

Electoral Boundaries Commission

Mr. MacLean (Queens): I agree with the theory that members of parliament represent everyone in their constituencies, the people who have voted against them as well as the people who have voted for them. I wholeheartedly support that view. Nevertheless, it is seldom that you have that sort of situation in a dual riding. In a single riding, as the political pendulum swings from one party to another you reach a point where a member is elected by a very small majority. In a dual riding it is very rare for the candidates of any one party to get exactly the same number of votes, although in the case of Queens the other member for Queens and I polled very close to the same vote on most occasions. In dual ridings there is usually a spread of votes between the candidates of any particular party, with the result that as the political tide moves you have an area in which you have members from two different parties elected. In that situation everybody in the riding feels that at least one of his men has been elected and he is represented in the House of Commons in a very particular way.

This is only one of the arguments for dual ridings. There are a number more. I am not wedded to any particular view as to whether dual ridings should be continued or eliminated, but I should like to see the commission concerned given the option of studying that particular question and then coming to whatever conclusion they may think proper rather than have parliament, in a rather arbitrary way, say that dual ridings should no longer exist.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if I might rise to speak to a point of order in a completely non-controversial way. My point of order does not relate to what the hon. gentleman said about dual ridings but is related to the first part of his speech. We did have, I thought, an understanding that we would save the discussion on tolerance until we got to clause 13. I did not want to interrupt the hon. gentleman, but I wonder if we could not agree to wait until we get to clause 13 in order to avoid having that debate twice.

Mr. Woolliams: If I may speak to the point of order, I may say that on the first item I intend to speak about a number of subjects that are rather interlinked, one of which may be the tolerance factor. When we get to that particular section of the bill we can deal with that subject in particular way. However, on the first item we can deal with the subject in a general way and discuss how it will affect the whole situation.

Mr. Pickersgill: We had a rather long debate on second reading in which this subject was rather well canvassed. I do not want to seem

restrictive in any way, but I just wondered if hon. members did not feel they could keep this particular subject until we come to the clause dealing with it. I assume that the big debate is going to be on this subject, and I thought perhaps general observations could be made on the first clause.

Mr. MacLean (Queens): I was only trying to save time. I was trying to put forward this point of view so the minister would have time to consider it, because to my knowledge it has not been raised before.

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not believe the point had been raised before.

Mr. MacLean (Queens): I did not want it to come as a surprise to the minister if he had not considered the point when the particular section came up. I had finished my remarks, and if the minister had not raised this point I would now be seated.

Mr. Churchill: If I may speak to the same point the minister has raised, I would say I was not present yesterday. However, I have read *Hansard* very carefully and I did not interpret what was said by the hon. member for Digby-Annapolis-Kings as agreement on the proposition now put before us by the Minister of Transport. I intend to speak on item No. 1 and I may refer to the tolerance factor. It is all very well for the Minister of Transport to say we have had a lengthy debate on this subject, but there are some members who spoke on the resolution stage, some on second reading, and others have not had an opportunity as yet to speak. So far as I am concerned, I spoke for ten minutes the other night, and I will not submit to any restriction with regard to item No. 1.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate what the minister has said in relation to some restriction, and I should like to direct my introductory remarks to that point. I would have taken part in the debate on second reading, but since I wanted to particularize I thought the best way to do this would be to speak to clause 1 in committee. I hope that in so far as my remarks may be general and not particular there will be no agreement to prevent me from saying what I want to say. I hope to be brief, anyhow.

This is the first time I have had an opportunity of speaking on this subject because I was unavoidably absent during the debate at the resolution stage. I am sure the minister will bear with me. I believe we all want to congratulate the minister upon bringing forward a piece of legislation which will result in the establishment of an independent body to deal with redistribution and get away from any form of gerrymandering. Every ten years