

who came to this country from Alsace-Lorraine before it became German territory, would be within the meaning of this paragraph.

Mr. CARVELL: I imagine this clause was put in to meet conditions in the West, where there is some body of people the Government want to disfranchise, I presume.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: This is an enfranchising clause, is it not?

Mr. CARVELL: No, a disfranchising clause.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It is enfranchising.

Mr. CARVELL: I think I can read the English language. It says:

Provided that a person claiming to vote who was a natural born citizen or subject of France, Italy, or Denmark, and who arrived in Canada before the date upon which the territory in which he was born became part of Germany or Austria (as the case may be) shall not be deemed to have been born in an enemy country.

That is, if he arrived in Canada before the territory was conquered he is not an enemy, but if he arrived in Canada afterwards he is an enemy; he is a German. In the county of Victoria there is a large colony of Danes who came from Schlesweig-Holstein after the war of 1864. I cannot say just how many there are, but I am told there are a great many of them. They left that country because they would not live under German rule. As soon as Alsace-Lorraine was ceded to Germany, or shortly afterwards these people emigrated to New Brunswick. They form one of the most thriving and intelligent communities that I have ever been in, and I know of no place in my constituency—it was formerly in the constituency of my hon. friend from Victoria and Madawaska, but is now in my constituency—that it is a greater pleasure to visit. Many of these people were not naturalized for years and years; in fact, it is only within recent years that many of them have become naturalized.

Mr. MEIGHEN: When did they come to this country?

Mr. CARVELL: Late in the sixties, or very early in the seventies. Many of them did not become naturalized until recently, and I know that some of them have never been naturalized, although they have always been voters. These men who came to this country because they would not live under German rule, who have lived here practically all their lives and raised fami-

[Sir Robert Borden.]

lies here, who are intelligent people in every way, are to be disfranchised.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: What would you suggest?

Mr. CARVELL: Cut it out entirely.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: Cut what out?

Mr. CARVELL: I do not see why on earth you want to disfranchise a man who has left a conquered country. Take the man who came from Alsace-Lorraine after 1871, is there any reason why they should be disfranchised if they came here afterwards and within fifteen years became naturalized British subjects? Surely they would not be charged with having German sympathies. I cannot understand what in the world the Government means. It brings me back to my assumption that there must be some body of men in the West they want to get after, and therefore they insert this clause. I would feel that a most serious injustice was being done to these people in my constituency, who are among the very first citizens in New Brunswick, if, by passing this legislation they were disfranchised. The Prime Minister should give us at least a reasonable chance to go over these things and discuss them. Of course, if we cannot have that chance, we cannot have it, but I think it is carrying the thing to such a ridiculous extreme that it will at least appeal to the Prime Minister as absurd.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I thought it was carried to an extreme when the whole of Saturday was wasted. That is my opinion, notwithstanding any view to the contrary that may be entertained on the other side of the House. I think that is where the absurdity began in the first instance. We have no desire to avoid reasonable discussion of this Bill. We would like to have the third reading not later than Friday next, and I think the third reading should take place then, because the time available for this Parliament to deal with this or any other measure is drawing to a close. After the Bill has been disposed of in this House, it will have to be dealt with in another House, and there may be considerable delay there. I am perfectly willing to give to-morrow and the day after for the consideration of the Bill in Committee, and to sit as late on either of those evenings as hon. gentlemen on the other side may desire, provided that we have an understanding that the vote will be taken on Friday night or Saturday morning at any time hon. gentlemen may select.