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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWELVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 13 July 1966, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. BROWN

(United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern
Ireland)

1. Examination of conditions in Nauru (continued):
 - (a) Annual report of the Administering Authority [4 (a)]
 - (b) Petitions concerning general problems in the Trust Territory of Nauru [6]
2. General Assembly resolution on the question of the Trust Territory of Nauru [9] (continued)
3. Programme of work

Note: The Official Record of this meeting, i.e. the summary record, will appear in provisional mimeographed form under the symbol T/SR.1288 and will be subject to representatives' corrections. It will appear in final form in a printed volume.

AGENDA ITEMS 4 (a), 6 AND 9

EXAMINATION OF CONDITIONS IN NAURU (continued):

- (a) ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY (T/1648; T/L.1108)
- (b) PETITIONS CONCERNING GENERAL PROBLEMS IN THE TRUST TERRITORY OF NAURU (T/PET.9/L.1)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON THE QUESTION OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF NAURU (2111 (XX)) (continued)

At the invitation of the President, Mr. R.S. Leydin, Special Representative for the Trust Territory of Nauru under Australian administration, and Head Chief Hammer DeRoburt and Mr. Joseph Detsimea took places at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT: Today we shall begin the questioning of the representatives of the Administering Authority on conditions in Nauru.

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): My delegation has only a few questions to put to the Special Representative. The first one is as follows.

Does the Australian Government or the Administering Authority for Nauru deny that the right of ownership of the phosphate deposits on Nauru is inherently vested in the Nauruan people? If so, on what does it base that denial?

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): The Trusteeship Council will recall that this question was raised at the 1965 Canberra conference between a delegation representing the Administering Authority and a Nauruan delegation. On that occasion the Nauruan delegation submitted a statement questioning the legal right of the Administering Authority to work the phosphate deposits. At the Trusteeship Council's last session the Special Representative for Australia reported on that discussion and placed before the Council the document relevant to this matter that had been submitted by the Nauruan delegation in Canberra. He also placed before the Trusteeship Council a document reflecting the conclusions arrived at by what might be called the highest legal authority in Australia, the Solicitor General. That document described at some length the way in which

the Administering Authority's entitlement to work the deposits flowed from the concession granted by the German Government to the Gesellschaft and the transfer of that concession to the Pacific Phosphate Company; the concession was transferred, in accordance with the terms of the original concession, to the British Phosphate Commissioners. This lengthy and detailed opinion prepared by the Solicitor General is to be found in document T/1643, dated 30 June 1965. The conclusion reached by the Solicitor General appears in the final paragraph of the document, which reads as follows:

"In the result it should be reiterated that this statement has been confined to a consideration of the rights of the British Phosphate Commissioners in relation to the phosphate deposits and to the legal objections made to those rights. The inevitable conclusion to be drawn from the reasons which have already been given is that there is a sound legal basis for the rights exercised by the Commissioners and that the legal objections made to the validity of those rights are without substance."
(T/1643, annex II, page 10)

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): My delegation of course respects the opinion of the Solicitor General which has just been referred to by the Special Representative. I would, however, say the following. It would seem that since Germany lost the war and all the property it possessed overseas was liquidated, the reversionary interest in the island of Nauru should be vested in the people of the island, which is their native land. In that case is it not an internationally accepted principle that the island of Nauru and everything that is on and in it should have reverted to the Nauruan people after the war?

Mr. McCARTHY (Australia): The representative of Liberia will recall that after the war to which he referred a mandate system was set up under the League of Nations. Under that mandate system certain responsibilities in respect

of the island of Nauru were transferred to Australia. Whether or not the various rights in relation to the island of Nauru should have reverted to the Nauruan people is one question. The other question is that, as I have said, the mandate system was set up after the First World War, and after the Second World War the Australian Government, by arrangement, voluntarily accepted the obligations of the International Trusteeship System, as we now know it -- the System which replaced the mandate system.

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): Mr. De Roburt the Head Chief of Nauru, said in his statement before this Council that he and his people felt that they were compelled to do the fair thing, and that the fair thing to them was:

"... to use the BFC as managing agents and pay them a fair fee."

(1285th meeting, page 67)

He further said:

"A fair thing, in our mind, also is that we should buy the equipment they have on Nauru; we should compensate them for it." (Ibid.)

Can the Special Representative say what would be the position of the Administering Authority regarding this proposal, since in truth the Nauruan land and all its sub-soil deposits rightly and naturally belong to the Nauruan people?

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): With regard to the last sentence of the representative of Liberia's question, I would refer him to the answer which the leader of my delegation has just given and to the answer that I gave in reply to his first question.

With regard to the earlier portions of the question, the Council will recall that in my opening statement I described how discussions were taking place in Canberra between a joint delegation representing the Administering Authority and a Nauruan delegation in pursuance of an agreement reached between the two parties last year. I said further that that discussion, after preliminary exchanges, had been adjourned to enable the Nauruan delegation to attend these meetings of the Trusteeship Council. A further purpose of the adjournment was to enable both parties to gather additional information which would facilitate and inform the further discussions projected for later this year.

One of the subjects of the present discussion, and I repeat that this is by agreement between the two parties, is a very important question, the results of which will have most considerable and important effect for both parties and, therefore, it is a question that must be approached with due care and responsibility. This is the question of the future arrangements to be made for the operation of the phosphate industry. The discussion of this when resumed, and the enquiries which are being made in the meantime, will, of course, examine such questions as that raised by my friend, the Head Chief,

(Mr. Leydin. Special Representative)

in his statement. I refer in particular to the Head Chief's comments, quoted by the representative of Liberia, that the plant and equipment which has been gathered over the decades by the British Phosphate Commissioners should be handed over to the Nauruan people who should pay adequate compensation for it.

This is one of the very questions which is the subject of the conference in Canberra, and it seems unwise to me, and, I think, also to my delegation, that those subjects should be canvassed at this stage. It was hoped that in the interregnum between the adjournment and the resumption of the meetings, neither side would take up positions which would perhaps make more difficult the reaching of an agreement later, an eventuality to which I am sure both delegations look forward.

I am sure the representative of Liberia will recall, in addition to the portion of the Head Chief's statement which he quoted, that portion of the statement in which the Head Chief said:

"... the response and attitude of the Department of Territories" -- and by that no doubt he meant the joint delegation -- "in the preliminary discussions we have had with them so far on most of these matters have been quite positive, most heartening and most encouraging." (Ibid., page 61)

The Head Chief went on to say that the joint delegation:

"... have been eager to listen and keen to help when and where necessary. I know our Council on Nauru will be very pleased with such response and attitude and I thought that your Council might like to share with our people these pleasant and valid thoughts." (Ibid.)

The Head Chief further said:

"Some of these matters which we discuss will have very far reaching and good effects for our people and therefore prospects for Nauru's future in this regard are not at all gloomy." (Ibid.)

I would sum up by saying that the subject of the question posed by the representative of Liberia is one which is at present under discussion between a delegation representing the Administering Authority and a delegation representing the Nauruan people.

