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Commonwealth Geographical Bureau

During the 21st International Geographical Congress a meeting of Commonwealth geographers was called to examine the possibilities of establishing a Commonwealth Bureau of Geography. A working group was set up under the chairmanship of Professor R. W. Steel and after several meetings, the following recommendations were made:

1. That a small Commonwealth Geographical Bureau be established, governed by a provisional Committee of Management consisting of seven representatives from Commonwealth countries allocated as follows: Africa (2), Americas (1), Asia (2), Australia (1), Europe (1).

2. a) That the representatives on the Committee of Management be elected by Commonwealth geographers at meetings convened for this purpose on the occasion of each International Geographical Congress;

b) That each representative serve on the Committee of Management for a period of four years; however, to provide for continuity it was recommended that provision be made at the time of each election for the extension of the term of office of three representatives for an additional four year period.

3. a) That the Committee of Management have the power to elect one of its members as Chairman, and to appoint a Director to handle the day-to-day business of the Bureau;

b) That the Director be responsible to the Committee of Management through its Chairman, and be provided with appropriate paid secretarial assistance;

c) That in the event of one of the members of the Committee of Management being appointed Director, the Committee be authorized to elect a replacement from the same continent.

4. That the terms of reference of the Commonwealth Geographical Bureau include the following:

a) The promotion of the study and practice of Geography at all levels within the Commonwealth, especially in these countries where the subject is as yet relatively under-developed;

b) The dissemination of information of interest to Commonwealth geographers by means of a bulletin published at regular intervals, and with at least one issue per annum;

c) The effecting of exchanges of staff, especially junior staff and research workers, between different countries of the Commonwealth;

d) The establishment and improvement of contacts with other Commonwealth organisations;

e) The soliciting of funds from Foundations, Trusts and other sources for the furtherance of the objectives listed above.

At a subsequent meeting of Commonwealth geographers, the recommendations of the working group were accepted and the Bureau was set up. Representatives from the various continents were elected to fill the different offices:

Director — Professor K. Kularatnam (University of Ceylon)

Members of the Committee of Management:

Africa — Dr. G. Benneh (University of Ghana)

Dr. R. S. Odingo (University College, Nairobi, Kenya)

- Americas — Professor J. T. Parry (McGill University, Canada)
Asia — Professor R. L. Singh (Banaras University, India)
 Professor S. I. Siddiqui (Karachi University, Pakistan)
Australasia — Professor K. W. Robinson (University of Newcastle, Australia)
Europe — Dr. B. W. Hodder, Chairman (London University, United Kingdom)

During the first year of its existence, the Bureau is preparing a directory of Commonwealth geographers and a list of universities and institutes with graduate courses in geography together with an indication of special facilities and research programmes. As far as Canada is concerned, this information is being compiled by the Canadian Association of Geographers on the basis of the returns made to the Newsletter and the current membership lists of Canadian geographical associations and societies.

Proposals which come under the terms of reference of the Commonwealth Geographical Bureau are welcomed, and should be addressed to either the Director of the Bureau or the Secretary of the Canadian Association of Geographers in his capacity as representative of the Americas.

(Communiqué)
