

Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Suspension

half of a member to represent this great resource development.

This is one of the factors which must be borne in mind when we talk about representation. It is not only the question of the people who are served. I am sure, for example, that in the run of a year I get as many letters and telephone calls as all the Ottawa members put together. This is basically because in cities such as Ottawa citizens have access to all the provincial members and to a municipal structure which is almost as heavy in bureaucracy as the average provincial government. Certainly one does not find the average citizen phoning up the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) in his capacity as the member for Ottawa-Carleton and complaining because a main line sewer is blocked, or because snow clearing is inadequate, or because parking space is not available at the local wrestling arena. There are other structures which can handle questions of this kind. Yet in the rural parts of the country people depend heavily upon their member of parliament to fulfil service or ombudsman roles.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I think the hon. member's remarks constitute the type of speech one hears on third reading of a measure such as this rather than being directed toward the proposal presented by the hon. member for Peel South (Mr. Blenkarn) and dealt with by the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia). They addressed themselves, really, to the question of the time formula which ought to be used in dealing with this legislation. The hon. member is not really dealing with that question at all; he is dealing with the over-all, broad issue. I think that in fairness to the member who has presented the motion which is now before us, hon. members who take part in the debate at this stage should try to make their contributions relevant to the question whether the time limit should be one date or another.

Mr. Lundrigan: I miss the days when Your Honour was sitting on the back benches with lowly characters such as ourselves. I am sure you would like to take part in this debate, and I would be willing to give up five minutes of my time for that purpose. But I cannot for the life of me see why my remarks are not relevant—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Will the hon. member please resume his seat? I think it is the custom in the House, whether the Chair is guided or misguided in the suggestions it makes, that the Chair should be listened to. I asked the hon. member whether he would direct his remarks to the motion before us, the issue of the time limit.

Mr. Lundrigan: Would Your Honour be good enough to cite a rule out of our Standing Orders? Your Honour suggests we should address ourselves to the question of the time limit. The suggestion before us is that consideration in committee be curtailed, that the involvement of the House should be diminished, that the period be shortened from a year and a half to approximately one year. I am trying to show that this issue involves more than just two or three simple propositions. I am seeking to call attention to certain factors which I consider to be important if redistribution is to be carried through successfully. So I cannot for the life of me continue my remarks unless I am

[Mr. Lundrigan.]

able to proceed along those lines. Perhaps I should not reflect on Your Honour's ruling since Your Honour is trying to keep the debate in hand. I will go along with that.

● (1620)

The fact of the matter is that redistribution is much more complex and complicated than has been suggested this afternoon, or will perhaps be suggested later on. I was using the argument that we must consider a number of factors, one having to do with population, one with geography, one with resources and one with governmental structures in our system to serve the population.

I want to conclude my remarks in the next five, 10 or 15 minutes by touching upon something mentioned by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner). A couple of evenings ago in the House that hon. member brought the province of Newfoundland into the debate when he talked about the alienation which frequently exists in the minds of people because needs in certain areas are not being met by the government in power. I think perhaps what he was doing was misplacing his own feelings in Western Canada by referring to Newfoundland in order to make his point. I am sure what he suggested in respect of western Canada is equally as relevant to eastern Canada.

There is a growing feeling of alienation in various regions of this country, I would suggest particularly in British Columbia, the three prairie provinces and certainly the Atlantic region. There is a growing feeling that unless there is some political issue at stake as a result of which the government recognizes the need for political support, these regions will not get the attention they deserve under our political system. This is a feeling that has been growing in the last decade and it is manifest in western Canada and the Atlantic provinces.

Since 1867 we have suffered economic disparity, and no government since that time has been able to overcome it. Today my colleague, the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), talked about the need for an economic opportunities conference to consider the problems faced by Newfoundland. The unemployment rate in Newfoundland has constantly been twice that of the national average. These unemployment rates range from as low as 9.6 per cent in the summertime to as high as 20 per cent in the wintertime.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would again ask for the co-operation of the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Lundrigan) in addressing himself to the substance of the bill before us. The subject matter has reference to certain provisions in Bill C-208. If the hon. member feels he cannot do that at this time I would ask his co-operation in presenting his contribution at the third reading stage.

Mr. Lundrigan: Thank you, Your Honour. I will try to oblige the Chair by keeping to the point. I am trying to make the point that in the Atlantic region and the Pacific region there is a growing feeling of alienation and concern about the fact that there is not numerical representation in the House of Commons, at least in terms of the power that various members have to bring to fundamental governmental changes.