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## COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

### Seventh Session

#### SUMMARY RECORD OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Monday, 30 April 1956, at 2.45 p.m.

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. ARENALES CATALAN	(Guatemala)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. VIXSEBOXSE	(Netherlands)
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. CUTTS )	Australia
	Mr. HAMILTON )	
	U MYA SEIN	Burma
	Mr. LIU YU-WAN	China
	Mr. BARGUES )	France
	Mr. DEBAYLE )	
	Mr. KESTLER	Guatemala
	Mr. RAGHU RAMAIAH	India
	Mr. PACHACHI	Iraq
	Mr. GRADER	Netherlands
	Mr. THORP	New Zealand
	Mr. CALLE y CALLE	Peru
	Mr. GIDDEN )	United Kingdom of Great Britain
	Mr. WARD )	and Northern Ireland
	Mr. SEARS	United States of America
	Mr. RIVAS	Venezuela

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. GAVIN	International Labour Organisation
Miss MCNAUGHTON	Food and Agriculture Organization
Mr. ARNALDO )	United Nations Educational,
Mr. DESCOMBES )	Scientific and Cultural
	Organization
Mrs. MEAGHER	World Health Organization
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Representative of the
Mr. BENSON	Secretary-General
Mr. KUNST	Secretary of the Committee

EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (A/AC.35/L.223):

- (a) GENERAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LIGHT OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE PREVIOUS SPECIAL REPORTS ON EDUCATION PREPARED BY THE COMMITTEE (A/2465, A/1303/Rev.1, A/AC.35/L.220);
- (b) ERADICATION OF ILLITERACY (A/AC.35/L.226);
- (c) PROVISION OF READING MATERIAL FOR NEW LITERATES (A/AC.35/L.221);
- (d) WASTAGE AND RETARDATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS (A/AC.35/L.224);
- (e) SECONDARY EDUCATION (A/AC.35/L.225);
- (f) TEACHER TRAINING AND THE STATUS OF TEACHERS (A/AC.35/L.228, A/AC.35/L.231);
- (g) FINANCING OF HIGHER EDUCATION (A/AC.35/L.219);
- (h) RACE RELATIONS IN EDUCATION (A/AC.35/L.232);
- (i) OTHER QUESTIONS RELATING TO EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS THAT MAY ARISE IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSIONS

Mr. KESTLER (Guatemala) reserved his Government's position on the question of the sovereignty of the Territory of Belize, strongly protested against the continued occupation of that Territory by the United Kingdom Government, and drew attention to the statement made by his delegation at the tenth session of the General Assembly emphasizing the support given Guatemala by the other Central American Republics in the "Antigua Guatemala Declaration".

Mr. GIDDEN (United Kingdom) reserved the position of the United Kingdom Government on British Honduras. He reaffirmed his Government's attitude concerning its participation in the Committee's work.

Mr. KESTLER (Guatemala) said that his delegation felt obliged to protest vigorously against the extraordinary and apparently unaccountable delay in the publication and circulation by the Secretariat of documents concerning the Territory of Belize. The delay was all the more regrettable because at the fifth and sixth sessions of the Committee his delegation had announced its intention of studying documents concerning that Territory with particular care.

Mr. BENSON (Secretariat) apologized on behalf of the Secretariat for the delay in the publication of certain documents. Instructions would be issued to the services concerned so that in future documents should reach the members of the Committee at the proper time.

The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider item 4 of the agenda.

Mr. BENSON (Secretariat) introduced the documents on educational conditions which had been circulated to the members of the Committee. He emphasized the importance of document A/AC.35/L.220/Add.1, which contained tables indicating enrolment in various schools in Non-Self-Governing Territories. That addendum was an essential part of the main document. The figures it contained should, however, be regarded as provisional, and they might have to be altered later. They were not always comparable, because in some cases it was uncertain whether they indicated total or average school attendance. Governments supplied that information, sometimes in a provisional form, in the reports they submitted in accordance with Article 73 e of the Charter, and such information might later be changed by the technical departments of the Governments concerned.

With regard to the procedure to be followed, he pointed out that it had been the practice of the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly to make increasing use of the Committee's reports as a basis for its work. In order to avoid the recurrence of certain allegations, which were in any case unjustified, of lack of information, it might be better to precede each section of the report by a brief note giving the sources of the relevant information.

