

3. Remarks by Mr. E. C. Anyaoku, *Commonwealth Assistant Secretary General,* at the Closing Ceremony

The adoption of the Conference Report sets the seal on what, I believe, has been a very successful Conference. We have enjoyed ten days of frank and fruitful discussion which has been characterized by those qualities that one always associates with Commonwealth meetings — a willingness to understand each others' difficulties, friendliness and relaxed informality.

The Conference has provided delegates with the opportunity to discuss, with their colleagues from other parts of the Commonwealth, issues that are of concern to us all. The discussion has been both intellectually stimulating and practically oriented.

The fruits of the Conference are many and varied. Old friendships have been renewed and new ones made. The value of many conferences, including this one, lies as much in what happens in the corridors, at receptions and in the hotels, as in the more formal deliberations of the conference chamber. In more tangible terms we have the fruits of the Conference in the form of the Conference Report which has now been adopted. It contains an unusually large number of recommendations, many of them requiring action by the Secretariat for their implementation. In the Secretariat's view, these recommendations are an exciting challenge and break new ground in Commonwealth co-operation in education.

Mr. Chairman, you have charged the Secretariat with the responsibility for pursuing these recommendations with vigour. On behalf of the Secretary-General and my colleagues, I wish to assure you, sir, and the Conference that the Secretariat accepts this charge. Within the limits of the resources that governments make available to the Secretariat, we shall do our utmost to ensure that the recommendations of this Seventh Commonwealth Education Conference are implemented to the best of our ability.

Our success in discharging these new responsibilities will depend, as in all other aspects of Secretariat work, on the support we receive from the Commonwealth governments. Support will clearly be required in financial terms and you, Mr. Chairman, have already drawn attention to this fact. Support will equally be necessary from ministries of education in member countries. The final recommendation of the Conference places a heavy load on the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee. The Committee has been given responsibility by the Conference for assigning priorities to the many recommendations that the Conference has made. I hardly need to emphasize that this is a most important task. I wish to be frank, Mr. Chairman, in saying that we have not always received, in the past, the support we require from governments through the C.E.L.C. Some governments have not always been represented at an appropriate level on this important Committee. Some representatives have been handicapped in their participation in the deliberations of the Committee by the failure of home governments to provide them with information or with adequate briefing. I am sure that delegates will appreciate the importance of ensuring that their representatives on the C.E.L.C. are kept in close touch with their home ministries.

In the same way as the Conference has charged the Secretariat with responsibility for carrying out the recommendations of the Conference, I would make so bold as to appeal to Commonwealth governments to support the Secretariat in its efforts to discharge its responsibilities.

We shall soon be leaving Accra which has been the venue of the second Commonwealth Education Conference to be held on the continent of Africa. Our thoughts will shortly turn to the planning of the Eighth Commonwealth Education Conference to be held on the continent of delegates will wish to know that preliminary consultations have already taken place on the possible venue for the next Conference. Arising from these consultations, the hope is being expressed that the next conference will be in Asia, which has not hosted a Commonwealth Education Conference since the 1962 meeting in New Delhi. Governments will, of course, be kept fully informed, through the C.E.L.C. on the progress of the consultations.

Those who have visited the basement of the Conference Centre in the course of the past twelve days will know that it has been a hive of activity all day, every day, and indeed for much of each night. It was, I think, Napoleon Bonaparte who said that an army marches on its stomach. It would be equally true to say that a conference's deliberations depend in large measure on the quality of its secretariat support. On behalf of the Commonwealth Secretariat, I should like to thank all our Ghanaian colleagues for their long hours of hard and effective work, and to thank the Ghana Government for providing us with such a dedicated and hard-working team, with whom we have all been delighted to work as friends and colleagues during the last two weeks.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I should like to extend to the Government of Ghana the very sincere gratitude of the Commonwealth Secretariat not only for the support I have just mentioned but for all the other arrangements made in connection with the servicing of the Conference.