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EL HONORABLE LOUIS STEPHEN ST-LAURENT, P.C., Q.C.
Primer Ministro y Presidente del Consejo Privado

Louis Stephen St-Laurent nació en Compton, Quebec, el 10. de febrero de 1882, de padre franco-canadiense y madre irlandesa-canadiense. Fué educado en el Colegio de San Carlos en Sherbrooke, Quebec, y en la Universidad de Laval, en la ciudad de Quebec, de donde se graduó en leyes. En junio de 1914 fué nombrado profesor de leyes en Laval.

Ha recibido doctorados en leyes de 19 universidades: Queen's University, en 1930; Universidad de Manitoba, 1935; Universidad de Montreal, 1943; Bishop's College, 1943; Universidad Dalhousie, 1947; Universidad de Ottawa, 1947; Darmouth College, Hanover, N.H., 1948; Universidad de McGill, 1949; Universidad de San Luis, Missouri, 1950; Universidad de St. Lawrence, Canton, N.Y., 1950; Universidad de Toronto, 1950; Universidad de Ontario Occidental, 1951; Universidad del Noroeste, Evanston, Ill., 1951; Universidad de la Columbia Británica 1952; Universidad de Londres, 1952; St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, N.S., 1953; Universidad de Peshawar, 1954 y Universidad de Delhi, 1954. Es también Doctor Cum Laude honorario de la Universidad de Mount Allison, Sackville, N.B., 1952; y de la Universidad de Oxford, 1953. El primero de enero de 1946 se le nombró miembro del Consejo Privado (Privy Council) del Reino Unido y el 7 de febrero de 1955 se le otorgaron las llaves de la Ciudad de Londres.

El Sr. St-Laurent fué bestonero de la Barra de la ciudad de Quebec y Bastonero-General de la Barra Provincial de Quebec, así como presidente de la Asociación Canadiense de la Barra. Actualmente es Presidente Vitalicio Honorario de dicha Asociación, y se ha encargado de multitud de casos importantes ante la Suprema Corte del Canadá y el Comité Judicial del Consejo Privado. Actuó como abogado de la Comisión Rowell-Sirois sobre las Relaciones Entre el Dominio y las Provincias, poco antes de la guerra.

El 10 de diciembre de 1941 el Sr. St-Laurent sucedió al Honorable Ernest Lapointe como Ministro de Justicia y Procurador General del Canadá. Fué elegido a la Cámara de los Comunes de la constituyente Oriental de Quebec en una elección preliminar en 1942 y en las elecciones generales de 1945, 1949 y 1953.

El 4 de septiembre de 1946 el Sr. St-Laurent fué nombrado Secretario de Estado en Relaciones Exteriores. Continuó como Ministro de Justicia hasta el 10 de diciembre del mismo año, cuando renunció a ese puesto para dedicarse enteramente al portafolio de Relaciones Exteriores.

El Sr. St-Laurent fué Presidente Adjunto de la Delegación Canadiense a la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas en San Francisco en 1945 y Presidente de la Delegación Canadiense a la Primera Sesión de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas en Londres, a principios de 1946.

Durante la estancia del entonces Primer Ministro en el Reino Unido en 1945, el Sr. St-Laurent fué Secretario de Estado de Relaciones Exteriores en funciones y en 1946, cuando el Sr. Mackenzie King asistió a varias conferencias en el extranjero, el Sr. St-Laurent actuó como Primer Ministro en Funciones.

El Sr. St-Laurent fué Presidente de la Delegación canadiense a la segunda parte de la primera sesión de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas en Nueva York en octubre de 1946 y en la segunda sesión de la Asamblea en septiembre de 1947.

En la convención nacional del Partido Liberal convocada por la Federación Liberal Nacional para elegir un sucesor al Líder del Partido Liberal que se retiraba, el Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King, el Sr. St-Laurent fué elegido para sucederlo en ese puesto el 7 de agosto de 1948.

