

with it. The second order is a pro forma notice in the name of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley), for committee of supply, and the third order is for committee of ways and means.

I do not know under what order of business the house may proceed to discuss public questions. I am glad the Prime Minister has extended the invitation to which he has referred, so that we may talk matters over and make arrangements under which opportunity will be given to hon. members to express their opinions in the house. While I have a rough knowledge of the rules of procedure, I am not an authority, but from my understanding I would assume that whatever is done will have to be done by consent.

So far as we are concerned we will of course cooperate. I do wish, however, that in relation to measures of national importance the government would consider taking us into their confidence, and would remember that we are still living in a democracy. I do not say this in any querulous spirit; I am simply asserting a principle. The people's elected representatives are still the representatives of the people, and while we have delegated all kinds of authority to government, it does not follow that the people's elected representatives have given to this or any other government carte blanche to do as it pleases by order in council. I commend these observations particularly to my right hon. friend, and I do so even in war time—because he will recall, as I do, what a steadfast opponent he has been of rule by royal commissions and orders in council.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to debate this matter, but I should like to give a word of explanation concerning one of the points which my hon. friend has raised. He has referred to the fact that there is no business on the order paper. The reason for that is that the session was really over when we adjourned. The purpose of the adjournment till to-day was simply to keep parliament in session to meet any emergency that might arise before the session was prorogued. We are not therefore proceeding simply as we please by order in council but rather under the authority which parliament has given us in the enactments which were passed at this very session. I want to make that clear.

May I remind hon. members of the circumstances which last year occasioned two sessions beginning in the one year. As will be recalled, in 1940 we had a general election in the early part of the year. Then we had a session of parliament in the late spring and early summer. The second session, the one we are now in,

started in the late autumn of 1940. This was done largely to suit the convenience of hon. members who, in addition to the session, had also been through a general election. Instead of continuing the session, we entered immediately upon a new session. It has been the custom in parliament for some years past to have the different sessions identified with the calendar years. The government feels that it will be found best in the end that the second session of parliament should end in this year, 1941, and the third session begin in 1942.

Mr. ANGUS MacINNIS (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, the members of this group would like to associate themselves with the welcome extended by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and the leader of the opposition (Mr. Hanson) to Right Hon. Clement Attlee, Lord Privy Seal in the imperial cabinet. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Attlee some five years ago at the labour party conference which took place that year in Edinburgh. I believe Mr. Attlee has since been in the very thick of things and I am glad to know that he and the party which he represents are working to-day for the cause of democracy.

May I also on behalf of this group thank the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition for their kind references to our leader, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth). We all missed him, and it is very gratifying to know that others missed him. It is one of the glories of democracy that while we may differ fundamentally, we are ready to recognize the character and worth of other individuals. That is one of the things that we hope to maintain when this war is over. It is one of the things that does not exist in the totalitarian state—there you either conform or you are liquidated.

In regard to the business of this session, we of this group think it would be a calamity if we were to depart without being able to discuss the questions which are foremost in the minds of the people of Canada. There is a great deal of misgiving as well as a great deal of inquiry, and I think it would be a bad thing for the government if we were to be sent back home, after some of us have come great distances, without having discussed many of the questions in which our people are interested.

I am not at all sure about the rules, but I notice that item No. 2 on the order paper for to-day, under Government Orders, says, "House again in committee of supply." I believe the Prime Minister could move accordingly, make his statement, and then those of us who wish to speak would have an opportunity of doing so. Otherwise this item on the order paper has really no sense. If we are satisfied that we shall have an opportunity of discussing