island had now been completed. The Council also administered the Social Services Ordinance, which dealt with the granting of old age pensions, invalid pensions, unemployment benefits, child endowments and the like. In addition, it was responsible for some transportation and provided a cinema transport service. However, the principal bus service was operated by the Administration. Apart from that, all the usual public services were provided by the Administration.

68. In reply to further questions from Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America), Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative) said that the royalties received from the British Phosphate Commission were paid into the Nauru Royalty Trust Fund, which was a working fund for the Local Government Council, and from which the Council drew such funds as it needed to finance those services for which it was responsible.

69. It had been estimated that by about 1990 the population of Nauru would be approximately 10,000. However, any projection of that kind should be accepted with caution. The Nauruan population was rapidly increasing at an estimated rate of about 4 per cent.

70. The possibility of providing for a population of that size from the island's own resources was the core of the problem of the island's future and it was one of the reasons why the Nauruan Community Long Term Investment Fund had been established, into which money was being paid at a substantial level. The Nauru Local Government Council had allocated an amount of 8/6d. per ton for the Trust Fund from the royalties of 17/6d. per ton which were being paid at present. One of the purposes of that Fund was, of course, to provide for the future of the Nauruan people, but there had also been preliminary discussions with a view to finding ways and means of establishing small-scale industries and developing

the tourist industry on the island against the time when the phosphate deposits were exhausted.

71. Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom) asked whether the island of Nauru had a harbour.

72. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) replied that there was no harbour in the sense that the word was understood in other parts of the world. There was a boat harbour, which differed from harbours elsewhere.

73. Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom) wondered, in view of the fact that the island depended to a great extent on the export of phosphate and on the import of food-stuffs, how the island would be served from the standpoint of exports and imports if it attained independence in two years' time.

74. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that, in the Nauruan people's view, there would be no problem with respect to the movement of vessels on the phosphate run in two years' time.

75. In reply to a further question from the United Kingdom representative, he said that the British Phosphate Commission had ships which carried on a trade at present and that it was planned to buy the Commission's assets, including the ships, if necessary.

76. Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom) said he understood that the available labour force came partly from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands and also that the labour was partly Chinese and included persons from Hong Kong and from other overseas Chinese populations. He asked Mr. De Roburt whether he thought that the taking over of the phosphate industry by an independent Nauruan Government would have any effect on that labour force.

77. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) said that the matter had not been fully dealt with at the recent Canberra talks. However, in the view of the Local Government Council, the question of independence should not depend on or have anything to do with the kind of labour used to mine the phosphate.

78. Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom) asked whether he was correct in his understanding that it was the Nauruan tradition to have private ownership of land.

79. Mr. DE ROBURT (Adviser to the Special Representative) replied in the affirmative.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.