



COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Eleventh Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND TENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 2 March 1960, at 10.50 a.m.

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. QUAISON-SACKEY	(Ghana)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. BACON	(United States of America)
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS	Argentina
	Mr. CURTIS	Australia
	Mr. OLIVEIRA	Brazil
	Mr. KANAKARATNE	Ceylon
	Mr. de CAMARET	France
	Mr. DADZIE	Ghana
	Mr. RASGOTRA)	India
	Mr. MITRA)	
	Miss KAMAL	Iraq
	Mr. GOEDHART	Netherlands
	Mr. WATT	New Zealand
	Mr. CASTON)	United Kingdom of Great Britain
	Mr. HOUGHTON)	and Northern Ireland
	Mr. WILLIAMSON)	
	Mr. SPALDING	United States of America

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. REYMOND)	International Labour Organisation
Mr. KHAN)	
Mr. ACHARYA	Food and Agriculture Organization
Miss PROCTOR)	United Nations Educational, Scientific
Mr. AKRAWI)	and Cultural Organization
Mrs. MEAGHER	World Health Organization
<u>Secretariat:</u> Mr. KUNST	Secretary of the Committee

PROGRESS ACHIEVED BY THE NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES IN PURSUANCE OF CHAPTER XI OF THE CHARTER (continued):

- (a) EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS (A/4131, A/4144)
- (b) ECONOMIC CONDITIONS (A/4105, A/4108, A/4109, A/4129, A/4134, A/4142, A/4162 and Corr.1, A/4165, A/4166, A/4178, A/4195)
- (c) SOCIAL CONDITIONS (A/4106, A/4107, A/4114, A/4124, A/4128, A/4136, A/4137, A/4152, A/4167, A/4175, A/4181, A/4193, A/4194)
- (d) GENERAL SURVEY (A/4192)

Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom), said that his delegation had listened with great interest to the statements made in the debate. On some points his delegation would make their views known in the Sub-Committee; on economic questions, his delegation would make a number of statements which he hoped the Sub-Committee would take into account in preparing both his reports.

The representative of Iraq had asserted at the previous meeting that the question of real importance was that of self-government and that the progress already made or being made in the various spheres of development was of little significance. While not denying that the achievement of self-government was of great importance to the peoples concerned, he would point out that there were other important factors which made up the well being of those people. There was often a connexion between these factors and self-government, but not always, and where there was the connexion was not always the obvious one. The same factors which contributed to the rapid achievement of self-government in some territories might be the same ones as had contributed to the rapid progress since then. But in some other territories the continued presence of the Administering Powers might be the necessary solvent for the problems which were themselves the barrier to immediate self-government. He hoped therefore that the Committee's report would not give any kind of exclusive emphasis to the factor of self-government.

Reference had also been made to the racial discrimination persisting in some territories. There again, rapid progress had been made, but the way of life of the people could not be changed overnight. The United Kingdom repudiated the idea of the inherent superiority of one race over another, and its policy was to encourage all inhabitants of the Territories for which it was responsible to play their full part as citizens of their countries.

Mr. HOUGHTON (United Kingdom), in reply to the remarks of the representatives of India and Ceylon concerning the primary school enrolment ratio quoted in document A/4131 (page 93), acknowledged that the figures given were correct. Nevertheless, they were likely to give the wrong impression, since they dated back six years, and spectacular progress had been made since. As paragraph 200 of the document indicated, the increase in the rate of enrolment had been 7 per cent per annum; in other words, the enrolment would have doubled in less than ten years, and that represented a considerable achievement. Furthermore, it should be noted that in Nigeria, for example, the rate of 13 per cent quoted for 1954 meant a total enrolment of 1,314,000 and that figure had increased to 1,920,000 at the end of the period under review, an increase of more than 600,000 pupils in two years. According to the figures available for 1958, the school population of Nigeria had almost doubled in four years.

That general progress was attributable in fact to the radical change which had come about in recent years in attitudes towards education. It had for long been regarded as one of the "welfare" benefits to be provided when economic progress had supplied the necessary resources, but it had subsequently been realized that for lack of the requisite trained personnel many of the Territories were unable to use the money which the Administering Powers provided. In fact, the appropriations for education represented an excellent investment, since the training of competent personnel was one of the factors permitting an increase in the rate of economic development.

