

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, April 25, 1966

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

• (2:40 p.m.)

REDISTRIBUTION

ALLOCATION OF TIME FOR CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the provisions of standing order 15A, I propose that the question of allocation of time for the consideration of objections made pursuant to section 20 of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act be referred to the business committee. Before you read my proposal, Mr. Speaker, since this is the first time this rule has been invoked in the house, I would like the indulgence of the house to make a brief explanation of the reason it is put forward at this time.

Mr. Speaker: Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. McIlraith: The reason for putting it forward is that the house leaders have been considering the method of having the debate on the redistribution objections conducted in a way that would be satisfactory to all hon. members, in the sense that it would give them a fair and equitable proportion of the time for discussing the various matters as they relate to their particular parts of the country.

There are some 33 notices of objections before the Chair, and they are distributed among nine provinces.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Could you give the numbers for each province?

Mr. McIlraith: Yes. For Alberta there is one, but it relates to all the districts. For British Columbia there is one relating to all the districts and another relating to an individual constituency. For Manitoba there is one relating to all the districts. For New Brunswick there is one relating to all the districts. For Nova Scotia there are three relating to individual constituencies. For Ontario there is one relating to all the districts and four relating to individual constituencies. For Prince Edward Island there is one

relating to all the districts. For Quebec there are two relating to all the districts and 18 relating to individual constituencies. For Saskatchewan there is one relating to all the districts. That makes a total of 33, of which 24 relate to individual constituencies. Therefore it would seem that there should be some method of apportioning time to give some reasonably fair distribution of the time to discuss the various types of objections. For instance, some of the objections relating to individual constituencies concern only the use of names and things like that.

While there is every prospect that we may have a satisfactory agreement, I thought it well to give this notice under the standing order. I hope that when we start the debate on Wednesday we will not have to use the procedure under standing order 15A at all. However, if we do it will be only to have the total amount of time fixed by statute evenly distributed among the various provinces.

Mr. Kindt: Mr. Speaker, is there any possibility of having a discussion on this? I ask because I am a member from Alberta; my name is on a list along with 17 other members from Alberta, and I intend to talk on redistribution.

Mr. McIlraith: The whole purpose of the rule is that the discussion on the allocation of time, instead of taking place in the house, would take place among the party house leaders.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to answer the house leader for a moment. First of all I am rather surprised that he would introduce this motion at this stage without first setting up the business committee. Actually, as the house leader himself has said, the new rules in this respect have not been applied previously, but as I understood them we would set up a business committee which would sit down and work out these proposals and then submit a notice saying, "We are going to allocate such an amount of time." This proposal could have the appearance of a guillotine, to say we would have so much time to discuss a very important question, namely redistribution. The right to discuss this question is in accordance with the act which we passed in parliament.