Mr. ARNALDO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) introduced UNESCO's three studies on education. The report on the eradication of illiteracy (A/AC.35/L.226) submitted certain considerations which UNESCO felt were important at the present stage in connexion with different aspects of the eradication of illiteracy. It had also been considered useful to include certain statistical tables. The report described methods of teaching adults to read and write, the training of staff for literacy work and the use of audio-visual aids in literacy work. UNESCO had requested Mr. Irving S. Lorge, of Columbia University, to prepare a preliminary report on the methodology of literacy testing. The main lines of his study appeared in the report. The general conclusions of the whole report, however, were based on the study of Professor William S. Gray of the University of Chicago, who had been commissioned by UNESCO to make an international survey of methods of teaching, reading and writing.

The report on "The Stagnation of Primary School Pupils" (A/AC.35/L.224) described the concern about "wastage" expressed at a number of recent international

(Mr. Arnaldo,  
UNESCO)

meetings. It then attempted to analyse the problem as it appeared from the statistics published for certain Non-Self-Governing Territories. The third session, which was devoted to a general discussion of the question, showed the administrative effects of a school system where pupils were not promoted regularly and left school before completing the course. Brief concluding remarks pointed to shortcomings in the report and to the need for further study of the problem.

The third document dealt with reading material for new literates (A/AC.35/L.221). It was an interim report and UNESCO hoped to study the question more thoroughly in the future. The first part provided an analysis of the problem and the second contained some specific examples of methods used by some Member States in their search for a solution. The third part indicated which questions required urgent study.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Ward (United Kingdom), Deputy Educational Adviser in the Colonial Office, took a place at the Committee table.

Mr. WARD (United Kingdom) congratulated the Secretariat and UNESCO on the documents supplied by the Committee. His delegation accepted the documents as a generally fair and accurate description of the educational position. He attached much more importance to the text of the documents than to the statistics they contained; there were too many possibilities of error in the statistical information at the disposal of governments for great reliance to be placed on the details of the figures, though the picture they gave might be true in broad outline.

There had undoubtedly been great educational progress; enrolment in primary and secondary schools had increased, wastage had been reduced, new universities and higher technical colleges had been established and many more teachers had been trained.

But what had been achieved was small compared with what still remained to be achieved, and the United Kingdom Government was deeply aware of the task ahead. The World Survey of Education, prepared by UNESCO, indicated that out of every ten children, five did not attend school at all, four attended primary school, and only one was receiving post-primary education. In other words, taking the world as a whole, 250 million children did not attend school, 200 million attended primary school and only 50 million were receiving post-primary education.

(Mr. Ward, United Kingdom)

Since the school-age population in United Kingdom Non-Self-Governing Territories was only about 15 million, the magnitude of those figures showed that the problem was far wider. The educational problems of Non-Self-Governing Territories were the same as those of sovereign States. No country in the world, not even the United States of America or the United Kingdom, was satisfied with its education. The aim of the United Kingdom Government was to enable every child, boy or girl, to receive an education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude, regardless of religion, race, financial or social status. The United Kingdom Government would not be satisfied until its aim had been achieved, and his delegation looked forward to the discussions of the Committee as a valuable exchange of ideas and expressions.

Mr. LIU YU-WAN (China) said that over half the population of the world was illiterate and that the great majority of children who did not attend school, or who were taught in a language other than their own, lived in Non-Self-Governing Territories. That state of affairs was of great concern to the United Nations, to UNESCO and to all the members of the Committee. At the two sessions which had already been devoted to an examination of the question, in 1950 and 1953, the Committee had defined the purpose of the measures undertaken in those Territories. The levels of living of the people must be raised by helping them to increase their productivity and improve their health; social progress in those Territories must be promoted, taking into account the basic cultural values and the aspirations of the peoples concerned. Steps must also be taken to encourage their intellectual development, so that they might be acquainted with all aspects of culture; lastly, their moral and civic conscience and sense of responsibility must be developed in order to prepare them to assume an increasing role in the management of their own affairs.

His delegation supported all those objectives but it attached particular importance to the last one, because Government assistance could be successful only if the indigenous inhabitants understood what was being undertaken and were prepared to co-operate. Any measure imposed from above would be ineffective if it encountered general apathy. A mass movement must be stimulated to make the people take stock of their needs and their resources and enable them to assume the management of their own affairs. In that connexion his delegation noted with

(Mr. Liu Yu-Wan,  
China)

satisfaction that nearly all the Administering Powers had approved most, if not all, of the objectives set forth in General Assembly resolution 743 (VIII).