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): We observed from the statement of the Special Representative for the Trust Territory of Nauru that 40 cents per ton, 15 cents per ton and 85 cents per ton are paid to the Landowners' Investment Trust, the Nauruan Royalty Trust Fund, and the Nauruan Long Term Community Fund respectively. I assume that these funds are kept in Australia by the Australian Government. May I ask whether an accounting of the principle and the accruing interest has been made or is being made to the Nauruans who are the beneficiaries of these funds.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): It is true, as the representative of Liberia has said, that the funds, which are trust funds, are invested in Australia, and an account is given from time to time to the Nauru Local Government Council of the amount invested, the current position of the funds and the like. In addition, the Administering Authority has taken care over the years to consult in detail with the Nauruan Local Government Council on the type of investment which should be used for this purpose, on the amounts which are available for investment from time to time, and the amounts which should be invested in particular investments. The interest, of course, which is gained by the various investments is compounded and added to the funds, which are increased in that way.

I should perhaps make it clear that in respect to the Landowners' Trust Fund each block of investments matures over fifteen years, when the principal, together with the accumulated interest, is paid to the landowners concerned.

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): I should like to address this question to Mr. De Roburt. Mr. Leydin, the Special Representative for the Trust Territory of Nauru, said in his report:

"If an ordinance made by the Governor-General is inconsistent with an ordinance made by the Legislative Council, the ordinance made by the Governor-General prevails." (1285th meeting, page 4)

Would Mr. De Roburt please state how he evaluates such a provision in respect of the legislative structure of the government of his country?

Mr. DE ROBURT: I am aware of such a provision in the Nauru Act. Although we are not happy about it, we feel that it will be used very rarely. I say this because it was stated during the discussions held in the Committee which dealt with the matters which were eventually submitted to the Attorney-General's department for legal formulation and which were submitted to the Australian Parliament for ratification.

I also understand that where the Governor-General disallows an ordinance made by the Nauru Legislative Council, he must account for his action to the Australian Parliament within a specific period of time. There again there is an opportunity for us to prod Parliament with any views we may have.

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): I should like to put another question to Mr. De Roburt. What concrete expectations does he have on behalf of his people and country from this Council at its present session?

Mr. DE ROBURT: As I said in my statement, of which I have a copy with me, "we shall expect your support if, in your considered view, our cause is just and the things we are seeking we are entitled to". (Ibid., page 67)

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): In his statement of 11 July Head Chief De Roburt said that he and his people would like to remain on the island of Nauru with its being fully rehabilitated. He felt that it was the responsibility of the Administering Authority to rehabilitate the island.

(Mr. Peabody, Liberia)

However, he expressed the willingness of the people of Nauru to contribute two-thirds of the amount required for rehabilitation. Since this appears, in the judgement of my delegation, to be a very fair and equitable request, I should like to ask the representative of Australia to state his Government's views on this question.

Mr. McCARTHY (Australia): This question of the so-called rehabilitation of the island of Nauru has occupied the attention of this Council for some years. Directly at the request of this Council, the Australian Government set up a committee on which the United Nations was represented through an expert from FAC. As I understand it, the other members of that committee were suggested by the Australian Government to the Nauruan people and agreed to by the Nauruan people.

As far as my knowledge carries me, a survey of this problem was carried out on the island of Nauru earlier this year. I myself have not received or had the opportunity to study the report of that Committee on which the United Nations was represented, and I understand that the report is presently before the Australian Government and before the Nauruan Legislative Council. I have no knowledge of what is in the report, I am not in a position to discuss the report, and I do believe that, pending decisions on it by the Nauru Legislative Council and by the Australian Government, the report is not open for discussion.

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): I think it has been said constantly by the representative of Australia in this Council with regard to self-determination and independence for Australian-administered Territories that it is the peoples of the Territories, and they alone, who must decide thereupon. The Nauruan people having decided that they desire independence, what are the Australian Government's views on this subject?

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): It is significant, in the context of the question raised by the representative of Liberia, that in the discussions now taking place between delegations representing the Administering Authority and a delegation representing the Nauruan people the question raised does not appear on the agenda, the agenda having been settled, of course, in close consultation by representatives of the Australian Government and the partner Governments with the representatives of the Nauruan people.

The reasons for this are quite clear. The matter was the subject of discussion last year, the Council will recall, when the Nauruan delegation, as it had on earlier occasions, sought the establishment of a target date for independence of the Nauruan people; and the view expressed by the Administering Authority on that occasion was that a decision had been made in line with the Nauruan request to establish a Legislative Council and an Executive Council. It was not considered wise ahead of any experience gained by the legislative bodies and the executive body shortly to be born, to establish a target date for the development of further political powers.

The Nauruan representatives themselves, have mentioned that they look forward to discussion on this question in 1967. As I have said, the view of the Administering Government is that discussions should take place within two or three years' time after the establishment of the two Councils.

Those two Councils were established, as I have already reported, but they are only a few months' old, and I believe it relevant and fair to say -- and the Head Chief, I am sure, will not object to my saying -- that all the members of the Council, including the official members, are quite inexperienced in this field.

(Mr. Leydin, Special Representative)

Whatever other experience they may have gained in assisting the Administration of the island, experience in a body of this kind is not possessed by any member of the Legislative Council. That experience is being rapidly gained and it can hardly be doubted that, after a further period during which a number of meetings of both bodies are held and the members become accustomed to handling the various questions relevant to the administration of the island -- some complex perhaps, some not quite so complex -- these various Nauruan members will be in a better position to discuss a question of this importance.

I think that the statement made by the Head Chief in his speech on 11 July is also relevant to this matter. He thanked the Trusteeship Council for paving the way to talks to be held in 1967, and he then went on to say:

"It is now up to us and the Administering Authority. There has been no move made as yet by either side to suggest at least a date or time when they should meet. However, this should be no problem." (1285th meeting, p. 57)

Mr. FEABODY (Liberia): As to the reason behind the question I have just propounded, since I have been in this Council during its present sitting I have heard over and over again from the Australian delegation especially when the question of New Guinea was being discussed, that it is the people -- not the Council, not the General Assembly nor any other source -- it is the people themselves who must say when they are ready and prepared for independence. Mr. De Roburt has come here representing his people and he has said in unequivocal terms that he and his people are ready for independence, and so forth. That is the reason why I asked that question. My delegation therefore feels that there should be nothing in the way of the Nauruan people's having their independence.

However, I will now go on to the next question. My delegation would like to know from the Administering Authority what the opinion of the Australian Government is regarding operative paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2111 (XX).

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): I understand the representative of Liberia to be referring to the paragraph of resolution 2111 (XX) which reads as follows:

"Requests the Administering Authority to fix the earliest possible date, but not later than 31 January 1968, for independence of the Nauruan people in accordance with their wishes".

It is my feeling, with due respect to the representative of Liberia, that we have covered that matter in an earlier question and answer. My opening statement sought to explain in detail to the Trusteeship Council the steps that have been taken since the Council's last meeting by the Administering Authority to discharge its obligations under the Trusteeship Agreement and to reach the proper objectives laid down in the Trusteeship Agreement. It is perhaps worth repeating that when the discussions were held between the Nauruan delegation and the delegation representing the Administering Authority last year, the delegation representing the Administering Authority said that it did not consider it wise to establish a target-date ahead of any experience by the two bodies shortly to be set up. From the Nauruan point of view, we have heard the Head Chief say that he looked forward to discussions with the representatives of the Administering Authority in 1967, and he has told the Council that he, at any rate, expects no problem in regard to that matter.

