

would be more highly thought of in Canada if he had encouraged discussion of this measure instead of endeavouring to apply the gag and forcing it through Parliament, and it comes with especially ill grace from the Minister of Finance, a gentleman for whom many of us have a high regard, for his ability and other qualities. The fact remains, and the minister knows it just as well as we do, that in the public mind he is very closely linked up in personal friendship and financial interest with Sir William Mackenzie. The people know that; they believe that such is the case, and as a friend of the Minister of Finance, I say that it is an unfortunate thing for him that he has chosen to choke off discussion of this measure, which involves the possibility of our paying out huge sums of money to Mackenzie and Mann. I know nothing about the personal affairs of the Minister of Finance, and desire to know nothing about them. I am speaking of public matters, and I say it is a public belief in Canada to-day that the Minister of Finance is where he is because of the Mackenzie and Mann influence and the Z. A. Lash influence. I have been credibly informed that it was on the nomination of Sir William Mackenzie and the late Minister of Militia and Defence that the Finance Minister secured his appointment.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: There is not the slightest foundation in fact for the assertion my hon. friend has just made.

Mr. KNOWLES: The Prime Minister's statement must be accepted, of course. The fact remains, however, that the public mind is convinced that the Minister of Finance is where he is because he is a pet of those interests, and the Minister of Finance would better preserve the name which he has reason in many ways to be proud of, if he were the last person to force through Parliament a measure of which Mackenzie and Mann are going to be the beneficiaries. I make that statement in all friendliness and in all manliness.

I desire to say further, that there is a suspicion throughout Canada that this Government is extremely close to the Mackenzie and Mann people and to the Canadian Northern. That is not a belief of a day's growth, but has been in the public mind for some years. There has been a strong belief in the public mind that in the Minister of Finance the Canadian Northern have a very close friend; I do not say an improper friend. It is also a common belief that in the late

Minister of Public Works they have a very close friend; I do not say an improper friend. It is also a common belief that in the late Minister of Militia and Defence, and in the present Minister of Railways and Canals the Canadian Northern have very close friends. In view of the public belief that this is in many ways a Canadian Northern Government, it is unfortunate for the Government that they should force this measure through Parliament without a fair opportunity for discussion being permitted to those who desire to criticize the Bill. I would go further and say that the suspicion in the mind of the people will not, unfortunately for the Government, be at all lessened by the choice that they have made of an arbitrator. It is not for me to discuss Sir William Meredith in any personal way. I am in the habit in a humble way of appearing before judges, and I am not going to take advantage of my position in this House to say anything with regard to a judge that is unfair or in any way ungentlemanly or unmanly. But I will say this: that once a man accepts an appointment like this in connection with a transaction that is generally looked upon in Canada as a shady transaction—and Sir William Meredith knows that—he becomes a fair subject of examination and criticism. In the public interest we must ask ourselves: Is Sir William Meredith an arbitrator of whom we on this side of the House can approve? Speaking for myself, I say without any hesitation that Sir William Meredith is an arbitrator of whom I do not approve absolutely and entirely, for many reasons.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: That will be the death of Sir William Meredith.

Mr. KNOWLES: If the minister will allow me, in my humble way, I am going to discharge my duty to the country, notwithstanding his ironical remarks.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: Will you permit a question?

Mr. KNOWLES: I have only twenty minutes.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: I wish to remind my hon. friend that if he goes on in this way his twenty minutes will be up and he will not have approached the question at all.

Mr. KNOWLES: My hon. friend asked me if I would permit a question, and under the belief that he was going to ask one I sat down, but as he evidently has not car-