



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 59/6

CANADA AND PAKISTAN

A speech by Mr. J.G. Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada, at the University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, on November 17, 1958.

Need I say how deeply moved I am by the warmth of the welcome that you accorded me this morning and also by those very kind words, Mr. Registrar, which you used in introducing me to this degree. I am also deeply honoured that you have thought fit to show your regard for the people of my country in accepting me into the fellowship of this distinguished University. I know, Mr. Chancellor, that my people in my country will treasure the honour which you have conferred on them through me. I would be less than frank if I did not tell you how very deeply moved I have been during my stay in this country by the warmth of your hospitality, the kindnesses extended to me and, above all, by that feeling of oneness which is apparent between your country and mine.

Although my country is distant from yours by many miles, over the years I have come to know, as must all who realize the contribution that universities make to the welfare of all, the high standards and the tradition of your centres of learning. We have been happy to welcome in Canada many who have taken their studies there and gained experience in the techniques of industry and commerce and government. From them we have learned something of the qualities of the spirit which is nurtured and developed in the University of the Punjab. I count myself fortunate to have been honoured as I have, and to have been privileged to pay even so brief a visit here and learn at first hand something of the vigour, the activity, the breadth of vision of the active life of this University. And I know of its development in its affiliated colleges and of its students in the arts and sciences and in the wisdom and culture of Islam.

I know, too, of the developments that are taking place in Pakistan. What moves me more than anything else, Mr. Chancellor, is the tremendous vitality of this country -

this new country in so far as its status is concerned - and the realization that all of you are the architects in the building of a new nation. In that connection, a sound and healthy university cannot be over-emphasized to a young and growing nation. No aspect is more vital, for it is in the university that the future leaders of the country are shaped. I know of the contribution that this huge University has made, its outstanding national service in training men and women for the Government, for the Armed Forces, for industry, for life itself. I pay my tribute to the initiative and the enterprise shown by your sponsorship last year of the International Islamic Colloquium to discuss the problems and potentialities of Islam in the modern world. I am pleased that representatives of Canada were present at that Conference too.

This is my first visit to Asia and, Sir, the first honorary degree that I have ever received outside of America. I think it is fitting that my first host in this vast continent should be Pakistan, a country of historic greatness, one of the most ancient in the world. I have thought of Lahore through the years, conjuring up visions of great Moghul kings, proud Punjabi soldiers, the glories of Muslim architecture. These things I saw yesterday with the eyes of a tourist. Its eminence as a cultural centre in Asia is not a thing of the distant past. Yesterday as I visited the tomb of the revered poet, philosopher, artist, lawyer, linguist, teacher and statesman, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, I thought of the words of Morley when he said: "Versatility is not a universal gift among the able men of the world. Not many of them have so many gifts of the spirit as to be free to choose by what paths they will climb the Steep where Fame's proud temple shines upon." Iqbal was of that limited group, able to qualify in the description of Morley. I am aware of the proud traditions of this University and of the vital work that it is carrying on. The realization that here in modern Pakistan is a land in which the historical processes of civilization have culminated, the knowledge that Islam proclaims that principle which above all is needed in the world today - that all men are a single nation, a brotherhood of men without bounds of colour, race, country, language or rank - these are the noble ideals that move me as I come in your midst. They are shared by the people of your country and mine, foretelling that unity which must come in the process of time among all the races of men. Vigour, self-reliance, the independent view of life - these things strike a responsive cord in the hearts of Canadians.

I am going to say just a word about Canada, something of our viewpoint, something of what we are, as the heirs of the culture and history of Europe. Our first settlers arrived only three and a half centuries ago; our population is drawn

in the main from Europe. But we have a cultural heritage which we share with you and a bond of brotherhood with you, inherited by the Europeans though Islam. We also have the benefits that your heritages and your culture made possible to all mankind. The development of mathematical thought, astronomy and medicine were made possible, Mr. Chancellor, because Islam, not only provided and enriched the links between East and West, but during the Dark Ages cherished and preserved the knowledge of the ancient Greeks for later generations of Europeans. When I say this it is not in any sense hypothetical, for there are now faculties at McGill University in Canada, and in other universities, for the special study of Islamic thought and deeds, Asian history and affairs. We are aware thereby of the unique gifts to mankind handed down by the enlightened civilizations of Asia and which come to us from Islam.

What I am here for is simply this; to bring to you a message of that new world; to tell you that Canada, having received a tremendous contribution from mankind, now endeavours in its way to repay something of what that heritage has meant to us. Canada has begun to repay some of the older civilizations. We are blessed with abundant natural resources and technical knowledge and modern industrial skills. We recall that the great Muslim scholars of the past did not selfishly harbour their knowledge. They made it available to mankind and we, as a country that has benefitted, think it proper that we should share with them, who did so much for us. We welcome the opportunity of the Colombo Plan to co-operate with the countries in South Asia and to share in the task of new construction and reconstruction. This afternoon I shall see something of the Warsak Development. These things we intend to continue. We believe that the Colombo Plan accomplishes the tasks at hand in the best and the quickest way. It has not been marred by useless controversy. We prize the opportunity it gives to bring us together to share with you a portion of our mutual heritage.

We also have the privilege to share it with you in another field, that of the membership of both of us in the Commonwealth. I have been deeply touched visiting your Armed Forces and seeing once more the living connection that exists in idealism and ideals between those that have served in that brotherhood, which above all others, causes unity. The Commonwealth is a unique association. I find at the beginning of this tour that there is a link as brothers in an atmosphere of trust and good will. There is no economic or political subordination where nations gather as equal partners. We believe in the concept of the Commonwealth, a union of hearts joined together in interdependence. We believe it contains within it, as a moment ago I quoted from the thoughts of Islam, the vibrant life of true comradeship for all mankind.

