

Press:

And when you take the pressure off a coalition, it stops coalescing sometimes.

Mr. Pearson:

I think that is our major problem now. If fear lessens, have we any other stronger basic cement to hold the coalition together? Cooperation based, not on fear, but on something more positive and constructive?

Press:

Mr. Pearson, the Russians seem to be succeeding pretty well in their economic offensive all over the world. Do you have any views as to how the West could match this penetration of the Russians?

Mr. Pearson:

I am not sure that we may not exaggerate their success in what you call their economic offensive. I think they have been more successful in their psychological offensive than in their economic offensive. After all, they have not really done very much to help other countries economically but they have made sensational promises and they have given the impression that they are going to do a lot. Now you say "Can we match them?" I don't think we should try to match them, in the sense that we should try to outbid them. We should base our policy in this field, as we have tried to in the past and maybe we should do more in the future, in helping materially underdeveloped countries in our own interest and in their interest. If we base our policy on these principles, we don't have to worry so much about the Russians as long as we know what we are doing.

Press:

Do you think, for instance, Mr. Pearson, that the West should take the lead in offering economic assistance to the countries in Africa which are now gaining their independence, such as the Sudan, rather than waiting for the Russians to do something about it?

Mr. Pearson:

I think that is right. I think that with the new countries who are coming on the stage, and who need help, we should take the initiative in offering them that help without political strings attached.