Mr. FEABODY (Liberia): We were told by the Head Chief, Mr. De Roburt, that the official members of the Legislative Council refused to serve on the Select Committee to look into the matter of independence. My delegation would like to know from the Special Representative upon whose instructions that was done.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): The representative of Liberia was good enough to give me an indication that he would seek information along these lines, so I have been able to gather some details which perhaps would not have been readily available otherwise.

I regret that I cannot give a direct answer to the representative of Liberia. Such instructions, if any, as may be received by the official members are, of course, confidential as between the official members and the authority giving the instructions. They are of course official members, as the Council well knows.

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I understood from the representative of Liberia that in asking this question he wished to know the reasons that were given by the official members for taking the stand they did on that occasion. I am glad to be able to inform the representative of Liberia that, of the five official members who were present at the meeting on that occasion, four spoke to the motion. I think generally it might be said, as I remarked in my opening statement, that they felt that as official members it would hardly be appropriate or proper for them to take part in the deliberations of the Select Committee, having regard to the general position of the question raised by the motion and to the question which was to be examined by the Select Committee.

One of the official members, I think the first to speak, suggested to the Legislative Council that the motion was premature, because he felt that the Legislative Council had been formed for the main purpose of fostering the political development of the Nauruan people, and he suggested for the Council's consideration that the motion rather assumed that the Legislative Council had already attained the purpose for which it was in fact constituted. I think that official member was referring to the references that had been made a number of times by the Nauruan delegation and the representative of the Administering Authority, that some time should elapse -- in the opinion of the representatives on the Nauruan delegation, two years; in the opinion of the representative of the Administering Authority, two or three years -- before there were discussions on further political development. That is what the official member had in mind.

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Special Representative)

The second official member suggested that it was premature to go beyond the statement made by the Government at the 1965 talks in Canberra. I understand he felt that as the talks on the subject had taken place between delegations which might be described as plenary delegations nothing further should be done by the Legislative Council, at least. This view was expressed more plainly by a third member who spoke. He drew attention to the 1965 talks and the Nauruan delegation's statement on that occasion that it looked forward to a continuation of the talks with the Government representatives in Canberra. He felt the discussions should continue in that way and not be brought before the Legislative Council. He suggested also that it might be sensible and necessary that the Legislative Council should be given time to function efficiently with the powers that it had before a further extension of powers was sought.

The official member who finally spoke said that the Council was only in its third day of sitting -- this was really the adjourned portion of the first meeting of the Legislative Council -- and he said that the Executive Council had not even met. Consequently, he thought it inappropriate for official members to be part of a Committee to debate matters already the subject of discussion at a higher level -- that is, by the Government of Australia with the representatives of the Nauruan people. He also drew attention to a statement made by the Nauruan delegation at the 1965 talks when the delegation representing the Administering Authority said that it did not consider it appropriate to establish, ahead of any practical experience of the operation of the Legislative Council, any specific target date for independence or for complete self-government.

That was a statement by the delegation representing the Administering Authority in 1965 which was quoted by the final speaker as one of the reasons why he considered that official members were not able to take part in the kind of select committee which the motion sought to appoint.

Mr. PEABODY (Liberia): I have no more questions on my list. Should the necessity arise, I reserve the right to ask further questions. In the meantime, I should like to thank the Special Representative, the representative of Australia, and Mr. De Roburt for their co-operation in answering questions which we have put to them.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): First of all, on behalf of the French delegation, I should like to extend a welcome to the Special Representative, Mr. Leydin, and also to the Head Chief Mr. De Roburt, and to Mr. Detsimea.

In his statement the Head Chief, Mr. De Roburt, recalled that the people of Nauru would like to accede to independence on 31 January 1968. I should be happy to know how that date was arrived at. In particular, I should like to know whether, since it began to operate last January, the Legislative Council, which represents the population as a whole, has stated formally, as it were, its views upon this date by expressing a formal wish along these lines.

In this respect, I should like if possible to have a simple clarification on the part of the Australian delegation. It seems to me that this results from the appointment at the beginning of this year, in January 1966, of the Select Committee which, under its terms of reference, is to report to the Legislative Council on:

(spoke in English)

"the most suitable means by which the people of Nauru can achieve complete independence by January 1968".

(continued in French)

Is it true to say that that was, in some measure, a position taken by the elected members with regard to 31 January 1968 as the date for independence?

The PRESIDENT: Before I call on Mr. De Roburt, I understand that the Special Representative has a word to say.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): I should like to thank the representative of France for the welcome he extended to me and to my Nauruan colleagues. I now yield the floor to the Head Chief because I know that he is very well able to explain the date of 31 January.

Mr. DE ROBERT: The date 31 January is significant to us because it is the date when the Nauruans who were sent to the island of Truk by the Japanese during the war were liberated by the United States forces and brought back to Nauru, to live together happily again with their people who had remained on Nauru. That took place on 31 January 1946. That is the basic answer to the question. It was the reason also why we selected that to be the date on which the Legislative Council and the Executive Council should begin to function, to which I am pleased to recall that the Australian Government has agreed.

The rest of my answer, I think, would simply be that, from 31 January 1966, a lapse of two years' time will result in the date 31 January 1968, and that is the reason. This follows the principle to which we adhered, and to which we still adhere, that at the end of two years' experience in Government at the level of the Legislative Council and the Executive Council we will be able to embark on full independence. That day will be 31 January 1968.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I thank the Head Chief for that interesting explanation. May I take it, that the Legislative Council of the island has also made known its views on that date? Has it taken a decision or expressed a wish that independence should be granted on that date, 31 January 1968? Is there a decision by the elected representative of the Nauruan people on this point?

Mr. DE ROBURT: No actual decision has been taken yet, but elected members have taken it for granted that there is a wish of the Nauruan people which the Administering Authority knows. Whether it knows it from the Legislative Council or from the Executive Council seems to us to be immaterial. The wish was expressed to the Administering Authority, to its representatives on Nauru and to its representatives in Canberra; and, having assumed that the establishment of a Legislative Council and an Executive Council does not invalidate legitimate requests by the Nauru Local Government Council to the Administering Authority, elected members on the Legislative Council have merely pursued the motion which they had, and which has been referred to by the Special Representative and myself. The motion, which was duly passed, was to establish a Select Committee to find out the best ways and means by which the Nauruan people could achieve independence by 31 January 1968.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): That reply is exactly what I had expected, and I am most grateful. I do understand that, for the people of Nauru, 31 December is a yearly anniversary by which it sets store, and the French delegation understands perfectly the attachment to that date which recalls the end of so many tribulations.

May I turn now to another question. I should like to know whether the problem of the resettlement of the Nauru population on another island -- Curtis Island had been mentioned -- has now been completely abandoned, or whether it remains a possibility. I believe that this is a question which concerns both the Administering Authority and Mr. de Roburt.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): It will be fresh in the Council's mind that at the 1965 talks the Nauruan delegation informed the representatives of the Administering Authority that, as a way had not been found in relation to

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Special Representative)

Curtis Island or any other possible site for resettlement by which the Nauruan people could, in the view of the delegation, maintain their identity, the Nauruan people did not wish to resettle and would remain on the island of Nauru.

