

COPY.

GILBERT AND ELLICE ISLANDS COLONY.

Office of the Resident Commissioner,
Ocean Island,
22nd December, 1937.

Gilbert & Ellice.

Confidential. (2)

Sir,

With reference to the second paragraph of my confidential despatch of the 26th November I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a further report by Mr. H.E. Maude on the subject of his recent tour of inspection of the islands of the Phoenix Group with a view to ascertaining their potential suitability for the settlement of the surplus population of certain islands in the Gilbert and Ellice Groups. Mr. Maude was accompanied on his tour by a body of selected representatives of the various island communities interested in the scheme.

2. Mr. Maude's extremely able and informative report describes in full detail the results of his investigations and no further observations on my part would appear to be called for pending the receipt of his final report, in which he proposes to embody his considered views and recommendations on the practical aspects of the settlement scheme and the possibility of its inauguration in the near future.

I etc.,

(Signed). J. C. Barley.

Resident Commissioner.

His Excellency,

The High Commissioner for the Western Pacific.

Office of the High Commissioner

for the Western Pacific,

Suva, Fiji,

18th January, 1938.

Gilbert & Ellice.

Confidential.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your confidential despatches of the 26th November and (2) of the 22nd December, the latter enclosing Mr. Maude's extremely interesting and informative report on his recent visit to the Phoenix Islands in connection with the proposed settlement scheme.

2. I wish to congratulate Mr. Maude upon the successful result of his expedition and upon a very able report.

3. In my telegram No. 12 of the 15th January I have enquired when the further report upon the practical aspects of the scheme should reach Suva; and have suggested the desirability of considering the allotment of separate islands to the adherents of the different Missions operating in the Colony.

4. I consider that it is of importance that

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His Honour

The Resident Commissioner,

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

- 2 -

the earliest possible effect should be given to a scheme of settlement as proposed, and shall be glad if everything possible may be done to expedite matters. I propose to approach Messrs. Burns, Philp and Company, Limited, immediately on the question of the surrender of the unoccupied islands and land included in their lease.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) A. F. Richards

High Commissioner.

Government House,

Fiji,

12. 2. 38.

My dear Maude,

I have been so pleased with your reports on the Phoenix Islands and also your general survey of Christmas Island, Washington & the rest, that I feel I ought to write personally & express my appreciation. They are very good indeed & leave little more to be said. I have written to Burns Philp & have told them we want the islands back & hope to arrange it amicably. The S. of S. is also being asked to give general sanction to the scheme & to financing its initial stages from surplus funds. That is all I want from him at present. It seems clear to me that the only person to take charge is yourself. I hope that you will be willing to do so. The whole scheme is yours in origin, in conception & in practical elaboration. It is only fitting that you should see it through. I should propose if the S. of S. agrees to the scheme being proceeded with & financed from Surplus funds, to give you carte blanche up to x thousand pounds to make what arrangements you chose without having to get sanction for anything. You might sometimes want help & at intervals you would inform the R.C. & myself about your progress but for all practical purposes you would be invited to use the powers of the High Commissioner without reference. I am sure that no one could make a real success of the job without such ample powers & independence.

Christmas Island will be a later development.

For

For some months now I have been squeezing Rougier & as time goes on I shall hope to get him out. As you say, if we could buy the place at a reasonable price it would be a most suitable use of surplus funds. The matter of recession of the Tokelaus will also be taken up simultaneously with approval of the settlement scheme but not so as to hold it up. These negotiations generally take an interminable time. I propose to discuss it all with the R.C. in May when he visits Suva. In June I am off in a sloop to look at Christmas Island and Washington - inter alia. If it were not for wasting so much of your time getting to I fro I should have liked you to come too.

With best wishes to you both,

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) A. F. Richards.

Duplicate

WESTERN PACIFIC.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Office of the High Commissioner
for the Western Pacific,
Suva, Fiji,
14th February, 1938.