El 10 de septiembre de 1948, el Sr. St-Laurent renunció como Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores y volvió a su puesto de Ministro de Justicia, continuando como Primer Ministro en funciones mientras el Sr. King asistía a la tercera sesión de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas en París. Cuando, debido a su enfermedad el Sr. King se vió imposibilitado en asistir a las reuniones de Primeros Ministros de la Comunidad de Naciones, que se iniciaron en Londres el 11 de octubre, el Sr. St-Laurent lo reemplazó durante las sesiones correspondientes.

El 15 de noviembre de 1948 el Sr. St-Laurent pasó a ser Primer Ministro y Presidente del Consejo Privado. En las elecciones generales del 27 de junio de 1949 y el 10 de agosto de 1953 su administración fué reiterada en funciones.

Desde que se le nombró Primer Ministro ha asistido a cinco conferencias de los Primeros Ministros de la Comunidad de Naciones en 1949, 1951, 1952, 1953 y 1955, y ha hecho algunos viajes a los Estados Unidos. En junio de 1953 presidió la Delegación Canadiense que asistió a las ceremonias de la Coronación. Durante febrero y marzo de 1954 el Sr. St-Laurent llevó a cabo una gira por el Reino Unido, Francia, Alemania, Italia, Pakistán, India, Ceilón, Indonesia, Filipinas, Corea, Japón y Hawaii.

El Sr. St-Laurent está casado con la señora Jeanne Renault y tiene dos hijos, tres hijas y diecisiete nietos.

Biography of

RT. HON. LOUIS STEPHEN ST-LAURENT, P.C., Q.C.

Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council

October, 1954

Louis Stephen St-Laurent was born in Compton, Quebec, on February 1, 1882, of French-Canadian and Irish-Canadian parents. He was educated at St. Charles College, Sherbrooke, Quebec, and at Laval University, Quebec City, where he graduated in law. In June, 1914, he was appointed professor of law at Laval.

He has been awarded LL.D.s by nineteen universities: Queen's University, 1930; University of Manitoba, 1935; University of Montreal, 1943; Bishop's College, 1943; Dalhousie University, 1947; University of Ottawa, 1947; Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H., 1948; McGill University, 1949; Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N.Y., 1949; St. Louis University, Missouri, 1950; St. Lawrence University, Canton, N.Y., 1950; University of Toronto, 1950; University of Western Ontario, 1951; Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., 1951; University of British Columbia, 1952; University of London, 1952; St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, N.S., 1953; Peshawar University, 1954 and Delhi University, 1954. Also Hon. D.C.L., Mount Allison, Sackville, N.B., 1952, and Oxford University, 1953. On January 1, 1946, he was made a member of the Privy Council of the United Kingdom. Made Freeman of the City of London, 1955.

Mr. St-Laurent has served as batonnier of the local Quebec City Bar, batonnier-general of Quebec Province Bar and president of the Canadian Bar Association. He is now the Honorary Life President of that Association. He has pleaded many important cases before the Supreme Court of Canada and before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. He served as counsel for the Rowell-Sirois Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations immediately prior to the war.

On December 10, 1941, Mr. St-Laurent succeeded the late Rt. Hon. Ernest Lapointe as Minister of Justice and Attorney General for Canada. He was elected to the House of Commons in the Quebec East constituency in a by-election, 1942, and in the general elections in 1945, 1949 and 1953.

On September 4, 1946, Mr. St-Laurent was appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs. He continued as Minister of Justice until December 10, 1946, when he relinquished this post to devote himself entirely to the External Affairs portfolio.

Mr. St-Laurent was Deputy Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations Conference at San Francisco in 1945, and Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the First Session of the U.N. General Assembly in London early in 1946.

During the Prime Minister's absence in the United Kingdom in 1945, Mr. St-Laurent was Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs, and in the summer of 1946 when Mr. Mackenzie King was away at conferences abroad Mr. St-Laurent served as Acting Prime Minister.

Mr. St-Laurent was Chairman of the Canadian Delegation at the second part of the First Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in October, 1946, and at the Second Session of the Assembly in September, 1947.

