

UNITED NATIONS
TRUSTEESHIP
COUNCIL



GENERAL

T/953
11 January 1952

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PETITION FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WA-MERU TRIBE
CONCERNING TANGANYIKA (T/Pet.2/99)

Observations of the Administering Authority

Note: The following observations were transmitted by the United Kingdom delegation to the United Nations by a letter dated 22 December 1951.

1. The matter raised in this petition concerns the implementation of one of the recommendations made by the Arusha-Moshi Lands Commission. The petitioners write as representing the Meru tribe as a whole, but in fact the most they can claim is that they express the views of the people living in the Ngare-Nanyuki area.
2. The petitioners complain against the decision that 350 taxpayers and their families (not 3000 families as stated in the petition) should move from the Ngare-Nanyuki area to available and suitable land to the south of this area. In considering this petition it is important to note that the moving of these people forms only one part of a general plan which is as a whole very greatly in the interests of the African population. It has involved among other things the taking over of a number of ex-enemy estates for tribal use and the acquisition of certain other alienated lands.
3. As part of a general settlement of land problems the Arusha-Moshi Lands Commission recommended that the area to the north and north-east of Meru Mountain (including the Ngare-Nanyuki area) should be set aside for cattle ranching. This area, which already contains a number of non-native cattle farmers, consists in the main of arid lands, suitable for ranching but, except for occasional pockets of good land, not suitable for cultivation. The Commission recommended that the small Meru population which had settled in the Ngare-Nanyuki area should be moved to better land to the south adjoining the main tribal lands.
4. The scheme as finally approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies was announced by the Government of Tanganyika in June, 1949, after it had been accepted by the Native Authority. It involved the removal of the Meru families in question

and the acquisition for tribal use of 3,945 acres of former German estates, 7,145 acres of other non-native estates and 100 acres of mission-owned land. In addition, an area of some 159,000 acres of new land adjoining the main tribal lands on the lower slopes of Meru Mountain is being developed to provide for the expansion of the tribe.

5. Although, as already stated, the scheme was publicly announced in June, 1949, and has been fully explained to the people, no protests against the moving of the families from the Ngare-Nanyuki area were made until very recently. In the meantime the other parts of the scheme have been put into operation. Certain of the alienated lands have been compulsorily acquired by the Government, despite protests from the occupiers, and the development of the new lands is proceeding. Already a piped water supply some $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, from the Mau Forest Reserve and passing through the settlement area, has been laid down, and water points for domestic supplies and the watering of stock are in course of preparation. In addition to the piped supply, seven boreholes have been or are being sunk and will soon be in operation. Two cattle dips are being provided along the line of the piped water supply. One of these is complete and the other one nearly so. An agronomic survey of the area is proceeding. The Lutheran Mission, which formerly operated a dispensary in the area from which movement is taking place, has agreed to carry on its medical work in the new settlement area and the necessary arrangements have already been made.

6. In their memorandum the petitioners refer to the purchase by the tribe some years ago of two former German farms in the Ngare-Nanyuki area which they are now required to leave. In this connexion it must be noted that not only is the price paid for these farms to be fully refunded, but under the present scheme a much larger area of alienated land is being made available to the tribe free of any payment. The whole cost of acquisition has been borne by the Government and the Meru people are not being asked to make any contribution. Moreover the heavy cost of developing the new settlement areas is being met entirely by the Government. Those being moved will receive compensation for disturbance. Free transport to the new lands will be provided and they will be given every assistance in establishing themselves there. Encampments are to be erected at the watering points along the pipe line and free food will be provided for the

/incoming settlers

incoming settlers for a reasonable period while they are putting up their own homes.

7. In short, the question of the movement of the people at present living in the Ngare-Nanyuki area cannot be considered in isolation as an entirely separate issue. It is part of a general scheme from which the tribe as a whole derives considerable benefit. As has been shown, action has already been taken to put the other parts of the scheme into effect and it is not possible at this stage to accept the objections of a section of the Meru people to carrying out their part of the bargain. Even if such a course were now practicable it would certainly not be in the interests of the tribe to abandon the whole scheme. As far as the Ngare-Nanyuki families are concerned the new land provided for them is of much better agricultural value than that they now occupy and offers better prospects for their future advancement.

8. On the 23rd August, 1959, the petitioners addressed the Secretary of State in the same terms as the letter of that date which accompanies the present petition. They were informed that the Secretary of State had considered their representations but that, having regard to all the facts set out above, he was unable to agree that that part of the general scheme which formed the subject of their representations should not be carried out. The whole question has been the subject of careful examination and re-examination and in the circumstances the Administering Authority suggests the Trusteeship Council should decide that no action by it is called for on this petition.
