



COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Eleventh Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 25 February 1960, at 10.45 a.m.

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- (d) General Survey (A/4192)

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. GIBSON BARBOZA	Brazil
	Mr. KANAKARATNE	Ceylon
	Mr. de CAMARET	France
	Mr. DADZIE	Ghana
	Mr. RASGOTRA	India
	Mr. PACHACHI	Iraq
	Mr. GOEDHART)	Netherlands
	Mr. de BRUYN)	
	Mr. QUENTIN-BAXTER	New Zealand
	Mr. CASTON	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. SPALDING	United States of America
<u>Representatives of specialized agencies:</u>		
	Mr. REYMOND)	International Labour Organisation
	Mr. KHAN)	
	Mr. ACHARYA	Food and Agriculture Organization
	Miss PROCTOR	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
	Mrs. MEAGHER	World Health Organization
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. PROTITCH	Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self- Governing Territories
	Mr. KUNST	Secretary of the Committee

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (continued)

The CHAIRMAN said if there were no objections the tentative time-table submitted by the Secretariat would be adopted.

It was so decided.

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

- (a) EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS (A/4131 and 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 and 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 and A/4194)
- (d) GENERAL SURVEY (A/4192)

Mr. GOEDHART (Netherlands) paid a tribute to the Secretariat and to the specialized agencies for the valuable documentation they had prepared, which reflected the advances made in the various Non-Self-Governing Territories in the past decade and provided a review of the principles which had guided the authorities responsible for the administration of the various Territories.

As the Committee knew, the Netherlands Government recognized fully its responsibilities under Chapter XI of the Charter and was acutely aware of the need to promote the progressive development of the Territory under its administration. Its sole aim in respect of Netherlands New Guinea was to discharge its responsibilities towards the inhabitants of the Territory and to permit them as soon as possible to determine their future in absolute freedom.

Economic progress held an important place in his Government's policy and should in its view go hand in hand with development in the social, educational and political fields.

The Netherlands Government attached special importance to co-operation in the social, economic and educational fields with the specialized agencies and regional organizations and with its neighbour, Australia, which was responsible for the administration of the rest of the island of New Guinea. That co-operation, which was in conformity with the provisions of Article 73 of the Charter, would play an increasingly important part in the future development of the Territory.

(Mr. Goedhart, Netherlands)

He asked the Chairman to call upon Mr. de Bruyn, who was well known to the members of the Committee for his expert knowledge of conditions in Netherlands New Guinea.

Mr. de BRUYN (Netherlands) said that since his delegation had at previous sessions given the Committee extensive information on social, educational and economic progress in Netherlands New Guinea, he would confine himself to a few general observations.

In an under-developed country such as Netherlands New Guinea it was necessary to strike a very delicate balance between the spiritual and the material needs of the indigenous population. To place too great an emphasis on the material aspects of progress in a primitive culture like that of the Papuans could cause results exactly opposite to what was desired. In Papuan society social development was the primary requirement upon which advances in the other fields largely depended.

In the past decade his Government had made strenuous efforts to promote the active participation of the Papuans in the formulation and execution of social policies in the Territory. There had been a considerable expansion of the areas brought under the Government's administrative control. In 1950 an area of only 126,000 square kilometres had been under executive control; by 1957 the area had been extended to approximately 270,000 square kilometres. The number of registered indigenous inhabitants had risen from 249,616 in 1950 to 350,902 in 1958. Each year more Papuans were participating in the administration of the country. The number of Papuan district officers had risen from sixteen in 1950 to ninety-three in 1960; in 1957 thirty-five of the sixty-five districts in which the country was divided had been administered by Papuan district officers. At the present time twenty-eight indigenous cadet officers were in training at the school for administrative officers and there had been a considerable increase in the participation of Papuans in other branches of Government. The number of permanent indigenous officials in Government service had increased from 746 in 1953 to 1,568 in 1958, which represented more than one-third of the entire established civil service. In addition there were over 1,900 indigenous employees in Government service on a monthly or daily basis. Similar increases could be observed in almost all other fields.

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(Mr. de Bruyn, Netherlands)

The socio-political training of the Papuans was of the utmost importance. The Administration's task was to create a sense of unity in a conglomeration of tribes and clans divided by hundreds of language barriers.

In most countries of the world political consciousness had preceded political organization. In Netherlands New Guinea the reverse was the case. The first steps towards democratic self-government had been taken at the village level with the institution of simple village councils. A start had been made with the formation of advisory councils at the regional level, which would be the forerunners of elected regional councils entrusted with executive functions and having their own financial resources. In 1959 the first regional council, which was predominantly Papuan and had ten elected and three appointed members, had been elected by the inhabitants of the Biak-Noemfoor area, comprising about 30,000 persons. The electorate had consisted of all adult men and women in that group of islands. The experience to be gained by that council would be of great importance for the establishment of further elected regional councils in the Territory.

The Netherlands Government realized that the establishment of an elected Central New Guinea Council to represent the entire population could not wait until all the regional councils had been formed. The necessary legislation by the metropolitan Government on the subject was in an advanced stage of preparation.

