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PRIME MINISTER'S KARACHI PRESS CONFERENCE

Text of statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, made at Karachi, Pakistan, on February 18, 1954, during the course of his tour of Europe and Asia.

I can assure you that it is a great pleasure to meet you gentlemen of the press of Pakistan, and I would like first of all to express my very deep appreciation of the most cordial and friendly, and perhaps a little bit exaggerated way in which the newspapers have announced my visit to Pakistan. They have certainly not exaggerated when they said it was a great pleasure for me to bring warm greetings from my own country to the people of Pakistan, because we have from the very origin of your State felt that there was very much in common between your people and ours, and that was heightened by the very friendly visit with which your late Prime Minister Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan honoured us in 1950.

We were delighted to receive his visit and we were especially delighted at the tone of his speech to the Members of Parliament on that occasion. From that day I looked forward to the time when it would be possible for me to return his visit and to meet some of the people of Pakistan. I wanted to assure them that we appreciated their importance to us, and the contribution that they would make with the other free peoples to stability of conditions. This is just as important to us as it can be to you people of Pakistan in the realization of the planned developments that you have undertaken with such remarkable success up to the present time.

As you know, we have a very extensive country - but relatively small population for the area of land and water which constitutes our Canadian country. Though we had settled only on a narrow ribbon stretching from one ocean to another just north of the boundary between our country and the United States, that in the vast extent north of that right to the Pole - over which we claim sovereignty, you know - and through which we are establishing our posts and missions and making an effective occupation, we are discovering resources that are being put to use. We think that these resources will contribute to the quantity of things available for the comfort of men and women, not only in our own land but in many other lands as well, because you no doubt know that we consume perhaps hardly two-thirds of what we produce, and have to import fully one-third of what we like to have to use. Our situation is very much dependent upon world conditions and that is why you find us so anxious to assure the people of all other free countries and those with whom we can have cordial relations, of our genuine desire to cooperate with them and to have their cooperation in the kind of friendly and cordial relations that I have felt since I arrived here in Karachi, since I arrived at the airfield 24 hours ago.