

## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



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INDIA AND THE UNESCO CONFERENCE

Text of the farewell address by Mr. L.W. Brockington, Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, at the Closing Session of the General Conference of UNESCO at New Delhi, India. December 5.

"I owe you an apology for my inability to present a formal address to you. Perhaps I have been too lazy. If you can see the notes in my hand you will know the truth of the remark once made by a Mayor of New York that an impromptu speech is not worth the paper it is written on.

"Now it is very pleasing to give thanks when thanks are due and I must say that I have watched with growing admiration the operation and uncommon skill of the Director-General and his staff in the difficult tasks which he has performed.

"Now I am not quite sure as I watched him whether he and his staff are operatic impresarios or tamers of wild animals. For every nation, as we know by experience, is a kind of a prima donna, and when I think of his operatic activities I remember what a character said in Utopia a play by W.S. Gilbert. A man who can run a theatrical crew, each one a genius and some of them two, can govern this tuppenny state.

"And when I thought of his difficulties as a trainer of wild animals I remembered two stories of my boyhood. One was of a menagerie keeper who said to the audience, Walk up, here we have seventeen species of wild animals all living amicably together in the same cage. I beg your pardon, the other sixteen are now inside the lion.

"And I remember the other unfortunate man who had as an exhibit a lion and a lamb lying down together in the same case. He was asked how he managed to have lions and lambs lying down together in the same cage. Well, he said, I manage it by frequent renewals of lamb.

"Now I am not going to say who in this audience are lions and who are lambs but I am sure we are all grateful to the Director-General and his staff whether they are our producers or our keepers.

"This is the third great meeting of Eastern and Western minds, hearts and minds, which I have attended in the last two or three years. Not long ago I was in Athens, that ancient sanctuary of the freedom of us all, that enfranchiser of the human mind. It was of Greece of which it was once said that the Greeks knew all the right questions to ask. I may say we are still searching for the right answers. At the closing session of seventy nations, many from the East and the West, we met as the sun was setting behind the Acropolis. We stood almost on the exact spot where Demosthenes once made his passionate pleas for the freedom of his native land. There also St. Paul preached of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. And I think we all realized there and then that without brotherhood there could be no freedom. And we lawyers found a pride and an inspiration in the knowledge that there were two lawyers, heralds of UNESCO, who both looked at the world with eyes of pity and talked to it with tongues of fire. One came from the West and the other one from the East. And one was Abraham Lincoln from the United States of America and the other was Mahatma Gandhi.

"And the other international meeting I attended was held in Scotland last year for the celebration of the birthday of that poet of the people and liberty, Robert Burns. Now there was no delegation more welcome or who deserved to be more welcomed at that meeting than the Russian Delegation. They were headed by a famous Russian poet, who had recently translated the poems of Robert Burns in to Russian. And any of you who read Burns will know that it must have been a formidable task. And in the first week he told me he sold 160,000 copies. And amongst the verses of Burns which appealed to my Russian friends and which are known, no doubt to you all, and have echoed in this meeting, as an inspiration, are some lines from a poem called, "A Man's a Man for A' That". Now in the verse I am going to quote to you there is one difficult word, "gree", which is the Scottish word for a prize. And this is what that poem says:

Then let us pray  
That come what may,  
As come it will for a' that  
That sense and worth  
Through all the earth,  
Shall bear the gree  
For a' that.  
For a' that and a' that  
It's coming yet for a' that,  
That man to man the whole world o'er  
Shall brothers be for a' that.

"Now I came with those words echoing in my ears, with high hopes to this meeting. And those hopes remain still undimmed. And I, speaking for my English-speaking confreres, would like first of all to thank all those faithful men and women of many races and many peoples who have sought the truth and have worked so hard to enlarge the human family and to keep friendships, personal, national and international in repair. And I would like to say for my own land of Canada that by the time of the next session of this body we shall have long since set up a Canadian UNESCO Council for the first time and it is the hope of all the Canadian Delegates that our successors will come better prepared by continued and continuous study to serve the purposes of this great organization.

"Now as we go to our homes there are many glimpses and echos which will follow us into our winters and our wanderings. We shall remember many things -- friendships and courtesies. But three memories will stand out about this meeting in my mind, I think above all others. I shall never forget the Egyptian Delegate whose splendid dignity and honourable fairness impressed us all. And I think a remark he made in the Programme Committee which you may not all have attended, interpreted the spirit of UNESCO as well as any other words I have heard spoken. For in a debate about the architectural and other monuments he paid a tribute to the educational and scientific and cultural assistance that throughout the years had been given to Egypt by Britain and France and he said how sincerely happy he will be when all misunderstandings and difficulties have been swept aside and that grand relationship is restored once again.

