

them at close quarters, but will not be so to the public for whom they are designed. They have great political flair — envisage every question not on its merits but entirely from the political point of view. This causes acute distress to (a) the legalistically-minded Latin Americans, (b) all social crusaders and liberal internationalists who see “power politics” invading every aspect of the new organisation, the social, humanitarian and even purely administrative.

The intellectual defence of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals has been left to Wellington Koo, which is rather hard on him, as he had nothing to do with drafting them. (At the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in August 1944, the four Great Powers — Great Britain, China, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. — agreed on a draft text for the creation of the United Nations.) I sat opposite him and he fascinated me — he looks like a little lizard, darting lizard eyes and nose down close to his papers. When he speaks he displays a remarkable collection of *tics nerveux* — he blinks rapidly and convulsively, sniffs spasmodically, clasps and unclasps his immaculately manicured little hands, pulls at the lapels of his coat and continually removes and then readjusts his two pairs of spectacles. This pantomime does not in the least mean that he is nervous of the work in hand — he is a very experienced professional diplomat, quick-minded, ingenious and conciliatory. But, of course, he has not — any more than any of the other Great Powers’ delegates — the moral authority, eloquence and vigour which would be needed to carry the Conference — it would take a Roosevelt or a Churchill to do that — or perhaps Smuts. The Chinese are an endearing delegation, polite and humorous — but then are they really a Great Power?

The French are among the disappointments of this Conference. The Big Power representatives, however undistinguished individually, *do* represent Power and so carry weight. The French are in the position of having to depend on their tradition, their professionalism and that assurance of tough and violent precision in language which have always been at their command in international gatherings. But it is just this assurance that they lack. The French delegation here reinforce the painful impression that I formed in Paris — they seem to be *détraqués*. You do not feel that they have France, *la grande nation*, behind them. They are full of *petits soins* and handshakes to other delegates. They are full of schemes and combinations and suspicions. But there is no steadiness or clarity in their policy. They have no one who is a connecting link with the past and who still retains faith and vitality. The national continuity has been broken. They seem just a collection of clever, amiable, young Frenchmen — and old Paul Boncour is too old and too tired — so is André Siegfried. In fact, you can see the effects of fatigue in the drained faces of almost all the European delegates. Europe (I do not count Russia) is not making much of a showing at this Conference.

In our own delegation Norman Robertson and Hume Wrong are the two most influential senior officials. There could hardly be a greater contrast than that between them. Hume (under whom I worked when he was Counsellor at our Legation in Washington), pale and fine featured, stroking the back of his head with a rapid gesture which suggests mounting impa-