



OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER  
FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC,  
SUVA, FIJI,

25th June, 1936.

No. 2774.

Sir,

I am directed by the Acting High Commissioner for the Western Pacific to convey to you His Excellency's instructions, as follows, relative to your representation of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony at the Seminar-Conference on Education in Pacific Countries to be held at Honolulu during June, July, and August, 1936.

2. You should proceed to Honolulu in the R.M.S. "Aorangi," leaving Suva on the 26th June. On your arrival at Honolulu you should communicate with Dr. F.M. Keesing, the Co-Director of the Conference, who will be in a position to inform you of the arrangements for board and lodging which it is understood are being made.

3. His Excellency understands that you will be expected to address the Conference on subjects connected with education in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, and to furnish any reasonable and proper information required by  
other

H.E. Maude, Esquire.





- 2.-

other members of the Conference concerning educational matters in the Colony. You will however realize that you are proceeding to the Conference not in a private capacity but as the delegate of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, and you should therefore refrain from any criticism of the educational or other policy of the Colony or any other Administration. Should you be in doubt as to your proper course on any point you should consult Mr. A.I. Mayhew of the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education, who is also attending the Conference.

4. The Superintendent of Education in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony asks that you should refer to his letter of the 28th July, 1935, addressed to Dr. Keesing, relative to special subjects suggested for discussion at the Conference. A copy of that letter is enclosed. You should also take the opportunity of discussing with Mr. Mayhew your own proposed school text-book on Gilbertese history.

5. As soon as possible after the conclusion of the Conference you should prepare and submit a report to the Resident Commissioner, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, and, in copy, to this office, on the work done by the Conference, with particular reference to any questions which you may consider pertinent to educational problems in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

6. It is understood that you have booked  
your

28. 7. 35.



- 3.-

your return passage to New Zealand in the R.M.S.  
"Niagara," leaving Honolulu on the 16th August.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Secretary to the High Commission.



COPY.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.  
Education Department,  
Tarawa, 28th July, 1935.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 12th April, on the subject of a Conference on Education in Pacific Countries. Your letter will be forwarded to the head of this Colony, i.e., the Resident Commissioner, for his consideration.

2. I do feel that there is a great need for such a Conference, and that it will arouse great interest among administrators, teachers, and missionaries. My intimate hope is that one of the questions to be dealt with will be the particular education required for backward peoples whose one-time systems of mind and body training were subverted on the coming of the white man. In this Colony, for instance, a traditional system of character and physical training, with many though not all fine characteristics, became impossible under the new economic situation. Once this happened sanctions could not be enforced, and the general tone declined until arrested by the missionaries. It is the duty of an education department

Dr. F.M. Keesing,  
Department of Anthropology,  
University of Hawaii,  
Honolulu, Hawaii.



department in such circumstances to give a bias to the education it provides, the bias to be concerned with the development of basic morality and physical well-being, and run through with such indigenous material as is compatible with Christian principles.

3. Moral and physical adjustment is of more importance than the dissemination of literary knowledge. This seemingly elementary fact still gets inadequate recognition. Teachers working in native countries are dominated by the ideas gained in their home countries, where the moral and physical background of the child is ensured by individual parents and by the force of public opinion. All teachers appointed to native areas should receive, in my opinion, a very special training, such as is often given to other officers, so that in their new work they may strike a proper balance of effort for the attainment of the whole education of the native.

4. I am unable to state whether an educational officer from the Colony will be able to attend the Conference. I note that Mr. Arthur Mayhew is among those listed on your Advance Notice. In the event that a local representative is unavailable, this gentleman is as familiar as is possible from a distance with what has been done here to adapt education to local needs, and he could speak for this area with authority, I request, in any case, to be placed on the list of those <sup>to</sup> whom the report of proceedings will be despatched in due course.

I have etc.,

(Signed) F.G.L. Holland,  
Superintendent of Education.