Sir,

I have the honour to address you on the subject of colonization of the Phoenix Islands by transferring the surplus population of some of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. The subject is no new one. In his Western Pacific despatch No. 310 of the 19th November, 1931, my predecessor reported his efforts to find an outlet for Gilbertese and Ellice Islanders. The question has been studied for some years by Mr. H.E. Maude and it was at his suggestion that the Acting High Commissioner made the proposal in his telegram of the 29th July, 1936. Your telegraphic reply of the 21st August asked for a practical explanation of ways and means, and the return of Mr. Maude to the Western Pacific service has given him the opportunity of translating his idea into practice.

2. My telegram of the 21st January, 1937, was succeeded by a discussion with the Resident Commissioner which left me with the impression that no progress could be expected until an officer known and trusted by the Gilbertese could be seconded for the work. The return of Mr. Maude in July was therefore very opportune. During my tour of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands last July - August I was impressed by the genuineness of the requests made to me in many of the Southern Gilberts. The people said they understood there were many empty islands in the Pacific under my jurisdiction and begged to be given the chance to occupy them. I promised to

arrange

The Rt. Hon., The Secretary of State for the Colonies,
Downing Street.

arrange a preliminary visit of inspection for some of their leaders and instructed the Resident Commissioner to send Mr. Maude in H.M.C.S. "Nimanoa" as soon as he returned to Ocean Island. The remainder of the story is told by Mr. Maude's reports.

3. I annex for your information:-

(a) Report by Mr. Maude, dated 19th November, 1937, on the causes and extent of over-population and "land hunger" in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

(b) Report by Mr. Maude, dated 3rd December, 1937, on his visit to the Phoenix Islands.

(c) Report by Mr. H.E. Maude, dated 6th January, 1938, on the settlement scheme for the Phoenix Islands, with practical details and estimates.

(d) Memorandum by Mr. H.E. Maude, dated 19th January, 1938, on the suggestion that it might be possible to allot separate islands to Protestant and Roman Catholic immigrants.

(e) Report by Mr. H.E. Maude, dated 19th January, 1938, on the suitability for settlement purposes of other Central Pacific atolls irrespective of the Phoenix Group.

4. I consider that Mr. Maude's reports are models of their kind and deserving of permanent record in the Colonial Office. I am having them printed locally in due course.

5. My immediate object in forwarding them is to ask for your general authority to proceed on the lines indicated by him. I propose to pay for the settlement of the Phoenix Islands from surplus balances of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony and your approval would be construed into general approval of such expenditure up to £6,000, plus a possible addition of £1,500 in resuming the occupation licence of Messrs. Burns, Philp and Company, Limited.

6. Messrs. Burns Philp and Company purchased in 1926 the rights of the Samoa Shipping and Trading Company, Limited, in this connection for £2,000. The Occupation Licence comprises rights over Sydney, Hull, Gardner, Canton Phoenix, and Birnie Islands and runs for 87 years from 1914 - subject to certain conditions. I am already in correspondence with Messrs. Burns Philp and Company, Limited, concerning this Government's desire to resume full possession of the islands and I have some hope of an amicable arrangement because I gathered from a personal interview with Mr. James Burns on August 31st, 1937, that their interest in the Phoenix Group was not very deep.

7. I invite attention to paragraph 31, Conclusion, of Mr. Maude's report of the 6th January. Time is the essence of success and I therefore confine my present recommendation to a request for your general authority to proceed. If I am fortunate enough to obtain that I realize that although the responsibility will be mine it will be necessary to second Mr. Maude for this work and to give him, as I propose to do, the fullest powers to proceed without constant reference either to the Resident Commissioner or to me. He would merely report progress at convenient intervals and possibly at times solicit further help or support. I feel very strongly that this is a rare opportunity of allowing an officer peculiarly fitted for the task to undertake constructive work of permanent value in the Western Pacific.

