

NOTE ON HULL ISLAND.

According to the records of the Admiralty (see statement of their representative under Item 3 of the interdepartmental meeting of the 24th November (enclosure C in A.22)) this island was first discovered by the United States. We do not know on what other grounds the United States can lay claim to it. His Majesty's Embassy at Washington have been asked to supply urgently any material on this point which they can discreetly obtain.

So far as the title of His Majesty's Government is concerned Hull Island was taken possession of on the 11th July, 1889, by Captain Oldham, H.M.S. "Aegeria" and in August 1936 Captain ~~Beaver~~ left a Union Jack and a notice board affirming British sovereignty over the island. For some years past the island has been leased to the British company Burns, Philp, for the exploitation of coconuts, and in August 1937 Mr. Jones, the local manager of the company, was given the provisional status of deputy commissioner of the Phoenix Islands. The company's interest in the island has now been bought out but Mr. Jones is still residing there and has been confirmed in the above-mentioned status. At the end of last year a New Zealand party, which has been withdrawn this month, landed on the island and staked out in an ostentatious manner the provisional site for an airport. Arrangements are on foot to colonise the island as an integral part of a scheme for placing settlers in islands of the Phoenix Group from the surplus population of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands colony. An advance party of these islanders is about to arrive at Hull Island, to dig wells and begin the planting of trees. It would appear advisable that some members of this party should remain on the island until arrangements have reached a point at which

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the main body of settlers can arrive there.

(Intlld). J.B.

14th January, 1939.