

*Electoral Boundaries Commission*

up of ten commissions, but just the same I hope that the few remarks which I wished to make will be taken into serious consideration.

I do not think it would be in the best interests of Canada to advocate the establishment of ten commissions which will certainly not give satisfaction. Let us take our responsibilities as members of the federal parliament, since redistribution comes within the jurisdiction of the federal government.

The provinces are increasingly jealous of their autonomy and since they are themselves ready to respect federal autonomy, I believe it is up to the federal parliament or a federal parliamentary committee to decide on redistribution throughout Canada, so as to maintain federal unity.

[Text]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

On clause 3—*Commissions to be established.*

[Translation]

**Mr. Rondeau:** Mr. Chairman, I have a few short comments to make on clause 3.

Following the brief observations made by the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette) respecting the establishment of commissions to report upon the readjustment of the representation of the provinces in the House of Commons and in accordance with the very principle set forth in the bill, that of representation by population, I should like to propose an amendment.

In order to improve that representation by population in Canada, the house should reduce the number of the proposed commissions, because there is no point, as I have said before, in setting up ten commissions, because some would only represent four federal members and would have but a few problems to deal with, especially, for instance, in the case of the maritime provinces.

Some members have said that if we have only one commission for the whole country, its work would not be efficient. On the other hand, others have contended that if only four commissions were established, there would not be enough commissioners to settle all the problems.

For my part, I would think that if we want to have a number of members proportionate to the population, these commissions should be established on the same basic principle, that is, a commission for the western provinces, including Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, would be sufficient, because it would represent a good deal of the population of Canada, that is about 40 ridings. A commission could be set up for

the province of Ontario which would include about 80 constituencies, one for the province of Quebec, including approximately 75 constituencies, another for the maritime provinces, for about 35 constituencies.

If the principle of representation by population has been put forward, I feel that the same principle should be applied to the establishment of the electoral boundaries commissions.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Kamouraska (Mr. Dionne):

That the number ten be replaced by the number four.

And I also move that the following be added at the end of section 3:

That those four commissions be divided as follows: one for the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia; one for Ontario; another for the province of Quebec, and the last one for the maritime provinces, namely New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland.

[Text]

**The Chairman:** Is the committee ready for the question?

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a few words about the amendment. I may say to the hon. member for Shefford that this was precisely the idea we started with when we began to consider this measure, when it was brought to my attention, as I think I told the house quite frankly in the last session of parliament at the first stage of the discussions on this whole business, and was made clear to us that we could not really hope to have an election under a redistribution before 1967 or 1968 if we had only one commission, because of the time that would necessarily elapse between the establishment of the commission and the time it would complete its work—

**Mr. Woolliams:** Oh.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** The hon. member for Bow River interjected at that point. I might point out to him that he ought to look at the history of the provincial commission in Ontario and see how long it has been engaged already in the task; and up to now it has dealt with metropolitan Toronto and not the rest of the province. Everyone who has studied these things has come to the same conclusion. We then thought, and it seemed a very reasonable thought, as the hon. member has put it forward now, that perhaps the tasks would be about equal—not quite; but about equal in proportion and in size—if there was one commission for the four provinces east of Quebec, one commission for Quebec, one for Ontario and one for the four provinces west