

national governments, he made clear to those present that one of the virtues or advantages of the British system of government is that it always has a way of meeting whatever situation may arise and of having its procedure work out smoothly. He pointed out that, so far as procedure in the House of Commons was concerned, that very desirable result was obtained by conferences between the leaders of parties and groups, and their whips. When I made my suggestion as to procedure that portion of Mr. Attlee's remarks was much in my mind.

However, my chief purpose in introducing Mr. Attlee's name at this moment is to say on behalf of the government and parliament of Canada, and on behalf of the Canadian people, how pleased we all are that Mr. Attlee has found it possible in the short time he is able to spend on this side of the Atlantic, in attendance at the conference in New York of the International Labour Office, to spare sufficient time to visit Canada, to deliver public addresses and to see something at first hand of the war effort of our country. His visit will afford him a fuller knowledge than would otherwise have been possible of the position of Canada in the war. He will be able to take back to the people of Britain no uncertain assurance of the intention of men and women of all classes and in all parts of Canada to put forth their utmost effort in the winning of the war. We are gratified indeed that one who is not only the leader of a political party in Great Britain but who has played such an important part in British public life especially in the furtherance of all that is best in industrial relations, as well as in the interests of his country in a time of war, has been able to spend these days with us. I am pleased to be able to avail myself of this opportunity to express our appreciation of Mr. Attlee's visit.

Hon. R. B. HANSON (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to associate myself with the expressions of welcome the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) has extended to the Right Hon. Clement Attlee. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Attlee on an all too brief occasion in September, and I was greatly impressed by his dynamic personality. On behalf of those surrounding me may I add my word of welcome to that of the Prime Minister. I hope Mr. Attlee's stay in Canada will be a pleasant one, and that he will take back happy recollections of his all too few days here with us.

With respect to the Prime Minister's statement in connection with the business of the session which remains to be disposed of, when parliament adjourned on June 14 my under-

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

standing was that the house would reassemble on November 3, the date then fixed. It was my further understanding that the house would prorogue and that a new session would begin immediately, as was done a year ago. So far as this party is concerned, that would have been a satisfactory solution. It does seem to me that, other things being equal, it would be well that this session should be brought to a close, because, may I remind hon. members, it is just a little under a year since this session was opened on November 7, 1940.

Something, however, has occurred to alter the government's decision in that respect, and I am not controverting the suggestion which has been made. As the Prime Minister has said, if we were to prorogue, and then open a new session and debate the address, as we did a year ago, what was said in that debate might be repeated later in the same session. I have seen that happen, and in my opinion it is not conducive to progress in our deliberations.

But why should the government not have some business ready for parliament at this time? We have been away from Ottawa for almost five months. Is there no necessity for legislation? Is there no necessity for motions for supply or ways and means, or for other government business which would afford hon. members an opportunity of doing some work? One of the crying needs in the House of Commons is that private members should be given something more to do than they have been given in the past. I am not going to dwell upon the point I have made more than once, namely that having delegated to the executive all the powers they have asked for or could think of—and I do not know what more they could ask for or think of than they now have—parliament has really been reduced in status to that of a debating society. So far as the executive are concerned it would appear that the only procedure required is to call us together from time to time to pass such supply as they may require. I do not believe that is the will of the people of Canada, even in war time. I suggest to my right hon. friend and his colleagues that they give some consideration to submitting to parliament national problems which arise from time to time, so that at least the people's representatives may have an opportunity to express their opinions.

Looking at the order paper I find that government orders are only three in number. The first is for the third reading of a bill in the name of the Minister of Mines and Resources (Mr. Crerar). It has been on the order paper for many months, and I understand the minister does not intend to proceed