At the national convention of the Liberal Party summoned by the National Liberal Federation to select a successor to the retiring Liberal Party Leader, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, Mr. St-Laurent was chosen to succeed Mr. King in that position on August 7, 1948.

On September 10, 1948, Mr. St-Laurent resigned as Secretary of State for External Affairs and again became Minister of Justice. He was also Acting Prime Minister while Mr. King was at the Third Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in Paris. When illness prevented Mr. King from attending the meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, which opened in London on October 11, Mr. St-Laurent replaced him during its sessions.

On November 15, 1948, Mr. St-Laurent became Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council. In the general elections of June 27, 1949 and August 10, 1953 his administration was returned to office.

Since he has been Prime Minister he has attended four conferences of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in 1949, 1951, 1952 and 1953, and has made several trips to the United States. In June 1953, he led the Canadian delegation to the Coronation ceremonies. During February and March 1954, Mr. St. Laurent undertook a World Tour, visiting the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Indonesia, The Phillipines, Korea, Japan and Hawaii.

Mr. St-Laurent is married to the former Jeanne Renault. They have two sons, three daughters and seventeen grandchildren.

ST. LAURENT -- THE ULTIMATE CANADIAN

by Bruce Hutchison

Mr. St. Laurent has achieved more in less time than any statesman in Canadian history. This statement is not a bit of banquet oratory. It is a mathematical fact.

Macdonald became Prime Minister after a lifetime of apprenticeship. Laurier similarly prepared from his youth and, as a party leader, suffered cruel defeats before he reached office. Mackenzie King set his ultimate goal in college and needed thirty years to achieve it. Within seven years of entering politics (with no intention of remaining there) Mr. St. Laurent was Prime Minister.

But there is a broad, though intangible gulf between the leadership of a government and the leadership of the nation. At least seven Canadian Prime Ministers were unable to cross that gulf. They held office but they were never accepted by the nation. Mr. St. Laurent was fully accepted within one year. That is the final test of a Canadian statesman. That is the measure of Mr. St. Laurent.

A Unique Achievement

Why is this achievement, unique in our national experience? How has this man telescoped a life's work into a single decade, or really into a third of a decade?

It will be said that his success has been built on his character, as all success must be. That is true, but it misses the real point of Mr. St. Laurent's career. Many other Canadian statesmen of this generation have shown character and ability worthy of the highest office in the state. Mr. St. Laurent possesses something else which no contemporary possesses in the same degree-- he is the most Canadian of all living Canadians. Outwardly and inwardly he is the image and essence of the Canadian people. He succeeds because the people have seen in him, almost overnight, the true expression of themselves.

Born with Canada in Him

Mr. St. Laurent's descent from the two great blood streams of our race is obvious enough. He was born with Canada in him. A good many Canadians, however, have inherited the same twin legacy. Something much more is required, something also besides character and ability, to make a Prime Minister and finally to make an accepted leader of the nation, far beyond party politics. Mr. St. Laurent succeeds because his reactions to every problem, public and private, are so typically Canadian.

(BRUCE HUTCHISON is Editor of the Victoria Daily Times and one of Canada's best known writers, author of "The Unknown Country" and frequent contributor to publications in the U.S.A and other countries.)

He is, above all, practical, seeking instantly and instinctively for the solution which he believes will work. That is the instinct on which Canada was built from the day when Champlain built his habitation on the frozen rocks of Quebec to the present hour when Canada, as part of the New World, is returning to redress the balance of the Old. That has been the Canadian approach to geographical, economic and political difficulties which seemed to doom a Canadian nation from the beginning. Again, unwilling to lose the good in the pursuit of the perfect, and understanding that politics is the art of the possible, Mr. St. Laurent knows how to compromise. And Canada, in every aspect of its life, is and must be a compromise to survive.

