

To provide this assistance, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada have supplied funds in these amounts: Great Britain, during the War became in debt to Ceylon, Pakistan and India, debts which have helped to keep her poor since the War. These debts form what is known as the "blocked sterling balances" and Britain has agreed that over the six years of the Colombo Plan she will arrange for India, Pakistan and Ceylon to draw on these balances pounds sterling amounting in our money to something in the neighbourhood of \$700 million, an amount which in her present difficulties will not be easy. Australia has agreed to contribute Australian pounds over the 6-year period amounting to roughly \$90 million. New Zealand agreed to contribute one million pounds for three years, about \$2,750,000 in our money and Canada gave \$25 million in the fiscal year 1951-52 and another \$25 million in the present year 1952-53.

Now let us see what we did with our Canadian contribution in 1951-52. We divided it--\$15 million to India and \$10 million to Pakistan.

The Indian Government requested wheat to help her over a bad famine period. It was intended that the Colombo Plan should provide only assistance which would lead to permanent betterment of a capital nature and so, as the wheat was distributed in India, the Indian Government paid the equivalent of its Canadian value into a counterpart fund and from that rupee fund it was proposed by India and agreed by us, that aid be given to the Mayurakshi Irrigation and Hydro-electric Project and I saw that aid being used when I was there. The work had been stopped owing to lack of money and our aid got it going again. I wish you could all have seen it, the great concrete dam going up. Hundreds of women carrying the earth out of the dam site in baskets on their heads; busy supervisors directing operations; clever engineers moving about from their piles of blueprints to the actual work coming into being. Overall a quiet, very efficient organizer, Mr. Ganguli, and a very efficient British-trained chief engineer, Mr. Mondol.

The most pressing problem in India today is shortage of food. She grows, in an average year, about 40 million tons of food grains, and that is at least five million tons less than her minimum needs. Large irrigation works are designed and being designed to make up that shortage. There are many of them spread about the country.

The Mayurakshi River - the word means "peacock's eye", so called because the water is, as they say, "as clear as a peacock's eye" - has been coming down in flood every few years and washing out the poor peasants, drowning their families and destroying their villages. This project will control the river, it will irrigate 600,000 acres of land which will increase the food yield by 300,000 tons of rice and 50,000 tons of wheat, potato and other grains. Eventually some 4,000 kilowatts of hydro-electric power will be generated which will provide the peasants with light, power for their grain mills and for the establishment of some much needed cottage industry to give employment in Bihar and West Bengal. Canadians should feel very gratified that their gift to India of \$10 million worth of wheat not only fed starving people in the first place, but, through the second use of the rupees obtained for the wheat, will help to raise the standards of living in the Mayurakshi basin and revolutionize the lives of the poor people who live there.