

Speaker for the purpose of suppressing the disorder itself? If it had been the purpose of the committee to report the disorder of any individual member, that it might be reviewed and censured by this House, doubtless the proper procedure would have been for the Chairman to have called you, Mr. Speaker, to the Chair, and to have so reported. But no disorder in committee was reported to you, Mr. Speaker, for the censure of this House. The disorder that was reported for the censure of this House was the disorder in the House after you, Mr. Speaker, took the Chair and constituted a House in regular session and not a House in committee, so that rule 14 is in no way applicable to the special circumstances that arose a week ago Saturday night.

Mr. BUREAU: If there was no disorder in committee why did the Speaker take the Chair?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Surely the hon. member would not say I am guilty of making the extraordinary statement that there was no disorder in committee. I said the committee took no action to have the disorder reported to the House for the purpose of censure; whether or not the committee should have done so is entirely another matter. I will be the last to throw out any suggestion that there was not disorder of the most regrettable and painful type in committee of this House at that time.

Mr. MACDONALD: I would call the attention of my hon. friend to what the Speaker said after taking the Chair on that occasion:

I want the Chairman to rule on this point of order. In my judgment, it has been debated away beyond the usual length, and beyond the usual privileges of debate.

Mr. MEIGHEN: That was referred to by the hon. member for Westmorland, and if my hon. friend had been listening, he would have heard me say that I would come to the latter part of the remarks of the hon. member for Westmorland in due course. I want to follow strictly the order adhered to by my hon. friend in presenting his argument to the House. It cannot be contended, Mr. Speaker, that you are necessarily oblivious to the proceedings in committee, and unless it can be argued that, according to the rules of the House, you are oblivious to those proceedings, then you have a perfect right to take any constitutional step you may desire to take as a result of those proceedings. I refer to Bourinot, at page 422:

During the sittings of the committee, the Speaker generally remains in the House, or within immediate call, so that he may be

able to resume the Chair the moment it is necessary.

And in other places it is clearly laid down that you, Mr. Speaker, being a member of the House, have the right not only to be here, to be interested in and to listen to, but also to take part in, the proceedings of the committee.

Mr. EMMERSON: As a member only; not as Speaker.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Certainly, but inasmuch as the Speaker takes cognizance of the proceedings as a member, he knows what is going on. I now come to the point as to whether or not he had a right to resume his position as Speaker under the circumstances on that occasion. The hon. member for Westmorland argues that you were in error, Mr. Speaker, in two respects; first, that you had no right to take your place as Speaker of this House, and, under the circumstances, to move from your position as an ordinary member of the House; second, that, having done so, you had no right to instruct the Chairman to put the question.

I think I have stated very fairly what the hon. member for Westmorland endeavoured to prove. I contend, and do so with the utmost confidence, that not only were you, Mr. Speaker, amply justified in taking the course you did, but in doing so you performed an act that entitled you to the gratitude of this House and the lasting regard of the people of this country. I was rather astonished that the hon. member for Westmorland, when reciting the authority adduced by you a week ago today for the action you took, recited only a portion of the authority you so adduced. It may be, as my hon. friend argues, that the specific rule quoted by you was passed since 1867, but, supposing it was, it has more application, I admit, to a case of disorder that has arisen not in committee but in the House, that you should take cognizance of and proceed to act upon by way of adjourning the House. But it will be remembered that Mr. Speaker adduced another reason for his action in that regard, and that reason was supported by Bourinot at page 521. This authority, which is so eminently substantial and cannot be shaken, was assiduously ignored by the hon. member for Westmorland:

In a very urgent case of disorder, the Speaker may take the Chair immediately, without waiting for the report of the Chairman.

I will not have so little regard for the intelligence of this House as to argue that there did not exist on the night of the 15th of March a very urgent case of disorder. If there was no such case of disorder on that occasion, then the imagina-