



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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Text of a Speech delivered by the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, Prime Minister of Canada, at the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian French-Language Weekly Newspapers' Association at La Malbaie, Quebec, on August 17, 1963.

\* Indicates paragraph delivered in French.

... Mr. Chairman, you have the right to be proud of your Association and of each of its members. The role of the weekly press is of the greatest importance, in encouraging worthwhile local initiative, in circulating news and information and also in moulding opinion at the primary levels of human activity - that is at the family level, at the municipal level, and within regional limits. It is, therefore, man himself, the human being, that you are interested in, even more than the mass of readers. You are familiar with international politics, national problems of course, but you are serving mainly the local or regional economy. That important, that vital, role only you can fulfil efficiently.

This work is accomplished throughout Canada by more than 1,000 weekly newspapers. But it must be noted that the French-language press makes a further and distinctive contribution. You play an essential part in safeguarding and developing French culture in North America.

\* Canada is rich and privileged in more than one way, particularly because she is the heir and depository of two great cultures.

\* Your Association extends beyond the geographical limits of the Province of Quebec, since its members are also recruited from the Atlantic Provinces, in Ontario and the Prairie Provinces. Therefore you are the very image of French Canada that is asserting itself everywhere in this country.

\* I believe it is important to accentuate this fact - the recognition that Canada is a truly bilingual country with two basic cultures, to which many others have been added to our great advantage.