

Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act

There were probably others. It is not clear to me, however, whether we will be dealing with them seriatim or whether they will be mixed and anyone can rise having objections under Quebec, then British Columbia and then Ontario. I think clarification on that is required.

Then the President of the Privy Council, who drafted the House order which was passed unanimously yesterday, responded by saying, as reported at page 27152 of *Hansard*:

Yes, Madam Speaker. As soon as they are recognized, Hon. Members will be able to express their views and speak to the objections of their choice, whatever the Province. That is why we do not want the debate to be terminated at 3 p.m., since we realize that not all Hon. Members will be able to speak tomorrow, considering the number of Provinces involved. However, as the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) pointed out, by law, we have no choice but to start the debate, and we want it to cover all the Provinces and Territories I mentioned earlier, but, as the Hon. Member pointed out, when a Member is recognized, he is free to speak to the electoral boundaries of a constituency in any of the four or five Provinces and Territories I mentioned before.

The confusion we now have has arisen for some reason, but there is no doubt in *Hansard* what was the intent of the President of the Privy Council when he put forward that motion. The explanation was clear prior to its being given unanimous consent by Hon. Members of the House.

Mr. Nielsen: After, after.

Mr. Evans: I would like now to call it one o'clock and perhaps prior to two o'clock we could come to some agreement as to the precise meaning of this so that we can commence the debate as intended at two o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): In response to the remarks of the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary, obviously it is to the benefit of all Hon. Members of the House the decision be made now so that Hon. Members coming in at two o'clock will know where they are going.

May I in the briefest way indicate to Hon. Members what has happened. The Hon. Member for Yukon rose. He referred to various aspects of procedure and made various quotations from authorities on the subject. He sought a ruling from the Deputy Speaker as to whether or not objections to ridings would be debated seriatim, as he said, in the order they were presented to the Chair. The Deputy Speaker ruled that they would be in that order. That means there will be a transfer from one particular province to another. That ruling is perfectly clear.

As the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) suggested and as I think the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary is suggesting, the House may decide that it should go a different way, by grouping ridings by province. The Chair has no difficulty in that regard. What I am faced with, however, is that my predecessor has made a ruling and obviously I will not overrule it. Hon. Members can easily find a way out. If by unanimous consent they wish to proceed in another manner, there is no difficulty. I thought it would be a courtesy to the House to have the decision made before the lunch hour so that Hon. Members could return knowing what is happening.

Mr. Prud'homme: One o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Nielsen: One o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Then I have to say, as I have already indicated, that we will proceed on the ruling which is in effect as of this time. At two o'clock Hon. Members will find on their desks lists of the ridings in the order in which they have been handed to the Chair for the purposes of debate. If the House decides on some different approach at two o'clock, so be it.

It being after one o'clock, I do now leave the chair with some relief until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1.06 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. When the House rose at one o'clock, Hon. Members who were present at that time will recall that there were several points of order raised as to the manner in which the House might best proceed for discussion of the objections which have been provided to the Chair, and now to the House, related to electoral redistribution in the various provinces of Canada.

This morning, my predecessor in the chair, the Deputy Speaker, had ruled on a point of order raised by the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) and the ruling in effect requires that discussions in the House proceed, not by province nor grouped by province, but seriatim by riding in the order in which the objections were brought to the attention of the Chair.

Following that, several Hon. Members suggested that it might be more convenient if the objections to the individual ridings were raised and dealt with province by province. Since it is not the intention of the Chair to overrule the ruling of my predecessor, it would then be a matter for unanimous consent if the House decides to proceed in some fashion different from that ruled on by the Deputy Speaker.

I would like to make one thing particularly clear to all Hon. Members. It may lurk in the minds of some Hon. Members that if an Hon. Member does not raise an objection to the Electoral Boundaries Commission redistribution of ridings today, such an Hon. Member may in some fashion lose some right or prerogative which he might otherwise have.

● (1410)

It is the intention of the Chair, just prior to three o'clock, at which time the House Order calls for an adjournment of the debate, to read the list of ridings, whether grouped by province or not is irrelevant, and to indicate that debate on objections to those ridings will adjourn and has been adjourned as of three o'clock.

Further debate is entirely in order but to underline the point I am making, no Member, whether present or absent, whether he or she speaks or does not speak to the subject matter of an objection to a riding, will in any way lose his or her right to