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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Tenth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Wednesday, 22 April 1959, at 2.40 p.m.

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(continued)

**PRESENT:**

<b><u>Chairman:</u></b>	Mr. KELLY	(Australia)
<b><u>Members:</u></b>	Mr. ROBERTSON	Australia
	Mr. CASTRO ALVES	Brazil
	Mr. WIJEGONAWARDENA	Ceylon
	Mr. BERGES	Dominican Republic
	Mr. de CAMARET	France
	Mr. ARKHURST	Ghana
	Mr. HERRARTE	Guatemala
	Mr. RASGOTRA	India
	Mr. KITTANI	Iraq
	Mr. GOEDHART )	Netherlands
	Mr. de BRUYN )	
	Mr. DAVIN	New Zealand
	Mr. CASTON )	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. BROWNING )	
	Mr. HOUGHTON )	
	Mr. MORE )	United States of America
	Mr. HARRIS )	

**Representatives of specialized agencies:**

Mr. KHAN	International Labour Organisation
Mr. ACHARYA	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
Mr. WALTER	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Mrs. MEAGHER )	World Health Organization
Dr. SACKS )	

<b><u>Secretariat:</u></b>	Mr. PROTITCH	Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories
	Mr. KUNST	Secretary of the Committee

**EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS IN THE NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: GENERAL DEBATE**  
(A/AC.35/L.294, L.295, L.296, L.297, L.298, L.299, L.302 and L.303) (continued)

Mr. ROBERTSON (Australia) said he wished to submit his delegation's comments on educational conditions in Papua in the form of a single statement covering the whole of agenda item 4.

The Territory of Papua confronted the Australian Administration with geographic, climatic and linguistic difficulties: it had a total area of some 90,540 square miles, an estimated total population of 478,595 and at least 165 separate languages. The broad objectives of the Administration in educational policy were to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the peoples, to encourage a blending of cultures and to bring about the voluntary acceptance of Christianity by the indigenous people, who lacked any general and cohesive organization of religious faith, teaching or ritual.

To attain those objectives, the Administration had set itself five tasks. The first was to ensure by the most rapid means possible that all indigenous children were taught to read and write in a common language - English - since a common language was essential to the Territory's educational, social, economic and political progress. The Administration did not have a monopoly of education, to which a notable contribution was being made by the missions. In Administration schools indigenous languages were rarely used as a medium of instruction and were in any event superseded by English after the first year or two of primary education. In the mission schools both the vernacular and English were used in the first years of education. The missions were, however, co-operating in the Administration's endeavors to make English the sole language of instruction in the schools; the Administration was, furthermore, empowered by the Education Ordinance to inspect mission schools applying for grants-in-aid.

The other four tasks which the Administration had set itself were to awaken the interest of the indigenous people in a higher standard of living, to give the indigenous community the necessary knowledge to cope with the political, economic and social changes occurring throughout the Territory, to bring about a blending of the best features of indigenous culture with those of modern civilization, and, to those ends, to provide a full range of primary, secondary, tertiary, technical and adult education for all sections of the community.

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(Mr. Robertson, Australia)

Between the years 1949 and 1957, there had been an almost four-fold increase in the total annual expenditure on education by the Administration and by the missions. In 1953 there had been twenty-nine Government schools (primary and post-primary); on 30 June 1958 the number of Government schools had been ninety-one and that of mission schools, 671. In 1949, the total number of pupils enrolled had been 39,802; by 30 June 1958, the figure had risen to 47,475, of whom 5,846 were in Government schools and 41,629 in mission schools. The total number of teachers, which had been 1,047 in 1949, had increased to 1,572 in 1958.

Commenting on the various sub-items of agenda item 4, he pointed out with regard to fundamental education and the eradication of illiteracy that the Administration was not primarily concerned with bringing into existence a small elite but rather with the establishment of a broadly-based popular education. Efforts had therefore been concentrated on the expansion of primary education which, in due course, would solve the problem of adult illiteracy. There had been a wide-spread development of women's clubs and increasing use was being made of broadcasts, films, libraries and newspapers. Apprenticeship and other forms of vocational training, and agricultural extension programmes were promoting the advancement of the indigenous communities; demonstrations of adult education techniques had also been given by experts from the South Pacific Commission.

With reference to the participation of the inhabitants in the development of education, the Education Ordinance empowered local government councils to build schools, to assume a share of the responsibility for the upkeep of such schools and, subject to the approval of the Director of Education, to make rules on local educational matters. Each local council had established an education committee which maintained close liaison with the Department of Education.

