

before the meeting was held, and, frankly, I did not do nearly as much work, or as effective work, as two of our colleagues who were also members, Senator Grosart and Senator Leonard, both of whom contributed immensely to the success of the meetings.

I wish to thank my honourable Leader for his over-kind reference to the small part I played in the committee on Parliamentary Institutions in the Modern World. I think he was bound more or less to say what he did because it was at his request that I did it. And, however bad I might have been, he at least will have to cover his own mistake in asking me to undertake it.

Hon. Mr. Connolly: Nobody could have done it as well.

Hon. Mr. Hugessen: I could add a little to what he said about the debate on parliamentary institutions which took place in this Chamber. It was, I think, his own responsibility that that meeting took the form of a committee rather than of a plenary session. It did give a number of interesting views of Parliament in general and of the functions of second chambers, and I think it was of some use because, as you could well realize, many of these new countries, particularly in Africa and Asia, are struggling to develop a proper system of parliamentary government, and any advice or experience that we in the older parts of the Commonwealth can give may be of some use to them. So I thank my honourable friend for his kindly, if undeserved, references to me.

I have one thing more to say about his speech. If you were to read his speech tomorrow, as being a complete reference to what actually took place in the Conference, and all his complimentary references to the various people who took part in it, and if you were to consider that as being in itself a true picture of the Conference, you would be getting a most misleading picture, because one of the important, one of the really vital parts of the Conference and of the proceedings leading up to the Conference, about which my honourable friend said not one word, was his own most distinguished share in that Conference.

Those of you who know what a vast amount of detailed work was involved—and there are some of you who do—will realize what a tremendous strain was imposed upon our Leader by the fact of his becoming chairman of this most important meeting.

I think the only thing one can say is that, from every indication that I have had from the delegates that I have met from all over the world, it was perhaps the most successful Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference that has ever been held; and I say that that is largely due to the initiative of our own leader. I am simply trying to fill in the gap, which my leader left in his speech, in the general impression that this house and the country as a whole should get of the way in which this Association meeting took place.

There was a Labour Member of the House of Commons in England who rather questioned the value of these conferences. He said, "What is the use of our coming here thousands of miles, just to speak?" Of course it is perfectly true that at a conference of this kind you cannot pass any laws. At times it is even difficult to pass resolutions. What we are trying to do is what people at other levels of Government are constantly doing; premiers of different parts of the world are meeting regularly, as are foreign ministers and ministers of every kind, chancellors of the exchequer and ministers of justice. Even in the business world there are regular international meetings of like-minded people dealing with like-minded subjects. At this Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting we had members of parliaments of different parts of the Commonwealth come together to share their common experiences. I must say I found great satisfaction in being present, listening to members outline the problems with which they are faced and the manner in which we possibly can help them.

With regard to travel arrangements, I have heard my honourable friend say that there had been some criticism. For my part, I heard nothing but the highest commendations from every non-Canadian delegate I met concerning the travel arrangements. They were delighted to get a chance to see as much of Canada as they did see as a result of the arrangements made. My honourable friend was quite right in complimenting the provinces on doing their share very well indeed in seeing that the members of this conference got a fair knowledge of every part of the country.

Honourable senators, I had not intended to speak on this subject tonight. My purpose in rising was to fill in the gap left by my honourable friend, and to tell the Senate once again that much of the success of the conference was due to my honourable friend the Leader of the Government.