

Déclaration faite par le Premier Ministre
au début de la conférence de presse donnée
à l'Ambassade, le 11 mars 1954

"Il m'a fait plaisir, dans ces conférences, de rencontrer aussi des journalistes dont la langue usuelle est cette autre langue officielle de notre pays, et de leur demander à eux, comme aux correspondents dont la langue est l'anglais, de m'aider à communiquer ce message d'amitié et de bonne volonté aux populations des pays que j'ai eu l'avantage de visiter.

Je vous suis reconnaissant pour ce que vous et vos confrères d'ailleurs ont fait comme rapports de ce qui s'est passé depuis que je suis parti d'Ottawa, il y a maintenant cinq semaines.

J'espère, et je n'ai pas de doutes, que vous allez continuer à faire des rapports objectifs et d'un caractère amical de cette visite et de la façon très cordiale que j'ai été reçu, non seulement par les représentants des gouvernements, mais par la population.

Je vous avoue que j'ai été très touché de voir hier à mon arrivée, ces milliers d'enfants qui eux aussi voulaient exprimer à la population canadienne, la population d'un des pays de l'autre hémisphère, leur plaisir de constater que nous voulions avoir des relations plus intimes, plus cordiales et probablement plus mutuellement avantageuses.

Et maintenant, si on a des questions à poser, j'essaierai de répondre d'une façon candide et franche parce qu'il me semble que c'est la franchise qui peut être une des bases fermes sur lesquelles l'on édifie ce concours de bonne volonté et qu'on donne effet à ce désir commun de travailler ensemble."

Questions posées en français à la
conférence de presse du 11 mars,
1954, et réponses données par le
Premier Ministre.

QUESTION: Monsieur le Président, quelle est la position canadienne sur l'essai de médiation indienne dans le conflit indochinois?

REPONSE: La position canadienne est que nous serions très heureux de voir cesser la tuerie qui se poursuit déjà depuis bientôt maintenant huit ans en Indochine, mais que nous ne sommes pas en état de devenir médiateurs, et nous espérons que ceux dont c'est la responsabilité, vont trouver une solution qui mettra fin à cette tuerie qui ne semble pas avancer les intérêts réels de qui que ce soit.

QUESTION: Monsieur le Président, que pensez-vous d'une défense du bloc Nord Pacifique? Serait-il nécessaire d'organiser la défense de la Corée, du Japon, du Canada etc.?

REPONSE: Pour le moment, le Canada a engagé tout ce dont il pouvait disposer dans les promesses qu'il a faites à ses associés dans l'organisation de l'Atlantique-Nord.

QUESTION: Est-ce que le Canada voit, sans appréhension le réarmement du Japon?

REPONSE: Bien, nous ne nous sommes pas rendu compte qu'il se passait quoi-que ce soit de nature à nous causer des inquiétudes.

QUESTION: Est-ce que la signature du récent pacte entre le Japon et les Etats-Unis ne modifie pas les perspectives commerciales du Canada et du Japon?

REPONSE: Nous espérons que non. Nous espérons que nous pourrons continuer non seulement à faire le volume de commerce que nous faisons dans le moment avec le Japon, mais qu'il y aura augmentation de nos échanges commerciaux.

QUESTION: Que peut-on attendre activement de la conférence de Genève?

REPONSE: Moi je n'oserais rien prédire. Je puis vous dire ce que nous en espérons. Mais entre nous, ce que nous pouvons en attendre, c'est une question à laquelle vous seriez peut-être plus en mesure vous-même de répondre que moi.

QUESTION: Est-ce que le Canada a l'intention de jouer un rôle médiateur entre l'Inde et le Pakistan?

REPONSE: Le Canada a l'intention de se mêler de ses affaires, et le Canada ne prétend pas être une puissance qui puisse influencer d'une façon efficace le jugement ou la conduite de ceux qui sont responsables des affaires de leur propre pays. Nous, bien ... je dis nous, peut-être que je devrais employer le singulier; moi, j'espère que ces difficultés présentes entre le Pakistan et l'Inde se régleront d'une façon aussi satisfaisante que se sont réglés les différends, un peu similaires, qu'il y avait il y a un siècle, entre le Canada et les Etats-Unis.