The question asked by the representative of France gives an opportunity to say that, having regard to the difficulties which will face a population of a little under 3,000 -- 2,700 at present -- on a remote island, and having regard perhaps to the dangers of such isolation and the difficulties of making a full life in the circumstances in which the Nauruan people originally found the island of Nauru, the opinion of the Administering Authority still is that resettlement would be the best way of ensuring the welfare of the Nauruan people.

The Trusteeship Council was informed last year, in April 1965, that after having waited for some nine months in the hope that the Nauruan people might reconsider its decision to stay in Nauru and to abandon further interest in Curtis Island -- that decision, by the way, having been made in 1964, and not 1965 -- the Australian Government complied with the request of the Nauruans to drop the acquisition of Curtis Island, and so informed the people of that island and the Queensland Government. In doing that the Australian Government made it quite clear that it did not mean at all that it had abandoned its belief that the overriding consideration in the Nauru Trusteeship Agreement, for the Administering Authority and for the Trusteeship Council, is to safeguard the future interest of the Nauruan people by its resettlement in a new home where it can increase and realize itself in a full life. This is still the view of the Australian Government, and its consideration of other issues reflects this concern.

The Trusteeship Council was informed along these lines at its session last year, and in the 1965 talks the delegation representing the Administering Authority promised to give active consideration to any further proposal or inquiry which the Nauruan people made in this direction. That was the culmination, of course, as the Council knows, of an arduous and anxious effort expended by the Australian Government over a considerable number of years. The early history of the resettlement question may not be well known to some members of this Council,

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Special Representative)

but the records will show that, concerned with the difficulties which would arise if the Nauruans, with their increasing population, remained on an island with such a small area, the Administering Authority suggested -- I think, through my leader on this delegation, who I believe went to Nauru to convey the offer to the Nauruan people -- that the Nauruan people should be admitted, with full and equal rights as citizens, to any one of the three countries of the Administering Authority. This offer was no doubt made having regard to the fact that an island carrying all the advantages which the Nauruan people had described as necessary, or at least very desirable, was not obtainable, but with the desire, at the same time, to place the Nauruan people in a position where it would be close to sources of employment, close to educational opportunities for its children, and close to all the advantages which go with a populous metropolitan country.

The Nauru Local Government Council, speaking for the Nauruan people, expressed its appreciation of this offer but decided that the offer could not be accepted because it did not comply with one essential requirement that the Nauruan people had underlined on a number of occasions in the Trusteeship Council and elsewhere -- that is, the proposal offered no safeguards for the maintenance of the Nauruan identity, for the continuance of the Nauruans as a people. They felt that they would become submerged in the population of the metropolitan country and would cease to exist as a people.

In those circumstances, the Administering Authority, both on its own initiative and in accordance with requests made on behalf of the Nauruan people by the Nauru Local Government Council, redoubled its efforts to find a suitable island that offered something approaching the conditions sought by the Nauruan people. In consequence, the offer of resettlement on Curtis Island was made. At the time the Trusteeship Council was given full details of the advantages, and perhaps disadvantages, offered by Curtis Island.

May I be permitted to say, as one who has had a long and enjoyable association with the Nauruan people, that it was a matter of great disappointment to me that the Nauruan people were unable to accept the offer of Curtis Island either.

As members of the Council know, I believe, Curtis Island is close to the Australian mainland. The Australian Government offered full citizenship rights to the Nauruans, although it was unable to agree to the setting up so close to the Australian coast of an enclave having no allegiance to the Australian Government. It went to some length to ensure that the Nauruan people would have control over the most essential aspects of their affairs and over the island which had been offered. One of the devices which was proposed to protect the Nauruan people against what they regarded as the dangers of assimilation was complete freehold ownership of the land, which would have had the effect of preventing, if the Nauruan people so desired, entry by Australian nationals to take up permanent residence there.

Thus, in reply to the question of the representative of France, I would say that the Australian Government still believes that resettlement offers much

greater assurance of the future welfare of the Nauruan people, and holds itself ready actively to pursue any further inquiry that the Nauruan people might wish to make on those lines.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I wonder whether, as regards this question -- which was studied last year, but deserves to be taken up again at this session -- it would not be of interest, if the President has no objection, to hear the views of Head Chief De Roburt as well.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Head Chief De Roburt.

Mr. DE ROBURT: I believe that the Nauruan case up to fairly recently on this question of resettlement has been rather well documented. The documents are before this Council. I shall, however, endeavour to reply to the question of the representative of France, and I may perhaps be allowed to explain the present Nauruan position on the matter.

When this question was discussed in 1964, the Nauruan delegation and representatives of the Australian Government failed to reach agreement. I need not waste the Council's time by going into the reasons why agreement was not reached.

Having failed to get the agreement of the Australian Government in August 1964 to the form of resettlement which they desired, the Nauruans were left with no alternative and decided to remain on Nauru and to look upon it as their permanent future home.

I feel that it is important to mention this. In 1965, during the Visiting Mission's stay in Nauru, it requested the Nauruan people to keep the matter open. I understand that the Visiting Mission's wish in turn became the wish of the Trusteeship Council. In deference to that wish, we undertook not to close the door on resettlement.

At the Canberra Conference last year, it was the Administering Authority which placed this question on the agenda. The Special Representative has indicated the result of the discussion at that Conference. I do not have the records with me, but the effect was that the Administering Authority agreed actively to pursue the question in co-operation with the Nauruan people and to continue to seek a solution in accordance with the wishes of the Nauruan people themselves.

After that Conference, nothing more has developed. I do not feel free to discuss what was said at the recent Conference in Canberra, when this question was discussed again.

As far as I know, and I think this will be a fair answer to the question put by the representative of France, our official position is that we are seeking a permanent future home on the island itself, which must be rehabilitated. I have pointed out to the Administering Authority that this is our position, and that if it has anything useful to bring to our notice on this question we will be glad to study whatever might be presented to us. But, at the moment, we are committed on this question to a future home on Nauru, a Nauru which must be fully rehabilitated.

Mr. KIANG (China): I should like to seek a clarification from you, Mr. President, on procedure. Would you permit any other member to intervene at the right moment in the questioning, because this has been the practice of the Council in the past. This would enable members to press a point which has been raised in an answer given to another member. If you would give me that permission, I should like to put a question to the Head Chief in the context of the answer he has just given.

The PRESIDENT: It is indeed an arguable point whether we should proceed by subject or whether we should proceed with an orderly list of speakers. On this particular occasion, I do not know whether the representative of France holds any view. He had the floor; does he wish to continue his questions or does he wish to give way to the representative of China?

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I believe that since we have taken up this question of resettlement, it would perhaps be preferable for us to have a thorough discussion and, if another representative has a question to put, it would seem to me perfectly logical for him to do so. However, I am a newcomer to this Council, and I would not wish to break the rules.

The PRESIDENT: I confess that I feel it would be better if we went from speaker to speaker in the usual way, but if the representative of China particularly wants at this stage to put a question on this particular point -- and may I emphasize that at this stage it must be a question rather than discussion -- then I would be prepared to give him the floor.

Mr. KIANG (China): It seems to me that it is important to catch the moment, and I should like to put a question in the context of the answer which the Head Chief has just given.