"I was impressed too, as I hope you were when my own ancestral land of Britain, whose honour is so dear to me and whose departures from conduct that is generally approved so sad to me, when I saw my own ancestral land of Britain showing her best side in voting willingly for the resolutions sponsored by Egypt and by Greece.

"And I think I shall never forget either the moving eloquence and sincerity of Mr. Nehru. And I would like to say this about him. By his personal suffering and sacrifices for freedom of his own land, he is surely fit to be one of the great champions of freedom everywhere. And when I hear some of the things he says I am often reminded of a great phrase by the Englishman, Tom Paine, who helped the Americans in their War of Independence. When somebody said to him Where freedom is, there is my country, Paine replied Where freedom is not, there is my country.

"Now of our thanks to India, to the Government and people of India, it is impossible to speak adequately in a few minutes. They have housed us and entertained us magnificently. But above all they have given us an opportunity unparalleled at least in my life, to enrich our common humanity.

"Now as we go away in the days to come many little things will flash upon that inward eye. There are some scenes to make us all very sad. Scenes of suffering and poverty: But I remember in my youth conditions in Britain when there were terrible slums and where ragged children with bare feet on winter nights sold papers on the street corners. And I remember hearing a young man from Ruskin College, Oxford, making a speech at that time. And this is what he said as far as I remember. He said I am an Englishman and I suppose in a way I am proud of the British Empire. But I am not concerned with an empire where the sun never sets as long as there are thousands of back alleys where it never shines. And so with joy I think we all witness India's careful planning and her determined effort to improve the lot of her own children. I have faith and I am sure we all have faith in her ability to do so.

"Now these things, some perhaps little things about this country I will not forget. In the Parliament House as the benediction which reigns over it, there is not an emblem of kingly majesty, nor of glory nor vainglory, no sign of might or wealth or of temporal power but the benediction that looks down from the walls of the house is the portrait of a man who was simple in life, steadfast in faith, saintly in conduct, a man of infinite compassion and unflinching strength and courage. I think of India as a nation of individuals. And I like individuals. And where can you find anywhere more individuals of infinite variety. I have met as we all have met many men and women with the grade of words upon their lips and wisdom in their hearts. I have heard the gentle teaching of calm philosophers. I have seen aged faces chiselled by sorrow into a rare and strange beauty. I have looked into young faces, transfigured by the eagerness of their enquiring minds by love of their free hand and eyes shining with a new hope. And as I have looked at them I have found myself repeating, "But come let us not lose hope in the world prematurely. The world is not quite given up to diplomacy, to the combination and the finding of formulas. There are always the young, the devoted, the enthusiastic, the breakers of fetters". We have all met much kindness and great courtesy. I have seen a nation that knows what should be the real end of revolution. For the real end of revolution is not only to sweep away evil things but to keep the good things. And I think we with English and American institutions, are so happy to see that India has kept as the solid basis of democracy, parliamentary institutions with their freedom of debate, and the dignity, the fairness and the incorruptability of its courts of law.

"Now many of us will depart, as I will, humbled and chastened, and yet we shall take away with us a new richness. For we know now, or I do, as never before, the passionate feeling in the East for brotherhood and equality. We honour India, not because of what she has but because of what she is and what great gifts she will give, and is beginning to give already to a free world where someday right will be the conqueror and wrong be the conquered. If we owe thanks to India how best can we repay our debt? Let me suggest that we all go back

as ambassadors of her tolerance, her hatred for violence, her passion for human brotherhood. Let us remember that in this land there is taking place before our eyes a blending of the spirit of the age, which is material and scientific progress, and the spirit of the ages which is devotion to Mother Earth, to the skill of the human hand and eye, and to patient and calm wisdom. Above all else in giving thanks let us make a vow in the innermost sanctuary of our own hearts and minds that we, the men and women of UNESCO, will, never tolerate domination, aggression, racial discrimination, exploitation nor any act or thought that springs from any outworn creed of national and racial superiority.

"Now in ending these poor rambling words may I join reverently in a prayer once written by a great Indian poet. For these words of Rabindranath Tagore come from a poem beloved by Mahatma Gandhi and enshrined in the heart and mind and often ennobled on the eloquent lips of Mr. Nehru. It is already a part of the folklore of freedom. And this is what Tagore said.

"Where a man is without fear,  
And the head is held high;  
Where knowledge is free;  
Where the world has not been broken up  
into fragments by narrow domestic walls;  
Where hearts can tune the depth of truth;  
Where tireless striving stretches its  
arms towards perfection;  
Where the clear stream of reason has not  
lost its way  
Into dreary desert and the sand of dead  
habit;  
Where a man is led forward by Thee into  
ever-widening thought and action  
Into that heaven of freedom my Father  
let my country awake."

"We join reverently in that prayer.

"My friends, we came as delegates from our own lands to UNESCO. Let us return as delegates for and from UNESCO, not only to our own land but to all lands and all peoples."