

ultimately there would be a change, but we felt it would not help to try to tell the people of the United States that we knew better than they did what they should do in their own best interests.

The countries I had the privilege of visiting are in the throes of what we hope will continue to be a peaceful revolution and they are, so far as I could gather, determined to make their revolution by democratic and peaceful means. The leaders of those countries are apt to succeed only if the masses of the people see with their own eyes that their economic and social conditions are improving and are likely to continue to improve.

I have seen something of the poverty of an average Indian village. I walked through the muddy lanes of such a village and into the dark mud houses. I went on to visit a village nearby where a community project had been established and where the villagers, with government assistance, were working together to improve their living conditions and to increase their production. There were already clear evidence of great improvement.

I began to realize what a stupendous undertaking it is to raise the living standards of the 300 million villagers of India. But I also began to understand that the magnitude of this task should not be thought of in terms of one nation comprising 300 million villagers but in the more manageable terms of 500 thousand separate villages. That is a lot of villages but each one of these villages in an individual community and the plan is for each individual community to do for itself what has been done in each of the already improved villages. It can be done provided each gets the same technical assistance from the government, and, in particular, provided it gets the help and inspiration of an enthusiastic and dedicated local official.

The enthusiasm and determination and realistic approach of all the planning authorities, both central and local, is such as to justify the hope that these ancient nations will succeed in their war against the poverty, the diseases and the ignorance so widespread amongst those great masses of our fellow human beings. The cost of their victory is that war is bound to be great. As Mr. Nehru said of his own country, this generation of Indians must accept a lifetime of hard labour, but it is apt to be very rewarding labour.

The task of these countries will be immeasurably easier provided there is a reasonable level of peace and stability in the world, and provided we in the West do lend a helping hand and do display in our dealings with them sympathy, insight and understanding.

Of course it is only too true that in the East there is poverty, poverty more extensive and more pervasive than anything we in the West have known for centuries. But one also sees much beauty, beauty of old buildings, beauty of the countryside, beauty of the people themselves. One sees in some of the devoutly religious Asian people, serenity seldom seen in the West.