Is there a possibility that after having achieved independence the Nauruan people might further examine the question of resettlement without abandoning their Nauruan homeland? I believe the Head Chief knows very well how my delegation has tried to discover in previous years the inseparable link between the earlier Nauruan proposals for independence and the question of resettlement, because we thought that any resettlement proposals could only be given a realistic appraisal after the Nauruans had begun to manage their own affairs on their present island.

Mr. DE ROBURT: It is not our wish that at this time we should think of other things which might happen in the distant future, because we feel we should concentrate our thinking on the present and the immediate future. We have no doubt whatever that if it becomes necessary at any point in the future to think of such questions, the Nauruan leaders at that time will know what to do. However, there is a point to which I should like to draw attention, because I feel that the members of this Council, and not only the members of this Council but other people as well, feel strongly that because of the smallness of our island physically, we, the Nauruans of today, should, in addition to what we are now thinking and deciding, also think of resettlement at some future date.

We do not agree with this point of view. As I have pointed out to the Administering Authority on several occasions, we feel that if the time comes when the population of the island is too great for the island, there will no doubt be people who will want to leave the island. However, we would regard that as leaving the island in the normal sense of emigration, such

as has been practised and encouraged by other countries when there has been a need for certain of their people to leave the country and go elsewhere. It has not occurred to us that it would mean resettlement in the manner of the resettlement which we have been discussing over the last few years.

Mr. KIANG (China): I wish to thank the Head Chief for the answer he has given. I am also grateful to the representative of France for allowing me to put that question. However, I wish to put it on record that it has been the tradition and practice of this Council for other members to put questions at the same time. I am not breaking any rules of this Council.

The PRESIDENT: I made no such suggestion.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I should like first to thank the Australian delegation and Head Chief De Roburt for the interesting explanations they have given us, and they have introduced many elements which are very useful in the opinion of my delegation. I should also like to thank my colleague and neighbour for the clarifications he requested from Head Chief De Roburt.

I feel that a reply has been given, but I should like to ask another question at this time concerning the Technical Committee of Experts entrusted with the study of the rehabilitation of the soil from which phosphate has been extracted. That Committee presented its report on 8 June last, and, if I have understood correctly, it will not be possible for the Council to obtain even an outline of its conclusions. As I understand it, it would be premature to seek any information about those conclusions. Is that so? I should like to know what the delegation representing the Administering Authority could tell us on this subject.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): I believe the representative of France has understood the information given by my leader earlier. The position is that the report was submitted by the Committee of Experts to the Australian Government and to the Legislative Council at Nauru only on 8 June, a very short time before I, as Special Representative, and my Nauruan colleagues left Australia to come to this session of the Trusteeship Council.

In respect to the Legislative Council, the Council has not met since the President received the report, and consequently has not had an opportunity to inform its members of the contents of the report. So it is considered that at this juncture it would be premature to discuss or to give any information about the conclusions arrived at by the Committee of Experts.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I must apologize, but I still have several questions to ask. I should like to have some details with respect to the various funds into which the income from phosphate is placed. There is the Nauruan Royalty Trust Fund, the Landowners Investment Trust Fund, and the Nauruan Long-Term Community Fund. Would it be possible to have an idea of the amounts presently on deposit in these Funds and the use to which these monies are put?

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): In order to have a good understanding of the amounts made available as royalties from the phosphate which is mined and exported, it needs to be understood that some of the royalties go directly to the land owner, some, which are intended to go to the land owner eventually, are held in trust and invested, and, in addition to that, there are two funds, the first of which was intended to provide the Nauru Local Government Council with the finance it needed for its various activities, and, finally, the Long-Term Community Fund, which was originated with the idea of building up over the life of the phosphate deposits funds which would assist in the resettlement of the Nauruan people and contribute to their continued welfare when the phosphate deposits become exhausted.

I think the Council understands that the over-all rate of royalty has been increased to 17/6 per ton. This is distributed over the four purposes which I have outlined. It represents, I may mention in passing, a 475 per cent increase on the total royalties which were paid before. This substantial increase, which applied retroactively, involved the payment during 1965-66 to the Nauruan community and to the various funds I have mentioned of a quite substantial sum. I think the total royalty paid during 1965-66 was approximately \$A2,600,000 or just under \$US 3 million. I should make it clear, however, that that sum included retrospective payments back to 1964-1965 and excluded retrospective payments which were yet to be made to the Community Fund, the Long-Term Fund. That involved an amount of about £A440,000, about \$US900,000.

As I mentioned in my opening statement, agreement was reached between the British Phosphate Commissioners and the Nauru Local Government Council that this would be a deferred payment made during the present year. In the meantime, it carries interest at 5-3/4 per cent.

As to the amount in the various funds, I do not have that information immediately available; but I shall obtain it and let the representative of France have it later on.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I should like to thank Mr. Leydin for the interesting explanation he has just given us. If I have understood it correctly, new talks will be held in October and November between the Administering Authority and a Nauruan delegation. It seems to me that we should not get involved in these talks. However, I should like to know what the agenda will be because I take it that the phosphate problem will be the main subject of negotiations at the present time.

In the view of the French delegation, this is a vital question. Basically, it is a problem that urgently requires an understanding, that is to say, reciprocal concessions on the part of those concerned, because, as I understand it, it is inconceivable that the question of independence can be settled if the phosphate issue is not.

Without being indiscreet, I should like to ask the Administering Authority what the agenda will be during these forthcoming talks.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): The representative of France has forecast correctly what the subjects of discussion will be at the resumed talks later this year. They will deal, as he has said, with the questions of rehabilitation and the report made by the Expert Committee on the possibility of restoring the worked-out mining lands and on the future arrangements for the operation of the phosphate industry.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): The Head Chief, Mr. De Roburt, said in his statement that one of the essential elements of independence for Nauru was an economy that is as nearly viable as possible. The present economy of the island depends exclusively on the phosphates, and we know that in a few decades the deposits of phosphates will be exhausted. It is therefore, in our opinion, quite reasonable to consider now on what basis the economy of the island will rest in the future. One might consider whether royalties from the phosphates should be used for the purpose of rehabilitating the soil, or perhaps for some economic activity more productive than agriculture -- industry, for example. I would therefore like to enquire whether there is any committee or other body now in existence to study this problem of the economic future of the island, and if so, whether in due time it is expected to obtain the views of experts of United Nations agencies such as the International Bank.

Mr. DE ROBURT: There is no Committee established yet to plan the future economy of the island along the lines that the representative of France has enunciated. The Committee of Experts who looked into the question of rehabilitation, have, I think, touched upon it briefly in their report which is still being considered by the Administering Authority and the Legislative Council.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I should now like to ask another question, this time with reference to the population. I have noted in the report of the Administering Authority contained in document T/1648 that half the population is made up of immigrants, of which four-fifths are Chinese or inhabitants of other Pacific islands. I should like to know from the delegation of the Administering Authority what the legal status is of these non-European immigrants. Are they permanently settled in Nauru with their families, or are they there only temporarily? Is it their intention to return to their homes after the expiration of their contracts or after a few years? If they are permanently residing there, are they excluded from the enjoyment of civil rights in Nauru? Can they become voters, for example?

In short -- and here I have another question that should be addressed to the Head Chief -- what will become of these immigrants when independence is attained, since independence is intended in the first place, as Mr. De Roburt has said, to safeguard the Nauruan community?

