

**TRUSTEESHIP  
COUNCIL****CONSEIL  
DE TUTELLE**

T/261

21 February 1949

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fourth session

Item 3 of the agenda

## EXAMINATION OF ANNUAL REPORTS:

TOGOLAND UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION, 1947

Communication received by the  
Secretary-General

The following extract from an undated communication from Gerald O. Awuma entitled "The United Nations and the People of Western Togoland" is transmitted to members of the Council at the request of the delegation of the Philippines.

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EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Education in Togoland has always been, and still is, left in the hands of the Missionary bodies who run primary schools. When the Chief and people of a village desire to have a school they send petitions to the missionaries. Very often the petition is turned down and in cases where it is accepted for consideration, the people must agree to make a gift of large stretches of land to the mission and undertake to construct and equip the schoolbuilding, which must be according to quite an expensive regulation pattern. In some cases, they must be prepared to pay the teachers' salaries, the missions merely providing the teachers.

The teacher is usually encumbered with a lot of duties. In addition to his routine occupation with his pupils in the classroom, he has to act as well as the village parson, hold morning and evening religious services, train candidates for baptism and confirmation, collect church dues, prepare people for communion and go often to confer with his circuit pastor at the head station. These duties often take him away from the classroom, leaving the pupils without supervision.

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In this manner a great deal of the child's time and opportunities are wasted. He has to spend three years learning the rudiments of reading and writing his local vernacular and a little bit of spoken English usually very badly taught. Then he travels away from his village to do another three years in a central junior school, where he continues to learn the

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local vernacular and starts learning to read and write English. At the end of six years at school, he has hardly learned enough to be of use to him in simple daily life. He is very lucky if he gets the chance to go into a central upper primary school, where he is prepared for the Primary School Leaving Certificate Exam. Four years are spent in this Upper Primary School, generally called a Senior School. He has then spent ten years at school, and as the average starting age is eight years, he is already eighteen years of age, too big to be eligible for any secondary scholarships. A child who comes from a good background may manage to leave the Elementary School at fourteen and may therefore manage to get a scholarship or a pass into a secondary school; but he has to travel outside Togoland for this, as there are no secondary schools in the Territory itself. It is often claimed that Achimota College and other secondary schools in the Gold Coast admit Togoland students. This is true in a measure; but it must be pointed out that these secondary schools are not enough even for the demands of the Gold Coast itself, and certainly a candidate from outside the Gold Coast must be exceptional to get a chance.

In spite of all these handicaps, the demand for education is very great indeed. Every year many chiefs apply for permission to start schools in their villages, for by a decree of the Gold Coast Government, no one can start a new school in the Territory without the written permission of the Director of Education, and application has to be made through a missionary body six months previous. Very few of these applications are usually granted. For the year 1948, all applications were turned down, and no new schools were allowed to be opened. Thousands of children of school-going age were disappointed. In one school alone at Ho, over a hundred children sought admission into the first Infant Class; thirty six were admitted in accordance with the rules, and the rest were let loose again into the lanes. Hundreds of boys and girls were turned back at the gates of the Senior Schools and a lot of money was wasted by parents travelling up and down the country seeking chances for their children. At Kpetoe, near Ho, forty-five boys and girls waited until March for permission to be started into the first form of a Senior School. At the end of their waiting, they were denied their hopes and had to go back to the bush.

The school fees are very high, too high for most parents, as these are mainly farmers whose scanty earnings all go back into the purchase of tools and household requirements. The newcomer to an Infant School pays 18/- a year; in the Junior School the fee is 30/- a year; and in the Senior School 42/- a year. In addition to this there are the ever increasing high costs of books and materials to consider, as well as the  
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cost of regular school uniform which every pupil is required to wear. Then there are other extra fees exacted, such as Art and Crafts fees, Dispensary fees, band fees, Domestic Science fees, etc. Taking into consideration that the salary of the Paramount Chief of one of the most progressive States, the Asogli State, is £ 84 a year, the cost of education certainly is far too high for the average Togolander. That elementary education cannot be made compulsory and available to all is already disturbing; that restrictions should be placed upon the facilities and the efforts of the people is considered as serious.

The two main educational bodies operating in the southern section of the Territory are the Roman Catholic Mission and the Presbyterian Church, who use the schools as recruiting grounds for converts to their respective denominations. The sort of religious training given in the various classes aims more at conversion than at giving the child an experience in turning within himself for daily contact with that imponderable force and essence, the source of all life and intelligence which men call God. A lot of denominational jealousy and competition is therefore the result. So it is that whilst many villages have been denied any facilities of having any schools at all, yet in the more prosperous places both missions establish schools and ring bells at opposite ends of the village at the same time. It is not unusual to come across teachers of these rival establishments disputing over a child whose denominational affiliations oblige the parents to force him into one school when he himself would prefer to go another where the tuition and surroundings are more attractive.

There are no schools in the southern section run by the natives themselves independently of the missions. Government and Native Authorities pay grants-in-aid to the missions towards teachers' salaries, buildings and equipment. The only attempt ever made by the natives to run a school entirely their own was in the year 1933 when the Paramount Chief of the Asogli State opened a Senior School at Ho to supply an urgent need. He was sharply discouraged; the two missions opened two new Senior Schools the next year, forbade their members to allow their children to go to the Chief's school upon penalty of ex-communication, and so in 1936 the Asogli State School had to close down, leaving only its spacious football ground to the benefit of the youth of the village.

Apart from the spasmodic attempts made here and there by enterprising young teachers to open evening classes for illiterates, nothing has been done so far by any of the educational units in the direction of mass or adult education.

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A series of efforts towards Fundamental Education in its broadest sense have been undertaken by such Improvement Societies as the Asogli Youth League and the Alpini Youth Society and the writer's experiences in this field are being recorded in a separate report for the Fundamental Education Section of UNESCO.

It was realized in the Territory quite long since that every development would depend upon education, and that even political development would be thwarted unless the people's minds were enlightened. The primary aim of all these societies, therefore, has always been to enlighten the minds of the people and educate public opinion. This has never been more necessary in Togoland than at the close of the Second World War, and the birth of the United Nations and its Trusteeship System.

The complete absence of Secondary or Technical schools, and the lack of either cinema, press or radio, have been basic factors in creating the educational background against which work began to inform the people of the existence and aims of a distant body called the United Nations.

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