

No. 54/10

NEW DELHI PRESS CONFERENCE

Transcript of statements made at the press conference of the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, at New Delhi, India, February 24, 1954

Ladies and Gentlemen: I will do my best to give you as full and as frank an answer as I can to the questions which you have put before me. I appreciate this opportunity of meeting you, although I am a little bit embarrassed at being the occasion for gathering you together when I realize that I have nothing of any importance to say to you. But nevertheless, during the days I have been here I have felt that there was such a friendly welcome extended to someone from Canada that I do enjoy meeting as many people as possible to have confirmed the impression that welcome does not come only from the Government or from the University of Delhi by which I was honoured this afternoon, but from you who represent all your readers, and I hope that I may ask you to assure your readers that the sole purpose of my visit was to bring warm greetings from the people of Canada to this great nation of India and to assure you that we did realize the importance of the influence of the Asian nations on world events.

And you know, though my country has not a very large population, it has a large area of land and water and, we think, great natural resources that we are discovering and endeavouring to use, and that makes us very dependent for our own welfare on the welfare of the whole free world.

And, well, of course there were two other purposes that I wish to pursue in making this visit. One was to see something of the great historical interest of this land where we know that many civilizations have followed each other and have left traces that the archaeologists interpret in fashions that sometimes surprise us but are probably accurate; and the other was to get as much information as I could in the short time when it was convenient for me to be away from Canada while our Parliament is in session, about the background of what people sometimes call "the Asian problem" (although I do not know that there are any more problems here than are presented by the other matters with which we are concerned in our daily thinking in each of our respective countries).

But I have very much appreciated the time Prime Minister Nehru has given me to explain to me the way in which the present situation of the Asian nations has developed, and I feel that that will be helpful to me and to my colleagues, because, well, we all have to work together, and though we realize that, well, the quantity of what we can do to take our part in shaping world events is very much smaller than that of the greater nations, we feel that its quality is just the same, and that we have as keen an interest in peace and stability and good human relations as any other nation in the world no matter how many times our population the population of that nation represents.

Well, 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.

Now I know from my experience at home, and I imagine that the world is much the same in the East as it is in the West, when there is a press conference it is an occasion when quite a lot of questions are directed at whosoever happens to be the occasion for the press conference. We had a general election in Canada last year and I went about the country from one end to the other, and everywhere I said I was going to make only one promise -- that I would do my best -- and I cannot make any other promise to you about whatever questions you want to ask me. But I will do my best to give you as full and as frank answers as my limited knowledge will permit. So that if you think that that is good enough for you to risk any of these questions, well, I am at your disposal.

QUESTION: Mr. Prime Minister, have you seen anything in India which might lead you to recommend an expansion of the Colombo Plan activities in which Canada is participating?

ANSWER: Canadians are very much, I would say, enthusiastic about the part we are taking in the Colombo Plan, and our people are quite prepared to go along. Of course they are, like tax payers in every other country, quite concerned about the rates of our taxes, but I think they feel that what is devoted to that side of international cooperation is well worth the portion of the tax that it means for each one of them. Now I can't make any positive statement about what our next appropriation will be. I am going to get back before our budget is presented by the Minister of Finance because I want to have my part of responsibility in the recommendations that he will make to Parliament. But I can assure you that not only from what I myself have seen but from reports I have had before of what has been accomplished -- not by the Colombo Plan but because the Colombo Plan was the occasion of, and of some assistance in the accomplishment -- it is looked upon as eminently satisfactory and as fully justifying the part we have been able to take in thus collaborating.

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 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.

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

ANSWER: 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.

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

ANSWER: 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.

QUESTION: You have a very large population in Canada, haven't you, of French-speaking Canadians?

ANSWER: Oui, oui, il y a . . . qui parle la langue française.

(laughter)

Well, I will repeat it in English because the two languages are official, you know, under our constitution. There is about a third of our people who are of French descent and who are very much attached to their language and who are now quite happy to be able to feel that their fellow citizens recognize the value to the Canadian patrimony of the two European cultures that we are blending in our own national culture.

QUESTION: Sir, my point is somewhat different -- my point was what is their reaction to a cease-fire in Indo-China?