A precise knowledge of the demographic structure of the population was obviously of the greatest importance for the planning of social and economic development policies. In 1957 a demographic section had been established to direct the compilation and collation of population data and in 1958 the section had introduced a system of population registers on an experimental basis in the district of Sentani. The results of that experiment, which was entirely administered by Papuans, had proved reasonably satisfactory. An investigation of the demographic structure of the Papuan population was also being considered. The Government had decided to initiate an extensive project of demographic research which would, inter alia, provide the information required for the setting up of population registers in areas under effective administrative control. It was anticipated that the project could be completed in 1962.

(Mr. de Bruyn, Netherlands)

The period under review showed good progress in the matter of health. Large-scale campaigns had been launched against malaria, yaws, tuberculosis and leprosy, in which grants from UNICEF had played an important part. Excellent results had been achieved in combating yaws and malaria. In 1955 about 7 per cent of the population had suffered from active yaws; a recent survey showed that only four per thousand still had infectious yaws. In the campaign against malaria, the houses of more than one-third of the population under administrative control had been sprayed with insecticides and the greater part of the population of those areas had been treated twice or three times. In the areas thus treated there had been a sharp decline in the mortality rate. For example, in the Sentani area, where an indoor residual spraying campaign had been launched in 1954, the mortality rate had dropped by 1959 from twenty-eight per thousand to seventeen per thousand and infant mortality had dropped from 215 per thousand to 125 per thousand, while the birth-rate had risen from forty-six per thousand to fifty-seven per thousand. Good progress had been made also in the control of tuberculosis.

The number of doctors had increased from nineteen in 1950 to eighty-five in 1960. Expenditure on health had increased from 1.9 million guilders in 1950 to 9,450,000 in 1959.

Though the total labour force was comparatively small, the Government was convinced that great benefits could be derived from well organized labour unions. The first union had been established in 1952 and the unions now had approximately 3,500 contributing members. An expert from the Labour Movement in the Netherlands was attached as adviser to one of the territorial unions.

His delegation would not dwell on the progress made in the field of education, since at the Committee's tenth session it had reported at length on general developments in that field.

He would reserve his observations on economic conditions for a later stage in the Committee's proceedings.

Mr. QUENTIN-BAXTER (New Zealand), after expressing his appreciation of the work done by the Secretariat in preparing the documentation before the Committee, said that there were nevertheless certain observations in them concerning territories under New Zealand administration which required correction or elucidation.

(Mr. Quentin-Baxter,
New Zealand)

The statement in paragraph 88 of document A/4124 that no workers' organizations existed in the New Zealand Territories was incorrect. As stated in his Government's report for the year ended 31 March 1959, under the provisions of the Cook Islands Industrial Union regulations of 1947 an industrial union of workers had been registered which covered all classes of workers. The regulations provided machinery for the settlement of disputes, and agreements between that union and all major employers had been negotiated during the years 1950, 1951 and 1952 by conciliation committees presided over by the Industrial Relations Officer appointed under the regulations. Those agreements had provided for an increase in all basic wage rates commensurate with a mutually agreed increase in the cost of living. Although union membership was not compulsory, the two largest employers gave preference to members of the union, which was affiliated to the New Zealand Federation of Labour.

The agreements reached between the Union and the employers were known as Industrial Agreements, and they applied to four main categories: namely, shop and office workers, and labourers excluding waterside labourers; a particular group of Public Service employees; stevedores; and factory employees. Agreements could cover labour in any or all of those categories and between February 1951 and March 1959, thirteen such agreements had been negotiated. In addition, in the Cook Islands and in Niue, local employees in the public service could join the Island Territories section of the New Zealand Public Service Association, one of the objects of which was to improve working conditions and remuneration.

In document A/4129 some reference might also have been made to the fact that in the Cook Islands, both the pearl shell industry and fish pond culture were being developed with Government help. An addition could also be made to paragraph 43 of document A/4194: In Niue women were taking a progressively larger part in village affairs and it was proposed that, under legislation shortly to be introduced, both men and women over eighteen years of age would participate in the elections to the Niue Island Assembly.

In two instances the statistics given, while correct, did not reflect the true position. Those appearing in table I of document A/4131 gave the impression that school enrolment in Niue had fallen during the period covered. The fact was,

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(Mr. Quentin-Baxter, New Zealand)

however, that in 1946 some pupils had been enrolled at both Government and mission schools and had thus been counted twice; by 1956 the mission schools had ceased to operate and there had in fact been no decline in attendance. Free and compulsory education had existed in Niue for many years. Again, according to table 1 in document A/4128 there appeared to have been an increase in the infant mortality rate in the Cook Islands between 1946 and 1956, the figure for 1956 being 149.93 per thousand. He did not dispute the figures, but it was unfortunate that those two years had been selected. Actually, for the period 1949-1958, the rate had been 112.1 per thousand, which was lower than it had been in the previous ten-year period. In 1958, it had been 61.48 per thousand. Despite difficulties in obtaining medical staff for such isolated communities, it was hoped that that improvement could be maintained.

Mr. KUNST (Secretary of the Committee) said that the observations made by the New Zealand representative would be taken into account when the reports were prepared for the printers.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.