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External Affairs
Supplementary Paper

No. 54/14 PRIME MINISTER'S TOKYO PRESS CONFERENCE

Text of statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, made at Tokyo, Japan, on March 11, 1954, during the course of his tour of Europe and Asia.

I appreciate the opportunity of meeting you this morning though this is a larger conference than any I have had since I left the East Block something over a month ago and I think I should apologize to you for having you come here at my invitation or the Ambassador's invitation that you come, because I do not feel I have anything by the way of information that would be of interest to your readers to communicate to you. But that doesn't detract from the pleasure of meeting you and having the opportunity of expressing to you and through you to all the ladies and gentlemen of the press that I have met since I left Ottawa my appreciation for the friendly and kindly way in which they have handled the reports of what activities I have been participating in since I left. You of course all know that the real objective of my visit was to bring courteous and friendly goodwill from the people of Canada to the people of countries that I set out to visit. I wanted also of course to return the courtesies that had been extended to us by several visits of leaders of various nations to Ottawa in the last four or five years and I can assure you that though my visit has been quite rapid everywhere and much shorter, it has been of great interest to me to make it and I have enjoyed it and feel that it has been quite worthwhile. Now, on previous occasions when I have met the ladies and gentlemen of the press I have told them, without promising or feeling that I could answer all of the questions they might wish to put to me, in that I would give such answers as I could with frankness and candour and that is what I have been attempting to do.

QUESTION: As this is the last stop on your tour, it might be appropriate if you could just give us your most important impressions of your world trip -- what sticks out most in your mind.

ANSWER: What sticks out more in my mind than everything else is that I have received the confirmation of what I formerly believed to be the case and that is that men and women in all nations are essentially the same, have the same aspirations, the same needs, the same anxieties and at present the same desire to work with each other for the purpose of maintaining the greatest possible degree of world stability so that they can devote their attention and efforts to the improvement of their standard of living.

QUESTION: Along the same line, could you point out some of the more specific outstanding problems which you feel the world now has to face in the immediate future?

ANSWER: Well I don't know that I could point out the outstanding world problems. The one outstanding problem is to

get people of all countries to work towards a goal of amicable settlement of whatever diverging views they may have because of their historic evolution and background by peaceful means and I think that there is a recognition everywhere that war isn't the way to do things of that kind.

QUESTION: Do you feel that there is progress being made in that direction today?

ANSWER: I do. I think we're on the right path and that there is a pretty universal desire to pursue that path.

QUESTION: Was there any particular nation where you visited that that was in evidence today?

ANSWER: No, I think (PAUSE). In every nation that I visited and in all conversations I have had with those whom it has been my good fortune to meet since I left Ottawa, I think that there is a universal recognition of the fact that intelligent human beings should be able to get along without resorting to this terrible business of killing each other off.

QUESTION: Would it be correct to interpret your feeling that there is less tension in the world today than a year ago or, in other words, that we are making progress?

ANSWER: Well, I don't know. Comparisons are always rather odious but I think there is a genuine desire now to try and keep this world at peace and to allow our own and the on-coming generations to make progress towards improving their standards of living - and by that I don't mean only the quantity of bread and butter that they get each day but everything that helps make human life worth living.

QUESTION: Japan desires earnestly to become a full-fledged member of the United Nations. Will you help?

ANSWER: Canada will certainly do its best towards that end because Canada feels that it would be a good thing for the United Nations to have a great nation like Japan as a full member taking its part in the deliberations and its responsibility in the solution of the various problems that are dealt with.

QUESTION: From the standpoint of Canada, what do you think about United States policy towards Far East, Communist China and Japan.

ANSWER: Well, here I don't want to express any opinion upon the policies of any of our friends. I know that we are all using our best endeavours to reach the same goal. Now, it is not unusual that people who have the same objective may not always have exactly the same concept of the best immediate means to make progress towards that objective and I have full confidence in the good faith and sincerity of all of our friendly nations in their efforts to make real progress.

QUESTION: Do you see Communist China recognizing Canada in the foreseeable future? (This sentence has been carefully checked with tape recorder).

