

WESTERN PACIFIC HIGH COMMISSION

Pitcairn Island,

24th December, 1940.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward a copy of the "Rules for the control of the Pitcairn Island Public School", as made by the Island Council under Regulation 6 (n) of the Pitcairn Island Government Regulations, 1940. The rules are based on the draft regulations forwarded by the Secretary to the Australasian Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on the 30th May, 1938, amended where necessary in accordance with the suggestions enclosed with the Acting Director of Education's minute of the 23rd June, 1938. While these draft regulations, as amended, have been taken as the basis for the Council's rules, they have been freely modified or added to whenever it seemed desirable to do so, in order to bring them into line with conditions and requirements in the island and make them a real practical help towards the efficient running of the school.

2. On my arrival in the island I found the resident Seventh-day Adventist teacher, Mr F.P. Ward, distinctly opposed to any government control or supervision over what he considered to be purely a church school. I understand that, soon after my arrival, Mr Ward sent a letter to the Australasian Union Conference in which he

The Secretary,

Western Pacific High Commission,

Suva, FIJI.

Enclosure 1.

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in which he stated that an attempt would probably be made to turn their church school into a government institution and that once this was done there would be nothing to prevent the introduction of Roman Catholics, under the guise of government school teachers, and the eventual loss of their religious freedom.

3. After I had completed my main work of preparing the new constitution and code of laws, I commenced a series of talks with Mr Ward as a result of which he was soon convinced that the Pitcairn Island public school has always, from its very foundation, been a government institution, under the control of the local administration. I assured him that the government had no intention of altering the existing state of affairs but were merely anxious to draw up, in conjunction with the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a body of rules which would put the control of the local school on a proper business-like footing and enable him to receive the maximum assistance from both the local administration and an efficiently functioning School Committee. I also made it clear to Mr Ward that the government were pleased that the Seventh-day Adventist Church had provided an efficient resident Head Teacher for the Pitcairn Island School and that as long as they continued to do so the government had no intention whatsoever of sending any other teacher to the island.

4. Once Mr Ward's fears had been proved to have been groundless he cooperated most readily in the work of preparing the new rules, and stated that he regretted having written to the Australasian Union Conference before becoming cognizant

before becoming cognizant of the true status of the school. On completion, the draft rules were gone through in detail by both Mr Ward and myself, several minor changes being made, after which they were placed before a joint meeting of the Island Council and the School Committee and unanimously approved by both bodies.

5. The 44 rules, as finally passed by the Council, have been divided into eight parts for easy reference. While a detailed discussion of each rule would appear to be unnecessary, brief notes on some of the main changes made in the final revision form Enclosure II to this letter. Under Regulation 6 (2) of the Pitcairn Island Government Regulations, 1940, the High Commissioner has power to amend or revoke any rule at his discretion.

Enclosure II.

6. Although all controversy regarding the former status of the local school has, I believe, long since ceased, I am nevertheless enclosing, for purposes of record, a copy of the School Laws which have been in force for at any rate the last half century. They were drawn up at the instance of Captain Rookes, of H.M.S. "Champion", in 1893 and continued to be in force until the passing of the rules now being forwarded. Mr Ward had not seen these rules until I showed him the original text in the Pitcairn Island Civil Recorder.

Enclosure III.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) H.E. Maude.

High Commission Representative,

Pitcairn Island.

Rules for the control of the Pitcairn Island
Public School, made by the Island Council under
Regulation 6 (n) of the Pitcairn Island Government
Regulations, 1940.

Part I - The School Committee.

- School Committee.** 1. The School Committee shall consist of the Chief Magistrate, who shall be ex-officio Chairman, and four other members, of whom three shall be appointed by the Officers of the Pitcairn Island Church and one by the Island Council.
- Term of office.** 2. Members of the Committee shall hold office for such term not exceeding one year as the Officers of the Pitcairn Island Church, in the case of those members appointed by them, or the Island Council, in the case of the member appointed by that body, shall prescribe. They shall be eligible for re-appointment.
- Vacancy to be filled.** 3. Any vacancy occurring in the Committee shall be forthwith filled by the authority responsible for the original appointment.
- Meetings of the Committee.** 4. The Committee shall meet at least once every four months, on a day to be fixed by the Chairman.
- Absence of Chairman from meeting.** 5. In the event of the Chairman being absent from any meeting the members present shall elect one of their number to preside, and such presiding member shall have at such meeting all the powers of the Chairman.
- Four members to form a quorum.** 6. No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Committee unless at least four members are present.
7. Every question

Mode of deciding questions before the Committee.

