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COUNCIL



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PETITION FROM THE NAURU LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL CONCERNING NAURU

Note by the Secretary-General: In accordance with rule 85 and supplementary rule F of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the Trusteeship Council and to the Government of Italy as the Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of Somaliland, a communication dated 10 March 1953 from the Nauru Local Government Council concerning the Trust Territory of Nauru.

This communication was transmitted to the Secretary-General by the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in the Pacific.

COPY

NAURU LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

Nauru Domaneab,

NAURU.

10th March, 1953

D/8/6(B).13

MEMORANDUM FOR:

His Honour,
The Administrator,
NAURU.

I enclosed herewith an agenda paper containing 3 items which the Nauru Local Government Council desire to submit to the Visiting U.N.O. Mission when they meet as scheduled in the itinerary programme.

The Council would greatly appreciate if same be transmitted to the Mission before the Meeting through the courtesy of Your Honour's Office.

(Signed) Illegible

(A. Bernicke),
SECRETARY

Received at United Nations Headquarters: 17 March 1953 through the Visiting Mission to the Pacific Islands, 1953

Item 1:

An overall review of existing Lands Agreements.

On the 2nd of December 1952, the Nauru Local Government Council, on behalf of the Nauruan landowners, requested the Administering Authority through His Honour the Administrator and the Secretary of Department of Territories for an overall review of existing Lands Agreements. (See Appendix I)^{1/}

The Nauru Local Government Council petition the U.N.O. Mission's co-operation to ascertain how far the matter has progressed and to assist the Administering Authority in its deliberation on the matter, so that at an early date a draft agreement may be prepared which it is hoped, will cover every aspect of the problem in such a way as to meet the satisfaction of both parties to the agreement.

In order to facilitate discussion on the matter, the Nauru Local Government Council wish to advance the following points to be had in mind when discussing the whole question.

1. To make provision whereby landowners may have more say in matters concerning his lands than he is now entitled under the existing agreements and ordinances. (See attached appendix I Section 4 - (1) (a) (1) to (4) and Sections 5 and 6 of the Principal Ordinance 1921-1939)
2. To make provision whereby the royalty may be made more elastic within certain limit, (for instance, despite general rise in prices of all commodities, our phosphate royalty has remained stationary all these years) and whereby it may be reviewed during currency of an agreement when certain unforeseen circumstances make it necessary for a revision.
3. To make provision whereby agreements or certain parts of them may be reviewed at shorter and more regular time intervals than that allowed under the terms of existing agreements and ordinances.

^{1/} Note by the Secretariat: Appendices I and II referred to in this petition have been placed in the files of the Secretariat and are available to members of the Trusteeship Council on request. Additional copies of the texts of the relevant land ordinances (Appendix I) are available in the United Nations library.

4. To provide for payment of fruit trees etc. not specified in the current agreements.
5. To make a clear cut definition of certified weights (see attached appendix I Section 3 (b) (1) (b) of Lands Ordinance 1921-1950).
6. To recast the sections covering NLRTF and LTIF in order to make them more realistic (see attached appendix I section 3 "(b) (ii) (b) also Section 5 "(ba) of Lands Ordinance 1921-1950).
7. To make provision for payment of any rocks or other substances removed from a block of land during the process of phosphate mining, if such rocks and other substances are removed and used for some purposes for example crushed stones for concrete work etc.
8. To provide for payment on royalty basis of any substances mined and removed for use from a block of land for example sands etc.
9. Where phosphate is so mixed up with other substances that it is not possible to extract and if such mixed substance is removed from a block of land and used for some purpose, same be paid at an agreed rate.
10. To make provision whereby landowners may be entitled during currency of an agreement to negotiate for a new rate of payment of phosphate removed from his land if such phosphate is mined and removed for purposes other than manufacturing super phosphate as fertilizer.
11. To make provision whereby rental rates of non phosphate lands may differ according to certain stipulated conditions to be decided and agreed upon by the Nauru Local Government Council, representing landowners and His Honour the Administrator representing the Administering Authority.
12. To make provision whereby during the currency of an agreement or agreements and only under exceptional circumstances, agreement or agreements may be reviewed.
13. To provide for establishment of a special Court to deal with any dispute arising from Lands Agreements as enacted by Ordinances.
Magistrates and/or judges of the Court shall have no direct or indirect connection interests etc. with either parties at dispute.
14. To review the current rate of 1/4 per ton given to Nauruans with a view to increasing it, in order to give us a fair share of the benefits that derived from the phosphate industry. We are not in a position to know the financial activities

of the B.P.C. but from what we see, we feel that our island and ourselves are not being benefited in a degree that we should.

Our Nauru Local Government Council has not yet functioned smoothly because of lack of fund, the poor state of our road, the unavailability of electric power to our homes and districts are all due to lack of Fund.

We submit for the Mission's study, the substance of the appeal we made to the Secretary to the Department of Territories in regard to our proposal for a revision of existing phosphate agreement at a Meeting on the 2nd of December 1952.^{1/}

Item 2:

Nauruan Education.

A comprehensive report on the subject was submitted to His Honour the Administrator on the 14th of July 1952 for transmission to the Department of Territories, a copy was despatched to the President of UNTC in July 1952 acknowledgement of which was duly received.

In December 1952 in a meeting with His Honour the Administrator and the Secretary of the Department of Territories the subject of Nauruan Education was again raised. As a result, a special Committee of five (5) three of whom were Councillors from the Nauru Local Government Council was set up to discuss the question of Education with other matters with His Honour the Administrator and the Department of Territories' Secretary.

On Education question the following principles were agreed upon to be recommended for consideration by the appropriate authority.

