

it begins to be the custom to have leaders of parties, who claim they are to be at the head of an alternative government after a general election, direct their followings from outside parliament altogether.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Your friend Mitch Hepburn did that, did he not?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: He is no example.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): He was your friend then.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That makes the position of my hon. friends worse and worse.

Mr. PERLEY: He succeeded.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: However, this is not a joking matter. It is not for me to say what road, either to success or to ruin, the hon. gentlemen opposite should take as we approach a general election, but it is for me in my position as leader of this House of Commons to point out that the place for the leader of a political party which hopes to be in a position to form a government, is in the House of Commons in the position of leader of the opposition.

May I here direct attention to the pertinancy of what I have just said. Parliament has given to the position of leader of the opposition a place of exceptional significance and importance. There has been assigned by statute to the leader of the opposition a position which places upon him certain definite obligations, one of which is to be in parliament and to watch the administration, to criticize the administration fairly, and presumably also to make known what alternative policies he would present to those which are being proposed. He draws a salary similar to that of the members of the government. Now, I submit that parliament never intended that that position should be occupied by someone acting in the place of the leader of the party, however amiable and delightful he himself might be. Considering the importance of the great questions which have to be decided in this parliament this year, I hope that before very long the leader of the Conservative party opposite will find it possible—if it is possible at all for him to do so—to get into this House of Commons and let us have the opportunity to debate these questions face to face.

May I point out also the invidious position in which I am placed if I venture to take issue with anything that Mr. Bracken may say; immediately it will be said that Mr. King is saying something in the absence of the person who has made the statement. Well, I wish to say what I have to say to Mr. Bracken in his

presence, and I want that presence to be here in the House of Commons. I hope hon. gentlemen opposite will believe that the government is most sincere when I say, on behalf of the government, that if, in any way, we can facilitate Mr. Bracken's entry to this House of Commons at an early stage in this session we shall be happy to do so, because I believe the people of this country have the right to see, not how Mr. Bracken performs in matters of political organization outside this house, but how he conducts himself in matters of debate here when the house is in session.

I have said what I have said because my hon. friend attached so much importance in the course of his remarks to Mr. Bracken and his bill of rights. With much of what my hon. friend has otherwise said I am in accord. He did endorse in many directions a large part of the proposed legislation which is put forth in the speech from the throne.

Mr. GRAYDON: Look where it came from.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend now says, "Look where it came from". But he does not deny he has endorsed much of what the government has proposed to this parliament, and for that I wish to thank him.

I should like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the address. My hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Graydon) said he was going to save time and cut short his remarks in that particular. It is one of the traditions of the House of Commons that when hon. members speak at the opening of a session some cognizance should be taken of the manner in which they speak on such an important occasion. I for one, being rather fond of preserving traditions where they are worthy of preservation, have great pleasure this afternoon in complimenting most warmly both the hon. member for Dorchester (Mr. Tremblay) and the hon. member for Rosthern (Mr. Tucker) upon their splendid utterances in moving and seconding the address in reply to the speech from the throne. The leader of the opposition has drawn attention to the fact that, for some years, both hon. gentlemen have been members of this house, that both are veterans of the last war, that both are on active service in the present war, performing useful service in our country, and that both have regretted that for reasons which are apparent they do not find it possible to serve overseas. However, each has been setting a fine example to others by the manner in which he has sought to serve the country's interests both in parliament and in the armed forces. These hon. members are similar in the respects which I have mentioned. They are similar also in another respect which is important at this time. They