ANSWER: They would be very happy to have a cease-fire in Indo-China, and they would hope, as we have hoped since there was a cease-fire in Korea, that it would lead to a permanent settlement without any renewal of fire. We -- and it may perhaps be a little more acute among the Canadians of French origin -- have deplored over the years this drain on the young manhood of France that was involved in the fighting in Indo-China.

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

ANSWER: 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 towards 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.

QUESTION: From your talks with Mr. Nehru do you have the impression that there is something that India at least can do towards settlement?

ANSWER: I think India has already done something that is apt to have considerable influence in the speech that it was my privilege to hear the Prime Minister make in the House of the People on, I think it was, Monday

afternoon. I think that any appeal, any public appeal, made by the Prime Minister of India is listened to very attentively and with very respectful consideration by the heads of all the governments with whom I have had any contacts.

QUESTION: Beyond the appeal, though, Sir, do you think that at the present time, the way the situation looks in Indo-China, there is any possibility of immediate steps for a cease-fire?

ANSWER: Well, as Mr. Nehru put it, there is to be a meeting of those we regard as the five great powers, in Geneva in April, and that meeting is for the purpose of dealing with the Korean situation and afterwards with the Indo-China situation; and wouldn't it seem to you and me as reasonable human beings that if it were our affair, and if we were on opposite sides, we would say, "Why not stop shooting and see if this April meeting can't bring about a settlement?"

QUESTION: 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?

ANSWER: 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 reach 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.

QUESTION: Do you have any indication whether the Chinese Communists or the Viet-Nam is prepared to accept Mr. Nehru's proposal?

ANSWER: No I do not.

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

ANSWER: 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 in making it, but we would have no hesitation whatsoever in rejoicing at the fact that Prime Minister Nehru was able to make that appeal.

QUESTION: Do you think that it would be practicable to also have a stoppage of fighting in Malaya and parts of Africa as also referred to by the Prime Minister?

ANSWER: Well, there I don't know that I can give you any specific answer beyond repeating what I have just said. I think that every good example is helpful on the way to a general easing of world tension and to the working out of intelligent bases upon which man can live and let live.

QUESTION: You say that we have come to the point of realizing that nobody wins anything by war. Would you still advocate, in the face of this observation, derived from experience, that it would still be desirable to arm nations?

ANSWER: Well, I would hope that for my country the world situation would before too long become such that we could devote a lot of what we are spending for armed forces to the development of the resources of our country and the improvement of the living standards of our people.

QUESTION: Today, Sir, in this region of the world, in addition to the economic strengthening under the Colombo Plan, do you feel that military security is also important?

ANSWER: Well, I feel that it is unfortunate that we of the West (I prefer to speak of the West rather than of the East), that we of the West felt that, if we wanted security, we were not getting the assurances of security from the United Nations and the Security Council that made us confident in our undertakings for the wider development of our resources, and it was to create a situation where aggression might not be attractive that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed. And it is to carry out our commitments to the up-building of joint strength for the main purpose of making it unattractive for aggression to be started that we are devoting, oh, something over 40 per cent of our annual budget to military expenditure.

QUESTION: 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?

ANSWER: 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.

QUESTION: Canada is also a Pacific power. Would you suggest a collective security organization in which Pacific and Asian countries could participate and support it?

ANSWER: The question has not come before us for decision as to whether or not we should be parties to a Pacific security pact. And under present conditions it wouldn't be possible for us to make to a Pacific security pact the specific commitments of so much on such and such a date that we have made to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. But we are, as you say, a country that extends from sea to sea and we are having increasing relations with the countries in the Pacific area. But we haven't been invited to form part of this arrangement worked out between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, and we haven't sought an invitation, and we haven't had to consider what we would say had one come forth.

QUESTION: Do you approve of the idea in principle?

ANSWER: Well, I would not be in a position to say that I have given that sufficient consideration to be able to go to the people of Canada and say to them, "I think that your security depends upon this being done." I was able to do that with respect to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and I would not go to the people and make an assertion that was not based upon convictions of my own arrived at from sufficient study.

QUESTION: You said just now that you had the impression or the belief that you had to enter the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to get security for your country.