The Committee should examine various aspects of the development of education, but above all it should study methods and means of taking practical action, because the main difficulties related to financing. In that connexion he referred to the interesting experiment carried out by the United Kingdom in Jamaica and St. Vincent, where schools had been built for £10 sterling or less.

Turning to the question of the general development of education, he said that some progress had already been made through the introduction of compulsory school attendance in several Non-Self-Governing Territories, but steps must be taken to ensure that the principle was really applied. A balance should also be maintained between quality and quantity, between urban communities and rural areas and between central and outlying districts; that was sometimes extremely difficult, as could be seen from the ten-year development plan adopted by the Gold Coast. Efforts must also be made to overcome the inequalities which still existed between boys and girls so as to ensure that all children could receive an education; he was glad to note that some progress had been made along those lines. Lastly, care must be taken to develop education without harming the Territories' economic and financial structure and thus compromising their future. Needs would grow steadily and progress would necessarily be slow, but he was convinced that the will to succeed would enable all problems to be solved.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Debayle (France), Inspector-General of Education, took a place at the Committee table.

Mr. DEBAYLE (France) said that in the Territories administered by France, educators had concentrated their efforts on improving the education given in the village and primary schools. Following up their initiative the Administration had issued a Decree on 22 August 1945 recommending the formation of school friendly societies at all schools in order to develop a spirit of fellowship and mutual assistance; the observations made by the Committee in its special study in 1953 had encouraged the Administration to continue along that path. The Rector of the Academy at Dakar, in French West Africa, had had studies made of practical ways of increasing the usefulness of those school friendly

(Mr. Debayle, France)

societies; the studies had subsequently been examined by the Board of Education, which included representatives of the elected assemblies and of the teaching body. Encouraged by the success of the co-operative movement in Africa, the Administration had recommended the establishment of school co-operatives at all schools in order to bring the children into closer mutual contact and to give them an intellectual and moral training. The co-operatives enabled children to increase the knowledge they acquired in class and to develop practical skills; they stimulated their whole personalities, helped them to adapt to their environments and gave them a sense of responsibility.

After reading the standard regulations for school co-operatives, he explained that each co-operative included active members from the school and honorary members - people who contributed to the school's prosperity by giving moral or material assistance. Each co-operative was managed by three officers, who were pupils drawn from one of the classes, and who, together with team leaders from among their comrades, formed a board of governors. The general assembly of society members normally met four times a year. The co-operative's funds consisted of the product of the sale of the harvest, stock-raising or work done by the co-operators, the profits from school entertainments, subsidies, gifts and the income from collections and contributions from active and honorary members. The co-operative could use its funds for the purpose of mutual help and communal enterprises, for the purchase of articles and equipment designed to improve the teaching, the appearance of the school or the health, hygiene and physical development of the pupils. The Academy inspectors stressed the importance of the different aspects of the co-operatives and pointed out that it was desirable for all pupils to participate in them but that they could not be compelled to do so because co-operation implied freedom of choice and action. The co-operative helped to bring old and new pupils closer together, the former serving as guides to the latter; it also brought about a closer contact between parents and school. The teachers left it to the children to organize and run their own co-operative. They thus acquired the taste for and the habit of team work, a respect for the general weal and the desire to increase it. The results so far had been extremely encouraging and it could be foreseen that education would increase in importance in the Territories administered by France.



Mr. GRADER (Netherlands) explained the geographical, climatic and other factors which had, over the course of the years, brought about an excessive fragmentation of the indigenous population in the Netherlands New Guinea. Even at the present time, 60 per cent of the villages in the areas administered directly by the Netherlands had less than 100 inhabitants, and villages with more than 300 inhabitants were very rare. In the interior there was a tendency for whole villages to migrate. The isolation in which those small groups of people lived was undoubtedly one of the main reasons for the relatively low level of their culture and material progress. Those considerations explained why, in general, advanced forms of social organization and local administration were not to be found among the Papuan population. The obstacles to the infiltration and acceptance of new ideas were consequently particularly great. That was what made it difficult, if not impossible, to introduce and apply measures uniformly without regard to the great differences in local conditions. Another factor which played an important part in the sphere of education was the great diversity of vernacular languages spoken in the Territory. It had been estimated that there were 126 officially registered languages, most of them quite unrelated. Even in the immediate vicinity of Hollandia, among the small villages scattered along the shore of the bay, which were no more than ten to twenty miles apart, three different languages were spoken. It was easy to imagine how great was the linguistic barrier in those inaccessible areas where mountains or huge swamps resisted penetration.

