

those who are able to accept them without salary or emolument. As to the acceptance of the salary or emolument, and the disposition of it after it has been paid, that is not a matter for the House or for the public; it must rest with the judgment of the gentleman who holds the office.

The hon. member for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham) referred to the fact that in the sections of the Bill which establishes the office of Under Secretary of External Affairs, and the office of Parliamentary Secretary of Militia and Defence, the secretaries are spoken of as ministers of the Crown. That language is entirely the work of the Parliamentary Counsel, to whom I entrusted the duty of preparing the resolution and also of preparing the legislation based upon it. I have not had an opportunity since six o'clock of full discussion with him in regard to it, but he informs me that in using this language he followed British precedent; that parliamentary secretaries in Great Britain are technically ministers of the Crown, and that therefore he thought it desirable to employ that language.

Sir SAM HUGHES: Are they members of the Cabinet?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: They are not. My hon. friend (Mr. Graham) apparently thought that both parliamentary secretaries were members of the Privy Council, but that is not so, and they do not attend the deliberations of the Privy Council. I shall give my attention to the report which the parliamentary counsel will make to me, as to the advisability of using the expression "Minister of the Crown" in this legislation.

The only other point upon which I desire to say a word is the suggestion that those gentlemen should not retain their seats in Parliament after acceptance of office with the proposed salaries. I should like to submit to hon. gentlemen that it would have been folly for us to appoint a Minister of the Overseas Service to discharge the important duties which are set out in this order in council, and then to bring him at once to Canada for two, or perhaps three months, in order that he might engage in the delights of a contested election. It seems to me this is about the last course that any reasonable man would have expected the Government to take. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that I never thought for one moment, of taking any such course. In the interests of this country, in the interests of our overseas forces, and especially in the interests of the men who are fighting

at the front, is it not better that the Minister of the Overseas Forces should be discharging the duties of his office, where they could best be discharged, rather than that his time should be occupied in running an election in this country?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: There is only one answer to that question, and I have no apology to make for the proposal that I am now placing before Parliament. It is not only a reasonable proposal, but the only proposal that I could or should make, and we have ample precedent for it on the other side of the water. When Mr. Asquith formed the first coalition government in the spring of 1915, not a single member accepting office in the Government was called upon to go to the people. I have in my hand the statute, passed on the 18th December, 1916, under which the ministers of the Crown in Great Britain to-day hold their seats in Parliament. It reads:

1. Notwithstanding anything in any Act, a member of the House of Commons shall not vacate his seat by reason only of his acceptance, at any time during the months of December, 1916, and January, 1917, of an office of profit, if that office is an office the holder of which is by law capable of being elected to, or sitting or voting in, that House.

So that in December, 1916, and January, 1917, in the exigencies of this war, and in order that the King's Government might be carried on without interruption, it was provided that some twenty-five or thirty gentlemen holding seats in the House of Commons, whose seats under ordinary circumstances would have been vacated by the acceptance of office, should not vacate those seats, although they accepted office. It is upon that principle (acted upon on these two occasions to an infinitely greater degree than anything that is proposed here) that I am asking the House to enact that, notwithstanding the fact that these gentlemen are members of the House of Commons, they may accept the salary which is now proposed, without its being held that they vacated their seats in this House, or that they thereby became ineligible for sitting or voting in the House of Commons. And when the hon. gentleman (Sir Sam Hughes) refers to the United States and Great Britain as the only two great democracies of the world that have existed for more than a hundred years, I should like to point out that he destroys his contention that the enactment of this legislation creates an autocracy. I cannot see anything in this legis-