A Great Man by any Standard

There is in him something else still more Canadian. Here is a great man by any standard of measurement, as even his strongest critics will agree. But he refuses to create and the Canadian people would never tolerate the postures and attitudes of the self-conscious Great Man. They seek greatness in their leaders but they distrust any man who parades it. No man, in politics or the other arts, has yet articulated what we call, for lack of a better word, the Canadian dream. Mr. St. Laurent is accepted by the Canadian people because, lacking oratory, the gleaming phrase and the grand gesture, he somehow articulates Canadianism better than any contemporary by being precisely what he is in public and private, a Canadian.

Now, it is commonly said of Mr. St. Laurent that he came too late into politics and thereby deprived Canada of many useful years of service. This also is true but misses the point of his career. For in fact -- almost as if the timing had been carefully arranged half a century in advance -- Mr. St. Laurent arrived, by pure chance, at precisely the right moment, for him and for the nation.

The Man Met the Occasion

He was ready, and he was schooled by seven years of intensive training, to fill the void left by Mackenzie King. It was not only in relation to Mackenzie King's retirement that Mr. St. Laurent arrived at just the right moment but in relation to a much larger occasion. Mr. St. Laurent alighted, as it were, on a decisive watershed in the nation's life. From that watershed his life, like the nation's, has flowed in these last three years. This, if ever, was the moment when the man met the occasion.

The man we know pretty clearly, The occasion is still obscure and its outcome incalculable. History's ultimate opinion on Mr. St. Laurent will depend upon his success or failure in grappling with the occasion, with the two sovereign facts of his time -- a deep change in Canada's own life and the sudden involvement of Canada in the supreme crisis of human life everywhere.

Hopes and Dangers of a New Age

By the end of the last war Canada stood on the threshold of a new age, It was not the age which Canada expected, for which it had toiled and bled in two wars. It was the age in which mankind could see, for the first time in all its experience on earth, the chance of settled peace and prosperity and yet at the same time the danger of destroying, in a single explosion, the civilization of five thousand years.

For the practical purposes of statecraft yesterday was centuries ago and tomorrow a terrain where no man had ever set foot. Like all other statesmen, Mr. St. Laurent had no map of this unknown country but he had an asset which few people noticed at the time -- he stood on the threshold and looked out on the unknown without any preconceived prejudices, without obligation to anyone since he had sought nothing for himself, without any promises to make good, without the necessity of justifying former mistakes, without commitments to any policy now obsolete. The nation was setting a new course. It had found a leader who could do the same.

A New Influence on Politics

Now it will be found, I think, when all the record is in, that politics affected Mr. St. Laurent as much as he affected politics.

Politics, it may be said, revealed Mr. St. Laurent to Canada. One suspects that politics equally revealed Mr. St. Laurent to himself. But for his accidental entry into politics the whole of this man would never have been known to the nation or to himself.

For observe the record so far: Here was a country boy out of a country store in Compton who had made himself one of the chief lawyers of Canada but, up to ten years ago, nothing more, and it seemed enough. He had passed middle age and yet half of his nature, one might say, and certainly his highest talents had not been uncovered or even suspected. They were not fully suspected when he succeeded Mackenzie King. Only politics at the highest level revealed them to their owner and to the public.

Full Use of Talents Begins

At first, it now seems evident, the shock of this transition from a partial to a full use of his talents was severe. For a short time, a few weeks, Mr. St. Laurent showed it. By the election of 1949 the shock had been fully absorbed but not in the fashion which most of Mr. St. Laurent's friends suppose.

It is said that after briefly attempting to carry the methods, the outlook and the manner of the law into the Prime Minister's office, Mr. St. Laurent, an apt pupil, quickly learned a new approach to the public. The factual lawyer, the rather theoretical constitutionalist was transformed in the election as the homespun, friendly, colloquial figure of the hustings. The legend of "Uncle Louis", given a name and label by some imaginative newspaper writer, seemed at first to be synthetic. Somebody, it was generally thought, had taken the Prime Minister aside and taught him a new act. His energies, hearing those radio addresses which, for Canadian purposes, were as effective as Roosevelt's fireside chats or Churchill's eloquence, imagined that Mr. St. Laurent had been taking lessons.

