

regard to public affairs, who will be found voting for this resolution. Rather he will vote that it should be defeated and we will then proceed to deal with the country's business and endeavour to advance its interests.

Hon. R. B. BENNETT (West Calgary): Mr. Speaker, I, in common with other members of the legal profession, recognize the soundness of the observations made by the hon. member for Kindersley (Mr. Carmichael) when he said on Friday last that he had much difficulty in appreciating the situation. For it is true that the matter involved is a more or less technical one. Nevertheless everyone who listened to the speech we heard this afternoon from that hon. member will realize that he is fully seized of the situation, and that what promised to be a complex and difficult question of law has, after the exposition made by the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Meighen), been clearly understood. I, for one could not fail to be impressed by the observations of the hon. member for North Centre Winnipeg (Mr. Woodsworth) when he inquired as to why we should follow British precedents. I am sure that we were all convinced, impressed with his sincerity and earnestness, but had he taken the trouble to look—and he is a very studious gentleman—he would have observed that the very preamble of our written constitution, the British North America Act, provides that the people of Canada were desirous of being federally united into one dominion, under the crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, with a constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom. Hence it is that we appeal to the precedents of Great Britain and to the Mother of Parliaments rather than those of continental Europe for the purpose of determining our constitutional and parliamentary practice and procedure. I was struck also with his observations with respect to Lord Bryce's *Modern Democracies*. Now had my hon. friend taken the trouble to have turned over a few pages he would have observed these words:

Parties are inevitable. No free large country has been without them. No one has shown how representative government could be worked without them... Where there are small groups each becomes a focus of intrigue, in which personal ambitions have scope. The groups make bargains with one another and by their combinations, perhaps secretly and suddenly formed, successive ministries may be overturned, with injury to the progress of legislation and to the continuity of national policy. Since there must be parties, the fewer and stronger they are the better.

These are the observations of Lord Bryce in the very volume to which my hon. friend

referred. While we were impressed with the earnestness of my hon. friend's observations we could not fail to realize that he in his suggestion that we should form a parliamentary committee of this House, overlooked the historic fact connected with the Long Parliament when the Long Parliament, in days now forgotten, was organized into committees. That those committees were the prelude of the end of the Long Parliament is now a matter of history. Surely my hon. friend would not reproduce in Canada the Long Parliament's history with its committees. My hon. friend must also have forgotten that parliament does not consist merely of the popular House. It consists of something more than that, for in section 17 of the British North America Act these words appear:

There shall be one parliament for Canada, consisting of the queen, an upper house styled the Senate, and the House of Commons.

These triune factors constitute the parliament of this Dominion. It is not composed of this Commons House of parliament, nor yet of the Senate nor yet of the sovereign, because, thanks to the long development that has taken place in the years that have passed, the struggles of successive parliaments against the aggression of the sovereign, the struggle of the Commons against the Lords, the parliament of Canada now consists of the king, the Senate, the House of Commons. These three factors together constitute this parliament. And when it is suggested, as it has been, that a committee of this House should function as the government, it overlooks the essential fact that you have these three factors that make and constitute our parliament. I should like that essential fact to be borne in mind because it is at the bottom of our constitutional practice and procedure. We might answer the question as to why we cling to British traditions and British precedents. In the language of Mr. Gladstone in his article "Kin Beyond the Seas":

But there is no parallel in all the record of the world to the case of that prolific British Mother, who has sent forth her innumerable children over all the earth to be the founders of half dozen empires. She, with her progeny, may almost claim to constitute a kind of Universal Church in politics.

It is for these reasons that we adhere to British precedents and to British authority; and when the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa)—whose elegant language, no less than the manner of its delivery impressed the House—referred to the desirability of our independent action I was reminded of the statement of Burke that an independent member of parliament is usually a member not to be