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'ANNoyed' teachers look to Britain

The Hongkong Professional Teachers' Union plans to tell overseas organisations about its displeasure over the T. K. Ann Report on the dispute between teachers and the Government in 1973.

The union intends writing to the British Labour Party and the world council of teachers in Geneva to explain the teachers' disappointment with the Education Department and give their side of the affair.

The 1973 problem has come to the fore again because the Ann Report on the dispute has only recently been published.

The Chairman of the 13,000-strong union, Mr Szeto Wah, said the report had twisted the facts in the 1973 dispute in order to protect the authorities.

The teachers, he said, were particularly dissatisfied with the proposal for disestablishment of Government primary schools and the commission's recommendations to solve the problems of communication.

"The absence of channels of communication between teachers and the Education Department, and particularly their refusal to recognise the union's position in negotiations, was one of the chief reasons for the dispute and yet the Ann commission has done nothing to rectify the matter.

"As for the Education Department, they are still not recognising the unions as genuine representatives of teachers who should be involved in consultation with the department," Mr Szeto said.

Commenting on the proposal for disestablishment of Government primary schools, he said education was the responsibility of the Government and should not be abandoned and left instead to the public.

Mr Szeto said a meeting would be held next Wednesday with the other educational bodies which make up the Joint Secretariat of 13 Educational Bodies to see if they would be interested in joining the PTU in their decision to bring the matter to the attention of the Labour Party and the international council of teachers.

On June 19 the union will hold a seminar to discuss the Ann Report and its ramifications for teachers.