7. Every question before the Committee shall be decided by the majority of the votes of the members present. The Chairman shall have an original vote and, in the event of the votes on any question being equal, a second or casting vote.

Secretary to the Committee.

8. Unless some other person be at any time appointed by the School Committee, the Island Secretary shall act as Secretary to the Committee. The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Committee, take minutes of its proceedings, conduct all correspondence, take charge of and preserve all papers relating to the business of the Committee, and perform such other duties as may be required by the Chairman.

Treasurer and Auditor.

9. Whenever necessary, the Island Postmaster shall act as Treasurer and the Island Secretary as Auditor to the Committee.

Minutes of proceedings.

10. Minutes of the proceedings of every meeting shall be regularly entered in a book to be kept for that purpose and at every meeting the minutes of the preceding meeting shall be read, confirmed, and signed by the Chairman. A copy of the minutes of proceedings of each meeting shall be forwarded through the Chief Magistrate to the High Commissioner.

Powers and duties of Committee.

11. The powers and duties of the School Committee shall be:-

(a) to see that all school buildings, out-houses, fences, and grounds are kept in good order and repair, and that proper sanitary conveniences are provided;

(b) to make

- (b) to make arrangements through the local government for the carrying out by public work of all building and repair work that cannot be performed by the school children or voluntary labour;
- (c) to make arrangements for the provision of adequate areas for playgrounds and instruction in gardening;
- (d) to promote the physical health of the children;
- (e) to see that the children develop good habits of order and tidiness outside school hours;
- (f) to ensure that the parents or guardians of the children provide them with proper clean clothing;
- (g) to encourage organized games and competitions by personally assisting and by arranging for the provision of trophies and prizes;
- (h) to arrange for the provision of all local equipment and material required for instruction in handicrafts;
- (i) to visit the parents or guardians of any children attending school irregularly in order to instruct them in the necessity for regular and prompt attendance;
- (j) to develop the school as a community social centre;
- (k) to give their advice on any matter concerning the school referred to them by the Head Teacher;
- (l) to give their advice on any educational matter concerning the children referred to them by the High Commissioner;
- (m) to keep such records and accounts as may be prescribed by the High Commissioner, and to prepare and submit to His Excellency any reports and returns concerning

- returns concerning education that he may require;
- (n) subject to the consent of the Island Council, to collect funds and dispose of them for school purposes; and
- (o) to submit to the High Commissioner at the end of every year an audited statement showing receipts and expenditure of any money received.

Committee to visit school.

12. The School Committee shall visit the school at least once every four months, check the school records and registers, inspect the sanitary and structural condition of the school, and report their findings to the High Commissioner in accordance with Rule 10.

Reference to the Island Council.

13. The School Committee shall have the right to refer any case of special difficulty to the Island Council.

Part II - School Discipline.

Punctuality and cleanliness.

14. The operations of the school shall be conducted with punctuality and regularity. Habits of order, tidiness, neatness, and cleanliness shall be encouraged among the children both by precept and personal example and, whenever necessary, enforced by school rule. Teachers are responsible for keeping the school rooms and furniture clean and arranged in an orderly manner.

Order and conduct.

15. Teachers shall instil into the minds of the children the necessity for orderly and modest behaviour, and for obedience to the teachers and school rules. The children shall be trained to respect the property of others and to be honest, truthful, attentive under instruction and conscientious in the discharge of their duties.

duties.

School Rules.

16. The Head Teacher shall have power to make School Rules in consultation with the School Committee. Copies of all School Rules shall be forwarded, through the Chief Magistrate, to the High Commissioner.

Children to obey School Rules.

17. Every child shall conform strictly to the School Rules and show unquestioning obedience to their teachers.

School sports and physical exercises.

18. Every child shall take part in school sports and physical exercises unless he is physically unfit to do so.

Corporal punishment.

