



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 54/20

CANADIAN RELATIONS WITH JAPAN

Text of Address by the Prime Minister, Mr.
L.S. St. Laurent, to the Japan-Canada
Society, Tokyo, March 12, 1954.

It is now five weeks since I left Canada on a tour which has led me through a number of friendly countries in Europe, and through equally friendly countries in Asia - Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Indonesia, the Philippines, Korea, and now Japan. From here I will return home across the Pacific. This is my first visit to your country, and while I have been here I have been trying to learn something more about the people of Japan, their problems and their aspirations.

In such a short visit I cannot expect to acquire much more than a surface impression of some of the aspects of Japanese life, but even this fleeting view will help me to picture this land of yours which has played, and which is bound to continue to play an important part in international affairs.

I have already been impressed by a number of things I have seen and heard, and in particular by the industry of your people, their zeal for education and self-improvement and their evident genius for organizing themselves to work together to fulfil common purposes.

I have seen here the combination of modernization and respect for ancient things so characteristic of Japan. The natural beauties of this country, of which I have seen all too little up to the present time, but the way in which you capture these in the artistry of your gardens, of your flower arrangements, of your paintings will be memories that I will treasure of this visit to your country.

You may be expecting to hear something from me about Canadian policy and Canadian interests in the Pacific area in general and in Japan in particular. Fortunately, the problems existing between our two countries are not numerous. Canadian interests may be summarized briefly, in just two words, "peace" and "trade". These aims apply not just to Japan, but to every country with which Canada has dealings. There are, however, certain particular aspects of our relations with Japan about which I should like to say a few words to you here today.

During the early years of their nation's history, the thoughts of the majority of Canadians were turned eastward towards Europe. This was natural enough, because nearly all of the people who live in Canada have come, or their ancestors have come originally from Europe. Many maintained ties of blood and friendship with their former homelands in