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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Tenth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHTH MEETING

**Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 21 April 1959, at 3.15 p.m.**

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. KELLY	(Australia)
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. ROBERTSON	Australia
	Mr. CASTRO ALVES	Brazil
	Mr. KANAKARATNE	Ceylon
	Mr. de MARCHENA	Dominican Republic
	Mr. de CAMARET)	France
	Mr. DOISE)	
	Mr. CHAPMAN	Ghana
	Mr. HERRARTE	Guatemala
	Mr. RASGOIRA	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. HOUGHTON)	
	Mr. SEARS)	United States of America
	Mr. HARRIS)	

Representatives of specialized agencies:

	Mr. KHAN	International Labour Organisation
	Mr. ACHARYA	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
	Mr. SALSAMENDI)	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
	Mr. WALTER)	
	Mrs. MEAGHER)	World Health Organization
	Dr. SACKS)	
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. PROTITCH	Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories
	Mr. KUNST	Secretary of the Committee

EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS IN 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.308)

Mr. SEARS (United States of America) introduced Mr. Harris, Educational Expert on the United States delegation, to the members of the Committee.

Mr. HARRIS (United States of America) considered that education was the essence of democracy. In the United States and the territories administered by it, education was controlled wholly at the State, territorial or local level, and the only national agency was the Office of Education in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare which had no power to dictate to the population what it should think or learn.

In the span of one lifetime, the world had developed considerably. People who but a short time before had been living in isolation now wanted to participate in that development. Opportunities which had been accepted only after patient encouragement and sometimes under compulsion had suddenly become inadequate. That was particularly true in the field of education. The educator's task was difficult, as the means at his disposal to satisfy the impatience of the people were only limited means. But his task was simpler in a society that was eager to learn than in a society that was loth to do so.

The reports containing information on educational conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories showed the increased interest and participation of the inhabitants of those Territories in education, and in efforts to eradicate illiteracy, as a result of the development of fundamental and of secondary and higher education, of vocational and technical training, and of increased attention to the health of children attending school.

When the Committee came to discuss items 4 and 9 on its agenda, the United States delegation would present statements supplementing the information given in the documents describing educational conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories under United States administration.

Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) thought that the fundamental importance of education for the development of all Non-Self-Governing Territories was generally recognized. Those Territories could not be guided towards self-government unless mass education of the population was developed and an adequate

(Mr. Caston, United Kingdom)

number of administrators and technical experts were trained who could assume responsibility for the government of their country. That dual aim was the foundation of the educational policies followed by the United Kingdom in the Territories it administered. It had long been recognized that the system of education in force in the United Kingdom was not applicable to those Territories, whose populations had needs and traditions of their own. Education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes and the traditions of the various peoples. Its purpose should be to render the individual more effective in his environment and to promote the progress of the community through the improvement of agriculture, the establishment of native industries, the improvement of health and the training of leaders. It was in the Territories themselves that the policy to be followed should be worked out, and the understanding and co-operation of the peoples concerned secured. Accordingly, in all Territories administered by the United Kingdom, the direction of educational policy had for a long time been in the hands of local education boards or departments, as was quite clear from document A/AC.35/L.294. The policy to be followed was prepared by the Government of each of the Territories, not by that of the United Kingdom.

Under the system, the part played by the United Kingdom was primarily advisory. Through the Colonial Office, the United Kingdom gave advice and provided financial assistance. British experts lent their aid, but did not command; their function was technical, not political. The careers of persons appointed as advisers by the Secretary of State for the Colonies showed that those appointments were in no way political. Moreover, members of the various advisory committees were drawn from the faculties of universities in the United Kingdom.

Those advisers and advisory committees studied the problems which arose, and measures which should be taken, and visited the Territories to discuss such questions on the spot. They supervised the allocation in the educational field of the Colonial Development and Welfare funds provided by the United Kingdom. From 1 April 1946 to 31 March 1958, nearly £29 million sterling had been spent from those funds on education, £13 million on primary and secondary education, over £5 million on technical and vocational training, and more than £10 million on higher education. Such credits were allocated for the execution of schemes put forward by the Territories. The advisers were responsible for assisting

(Mr. Caston, United Kingdom)

in the most efficient outlay of the money available, approving the schemes submitted by the Territories, and giving advice on the way in which those schemes could be improved in the light of experience acquired in other Territories or in the United Kingdom itself.

The Colonial Office assigned students from the Territories to those educational institutions in the United Kingdom which were best adapted to their individual needs. On 1 January 1959, 11,193 young people from the Territories under United Kingdom administration had been studying in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Two thousand six hundred and thirty of them held scholarships and 3,087 were attending universities.

He introduced Mr. Houghton, educational expert for the Non-Self-Governing Territories under United Kingdom administration, to the members of the Committee.

Mr. HOUGHTON (United Kingdom) stressed the value of discussions free from political considerations amongst persons interested in the development of education. It was sometimes said that certain Territories were backward because they were dependent. It would be more accurate to say that they were still dependent because they were backward. That word and the term "under-developed" were often considered as derogatory by the populations, but they were used only to describe Territories which for one reason or another had not yet succeeded in utilizing all their human and material resources for the benefit of the entire population. If that definition was accepted, it became clear that the problem of the development of education existed just as much in independent countries as in the Territories still administered by the United Kingdom.

