

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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PRIME MINISTER'S REPORT TO PARLIAMENT ON RETURN FROM TRIP ABROAD

Statement made in the House of Commons on
March 18, 1954, by the Prime Minister,
Mr. St. Laurent.

Mr. Speaker, if I might have the consent of the House for a few moments I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, sir, and all my colleagues for the generosity and cordiality of the reception they have accorded me this afternoon.

I would also like to make a very short report of this trip which has been so happily concluded.

I want to assure hon. members that everywhere I went as a representative of Canada I was received with enthusiasm and every evidence of friendliness and goodwill. But nowhere was that more touching to me than it was last evening at the airport and here this afternoon in the House of Commons.

Everywhere I went I heard "O Canada" sung, and I was always moved and touched at the feeling of pride it gave one to be there as a representative of that country for which the hymn was being sung or played. But when I heard it on opening the doors of the airplane last evening I do confess that a lump rose in my throat, because it was a great pleasure and a great satisfaction to be back in this land, and because the sight of my friends on the field made me prouder than ever that I could as a Canadian come back to my homeland.

I will not attempt to make a narrative of my trip. I have not seen all the newspapers. But I have seen some clippings and I have been told that there was quite a large volume of publicity given to the happenings of each day while I was away. I do wish to express gratitude to the Canadian press, as I have in other countries expressed gratitude to the press of each of those countries, for the help they gave me in spreading this message of goodwill and friendship which I had been authorized by my colleagues in the House, and I believe by the public generally, to carry to those various nations.

This afternoon I feel I should discharge the responsibility placed upon me virtually everywhere. I want to assure you, sir, and all my colleagues in the House, and through them the Canadian people, of the very cordial greetings, friendliness, and good wishes of the people of those several countries.