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): As the representative of France has said, roughly half the population is made up of immigrants, and according to the annual report for the period 1 July 1964 to 30 June 1965, now before the Council, there were 900 Chinese, 446 Europeans, and 1,481 other Pacific islanders, making a total of 2,827 immigrants. The total population of Nauruans was 2,734, making a total population for the island of 5,561.

Perhaps if I go through each of these categories, it might be convenient for the Council.

All of the 900 Chinese are tradesmen who are labourers who have been recruited by the British Phosphate Commission in Hong Kong and brought to work on the phosphate deposits in Nauru under an agreement which has a term, in the first place, of one year. They are either people so recruited for that purpose, or the wives and children of some of those workers. Quite frequently it happens that the Chinese worker who comes to the island returns home after the expiration of his agreement, that is to say at the end of twelve months; but there is provision in the agreement between the Commissioners and the worker for the renewal of the contract for an additional period of twelve months if the worker so desires. A number of Chinese have been there for varying periods -- three, four, five years; not many for much longer, I would think. While resident on the island they enjoy all the rights excepting the right of enrollment and of voting at elections for members of the Legislative Council. It does not seem appropriate that one who is only a temporary resident of the island and who fully intends to return to his own country should have the right to vote for members of the Legislative Council for the Territory of Nauru.

(Mr. Leydin, Special Representative)

In the next column of the annual report, on page 10, we see that 446 Europeans are mentioned. They also are immigrant workers -- staff employees, and so on,-- who are brought mainly from Australia but occasionally from New Zealand and elsewhere to work in the British Phosphate Commission Industry on Nauru. They also, of course, have no right to enrollment on the rolls or to participate in the elections for the Legislative Council. otherwise they enjoy the same rights as the Chinese workers.

The number of people from the other Pacific islands is given as 1,481. They come from various islands in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands groups. The number includes wives and children of some of the workers. They also come to Nauru on an agreement which in the first place is for one year only.

It may, however, be renewed for a further period, as it often is, but I would think that there would be only rare cases of Gilbertese or Ellice Islanders who are there for a very long time, for many years. This excludes, of course, some Gilbertese and Ellice Islanders who live in the Nauruan districts and to all intents and purposes live as Nauruans among the Nauruans. But the number of these latter is not very great.

The PRESIDENT: The second half of the question, I understand, concerned the future and was addressed to the Head Chief, Mr. De Roburt. Would the Head Chief have anything to add?

Mr. DE ROBURT: As the Special Representative has explained, the people to whom I think the representative of France referred are the expatriate employees who come to Nauru under yearly contract of employment. That being the case, this is not a problem in our opinion. They are not citizens of the country and therefore we will have nothing to worry about with regard to them. I think I have answered the question.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I wish to express my gratitude for the replies given, which explain points that were not clear to me and on which the documents distributed to us did not enable me to arrive at clear-cut conclusions. Now, I feel that I am quite up to date on the situation.

May I be permitted to put a question which might seem extremely strange, though I do not hesitate to put it. Is it intended to have income taxes in Nauru: a tax on salaries and a tax on commercial profits? Apparently it is a wonderful country where there are no taxes. Is this situation likely to last, or are changes contemplated in this respect?

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): I am told that it will gladden the hearts of most people on Nauru if I say no, there is no immediate intention of imposing direct taxation. We have in Nauru some limited taxation in the way of customs duties, but there is not at present any proposal that taxation should be imposed. I have no doubt that this is a matter which the Head Chief has in mind for the future and which he has outlined to the Council. The question of taxation has been mentioned between the Nauru Local Government Council and the Administrator from time to time, but with no proposal to impose taxation emerging.

(Mr. Leydin, Special Representative)

As the Council will understand, the funds of the Administration for all its services -- education, health, social services and the like -- in so far as they are not provided by the Nauru Local Government Council, are provided by the British Phosphate Commissioners under the agreement between the three Administering Authorities. Therefore, my answer to the question is that I know of no present proposal to impose direct taxation in Nauru.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I thank Mr. Leydin for that very interesting explanation. If I may be so bold as to tax the patience of the Council, I still have two further questions. It appears from the report of the Administering Authority that communications between Nauru and the outside world, apart from radio communications, are maintained through a few chartered planes and, mainly, by the phosphate ships. I would like to know -- and I think Head Chief Mr. De Roburt would be in a position to explain the feelings of the population -- whether this situation is satisfactory.

I was wondering also whether a time might not come when it would be necessary to improve the airport on the island, which at present can only be used by what are called conventional airplanes of the DC-4 type.

Mr. DE ROBURT: I agree with the views of the representatives of France and I am happy to assure him that our Council on Nauru, and the people, and I think also the Administering Authority, see it that way also. Although it is much too premature for me to tell the representative of France in detail what is being contemplated to improve the position he refers to, definite consideration of practical steps to be taken in the near future is being undertaken at present.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I come now to my last question. I apologize if I present it at some length. But, after having thought over this problem, and although I am new to the Council, I should like to raise a point which has rather disturbed me.

(Mr. Basdevant, France)

Earlier I put two questions, and now, in recalling them, I wish to put a third. My delegation was impressed by the wish shown by the people of Nauru to accede to independence, but, at the same time, while this would not be a possible obstacle to the granting of independence, my delegation wondered about the economic future of the island, when the phosphates have been nearly exhausted. It will be recalled that I put a question on this subject. My delegation has also considered the geographic isolation of the island, which at present is linked to the outside world only through the ships that transport phosphate. I was also impressed by the wish of the Nauruan community to retain its identity, and I wondered whether, by trying to retain that identity, they were not tending to look inward only.

I should like to put a question in this connexion to Mr. De Roburt. How do the Nauruans envisage their long-term future? Are they not afraid that they might turn inward too much, and are they not afraid of the moral consequences that might result for them because of this isolation in which they would confine themselves? I am aware that the problem is complex. Possibly there are more immediate problems which the Head Chief and those responsible among the Nauruan people are more concerned about. But if I put the question, it is not to hamper the political evolution, which seems to me to be normal. But perhaps we might give some assistance in solving the problem if it arises, so as to be able to decide with complete certainty and with complete sincerity on the political future of Nauru.

Mr. DE ROBURT: I do not think, in regard to the whole problem of Nauru as it is today, that we are looking inward only; and I think it is only a question of time before we will be in a position to reveal plans which, we are confident, will receive the approval of this Council and of the Administering Authority, plans which will provide very realistic conditions for our people to enjoy in the future. In saying that, I wish to advise this Council that we at present are engaging very capable experts in various fields -- in economics and other professions -- to endeavour to lay down the groundwork for the future economic well-being of the island. And I hope I am not divulging something I should not concerning matters being touched upon now, but, on the problems referred to by the representative of France, the Administering Authority itself shares the same optimism.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretatio from French): I am most grateful to Head Chief De Roburt, and I too am optimistic.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): I undertook, a few moments ago, to answer the question about trust fund balances, and I am now able to do that.

In respect of the two significant balances -- and I refer to the Landowners' Royalty Trust Fund, which is the trust fund dealing with investment blocks maturing over fifteen years, and the Community Long-Term Investment Fund -- the Landowners' Royalty Trust Fund had a balance some weeks ago of \$A1,224,600, which is approximately \$US1.35 million; and the Community Long-Term Investment Fund had a balance of \$A2,743,000, which is near enough to \$US3 million. I do not have the balance of the Nauru Royalty Trust Fund, but I hope this will not be significant from the point of view of the representative of France, because, generally speaking, it is a working fund for the Nauru Local Government Council; and, while some money has been accumulated in it, it is used for current purposes year by year.