When the question had arisen of establishing national development programmes, some had held the view that a complete educational system must be preceded by a period of economic expansion. But it was more realistic and more democratic to consider education as one of the most effective means of progress and consequently to assign it a place at least equal in importance to that of economic expansion. The establishment of a national system of education was costly, so that metropolitan Governments had been obliged to furnish considerable financial assistance to Territories and had accordingly been anxious to ensure that such funds were widely used.

(Mr. Houghton, United Kingdom)

In the United Kingdom the old attitude of benevolent paternalism, based largely on ignorance of the needs and desires of the overseas Territories, had to a large extent given place to a sincere, if sometimes ill-defined and faltering, sense of partnership. That development had helped to complicate the task of the educator, who was faced with the task of seeing that policies were in line with the hopes and desires of the people. It was now realized that the fundamental factor in education was less the policy of the Government than the attitude of the governed. After resisting the innovations which had threatened to upset their traditional way of life, the peoples then moved, first to a selective, finally to a complete acceptance of western schooling; educational progress became identified with the march towards self-government. While United Kingdom educators were questioning the absolute superiority of their educational system and were trying to help the Territories to develop their own political and cultural personality, the peoples of those Territories were convinced of its superiority and determined to master it. Hostility towards technical education, the development of trade schools and the training of artisans, which had been considered inferior to the education originally offered, usually vanished very quickly, however, when the population of a Territory about to attain self-government or independence realized that education of that kind provided a means of achieving greater economic freedom.

The work of British educators would become more effective as they learned to know the peoples' wishes and were able to satisfy them. At the present time, the demand for schools and for teachers was assuming unprecedented proportions. As long as the available resources had kept pace with that demand the quality of education had been maintained. Needs of exceptional scope now had to be met, but, although the Territories' resources were small by comparison with those of the industrial countries, programmes of free, universal primary education had been drawn up. By disregarding the old-fashioned principle of financial orthodoxy that priority should be given to revenue-producing services, it had been possible to find the ways and means to put the programmes into effect. In theory, education should be developed only as rapidly as the necessary teachers and schools became available; however, the educator was under pressure to move either too slowly because of economic factors or too fast because of political factors.

(Mr. Houghton, United Kingdom)

Thus far, there had been no disastrous decline in the quality of education, and efforts had been made to mitigate the damage by a big expansion of teacher training.

In general, the United Kingdom felt that standards should be established before the stage of mass demand was reached; when it was, it should be passed through as quickly as possible; later on, the advances made could be consolidated and standards reasserted precisely. However, since the resources and needs of the Territories were different from those of the United Kingdom, it was the duty of United Kingdom educators to indicate the standards and the system which they considered best and to suggest means of adapting them to local needs, working in close partnership with the peoples concerned. They might take the view that their task would be at an end when they had provided such education, but the manner in which they carried out their work in the last stages before the Territories attained self-government would determine the future links between the parties concerned, and success would be assured only if all of them displayed the necessary wisdom and goodwill.

He wished to point out some of the remarkable advances made in the Territories administered by the United Kingdom. In Kenya, between 1946 and 1957, the number of primary schools for Africans had risen from 2,259 to 3,898 and the number of children enrolled from 208,000 to 500,000. During the same period, the number of secondary schools had risen from five to twenty-five and attendance from 395 to 3,316. The number of African teachers had grown from 4,810 to 10,263, and public expenditure on education had increased from £148,935 in 1946 to £2,500,198 in 1958. Equally encouraging figures could be cited for other Territories, such as Nigeria, Uganda, and Northern Rhodesia. The situation was somewhat different in Jamaica. The latter had a very old tradition of education, but the benefits of education had long been reserved to a small number of urban inhabitants. When the entire population had wanted to enjoy those benefits, mainly because of British influence after the war, the Government had not been in a position financially to meet its wishes. The Government's vigorous economic policy would now enable it to achieve

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(Mr. Houghton, United Kingdom)

its goals, and it planned to institute free, compulsory primary education for all children by 1962. At the same time, secondary, higher and adult education had made great strides. It was evident from all the figures he had cited that the vital importance of education was receiving increasing recognition; if the rate of progress was not always as rapid as could be wished, that was due to local conditions which might cause anyone to pause.

Mr. GOEDHART (Netherlands) presented to the members of the Committee Mr. de Bruyn, who was well qualified by his academic training and his experience to report on the advances made in education in Netherlands New Guinea.

Mr. de BRUYN (Netherlands) said that educational progress in Netherlands New Guinea must be viewed against the background of the Territory's over-all development, to which the Netherlands was devoting sums of money that had risen from 15.5 million guilders in 1950 to 66 million in 1957.

The increase in expenditure was attributable to the large-scale economic, social and educational development and to the steady expansion of the area under the effective control of the Netherlands administration, which had increased from 126,000 square kilometres in 1950 to 264,000 in 1957.

