

We will be holding a conference with respect to trade and economic matters within the Commonwealth at Montreal in September of this year. There will be on the agenda of that conference an item relating to the economic progress of the underdeveloped parts of the Commonwealth. I am confident that through those discussions Canada can make a further contribution in respect of those nations to which I referred, a contribution not only of capital but also in terms of technical assistance. I should not like to leave the impression that under the Colombo Plan and other systems of aid to underdeveloped countries Canada has forgotten underdeveloped countries that are not members of the Commonwealth. The most of our assistance, however, has gone to the Commonwealth countries and, as I intimated a moment ago, further thought will be given to these matters in the context of the Montreal meeting.

My foregoing remarks have to do with countering the movements of the U.S.S.R. in the economic field. Indeed it is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that the West has given more and has been giving more for a longer time to underdeveloped parts of the world than the Soviet bloc. They are paying us the compliment now of following our activities in that regard, but you may be sure that their gifts always have a political string attached to them. I do not think we should ever endeavour to counter every Soviet gesture. We should work steadily, in co-operation with the people of those countries, within their plans and priorities in our earnest desire to help them and to bring reality to their hopes. In this way we can best counter the Russian activities in this regard and we can contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world.

I eagerly look forward to this debate and to the discussion in the meetings of the committee on external affairs, to the end that in the formulation of its external policy and in the implementation of this policy, Canada can speak with a strong voice.

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