

Hon. Mr. FARRIS: It took Great Britain a long time to achieve democracy. Most countries in the world to-day are not capable of or competent to have democracy. If it comes to a country too soon, it fails. We saw that in Italy, and there are other countries one could name. Russia is not a democracy. I am making no attack on Russia. I bear testimony to her wonderful achievement in the social and economic field and in this great war, but I should think that Stalin would be insulted if anybody said that Russia was a democracy as we understand it. Take any nation—take a nation that emerges from savagery. It does not first achieve democracy. The first sign of organization is the big chief with the big stick. Self-government only comes slowly, and down the ages. We have had the Magna Carta in Britain for seven hundred years. When King John was forced to sign the Magna Carta there was no democracy in Britain as we understand it. It was the nobles who wrested power from the king, and it was for themselves and their class that Magna Carta was secured. The great masses of people in England had never heard of the idea of democracy at that time, and if it had been given to them they would not have known how to make it work. It has taken England a thousand years to achieve an effective democracy. This idea that you can take a conglomeration of nations in all stages of social and economic development with many of them having no conception of democracy, and expect to form them into a democratic union, is to ignore realities and hope for the impossible. But I have no doubt that some day out of this organization, if we can hold it together, a democracy of nations may be accomplished. As I said before, it is something to look for and work for, and not to jump at too soon.

Now, honourable senators, these are my suggestions as to how to approach this question—I am afraid I have taken too long in doing so.

Some Hon. SENATORS: No, no.

Hon. Mr. FARRIS: As I said before I consider it of the greatest importance.

Now, "in the second place"—let us consider the Dumbarton Oaks proposals that will be submitted to the delegates at the conference as a basis for discussion. You will notice, honourable senators, that the Canadian letter of acceptance was a very guarded one. The invitation suggested that the Dumbarton Oaks proposals would be the basis for the scheme, but the acceptance by the Prime Minister stipulated that they would be a basis for discussion of the scheme, which I think is the proper ground upon which it should be put.

No nation which goes to San Francisco should be tied to the consideration of these proposals further than to say that they are valuable as a basis for discussion.

The recital to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals says that the organization is based on the principle of the "sovereign equality of all peace-loving states." My honourable friend from De Salaberry (Hon. Mr. Gouin) who spoke the other night in one of the most interesting and best speeches I have heard in the Senate—I did not hear my honourable friend from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugesson)—expressed a little concern over the meaning of these words. If they mean what he suggested they might mean, I could understand his concern. To me they sound a good deal like the recital in another famous document—that "all men are born free and equal." That depends entirely on how you interpret them. I do not think the recital in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals means that all sovereign nations are equal. If this were the meaning I would challenge the statement. I would feel more like the Irishman who said he believed that one man was as good as another—and sometimes a little better. The recital means to me that each nation is the equal of the other in its rights to be a sovereign nation. That is all I think it means. It is all it could mean, and make any sense. Every nation is entitled to be a free nation; every nation is entitled to be a sovereign nation and to have the form of government which the people of that nation wish to have. In that sense all nations should stand on an equality. But when we consider equality from the standpoint of intelligence, or education, or wealth, or power, or force as a means of waging war and the maintaining of peace, it would be utter nonsense to suggest that all nations are of equal sovereignty, because in that sense they are not.

In approaching the question that I have in mind, one of the first things to consider is the essential differences between the League of Nations covenant and the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. These have been canvassed so often in this House and elsewhere that it is not necessary for me to mention them further than to have them before us sufficiently for our discussion. The important difference in on this question of peace and war. The essential power of the League of Nations was, under Article XI of the Covenant, vested in the League itself. Perhaps it would be worth while recalling to honourable senators' memory what it says.

Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League