8. There are two further points in these reports, (1) the suggested return of the Union (Tokelau) group from New Zealand jurisdiction to that of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, and (ii) Mr. Maude's comments on Fanning, Washington, and Christmas Islands. Jurisdiction

over

over the Union Islands was assumed by New Zealand in 1926 and I shall take up (i) in due course. In regard to (ii) I have arranged to pay a personal visit to these three islands as well as to the Phoenix Group and others in June of this year. I shall then set on foot the necessary enquiries in Fanning and Washington Islands, concerning which I have already spoken with Mr. James Burns, and I shall be able to form a better opinion of conditions on Christmas Island. In the meantime I have stiffened the control over Monsieur Rougier's operations and hope in time induce in him a willingness to sell his rights back to Government. There can be no question that the resumption of Christmas Island must be the ultimate solution of the Gilbertese population problem and I foresee for it a marvellous future as the new home of the Gilbertese race. But a delay of several years is likely to ensue before that dream can come true and in the meantime it would be lamentable to lose the lucky coincidence of an officer of Mr. Maude's calibre and the present enthusiasm of the natives. I regard the colonification of the Phoenix Group as a half-way house to the ultimate goal of Christmas Island.

9. If you can see your way to giving me a telegraphic reply to this despatch I should be grateful.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed). A. F. Richards.

High Commissioner.

Duplicate

Telegram.

From the High Commissioner, Suva,
To the Resident Commissioner, Ocean Island.

No. 186/50.

Date: 14th February, 1938.

Rec'd. 15th Feb., 1938.

Confidential.

Your despatch 25th January

Phoenix Islands settlement scheme - I have recommended Maude's proposal to Secretary of State and requested general authorities to proceed and finance from surplus funds. Am also negotiating with Burns, Philp & Co. Ltd. for immediate resumption of occupation licence. I propose, if you concur, to appoint Maude to be in charge of scheme and to give him "carte blanche" within certain financial limits.

You will doubtless take steps to inform the natives that Government is proceeding with the project as soon as arrangements have been made with present lessees.

I agree with you that Maude's reports are excellent. Please convey my appreciation.

High Commissioner.

Duplicate

Telegram.

To the High Commissioner, Suva,

From the Resident Commissioner, Ocean Island.

No. 193/40.

Date: 16th February, 1938.

Confidential.

Your telegram No.50.

I consider Maude only officer available with necessary qualifications and ability to take charge of scheme and have strongly recommended his secondment for this duty in my despatch of 8th February in transmit, also resumption of Hull and Sydney "in toto", either by negotiation or direct action, at earliest possible date and financing of project, if necessary, from surplus funds.

I will inform natives in accordance with Your Excellency's instructions on my forthcoming visit to Southern Gilbert Islands.

I suggest inserting sum of £5,000 provisionally to meet initial cost of undertaking in draft Estimates which I am about to close. Do you agree, please?

Resident.

Duplicate

GILBERT AND ELLICE ISLANDS COLONY.

OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER,
OCEAN ISLAND.

17th February, 1938.

L.C., G.I.

No. Confidential.

Sir,

With reference to your confidential report of the 6th January and other connected reports which you have recently submitted on the question of the alleviation of existing over-population and "land-hunger" in certain parts of the Colony, I am directed by the High Commissioner to convey to you His Excellency's appreciation of the thorough manner in which you have carried out your duties and the excellence of your reports.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant

J. C. Barley

Resident Commissioner.

I. E. Maude, Esq.,

Native Lands Commissioner,

Gilbert Islands,

at Ocean Island.

Telegram.

From the High Commissioner, Suva,

To the Resident Commissioner, Ocean Island.

No. 211/59.

Date: 21st February, 1938.

Rec'd. P.M.

Confidential.

Your telegram No.40.

Please make provision in Draft Estimates increasing amount to £7500 to allow for possibility of compensation being necessary for cancellation of licence - expenditure is to be met from surplus funds.

High Commissioner.

Ocean Island,

18th March, 1938.