ANSWER: Well, I don't know that we shouldn't be very careful about the use of that word "recognition" - it seems to

provoke various reactions and I was asked in Manila and in Seoul what about the ultimate recognition of China and I wouldn't attempt to state any policy but merely to express my view of what might be a realistic approach. There are problems that are disturbing at this time which are of concern to the people of China and we all are of the hope that these problems will be disposed of and will be settled and I think that in order to get them settled whenever the appropriate moment arrives to make serious attempts in that direction, that it is those who are in effective control of public affairs in China who will have to be participating in the negotiations and agreements reached to dispose of those problems. Now whether you regard that as recognition of Communist China or anything else, I think it is only the common sense realistic approach that there will not be an agreement by which the people of China will feel that they are bound unless it is made with those who are in effective control of its public affairs. And I didn't intend, nor do I intend, to express any opinion upon the manner in which a government becomes the one in effective control of the public affairs of a country; or whether I like that form of government or not. Just taking the facts as they happen to be. And I think I had better keep away from the word recognition because there has been a lot of controversy in newspapers over the degree of recognition that even discussing with representatives of the government that happens to be in effective control of the mainland of China at the present time at this Geneva Conference. I think we all hope something will come out of the Geneva Conference but there wouldn't anything come out of it if there wasn't somebody there speaking on the behalf of the people of China.

QUESTION: Generally, do you think that the non-Communist countries must ultimately trade with Communist countries?

ANSWER: Well, I don't think it will be a healthy situation for mankind to have the world divided up into blocs with a wall between the two because the kind of instruments of warfare that you have now are not stopped by no matter how high a wall you attempt to build and I think that if we want stability in the world that there will have to be all kinds of relations between the various countries of the world and I think some of them are apt to be commercial relations. There are not many countries in the world that are completely self-sufficient and there are no countries, to my knowledge, in the world who do not derive some benefit from exchanging their surpluses for things they need and that is not normally done by direct barter. It is done by disposing of your surplus in the world markets and buying in the world markets the things you want for your own comfort and subsistence.

QUESTION: Speaking of trade, we understand that there has been some feeling in Canada against importing of Japanese textiles and also against certain fishing practices off the Canadian West Coast. Have you discussed this at all with members of the Japanese Government?

ANSWER: No, I haven't but those matters have been under discussion by the proper representatives of the two countries and I am quite confident that we are on the way to mutually satisfactory solutions. There are in all countries certain people who would like to see the special thing in which they are engaged protected against competition from any source and that is quite normal but the governments have to try to do that which will be best not only for any one small or relatively large group but what will be best for the great mass of the people to whom they are responsible.

QUESTION: How did the Canadian people feel about the re-armament of Japan?

ANSWER: Well, the Canadian people generally are now very well-informed, you know, about the details of that and they leave the responsibility for such decisions as might be required on behalf of Canada to the Canadian Government. The Canadian Government is the government of a nation of 14 or 15 million people with, of course, large territory but it is not a very important percentage of the world population and we don't attempt to be too firm in our appreciation of the views of those whose opinions are apt to have very much more weight and to be very much more effective than such views as we might express. The people of Canada you know, would be quite happy if nobody had to arm or re-arm and it is only because of their feeling that under present conditions it is necessary that there be a bloc that wouldn't look easy to overcome that they have accepted the rearmament burdens that we are carrying during these years.

QUESTION: As to the new look policy of Mr. Dulles, we understand that you are giving full support to that policy.

ANSWER: I am not sure that I understand that question.

QUESTION: Repeated.

ANSWER: I don't know really just what is implied in your question. The (pause), well the last time I heard "new Look" applied to something concrete was to the length of women's skirts. Here I think that we are all, from time to time, slightly modifying our opinions as to what may be best to do or attempt to do in the interests of world peace and I think that the State Department is quite as much concerned about practical achievements as any of the rest of us can be, and we have confidence not only in their good faith but in their wisdom. Of course we do not always see eye to eye upon specific points but in a general way we think that they are doing their best and that it is a pretty good best.

QUESTION: In other words, the new look policy contains the massive retaliation policy (inaudible on tape recorder)

ANSWER: I hope that that is just a concept that will never have to be translated into concrete action. That is not the purpose but it is one of the effects of building up the strength of the North Atlantic Treaty Nations. They do not want war and they want to be in a position where war will be unlikely but that position must mean that, if in spite of their hopes war does come, they will be able to strike back and to strike back pretty effectively.