With regard to the question of compulsory primary education, he stressed the importance of ensuring a balanced development of the educational system. Concentration on a single objective over a protracted period was liable to produce unfortunate results, as had happened, for example, in Mauritius, where primary education had become universal, but where, it was generally held, its level had considerably declined, a fact which had hindered educational development at other levels.

(Mr. Houghton, United Kingdom)

The representative of Ceylon had asked for an explanation of the discrepancy between the rate of school attendance in the African Territories and in those of the Caribbean. It should not be forgotten that the latter region had been under European influence for some 300 years. Consequently, the Caribbean peoples had adopted a way of life much closer to that of the metropolitan countries than to that of the African or indigenous communities from which they had sprung; there was, for example, complete equality of the sexes in the region. It should also be noted that, once initiated, progress proceeded at a rapidly increasing rate, as was shown, for example, by the rise in the number of girls attending school in Northern Nigeria, where conditions were nevertheless notoriously unfavourable (30,900 in 1953, 45,100 in 1956 and 56,800 in 1958). Even more spectacular progress had been recorded in that sphere in other parts of Nigeria, in Uganda and in Kenya; in the latter Territory the numbers had more than doubled between 1954 and 1958.

The representative of Ceylon had also expressed the hope that the problem of education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories could be solved by means of co-operation between the different countries. He recalled in that connexion that, at a recent conference called by UNESCO, the view had been expressed that all African countries and Territories, dependent or independent and regardless of language, should co-operate fully in the sphere of education. It had formulated recommendations to that effect to the African governments and to the UNESCO secretariat, which had been asked to assist those countries and Territories, not at the national but the regional level.

He protested against the description of the director of education, in paragraph 18 of document A/4131 as "an officer of the Administering Power". In the Territories administered by the United Kingdom, at least, that post was occupied by educational specialists who were in no way responsible to the metropolitan country: their one and only concern was the education of the children for whom they were responsible; they were appointed and paid by the Territorial Governments and it was to those Governments, and to them alone, that they were responsible.

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Mr. RASGOTRA (India) observed that the information and figures contained in document A/4131 gave a far less satisfactory picture of educational conditions in the African Non-Self-Governing Territories than the one just painted by Mr. Houghton. To revert to the example of Nigeria, although it was true that the number of children attending primary schools had considerably increased in 1958, the number was still much too low since it represented only about 25 per cent of the population of school age. If the increase continued at that rate, it would be thirty to fifty years before a school attendance ratio of 100 per cent was reached. In the meantime, vast numbers of young people would be condemned to illiteracy.

Mr. Houghton had also stressed the fact that in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the public did not generally take a favourable view of heavy expenditure on education. He wondered where that attitude had shown itself: among the immigrants of European origin, perhaps, but certainly not among the Africans. The Territories which had recently attained independence gave clear proof of that; likewise the situation existing in India before the War.

Mr. Houghton had also referred to the case of Mauritius, where educational progress had been relatively satisfactory, in order to prove that it might be harmful to over-accelerate primary school development. He could not subscribe to that view. It was important, in his opinion, to educate as many people as possible and not simply to raise the level of education of a small group, of an elite. The level of instruction should, of course, be improved, but it was first necessary to make the benefits of education available to all. That was why it was essential for the population to take part in the framing and application of educational policy. In that connexion it might be noted that the progress registered in Nigeria had really begun after the adoption of the Constitution in 1954, namely, after education had become the responsibility of the regional governments. It should be borne in mind that the peoples of a Territory often viewed a problem very differently from the metropolitan Government.

(Mr. Rasgotra, India)

As to the alleged danger of giving undue importance to certain aspects of education at the expense of others, he believed that it was important to create a solid basis for the educational system, after which the system could be gradually improved. The case of Mauritius, to which Mr. Houghton had referred, was, he thought, an isolated example. Authorities in the matter were generally agreed that at the initial stage the ratio between the secondary and primary school enrolment should be 10:100 and that that ratio might be increased to 20:100 at a later stage.