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Is it your impression that India at least doesn't believe in the principle of achieving collective security through arms or through armed strength?

ANSWER: Well I do not know that India has expressed any views about what it was proper to do in the North Atlantic Treaty area. India has, through its responsible government, come to the conclusion that for India it was preferable not to make any commitments. We came to the conclusion that for us in our part of the world it was desirable to make commitments and it was desirable to assert beforehand that if aggression started against any one of us, we were, as we were in the last two world wars, disposed to join together to repel that aggression. The Kaiser had not been told before 1914 that if he started a war all those who ultimately joined up against him would do so. And Hitler and Mussolini had not been told before 1939 that if they started anything all those who joined together to prevent them from succeeding would do so. Well with that experience we felt that it was desirable this time that if anyone now starts something we are all going to be together and that he should not start anything unless he feels he can overcome us all.

QUESTION: This attitude of yours makes it possible for those who do not want to back such an idea to remain uncommitted?

ANSWER: Well really, I would not like to express any opinion upon what would be the wise or the wiser or the wisest course for those who are responsible for other countries to adopt. I have found in the 12 years that I have been in Ottawa that I have my hands full in trying to make as wise decisions as possible about my own country.

QUESTION: 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?

ANSWER: 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.

QUESTION: May I ask one further question?

(laughter)

Mr. St. Laurent I am not sure about that, you know. I have had two or three of your questions.

(laughter)

Questioner I am very optimistic.

Remark from audience Ask it in French, Larry

(laughter)

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

ANSWER: 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.

QUESTION: 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?

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

QUESTION: I am not saying fully informed, I was referring to appreciation. You in your speech yesterday in Parliament said there was a lot to be said for America, or words to that effect, and you tried, shall we say, to interpret sympathetically to us the American view. We have a feeling that maybe we do not understand the American position and you were good enough to understand. Did you have any evidence in your talks with Mr. Nehru of that kind?

ANSWER: No, Mr. Nehru made no criticism whatsoever of the views I had expressed as formed from our experience living alongside our American neighbours. There are, I suppose, 160 million people in the United States. I don't know so much about Asia but I do know that in some of the European countries that I have visited there were impressions that were not fair to the mass of the American people. Now I don't know whether there are such impressions in Asia or not, but I practised law for 36 years and during that period I had a lot to do with Americans who were making investments in Canada. Since I have been in Ottawa I have had many contacts with many Americans and I have travelled quite extensively throughout the United States, and I think that in the main the United States citizen is not very much different from the Canadian citizen. He wants peace; he wants to raise his family under peaceful conditions and he is willing to go along with those he trusts in the way in which they think they are going to best secure for him that peace for himself and his family that he hungers for.

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

ANSWER: Well I am sure they are not deliberately creating tension. I know that their deliberate desire is to lessen tension. Now, after the Coronation I had some chats with Mr. Malik, who was the Russian representative at the Coronation, and who happened during the ceremony to be seated, well, no further from me than the gentleman across the table. I had the stall, choir stall, along the wall and my wife was in front of me and Mr. Malik was in front of her and he followed the Coronation ceremony with very respectful attention. I was curious to know whether he would or not and then I had several occasions to meet him and I was expressing to him my satisfaction that Russia was going to resume normal diplomatic relations with us and send an Ambassador back to Ottawa. There had not been an Ambassador there since 1945 after we had some little trouble over a spy investigation, and I said that I hoped we would certainly follow their example and send our Ambassador back to Moscow, and that I hoped that would help do something toward easing the situation. And I said, of course I suppose we will continue doing things you think are wrong and I know that you are going to continue doing things we think are wrong, but I hope you won't think we are doing it on purpose and that we will be charitable enough not to think you are doing it on purpose. He said, well you know

the only people who do not make mistakes are those who do nothing at all. It may be that the Americans are doing so much that they are making mistakes. It may be that we are making mistakes but we are not making mistakes because we want to.

QUESTION: Do you feel in this particular case they can be making a mistake?

ANSWER: I do not know I think it would be a mistake for me to try to recommend to my Parliament that we extend military aid because they would say we have gone just as far as we possibly could with the commitments that have already been made.

