

This Colombo Plan is succeeding because it is based on good-will - if you like - on brotherhood. During my visit to India, I had the honour of opening a power and irrigation project which is now known as the "Canada Dam", situated a couple of hundred miles north of Calcutta. It is in a part of India where the inhabitants, because of shortage of water and lack of irrigation facilities have for centuries tried to scrape out a bare existence from the hard, dry, soil, and have often failed even to do that. This Canada Dam, however, will provide modern irrigation facilities for 600,000 acres of land, and enable that land to produce two crops a year. The people there know what that means, so when I pressed the button that sent great floods of water rushing down the spill-way and out the irrigation canal, the Indian peasants and tribesmen who had come on foot, or in bullock cart, from miles around in their thousands to witness this great day, which meant so much for them, gave a shout that must have reached almost to Canada. It gave also to those of us who were there from Canada a reality to the words "Colombo Plan" that one could never get merely from talking or writing about it.

Similarly with the great Warsak hydro-electric project that we are building with the Pakistanis on their Northwest Frontier. This is brotherhood in action without any strings attached. It is a far cry from the offers of steel plants and military equipment to be purchased by Asian governments from the Soviet state in the hope that certain Communist political objectives may be achieved.

We in the West have no wish to compete with Communist dictatorial regimes in their offers, some of them cynically hypocritical, of material assistance, dictated by political considerations arising out of Communist policy which, in the long run, can mean only trouble for those peoples who come under its influence. We can, however, successfully compete with them - if we wish to, as we should - in sympathetic understanding and good neighbourliness as the basis for mutual aid. These qualities are more important even than the material value of such aid. We in the Western countries would be well advised to remember this as we face the problems of competitive co-existence and the contest for the hearts and souls and the friendship of the uncommitted millions of Asia. ....

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