Mr. BASDEVANT (France) (interpretation from French): I am most grateful to Mr. Leydin for the figures he has just given me, and I wish to thank the delegation of the Administering Authority for the patience it has shown in replying to my questions. That is all I have.

Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America): I think the representative of France has almost exhausted our questions, but I do have just a few remaining questions which I should like to put to the members of the delegation of the Administering Authority.

I should like first to welcome to the Council Mr. Leydin, and also the Head Chief, Mr. De Roburt, and Mr. Joseph Detsimea. We are happy to see them here, and we appreciate the thoroughness and patience with which they are answering our questions.

I am wondering whether perhaps the Special Representative, Mr. Leydin, could inform me whether there is at present any emigration from Nauru.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): There is a good deal of movement to and from Nauru because of the circumstances I outlined earlier. Each year, I suppose it is fair to say, Chinese indentured workers, tradesmen and labourers are recruited in Hong Kong and come to Nauru. Chinese indentured tradesmen and labourers who have completed their term of agreement return to Nauru, sometimes with their families, if they have had their families with them on Nauru. This is true also of the indentured workers from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. Each year, some new recruits arrive and time-expired workers return to their island home in the Gilbert and Ellis Island group.

These days, too, there is also a good deal of movement even among the European staff of the British Phosphate Commissioners and, in much less degree, among the staff of the Administration. In the Administration we have teachers who return to Australia each year and some teachers who arrive in Nauru to take up new appointments.

Nauruan traffic -- if I may so describe it -- to Australia is fairly constant, but it is made up mostly of Nauruan children going to school in Australia for the first time, or returning to Australia after having spent their school holidays in Nauru.

(Mr. Leydin, Special Representative)

Other Nauruan citizens journey to Australia to take courses under the instruction of Australian tradesmen or to follow an apprenticeship for some years.

That, I think, describes well enough the only emigration which Nauru has, but if I may crave your indulgence I will consult the Head Chief, who may be more familiar with the emigration of Gilbert and Ellice Islanders to other places in Australia.

Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America): What I really had in mind was not so much the movement back and forth of people from other countries, such as the Chinese and others that were mentioned; what I really meant to inquire was whether any Nauruans themselves go out, to stay -- to emigrate, to take up residence in another country. Are they free to do this, and do they do this in any significant numbers -- or, in what numbers?

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): There are very few cases of Nauruans going overseas for permanent residence. Off hand, I can recall only one. The movement of Nauruans is generally, I think it true to say, under the control of the Nauru Local Government Council, and a Nauruan who wishes to make a journey of that kind to another country normally, I think, seeks the approval of the Nauru Local Government Council. But this is an everyday affair, an item of business, for the Head Chief and his colleagues -- I do not intend to suggest that there are a great number going away every day, and perhaps he would be glad to give further information on this point.

Mr. DE ROBURT: As far as I know, the number is not at all significant. Indeed, like the Special Representative I can think of only one person who has emigrated from Nauru to reside elsewhere. And I would qualify that by saying that during the time when we were in Australia a month ago, that person returned to Nauru.

Mrs. ANIERSON (United States of America): I was interested to hear the Head Chief observe the other day that he believes that the young people in Nauru hold the same view about their future and the future of their island as the older generation. I know that there are great cultural differences among countries and peoples. But the Head Chief's remark struck me as somewhat unusual, particularly in view of the difficult prospects facing the younger generation in Nauru, those who will have the actual responsibility for making the plans and the decisions. Could the Head Chief discuss this matter in a little more detail? In particular, could he tell me whether there are any young members of the elected legislature? What is the average age of the members of the Nauru Local Government Council? What means do the young people have for expressing their views in a political sense?

Mr. DE ROBURT: I hope that the representative of the United States does not consider us as very old men. I think that the Trusteeship Council will remember the adviser to the Australian delegation in 1964. He was the oldest member of the Local Government Council. The other members are of the same age as we are, and perhaps even younger. I think it would be correct to say that the average age of the Nauruan Councillors is somewhere between my age and that of Councillor Detsimea.

I do not think that I have done full justice to the question of the representative of the United States. I think that I should answer her in this way. The young people do have a voice, and they attend our meetings when we discuss political and other events. We make it a point to invite the young people to attend our discussions of important matters -- and I take it that the representative of the United States and I have the same age group in mind; I am thinking of the high school and college graduates. As I have said, we invite these people to our public meetings and give them full opportunity to express their views. I can say without any hesitation that they are strongly

(Mr. De Roburt)

behind the policies which the present Council is pursuing. On the question whether the young people would like to stay elsewhere than on Nauru, I believe that the Special Representative at one time consulted the Nauruan students in Australia about whether they wished to stay there. I would ask him if he would wish to tell the Council the reactions of the students to whom he spoke.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): I should be glad to supply that information. I have no doubt that the Head Chief has asked me to do so because he knows what the answer will be.

The Head Chief is referring to the occasion of my second appointment to Nauru. Just before leaving for the island I paid a visit to the many schools in Australia being attended by Nauruan students. Those students were of various ages. Some were youngsters who had come to Australia on what is called a lower-age scholarship, granted by the Administration; they were about twelve years old, I would suppose. Others were attending technical schools. Others were there under higher-age scholarships; they had left Nauru at perhaps the intermediate level and were at the stage of anything up to the Australian matriculation standard. As the Head Chief has said, I was anxious to get some understanding, before going back to Nauru, of these people's views on the momentous decisions facing the adult Nauruans. I did not find one student who said that he was in favour of resettlement elsewhere. They all wished to stay on Nauru. They liked being in Australia; they enjoyed it. Indeed, it is a notable feature of the island that a Nauruan eagerly grasps the opportunity of going to Australia for a period, either for schooling or for other purposes. But it is a fact that during my inquiry I was unable to find one Nauruan student who said that he would wish to live elsewhere. They all wished to go back and live permanently in their homeland of Nauru.

Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America): I wish to thank the Head Chief and the Special Representative for their very enlightening answers. I should also like to assure the Head Chief that it is quite clear that neither he nor his colleagues are old men. I was interested only in learning something more about

(Mrs. Anderson, United States)

the views of the young people. I think that it is 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 share the older generation's attachment to the island, fraught with difficulties as it appears to be.

I should now like to ask the Head Chief the following question. Could he give us the approximate number of Nauruan people who benefit directly from the royalty payments for the mining of phosphate?

Mr. DE ROBERT: The number varies from time to time, because when the royalties are paid they are essentially royalties relating to land which is owned by particular people and which has been mined during the previous six months and the phosphates exported to Australia and New Zealand. The number, so far as I can remember, would be between forty and fifty families each time, and there are subdivisions in those families. This is a normal function of the Administration, and not of the Local Government Council, so I think it would be to the benefit of the United States representative if she directed her question to my colleague, the Special Representative.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): I understand the United States representative to be interested in the number of landowners who are concerned in the payment of royalties at a particular time or in a particular amount. This, of course, varies as the Head Chief has said, but some figures I have here would give a general picture which might assist the United States representative. They were prepared in expectation of the visit of the United Nations Visiting Mission on the last occasion, and these figures show that during the year payment was made directly of phosphate royalties to 593 landowners. In respect of the number of large payments made last year, I understand that about 313 Nauruan landowners were involved.

Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America): I wonder whether the Special Representative could inform us what essential public services are being provided by the Administering Authority to the Nauruan people. By essential public services, I mean such essentials as housing, water, transportation, roads, communications, sanitation and so on.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): I think I might make the position clear if I mention first the activities which the Nauru Local Government Council has under its control. Under the Housing Ordinance of the Territory, the Nauru Local Government Council is responsible for the maintenance and management of houses which have been built by the Administration or by the British Phosphate Commission, and currently, I should say, by the Council because we now have a joint project. Once the houses are built they are handed over to the Nauru Local Government Council for them to maintain and manage.

In addition, the Nauru Local Government Council purchases electricity in bulk from the British Phosphate Commission and retails it to Nauruan consumers. That activity is at present being widely expanded because, as I mentioned in my opening statement, the electricity main circling the island has now been completed and it carries electricity to all Nauruan homes, or, at least, it will shortly do so because there are some few homes yet to be wired. That is another activity under the control of the Council.

The Council also administers the Social Services Ordinance, which deals with the granting of old-age pensions, invalid pensions, unemployment benefits, child endowments and the like to the Nauruan people.

The Nauru Local Government Council looks after some of the transportation. For example, it hires buses from the Administration and provides transportation for the Nauruan population for "picture nights" and similar occasions. But the principal bus service which serves all parts of the island is maintained at present by the Administration.

Apart from that, all the usual general services are provided by the Administration. We have a number of Government departments for that purpose, and these include the Health Department, the Education Department, the Works Department, the Surveys Department and the like and all the usual government and public services other than those I have mentioned as being controlled by the Nauru Local Government are at present the responsibility of the Administration.

Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America): I should like to have a further clarification. Does this mean that the Local Government Council has a special fund which finances those services for which it is responsible? Who pays for these services?

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): Earlier, in another context, I mentioned the Nauru Royalty Trust, which is a working fund for the Council. Into it is paid the royalties received from the British Phosphate Commission once a quarter. From it, the Nauru Local Government Council draws such funds as it needs for the payment of staff and employees, purchases of material, the maintenance of houses and other matters under its control.

Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America): I wonder if the Special Representative or the Head Chief could make some projection of what the total population of Nauru will be in thirty years' time, one generation from now, and could discuss this projected figure in terms of the island's productive resources.

Mr. LEYDIN (Special Representative): A projection has been made of the likely population at some time ahead, and it has been estimated that by about 1990 the population will be about 10,000, or a little over 9,000. I would accept any projection of that kind with caution because of the rapid increase of the Nauruan population which shows no sign of abating. I believe the estimated rate of increase at the present time is about 4 per cent.

As to the possibility of providing for a population of those dimensions from the island's own resources, this is the core of the problem when the future of the Nauruan people is being considered, and it is one of the reasons why we have a long-term community fund into which money will be paid at a pretty substantial level from now on. I think I have already told the Trusteeship Council that the Nauru Local Government Council has allocated an amount of 8/6d per ton for the community Trust Fund from the 17/6d per ton royalties at present being paid. One of the purposes of that fund is, of course, to provide for the future of the Nauruan people, but there have been preliminary discussions also -- and I know the Head Chief and his people are interested in this -- about finding ways and means of establishing minor industries on the island against the time when the phosphate deposits are exhausted, and about developing such matters as tourism and the like.

Mrs. ANDERSON (United States of America): I wish to thank the Special Representative and the Head Chief for their answers. I have no further questions.

Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom): The representative of France, as my colleague, the representative of the United States, has just said, asked most of the questions I desired to ask. However, perhaps I may be permitted to put one or two questions to the Head Chief.

If he will perhaps forgive my ignorance, I should like to know whether the island of Nauru has a harbour.

Mr. DE ROBURT: There is no harbour in the sense of the word as it is understood in other parts of the world. We have a boat harbour, but it differs from harbours elsewhere.

Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom): I was thinking of the future, bearing in mind that the island depends to a tremendous extent now only on the export of phosphate but also, I think, recently to a very considerable extent on the import of foodstuffs. I should like to know, given independence in two years' time, how the Head Chief envisages the island would be served from the standpoint of exports and imports.

Mr. DE ROBURT: My people and I clearly envisage that in two years the considerable activity with respect to vessels coming back and forth on the phosphate run will continue. We see no problem in two years' time.

Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom): If I may take this question a little further, I see no problem given the vessels going back and forth. But I am not quite clear about this: Does the British Phosphate Commission itself have ships which conduct a trade at the moment?

Mr. DE ROBURT: The answer is yes.

Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom): I understand, taking this further, that you would envisage taking the ships over with the general capital equipment.

Mr. DE ROBURT: We were seeking to buy the assets. These assets have not been studied in detail as yet. But if it is necessary that they include ships, then we will buy the assets and not just take them over.

Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom): I think to a certain extent the representative of France has put this question, but if I may, I should like to put it again. As I think the Head Chief has told us, his intention would be to take over the phosphate industry on an agent basis in the event of independence. I should like to ask him to develop his reply to the representative of France, on what effect he thinks this would have on the labour force on which at present the industry depends. Does he think that the taking over of the phosphate industry would have any effect on that labour force or not?

Mr. DE ROBURT: If the representative of the United Kingdom, with respect to the labour force, is asking me from which countries we have it in mind at present to draw that force, I have no answer. But I say this: that there will be a labour force required to mine the phosphate and it would seem reasonable to use regularly available labour.

If I have not answered the question clearly, I should like to know.

Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom): I thank the Head Chief for his answer, but I think he has not quite answered my question. I understand that the available labour force at the moment comes partly from the Gilbert and Ellice Island group, and also, I think, the labour is partly Chinese -- some from Hong Kong and maybe some from other overseas Chinese populations. I was simply wondering what its status would be in the event of the island becoming independent and the phosphate industry being taken over by the independent government.

Mr. DE ROBURT: This is a question which was not fully dealt with at the recent conference in Canberra. In answer to the question of the representative of the United Kingdom, the opinion of my Council is this: we do not think that the question of independence depends upon or should have anything to do with which kind of labour is used to mine the phosphate, if and when it is handed over to us.

Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom): I have only one further question which I should like to ask. Am I correct in my understanding -- if I may put this question to the Head Chief -- that it is the Nauruan tradition to have private ownership of land?

Mr. LE ROBURT: The answer to the question is yes.

Mr. MAIN (United Kingdom): I thank the Head Chief for his helpful answers to the questions. I have no more questions to put tonight.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to draw attention to the fact that the observations of the Administering Authority on the two specific petitions concerning New Guinea to which certain members of the Council have attached considerable importance have now been circulated. If it so suited the Council, we could take those petitions at the end of our meeting tomorrow. Unless I hear objection, they will be placed on the agenda accordingly, with the observations of the Administering Authority.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to make one important announcement which affects the members of the Council. The Drafting Committee on New Guinea, which we established yesterday, will meet tomorrow at 10.30 in the morning in Conference Room 7. I would suggest that our meeting be held at 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon, when we will pursue this stage of questions and answers on the Territory of Nauru and then go on to deal with the two petitions on New Guinea.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.