QUESTION: Is the impression in America, right or wrong, that Mr. Nehru is an unfriendly type?

ANSWER: I do not think there is an impression in America that Mr. Nehru is unfriendly. I know there is not in my country. I know, well, . . .

Questioner: I am not referring to Mr. Nehru's state.

Mr. St. Laurent: . . . there may be some in the United States but I do not think that would be the impression of any substantial portion of the American public. I know that there is in America high admiration for Mr. Nehru and for what he has been able to do and I know that there are Americans who deplore, as I deplore, that there were unfortunate comments for instance about the way the prisoner-of-war situation was handled in Korea. Well we know that there was a great service rendered by India to the whole free world, by taking on that responsibility and discharging it in the way it was discharged.

QUESTION: 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?

ANSWER: No, I think you had better make the comments yourself, Sir, you seem to know much more about the Asian situation than I do.

QUESTION: Are you convinced that American military assistance to Pakistan is not in any way directed against India?

ANSWER: I am convinced that if there had been the slightest suspicion that it could be directed against India that it would not be agreed to.

QUESTION: Our Government has been saying that we do not think it is in our favour. Then how do you say it is not against us?

ANSWER: Well I am not saying that you haven't the right to feel that it could operate against you. I was asked whether there was any intent to extend military aid to be used against India. Well, I am convinced there wouldn't be 1 per cent of the American public that would go along if it was proposed to extend military aid to any nation directed against India.

QUESTION: Sir, do you visualize any possibility that a country which is the recipient of such aid might misuse it? (Syngman Rhee for example?)

ANSWER: Well here I think I will have to fall back on Mr. Malik's statement that it is only those who don't do anything who do not make mistakes. Now it may be that it is only those who have no arms whatsoever who are never in a position to misuse them.

QUESTION: One more question, Sir. Did you get the impression during the course of your talks with Mr. Nehru that but for the presence of the Kashmir problem India might not have raised such a serious objection to military aid?

ANSWER: Well, I would not like to speak for Mr. Nehru and of course my conversations with him were confidential and he was endeavouring to inform me, to instruct me, and I think it would be improper for me to say anything that might be construed as divulging a confidential conversation with the Prime Minister of India.

QUESTION: What would be the Commonwealth reaction if India looks to Russia for aid, for military aid?

ANSWER: The Commonwealth reaction would not be a Commonwealth reaction. It would be a reaction of nations who form part of the Commonwealth because each one is its own master in its domestic and in its foreign policies. There is no central Commonwealth organization and no Commonwealth meeting of Prime Ministers attempts to tell any member of the Commonwealth what he should do or what he should not do.

Questioner: Why I asked was because Mr. Eden in London yesterday said that this question about aid to Pakistan is just one friendly power giving aid to a member of the Commonwealth.

Mr. St. Laurent: Well, I think we would be very much concerned if there was an exchange of military aid between India and any country that we look upon as a potential aggressor. We do not look upon India as a potential aggressor of our community of nations and we do unfortunately look upon Russia as a potential aggressor. I do not think that I shall live to see aggression, and I expect to live on for some years. But nevertheless there was this shadow of totalitarianism over Europe and we have found from our experience that when trouble breaks out in Europe, we in North America just cannot keep out -- we are necessarily drawn into it.

QUESTION: In that case who would you blame if this development took place?

Mr. St. Laurent: If what development took place?

Questioner: If India asked Russia for military aid?

ANSWER: I do not know that I would blame anyone, but I would be sorry to feel that this great nation of India was considering that there might be a situation where India and Russia would be fighting some other part of the world together. Well that is why we would be concerned because we would consider that it is something that we cannot anticipate as possible.

QUESTION: If that is the case, then they should have....

ANSWER: You are free to criticize the United States Government. I am not going to do so.

(laughter)

QUESTION: Yesterday in your speech you said the countries of Asia should have a greater say in the affairs of Asia. In view of that statement would you advocate wider representation for Asia at the Geneva conference and would you also say that China should be admitted to the U.N.?

ANSWER: China is already a member of the United Nations. The difficulty is to determine who is China as the proper representative of the Chinese people. There, China is a permanent member of the Security Council.

QUESTION: (None of the stenographers was able to hear this question except for the word "Formosa", nor was it picked up at all on the tape recorder).

ANSWER: Well that is a problem that the United Nations will have to face up to, but probably will not wish to consider while the United Nations and China are merely in a cease-fire situation of actual warfare.

QUESTION: Again going to Indo-China. As you know, India enjoys great confidence in Asia. And after Korea India made another appeal regarding Indo-China. Do you think it advisable or possible that India should be heard or represented in the Geneva conference?

ANSWER: Well I do not know. Really this Geneva conference is something of which I know no more than has appeared in the rather short press despatches. The Berlin conference was still on when I was at Bonn and it is since that that there has come about this report that there has been agreement for a conference between those five powers that were the big powers and recognized as such at the time the United Nations charter was set up. Now I have understood that they were not going to close the door to the others who had been taking part in the United Nations forces fighting in Korea, and I was glad to know that. I would not like to be told that Canada could not be there. But whether it will be advisable for Canada and the others to be there or not still remains something to be decided. Now whether India should be there or not, I think that it is very difficult and hardly practicable to have questions that affect the whole of Asia disposed of in a satisfactory manner without the representatives of the influential Asian nations, but you must appreciate that I am the Prime Minister of a country of 15 million people and I just cannot organize these conferences, you know, in the way I might think is the best way for them to be organized.

QUESTION: In view of the new trend of thought that economic and military aid are more or less similar, would you try and advocate in the West that to the extent to which Pakistan gets military aid India might perhaps get added economic aid to restore a sort of balance? Do you think it possible?

ANSWER: I would not appreciate statements by the President of the United States or his colleagues about what we should do in Canada with the appropriations we can get from Parliament for aid to our mutual friends. And I do not think it would be proper for me to say that I think it would be wiser for the American Administration to make such and such other use of the funds that are raised by the taxation of the American people and to which I do not contribute.

QUESTION: When you said in your speech to Members of Parliament "It has been, and still is, our hope that India, which can bring much wisdom and experience to bear on it, will participate as fully as possible in future efforts to bring it nearer to solution" -- would you amplify that?

ANSWER: No, I think that is quite complete and I think that fully expresses the feeling of the people of Canada.
(laughter)

I think that we feel that these things should lead to something that will last and we don't think that settlement of large Asian problems are going to be permanent settlements unless they are participated in by the influential nations of this great continent of Asia.

QUESTION: With regard to Chinese representation. You said you feel it is a problem that the United Nations will have to face up to but that at the present moment the situation in Korea If settlement were to take place in Korea do you think that it might be a logical time for the U.N. to make such a consideration on the basis of the Geneva conference?

ANSWER: I do not know whether it would be on the basis of the Geneva conference but I think that it is the fact that at the present time it is not the Nationalist Government in Formosa that represents that great mass of humanity that constitutes the people of China and that whether I think that the other government is the kind of government China should have or not does not change the facts. If China is to be there, it should be the Government that China gives itself in fact, and we think from our own experience, you know, that it is the people of a country who have a right to determine what kind and form of government they should have for their country. And we are not suggesting that the form of government that exists in Russia should be changed. That is something which concerns the people of Russia. And I think we have to be realistic and if the people of China are to be represented that they will some day have to be represented by those that they consider the government that represents them in fact.

QUESTION: You would not mind general elections being held in China on the same basis as they were held in India?

ANSWER: Well now, I do not know enough about China. I would imagine that difficult as it was to hold this general election in India, it would be much more difficult to achieve the success that was achieved in India in China. I may be mistaken. I have never travelled in China but I am under the impression that it would be much more difficult to have a genuinely democratic election with universal suffrage such as you had in India, in China at the present time.

QUESTION: Or in Russia?

ANSWER: Or in Russia at the present time.

(laughter)

QUESTION: You said that you believe in gradualism regarding colonial countries. Do you advocate any progress towards self-administration in colonial countries or are you satisfied with the present position?

ANSWER: Well, to say whether I am satisfied or not is not a question I can answer. If I were living in a country that did not have self-government I would not be satisfied with the situation. But I am now happily living in a country which has self-government for which efforts were continuously made with progressive results from the establishment of our first Parliament in 1791 up to the present time.