Mr. HOUGHTON (United Kingdom) said that he had had no intention of belittling the importance of the peoples' participation in the formulation of educational policy; indeed, the contrary was the case. Nevertheless he was convinced that it was undesirable to accelerate the development of one branch of education at the expense of other branches. Many countries had realized that when it had been found that a too rapid development of primary education had been accompanied by a lowering of educational standards, chiefly on account of the lack of sufficient trained personnel. Furthermore, he would again emphasize that the tendency to regard expenditure on education as an investment was relatively new. That was partly the reason why it had been only in recent years that educational development had made real strides.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

- (a) TRADE AND FINANCIAL RELATIONS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (A/AC.35/L.317)
- (b) TERMS OF TRADE (A/AC.35/L.314)
- (c) MONEY AND CENTRAL BANKING (A/AC.35/L.315)
- (d) PARTICIPATION OF INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF GOODS
- (e) PRODUCTIVITY OF INDIGENOUS LABOUR (A/AC.35/L.316)

The CHAIRMAN proposed that there should first be a general debate on item 5 of the agenda as a whole and that the Committee should subsequently consider each sub-item separately.

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Mr. MITRA (India) recalled that in resolution 1470 (XIV) the General Assembly had requested the Committee to devote special attention at its 1960 session to the question of the association of certain Non-Self-Governing Territories with the European Economic Community and to the possible effects of that association on the development of those Territories towards the objectives of Article 73 of the Charter. In his view the Committee could either decide to add a new sub-item to item 5 of the agenda or could examine the question during the general debate on the item. The Economic Commission for Africa had already discussed the problem raised by the association of African Non-Self-Governing Territories with the European Economic Community.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the agenda had been considered by the Committee at its previous session and had been adopted at the opening of the present session. It could hardly be changed now. The Indian representative could deal with the problem to which he had referred during the general debate. He therefore proposed that the general debate on item 5 of the agenda should begin.

It was so decided.

Mr. WILLIAMSON (United Kingdom) said that it was difficult to achieve a true and fair picture of economic development in the Non-Self-Governing Territories under United Kingdom administration since 1957. First of all, although most under-developed countries, whether non-self-governing or independent, had many problems in common and there were limitations to the extent to which it was possible to generalize about the United Kingdom Territories as a group, and one or two of them were perhaps no longer under-developed in the normally accepted sense of the word. Secondly, under its terms of reference the Committee studied economic progress every three years, but a period of three years had not necessarily any particular significance in the development of a country. He would therefore be obliged to touch upon questions relating to item 4 of the agenda, the ten-year progress report.

The past fifteen years could be divided into several clearly defined periods. After the war commodity prices had risen rapidly, reaching a peak in 1951. During those years many United Kingdom Territories had found their development held up not so much by lack of money as by shortages of such products as steel, cement and machinery and by the lack of skilled manpower. A series of events had led to a rapid accumulation of external assets by many Territories and that had

(Mr. Williamson, United Kingdom)

in fact continued for several years. Since 1951 commodity prices had fluctuated; they had dropped in 1954 and 1958 and had increased in 1957. During that period imports of all kinds had become more freely available and there had been a steady increase in output and capital expenditure. In recent years a deficit on current account had been more or less matched by an inflow of capital. External assets had remained fairly steady since 1955. In other words, the past three years had not constituted a special period with characteristics of its own.

Despite the wide variations between conditions in the different Territories, some general indications might usefully be given. The gross domestic product of the Territories at current market prices had increased by nearly 20 per cent between 1955 and 1958; allowing for price changes, the annual increase had been some 5 to 6 per cent. Expenditure on gross fixed capital formation had increased by 27.5 per cent between 1955 and 1958 and at the end of that period had been about three times as great as in 1948. The price recession of 1958 had acted as a slight brake on private investment, which had decreased from £100 million in 1957 to £80 million in 1958. The effects of the 1958 recession had, however, been very uneven and many Territories had not been affected by it to any appreciable extent, especially those which produced cocoa, copra and sisal, whose prices had not followed the common trend. The general condition of commodity markets, however, had an influence on the flow of private investment into under-developed countries and price recessions had an unfavourable effect.

The Territories under United Kingdom administration could be divided into three main economic categories: those whose economy had reached a stage at which they could continue to progress under their own momentum and those which, for various reasons, had not reached that stage. Among the first group were Jamaica, Trinidad and Hong Kong, where there was a high rate of investment and production and, perhaps most important, a high rate of reinvestment by firms operating in the Territories. The second group of Territories, whose long-term prospects for achieving economic growth seemed good but where certain essential factors such as capital enterprise or trained manpower were still lacking, included Nigeria, Kenya and Uganda. Lastly, there were some Territories whose prospects of achieving a condition of self-sustained economic growth seemed

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(Mr. Williamson, United Kingdom)

remote because either of a lack of natural resources or because they were too small to support the overhead expenses of public services on a reasonable scale or to permit more than the most rudimentary kinds of division of labour. Those Territories were likely to be a continuing economic problem for years to come.

