

ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP PLAN

The compilation of the Eleventh Annual Report for the period 1 April 1970 to 31 March 1971 has been hampered by the failure of some participating countries to submit their contributions by the dates requested. Publication was delayed in the hope that reports would eventually be received from all countries, but since this has not happened the report appears in an incomplete form. The Report of the Working Party on the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan published in the Fifth Commonwealth Education Conference Report (pp 3.6-3.7) expresses concern at the difficulties experienced in the compilation of successive reports and stresses the importance of prompt replies by agencies to requests for contributions. It is hoped that with the co-operation of all Scholarship agencies, the Twelfth Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 1972, on which work will have already begun by the time the present report appears, will be published punctually and in a complete form.

The Fifth Commonwealth Education Conference held at Canberra in February 1971 provided another opportunity for an examination of the day-to-day working of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan and this was undertaken by a Working Party appointed by Committee A. Its report, referred to above, indicates that the administration of the Plan has proceeded with reasonable efficiency, but stresses, for the guidance of scholarship agencies, the importance of observing the agreed timetable for inviting and submitting nominations and for informing candidates of the outcome of their applications. It was agreed that the "Administrative Handbook on the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan", (prepared by the Association of Commonwealth Universities and first issued after the Fourth Commonwealth Education Conference), should be revised, so as to embody the changes in practice adopted at the Fifth Conference, and distributed to all authorities engaged in the administration of the Plan.

The Working Party also made recommendations concerning the proposal for a "Ten Year Review" to assess the value of the scheme during the period 1960-70 and to provide a basis for any modifications shown to be necessary in making it as relevant as possible to current requirements. The Conference endorsed the Working Party's proposal and requested the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee to sponsor the review. At the time of publication of the present report all nominating agencies will have been asked to review the effectiveness and value of the Plan from the point of view of their country for the first decade of its operation. It is of the greatest importance that comprehensive replies to the questionnaire drawn up at the Conference be submitted by the date requested in order that the review may be completed and circulated to all participating countries well before the Sixth Commonwealth Education Conference.