

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE BILL

THE Overseas Development and Service Bill had an unopposed second reading in the House of Commons on February 24. The Minister of Overseas Development, Mrs. B. Castle, claimed that the Bill reflected the spirit of the discussions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and in moving its second reading explained that Clause 1 would assist good planning of colonial development and welfare by providing a year's overlap. Under this Clause, a further £50 million was provided for schemes financed by grants, and a further £20 million for loans, which with the outstanding amounts gave totals of £95 million for grants and £40 million for loans for the five years up to 1970, for a much smaller number of dependent territories than was covered by the £68.5 million and £32 million, respectively, provided for the three years 1963-66 under the 1963 Act. About thirty Governments still came within the scope of the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, but Mrs. Castle thought it unlikely that actual expenditure would reach the ceiling of £25 million for grants for the first three years or £10 million for loans. The Bill also lowered the proportion of loans to grants and provided 70 per cent of this aid in grants, and she hoped to see the aid given in a form in which it could be speedily used for development.

Clause 2 of the Bill extended the provisions of the Overseas Service Act, 1961, which it replaced, under which 41 Governments and administrations had entered into agreements, and during the present year more than 11,000 officers were receiving benefits at a cost to the British Government of more than £16 million. During 1964, nearly 1,800 officers had been recruited by the Ministry and requests were still increasing. So far, the scheme had been limited to officers in the central public services of overseas Governments who were expatriate members of the Overseas Civil Service or expatriate contract officers appointed in the same way. Under this

Clause, the Minister was authorized, with the agreement of the Treasury, to extend the scheme to bodies and organizations overseas other than Governments who were employing expatriate officers, and to public or social services such as education or local government. Mrs. Castle said that while no general offer of help would be made, she would consider any requests which might be received on their merits. At the third Commonwealth Education Conference at Ottawa in August 1964, financial assistance had been offered towards the salaries of British teachers in overseas universities, and Mrs. Castle said she proposed to honour this undertaking through the extension of the aid scheme if the Bill were passed. She also emphasized that under the present scheme Britain had been at pains not to disturb the relation between overseas Governments and the expatriate officers they employed or to encourage any division of loyalty: she believed that this principle was right. Finally, she stressed the importance of enlarging and improving Britain's technical assistance.

The Bill was generally welcomed in a well-informed debate, and in winding up for the Government, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Overseas Development, Mr. A. E. Oram, said that whereas under the 1963 Act £109 million was provided over three years for a population of 18.75 million, under the present Bill £135 million over five years was made available for 5.5 million. In a written answer on the same day, Mrs. Castle stated that bilateral economic aid to developing countries disbursed by the Government in 1963 amounted to £69.2 million in grants and £69.7 million in loans; for 1964 the corresponding figures were £81.9 million and £92.5 million. In addition, £13.3 million in 1963 and £13 million in 1964 were contributed in multilateral aid to international organizations and £5.7 million and £3.0 million, respectively, in multilateral aid in other ways. In 1963 private investment contributed about £65 million.

PROBLEMS IN SETTING UP NEW UNIVERSITIES

A PAPER, *The Creation of New Universities**, has been prepared by Dr. C. I. C. Bosanquet and Mr. A. S. Hall, based on a conference held at the University of Keele in July 1964. The conference was attended by representatives of all the existing new universities, and its purpose was to assess experience in planning, their physical layout and their academic strategies. Moreover, it was hoped that it would indicate the distinctive features of the British contribution to thought and design, and the common features of the technique used in establishing new universities and of the public pressures they illustrate. By and large, the authors conclude that disappointingly little use has been made of the opportunity for innovation. While the new universities are being created with remarkable speed and administrative skill, the range of subjects and types of teaching offered are unlikely to be altered significantly, but the kind of education hitherto confined to Oxford and Cambridge would be more widely distributed in the United Kingdom.

The sites so far chosen, with the exception of Warwick, lie on previously undeveloped land near the outskirts of towns of medium size, usually of historic interest, lacking major industry, but centres of local administration. The

older industrial areas, as a rule, have failed even to create a 'promotions committee'. The form of constitution evolved does not differ significantly from the constitution of twenty universities that have come into being in Britain since 1890. No daring experiments have as yet been tried—the main reason for this is regarded as being money: no university feels it can be independent of some kind of local support.

The four formal sessions of the conference covered the shaping of university development plans; curriculum and teaching; staff and student residential arrangements and social life; academic organization and university government.

While there was some sharp difference of opinion over internal organization, such as the extent to which it should centre on the college system or around schools of study, how far a university should impose its guardianship on its students, the degree of responsibility exercised by the University Grants Committee in regard to subjects of study and the relation of universities to Parliament, there were two main points of agreement. First, in development, strategy as well as tactics must be subject to continuous review, taking into account experience gained by the individual university, overall national needs, and the availability of reserves. Secondly, the greatest single difficulty has been inadequate reserves during the planning

* *The Creation of New Universities*. (Based on a Conference at the University of Keele, July 14 to 16, 1964.) By C. I. C. Bosanquet and A. S. Hall. Pp. 14. (Keele: The University, 1964.)