

*Electoral Boundaries Commissions*

**Mr. Knowles:** Move it. We would like to hear it.

**Mr. MacLean (Queens):** I am buying this in a poke because I have not read it yet. I think I will read my own amendment and in doing so can add to it what the minister has suggested. I move:

That clause 13 be amended by deleting the word "and" in line 31 and inserting a new subsection (b) as follows:

"(b) where, immediately before the coming into force of this act, any electoral district in a province was represented by two members of the House of Commons, the commission may, if it sees fit to do so, recommend the continuation of such representation, in which case the division of that province into electoral districts and the description of the boundaries thereof in accordance with rule (a) shall proceed subject to such adjustments as are necessary in order to give effect to the continuation of such representation;"

and that the present subsection (b) be designated subsection (c) and that in line 46 thereof there be inserted after the word "case" "except as may be necessary in order to give effect to rule (b)."

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Since the other one has been vetted by the law officers of the crown I wonder whether the hon. gentleman would mind having it formally moved so that we will not get into any possible legal troubles.

**Mr. MacLean (Queens):** I believe it is the same wording. I have not read it, but I would move it as the official amendment.

**The Chairman:** Mr. MacLean (Queens) moves:

That clause 13 of Bill C-72 be amended

(a) by striking out lines 30 to 33 on page 4 thereof and substituting therefor the following:

"(b) representation commissioner under section 12; where, immediately before the day this act was assented to, provision was made for any electoral district in the province to be represented by two members of the House of Commons, the commission may, if it sees fit to do so, recommend the continuation of such representation, in which case the division of the province into electoral districts and the description of the boundaries thereof in accordance with rule (a) shall proceed subject to such adjustments as are necessary in order to give effect to the continuation of such representation;

(c) the commission may depart from the strict application of rules (2) and (b) in any case where"

(b) by striking out lines 46 and 47 on page 4 thereof and substituting therefor the following:  
"but in no case, except as may be necessary in order to give effect to rule (b), shall the population of any electoral district in the province as a result thereof"

**Mr. Barnett:** Mr. Chairman, I recall an earlier observation of the minister that perhaps those who come from the eastern part of the country may have a greater appreciation of historic traditions and customs than others. As someone who was born, brought

up and has lived all his life in western Canada, may I say that at least some of us have some appreciation of the historic traditions and customs not only of our own areas but of other parts of the country.

However, Mr. Chairman, the point on which I wish to rise in speaking against the proposed amendment is that while I may have a good deal of sympathy with the point of view of members who have suggested this amendment out of respect for their own local customs and traditions, nevertheless I think it should be obvious that in spite of that sympathy we in this house have to recognize that this amendment, if it passes, is not going to be confined in its implications and results to Prince Edward Island or Nova Scotia.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Yes, it is.

**Mr. Barnett:** Hon. members are trying to tell me I am wrong, but perhaps they should listen to my conclusion. I think we recognize that each provincial commission is going to be autonomous in respect of its operations within a province under the provisions of the legislation. Nevertheless, I think we recognize also that there is provision in the proposed legislation for objections to be raised in this house.

The point I should like to make is that accepting an amendment such as is proposed may very well develop arguments as to why certain customs and traditions with regard to county boundaries and other historic considerations in respect of constituencies in other parts of the country should be retained by commissions in the respective provinces. It strikes me, therefore, that this is not purely a local issue with regard to Halifax or Queens, but one to which consideration should be given because of its general effect across the country.

It is with that sort of consideration in mind and, as I say, with some sympathy for the point of view that has been advanced for the respective traditions, that I feel it would be most unwise for us to adopt this amendment. It would serve to put not only the commissions in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island on more of a hot seat, but indirectly the commissions in other provinces across the country.

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

Amendment agreed to: Yeas, 24; Nays, 17.

Clause agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported.