

Electoral Boundaries Commissions

annexes the latter and apparently it is not seeking to emulate some other provinces.

Mr. Fisher: I wonder whether the minister and the hon. member for York-Scarborough have considered that under clause 25 and other clauses where we provide for members of parliament making protests to the House of Commons about reports and decisions, we almost force the group of members of parliament who will protest to base their objections on a referral back to clause 13 in order to justify them. Probably I am anticipating more trouble than is likely to ensue but it seems to me, particularly at the first shot, that it will be fairly easy to get one third of the members from a province to make some objections.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if the hon. gentleman recalls the amendment passed the other evening. I think he is basing his contention on the original bill and not on the amendment.

Mr. Fisher: I am still for the amendment, but it would be fairly easy to get ten members to object. The present amendment gives one more reason for making objections. Ordinarily whatever we may say about what becomes the law does not really matter a damn. We have encountered that many times, particularly with reference to sections of the Railway Act. One can go back and read the debates and note what members thought those sections meant, but by the time the courts got through interpreting them they did not come out the same way at all. This is an unusual statute in that it is going to give members of parliament the possibility of practising delaying tactics and interpretation tactics. Has the minister considered what this amendment dealing with the rate of growth can lead to? It is really nebulous, and almost any member of parliament could hinge an argument on it and thus raise an objection. Given the fact that objections are likely to be certain, this is a small point, but the minister should consider it.

Dealing with this clause and the bill generally may I say I gathered, particularly from listening to the hon. member for Moose Jaw-Lake Centre, that some members and some of the people who are commenting on redistribution have not yet grasped the enormity of it all. There is just not going to be the same pattern in Canada again.

Mr. Pickersgill: Would the hon. member permit a question? Would he not expedite the passage of the bill by saving that part of his

speech for his next article after we have adopted this clause?

Mr. Fisher: If I ever thought the minister would deign to read the article, I might consider it.

Mr. Woolliams: Oh, they are reading them.

Mr. Fisher: Perhaps they are, but I do not flatter myself. It is like rocking a boat in a lake without producing any ripples.

Mr. Knowles: After the fine commercial the minister gave you—

Mr. Fisher: Well, the minister is good at giving himself and the Liberal party commercials.

Mr. Woolliams: His estimates come up next.

Mr. Fisher: Whose estimates come up next?

An hon. Member: The C.B.C.

Mr. Fisher: I should not have these distractions. There is not a constituency in Canada, except for Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland, which will not be much changed; and I expect that anything we do here will only add to the complication. My hon. friend sitting next to me said he was looking at this density matter, and that some constituencies were more dense than others.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pickersgill: Was he thinking of Port Arthur?

Mr. Fisher: No, he was thinking of Newfoundland. I merely wish to suggest to the minister that by this amendment, which I still intend to vote for, we may be creating a complication which will be remembered in a year or so when the protests against the new boundaries are mounting in this chamber.

Mr. Harkness: I am glad to see this amendment introduced. When I spoke on this bill some months ago in the earlier stage of its consideration I expressed the view that some account should be taken of population growth, that is the growth which had actually taken place since the census on which the redistribution was based.

There is no doubt in my mind that the absence of such a consideration at the time of the last redistribution in 1952 is one of the main reasons we have such an inequitable position at the present time as far as the suburban areas of our cities are concerned. Had any consideration been given to the known growth factor in those years we should