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CONDITIONS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Note verbale dated 14 December 1956 from the Representative  
of the United States of America to the Secretary-General

New York, 14 December 1956

The Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to discussion at the Trusteeship Council hearings on Trust Territory affairs in June of this year, has the honour to transmit a copy of a press release, dated 25 November 1956, issued by the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, stating that a settlement has been made with the former residents of the Bikini and Eniwetok Atolls in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands as compensation for the use of these atolls as nuclear testing sites.

Enclosure: as stated.

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TRUST TERRITORY

Guam, 25 November 1956

The people of Eniwetok and Bikini have been compensated for moving from their home islands in order to facilitate the atomic experiments of the United States in the Western Pacific.

Announcement was made today at the office of the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory, Delmas H. Nucker, that formal settlement had been made with the former residents of Bikini and Eniwetok, now living at Kili and Ujelang respectively, whereby they are being provided with trust funds and cash amounting in all to half a million dollars, and other considerations in addition. The settlement marks the satisfactory culmination of United States efforts to provide adequate compensation for the people who left their familiar habitats for new homes on other islands, in order to provide a testing ground for atomic power.

Terms of the trust agreement amount to \$300,000.00 for the Bikinians now located at Kili, and \$150,000.00 for the people of Eniwetok now living at Ujelang. Also, both groups have been given land-use rights to their present island homes, plus an additional \$25,000.00 already delivered in cash to each group, and other considerations. In return, the United States is given land-use rights to Bikini and Eniwetok.

The additional considerations include land-use rights to certain small islands adjacent to their present home in the case of the Kilians, and also a 50-foot boat which they will use in transporting the passengers and copra, the dried meat of the coconut, between Kili island and nearby Jaluit atoll.

The High Commissioner reported that he had conferred personally with both the former Bikinians and the people of Eniwetok, and that in compliance with the wishes of each group, the Trust Territory Government has agreed to establish the respective trust funds, make the additional payments in cash, and give other considerations. Word that all contracts carrying out the terms of these agreements had been formally signed by the people of Ujelang and Kili and the initial cash payments delivered, was received at the High Commissioner's office in Guam by dispatch from the Marshall Islands, where a representative of the Trust Territory Government has signed the papers on behalf of the Trust Territory Administration.

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Negotiations by the High Commissioner were conducted early in November of this year, following almost ten years of activity on the part of the Trust Territory Administration in assisting the former Bikini and Eniwetok residents to become established in their new islands. During this period a subsistence and education programme has been carried on to insure their welfare and well-being.

"It is gratifying to be able to report that the people of Kili and Ujelang were in total accord with the terms of settlement," the High Commissioner stated following his return from discussions with the re-located families. "Their satisfaction was demonstrated to me during our recent conferences, both of which closed on assurances of complete satisfaction."

The payments for land use by the United States were a subject of discussion at the annual United Nations Trusteeship Council hearings on Trust Territory affairs in June of this year. The amicable settlement of these Bikini and Eniwetok claims by mutual assent of all parties, gives material proof of the United States' fulfillment of its obligations in connexion with the Marshall Islands experiments. It also marks a step forward in Trust Territory administration.

The High Commissioner in reaching his destination made the last lap by small craft in open seas. He was taken by plane from Guam to Jaluit, then in the Killians' 50-foot vessel almost to the Kili reef, where he transferred to a small row boat which his Marshallese escort deftly guided over the reef into shore by selecting a high wave and riding its crest onto the beach. Departure from Kili of was made in like fashion. Such travel by small craft is the customary mode of ns transportation between the numerous small islands of the Trust Territory, which are scattered over its approximate 3 million square miles of ocean.

The High Commissioner's arrival at Ujelang was effected by plane landing in the lagoon, where he was met by an outrigger canoe that carried him in to shore.

Mr. Nucker is in Washington, D.C. for swearing-in ceremonies following his appointment as High Commissioner of the Trust Territory, a post he has been filling in the capacity of Acting High Commissioner for the past two years. Announcement of his appointment was made by President Eisenhower on 3 November while Mr. Nucker was enroute to the Marshalls from his headquarters in Guam.

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