Education in the Territory was free at all stages. The Administration provided free board and accommodation and free transport for students to and from their homes; it also met the expenses incurred by indigenous students awarded scholarships for secondary education in Australia. The Department of Education was giving close attention to the question of compulsory school attendance, for which provision had been made in the Education Ordinance. It was responsible for the preparation and revision of syllabuses and textbooks; non-governmental schools followed the

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(Mr. Davin, New Zealand)

In 1958, the Avale Agricultural College (Western Samoa) had accepted six boys from the Cook Islands. Seven other students had been admitted in 1959. They were to be trained as planters, farmers and instructors. The best students would subsequently take further specialist training in agriculture.

Cook Islanders could also take the correspondence courses offered by the New Zealand Correspondence School. About twenty young people were registered in these courses.

Each year four to six teachers from the Cook Islands went to New Zealand for periods of four to six months to observe the methods used in selected schools. Those periods of study were specially useful to teachers about to become head teachers.

In the belief that teacher-training was of particular importance, the Administration had opened a teacher-training class in 1954. The indigenous teachers' training college at the Nikao Centre was now offering ninety-two students either a full three-year course or a concentrated one-year course for teachers with several years' experience but no special training. Instruction was given by New Zealand-trained teachers and the students could do practice teaching in the Normal School and the Maori schools attached to the Centre. In addition, 300 teachers and student-teachers had attended a refresher course in September, 1958. Because of the success of that course, the Education Department intended to organize similar courses at fairly frequent intervals.

The primary school curriculum was based broadly on that of New Zealand, but was adapted to local conditions. Instruction was given in the vernacular during the first two years and thereafter in English for most subjects. The New Zealand teacher-organizer in Mangaia was experimenting with courses in agricultural and homecraft education for pupils unable to go to Tereora College. Since 1950, six issues of the Cook Islands Maori Journal had been published annually and made available to the schools, as had many readers in the vernacular. In 1958, a new Cook Islands Infant Reader had been published, which was to be the first of a series.

Facilities for technical training were still limited, and difficulties had been experienced in recruiting New Zealand-trained instructors for the woodworking class at Tereora College and the domestic science class at Nikao.

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(Mr. Davin, New Zealand)

Certain Government departments such as the Post Office, the Public Works Department and the Printing Department had sent a number of their employees to New Zealand for further technical training.

Where social services in schools were concerned, milk was distributed in all public and mission schools. In Rarotonga, there was a scheme for the medical inspection of school children by a Health Department nurse. There were health clinics in several schools, which were visited regularly by public health officers.

There was no provision for medical training in the Territory, but training in dental work was given at Suva; a dental nurse had taken a course in dental health education in New Zealand, and a Cook Islander planned to take a three-year course in dentistry at the University of Brisbane. Twelve medical practitioners and several public health inspectors had been trained since 1946 and two students from the Territory were at present attending courses at the Suva Medical School. Students wishing to become X-ray and laboratory technicians, medical assistants and nurses also went to Suva for their training. A Cook Islander had attended the public health courses given by WHO in Apia and Port Moresby in 1956 and 1958 respectively, one had attended the WHO tuberculosis course in Suva in 1959, and two others had attended the South Pacific Commission public health course at Noumea in 1956.

Evening courses were provided in Rarotonga for young people in the villages. Twenty-three village co-operatives and eleven co-operatives in schools also participated in adult education. The Department of Social Development published a daily newsletter and two monthly bulletins, which were widely used by reading groups in the youth centres and by co-operatives. The inhabitants could attend film showings. Upwards of 100 houses had been constructed on the basis of Administration plans and under its supervision as part of an aided self-help scheme. Courses had been held for local builders and contractors.

Turning to educational conditions in the Tokelau Islands, which were administered from Western Samoa, he said that the curriculum of the three primary schools was prepared by the Education Department of Western Samoa. School supplies were provided free of charge and many books and publications were sent by the



(Mr. Davin, New Zealand)

New Zealand Government. With the help of a special booklet, every school was able to follow the radio lessons of the Education Department of Western Samoa, which had done much to raise the standard of work, especially in English. The educational programmes were strongly supported by the population and almost all children attended school. Qualified teachers had the opportunity of regularly taking refresher courses in Western Samoa. Gifted children received their secondary education in Western Samoa, the cost of the scholarship scheme being shared by the New Zealand Government, the Western Samoa Government and the Church missions. Thanks to that scheme, all teachers were now Tokelauans. Two indigenous inhabitants were at present taking the medical practitioner's course at the Suva Medical School. Others were being trained for careers in administration, dentistry, postal work and agriculture. There were no facilities for adult education.

After an exchange of views, in which Mr. GOEDHART (Netherlands), Mr. RASGOTRA (India), Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom), Mr. CASTRO ALVES (Brazil) and Mr. ROBERTSON (Australia) took part, the CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should take up the various sub-headings of agenda item 4 separately and in order, without waiting for the end of the phase of the debate on that item; representatives could make their general statements whenever they thought it appropriate.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.5 p.m.