

I am pressing the point of order notice of which I gave yesterday just after the Prime Minister indicated that he would move this motion of closure today.

At the outset, Mr. Chairman, may I deal with what the Prime Minister has said. Frankly, I wonder whether the right hon. gentleman realizes the full implications of what he has told this House of Commons. Although I tried to take down his words I may not have them exactly but I am sure I have their import. He said to us that the government would have preferred to follow the earlier precedents because they would have made possible a more complete discussion of the individual clauses. Having said that, he then recited what he referred to as the obstruction with which the government was met on the floor of the house.

Mr. Fleming: Frustration.

Mr. Knowles: I am sorry, I am told that the word was "frustration" rather than "obstruction". Does the right hon. gentleman realize what he is saying? He is telling the House of Commons that it was the government's preference to follow the correct precedents, to follow the ones that can stand up, but because they were frustrated by the bad boys of the opposition, because their timetable was upset, they changed their minds and decided to follow a bad precedent. Frankly, Mr. Chairman, I am shocked—

An hon. Member: Who cares?

Mr. Knowles: —at a great lawyer like the Prime Minister telling us that that is the kind of leadership he is giving his party in the House of Commons.

An hon. Member: Good leadership.

Mr. Knowles: The Prime Minister told us that Mr. Bennett's precedent was that of a constitutional lawyer and a man versed in parliamentary procedure. That is not usually the kind of compliment the Liberals pay Mr. Bennett. Since happily I belong to neither of the old parties I can speak the truth about what Mr. Bennett did in 1932. I think he perpetrated a fraud on the House of Commons—

Mr. Harris: Careful, now.

Mr. Knowles: —when he moved closure as he did before clauses 2 and 3 had been called at all. The Prime Minister says today that Mr. King registered no objection, that the only objection was raised by Mr. Gardiner who was a member of the U.F.A. I think it is very clear from a reading of the debate that at that point there was a bit of play between the two sides. It almost looks to

Northern Ontario Pipe Line Corporation me as though Mr. King wanted the government of the day to impose closure, for once closure had been imposed the Liberals kept up the debate for only a very short time. There was not a great deal of point in making a formal protest and appealing the ruling, but I do ask the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister who says that Mr. King did not object to what went on on that occasion, to note that on pages 1610 and 1611 of *Hansard* for April 1, 1932, Mr. King did have something to say about what was happening at that time. The closure motion had been moved on the same day, as reported on page 1609. On the very next page, Mr. King said this:

—the Prime Minister comes along in the first minute of proceedings in committee today and applies closure, affecting all three sections of the bill, though as you, yourself, Mr. Chairman, well know, even the first section has not yet been passed. I quote from yesterday's proceedings at page 1557 of *Hansard* as follows:

"The Chairman (Mr. Hanson, York-Sunbury): I would ask the hon. gentleman, who knows the rules, to observe them. We are discussing section 1 of this bill."

As you yourself have said, Mr. Chairman, section 1 of the bill is the only section that has been discussed, yet by the most coercive and arbitrary act of which a government is capable, we are being prevented from discussing sections 2 and 3 of the measure and discussing at any further length the first section.

The Prime Minister says Mr. King made no objection. There is his objection, over on the next page, that this was the most coercive and arbitrary act of which a government is capable. Later, on third reading of that bill on the same day, as recorded on page 1615 of *Hansard*, and I admit this refers to the whole proceedings which Mr. Bennett had employed in connection with that legislation but it included what had happened that day, Mr. King said this:

I can only express the hope that some of the rulings and decisions may never be cited as precedents by any subsequent parliament in this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear hear.

Mr. Knowles: I continue:

I believe the members of the ministry will themselves be the first to blush when, in calmer moments, they review what the records disclose of the means which were taken to bring into being this particular measure.

I note that the hon. member for Kamloops, although he is neither a minister nor was he a member of that cabinet, is blushing.

Mr. McCann: It is the colour of his hair.

Mr. Knowles: The Prime Minister stands up today, a great lawyer and a great defender of the rights of parliament, and says to us: "We would much rather have followed the earlier precedent, the correct ones, the ones