

Mr. HOWE: The opposition is doing pretty well now.

Mr. ROWE: Yes; but if you had been here longer than the Prime Minister you still would not know the rules as he does. You have to know them well before you can work them as he does to his own advantage. I have heard the right hon. gentleman almost weep about matters of procedure in defence of the rights of private members when the government of Right Hon. R. B. Bennett was sitting over there and the Prime Minister was sitting here.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I should like to call his attention and the attention of other hon. members to the motion which is before the house, and to ask that his remarks be relevant to that motion. The motion is:

That the debate on the address in reply to the speech of His Excellency the Governor General to both houses of parliament be the first order of business on Monday, December 8th instant.

I would ask the hon. member who has the floor and others who intend to take part in the debate to keep their remarks relevant to the motion.

Mr. GRAYDON: On a question of privilege—

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not raise a point of order; I just called the attention of the hon. member who has the floor to the motion which is before the house. I do not think there should be any question of privilege.

Mr. GRAYDON: Then I raise a point of order, whether or not you brought up the question. My point is that when you read the motion of the Prime Minister you left out the last two lines.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I point out that I asked hon. members if they would have any objection to my amending the motion by leaving out the last two lines. I thought in so doing I would be obliging the opposition as well as everyone else who desired to get on with the debate. The motion is to allow the debate on the address to proceed.

Mr. GRAYDON: But until the consent of the house is given, surely that motion stands.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. member for Peel (Mr. Graydon) that I read the motion which was put before the house a few moments ago. The hon. member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Rowe) may continue his remarks.

Mr. ROWE: I have always endeavoured to respect your rulings, Mr. Speaker, and I do not want to deviate from that course now. The spirit of this motion probably is more contentious than the letter of it. I realize that it is the intention of this all-powerful executive to decree what procedure shall be followed during the next few days, if any is to be followed at all; but with all deference to your interruption, which of course it is your privilege to make, I repeat that the procedure of this house is a matter of fundamental importance. During the last twenty-five years no one has emphasized that fact more than the right hon. Prime Minister.

Mr. HOWE: You said that before.

Mr. ROWE: My right hon. friend understands repetitions, for no one repeats himself more than he does; but I am not disturbed by these empty interruptions.

I well recall my first impression when I entered this house some years ago. I thought the present Prime Minister was the most vociferous member of the house in speaking about parliamentary procedure and defending the rights of the individual member. Now we see a plan by which the executive is to become all-powerful, and they offer scarcely an apology for this change. This sort of thing is permeating not only the procedure followed in this house but the administration of the government between sessions. You would imagine that this tired old executive was so all-powerful it did not need a parliament at all. The Prime Minister used to say that the supremacy of parliament must be upheld and that we should end the sort of dictatorial government he said we had between 1930 and 1935. It might be interesting to read some of the statements he made at that time. If they were good then, surely my hon. friends will listen to them today. If they were sound then, they should be sound now.

Mr. POULIOT: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I rise to a point of order. If we look at the record we find that the motion now being debated is the first of the government notices of motion. On Friday there was not unanimous consent, or any kind of consent, to give it priority over any other item on the order paper. Therefore it is impossible to discuss this motion at the present time. The only thing we can do is follow the order paper unless unanimous consent is given. Those who speak on this motion at the present time are out of order, so the only alternative is either to ask for unanimous consent or to follow the order paper as it is printed.