The True Man Emerges at Sixty

The fact, like most important facts, was quite simple -- for the first time, in the boundless territory of politics, Mr. St. Laurent could be himself. The whole man, the instincts of the country boy, the inherited qualities of a people living in Canada for three centuries, combined with the accumulated experience of his own sixty

busy years fused in politics as they could not possibly develop in any other medium. At the proper moment -- probably to his own surprise -- he fitted into the Prime Minister's office as into a well-worn shoe. Many of his friends thought they were observing a new man. What they beheld was the true man and the whole man released into the element where he belonged. The people grasped that fact before the politicians. They voted overwhelmingly for a Prime Minister whose name they had hardly known yesterday and could not pronounce today. The man had met the occasion. The rest is the history of these three years.

Before leaving the subject of Mr. St. Laurent, the human being, to discuss him as the statesman, one ventures a purely personal opinion and a word of warning. Everyone knows his buoyant nature, his little, nameless acts of kindness, everyone knows, and the nation rather enjoys, his passing moments of temper. In this writer's few conversations with him something else appears, very subtly, never in words, only in a passing gleam of the eye -- the inner toughness of this man. If anyone still imagines that "Uncle Louis" is just a genial relative of the Canadian family he has not seen this man up close. Under the friendly surface there is firm resolution.

His Place in the Tide of Things

What of Mr. St. Laurent's place in the tide of things? What, apart from his own character, has he contributed to that tide?

We shall not see those questions answered in our lifetime but if we come back to the two sovereign facts of the post-war era -- the organic changes in Canadian society and Canada's involvement in a world revolution -- we may begin to glimpse at least the outlines of the Prime Minister as a historic personage.

Mr. St. Laurent did not inherit the society or the Liberal party of Mackenzie, Blake or Laurier. He inherited the society of our times and the Liberal party of Mackenzie King. In Mackenzie King's time it had undergone a complete, though quiet overhaul. The Liberal party perished in Britain because it could not change. The Liberal party in Canada, as one must agree whether one agrees with its policies or not, survived and flourished because it could and did change.

The Background of Liberalism

Without going into its history it can be said, briefly, that Liberalism began in Canada as the champion of liberty from tyrants, both overseas and home-grown. The victory for liberty of both sorts had been won by Mackenzie King's time, and not, of course, by the Liberal party alone. The greatness of Mackenzie King lies in the fact that he beheld an entirely new task which the Liberal party by its experience was not equipped to undertake and that he so equipped it.

Society in Canada was free of tyrants, here and abroad; it had subdued the wilderness; it had made a nation. But with Mackenzie King the nation and its Liberal government confronted possibly the most remarkable fact in the human history. That is to say, for the first time since man appeared upon the earth he had the tools which could provide him with an abundant life.

Once this fact is grasped by all mankind politics everywhere must centre around it. No statesman of any country or party could survive if he ignored it. No government anywhere could long endure if it failed to work for the emancipation of man from poverty, the oldest tyrant of all. In opposition between 1930 and 1935, Mackenzie King and the Liberal party saw the meaning of the great depression, saw that society could never turn back again, that a new society of some sort, under Liberalism or some other doctrine, would insist on being born.

It would be absurd to say that Mackenzie King, any more than Roosevelt or any other contemporary, saw precisely how the new society would be born, what shape it would grow into or whether, growing into the wrong shape, it would perish. But at least the Liberal party in Canada, for all its contradictions, hesitations and mistakes, appeared to the people as the only party which was ready for the new phase and could be safely trusted to manage it.

Inherited a Society in the Floodtide of Change

Thus Mr. St. Laurent did not inherit a nation or a party settling down in comfort and stability after reaching its goal. He inherited a society in the very floodtide of a change throughout the world. He was not elected merely to head a government but to lead an adventure.

