

## REPORT OF COMMISSION "B"

### THE MACHINERY FOR A CONTINUING DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE OFFICIAL AND THE UNOFFICIAL COMMONWEALTH

#### Terms of reference

1. The task of Commission B was to make recommendations on the machinery for a continuing dialogue between the official and the unofficial Commonwealth. In its deliberations it took into account the papers submitted to the Conference and the discussion of these in plenary sessions.

#### The range of non-governmental activity

2. The Commission reviewed the wide range of effective activity of NGOs in the professional fields, in economic and social development and in information and education. In the view of the Commission the work of NGOs is economical and cost-effective. It is fundamental to the further utilisation of professional resources, relevant to local needs in the development field and of great importance to the public understanding of the nature and work of the commonwealth - especially while funding for the official information programme is still on a very limited scale.

#### The need for fuller information

3. The Commission was conscious of the incompleteness of the information at present available on the range and scope of non-governmental activity, especially by local groups concerned with community projects in the developing countries, and agreed that there was a need to collect more information to build up a fuller picture.

#### Governmental support

4. They were conscious of the close relationship in many Commonwealth countries between the official administration and the NGOs and the scope for further creative development; of the continuing interest of the Commonwealth Secretariat in non-governmental activity; and of the vital and imaginative support given to the Professional Associations by the Commonwealth Foundation.