

[Professor Maude]

[The Banabans in December 1945]

The Banabans were living on Bairiki (an islet on Tarawa Atoll) from 30th November until 9th December 1945. During this time, I visited Bairiki on two or three occasions and had individual conversations (in the nature of "pep talks") with groups of Banabans (probably I used an interpreter). In particular, I recall having given a speech of welcome to the assembled Banabans there, in which I said that I was pleased that they were happy and glad that they agreed with Major Kennedy that they should go on to Rabi.

It was I who saw the Banabans off when they sailed on "Triona" for Rabi [on 9th December]. This ship had been provided by Sir Albert Ellis and I recall that he declined to make any charge for this assistance.

I recall that the Banabans were in a bad state when I saw them on these occasions - and would refer to the comments in paragraphs 32-34 of my Memorandum of 2nd September 1946. (In fact, my wife was in more continuous touch with the Banabans while they were on Bairiki; she was constantly active in assisting Dr Tutu Tekanene with helping their womenfolk with the provision of medical aid.)

The re-assembly of the Banabans following the war was under the charge of Major Kennedy, although I had instructed him to set it in hand and had, under instructions from the High Commissioner, arranged shipping with Sir Albert Ellis. In the post-war conditions, there were far too many calls on my time in the work of Resident Commissioner - much travelling, many necessary contacts with the American forces - to have permitted me to conduct the arrangements myself. From December 1945, Major Kennedy was engaged in settling in the Banabans on Rabi. Mr Maynard (of BPC) visited them on Rabi in March 1946; Mr Macdonald and I first went there in June 1946 (in connection with the complaints against Major Kennedy).

I should make it clear that at this time I was acting as Resident Commissioner of the C&E Islands Colony and, during the period when the Banabans were on Bairiki,

was based on Betio (another islet on Tarawa Atoll and at that time the base of the American forces). I was therefore not living on the same islet as the Banabans. A few weeks after the Banabans had, as described, left for Rabi I myself left Tarawa, first for London (for consultation with government officials there), then going on to the United States. After that, I went on to Fiji, where I worked for some time under the directions of the High Commission.