19. In all cases where the Head Teacher considers corporal punishment to be necessary it shall be inflicted by himself or by an assistant with his approval.

Suspension.

20. A child may, for gross insolence, persistent disobedience, profanity, or immoral conduct, be forthwith removed from the school by the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher shall report his action without delay to the School Committee, who shall inform the parents of the child concerned.

Readmission of suspended child.

21. No child who has been removed from the school under Rule 20 may be readmitted without the sanction of the School Committee.

Infectious diseases.

22. The attendance of any child suffering from a contagious, infectious, or offensive disease may be temporarily suspended by the Head Teacher.

Playground supervision.

23. Teachers shall carefully supervise the conduct of children in the playgrounds and see that their behaviour is orderly when

is orderly when proceeding to school or returning from it.

Religious views of children and parents to be respected.

24. Nothing shall be said or done by any teacher in a child's hearing or presence, calculated to offend the religious views of the child or his parents.

Part III - The School Term and Daily Routine.

Terms and holidays.

25. The dates and duration of the school year, terms and vacations shall be fixed by the Head Teacher, subject to the approval of the School Committee; provided that the school shall be open for at least 380 half-days in each year, and further provided that not less than five full weeks shall be given for the Christmas vacation and not less than eight weeks during the year.

School hours.

26. Not less than five hours shall be spent at lessons each school day, the times of instruction being adjusted to suit the convenience of the parents and teachers.

Secular instruction.

27. Secular instruction shall be given to pupils in Classes 1 and 2 for not less than four hours and in the remaining classes for not less than four and a half hours each school day, exclusive of any recess but inclusive of periods spent in Practical Agriculture, Physical Training, and Organized Games.

Time-table to be forwarded to High Commissioner.

28. A copy of the time-table showing the times at which the various lessons are taken, and by which teacher each lesson is given, shall be forwarded annually to the High Commissioner for approval. The periods for religious instruction shall be shown on the time-table.

The Sabbath Day.

29. No school shall be held on the Sabbath Day and care shall be taken that all pupils leave the school grounds in ample

grounds in ample time to make their preparations for the Sabbath.

Part IV - Attendance.

Age limits for attending school.

30. No child under the age of six years shall be admitted and no pupil shall be allowed to remain at school after the end of the school year in which he reaches the age of sixteen years except with the consent of the School Committee. The Head Teacher shall have power to raise the age of entry or lower the age at which pupils must leave school when he is satisfied that the staff is insufficient to teach efficiently the numbers normally attending.

Definition of irregular attendance.

31. For the purpose of Regulation 92 of the Pitcairn ^{Island} Government Regulations, 1940, a child's attendance shall be deemed to be irregular during any month if he has failed to attend school during 90 per cent of the maximum openings of the school for that month.

Proceedings to be taken for irregular attendance.

32. The Head Teacher shall report to the School Committee should any child's attendance during any month be irregular. It shall be the duty of the School Committee to take proceedings under Regulation 92 against the parent or guardian of any child reported to them for irregular attendance, unless they are satisfied that the child was unable to attend school from sickness or other unavoidable cause.

Parents to furnish written excuse for late-
ness.

33. In all cases of absence or lateness, a written excuse signed by the parent or guardian of the child shall be presented to the teacher.

Part V - Courses of

Part V - Courses of Instruction and Examinations.

Course of Instruction.

34. The course of instruction shall be based on the Australasian Union Conference Course of Study for Primary Schools; provided that it shall include the following subjects -

Health, Domestic Crafts for girls and Manual Crafts for boys, Gardening, English, Arithmetic, Art, Music, History, Geography, and Physical Training.

Terminal Examinations.

35. Examinations shall be held as far as possible in accordance with the outlined syllabus and, in addition to class tests, a regular examination shall be held each term. The results of such examination shall be duly entered and a report written on them.

External Examinations.

36. Children shall sit for the Australasian Union Conference Certificates on the completion of the work of Grade VI and Grade VIII.

Part VI - Registers, Records, and Reports.

Registers and records.

37. The Head Teacher shall keep the usual registers and records as laid down by the Australasian Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for primary schools conducted by them, including a Log Book in which shall be recorded any event of importance connected with the school, unavoidable closing of the school, special holidays, changes and absences of teachers, and visits. No entries shall be made except by the Head Teacher, the Chief Magistrate, and authorized visiting officers.

