

Redistribution

of the government that it has such a large majority—have made their decision as to what must be done by their members on the committee, as explained to us yesterday at the ministerial level.

Without extending this beyond the point raised by the minister on this occasion, I simply want to point out that last night I was suggesting that this matter go back before the committee for re-examination, particularly those points which have been so much under discussion in this committee. When the minister says that amendments may be moved, they would be amendments in relation to a particular plan that has already been decided upon. I used the simile before that the only difference between what had happened on earlier occasions and now is that in this case the condemned man is allowed to see the scaffold in advance. That is the only difference, but in this particular case, if it is left on the basis it is now, the only change would be that he would be permitted to make a motion by way of amendment which would change the length of the rope. That is really all that is left when you are dealing with constituencies where decisions have been made.

I would still hope, when it is so clear that there are these specific objections, that the general committee on redistribution—I am not talking about the committee of the whole house—be permitted to re-examine this and see if they cannot meet some of the objections that have been made. In the meantime we would be wasting no time because we could proceed with other business that is available.

Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce): May I just make a brief reference to what has been said. My hon. friend suggests that, because the Liberal members of a particular province met together to discuss the problems of that province, they are offending against parliament. By inference he suggests that no one else does that.

Mr. Drew: Now, Mr. Chairman, let us keep this on a reasonable basis.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

An hon. Member: Get a little more rope.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman, I hope hon. members will recognize that at least it is less inconvenient for me to remain here in Ottawa than it is for some others, and I am quite prepared—

An hon. Member: Do not worry about us.

Mr. Drew:—if hon. members—

Mr. Gardiner: That is why you are keeping us here.

Mr. Stuart (Charlotte): Do not threaten.

An hon. Member: That is one reason we are still here.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman, I am quite prepared to wait whatever time is necessary to have my remarks heard in this committee. I was simply pointing out to the minister that I was not suggesting for one moment that there should not be discussion; there was never any suggestion of that in what I said. What I was referring to was the absolutely clear and unshrouded statement that a caucus had said what must be done and that those were the instructions.

Mr. Gardiner: My remarks were with regard to the existence of constituencies; not with regard to any boundary lines at all.

Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce): I think both parties have made their position clear and we might proceed with the discussion of the bill.

Mr. Adamson: I know the minister does not want to leave any misapprehension about the United Kingdom situation. I happened to be there at the time and the objection to that bill was that it was in fact a gerrymandering bill in that it did away with the twelve university seats where normally people of independent thought were elected and it weighted the representation toward Socialist urban and away from Conservative rural representation. Those were the objections to the bill.

Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce): I quite agree. I quoted that simply to point out that even under this wonderful system there can still be political objections.

Mr. Kirk (Antigonish-Guysborough): Mr. Chairman, in taking part in this debate on redistribution I first of all want to compliment the Minister of Resources and Development upon the very fair statement he made yesterday in the house in reply to the observations of the hon. member for Annapolis-Kings. As a member of the redistribution committee for the maritime provinces I endorse everything said by the hon. minister.

May I in passing say that I know all hon. members were glad to hear the minister say that our good friend, the hon. member for Queens-Shelburne, is improving in health so much that he may be taking his seat in the house when parliament reconvenes in the fall.

At the outset I may say that I had not intended taking part in this debate, for two reasons. First, I did not think that there would be any occasion to do so as I was firmly convinced that the hon. member for Annapolis-Kings, if not pleased, would at least be satisfied that the redistribution was