I was among those at the Commonwealth Trade and Economic Conference at Montreal, although only on one occasion. It was there agreed that scholarships be made available to students and teachers in Commonwealth countries. The purpose of the scholarships is to make available to young men and women, to whom we hand our heritage of wisdom, an opportunity to learn a wide variety of the subjects of each other's and in each other's lands. Within the next few years there will be a thousand students and teachers participating. Canada will undertake the responsibility of looking after one quarter of the students and also the same proportion of the teachers and experts needed in these countries.

All through the generations of the past, it was a good tradition that scholars should travel. And that is what these scholarships will do. They will throw open the thresholds of learning and create a diversity of understanding and of knowledge. Our peoples will have the opportunity to share under the Colombo Plan and within the Commonwealth the tremendous benefits that come to mind and to body when nations co-operate together. We have continued to accept increasing numbers of foreign students. Four thousand foreign students are in Canadian universities today, five percent of the total enrolment. We have also opportunities for foreign graduate students, including PhD's, who each year have available to them in Canada a large number of fellowships tenable in the laboratories of the National Research Council, in some of the universities and in the Federal Government Departments of Agriculture, Mines and Technical Surveys and National Health and Welfare. These fellowships know no restrictions of nationality. They are open in competition as between Canadians and foreign nationals. Last year 192 of these fellowships were held by fellows from 28 countries, including one from Pakistan, and during the next few months there will be two from this country. Only today I read in the press the announcement of a policy which I believe is indicative of our attitude of co-operation - the announcement of a two-year policy whereby we will make available to the various medical faculties in the universities of ten Colombo countries \$2,500 for medical books, or a total of \$100,000. In other words, in a spirit of co-operation we are building for that brotherhood which is of the essence if peace is to be maintained.

I know there are those who say, what if the Commonwealth cannot survive? Well, those who are cynics and indifferent and selfish say it cannot be. Others endeavour to plot to divide the people of the free world in order to weaken us. Mr. Chancellor, one of the memories that I will carry from this nation is this - the vital unity of the people, a dedication. You have the same feeling that we have.

We are outside the Iron Curtain and we intend to stay outside the Iron Curtain. That is the message that I have received from this nation as I have met with you. Whoever tries to separate us will find that spirit, that unity in comradeship that I mentioned a moment ago, when the soldiers of our nations stood together to defend the world from tyranny, to preserve the sacred ideals of liberty and justice. When our engineers build dams together, when our students learn together, when our statesmen and national leaders confer and confide, we bring about within this Commonwealth of different races and religions, of different forms of government, a unity in the spirit, a dedication to the assurance that any disputes that we have (families will always have disputes) can, and must be, settled in an amicable way.

And I think, Sir, that it is sometimes forgotten what contribution the Commonwealth countries in Asia and Africa have made to the evolution of the concept of the Commonwealth. I saw it a year and a half ago in London when as a novice I joined that Conference of Prime Ministers. Our peoples do not share a common British ancestry; your mother tongue is not English. Nevertheless when your country, like the others, emerged to independent status, it remained within the Commonwealth as an act of choice because of that something that touches our hearts, the common heritage of free institutions, the common recognition of the worth of man. And I see this Commonwealth greater in the years ahead. It has a message for all mankind. Its common heritage - that is something; its dedication to the worthwhile things of life - that is something more. It is a bridge of understanding spanning the five continents of the earth and linking together peoples of every race and creed and colour.

Sir, it has been an inspiring experience for me. I see this new land, and I say new land because it is a new country among the countries of the world. We, who are growing older, look at the student body and wish once more that we could be with them to see something of what will happen in their life times. If I could give a message to the student body of this University, now mine by adoption, it would be this: to the young men and young women - be participants in the great opportunity that has come to you. In the practice of your citizenship, don't be standers-by. Join in the achievement of being architects of Pakistan's future. What vistas of opportunity are open to you. Leaders, leaders needed today, leaders that only the universities can give, you have a challenging future and great opportunities. May you be the leaders whose principles will never be tailored to materialistic aims or to the winds of ill-considered public opinion. May you never deny yourself the courage to take the offensive for the things that are just and right. May you always, understanding freedom, live it and cherish it. May you be the architects of the greatness of a great Pakistan. May you

realize with Edmund Burke that only in individual contribution can a nation be great. All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing. That is my simple message to you.

Sir, Mr. Chancellor and Mr. Vice-Chancellor, I am deeply moved by the honour that you have done me. Thank you for the opportunity to speak these few words to you. What it has done has been to enable me to reaffirm my country's admiration for Pakistan and its Islamic heritage, to show our sympathetic interest in the problems of your country, to place before you that view, that is mine, of the necessity of the maintenance of our Commonwealth ties. I can see that your achievements have been splendid, remarkable, outstanding. My sincere desire, and the desire of Canada, is to work with you in whatever way we can, to join with you in the building of this strong, rich heritage of freedom in this cradle of ancient civilizations. Raising standards, giving men and women new hopes, showing them that horizon of the future - these are possible so long as there are universities that send forth leaders whose dedication is not materialistic but is founded upon the things of the spirit. Then greatness in individuals as well as nations is assured. Again, Sir, from the bottom of my heart I thank you for the honour that has been done me.

S/C