As the 1958 recession had shown, the problem of the stabilization of commodity prices was of the utmost importance for the economic stability and progress of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, many of whose economies for the most part depended on exports of two or three commodities. The problem was at present being studied by various United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and by GATT in all of whose activities the United Kingdom played an active part. Economic planning became very difficult when export earnings could vary by large amounts as a result of conditions outside the control of the Territory concerned; the United Kingdom was therefore greatly interested in any workable systems of commodity price stabilization which were fair to both producers and consumers. Producers' cartels which tried to keep prices at artificially high levels were undesirable on several counts and had within themselves the seeds of their own downfall, since they encouraged other producers to expand output and encouraged consumers to find substitutes.

There was, however, no simple rule for the drafting of commodity agreements since the conditions of supply and demand varied greatly from commodity to commodity. The United Kingdom had participated in several commodity agreements since the war, including agreements on tin and sugar. The Commonwealth Sugar Agreement had given a major element of stability to the economy of the West Indies and Mauritius and to some extent Fiji since 1950.

There were other commodities for which it would be difficult to reach agreements of the kind, either because there was a whole range of substitutes readily available or because technological advance was reducing the demand. The other principal approach to the problem in United Kingdom Territories had been the use of internal price stabilization funds. Many of them had been criticized, especially in the early 1950's, but today they were an important stabilizing influence in the Territories where they existed. Nigeria was, perhaps, the outstanding example.

(Mr. Williamson, United Kingdom)

The problem of price and income stabilization was still, however, acute and it must be admitted that there was no simple and universal solution to it. Each case required study on its merits, on a commodity by commodity basis. Nor was complete stability altogether desirable. Price changes were often the signals which advised producers of their best course of action. A world in which prices did not change would be a static one.

Turning to the problem of finance for development as it affected the United Kingdom Territories, he observed that in most Territories the greater part of development finance had come from internal savings, through taxation or local loans. The financial help provided by the United Kingdom was intended to supplement local effort, not to be a substitute for it. Since the war the principal sources of external finance had been Colonial Development and Welfare funds and loans raised by territorial Governments on the London market. During the past few years, however, certain difficulties had arisen. With the fluctuations of many commodity prices and the steady rise in the ordinary costs of government, many Territories were no longer able to devote a sufficient proportion of their own funds to development.

Moreover, as a result of the boom in equities and the consequent decline in demand for fixed-interest securities, it had become more difficult for territorial Governments to raise money on the London market. The Colonial Development and Welfare (Amendment) Act of 1959 had been designed to meet the problem. That Act made available an additional £95 million for the period 1959-1964, which brought the total amount of Colonial Development and Welfare funds available for use during that period to about £140 million. In addition, the introduction of a new system of Exchequer loans had enabled the United Kingdom Government to make available £100 million for loans to the Territories during that period.

He went on to describe some of the ways in which Colonial Development and Welfare grants had been used. Since 1955 a total of about £4.5 million had been allocated for the development of African agriculture in Kenya; had received grants totalling £6,750,000 for federal and regional trunk roads; Gibraltar had received a grant of £300,000, and Sarawak one of £285,000, for port development. There were also other activities, less spectacular but equally essential to the balanced, long-term growth of the Territories' economies, which should not be

(Mr. Williamson, United Kingdom)

overlooked. In that connexion, he emphasized the importance of local initiative, for both the planning and the execution of development programmes, and the efforts made by the United Kingdom Government to encourage it. In many Territories plans were increasingly the work of parties responsible to the elected representatives of the people.

Turning to the problem of industrialization, he said that there had been considerable discussion of the problem at the recent session of the Economic Commission for Africa at Tangier. At that session Mr. de Seynes, Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs, had advocated the establishment of industrial complexes in Africa as a means of promoting rapid economic growth. The United Kingdom delegation completely agreed with that suggestion, noting that Mr. de Seynes had also emphasized that the production of more and better food in the African Territories was essential to the success of a programme of industrialization. Mr. de Seynes had suggested also that African countries might seek, by industrialization, to reduce their dependence on the outside world. The United Kingdom naturally favoured the industrialization of the Territories under its administration but it would regret any tendency towards economic isolationism, since trade, as well as industry, created wealth. Industrialization was only one aspect of development and some countries owed their prosperity more to the development and expansion of agriculture than to large industrial complexes.

