

boundaries and constituencies would be required to provide reasons as to why the boundaries are outlined in the way they are.

It should be noted that if reasons are given regarding how the boundaries of constituencies are established, there would be less controversy and objections to those boundaries.

I am pleased to note also that an amendment was passed in committee requiring that the report of a commission be published under subsection 17(3) in the *Canada Gazette* and the recommendation therein set forth.

I would like to express my appreciation to all members of the House for the negotiations we had with the official representatives of the different parties in the House, for waiving the necessary notice required to bring this bill forward today so that it can receive third reading and be passed.

● (1750)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): The hon. member for—

An hon. Member: Coast Chilcotin.

Mr. Jack Pearsall (Coast Chilcotin): Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is west of the Rockies. I have found the same doubts as to who I am in the riding when men who have walked a very long distance, and look at me and ask, "Where have I seen you before?"

I should like to say that I endorse the comments made by my colleagues across the floor. We on this side of the House heartily endorse the amendment to this bill. In committee I stated that, as a former returning officer, I should like to recommend that all members pay attention to the bill and remember the text of it. If everyone knows what is in the bill there will be no room for mistakes in the next election.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker, I rise to extend my congratulations to a dozen or more new members whom I see in the House this afternoon and to remark that some of us had to wait years to see any private members' public bills get through. They are seeing such a bill get through today, and they have not yet sat here for two months.

Mr. John M. Reid (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council): Madam Speaker, I should like to indicate to hon. members, particularly the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), that as a result of a cabinet decision taken about three years ago there was a change in government policy with respect to private members' public bills. The record shows that since that cabinet decision was taken more private members' public bills and private members' motions have been passed than were passed in the previous ten years in this House. What we are trying to do now, Madam Speaker, is to examine each private members' public bill from the viewpoint of each department and try to give the benefit of doubt to members. We are trying to avoid bills being talked out as far as possible. The same applies to motions.

The draftsmanship of the private members' public bills presents a problem, however. In committee we are finding

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that if a bill comes back and is passed into law the draftsmanship might prevent it from being good law. We may have to work out a different system so that more time is made available, for discussion with the members. Hopefully the bills would be drafted more carefully, but perhaps many of the ideas that now show up in the form of a bill could be better discussed in the House of Commons in the form of a motion which would allow greater latitude. We may have to shift priorities.

As we start to look at these bills from the point of view of law, we find that they do not achieve their purpose, and are defective in other respects as well. There are dilemmas, and we may ask hon. members not to proceed with them as bills but, instead, send their subject matters to committees for discussion. As hon. members know, the power of committees to change bills is extremely limited by the material they are originally given, so we will have to overcome this by sending the subject material to committees for discussion.

I want to indicate to hon. members that we have changed the policy. We are trying to work out some agreements and trying to cope with the problem under existing Standing Orders. We hope a greater number of bills and motions will go to committee. There are attendant responsibilities upon members to canvass the ideas they are expounding in bills and motions. This could make our job and that of the committees much easier.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Madam Speaker, I agree with the parliamentary secretary. After 107 years it is time that more private members' ideas were debated and brought to a decision. The parliamentary secretary suggested one way that this could be done.

As a lawyer who has ascended to the respectability of being a member of the House of Commons and left the low degree of practice at the bar, I sometimes think it would be better if more bills were drafted by laymen. They might be more intelligible than those drafted now by members of the government.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

Some hon. Members: Six o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Is it agreed to call it six o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. The hour appointed for consideration of private members' business having expired, I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock p.m.

At 5.57 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.