

fostering and increasing interchanges between Commonwealth organizations in professional fields throughout the Commonwealth. Funds for member governments are disbursed to encourage representation at conferences, to facilitate the exchange of visits among professional people, and to assist in organizing professional conferences. Recently the Foundation has been concentrating on encouraging the development of non-governmental associations in a number of newer professional fields.

All such programs(6) of mutually-beneficial action flow from consultation and co-operation at the highest level; indeed, the interchange of thoughts at the heads-of-government level permits the considerable degree of international co-operation evident today in the modern Commonwealth. Yet the tremendous growth in the number of independent nations participating in the Commonwealth has posed a difficult problem within the association; informality and intimacy, long characteristic of Commonwealth heads of government meetings, were becoming more and more difficult to maintain. It was feared that, in an atmosphere of reduced familiarity and the growing importance of regional or interest groupings, discussion of such problems of a world-wide nature as economic disparities might well serve only to bring out differences among members and precipitate acrimonious debate, with few constructive results. Therefore, at Singapore in 1971, Commonwealth heads of government welcomed the suggestion that their senior officials meet to study the loss of informality in executive meetings and to recommend means by which informality and flexibility could be restored. They also welcomed the Canadian suggestion to direct senior officials to prepare for their discussion a subject of practical concern to all heads of government -- comparative techniques of government. Senior officials met for fruitful discussions in Ottawa in October 1972 and formulated proposals on both subjects for consideration by heads of government in advance of their 1973 meeting in Ottawa from August 2 to 10, 1973.

- (6) In addition to the joint undertaking by member governments of these official programs, there is a wide variety of Commonwealth organizations (more than 200) constructively active in the non-governmental field.