

1st April, 1959.

XXX/272/59

Recommendations first Conference.

To:

His Honour D.M. Cleland,
Administrator of Papua and
New Guinea,
Government House,
Port Moresby.

My Government informed me that the Australian Government has accepted the recommendations of the first Conference on Australian-Netherlands administrative co-operation in New Guinea, held at Canberra 20-24 October 1958. I look upon this fact with great satisfaction because now the formal basis has been established on which we can start building our co-operation to the benefit of the inhabitants of both our territories.

In anticipation of the Australian Government's acceptance of the recommendations some preparatory action was already taken. To advance our aims I believe it will be best to inform you how the action taken relating to different recommendations stands at present.

Agenda item 2A(b) - The recommendation on "Channels of communication between administrations" has been brought to the notice of officials concerned with the request to act accordingly in future. I do not expect any difficulty in this respect.

Agenda item 2B - The recommendation on "Means of communication and proposals for facilitation" has been passed on to the departments concerned.

As to air-communications the possibilities to increase the frequency between our territories are being investigated at present. I am expecting definite proposals to be made in the very near future.

As to sea-communications the Netherlands Government has opened discussions with shipping companies in order to establish a monthly service between Hollandia and Wewak or Madang. In case, however, these discussions will not result into a satisfactory solution in the near future I am considering to suggest some temporary arrangements be made between our administrations to have alternately

alternately an Australian and a Dutch patrol vessel or coaster maintaining a monthly service between Wewak and Hollandia to try out the demand for such a connection. Before any further step is taken I would appreciate to have your views on this matter. As to land-communications I do not see any immediate action but it should be understood that in case one of the administrations is planning the construction of a road in the border area the other administration should be informed. It could then be worked out whether - depending of circumstances - any combined plan could be established. As to tele-communications I have requested my Director of Transport and Energy to draw up proposals for discussion with his opposite number in your administration. In due course I hope to request your formal approval for these discussions.

Agenda item 2C - In connection with the recommendation on "Language problems and means of overcoming" the following arrangement has been made. Reports etc. on various matters, written for internal use, will be summarised in English or if this is not feasible, the contents will be told to your Liaison Officer at Hollandia. The Liaison Officer will decide whether the report is of sufficient importance to the officers of the P.N.G. administration to warrant a translation of the whole (or a part of the) report into English. In case his decision is in the affirmative arrangements will be made for its translation. For this purpose steps have been taken to engage a suitable translator (Dutch-English) to meet the request for translations. In the meantime other arrangements will be made and perhaps it will be necessary to call on your administration conform the offer made by Dr. Gunther during the Canberra Conference. As to the recommendation recorded in para 15 it is planned to increase the tuition in English in schools considered suitable for this purpose. The Director of Cultural Affairs has been invited to examine the matter.

The attention of all those concerned has been drawn to the recommendations recorded in paras 17 and 18 under agenda item 3B - "Proposals for further measures of co-operation". The official approval for visits to and fro will - as usual - be sought between you and me. It would facilitate my planning to have a tentative programme of intended visits of officers of your administration to this territory for the rest of the year. As to the exchange of information initiative will be taken by our departmental heads through our liaison officers informing each other what requirements there are and what can be made available. As to recommendation para 19 - native affairs - the advice for further action has been requested from the officers concerned with this matter. In due course I will return to this subject.

The Director of Health has been requested to work out the implementation of recommendation recorded in para 20.

20.

In view of the large field of activities under this recommendation it might be useful to agree to an interim meeting of our departmental heads or officers of these departments.

I am of the opinion that the implementation of the recommendations recorded in paras 21, 22, 23A and 25 should be put in the hands of a study group consisting of education experts of both administrations.

In first instance the study group should be small, two officers, one of each administration.

They will have to come together to work out a plan for further action and - if required - other education officers could be invited to participate in the work of the study group.

I have requested the Director of Cultural Affairs to nominate the (first) member of the study group.

It would be appreciated if you would advise me whether this suggestion meets with your approval.

In that case initiative action on these recommendations could be taken immediately.

It is felt that an early start is essential. The matters dealt with in these recommendations are comprehensive and rather complicated and it may be expected that it will take considerable time to come to recommendations for action. These recommendations, as part of an interim report of the study group, should be considered by the second Conference on our co-operation and therefore should be in the hands of the administrations two or three months before the commencement of this second Conference.

In connection with the recommendation recorded in para 23A it is felt that immediate action can be taken with respect to the nautical school in Hollandia. A proposal for participation of some Australian New Guinea students is being prepared and will be forwarded for your consideration in the near future.

As to the recommendation recorded in para 26 the appointment of the members of the working committee is under consideration. I will inform you with the names of the Dutch members at the same time suggesting a date for the first meeting of this committee.

For the implementation of recommendations recorded in the paras 27 and 28 it is felt that the creation of a study group consisting of officers in these fields (agriculture, stock, forestry) would be most advantageous.

Prior agreement should be reached on the composition and task of this committee.

I have put the matter in the hands of my Director of Economic Affairs for advice and suggestions as to the officers to participate in the study group and as to its task. My proposals will reach you in due course.

My thoughts on the implementation of the recommendation para 29 have

have not yet developed to the extent where it would be possible to make a practical suggestion. In due course I will communicate concerning this matter.

As to the recommendation recorded in para 30 departmental heads have been requested to draw up inventory lists of specialists, specialists facilities, laboratories and technical facilities available in this territory. Together with a similar list concerning your territory the recommendation under 30 (b) can be worked out.

The first steps, as mentioned above, on the way to closer co-operation have been taken and it is my sincere hope that our endeavours will have fruitful results.

I have designated Dr. Loosjes, the Government Secretary, to be in charge of all activities in respect of our co-operation. In his central position as Government Secretary he will take all necessary action, stimulate, and co-ordinate activities. At the end of April Dr. Loosjes will be present in Rabaul at the forthcoming Fourth South Pacific Conference and participate in the Nineteenth Session of the Commission. I have taken advantage of this by instructing him to proceed to Port Moresby after the Session of the Commission where he will call on you and discuss any further development of our initiative actions and such other matters in connection with our co-operation as you may care to bring up. Dr. Loosjes expects to arrive in Port Moresby round about the weekend of 17th May. Your formal approval for this visit of Dr. Loosjes would be appreciated.

I understand you have had a busy time recently with the visiting mission and Legisco. I am more than occupied with the budget for 1960.

Please accept my best wishes and sincere regards for Mrs. Cleland and yourself in which my wife joins me,

Yours sincerely,

Dr. P. M. Platteel.
Governor of Netherlands New Guinea.