During the period under review, great strides had been made in the construction of housing, hospitals and schools and in the improvement and extension of airports and harbours. Particular attention had been paid to the development of public health services; expenditure for that purpose had increased from 1.9 million guilders in 1950 to 7 million in 1958, and the number of doctors had risen from nineteen to eighty during the same period.

In the economic field, several important projects had been undertaken. Although agricultural policy still aimed at improving food crops, efforts had also been made to develop certain cash crops, such as cocoa; the area used for the cultivation of cocoa had increased from thirty hectares in 1954 to 642 in 1958.

The progress revealed by those figures had been achieved through the work of a large number of non-indigenous specialists, and also of an increasing number of indigenous officials who had had to be given the necessary training. There

(Mr. de Bruyn, Netherlands)

had been 746 indigenous officials in government service in 1953 and 1,439 in 1957. In 1957, thirty-five of the Territory's sixty-five districts had been administered by Papuan officials.

Many years of research and preparation had preceded the establishment of the present educational system. The immediate aim of the Netherlands Government was to spread elementary education to the greatest possible extent, to improve the quality of education and to create opportunities for continued education and vocational training.

Owing to the notable differences in cultural development of Papuan society, it was necessary to distinguish between the urban centres, regions which had long been christianized, and the areas which had only recently come into contact with Western culture.

In the rural areas, the village constituted the functional social and economic unit and the village school was the backbone of the educational system. There were subsidized and unsubsidized schools. The former were the village schools, classified as A, B and C. The unsubsidized schools and the C-type schools were found in areas where Western culture had only recently penetrated, while the A-type schools were established in the most advanced areas. The progress achieved could be measured by the fact that the number of C schools had dropped from 318 in 1952 to 148 in 1958, whereas the number of B schools had risen from 206 to 422, while A schools, non-existent in 1952, numbered eighteen in 1958.

Selected pupils from the village schools could attend three-year courses in continuation schools which prepared them for education at the post-primary level. The number of continuation schools had increased from nine in 1950 to nineteen in 1958, and the attendance of Papuan pupils had risen from 850 to 2,250.

In the urban centres, primary education was given at the type A and B primary schools which prepared their pupils for education at the post-primary level. The number of pupils had increased from 1,373 in 1952 to 3,576 in 1958 and the proportion of Papuans among them had increased from 34 to 51 per cent.

With respect to secondary education, the Territory had three types of schools. Schools of the first type (PMS) were open to graduates of continuation

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schools and B-type primary schools. The two other types of schools (MULO and HBS), equivalent to the schools of the same name in the Netherlands, were open to graduates of the primary schools A and B. The number of Papuan pupils enrolled in the secondary schools had increased from twenty in 1950 to 170 in 1958. Furthermore, in 1957 eleven Papuan boys had been attending secondary schools in the Netherlands and in 1958 the first Papuan had been admitted to a university.

As regards teacher-training, the facilities for training village school teachers had been improved. The number of pupils at the training schools had increased from 120 in 1950 to 432 in 1958, 375 being Papuans.

From 1950 to 1958, the total number of schools and special courses had increased from 652 to 1,203 and the number of pupils from 31,395 to 52,912. The number of teachers had risen from 952 to 1,940. The educational facilities had therefore almost doubled in eight years. The total cost of education on the budget of the Department of Cultural Affairs had amounted to 3.5 million guilders in 1950, while the sum required in 1958 had been more than 9.8 million guilders. Those figures showed the great development of education in Netherlands New Guinea in the period from 1950 to 1958.

Mr. SALSAMENDI (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) introduced the two documents prepared by UNESCO on the educational situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, entitled "Free and Compulsory Education in Primary Schools in Non-Self-Governing Territories 1955-1957" (A/AC.35/L.298) and "Illiteracy and Fundamental Education in Non-Self-Governing Territories" (A/AC.35/L.303).

The first of the two documents was a factual presentation of the two mutually complementary characteristics of universal primary education, namely, that such education must be "free" and "compulsory".

As article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights set forth very clearly the obligations of Governments with regard to free and compulsory education, UNESCO had felt that it might be useful to present in tabular form the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories in that regard. In the case of free education, it had been felt that the term implied more than exemption

(Mr. Salsamendi, UNESCO)

from tuition fees, and the tables therefore also indicated exemption from boarding fees, free transportation, school meals, etc.

In the case of compulsory education, UNESCO had felt it necessary to outline the main features of the policies of the Administering Powers with regard to the future of education in those Territories. For this reason, the information had been presented in two columns - one illustrating the present status and the other the problems and trends.

In the period under review, UNESCO had supplied education specialists under the Technical Assistance Programme to six of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and had awarded six fellowships to educators from three of those Territories.

Regarding the second document, he pointed out that it had already been prepared when the tenth session of the General Conference of UNESCO had decided (resolution 1.51) to drop the use of the term "fundamental education" and to replace it by "youth education" or "adult education", as appropriate. The document was in two parts - the first one on standardization of literacy statistics, and the second on illiteracy and fundamental education, i.e. adult education, in order to meet the wish of the Committee regarding the proper interpretation of the term "literacy".

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.