QUESTION: Would you be impatient if the people of other colonies tried to attain the same status you have?

ANSWER: I think that human nature is much the same in all those countries, and I would not be at all scandalized at people residing in a country that did not have a fully responsible government of its own having the same feelings about the desirability of self-government as we had in Canada until such time as it had been fully achieved.

QUESTION: You said that in the N.A.T.O. each member is obliged to go to the support of the others if attacked. Does this include the colonial possessions of the powers concerned?

ANSWER: No.

QUESTION: I have in mind the Portuguese settlements in India.

ANSWER: No. No, it certainly does not include the Portuguese colonies in India.

QUESTION: Are there any secret clauses in the pact - there was a report that this is a secret clause?

ANSWER: There are no secret clauses, or at least if there are they are secret from me.

(laughter)

QUESTION: As between your loyalty to the Commonwealth and your obvious friendship towards your immediate neighbour, the United States -- to people in India it is some sort of miracle how you steer a clear course. I should like to know how you function.

(laughter)

ANSWER: We do not allow, and there never has been any attempt, but if there were, we would not allow any country of the Commonwealth or our great neighbour to the south of us to attempt to tell us how we should run our affairs, so that our loyalty to the Commonwealth and loyalty to our neighbour is based upon what we decide to be in our interests because of our mutual dependence on each other for general welfare.

QUESTION: Despite pressures from both sides, I presume?

ANSWER: Well I have never felt pinched by those pressures.

QUESTION: On the Portuguese possessions -- you said there were no secret clauses. Are there any clauses specifically excluding them? Because on the basis of that treaty the U.S.A. gets bases in the French Protectorates of Africa and in Algeria. Therefore if the Portuguese possessions are not specifically excluded by that they might be used here as well.

ANSWER: They might be used by the United States, but here this undertaking is an undertaking to repel aggression directed against any of the metropolitan territories of the signatories and nothing more than that.

QUESTION: Goa is regarded by the Portuguese as a metropolitan territory.

ANSWER: It is not so regarded in relationship to the North Atlantic Treaty.

QUESTION: The same is true of Pondicherry?

ANSWER: Oh yes it is, oh yes. We could not, even had we recommended it, have got our people to sanction an undertaking by us to fight in any part of the world. This was seriously considered you know and it was a new step for us because we had never previously made any peace-time commitments and our people approved of the limited commitments that were involved in this North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

QUESTION: Would you say that before you came here you had certain broad impressions about this country and now that you are on the eve of leaving us you would say you have changed or formed new ones?

ANSWER: No, I would say that I have been happy to find that the general impressions I had before I came here were confirmed by the more detailed impressions I have derived from what I have seen and what I have heard.

QUESTION: That is very interesting. I would like to know what those impressions are.

ANSWER: My impressions were that the people of India, like the people of Canada, were engaged on a high enterprise and that to carry that enterprise to a successful conclusion they wanted stability and peace in the world and they were going to do their best efforts to maintain peace and stability in the world.

QUESTION: Your impression of the sub-continent. When you leave India, and you are not going back to Pakistan, will you carry at the back of your mind that one part of this sliced country will be armed against the other?

ANSWER: Well I sincerely hope that what occurred in North America will occur in this sub-continent. Our confederation was motivated in large part by our fear of our neighbour the United States. And that was 87 or 88 years ago now and at the present time and for as long as I have known anything at all about public affairs, I have never had any fear nor found any other Canadian who had any fear of aggression from our neighbour to the south. And I rather confidently expect that that is going to be the ultimate situation in this sub-continent.

High Commissioner: I would like to stay for a long time to listen to the Prime Minister but I am afraid he has to go to another meeting.

APPLAUSE

Audience: We do not always clap, Mr. Prime Minister.

Mr. St. Laurent: Well I am delighted to have met you and I hope that what I have said may give you a somewhat clearer impression of our situation in the world. We are dependent for our own welfare upon the welfare of many countries and we realize that unless there is that genuine welfare we are not going to achieve with our high enterprise the success we hope for.

