

*External Affairs*

To understand the people of Asia and to live in terms of friendship with them requires, of course, on our part and on the part of western peoples both patience and tolerance. It requires also an effort of imagination. We have to try to see ourselves as the Asians see us. It is difficult for us, for example, to understand the intense preoccupation of the people and the new leaders of free Asia with the question of colonialism and imperialism, because we know that the former imperial powers have already withdrawn or are not in a position to dominate, even if they would. The governments and peoples of those same erstwhile imperial powers are among our closest friends in the world and we see in them people who, far from being enemies of freedom, nourish it in Asia itself as elsewhere, and are now able and willing to assist new and unsteady regimes to master their political and economic problems.

From the facts of their own history Canadians should understand, however, the viewpoint of Asians that self-government is more important even than good government. We should understand also the mistrust and suspicions of those who for years have felt themselves—possibly not at all times justifiably—to be the victims of prejudice and at times of racial arrogance. If we remember these things now, we may be able better to understand why so many Asians fail to see as clearly as we do the gulf which divides communism from democracy, and why they are so reluctant to join our side without reservations.

Along with this feeling of nationalism and anti-colonialism which has contributed to the strength of communism in Asia, increasing attention is being paid now to the social and economic sources of communism. We have talked about this matter more than once in this house. It is, of course, an important aspect of the problem. No one would deny that hunger entices men to communism. The false promises of plenty are always an appealing argument to the destitute. We in the west have shown our awareness of this argument by various programs of economic and technical assistance. This assistance should help to reduce the impulse toward communism by raising the standard of living, and by proving that it is possible to do it without the loss of political freedom and within a democratic system.

But, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that we should not forget that these social and economic aspects are only one element of this complex problem. I think there is a danger of oversimplifying the issues in Asia in these terms. Confronted by the appalling defence and political problems involved in the

emergence of a free Asia, it is easy to lapse into the comfortable belief that we can save Asia—and that is how it is often put—with economic aid alone; that we can buy off communism and purchase peace for ourselves merely by stepping up our economic assistance.

That, as I see it, is unhappily nothing but a comforting illusion; and in saying that I do not minimize the importance of such economic assistance. What we are seeking to do, of course, in the western world is help the Asian people to help themselves. That continent, I make bold to say, will not be saved or even, in the long run, helped by aimless assistance or by making political support a condition for such assistance, or by westerners attempting to assume the direction of political and economic forces in these Asian states, however benevolent their intentions. The danger to Asia comes from weaknesses which will not be removed merely by dumping in millions and millions of dollar or sterling aid for projects not carefully enough planned.

The west can help in this way, of course; but the west can help even more by co-operating in a partnership of mutual understanding, respect and support with genuine leaders of the Asian peoples. Democracy—and it does not necessarily need to be our type of parliamentary democracy—can be established in those areas only by the efforts of the people themselves. Therefore, as I see it, the main problem at this time for Asians is to organize, as some Asian states have done, governments and administrations which are strong enough, free enough and incorruptible enough to make use of western assistance and support in helping to establish the conditions of law and order, freedom and prosperity which alone can counter the appeal of communism.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know of any place where a more significant effort is being made to work out these problems with all their ramifications along all the sectors of this front than in Indo-China. I should therefore like to say a few words about the situation there, more particularly because of our participation, with India and Poland, in the supervision of the cease-fire settlements in Indo-China.

The settlement reached at Geneva last July comprised cease-fire agreements for Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia. These provided for the establishment of three separate international supervisory commissions, each made up of representatives of India, Poland and Canada, and each charged with the task of supervising the carrying out of the cease-fire agreement for the particular country