



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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No. 54/15 - An Address by the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent  
at the Convocation of Delhi  
University February 24, 1954

I appreciate very much the honour which Delhi University has today bestowed on me. I am proud indeed to have been admitted to the distinguished company of your graduates and scholars. I realize that this honour comes to me because of the position I hold in the government of my country and that it is a gesture of good-will and friendship to the people of Canada. I am nonetheless happy and grateful that I should be the person to whom this gesture is addressed.

Although Delhi University is not as old as some universities in India, I know something of the splendid work it is doing for India's young men and women in the humanities and the sciences and in preparing them to take a significant part in the building of the new India. We in Canada are already acquainted with many of your students whom it has been our pleasure to welcome at our universities.

It has indeed been a signal honour for me to have received this degree from the hands of the Vice-President of India, your revered Chancellor. We are all greatly indebted to Dr. Radhakrishnan for his eminent scholarship, for his splendid work in making the philosophies and religions of the East better known in western countries, and for his original contributions to modern philosophical thought. His leadership in UNESCO and his distinguished public service to India in recent years are well known to Canadians, many of whom had the privilege of meeting him and hearing him speak when he visited Canada last year, and many more are looking forward to a series of lectures which he has kindly consented to give at McGill University in Montreal next autumn.

I am also deeply honoured by the presence here today of your learned Pro-Chancellor, the former Chief Justice of India. I appreciate greatly Mr. Sastri's courtesy in making a special visit here from Madras to attend this ceremony.

I am conscious today of the vast cultural heritage of this ancient land. I recall, for example, that more than four thousand years ago there was a remarkable valley civilization on this sub-continent. I also recall that some of the technical concepts on which Western science and Western thought patterns are based, such as the so-called Arabic system of numerals, had their origins in India. It was India, too, that gave birth to two of the great religions of the world, Hinduism and Buddhism, and the imposing moral philosophies which emanated from them.