

*United Nations Agreement*

tion on the part of our delegates to indulge in loud talk or unreasonable insistence upon our own particular point of view. We pressed amendments from time to time, but, may I say, Mr. Speaker, not to the point of hurting the chances of the charter being finally adopted. The charter was far too important and vital to allow considerations of that kind to interfere with its final adoption. In other words, we felt that it was better for Canada and the world if we approached the conference rather in the spirit of a meeting of minds than as a brittle collision of opinions. Canada did not attempt to be spectacular at San Francisco. I had for my objective, and I am sure I am speaking for those who were at the conference, first of all the doing of a good job for Canada and the world; and, second, trying to show the world that Canada was ready to participate to the fullest extent in connection with her contribution to world peace; that she was ready to assume and fulfil her full obligations to the world; that in so doing she was prepared to shirk not a single national or international duty, and that this nation was ready to pitch isolationism overboard, once and for all.

Of course Canada's geographical and national position meant that we had a key part to play, so far as conference deliberations were concerned. Our very close ties with the British commonwealth, our close relations with the United States of America and our friendship with every country great and small brought Canada to a key position, so far as exercising a great influence on the general activities of the conference went. At San Francisco I found that Canada was the enemy of none and the friend of all.

I believe I may speak with some considerable weight, and as a result of experience when I say that of all those nations which took part in the plenary sessions and the sittings of the committees day and night, there was none more popular at San Francisco than was the good old Dominion of Canada.

A minute ago I referred to the British commonwealth, and I should like to say a word in connection with the part the commonwealth played in the deliberations of the world conference, and what I say in this respect will, I am sure, be borne out by all who were there. I was never in my life more proud of the fact that Canada is part and parcel of the great British commonwealth than I was when I attended the San Francisco conference. There the many units of the commonwealth displayed a spirit of healthy and living collaboration which, I felt, should be known to the house. The British commonwealth met every single test to which it

[Mr. Graydon.]

was subjected at that conference. It showed that it was an exemplary, going international concern pledged to world peace, and one which had been tried and proven in the fiery crucible of experience, and had emerged therefrom after having achieved a great victory.

I think most of us who sit in this chamber this evening will remember the occasion in 1943 when the then foreign secretary for Great Britain, the Right Hon. Anthony Eden, stood at the head of the clerk's table, and delivered his address. We well recall hearing him say on that occasion that the British commonwealth was a pattern which the world might wisely follow in its quest for peace. I have come from the San Francisco conference with the conviction, one which has been confirmed since my return, that there never was a need greater than that found at this time for uniting and bringing the units of the British commonwealth closer together.

The wisdom of holding the conference when it was held must be apparent to all. It was held at a time when the world was still under the umbrella of armed hostility. I am wondering whether, if that umbrella had been lifted before its deliberations, the accomplishments and achievements of San Francisco would have been as great, as important and as vital.

In this connection I would draw the attention of hon. members to the report of a prominent Ottawa journalist, Mr. I. Norman Smith who, among others, was with us at the conference, and whose brief but cogent remarks respecting the opening of the conference might appropriately be placed before hon. members this evening. In his brief, but most informative book called "San Francisco, the First Step to Peace," Mr. Smith said this:

At the end of 10,000 words in which realism and idealism fought themselves to a draw, the charter's authors had lost something of their enthusiasm. The text ends very prosaically: "Done at the city of San Francisco the 26th day of June, 1945." But the united nations charter is the better for having been born the hard way.

The San Francisco conference had its struggles. At the beginning it was not a certain starter. Half way through it was not a certain finisher. Indeed, on looking back on these two months of discussion, those of us who were there sometimes wonder how the conference survived at all. Its father, President Roosevelt, died mere days before it got under way. Russia arrested Polish statesmen sponsored by Britain. Trouble broke out between France and Syria and Lebanon. Sides were drawn up on Argentina. Peace rumours occupied the minds of its great men for ten days. Germany's surrender finally came through in a naturally disconcerting fashion, and the British government called a general election.