

I hope we will continue to support the Colombo Plan. And I am sure that in this country we will not only continue to do so but be able to increase that support, especially at this time when grandiloquent, if ambiguous offers of help and sympathy are being thrown at these people from other quarters. The plan provides an important way to show not only our willingness to contribute materially but our desire to understand and appreciate the problems with which they are faced; and they are certainly faced with tremendous problems, complicated and difficult, in countries like India, and Pakistan.

So far as the Russian part of our trip was concerned I should say at once, as I have already said since I returned, that we were given a magnificent reception. We were shown every kindness by a people who are naturally kind and generous. Of course the official "red carpet" was out, and of course the people who looked after us officially had been told, and I am not criticizing this, had been told to make us welcome and to be kind to us and to give us everything possible to eat and to drink! But while making this qualification that we were official visitors, I got the impression that those who were told to look after us in this way got a great deal of genuine pleasure out of carrying out that kind of instruction.

Therefore the feeling I got from this expression of kindness on the part of our hosts was that if we could only somehow get through to the people of a country like this, so many of our problems could be solved. But that "if" is a very big "if" indeed. There is a great gap, I suppose there is some kind of gap in all countries, between people and governments. I hope, indeed, I am sure it is a narrow gap in the free democracies. I cannot, however, say that of a totalitarian government. Therefore the kindness and generosity of the people has only a qualified political significance. The difficulty of getting through to the people behind their government and their leaders and convincing them that we share their expressions of friendship, was shown very clearly at the recent Foreign Ministers' Conference at Geneva when the effort on the part of the Western Ministers to bring about increased contact and freedom of communications between peoples was met on the other side by flat refusals.

I am also asked by my friends what other impressions did I get apart from the impression of kindness, generosity and great hospitality. It is not an easy question to answer because we were only there 8 days. Though 8 days in Russia may be long enough in which to write a book, it is not long enough really to get to know the country. Someone once wrote a book about the Russian revolution which was entitled "Ten Days That Shook The World". If I ever do write a book about my visit to Russia it will be the "Eight Days That Shook The Pearson's"

Well, of course, we got impressions. But impressions based on a short and on an official visit are not very sound foundations for conclusions and judgments. I think, however, that they are of value for a person in my position because it gives you an opportunity to check from first-hand evidence some of the judgments and conclusions you had previously reached on the basis of information received and of study you had made. Also our