Dear Sir Arthur,

Thank you very much indeed for your extremely kind letter which has just reached me. I was very glad indeed to hear that you were pleased with my reports and had decided that the scheme should be proceeded with forthwith. I must confess that I was relieved also as I had worried lest in more than one place, and particularly in the report on Christmas and neighbouring islands, I had exceeded as it were my "terms of reference".

I had already told Mr. Barley that if Your Excellency so decided I should be very glad to carry on with the scheme until its completion. I genuinely believe the whole migration project to be a practicable proposition and one which will be of incalculable benefit to the islanders, and with the very generous powers which you propose I feel sure that it will be possible to complete the settlement without undue delay. The scheme has also a fascination of its own owing to the uniqueness of many of the problems to be faced, and it should prove an effective answer to those critics who have, particularly in the past, predicted the gradual dying out of the Pacific races under Colonial Office rule. A great deal will depend on who is detailed to assist in the scheme as I am, alas, no hand at building cisterns or the like. However I hope to apply for the temporary services of

a half-caste overseer and a Cadet who appears to possess special aptitude for such work. Should it be possible to spare them when the time comes I have every confidence that we shall be able to manage the whole scheme, including the cistern building, rough surveying, etc., without the need of any other outside assistance. The new Cadets have studied surveying and if rectangular blocks of land are marked out with numbered cement plugs at each corner it should, I believe, be possible to make a rough survey sufficiently good for all practical purposes.

I sincerely hope that ^{Your Excellency's negotiations} ~~it will be found possible to arrange~~ for the return of the Tokelau Islands, ^{my hope successful} - it would solve so many practical problems. It would seem that two ~~main~~ difficulties may prove to be the sentimental attachment which some of the islanders apparently have towards Samoa, partly as the place from whence their missionaries came, and the fact that this Colony quite neglected the Group when we had it. At the same time there can be little doubt that at the present time this Colony can do a very great deal to help the Tokelau Islanders and it would be a great pity if memories of past neglect and a rather nebulous sentimental attachment to Samoa should be successful in preventing them from re-joining this Colony and participating in the very definite advantages which can ^{now} be offered them.

You mention that you had very kindly thought of taking me to Christmas, Washington, and the other islands. It has long been my ambition to visit these atolls and I should indeed have

dearly liked to have had the honour of accompanying Your Excellency but I realize the practical difficulties involved.

My wife is at present in Auckland having her first-born and we are both hoping that she may be back in time to accompany me or join me later. She, like myself, realizes that you are giving me a great chance to do some really useful work and, being temperamentally so suited to just that kind of life, she is very worried lest she may miss it.

Once again I must thank Your Excellency for your very encouraging letter which is all the more appreciated as we feel that I may be justifying your initial kindness in allowing me back to the Pacific.

Yours sincerely,

TELEGRAM.

From:- The Acting Resident Commissioner, Ocean Island (Mr. Garvey),

To:- The Commissioner for Native Lands, Gilbert Islands, at Beru Island.

26th May, 1938.

Rec'd: 26th.

26th May - Confidential - No. 1 - Your letter 19th January,
Phoenix Islands settlement scheme - In view of the difficulties
obtaining the surrender of Hull and Sydney do you consider modified
scheme embracing the remaining islands practicable, if so telegraph
briefly and supplement by report.

Garvey.

TELEGRAM.

From:- The Commissioner for Native Lands, Gilbert Islands, at Beru Island,
To:- The Acting Resident Commissioner, Ocean Island (Mr. Garvey).

28th May, 1938.

28th May - Confidential - Your telegram 26th May - Gardner could almost certainly support moderate population in 5 to 7 years. Result of planting Canton unpredictable. Experimental planting on both might be preferable to total abandonment of scheme which would have unfortunate effect on native confidence but unless Hull and Sydney are heavily taxed it would seem that expense of maintaining administration and communications would be out of proportion to benefits.

Maude.

TELEGRAM.

From:- The Secretary of State, London.

To:- The High Commissioner, Suva, Fiji.

No. 49.

