

*Transport and Communications*

In my province, the way the deck is stacked at the moment, and according to the formula that is laid down constitutionally, even if we gain another 50,000 population we will lose one Member of Parliament after the next census. I could say that as long as it is a Conservative member I will not object. But whatever constituency is lost, it will mean that although 13 of us in the House now represent some 940,000 people, we will end up with 12 representing the same or a larger number of people, and we will have larger geographical areas to cover. This is almost impossible for any member. I hope that the committee when it reports back to the House, and the government when it is considering constitutional matters both in this House and with representatives of the provinces, will consider including in whatever new constitution Canada might have, however long that may take, a much better and more equitable formula for the basis of representation in this chamber.

This is a large country, thinly populated. To keep on compounding the folly we have engaged in since 1953 inhibits the democratic process in large geographical areas and militates against the participation of voters and citizens in the electoral process. It also militates against those who are elected to this chamber—against their ability to do an adequate job in representing their constituencies. I put these remarks on the record if for no other reason than to serve a warning on my colleagues on the Committee on Privileges and Elections that at least some of these areas will be discussed in the committee, and that we hope to get representation from people in other parts of the country on these matters.

Motion agreed to.

**TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**AUTHORIZATION FOR STANDING COMMITTEE  
TO ADJOURN FROM PLACE TO PLACE  
WITHIN CANADA**

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council)** moved:

That the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications be empowered, during its consideration of the subject matter of ground transportation at airports, to adjourn from place to place within Canada.

**Mr. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce):** Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the Transport Committee and have been since 1966, and when this proposal was put to the committee I opposed it. I opposed it because it

[Mr. Benjamin.]

is my feeling that too many committees of the House have been working outside Ottawa too often—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Allmand:** —to the extent that I feel it is very difficult for many of us to do the work that we have to do in Parliament. I agree that parliamentary committees should travel in Canada when it is necessary for them to do so, that is, when there are people who have to be heard and who are not able to come to Ottawa to put forward their points of view, or when it is necessary for a committee, because of the issue, to go to the spot to study that issue. However, I feel that over the last year or two too many of our committees have been going away from Ottawa when for a lesser amount of money they could bring witnesses to Ottawa and pay their expenses. Members would then be able to carry on their work in this House and in other committees, in caucus and so forth.

Many of us now have a large amount of correspondence. We have to deal with correspondence in our offices. Most backbenchers are on two or three committees, and then of course we have to know what is going on in the House. I am not criticizing this committee alone, but I must point out that the committee which I am on travelled to Toronto and Montreal this year and Labrador and the Maritimes late last fall. In fact, this is the fifth time in less than 1½ years that the committee will travel outside Ottawa. I reserve my judgment on several of the other trips that we made but I think we have been spending too much time away.

• (9:40 p.m.)

I want to go on record as saying that I feel we should only take committees out of Ottawa as an exception rather than the rule. If it is possible to bring witnesses here, that should be done. In this particular study of ground transportation between city and airport we have already had hearings in Montreal and Toronto. If the argument is made that to be equitable we should have hearings in the west, I wonder whether we will learn much more by going out there. I understand the itinerary provides for visiting four cities in the west to study the same problem. Surely, one or two would be enough. The steering committee, which is representative of all parties, approved this particular motion. When it reported to the main committee I took exception to it, but I was voted down.