(a) Primary School

- (i) Institute a training scheme to bring present teachers up to a satisfactory standard.
- (ii) Commence a scheme to train young boys and girls as teachers.
- (iii) The possibility of providing two central primary schools instead of the several existing small schools.

1/ Note by the Secretariat: See below.

(b) Secondary School.

(i) Introduce in a central secondary school general and technical courses for both boys and girls.

(ii) Establish workroom facilities in the Secondary school as far as practicable.

(c) Adult and Apprenticeship Education

(i) The immediate establishment of adult education.

(ii) The Secondary school to be used for this purpose as far as possible by evening and Saturday classes.

(iii) The appointment of a woman welfare officer to teach and encourage interest among Nauruan womenfolk in homecraft, arts and crafts hygiene etc.

(d) Overseas Education

(i) The Australian Government should continue to arrange the placing and accommodation of privately financed students. The Committee stated that no parent at present wished to privately arrange placing etc., in Australia.

(ii) The number of Scholarships should be increased and the facilities should be provided to Secondary children.

It will be noted that it was after an elapse of 6 months between when the matter was first submitted and when it was followed up. So far plans were formulated as shown above which are yet to be considered and finalized, and experience has shown that it would be sometime before the plans were in operation. It can also at any stage be shelved and left in abeyance for an indefinite period.

It is not a pleasure at all for the Council to repeat the same statement that was made by the old Council of Chiefs before the U.N.O. Visiting Mission in 1950 regarding education of Nauruans. (See Appendix II.)^{1/} It was due mainly to this dilatory way of handling our education that there is only one Nauruan now holding key position within the Administration after 30 years of compulsory education in a place like Nauru. The Nauru Local Government Council

1/ Note by the Secretariat: See T/PET.9/6 of which the above mentioned appendix is an extract.

petition the U.N.O. Mission to take up the matter of education with the Administering Authority with a view to arriving at certain conclusions which would ensure the taking of progressive steps towards the Nauruanization of most of the key positions with the Administration within a stipulated period, having in mind when discussing the question those Nauruans who are now holding senior places and have acted as heads of their respective departments during the absence of European Officers on recreation leave. The Nauru Local Government Council also petition that assurance and promise be obtained from the British Phosphate Commissioners to make available to Nauruans when properly qualified and capable some of the responsible positions within the Commission.

Item 3:

UNTC and the indigenous population of Trust Territories.

The Nauru Local Government Council desire to propose that in order that the indigenous population of Trust Territories may have more direct participation in the works of the Trusteeship Council, one or two indigenous representatives of a Trust Territory be attached to the delegation from the Metropolitan Government to United Nations Trusteeship Council. The practicability and usefulness of such a scheme may be confined to certain Meetings only, in that event, the indigenous delegation can be returned home after such Meetings. The costs can be shared proportionally by United Nations Trusteeship Council, Metropolitan, Territorial and Local Governments. However, it is the opinion of the Nauru Local Government Council that even when other Trust Territories than one particular delegation's territory are discussed in its presence, the experience and the knowledge gained therefrom will be of immense assistance to the delegation in promoting the cause of the Trusteeship System at home whenever opportunities are offered.

Statement made by the Secretary to Nauru Local Government Council at 2nd December 1952 meeting with His Honour the Administrator and the Secretary to Department of Territories.

Item 4:

Sometime ago, we made representations for increase in the landowners and the N.R.T.F. divisions of the phosphate royalty. (That is, in 6d and 3d divisions).

There are four divisions within the phosphate royalty, two are for long term investments one on behalf of landowners 2d per ton and the other is for the community at 5d per ton. The other two divisions are one for landowners at 6d per ton and the other for the community at the rate of 3d per ton. The latter pair are used for current expenses. Therefore, we feel that in order to keep pace with the rising costs of commodities, we requested for increase in both divisions. All commodities have increased in prices, tinned milk, sugar, rice, bread, fresh and tinned meat to cite a few of these articles which we imported as our stable foods, and have in mind the relationship of these goods with our phosphate, is it not reasonable that we ask for some increase in the price of our phosphate.

One of the New Zealand prominent agriculturists, within this very building just recently informed this Council that Nauru Phosphate was New Zealand agriculture's life blood, and we assume, but we may be wrong, that Australia also needs our phosphate just as much as New Zealand.

Does it not seem strange to think that the British Phosphate Commission which can grant £25/-/- per month to their married and single staff as a living allowance, and which can afford to have vast assets, such as these ships capable of loading 10,000 tons of phosphate, another fast modern ship costing within the vicinity of half a million pounds which is now under construction, Fleets of Leyland International and Ford Thorton Trucks, plants costing millions of pounds, offices in all parts of the world and other costly properties, cannot even grant us a little more benefits.

The people from the Gilberts and Ellice Islands are now reaping the benefits beyond their wildest dream that come out of our phosphate.

Does it not seem out of all proportion that these who work our phosphate are being more benefited than we the landowners.

It so happens that we have been taught and developed into living to a European standard, dressing as Australians eating as such and absorbing all the cultures which had made Australians so healthy and satisfied, yet the means by which all these can be achieved are denied us, all for the need of money.

Our phosphate means everything to us and when it is finished our oncoming people will have nothing to barter for the means to live. Therefore taking everything into consideration, it seems out of all reasons that we who are the inheritors of this land are kept so low and not entitled to have more of the benefits being enjoyed by the people who are working our island.

When the land agreements were entered into and signed and by which we stood, there was no provision made for the enormous increase in the prices of all commodities which are necessary to us for decent living standards and future development.

It seems out of all proportion that we who are losing our inheritance for such a mere pittance are asked to live on the existing terms.

We submit therefore that consideration be given for a revision of all phosphate agreements between the Nauruans as landowners and the British Phosphate Commissioners.
