

STATEMENT OF INTENTIONS 1947.

COPY.

The following is a statement of the Intentions of Government with regard to the future of the Banaban Community on Rabi Island, with special reference to their lands and funds and other matters incidental thereto, and is drawn up on the understanding, which a majority of the Banabans hereinafter affirm, that they desire to reside on Rabi and regard it as their headquarters and home.

(A). As regards lands on Ocean Island -

(1). Such decision to reside on Rabi Island shall in no way affect any rights to lands possessed by the Banabans on Ocean Island;

(2). The title to all worked out phosphate lands which have, or may in future, come into possession of the Crown shall revert to the Banabans.

(B). As regards lands on Rabi Island -

(3). The ownership of Rabi Island, with the exception of a Fiji Government reserve of 50 acres at Katherine Bay, shall be vested in the Rabi Island Council on behalf of the Banaban Community resident in Rabi Island, subject to the creation at Nuka of a Government Station of an area to be agreed upon by the Island Council in consultation with the Banaban Adviser;

(4). The division of lands on Rabi Island, and the system of land tenure and inheritance shall be in accordance with legislation to be enacted by the Rabi Island Council;

(5). The ownership of all the assets of the former estate, including stock, tools, houses, etc, shall be vested in the Rabi Island Council on behalf of the Banaban Community resident here and no such assets shall be disposed of except in such manner as may be jointly agreed upon by the Banaban Adviser and the Council.

(C).

(C). As regards Banaban Funds -

(6). The Banaban Royalty Trust and Provident Fund shall be amalgamated into one fund to be called the Banaban Fund which, save for the payment of annuities as at present, shall be used exclusively for the benefit of the Banaban Community on Rabi Island;

(7). The management of the Fund shall be vested in a Banaban Fund Trust Board consisting of the Banaban Adviser as Chairman and of not more than five members of the Rabi Island Council elected by the Council as members; such Board shall be empowered to deal with problems connected with annuities and like matters. Decisions of the Board in such matters shall be subject to the approval of the Governor or of such Officer as he may appoint for the purpose;

(8). Residence on Rabi Island for more than six months in each financial year shall be an essential qualification for all members of the Banaban Fund Trust Board;

(9). The Banaban Fund Trust Board shall draw up annual Accounts and Estimated showing, inter alia, the revenue accruing from royalties and interest from the Banaban Fund, and the expenditure on different services. Such Accounts and Estimates shall be submitted to the Council for the consideration and when passed by it, shall be forwarded by the Banaban Adviser to the Governor of Fiji for his approval. The Accounts and Estimates shall be published and shall be made available to the Banaban Community.

(10). The Board shall also deal with all problems arising from the Landholders' Fund. The capital sum invested in the Landholders' Fund shall be handed to the Banaban Fund Trust Board for investment as Trustees on behalf.

behalf of each landholder, who shall have the same rights, in accordance with Banaban customary law, over his invested capital funds as he would have had over the lands which such capital funds represent. The Board shall also deal with all problems arising from the Landholders' Fund. Decisions of the Board in such matters shall be . . . subject to the approval of the Governor or of such Officer as he may appoint for the purpose.

(11). At a public meeting of the Banaban Community held at Rabi Island on the 9th May 1947, it was agreed at the unanimous request of those present, that His Excellency the Governor of Fiji should be petitioned to permit the withdrawal by individual landholders of part or the whole of their capital invested in the Landholders' Fund for the purpose of the effecting permanent improvements to their landholdings on Rabi Island, the prior consent of the Governor of Fiji being required in each instance. The meeting was informed that an amendment to the present legislation in the Gilbert and Ellice Island Colony would probably be necessary, in the event of this proposal receiving the approval of the Governor.

(D). As regards Annuities -

(12). The payment of Annuities, in accordance with the terms of the 1937 Annuities Settlement, shall continue unless varied by the Governor of Fiji consequent upon recommendations made by the Banaban Fund Trust Board;

(13). Such annuities shall be payable in Fiji currency to those resident in Fiji and in Australian currency to those resident elsewhere.

(E). As regards visits to Ocean Island -

(14). The Banabans shall be permitted, subject to the provisions of the laws of Fiji and further subject to shipping being available, to travel freely between Rabi Island

Island and Ocean Island and, subject to the rights, of the British Phosphate Commissioners over any lands purchased or leased to them, to reside on Ocean Island.

(F). As regards Taxation on Rabi Island -

(15). The Banabans on Rabi Island shall be subject to the laws of Fiji, including the laws relating to Taxation, in the same manner as other residents of Fiji. The Banabans will consequently be eligible to receive all normal services provided by the Government of Fiji on the same terms and conditions as such services are provided for other residents of Fiji.

(C). As regards the Banaban Adviser -

(16). The Banaban Adviser hereinbefore mentioned shall be an Officer of the Government of Fiji, appointed by the Governor to advise the Banaban Community resident on Rabi Island on all matters connected with its social and economic advancement. He shall be paid from the Banaban Fund at such salary as may be fixed from time to time by the Governor, after consultation with the Island Council and the Governor shall have power to vary the terms of, or terminate, his appointment.

The above.

The above statement of the intentions of Government have been read out and explained fully to the Banaban Community a majority of which has, by voting in a secret ballot, the results of which are recorded in the appendix hereto, signified its acceptance of the same.

(Signed) H.E. Maude.
Resident Commissioner,
Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony,
for the High Commissioner for the
Western Pacific.

(Signed) P.D. Macdonald,
Acting Assistant Colonial Secretary,
for the Governor of Fiji

(Signed) F.G.L. Holland.
Administrative Officer,
Rabi Island.

(Signed) Bauro Ratieta.
Assistant Administrative Officer,
Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony,
(Interpreter in Gilbertese language)

(Signed) Iete Eri.
Rotan
Kabanti

Rewi Kaibuariki
Akeriba
Tebuke
Kaitu
Keangibo
Tarakai Kamarie
Katarake
Mataio
Tekai Arekibo
Auriaria
K.Ueanimaraki
Tetebano
Tekenimatagg
Naikara Kake
Teremita
Ikamawa
Tito Airu.

Representatives of the
Banaban Community.

Appendix.

The following are the results of a vote taken by secret ballot, held in Rabi Island on the 10th and 11th May, 1947, at which 318 (94.6% out of 336 of the population over the age of 18 noted; the voting was supervised by the undersigned:

For making Rabi their headquarters and home -	270	(84.9%).
Against making Rabi their headquarters and home -	48	(15.1%).
Majority in favour -	222.	

(Signed) H.E. Maude

Resident Commissioner,
Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony,
for the High Commissioner for the
Western Pacific

(Signed) Iete Eri.

(Signed) P.D. Macdonald.
Acting Assistant Colonial Secretary,
for the Governor of Fiji.

(Signed) Rotan.

(Signed) F.G.L. Holland.
Administrative Officer,
Rabi Island.

(Signed) Kabanti.

(Signed)

Bauro Ratieta.

Assistant Administrative Officer,
Gilbert and Ellice Island Colony.

(Interpreter in Gilbertese language)

(Signed) Akeriba.