

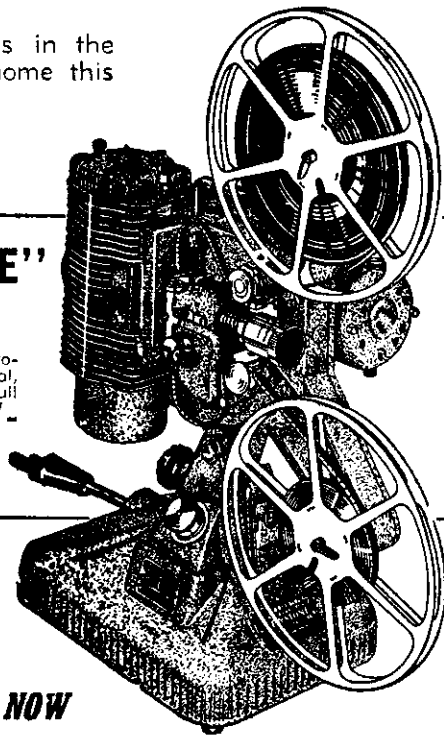
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THE problem of irrigation on a farm project near Delhi is solved by this motor pump—the gift, through Corso, of the people of New Zealand

WITH CORSO IN INDIA

THE Government of India is doing a great deal to improve the living standards of its 360 million people, according to Colin Morrison, secretary of Corso, who returned recently after a two-months' visit to the sub-continent. In Pakistan, by contrast, he got the impression that affairs were moving slowly, largely because of administrative difficulties which were a result of the partition of the country in 1947.

"When we remember that two-thirds of the world's population is living in Asia, and half of that in South-East Asia alone," he said, "it is clear that the way in which these countries solve their problems of agriculture and industrial production will profoundly affect the world we live in. When independence came to India the country consisted of nine partially self-governed provinces, four small centrally-governed provinces, and 584 princely states. Now there are 28 states which have a similar relationship to a central government as the 48 states of the U.S.A. have to Washington.

"India's success in welding such a feudal-colonial form of society, involving peoples speaking 100 different dialects and with strong religious differences, into a strong modern state will go down in history as a spectacular achievement," he said. "The rupee is sound today, and a new five-year plan which was started last year will enable the people to raise enough food, the authorities believe, to support themselves at a higher dietary level than in the past. New lands are being opened up, and in addition better use is being made of land already under cultivation. The Government Agricultural Institute already has 55 community projects under way to improve village agriculture, and 300 more are planned, which will eventually benefit 60 million people.

"The object of these projects is to introduce modern methods of cultivation,

adequate fertilisers, improved seeds, better use of water, improved sanitation, and to establish schools, public health schemes, and literacy classes for adults. Irrigation is being introduced by means of tube wells, river valley projects, additional shallow wells, and storage ponds."

In India Mr. Morrison met Joe Short, an extension worker for the Allahabad Agricultural Institute, who comes from New Zealand and who is helping in this work. It is through such people that the Corso organisation operates, Mr. Morrison explained. Two pumps costing £800 and £250 respectively, gifts from the people of New Zealand, had recently been installed, one on a Sikh refugee farm near Kharar in the Punjab, and the other at Jadpur on a farm under the control of the Indian Co-operative Union. Once the workers had paid off such a pump, he said, the Co-operative Union would re-invest the money in another, so that the initial gift had a snowballing effect and would eventually benefit a large number of people, he said.

While he was in India Mr. Morrison met the Prime Minister, Mr. Nehru, at Delhi, and in Madras he attended an International Social Work conference at which the representatives of 30 countries discussed the basic needs of the peoples of South-East Asia and the ways in which they could raise their living standards.

He visited various social organisations which Corso supports with cash contributions and such New Zealand products as dried milk. These included the Allahabad Leprosarium, where a New Zealand ward is being built with the assistance of £700 contributed by Corso. He also visited schools for the deaf and blind in Ceylon, refugee camps in Bombay, where dried milk is distributed, hospitals, orphanages and village centres, and inspected medical vans which tour the outlying mountain areas.

N.Z. LISTENER, MAY 15, 1953.