QUESTION: Don't you believe that policy will lead to a third world war?

ANSWER: I hope not and I don't think it will. This old maxim of the Romans "If you want peace, prepare for war" has not been disproved though it has been used for many centuries. I do not know, but I am naive enough to believe that had the Kaiser known in advance what was going to be lined up against him in the First World War, he might have hesitated and Hitler and Mussolini might have hesitated had they known in '38 and '39 what strength would be lined up against them. Well this time we're saying before anything

starts, we are all going to stand together and don't start aggression against any of us unless you feel you are able to overcome us all. We think that all of us together constitute a pretty formidable group to attempt to overcome.

QUESTION: Arising out of that, in the course of your travels, you must have come across some countries where neutralism is rather a strong force such as some Asian countries. Would you mind telling us what you think of the realism and practicability of neutralism of the national policy?

ANSWER: Experience has been that neutralism or isolationism was not practicable either for Canada or the United States. If it were, we would be very happy but having realized from very burdensome experience that it wasn't practicable we have come to the conclusion that we have to do our part to build up a joint strength in which we would not be neutral. I do not doubt the good faith of those who feel otherwise. Switzerland has found it possible to be neutral. The Irish Free State found it possible during the last war to remain neutral but we on the American continent didn't find it possible.

QUESTION: What of India's neutral policy?

ANSWER: I think that the Government of India is as desirous to see peace prevail in the world as any of the rest of us can be. The statesmen of India certainly know the situation of their country better than we Westerners do and I don't know if there was a world conflagration whether India would remain neutral or not. If it didn't remain neutral, I would expect it would be on our side and not on the side of our enemies.

QUESTION: What specific idea have you on the matter of creating export and import between Canada and Japan even though import of the corn and wheat from Canada will be decreased by the signing of the Military Security Act between the United States and Japan?

ANSWER: I am not sure that the imports of Japan of Canadian grain will be substantially decreased as a result of the signing of that Mutual Security Pact between the United States and Japan. Here Japan will continue to purchase supplies in the best possible market. We think that ours is probably the best; most economical source of supply for Japan and we think that those economic realities will have their effect and that we will continue to supply many things required for the Japanese economy.

QUESTION: Have you any specific ideas to increase actually the amount of trade between Canada and Japan?

ANSWER: Well, the things that are being done are on both sides and are to increase the knowledge of each other about the availability of supplies that can be absorbed in both our economies without too disturbing effect and I think that we are convinced that there are Japanese commodities that can be sold in Canada without upsetting our economy and we feel quite sure that we have surpluses that can be absorbed by Japan without disturbing its economy or disturbing its arrangements with other countries.

QUESTION: Are you going to encourage or open your gates to Asia as you have done in certain aspects of Europe?

ANSWER: That is a problem. There is lots of room for people in Canada but they cannot live outdoors and we have been taking in for the past four or five years just as many as can be provided for in our pretty active home-building programme that has been in operation. We have built hundreds of thousands of housing units since the end of the war but there is still a backlog. If you were thinking particularly of Japan there are several thousand people in Japan at the present time who have Canadian citizenship and who are fully entitled to return just as soon as transportation arrangements can be made.

QUESTION: In your talks with the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan was any specific issue discussed? As, for example, the American aid to Pakistan and Kashmir.

ANSWER: My talks with the two Prime Ministers were of a confidential nature and I don't think it would be proper for me to publicize anything about them here. We have been friends for quite a long time. I have confidence in them - I think they have confidence in me - so we discussed very frankly anything that can be regarded by any one of us as of mutual interest and concern. But we do it on the basis of one friend discussing a matter confidentially with another.

QUESTION: Could you give us some idea of some of the specific points you covered with Prime Minister Yoshida yesterday in your talk with him?

ANSWER: I would have to make the same answer. We discussed in a general way all the matters that appeared to us to be of mutual concern.

QUESTION: Does the Canadian Government plan to do anything about the claims of Japanese residents in Canada?

ANSWER: There was a Commission established years ago to deal with all those claims and I think they have been pretty satisfactorily disposed of. We have tried not to forget what took place during the war but to consider the war a thing of the past and to do and behave in a way that all inhabitants of Canada would feel that they were getting a fair deal from the Canadian nation.

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