



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 54/34 THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

Address by the Honourable L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, Seventh International Conference of Social Work, Toronto, Sunday, June 27, 1954

The most pleasant part of my task tonight is to extend in the name of the Government of Canada a most cordial welcome to the members of this great International Conference of Social Work. I am sure that I speak not only for the Government, but for all the people of Canada, when I say to our distinguished visitors from other lands and continents how keenly we appreciate the honour you have paid to our country in selecting Canada for this, the seventh meeting of your world-wide organization.

This is not, of course, the first occasion on which Canada has had the pleasure of acting as host to important international gatherings; but never before have we had the opportunity of providing the meeting place for the deliberations of leaders of social welfare movements in so many lands. I join with all Canadians in wishing for you a Conference rich in profit and in inspiration and a visit filled with pleasant experiences and associations.

Two years ago, this Conference met in Madras in India, a vast country half a world away in distance, but closely bound to us in common ties of friendship and of brotherhood. The International Conference could hardly have chosen two countries of greater contrasts for its successive meetings. What a difference between the 400 million peoples of that storied land, with its ancient cultures, and the wide but sparsely populated expanses of Canada, with its mere 15 million persons scattered over half a continent, and many of these relatively recent arrivals here!

There is, perhaps, an appropriate symbolism in the choice of Canada for your meeting place to follow after India. It was barely 450 years ago that Canada -- and indeed the whole Continent of North America -- was discovered and explored by intrepid voyagers from Europe seeking across the oceans to the West a passage to India. I would like to think that, here in this city of Toronto in this year of 1954, Canada will once again prove to be a land of discovery for the new explorers of the Twentieth Century; that here the social explorers from the East and from the West will find a common meeting ground for new approaches that may widen the frontiers of social welfare; and that like the earlier explorers to this continent, each of you returning to your homes in Asia or in Latin America or in Europe may carry back with you new