

Electoral Boundaries

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

● (1600)

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce) moved that Bill C-14, to incorporate the Federal Business Development Bank, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: When shall the bill be read the third time?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Now, by leave.

Mr. Speaker: I understand that there may be a disposition in the House, with leave, to read the bill the third time now.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Gillespie moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

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

* * *

REPRESENTATION ACT, 1974

MEASURE TO PROVIDE FOR REPRESENTATION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND ESTABLISH ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSIONS

The House resumed, from Monday, December 2, consideration of the motion of Mr. Sharp that Bill C-36, to provide for representation in the House of Commons, to establish electoral boundaries commissions and to remove the temporary suspension of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, when I adjourned the debate on this redistribution bill on Monday I was speaking about the frustration of the ordinary Canadian who finds difficulty in exercising a certain amount of control over a government that is continually growing. I am closing the debate today although I know that several of my colleagues would liked to have participated in it. I mention the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche), the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta (Mr. Reynolds), the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon) who feel as I do. They recognize, as I do, that anything that is big does not necessarily mean that it is better. Just because we have a big government does not mean we have good government. A big House of Commons does not mean it will be a good House of Commons.

When the day comes that the government gives members of this House the opportunity fully to exercise their abilities, we will be able to give greater service to Canada than is being given at the present time.

[Mr. Speaker.]

On Monday, the hon. member for Edmonton Centre (Mr. Papproski) brought to the attention of the House the fact that Senator Hastings from Alberta, a Liberal, had made an announcement regarding LIP grants to the city of Edmonton. Surely such announcements should either be made by the minister in the House or even by the member representing the area. I feel this is almost bordering on a question of privilege when a spokesman for the Liberal organization makes such announcements. I am not so much concerned about who makes the actual announcement provided it is a member of the cabinet, preferably the minister in charge of the department, and it is made in the House of Commons.

I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, that some members opposite seem to consider that we are conducting a filibuster on this bill. We are not. I mentioned that some of my colleagues would like to speak but they are willing to forgo their opportunity so that the bill may come to a vote and go to committee. After the bill had only 3½ hours of debate the hon. member for Coast Chilcotin (Mr. Pearsall) yesterday put the following question to the President of the Privy Council, as reported at page 1889 of *Hansard*:

MR. JACK PEARSALL (COAST CHILCOTIN): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of the Privy Council. In view of the filibuster on the redistribution bill last night, can the minister indicate when that bill will be brought forward again?

HON. MITCHELL SHARP (PRESIDENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL): As soon as I have some indication that progress in desired on the other side, Mr. Speaker.

It is unfortunate that the hon. member spoke in such a manner when members on this side of the House from British Columbia are so very concerned about what is happening with this bill. As I said, bigger does not mean better, and an increase in the number of members in the House of Commons will in no way ensure better government. The ordinary Canadian is becoming frustrated daily as he feels he is losing control.

In Great Britain where the population is 55,514,600, parliament has 635 members. That means each member represents 87,000 constituents. In the United States with a population of 212 million there are 435 Congressmen and 100 Senators, which means that each person elected represents 396,000 people. With 22 million people in Canada, taking the members of the House of Commons and the Senate combined, each member represents 60,000 people. Canadians are the most over-governed people in the world. If the government really wanted to give good service to the average Canadian it would make better use of the Senate which is assigned a disproportionate membership from certain regions.

Commissioners will be appointed under the provisions of this bill to oversee the redistribution of electoral boundaries. This rules out any possibility of a member of the House of Commons or other individual having influence over such boundaries. This is one of the areas that created great concern in the last redistribution.

● (1610)

The commissioners completely failed to consider the needs of the people. I know that Saskatchewan and Manitoba need protection, just as the eastern provinces and the maritime provinces do, and I think the people of Canada recognize this, as do members of this House. We in