

Mr. CRERAR: Well, Mr. Speaker, hon. gentlemen opposite sometimes find such little comfort in this House—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. CRERAR: —that I for one have no desire to begrudge any pleasure they may derive from a trivial slip of the tongue. Let me qualify my statement, which I did not mean in the sense in which hon. gentlemen opposite have construed it. I am sure that, whether as leader of the Opposition or leader of the Government in this country, the hon. gentleman who has lately assumed the responsibilities of the office which he now fills has the good wishes both of this House and of the country as well. I have to offer, however, one or two criticisms of the speech delivered by the leader of the Opposition. If there has been any departure in this country from the strict principles of representative Government, I am in entire accord with my hon. friend in his desire to see those principles firmly re-established. But I for one should have liked to hear something from the leader of the Opposition as to what he proposes to do, should he be called upon to discharge the onerous duties of Prime Minister, in respect of many of the matters that are now engaging the attention of the people. After all, his speech, and the admirable speech of the acting Prime Minister (Sir George Foster) who followed him reminded me a good deal of the days of long ago when it was almost a contest between the "ins" and the "outs" as to who would hold the premier honours in debate in this House. In my judgment, Mr. Speaker, this does not measure up to the occasion and to the needs of the hour. We are facing problems which five years ago we never dreamed we would have to face. We have tremendous issues to settle, and to my mind it would have been more appropriate had the leader of the Opposition and the leader of the Government devoted a little more attention to these great and pressing matters than they did in the speeches they delivered a few days ago. Probably it may be regarded as being a trifle forward in a young member of the House to proffer words of counsel to those who occupy these responsible positions. Nevertheless, there are questions of great and urgent moment before us, and in the brief time I shall take up this evening I shall endeavour to discuss a few of them. When all is said and done, there is not much profit in raking up the past and in resuscitating old party strifes and

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fighting them over again, I care not which side it comes from; because, with the great problems facing the country at the present time it is the duty of the citizens, and particularly of their representatives in Parliament where our laws are made, to devote their attention with all the ability and energy they can bring to bear, to the solution of the questions in the manner that will bring the greatest benefit to our country.

Now, the speech from the Throne tells us that peace has been concluded with Bulgaria and that the Treaty ratifying that peace will presently be submitted to this House for its consideration. The fact that Canada has found herself in the position of making a Treaty of Peace with Bulgaria carries a great significance with it, and brings home at once to one's mind the place our country occupies to-day among the nations of the world. We have heard a good deal from ministers of the Crown in regard to the altered position which Canada now occupies as a result of our participation in the war, and particularly of our participation in the making of peace. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Rowell), who, I regret, is not in his seat, has told us—and it has also been told us by some of his colleagues—that Canada has attained the full status of a nation, that we have grown away from the position which we occupied in the past. My attention was attracted a few weeks ago by an address delivered by the President of the Privy Council in the city of Ottawa, in the course of which he took strong exception to certain resolutions that were about to be brought before the American Senate dealing with Canada's relations to the League of Nations. If I remember rightly, the hon. gentleman took strong grounds, even going so far as to state that if these resolutions were carried through Congress at Washington either Canada or the United States would step out of the League of Nations. I do not for a moment mention this as a challenge to the hon. gentleman's position on that point, but I would direct this consideration to the House, and particularly to the Government—that at the time the President of the Privy Council was making that speech in Ottawa, one of his colleagues, my esteemed friend the Minister of The Interior (Mr. Meighen) was making a speech in the city of Winnipeg in which he spoke of Canadians as "subjects of Great Britain." Now, there is to my mind a distinction here, and One can understand the position that some