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Transcript of statements made at the press conference of the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, at New Delhi, India, February 24, 1954

Ladies and Gentlemen: I will do my best to give you as full and as frank an answer as I can to the questions which you have put before me. I appreciate this opportunity of meeting you, although I am a little bit embarrassed at being the occasion for gathering you together when I realize that I have nothing of any importance to say to you. But nevertheless, during the days I have been here I have felt that there was such a friendly welcome extended to someone from Canada that I do enjoy meeting as many people as possible to have confirmed the impression that welcome does not come only from the Government or from the University of Delhi by which I was honoured this afternoon, but from you who represent all your readers, and I hope that I may ask you to assure your readers that the sole purpose of my visit was to bring warm greetings from the people of Canada to this great nation of India and to assure you that we did realize the importance of the influence of the Asian nations on world events.

And you know, though my country has not a very large population, it has a large area of land and water and, we think, great natural resources that we are discovering and endeavouring to use, and that makes us very dependent for our own welfare on the welfare of the whole free world.

And, well, of course there were two other purposes that I wish to pursue in making this visit. One was to see something of the great historical interest of this land where we know that many civilizations have followed each other and have left traces that the archaeologists interpret in fashions that sometimes surprise us but are probably accurate; and the other was to get as much information as I could in the short time when it was convenient for me to be away from Canada while our Parliament is in session, about the background of what people sometimes call "the Asian problem" (although I do not know that there are any more problems here than are presented by the other matters with which we are concerned in our daily thinking in each of our respective countries).

But I have very much appreciated the time Prime Minister Nehru has given me to explain to me the way in which the present situation of the Asian nations has developed, and I feel that that will be helpful to me and to my colleagues, because, well, we all have to work together, and though we realize that, well, the quantity of what we can do to take our part in shaping world events is very much smaller than that of the greater nations, we feel that its quality is just the same, and that we have as keen an interest in peace and stability and good human relations as any other nation in the world no matter how many times our population the population of that nation represents.

Well, I think that we are intelligent human beings and that we have come to the point where we should realize that nobody wins anything by a war.