

parts of the commonwealth. However, I do feel that the commonwealth delegates, representing the various racial origins and viewpoints of peoples widely scattered throughout the world, will have a profound influence upon world opinion. I am pleased that the first meeting of the newly-formed General Council is taking place in Canada, and I want to extend to the members of the association the warmest possible welcome and my best wishes for the success of their deliberations.

Hon. John T. Haig: Honourable senators, last year in Bermuda I had the honour and pleasure of attending a parliamentary conference of world democratic countries, in which New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada were represented. At that time the wish was expressed that the United States might have an opportunity to become part of this organization.

Honourable senators, I join with the honourable leader of the government (Hon. Mr. Robertson) in welcoming representatives of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to our country. Thanks to His Honour the Speaker, some of us had an opportunity to meet several of the delegates a few nights ago. We were delighted with their spirit and sentiments. They all expressed the same high regard for their parliamentary institutions and for the part they play in the freedom, peace and good will of the world. It is a great honour to Canada to have the first meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association held here, but I do not think enough notice has been taken of it. I know two or three delegates who have stated that this is their first trip away from home. One distinguished representative, a member of the judiciary of the Gold Coast, came here thinking that it would be summertime and that he would not need an overcoat. I want to tell a story that he told me—and which I think he repeated the other night—because it shows how effective the personal touch can be in making people from other countries feel welcome here. He was staying at the Chateau Laurier, and in the morning he boarded the elevator to come down to the main floor. He had on a hat but no overcoat, and the young woman operating the elevator said, "I think, sir, that if you are going out this morning you will need an overcoat." He told her that he did not have an overcoat with him, and she said there was a store across the street, not far away, where he could get one. He did not know just where that was, and she took the trouble to walk out in front of the hotel, point out the store to him and call a taxi. Well, he said that young woman's interest in his welfare was very much appreciated, and he looked upon it as indicating a cordial welcome.

I enjoyed my trip to Bermuda last November as a delegate to the Parliamentary Conference. The other night the honourable leader of the government (Hon. Mr. Robertson) accused me of not having said much about the meeting. The fact is that our proceedings were secret. As honourable members who have been to that country know, all vehicular traffic there keeps to the left, and I do not mind admitting that for the first two days of my visit I feared I was going to be killed. Indeed, the idea occurred to me that perhaps the leader of the government had arranged to have me appointed a delegate in order to get rid of me. After being there a few days I got used to seeing drivers keep to the left, so much so that when I returned home I felt that our own drivers were on the wrong side of the road.

We were given a very warm welcome in Bermuda and had a good time. While we passed no formal resolution, we did perform what I think was a useful service in demonstrating to the American delegates—five senators, two members of the House of Representatives and an Assistant Under Secretary of State—that the nations of the commonwealth are just as anxious as the United States to preserve freedom for all peoples. I think also that we made it clear to them that while we appreciated the great contribution of the United States to world peace, we nevertheless liked our own institutions. And I believe that at the end of the conference those influential Americans realized more fully than before that the commonwealth has shown what free nations can do when they choose to work together. It is amazing, when you stop to think of it, that within the lifetime of one generation there have been two major world wars, but that somehow free peoples have by joint effort managed to rise above those catastrophes.

At the gathering of parliamentary delegates here the other night one could not help being impressed by the different races represented. Black men, brown men and white men were exchanging ideas, and underlying the whole discussion was a common love of freedom and peace.

I have great pleasure in joining with the leader of the government in extending a hearty welcome to the delegates at this Parliamentary Conference.

INTERNATIONAL WHEAT AGREEMENT

MOTION OF APPROVAL

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson moved:

That it is expedient that the Houses of Parliament do approve the International Wheat Agreement opened for signature at Washington on March 23, 1949, and that this house do approve the same.