

*Electoral Boundaries Commission*

municipal or federal level, and this would certainly be an important factor. Do they take their duties seriously? Have they worked hard at them? Once we start to impose qualifications and to seek people who have the most qualifications under each one of these tests, we automatically limit to an ever narrowing degree the choice which a chief justice has in his province.

If we are prepared to accept a group or class of people, such as university presidents, etc., and limit choice to this class, we are going to leave little or no choice. We are going to subordinate all of the qualifications which I think might be most valuable to the commissioner to the qualification of belonging to one particular class. For the life of me I cannot see that being the president of a university is a necessary indication that he has the proper qualifications for this type of job. It may be he is ideal, but it certainly does seem to be putting the cart before the horse in limiting the field in this way, and to say that we should pick from a class of people chosen for some purpose other than their suitability for this particular job. First things come first, and I suggest that the most important qualifications are those I have outlined. It is their fitness to handle the job, not their position in the community. All of this I submit is suggested in the amendment of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, because he wants to put on the appearance of less political partisanship. I repeat that I think the objective here is to put on the "appearance" of less political partisanship, not to make it less political.

For the reasons I have outlined I cannot but come to the conclusion that the appointments on either side would cancel out—and all of this for what? I am not sure that I follow that type of reasoning. I think the people of this country are quite used to the fact that matters political are usually handled by the politicians; that when appointments are made by one party or another—especially if appointments are made by one Liberal and one Conservative—we are going to have two people appointed who will be watching very closely that the rules are followed and that things look good as well as are good. Neither one is going to dare press for a political advantage for his party because he knows that the other is going to make sure that this is known to the public. I suggest it is somewhat akin to the argument about outlawing the communist party. Should we outlaw it or have it where we can watch it?

That is what we are doing here. Political partisanship is open and aboveboard. The motives and actions of these people will be in full view. There is no doubt that they are partisan to one side or the other and that they are going to be most carefully watched for that very reason. Their motivation does not have to be sought for because their actions are going to be examined most closely. I suggest that by this method, putting them out in the open instead of erecting an artificial fence around them, we get a realistic approach to the problem.

There is one other possibility, of course. I have not studied the amendment closely enough or perhaps do not know the country well enough to be sure that there are enough possible choices from among the categories listed. It might be that a chief justice would not be able to find the requisite number of candidates in that province who would come within these categories. Before the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre objects too strenuously, I suggest that these people have to be ready, willing and able to serve, so that to say that the number is surely sufficient in each province does not go quite far enough. I suggest that possibly only 10 per cent of those in these categories would even consider accepting an appointment to serve on such a commission. If you are going to restrict the categories unnecessarily from which the choices can be made you are likely to find yourself faced with an unsolvable defect by reason of this amendment.

Let me make one further point about the agreeability of such people to serve. I cannot see that it would make the people appointed any happier to be appointed by the chief justice. If the chief justice is a Liberal and a Liberal is appointed, even though the chief justice is supposed to make non-political appointments I am sure the appointee is going to feel a little uncomfortable about his position on the commission. The same is true of his cohorts on the commission.

I suggest there is nothing that would make a man serving in such a position feel more comfortable than to know that his appointment had been made by a leader of a political party because of his qualifications for the job and that no one was going to expect him to be anything but a Conservative, if he was one. I am not suggesting that because a person appointed is a Liberal or a Conservative he is going to put his party first. I know there are many in all parties who would strive to their utmost to rid themselves as far as possible of any political bias, who would