

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, October 24, 1949

The house met at 4.30 p.m.

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ADDRESS TO MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND OF THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS TO BE PRINTED IN
HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATES

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister)
moved:

That the address of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, delivered before the members of the Senate and of the House of Commons of Canada in the chamber of the House of Commons on October 24, 1949, be included in the House of Commons debates and form part of the permanent records of this parliament.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): Does this motion mean that the address of the Prime Minister of Canada and your own address in reply, Mr. Speaker, will be included?

Mr. St. Laurent: I understand that is the usual practice. The whole of the ceremony will form a part of the record of today's proceedings.

Motion agreed to.

(For text of address of Prime Minister Nehru, with speeches of welcome and thanks, see appendix A, pages 1102-06.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

QUESTION OF USE OF PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM—
OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS TO MEET
DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

Mr. G. A. Cruickshank (Fraser Valley): On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a suggestion to you, and through you to the house. It is one that has been made by the hon. member for Macleod (Mr. Hansell) on many occasions. We have had the great privilege of having as our guest today the distinguished Prime Minister of India. I happen to be fortunate in the location of my seat in the house, but very few of the members, and no one in the galleries, could hear him. I think in this day and age of scientific development there is no reason why we should not have a public address system. I insist, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) that other arrangements be made.

Mr. W. D. Wylie (Medicine Hat): May I say that I tried to listen to the remarks of the Prime Minister of India. I am sure everyone

in this section of the house wanted to hear what he said, but none of us could do so. May I say further that I am sure every hon. member of the house would like to have the privilege of meeting the Prime Minister of India. Magistrate W. H. Ellis, of Medicine Hat, is in India at the present time, and I have had letters from him in which he has made reference to Prime Minister Nehru and has said many good things about him. I should have liked to have the privilege of meeting Prime Minister Nehru. I have not had that opportunity, and I could not hear everything he said. I think that something should be done to enable every hon. member of the house to hear what is said in this chamber.

Mr. Speaker: I will look into the question that has been raised. It is unfortunate that there was not an amplifying system in the house today. I can assure hon. members that the matter is receiving consideration. The former Speaker went into it at considerable length. He spent a good deal of time on the matter, and I am sure he will be pleased to act on any committee that may be appointed to go into it further, or co-operate in any other way.

The hon. member for Medicine Hat has stated that he would like very much to have met Pandit Nehru. May I tell hon. members that it has been my custom, since you have done me the honour of electing me Speaker of the house, to invite a number of hon. members of the house and members of the press gallery to my chambers when a distinguished visitor comes to Ottawa and calls upon me. There have been four or five distinguished visitors this session, and on each occasion I have invited thirty or forty hon. members. The house will realize that the Speaker's chambers are not large enough to accommodate all hon. members at one time; but I hope to continue the custom of inviting thirty or forty on each occasion when a distinguished visitor calls upon me here. May I add that if at any time any hon. member would like especially to meet a distinguished visitor who is in Ottawa, I shall be pleased to make that arrangement for him.

I thought I should make that statement to the house, so hon. members may know the system I have adopted.