

Redistribution

Paragraph 3, Cape Breton South, agreed to.

Paragraph 4, Colchester-Hants, agreed to.

Paragraph 5, Cumberland, agreed to.

On paragraph 6—Digby-Annapolis-Kings.

Mr. Fleming: I have an amendment on paragraph No. 6 Digby-Annapolis-Kings. The amendment is:

That the schedule to this act be amended by striking out paragraph 6 relating to Nova Scotia on page 45 and the following substituted therefor:
"6. Annapolis-Kings, consisting of the counties of Annapolis and Kings."

Mr. Chairman, in view of the discussion this matter has had already in the house I do not think I need to spend much time reviewing the aspects of the proposed amendment; but I will point out to the committee that the amendment does give an opportunity to effect equalization of representation in three adjoining ridings.

The report of the majority of the maritimes subcommittee and the main committee as embodied in the schedule will have the result that the riding of Queens-Lunenburg will have a population of 45,800; the riding of Shelburne-Yarmouth-Clare will have a population of 45,595 and the riding of Digby-Annapolis-Kings will have a population of 66,510. It cannot be said that that is equality of representation. The amendment if adopted will have the effect of equalizing representation among these three ridings, and Mr. Chairman, if this amendment is adopted with the support of fair-minded members of the house, there will be a corresponding amendment in clauses 10 and 11 with the following object in view.

The Chairman: Order.

Mr. Fleming: There will be a riding of Queens-Lunenburg-Shelburne—that is to say with the municipality of Shelburne—with a total population of 53,619. The amendment to No. 11 will have the effect of creating a riding of Shelburne-Yarmouth with the inclusion of Barrington municipality, having a total population of 49,356. The adoption of the amendment now submitted will have the effect of continuing the present riding of Annapolis-Kings unchanged with a population of 54,930.

Mr. Chairman, if the purpose of redistribution is to effect equality of representation as between comparable ridings, the case for the amendment is overwhelming and unanswerable, whereas the best that can be said for the majority report as embodied in the schedule is that it will have the effect of creating such a disparity in representation as between the riding of Digby-Annapolis-Kings on the one hand and the ridings of

Queens-Lunenburg and Shelburne-Yarmouth-Clare on the other that the first named riding will have approximately 45 per cent more population than the two last named ridings, which are adjacent and comparable with it in every respect.

Amendment (Mr. Fleming) negatived: Yeas, 19; nays, 64.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Chairman, before the schedule carries I would like to say one word. I want to join with the statements of the minister and the hon. member from Antigonish-Guysborough who spoke this morning in paying tribute to the hon. member who represents Queens-Shelburne constituency at the present time. I want to associate myself entirely with everything that was said by those gentlemen with respect to the gentleman who has represented the constituency so well. I know that we all regret the fact that, due to physical condition and a very serious illness from which he is making recovery, it is impossible for him to be here at this time. When the minister suggested that it was the constituency of Queens-Shelburne which was really suffering the loss because they were being deprived of his services I think that was a fair statement; and I think the minister will also agree that because of his physical disabilities it would be improbable that he would embark upon political enterprise in the future. That is at least one of the factors that enters into the situation.

I want also to refer to one thing the minister said yesterday, to the effect that we were going back to the same system of redistribution which had been agreed upon in 1933. That, of course, is a factual statement, Mr. Chairman. We are going back to the redistribution of 1933.

I think it would be worth while if one looked at the figures for a moment to ascertain the situation in 1933 and the situation today. This morning I had an opportunity of consulting the census records, and found the census figures for 1931 on which that redistribution was based and the census figures for today. I find that in 1931 the constituency which was redistributed at that time, Annapolis-Kings and the Digby municipality, had a population of 49,447; today, it is 66,510. The minister was dealing with percentages yesterday, and that is a percentage increase of 34.5 per cent as between the proposed constituency now and the constituency as it was redistributed in 1931. As a matter of fact, the increase in Annapolis and Kings counties is almost twice as great as was the entire population of Digby municipality