How soon Mr. St. Laurent realized the scope of that adventure one does not know but certainly he realized the scope of that adventure one does not know but certainly he realizes it now. How he views it, where he thinks it will lead, one does not know either. Mr. St. Laurent does not convey his private thoughts to this writer, but from his public acts and utterances I think it fair to say that his thinking does not fit into any recognizable category. Assuredly he is not a Manchester Liberal of the nineteenth century and neither was Mackenzie King. Assuredly he is not a socialist by any accepted definition, and the notion that he actually is a very conservative sort of man who stumbled into the Liberal party is the most absurd of all notions about him and probably has been entirely removed by his work of the last three years.

Believes in Methods that will Work

His critics will say that since he fits into no accepted category and never proclaims a complete philosophy of politics as some other Prime Ministers have done he is therefore only a pragmatist, doing what seems to be a good idea at the time. There certainly is in him a strong vein of pragmatism as there must be in all successful statesmen, especially in a many-sided country like Canada. There must be here, more than in most countries, the willingness to experiment and to take chances. The willingness of Mr. St. Laurent to learn as he goes, to be inconsistent rather than wrong, to look for the method which will work -- that willingness is the most obvious source of his authority in party and nation. This is not to say, however, that he or the statesmen of other nations who follow the same method are footloose and lost because they do not possess the foolproof philosophies which served their predecessors in other times. In fact, a new approach to politics is growing up in all

the democratic states. I do not pretend to describe, much less explain it. It can be seen, however, that it springs from and is mainly concerned to grapple with the historic fact, mentioned before, that mankind now has the chance and is determined to achieve by one means or another the better life which science now offers him. The important question is whether that achievement will be with freedom or without it.

The new philosophy of Liberalism, recognizing that its old philosophy was not wide enough for this age, holds above all that the achievement will be worthless if freedom is lost in the process. That, one supposes, is the starting point of Mr. St. Laurent's thinking. The day-to-day methods of implementing it will be varied, often apparently inconsistent and no doubt sometimes wrong. But as an historic figure surely his importance lies in the fact that, among Canadians, he is the first clearly discernible figure in this new age and is ready to lead it.

His Approach to International Peril

If all this pretty vague, as it must be in a darkling age, Mr. St. Laurent's response to the other sovereign fact, the fact of irremediable international peril, is as clear as daylight. There is, indeed, nothing to approach it in clarity throughout the history of Canada.

Here was a boy in a small Canadian town, here was a lawyer absorbed by his legal briefs among a people whose life from the beginning had been an attempt to isolate themselves from the Old World which had abandoned them along the St. Lawrence Valley. Here was a man who, for all his knowledge of Canada, had no personal experience in international politics up to the time he entered public life. Yet this was the Minister of External Affairs who saw at once, even more clearly than his leader, the meaning of the United Nations and who, when the United Nations failed to enforce peace, was one of the first architects of the North Atlantic Treaty, as the record will prove.

Yes, improbable, almost in retrospect incredible. Nevertheless, given the character of the man, inevitable. For at once when he confronted the world crisis, when he saw Canada's place of special peril within it -- Canada lying on the map directly between the United States and Russia -- Mr. St. Laurent's reaction was the typical reaction of the Canadian. He brushed aside all previous calculation, he refused to hide the facts from the people, he risked his political life without hesitation, without a moment's worry and he did what all Canadians have always done from their first days in this country. He did what had to be done. He forgot yesterday and grappled with today.

Led Canada into the World

One does not know what history will say about Mr. St. Laurent, the statesman, in domestic politics. It cannot fail to say, for the facts are already established, that he was the man who, more than any other, led Canada out of isolationism into the world and, in so doing, gave Canada a place in the embryonic but growing community of free nations such as it had not glimpsed, much less achieved before.

That work in international affairs has been sufficient, one might say, for any man's lifetime but even at Mr. St. Laurent's age plenty of work still lies ahead. After these unbelievable ten years Mr. St. Laurent must see, like the aging Ulysses, some work of noble note yet to be done, and doubtless he sees that all his work, past, present and future, rests on the sovereign fact of his own life -- a fact which he could never sink below and would not wish to rise above -- that he is, in every fibre, thought and instinct, a Canadian



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