

Clause 3 was rendered necessary through the reckless and unprincipled system of trading adopted by many of the traders. "The Niue Island Private Debt Ordinance, 1903," which was passed on the 25th August, 1903, sought to abolish the practice of selling goods to the Natives on credit, but it has failed lamentably in that respect. It was found that some traders conducted their businesses with the Natives largely on a system of credit, and the Natives, knowing that the traders had no legal means of recovering their debts, were in the habit of adopting all sorts of petty tricks with the view of evading their responsibilities. This sort of thing led the traders to practise coercive means in order to obtain payment of their debts, and altogether the position was becoming acute, and sooner or later would have resulted in trouble more or less serious. The practice, moreover, was developing very bad traits in the Native. The traders are now of the unanimous opinion that the new law was urgently needed, and that in its operation it will act for the benefit of the trade of the island.

With reference to "The Niue Island Native Meetings Regulation Ordinance, 1908," the preamble explains briefly the causes which led to the Ordinance being passed, but my letter (No. 117) of the 6th ultimo more fully explains the difficult position that has grown up.

I may add that both Ordinances were passed by the Council unanimously, and that the principal "Patus" and influential men of the island are in thorough accord with the provisions contained therein. So far as I am able to judge by personal contact with the Natives generally, there is a feeling of relief and satisfaction among them at the passing of these Ordinances.

I have, &c.,

H. CORNWALL,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. the Minister, Cook and other Islands, Wellington.

Enclosures.

ORDINANCE NO. 23.—THE NIUE ISLAND TRADE REGULATION ORDINANCE, 1908.

WHEREAS it is found expedient to prohibit the making of copra from young or immature cocoanuts: And whereas it has also been found expedient to make further provision for the regulation of trading generally:

Be it therefore enacted by the Niue Island Council as follows:—

1. The Short Title of this Ordinance is "The Niue Island Trade Regulation Ordinance, 1908."
2. Any trader who shall purchase, or permit to be purchased, copra made from young or immature cocoanuts shall upon conviction render himself liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds (£5) for a first offence. For a second offence the trader shall forfeit his license to trade in Niue.
3. Persons making copra from young or immature cocoanuts, or offering for sale, or causing to be offered for sale, copra made from young or immature cocoanuts shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding three pounds (£3), or in default thereof may be sentenced to a term not exceeding three months' hard labour.
4. Any trader who shall sell, or permit to be sold, goods on credit or trust to a Native, or half-caste living as a Native, except as provided for by section 3 of "The Niue Island Private Debt Ordinance, 1903," shall forfeit his license to trade in Niue.
5. All tickets representing cash due for produce purchased by traders from Natives shall be issued in a form to be approved by the Resident Commissioner, and shall be honoured by the issuing trader upon presentation thereof for goods of any kind whatsoever which the said trader may have in stock to the value stated on the ticket.
6. All proceedings in respect of offences committed under this Ordinance shall be taken in the Resident Commissioner's Court.

Passed by the Niue Island Council, this twentieth day of August, one thousand nine hundred and eight.

Approved.

H. CORNWALL,

Resident Commissioner, Niue.

President of the Niue Island Council.

Assented to by the Governor on the 2nd December, 1908.

ORDINANCE NO. 24.—THE NIUE ISLAND NATIVE MEETINGS REGULATION ORDINANCE, 1908.

WHEREAS the old custom of holding general meetings of the people of the Island of Niue is continued, and it is found that attempts are made to give resolutions passed at such meetings the force of law by means of the infliction of fines and coercion, thereby endangering the peace, and otherwise committing acts which operate in opposition to the constituted Government:

Be it therefore enacted by the Niue Island Council as follows:—

1. The Short Title of this Ordinance is "The Niue Island Native Meetings Regulation Ordinance, 1908."
2. General meetings of the people of the various villages of the Island are hereby prohibited, except where it is proved to the satisfaction of the Resident Commissioner that a general meeting of the people of the Island is desirable for the purpose of discussing any matter of general interest, in which case the Resident Commissioner shall appoint a time and place for such meeting, and shall preside thereat.