2nd June, 1938.

Confidential. Your despatch of the 14th February, your despatch of the 25th March, Confidential. Colonization. I desire to express my appreciation of the valuable services which Maude has rendered in this matter. I welcome proposals and approve them in principle in regard to Hull, Sydney, Gardner Islands. As regards Canton it is necessary for reasons of which you are aware to reserve a decision for the time being. As regards finance I am making enquiries whether the Colonial Development Advisory Committee will be prepared to recommend a grant or alternatively whether if they are unable to do so it would be possible to raise a small loan with the Crown Agents for the Colonies. In the meantime it may be necessary to finance scheme from general reserves of the Colony.

As regards Burns, Philp and Company's claim against the United States Government I am taking the matter up with the Foreign Office and will telegraph as soon as possible.

As regards Union Islands I presume you have not

already communicated with the New Zealand Government and I should wish to be consulted before any action is taken as it may be desirable that approach should be made through the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs in the first instance. I will telegraph further as soon as possible.

Secretary of State.

Extract from Confidential despatch from the Secretary of State to the High Commissioner dated the 24th June, 1938.

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3. As stated in my telegram of the 2nd June, I welcome the colonisation proposals and I wish to endorse the tribute paid by you in your despatch of the 14th of February to the work which Mr. Maude has accomplished. The care which he has devoted to the examination of the project, and the comprehensive and lucid reports which he has furnished on all its aspects, have been of great value, and I trust that they will eventually be rewarded by the successful fruition of the schemes which he has prepared.

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GILBERT AND ELLICE ISLANDS COLONY.

Tarawa,

25th November, 1938.

Misc.

No. 236.

Sir,

I have the honour to appoint you, with the approval of His Excellency the High Commissioner, as Officer in Charge of the Phoenix Islands Settlement Scheme and Administrative Officer, Phoenix Islands District, as from the 16th November.

2. You will continue to draw salary and consolidated travelling allowance at the same rates as those appertaining to your post of Native Lands Commissioner, Gilbert Islands, and you will hold the above appointment conjointly with your substantive post.

3. You are already cognizant of the scheme for the settlement of Gilbertese on islands in the Phoenix Group and you will conduct the programme of settlement in accordance with the approved lines which have already been laid down in the printed Report furnished by you regarding the colonization of the Phoenix Islands. You will, however, be subject to such instructions as you may receive from me from time to time, regarding any alterations or amplifications of the original programme. You should submit, at periodic intervals, which should not be greater than 3 months, reports on the progress of the scheme, for the information of the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State.

4. You

H.E. Maude Esq.,
at Tarawa.

4. You are aware that a sum of £14,000 sterling has been granted by the Colonial Development Fund to finance the scheme. This sum will be controlled by the Treasurer, and in the first instance you will be issued with an imprest of £200 to cover the incidental expenses of the first expedition.

5. Owing to political considerations it is imperative that advance parties of natives should be landed at Gardner, Hull and Sydney Islands at the earliest opportunity and you should make every endeavour to expedite the equipping and despatch of the first expedition. For this purpose R.C.S. "Nimanoa" is being placed at your disposal and will be subject to your orders from the date on which you leave Tarawa for Ocean Island to collect the stores and equipment required.

6. Mr. G.B. Gallagher, Cadet Officer, has been detailed to assist you by joining the first expedition. I am furthermore arranging for the appointment of Mr. J.P. Jones, at present Administrative Officer on Hull Island to join the Settlement Scheme as Overseer and Surveyor. Mr. Jones will be under your direct orders and will be available for employment on whatever work you consider necessary. He will receive salary at the rate of £29. 3s. 4d per mensem in respect of his services as Government Overseer, Phoenix Islands Settlement Scheme. His appointment will be on a temporary monthly basis only.

7. In your capacity as Administrative Officer, Phoenix Islands District Mr. Jones will be
subordinate



subordinate to you and will be subject to your orders and instructions.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant

Acting Resident Commissioner.