Annual Report.

38. The Head Teacher shall submit an Annual Report to the High

to the High Commissioner, through the Australasian Union Conference, as soon after the end of the school year as possible.

Part VII - Teachers.

Appointment and dismissal of Head Teacher.

39. The appointment and dismissal of the Head Teacher shall be made by the Australasian Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Appointment and dismissal of Assistant Teachers.

40. The appointment and dismissal of Assistant Teachers shall be made by the School Committee; provided that any Assistant Teacher may, within a week after notice of dismissal, appeal against such dismissal to the Island Council, whose decision shall be final.

Resignation of Teachers.

41. No teacher shall be at liberty to resign his appointment without giving at least one month's notice in writing of his intention of doing so to the School Committee.

Salary of the Head Teacher

42. The salary of the Head Teacher shall be paid by the Australasian Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Salaries of Assistant Teachers.

43. The salaries of Assistant Teachers shall be paid by the School Committee from funds raised for that purpose.

Part VIII - Miscellaneous.

Inspection.

44. The school shall be open for inspection by officers appointed by His Excellency the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific or the Australasian Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

(Signed). David A. Young.

Pitcairn Island,
20th December, 1940.

Chief Magistrate,
Pitcairn Island.

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Notes on the rules for the control of the
Pitcairn Island public school.

Rule 1. As long as the Seventh-day Adventist Church provides most of the funds required for the working of the school it would appear to be only right that they should have a majority on the School Committee. The point is of little practical importance, however, as church and state are really one in the island and in any case the Island Council is the ultimate authority behind the School Committee.

Rule 2. The period of office has been altered to bring it into conformity with that of the Island Council and the Church Committee.

Rule 8. The Island Secretary has been appointed ex-officio Secretary to the School Committee, as he is a permanent paid officer, and the only native born islander competent to perform such duties efficiently. In view, however, of his protestations that he already has too much work to do, a proviso has been added enabling the School Committee to elect some other person as Secretary should actual experience show this to be desirable.

Rule 9. These two permanent and paid officials, both of whom have been trained to handle cash and keep proper accounts, are clearly the most suitable islanders to hold the positions created by this rule.

Rule 11 (a) and (b). Building and repairing form part of the public work - see Regulation 51 of the Pitcairn Island Government Regulations, 1940. The School Committee merely arranges, through the Internal Committee, for the work to be

work to be done.

Rule 13. It is desirable that the Island Council should be recognized as the authority behind the School Committee.

Rule 25. The minimum period of vacation permissible has been fixed at 8 weeks instead of 9, to bring it into line with local practice.

Rule 31. The criterion of irregular attendance has been fixed at 90 instead of 80 per cent of the maximum attendances possible during the month. Regularity of attendance is traditional in the island and it seemed undesirable to lower the existing high standard.

Rule 32. In order to prevent the Head Teacher from incurring unnecessary unpopularity, the duty of enforcing regular school attendance has been placed on the shoulders of the School Committee.

Extract from the "Pitcairn Island Civil Recorder", page 270.

School Laws.

- 1st. The school shall be entirely under the control of the Parliament which shall employ the teachers and make all necessary regulations and laws pertaining to the government of the school.
- 2nd. The school year should consist of forty weeks. There shall be one week's vacation at the close of each of the three quarters, and four weeks during the hot season and during the month of May. When public work requires the presence of the older students, they shall be dismissed by the teachers.
- 3rd. School shall be held five days each week, beginning with Sunday. It shall begin at 10 a.m. and close at 2 p.m. A recess of 30 minutes shall be given the smaller children, and one of ten minutes the older students.
- 4th. All students will be expected to be in their seats promptly at the beginning of the daily session. The first bell will ring at 9.30 a.m. and the next one at 10 minutes before 10 a.m. when all students should immediately go to the school-room. None but teachers will be permitted to enter the school-room without permission, till 10 minutes before 10 a.m. nor after school hours in the afternoon. Any student coming late must bring a written excuse from his parents or guardian stating the cause of his tardiness. Failure to present such excuse will prevent the students being admitted into the school until the regulation is complied with.