

London

From London I bring you the greetings of Sir Winston Churchill, Lord Alexander, Lord Athlone, Lord Swinton, Minister of Commonwealth Relations, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Minister of Labour, and several others. I can assure hon. members that it gave me great satisfaction after leaving Canadian soil to make my first stop on the soil of the United Kingdom.

I might say, incidentally, that I received from Sir Winston Churchill a bit of advice which stood me in good stead during the whole of my trip. He told me he expected my trip would be a bit strenuous, but that he had always found it was wise never to stand too long when there was an opportunity to sit down, and not to be content to sit down when there was an opportunity to lie down.

France

From London we flew over to Paris, and although we were somewhat concerned when we left London by the news that we might not be able to put down on the continent, the fog lifted just about 20 minutes before we arrived at Orly and we were able to disembark and be greeted by our French friends before the fog closed in again a few minutes afterwards.

In France I was most cordially welcomed by the new President of France, Mr. Rene Coty, and his charming lady, Normans like many of the Normans who were here in the early days, and some of whose descendants are here in this House at the present time; and also by the Prime Minister, the President of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Laniel, also a Norman. There was some suggestion in France at this time that the country was being run by the Normans. When I heard that suggestion I told them that from my experience with Normans, and perhaps from that of the people of the United Kingdom with Normans, we would not find that that was anything to worry about. I also had the privilege of meeting the President of the National Assembly who occupies a post similar to yours, Mr. Speaker, and the President of the Council of the Republic. Though that is its official name, it is still commonly called the Senate. To them and through them to the elected representatives of the republic I conveyed our greetings and was charged by them to bring back to you and to all our colleagues their best wishes and most cordial regards. I also met several others, among whom was our friend Mr. Robert Schuman who, though he has reverted to the role of an ordinary member of the Assembly, is still taking a great interest in the international problems that are of such great concern to us all.

I had the privilege of dining with the members of the NATO Council and then, the next morning of a visit to the headquarters of SHAPE where I heard a concise but very instructive report from General Gruenther. I was also shown some interesting old Canadian archives that are still in Paris, although I think we have photostats of them in our own archives here. But there is something in just feeling these things that have come down from two or three centuries, though perhaps after my visiting the Orient two or three centuries would not have appeared to me to be so impressive as they were when I was examining these old documents relating to Canada's early history.