

## FOREWORD

At the Fifth Commonwealth Education Conference held in Canberra in 1971 it was agreed that the Commonwealth Secretariat should study facilities in Commonwealth countries for the acquisition of practical experience in industry for students training to be technicians. For the developing countries in particular, the role of the technician and his education and training - both in educational institutions and in industrial and allied organizations - are vitally important. These countries are implementing massive programmes of industrialization with the aim of becoming increasingly self-sufficient in the manufacture of engineering and consumer goods, raising the productivity of agriculture, and building a society appropriate to their national, social and economic goals. To achieve this aim, the quality and quantity of the facilities available for the education and training of technicians must be satisfactory. For, as has been said elsewhere by Dr. L. S. Chandrakant, "In the final analysis, the pace and direction of the economic progress of developing countries will largely depend on how far they solve their technician problem."

In the past, considerable success has been achieved in providing practical experience in the developed countries, and thousands of overseas students have been able to make use of their facilities. However, the supply of training places has not equalled the demand, nor has this form of training always been the most relevant to the students' needs. More appropriate training may well emerge by means of co-operation among developing countries themselves, particularly on a regional basis, and it was with this in mind that the present survey was commissioned.

To carry out the survey, the Commonwealth Secretariat was very fortunate in obtaining the services of Mr. R. Dasgupta, Deputy Director of Technical Education for Madhya Pradesh, India. Besides having detailed knowledge of the situation in his own country, Mr. Dasgupta was able to visit Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Hongkong and Singapore and see for himself the training facilities in existence there. The result has been a report of such interest and comprehensiveness that we are publishing it in our Education in the Commonwealth series where we believe that it will serve as an important source of reference not only to the countries included in the survey but to many other Commonwealth countries as well.

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