



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 54/3 THE PRIME MINISTER'S ROUND-THE-WORLD TOUR

Statement made in the House of Commons on January 29, 1954, by the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, concerning his proposed trip to Europe and Asia.

... I do not need to remind anyone that as Canada has developed in the past fifteen years, and as the nations of the world have become more and more dependent upon one another, the extent of the relations of this country, not only with our immediate neighbours and with other members of the Commonwealth, but with all countries, has increased at an astonishing rate. You will recall that it was as recently as 1926 that Canada named her first diplomatic representative abroad. In the intervening twenty-seven years we have established diplomatic relations with over forty countries. In addition, through our contribution in two world wars, our membership in the League of Nations, the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and our close association with the other members of the Commonwealth, we have come to play an even larger role in the councils of the world. Our external policy has acquired a growing importance in the thinking of our people, and the importance of external relations has been reflected in the debates in the House and in practically all aspects of the activities of those who are charged with the responsibilities of government. I think that fact is well illustrated by the fact that later today the unanimous consent of the house is expected to be given to a rather extraordinary debate upon external affairs.

An indication of Canada's increasing place in international affairs is to be seen also in the number of recent official visits paid to us here in Ottawa. Since the war, in addition to the royal visit of our gracious Sovereign and her consort, before her accession to the throne, we have been honoured by visits from such distinguished Commonwealth leaders as Sir Winston Churchill, Mr. Nehru, the late Liaquat Ali Khan, Mr. Atlee, Mr. Menzies and Mr. Holland. Prominent visitors from other lands have included the former president of France, Mr. Vincent Auriol; the Chancellor of Germany, Dr. Konrad Adenauer; the former Prime Minister of Italy, Mr. de Gasperi; Crown Prince Akihito of Japan; the former President of the United States, Mr. Truman; and, at the beginning of this session of our new parliament, President Eisenhower. It is partly with a view to repaying some of these courtesies that I am making this tour.

Another purpose of my journey is to see for myself the conditions existing in other parts of the world and to assure the governments of those countries of the sincerity of our desire to co-operate with them in our own interests as well as in theirs. I am sure you will agree that it is important for us as Canadians to understand these conditions abroad and to have our own conditions