

MR. ST. LAURENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN NEW DELHI

WORLD PROBLEMS: The following are excerpts from the Press Conference held by the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. St. Laurent, in New Delhi, India, On February 24, 1954:

(Indo-China)

Question: Sir are you in favour of our Prime Minister's appeal for a cease-fire in Indo-China?

Answer: Oh, I think that all peace-minded people (and I think they are the majority in most countries) are always in favour of a cease-fire whenever there is fire going on and that I know that I felt genuine anguish when I was in Paris and the situation in Indo-China was being described to me by Prime Minister Laniel.

Q: Do you think it is practicable to have a cease-fire?

A: Well I think it is. I think that we are intelligent human beings and that we have come to the point where we should realize that nobody wins anything by a war.

Q: Did you discuss this with Mr. Nehru, Sir?

A: Well Mr. Nehru has been kind enough to inform me about conditions as he appreciates them in Indo-China as well as in many other parts of the world.

Q: Will your Government try and back the Indian proposal if it comes up?

A: Well, our Government will do everything that it can but our Government hasn't the presumption to feel that there is very much that it can do in an effective way about the settlement of problems in this hemisphere. But I can assure you that all our efforts are directed toward the establishment of political settlements because we believe that their results are apt to be more permanent than whatever results can be obtained by killing each other off.

Q: Would you concede that peace - no I will narrow the issue and say the suspension of killing - in the East would lessen world tension today?

A: I think it would be an indication of a desire for those who are now engaged in hostilities to find peaceful solutions and I think that any move towards peaceful negotiated solutions is a move that would encourage me and would confirm my confidence that mankind was trying to create a level on which there would be saner behaviour than it has been your and my misfortune to find during this first half of the Twentieth Century.

Q: Would the Canadian Government endorse Mr. Nehru's appeal in general terms?

A: Oh yes, without any reservation or hesitation whatsoever. We wouldn't have ventured to make it ourselves because we wouldn't have felt that our importance in world affairs was sufficient to justify us making it; but we

would have no hesitation whatsoever in rejoicing at the fact that Prime Minister Nehru was able to make that appeal.

(U.S. Aid To Pakistan)

Q: You prefer to speak as the West but Canada under the Atlantic Pact is linked with Turkey and Turkey is now having a pact with Pakistan which involves you in the security problems of South-East Asia. Would you say anything on the subject?

A: Well, here our express commitments are to stand together in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to repel aggression against any member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. That is the extent of the pact which we have signed and which our Parliament has approved. Now we feel, you know, that we have committed ourselves to the full extent of the commitments that a government can make and expect to remain a government in that North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Q: You have been pleased to make a few remarks in general terms about security. Can you give us some comments particularly on United States military aid to Pakistan and the Turko-Pakistan agreement?

A: No I wouldn't like to make any comment about that. We have never had to consider whether it would be wise for us to attempt any other military aid than what we have committed in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Q: Would you concede, would you think that it would be reasonable, desirable, understandable and expedient for India to arm herself in parity with Pakistan today?

A: I don't know (laughter), really I don't know. It is not that I want to evade the question but I don't think I have the kind of information or knowledge that would make an opinion of mine justifiable.

Q: During your talks with Mr. Nehru did you form the impression that there were certain things about the West particularly the United States that he did not either fully understand or he mistook?

A: No, I did not form the impression that he was not fully informed.

Q: How is it that the United States is deliberately creating tension in this part of the world by giving military aid to Pakistan?

A: Well, I am sure they are not deliberately creating tension. I know that their deliberate desire is to lessen tension.

Q: You said about the Security Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization about the need to deter aggression. In India there is a feeling that Pakistan has committed aggression against India. In the light of United States aid there is a section of information here that says India should seek new friends to protect herself against aggression. Would you make any comments?