Industrial production should be encouraged not as an end in itself but wherever it appeared to be in the economic interest of the Territory concerned. Such had been the case in Jamaica, for example, where a processing plant was carrying out the first stage of the transformation of bauxite into aluminium, in Nigeria, where more than a hundred oil mills had been constructed in the Eastern Region between 1946 and 1957, and in British Guiana, where several sawmills were producing both for export and for the local market. In the Territories generally cement production was now fifteen times higher than the 1948 level. The total output of copper in Northern Rhodesia had more than doubled between 1946 and 1956 and the proportion of electrolytic copper rose from 29 to 56 per cent over the same period. Sometimes it happened that a Territory's production could compete successfully with that of the highly industrialized countries. For example, there had been considerable pressure on the United Kingdom Government to restrict the import of textiles from Hong Kong. The United Kingdom Government, acting in

(Mr. Williamson, United Kingdom)

accordance with Article 73 of the United Nations Charter, had resisted that pressure. The question of low-cost manufactures was becoming a major problem of international trade in the free world and the suggestions for dealing with it which were reached at the Commonwealth Conference at Montreal in 1958 seemed wise.

With regard to the technical assistance which the United Kingdom Territories received, by far the most of it was provided by the United Kingdom itself. Experts from the Colonial Office visited the Territories and advised the territorial Governments and other local authorities. The Colonial Office was also assisted by many eminent specialists, who, as members of advisory committees, considered various research questions which were of importance for the development of the Territories. There were also specialized institutes, among them the Directorate of Overseas Geological Surveys and the Tropical Products Institute. The Colonial Office also helped territorial Governments to recruit the staff they needed, including doctors, engineers and teachers. Lastly, the United Kingdom offered training facilities for civil service officers, often without charge.

The very wide disparity between the average income of Africans and non-Africans in several Territories was due, largely to the fact that there was still a heavy preponderance of Africans in primitive agriculture with low productivity and that most of the Africans in urban occupations were unskilled. It was by raising agricultural productivity and giving Africans technical training in all fields that such disparity would be reduced.

Reference had been made to the extent of the assistance provided by the United Kingdom to its Non-Self-Governing Territories, the implication being that it might well have been greater. It was obvious, that the United Kingdom could increase its overseas aid only if it was itself prosperous and its currency strong. In that connexion he quoted words used by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in Parliament on 16 February 1960. Thanks to the success of its efforts in recent years, the amount of economic assistance which the United Kingdom had been able to make available to less developed countries, both bilaterally and through international institutions, had been rapidly increasing. Such assistance had risen from £75 million in the financial year 1957/1958 to £100 million in 1958/1959, and in the current year it was expected to reach about £150 million. In addition, the United Kingdom Government had undertaken to contribute £50 million to the International Development Association if agreement was reached

(Mr. Williamson, United Kingdom)

on its establishment. Much of the economic aid furnished by the United Kingdom went to its Non-Self-Governing Territories and it had agreed to make a loan of £12 million to Nigeria when that Territory became independent in October 1960. The United Kingdom's resources were not, however, unlimited and the whole range of its aid to under-developed countries, generally, mainly in the Commonwealth should be kept in mind when the level of its assistance to the dependent Territories was under discussion.

Private investment in the Territories under United Kingdom administration had greatly contributed to the economic development of those Territories and the United Kingdom believe that it would continue to do so. Such investments were made in very varied sectors, such as mining, oil production, plantations, and factories for the production of cement, textiles and other consumer goods. By employing labour and natural resources, as also by paying taxes, private investors helped to bring prosperity to the Territories in which they operated. They also brought in valuable new technical knowledge and managerial skill. Indeed, in the constitutionally more advanced Territories - Nigeria, for example - authoritative spokesmen of popularly elected Governments had taken pains to attract private capital by assuring investors of fair treatment.

Development corporations established by Governments, which had already achieved good results in Nigeria and Uganda, as also development banks, had a valuable contribution to make, often in co-operation with private enterprise. A considerable number of such institutions had been established in the United Kingdom Territories. The Economic Commission for Africa had decided to make a special study of development banks and to seek the co-operation of the International Bank in that regard

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.