

memory of Sir Robert Borden. Canadians have increasing reasons to be proud of the part Canada is playing in international councils. Of our delegates to the San Francisco conference I believe it is correct to say that every one of them valued the honour of being a delegate of Canada at that conference, and all acquitted themselves with great credit. I think they all feel that much has been gained for themselves and for parliament by their contact with leaders of the other nations of the world; and the fact that the Canadian delegates were able to speak with a united voice meant much in the weight Canada was able to carry at that conference. It is a great thing for a country when there can be substantial unanimity among its people in support of its international policy. It was a great thing for Great Britain that even with the change of government last summer there has been no interruption in the international policy which that nation has pursued. And it is a great thing for Canada that at San Francisco this nation should be able to speak with one voice. May that situation continue. May the parliament and people of Canada be able to approach their international relations with a substantial measure of wholesome unanimity.

In their excellent reports to this house mention has been made by those who attended that conference as Canadian delegates of the contribution Canada made to the deliberations of the conference. As we know, Canada has been chosen by destiny to be an interpreter. For a long time we have known that we were assigned the role of interpreting Britain to the United States and the United States to Britain. Canada is now enjoying the expanding role of interpreter among the nations of the world. We are now regarded as at least one of the leading nations among that group classified as the secondary nations of the world. This gives us a special opportunity to help to bring about understanding between the so-called major nations of the world, or the great powers, and those in lesser positions.

The heritage we as Canadians enjoy is an increasing heritage. Day by day and year by year the Canadian heritage grows and is enhanced. It was a great thing for our fathers to be Canadians. It is a great privilege for us to be Canadians. Yes, and it will be a greater privilege for our children in years to come, when we fulfil our potentialities as a nation. We have been given an unparalleled opportunity; let us be faithful to that trust.

I should like to say a brief word concerning the contribution made by permanent officials of those departments which were represented at the conference, officials of various departments of government. Their contribution was

extremely valuable. I believe that parliament would like to record its sense of obligation to those permanent officials. Governments come and governments go, but it will be a source of strength to this country to have in its departments of government men with international experience. As was clearly shown at San Francisco, we have at the present time in those departments men of a quality and calibre sufficient to take their place with the permanent officials of governments of other nations. This is a matter of satisfaction and congratulation to Canadians.

May I make a brief observation concerning British-commonwealth relations. If I for one moment thought that by supporting this charter I were weakening the ties that bind members of the commonwealth together, I should not cast my vote in favour of its ratification. But, Mr. Speaker, how can it reasonably be contended that there is anything in the charter which in any sense would weaken the bond which binds together the free members of the commonwealth? Rather, I say we weaken that commonwealth if we fail to give strong support to the charter. It has been clearly shown times without number—it was manifest at San Francisco—that the commonwealth needs us and we need the commonwealth. We would inevitably weaken the one if we failed to give strong support to the other; let there be no mistake about that.

At the hands of the parliament at Westminster the charter enjoyed unanimous approval, and in the United States senate virtually unanimous approval. Is Canada, then, to withhold approval; are we to withhold unanimous approval? Is it to be suggested that we are in any way contributing to the weakening of commonwealth ties by doing the very thing the parliament at Westminster has done unanimously?

May I offer to the house some observations concerning the charter? In the first place the writing of it was a vast accomplishment. That fifty nations of the world, drawn from all quarters of the globe, were able to agree upon a charter, a lengthy and involved charter extending to so many aspects of international relations, is, of itself, a great and lasting accomplishment in the field of international relations.

In the second place, great benefit was derived by all participants. I am not speaking only of delegates; I speak of the countries themselves which gained by meeting together. As we know to our cost, ignorance only too often lies at the bottom of misunderstanding. And misunderstanding lies at the bottom of much of the suspicion and distrust we see in the