Another economico-social fact which hindered progress in education was the very low level of development of handicrafts, which were confined almost entirely to wood-carving and basket-weaving. Except in a few more advanced areas, pottery-making and metal-working were unknown, and Papuan society therefore had no artisan class. There was thus no basis for technical training.

He recalled that during the debate on that subject the year before, his delegation had stated that its Government's educational policy was to lay emphasis on improvement in quality rather than increase in quantity. The Administration was trying to adapt educational programmes to the special needs of the different sectors of Papuan society: the urbanized centres, the areas of the interior which had been considerably influenced by Christian civilization, or areas where Western culture had only recently penetrated. The educational system also had to take account of variations in the people's means of subsistence, the accessibility of

(Mr. Grader, Netherlands)

each area and the possible effect on different areas of development plans or phenomena such as the migration of manpower.

The Netherlands Administration believed that for its full effectiveness a rational educational system largely depended on the skill and personality of the teachers. Only if the teachers were fully alive to the special problems of a given society could education play its appropriate part in the gradual improvement of cultural standards.

A recently promulgated Ordinance governed the relations between public and private education. Whenever a private educational establishment was able to apply the official standards and conditions, it received a subsidy sufficient to cover the whole of its expenditure.

Moreover, recognizing the dynamic nature of the indigenous society, the new legislation, instead of imposing a uniform and rigid system, made it possible to take account, in practice, of different degrees of development. To that end, the Department of Education authorized the private schools to appoint their educational specialists and granted them special subsidies for that purpose. The specialists' task was to modify the educational system so as to take into account specific regional needs.

The educational system established a distinction between education in the rural areas and education in the urban centres. In the village schools, there was a three or four-year course, depending on the degree of cultural development of the community; in the schools with a three-year programme, the educational level depended on whether the population's contact with the Administration was of more or less recent date.

In addition to the village schools proper, the Administration had established boarding schools, situated in the areas where the need for supplementary education was apparent, which offered the most deserving pupils the opportunity of completing their education by taking courses for another three years. In the towns, a distinction was drawn between two types of schools, according to the pupils' knowledge of the Dutch language. Pupils who spoke Dutch fluently followed the same programme as the pupils in primary schools in the Netherlands, where the school programme was a six-year one. In the other urban schools, the educational level was slightly below that of the primary schools and the programme was more closely adapted to the needs of the Territory. It went without saying that the

(Mr. Grader, Netherlands)

distinction was in no way based, either in principle or in practice, on differences of ethnic or racial origin.

Secondary educational institutions were of three types. The first group included the schools intended for pupils coming from the boarding schools, where they had supplemented the education given in the village schools. The two other groups, which differed only in the length of the course - three years in one and four years in the other - chiefly received pupils who had been given their primary education in the urban schools.

In order further to facilitate the transition from the rural educational system to the urban educational system, the new legislation provided for the establishment of preparatory courses. If necessary, he would revert to all those points later on.

The educational reference also covered teaching methods and the preparation of text books; an attempt had been made to adapt the latter to regional conditions, including the geography, fauna and flora of the Territory. It was hoped in that way to stimulate the pupils' interest in their own country and strengthen the ties between the various areas.

The Administration attached great importance to the education given in the village schools. The fact that the number of village schools had hardly increased since 1953 was due in part to the merging of certain schools, which had had too few pupils, with larger institutions. The increase in the number of fully qualified teachers showed that the quality of the teaching had improved. Quantitatively, the educational facilities available to the population were sufficient to satisfy present needs.

Referring to document A/AC.35/L.220/Add.1, he pointed out that the school enrolment of the Papuan population was about 35,000. Enrolment per 1,000 of the population was 86 and not 47. He asked the Secretariat to correct the mistake.

In conclusion, he said that he approved of the division of educational institutions into public institutions, subsidized private institutions and non-subsidized private institutions. He hoped that that division would be definitively adopted in the preparation of future summaries.

Mr. BENSON (Secretariat) assured the Netherlands representative that the correction for which he had asked would be made. With respect to the division of educational institutions into three categories - public institutions, subsidized private institutions and non-subsidized private institutions - he would like to know what the members of the Committee thought.

Mr. WARD (United Kingdom) said that as far as British Territories were concerned, that three-fold division would be very appropriate. Private institutions received subsidies only if they agreed to supervision and inspection by the Administration and observed the minimum educational standards it imposed. Unsubsidized private institutions, unless they had some alternative source of income, might well fall considerably below those standards, and it was one of the aims of British policy to improve their efficiency. He supported the division proposed by the representative of the Secretariat.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.