

EDITORIAL

According to the Duncan Committee, a diplomat is a man who goes abroad to sell washing machines for his country. He may lie, but mainly he sells washing machines. The application of this view to reorganising British representation overseas has provoked strong feelings among those who feel that it wilfully undermines Britain's contribution to development. The part given to aid administration is too small and by not recommending an increase (as well as by expressly relegating less developed countries to the second division of British interest overseas) the Committee is seen as conniving to waste and under-administration. There are several kinds of moral and political concern in the opposition expressed by contributors to the Duncan Report: most involve a feeling, altruistic or paternalistic, of continued responsibility for ex-colonial states and some have to do with the 'condition of Britain' - as with Guy Hunter's organic view that society needs a sense of common purpose. We hope that this symposium makes it clear that feelings about the Report have not been assuaged by the passing of time.