

GOVERNMENT



OF CANADA

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## WEEK'S EVENTS IN REVIEW

**MR. ST. LAURENT'S TORONTO ADDRESS:** Speaking on the future role of "Free" Asia in world affairs in an address to the annual meeting of the Canadian Press, held in Toronto on April 28, 1954, the Prime Minister said in part:

"We in the Western world are apt to think of world affairs in terms of the free nations of Europe and North America on the one side and the Communist-dominated world on the other. I suppose it is natural for us to think of South and South East Asia as an area whose people also have to choose one side or the other in the so-called 'cold war' and who should be just as much concerned about the outcome of that cold war as we are.

"No doubt the consequences of a Communist victory over the West if that could happen would be very serious for the peoples of Asia in the long run, but it is not reasonable to expect the peoples of Asia to see the importance of these matters from the same angle that we do.

"What has happened to countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, Eastern Germany, Austria and other nations of Eastern Europe is something that has real meaning for us; but the enslavement of these countries cannot have the same immediate significance for the vast multitudes of these people of Asia.

"Many millions of them may never have even heard of most of those countries and they have had very little contact and not much experience with Soviet Russia at any time. It is equally true that they know little about North

America, but they do know that the main language used in North America is English and that most of its people are of Western European origin and their memories of their relations with Western Europeans are not altogether happy. It would be less than frank to say that their experience with European domination has left them without any suspicions even about us in North America. And it is important for us to realize that the peoples of Southern Asia, because they have had so little direct experience of Russian Imperialism, Communist or otherwise, are not inoculated as we are against the false ideas and illusory promises of Communist propaganda. On the other hand, they are apt to associate the whole Western world with the former Imperialism they resented so deeply and unless we can show them that we really want to be their friends and to treat them as equals we can hardly expect to enjoy their sympathy and enlist their support for the kind of peaceful world we are seeking to achieve.

"Nevertheless, the nations of Southern Asia are bound to play an increasingly important part in world affairs. For some time I have been deeply impressed, and I am sure you have too, with the great and growing importance of these ancient Eastern civilizations which are striving to adapt themselves to this twentieth century.

"It seemed clear to me that their power and influence would be certain to increase, and that in terms of our own self-interest we

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