

was belaboured by the hon. member for Carleton, (N. B.). The hon. gentleman means that they could continue the discussion on some other subject?

Mr. GERMAN: Yes.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The Government of this country could do that if they were willing to take the responsibility, but what would be the object? Let us consider the question and see how it would work out.

Mr. GERMAN: It could be done.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, but what could be the object? In order that there might be a short discussion on something that has been already discussed, the Government are themselves going to obstruct some other business and prolong the discussion over it. What object have the Government to serve by that? If it were possible within reason to put it within the power of even an insane government to do such a thing it could be done.

Mr. GERMAN: I did not say it should be done. I was asking the hon. gentleman if, under these rules, it could be done?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, but it would be absurdity itself if it were done.

Mr. GERMAN: The resolution says:

Any minister of the Crown who, standing in his place, shall have given notice at a previous sitting of his intention so do to, may move that the debate shall not be further adjourned, or that the further consideration of any resolution, or resolutions, clause or clauses, section or sections, preamble or preambles, title or titles, shall be the first business of the committee, and shall not further be postponed.

Now, the second clause of the Naval Aid Act is under discussion. If a motion is made that the debate be not further continued, does the hon. gentleman understand that that simply adjourns the debate of that clause, or does he think that it terminates the debate on the whole Bill?

Mr. MEIGHEN: No, just on that clause—

Mr. GERMAN: That is what I understand.

Mr. MARCIL: But it says: clause or clauses.

Mr. GERMAN: Could they not give notice as to the whole Bill and stop the discussion on every clause?

Mr. MEIGHEN: This it what can be done; clause 2 is under discussion, say for two weeks or three weeks or five weeks, as would suit hon. gentlemen opposite; clause 2 is under discussion and the motion to postpone the consideration of that clause is made. Then it would be in order I would think, for the committee to pass to clause 3, and clause 3 would then have to be discussed and a separate motion would have to be made as to clause 3.

Mr. GERMAN: In the same way on the twenty-four hours' notice?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes.

Mr. GERMAN: As to each clause.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Exactly.

Mr. DEVLIN: That is not the rule.

Mr. MEIGHEN: But, of course, that is the notice. A motion is made that consideration be postponed on one clause; then, after the other clause has been discussed, another motion is made, of course all within the responsibility of the Government, that the consideration of that be postponed. Then notice is given that the clauses so postponed be on a certain day no further postponed. That is to say, notice is given that a motion will be made

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on some subsequent date stated, that the consideration of these clauses, so postponed, be not again postponed, and these clauses then must be taken up on that day.

Mr. DEVLIN: And vote on the whole Bill and all the clauses?

Mr. GERMAN: That means discussion on the whole Bill could be stopped on twenty-four hours' notice. I would like to get more information. Clause 2 of Navy Bill is now under discussion; the discussion of clause 3 will not be taken up until clause 2 is disposed of, discussion on clause 3 will not be begun. Surely it cannot be the intention of the Government, simply with one notice, to say that on such a day the discussion on clause 3 shall terminate and on such a day the discussion of clause 4 shall terminate, and consequently wipe out the whole thing on that day?

Mr. MEIGHEN: I do not know that I understand the question but I will repeat what I have said and I think the hon. gentleman will understand me. Clause 2 is under discussion and the Government have reason, by what they have observed to see that it is being obstructed, or on reasons that appear to them good, they move that the discussion be adjourned.

Mr. GERMAN: On clause 2?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes. Nothing however is done at that time and they pass to clause 3. That is the next thing to do, without a doubt. Clause 3 then becomes the subject of discussion in the committee. Clause 3 is under consideration and the committee discussed it also for a time, and the Government takes the responsibility for the length of that time. Then, if the same conditions develop; if the Government deem it is their duty as the custodians of the rights of the people of this country, they can move that the consideration of that clause be postponed. Then the committee passes to clause 4 and it is in the same category, and nothing is done as yet except merely to move the postponement. A debate has taken place successively on each clause and then when we have got all through the Bill and all has been debated clause by clause, the Government, or a member of the Government, may give notice that he will move on a certain day that these clauses, all of them, be the first business of that committee and be not further postponed, and then all the clauses must be taken up on that last day and concluded by two o'clock. I think that is absolutely clear.

Mr. GERMAN: It is worse than I thought it was.

Mr. HENDERSON: You mean it is better than you thought it was.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I am putting that as what would be within the power of the Government to do. Even that, the extreme exercise of its power, would be to give a day's discussion beyond what is permitted under the British rules. The Government does not need to do that. It can have one adjourned and then, if it is reached, it can take it up and finish it on a certain day, vote on it and then take up the other. Either way can be adopted. The extreme exercise of the rule would be to give to the Opposition of this House a day's discussion beyond what is given under the British rules. Within that day, the Opposition have it within their power to organize themselves and to discuss the Bill within that time to the