

closure should be introduced in order to prevent a small minority of seven or eleven members from holding up the business of the House. In the British House of Commons, there are 670 members, which makes it a rather unwieldy body, whereas here we have only 221. There has been no organized attempt in this country since Confederation—and nobody knows it better than hon. gentlemen opposite—to obstruct the general business of the country. There has been holding up of certain Bills, call it obstruction if you will, but certainly there has been no obstruction this year except to the Naval Bill. Notwithstanding that fact, hon. gentlemen opposite introduce a measure into this House which is unprecedented for injustice and iniquity. It is brought in for the purpose of putting through Parliament a special piece of legislation which, I submit, with all candor, has not a majority of the people of this country behind it, for which the Government has no mandate and on which, should they appeal to the country, they would be overwhelmingly defeated. The union of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales was brought about by methods far different from those which brought about the union of the provinces of Canada. The countries forming the United Kingdom were brought into the union against their will. And so they could not afterwards complain that promises made to them were broken. But the provinces of Canada were brought into Confederation under a certain state of facts, an agreement to which the provinces gave their consent—some of them grudgingly, to be sure. They came into the Confederation with the understanding that they were to receive justice in this Parliament. The small provinces of Canada are the maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. They were brought into Confederation on the understanding that the rules of the British House of Commons at that time prevailing should prevail here; and if at any time they were badly treated by the majority in this country, their representatives had it in their power to obstruct the whole public business until their grievance was remedied. We in the maritime provinces are in the minority. Suppose that a majority from the two great provinces of Quebec and Ontario should treat us unfairly on any question, under the proposed rules, that measure can be put through this House under closure, the minority having no voice against it. That is the point I again ask the right hon. the Prime Minister to take into consideration before he finally rushes this piece of legislation through the House.

Another point was raised by the hon. member for Portage la Prairie. I come back to that hon. gentleman because, except for the Prime Minister, he is, judging by the speeches, the only gentleman on that side who has given careful attention to this question. He put forth a challenge to the effect

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that there was absolutely nothing that could be done under these proposed rules that could not be done in the British House of Commons under the rules that prevail there at this time. I have not gone into that phase of the question with as much detail as the hon. gentleman evidently has done, but there is one point on which I would be willing to accept his challenge. I would direct his attention to the question of Supply. I submit—while admitting that it is an extreme case—that while under these proposed rules, Supply could be put through this House under closure in one, two or three days, in England it is impossible to put through Supply in less than twenty days.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Read the English rule.

Mr. CARROLL: Yes, I hope the hon. member will do me the justice to believe that before discussing this question I did read the English rule.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Read it now.

Mr. CARROLL: I have read it and I think I understood it. I say again that in twenty days the whole Supply can be put through in the British House of Commons; some of it can be put through in compartments, but the whole Supply cannot be put through in less than twenty days.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Read the rule that says that.

Mr. CARROLL: I have read the rule, and I would merely retort, let the hon. gentleman himself read it. This is one very marked distinction between the rule of this House and the rule of the British House. But, Sir, hon. gentlemen opposite have tried to make us believe that anything which the British Parliament does is of necessity right. I protest against such a proposition. I say the British Parliament have made mistakes in the past, and we should not follow them in their mistakes. The procedure in the British Parliament is and should remain foreign to this House. The formation and composition of these two deliberative bodies are as distinct and far apart as the poles. The mere fact that they have closure in England does not make closure in this country a good thing. There is no doubt we have much to learn from the great mother of parliaments; but there is also no doubt that we have much to undo which has been done by that great legislative body. I could mention, if I had time, many things which the British Parliament has done which a Canadian Parliament would not dare to do. My hon. friend from Brandon (Mr. Aikins) gave us light on this question. He told us that Italy had closure, that Denmark, Belgium, Holland and Switzerland had closure; and therefore we should have closure. Why