

But one should not for a moment conclude that it is possible through a plan of this sort to take care entirely of the problem of reconstruction in a continent like Asia. The assistance given by the United States, and it is considerable, and by the other participating countries in the Colombo Plan, and that assistance too is considerable, is marginal only. If there is going to be a satisfactory measure of reconstruction on the economic and social side in Asia, it will be largely due to the efforts that are now being put forward by the people of Asia themselves. This I clearly indicated to them when I said, on behalf of Canada generally, that our assistance as a Colombo Plan power was made without any strings attached. It was not made for the purpose of effecting political alliances or of having them move from positions of neutrality to positions of antagonistic support. I said, what is the case, that our assistance -- and I indicated we were not all agreed in Canada on what the measure of assistance should be -- was based upon a sincere appreciation that in this inter-dependent world our humanitarian obligations demanded of us to render some assistance to those nations and to these people.

While that is the case, I could not help but feel, particularly at the Colombo Plan meetings, as I now visualize the political personalities who sat around the conference table, ministers representing every government of the Colombo Plan group, that while we might have our differences in economic and social terms, every minister there represented governments that share with us common beliefs in the value of individual freedom, and share with us our view of the importance of the individual human being in his or her relationship to the state, and the belief that, inadequate as it sometimes may be, there is no more effective guarantee for the preservation of human freedom than governments composed of men and women chosen by the people to govern the nation; in other words, a common belief in the parliamentary form of government. And with those common denominators, together with the spiritual foundations, which I have already mentioned, I have no doubt, whether or not we belong to the same military alliances, or the same political grouping, that the vast majority of the nations of Asia with whom I had these contacts can be counted on in the long term to give their expression in support of a society based upon freedom and not on its suppression.

While there was concern in some places about actions taken in Egypt, there were strong denunciations about the aggression of the Soviet Union in Hungary. I spoke on one occasion to the Indian Council on World Affairs. I do not know whether there were reports here of this meeting, but some critical comment was made by one or two individuals who interpolated questions at the meeting. I said in my remarks that there was a vast difference between the attitude of Great Britain and of France toward their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and the reaction of the Soviet Union not to one but to 10 resolutions passed in the Assembly against the aggression it perpetrated in Hungary. The difference in the two cases was that in the one there was an acceptance on the part of the charged parties, if you like, of the resolution taken by the United Nations and in the other a complete flouting of the resolutions passed by the United Nations. And that I regard as a matter of the greatest significance.

International Supervisory Commissions

It would be wrong for me to overlook in this account the important work of the International Supervisory Commissions in Indochina. Whenever I use the phrase "Indochina" now I remember the correction made by a distinguished Australian who told me that I should no longer speak of Indochina but rather of three countries