

foreign to his mind has become the rights of parliament that he cannot bear even to hear the word mentioned without interrupting immediately. I want to make it perfectly clear again, Mr. Speaker, that the battle that has been put up in connection with this measure is not merely over the rights of minorities or the rights of majorities; it is true that it has to do with the rights of both; rights, which in the case of the majority no less than in that of the minority are threatened, it is concerned with the rights of something greater than either, namely, the rights of parliament and all that parliament stands for in a free country.

Now may I conclude what I have to say by referring to the quotation the Prime Minister gave this house when he was making his address in introducing the closure. My right hon. friend read a passage from Redlich which he said portrayed what had been going on in this house during the preceding two weeks, and he gave that quotation to the house as representing the true point of view in the matter of what among other things, constituted obstruction.

Mr. BENNETT: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I hear my right hon. friend say "hear, hear." I think anyone reading that quotation will see that what the Prime Minister said about it applying to what has taken place in this House of Commons in the last two weeks is perfectly true, but what the Prime Minister did not see and apparently does not yet see is that the essential features of the quotation apply to himself and those who have been supporting his point of view, and not to any one or to anything that has been done on this side of the house. Let me read the quotation, it is from volume 3 of Redlich, at page 196:

Focussing once more the results of our retrospect we may arrive at certain important conclusions which will be useful in the search for a solution of the problem set before us. The political development of our own day has laid bare—in the first instance in England, and then in nearly all the constitutional states of Europe—the conventional foundation of parliamentary government. Parliamentary conventions appear above all in the forms of parliamentary action, in the limitations to party strategy imposed by the inviolable bounds of the rules and in the tacit agreement among all who take part in parliamentary life to handle these rules in a reasonable way.

I say those words do not apply to an opposition or to a government. They apply to all members of parliament, and if they mean anything at all, those words mean that you cannot carry on the business of parliament

unless you observe the conventional rules with respect to parliamentary procedure in the control of finances and everything else; unless you follow the accepted rules you cannot do any business at all in parliament. That is the exception we have taken to the action of hon. gentlemen opposite. We have said their action strikes at the very foundation of parliamentary government. Redlich says that, if you strike at the foundation of parliamentary government, you cannot do anything at all in parliament, because everything done by parliament is based on the assumption that, by the common agreement and consent of all assembled together in a parliament, you have regard and respect for the conventional foundations of parliamentary government. Let me read the words once again:

The political development of our own day has laid bare—in the first instance in England, and then in nearly all the constitutional states of Europe—the conventional foundation of parliamentary government.

What is the conventional foundation of parliamentary government?

Parliamentary conventions appear above all in the forms of parliamentary action, in the limitations to party strategy imposed by the inviolable bounds of the rules and in the tacit agreement among all who take part in parliamentary life to handle these rules in a reasonable way.

I ask hon. members of this house if the rules have been handled in a reasonable way with respect to the resolution on which this bill was founded, and with respect to the stages by which we have arrived at the present consideration of the measure itself. Redlich goes on to say:

It has further appeared that, though the observance of these conventions does, to a certain extent, depend upon the social character of the membership, a far more important consideration remains: parliamentary conventions are only effective, and the parliamentary government which they support is only possible, when there is an acceptance of the constitutional basis upon which state and parliament are founded.

Could anything be more emphatic than that?

. . . a far more important consideration remains: parliamentary conventions are only effective, and the parliamentary government which they support is only possible, when there is an acceptance of the constitutional basis upon which state and parliament are founded.

The constitutional basis on which this parliament is founded is the right of the Commons and the Senate to pass legislation, and for the Commons and the Senate alone to exercise that right, not for that right to be usurped by the ministry of the day. If you