

two decades conflicts have occurred between those who believe in separation from the British Empire and those who uphold the British connection. These conflicts at times have waxed so fierce as almost to make it appear that there could be only one outcome, namely, secession from the British Empire. The fact that representatives from these troubled dominions of Ireland and South Africa could sit at the same table with representatives from the Dominion of Canada, from the more purely Anglo-Saxon commonwealth of Australia, from Newfoundland, from the dominion of New Zealand, and from the mother country, and work out a declaration of principles satisfactory not only to one or two but to all these dominions and to the mother country as well, after which the President of the Irish Free State could go back to Ireland and there fight successfully for the British connection and the Premier of South Africa could go back to his country and tell his people that henceforward there was no further need to consider the question of secession—this fact goes to show how great was the achievement of the Imperial conference of 1926, and demonstrates that what was accomplished there was wrought in the spirit of true and lofty statesmanship.

The intimation in the speech from the throne that in the near future the British government is likely to have a representative here, that Japan and France propose to have representatives at Ottawa as well as Canadian representatives at their capitals, and the fact that Canada has been accorded by the assembly of the League of Nations a non-permanent seat on the council of that body, are of importance as indicating the development of the ideas and ideals promoted by the Imperial conference of 1926.

Now let me say a word about one other event which took place last year and which is of importance not merely to one political party but to Canada as a whole. I refer to the first national convention of the Conservative party which was held in the city of Winnipeg in the month of October last, and which was one of the most important events in the history of this country. My own observation has led me to the conclusion that many delegates who went to that convention with somewhat narrow views on national matters returned to their homes with their minds broadened and enlightened. In the province of Nova Scotia we have too often seen exhibitions of the most extreme sectionalism. During the last few years this government has been not only criticized but denounced and condemned in that province

for its tariff policy, which was alleged to be in the interest only of the farmers of the west; for its construction of the Hudson Bay railway, and for the lowering of the transportation rates on western wheat. For example, one candidate, now a member of this parliament, put into his manifesto, issued on the eve of the election of 1926, these words:

Western freight rates were lowered, taxes so changed and altered as to fall less heavily on western farmers, and millions of your money promised for a useless railway to Hudson Bay. We in this eastern province were crying for bread; we not only received a stone, but we helped, and are helping, to pay the bills for those princely gifts to others.

Fortunately for the unity of Canada the Liberal-Conservative party, in national convention assembled at Winnipeg, assumed a new and entirely different position and attitude in respect to these matters. By their resolutions they sanctioned the principle that necessities of life and implements of production should be lightly taxed by the customs tariff; that the construction of the Hudson Bay railway should go forward; that the existing freight rates on grain and grain products should be maintained as a maximum. This I cannot help thinking is an indication that even the opposition is coming around, getting into line, and that henceforward it will be more constructive, more truly national in its efforts and activities.

Mr. Speaker, my speech would be incomplete did I not, as I do very heartily, extend my congratulations and the congratulations of this side of the chamber to the newly selected leader of the opposition in this house. As we all know he is thoroughly imbued with the high traditions of British parliamentary life and is prepared to devote himself to the public service. In this we hope that his efforts may result in the building of a progressively greater Canada.

Consequently, Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to move that an address be forwarded to His Excellency the Governor General to thank him for the speech which he so graciously delivered to both houses of parliament.

Mr. ARTHUR L. BEAUBIEN (Provencher) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, ever since the setting up of confederation a custom based on the terms agreed upon in the great federal pact requires that the address in reply to the speech from the throne be moved and seconded in both the official languages of this country. Every government has desired to acknowledge thereby the equality of the