

result of the proposed measures. Instead, he put forward a motion that did not even have the benefit of being examined in committee. The hon. member does not know what was debated in committee. He has no knowledge of the evidence that was produced. He preferred the typical approach of one who does not want to be confused with the facts. What a sham!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I am taking part in this debate unnecessarily because I spoke for 40 minutes on this bill about a week ago. However, I am moved to speak today on the amendment of the hon. member for Peel South (Mr. Blenkarn), who represents Mississauga in the southern part of this great province of Ontario.

I agree there is definitely a problem facing members who represent urban centres where a great deal of growth is taking place very quickly. I sympathize with anyone who has to look after the needs of 200,000 constituents. I find it a challenge to look after 75,000 people in my constituency.

I cannot agree with the hon. member for Peel South that the problem is so simple that there are but three matters to be resolved. I feel the issue is broad enough to be treated with a great deal of respect by the Canadian House of Commons. We should thoroughly investigate all avenues that can be explored to bring about a change in our representation in the House of Commons in a way that will take care of the needs of all Canadians.

The hon. member talked about representation by population. If that concept were strictly adhered to at the present time, I think it would ruin this country. I think the idea of representation by population is old and antiquated, the type of thinking which went out at the turn of the century with the research my hon. friend talked about in 1873.

● (1610)

That is about the vintage of representation by population: it is a hundred years old. I do not think we should look upon the House of Commons in this narrow sense. For example, the hon. member mentioned that at one time Prince Edward Island had six members. I believe he mentioned that Nova Scotia had 16 members, and today they are down to 11 members. By his very research he has proven the point we are trying to make. I admire anyone who takes the time to do some research. But the hon. member has really proven to me by the use of his figures that there is need for us to be concerned about what is happening to provinces which are losing their representation. There is something radically wrong when one of the founding provinces, Nova Scotia, which at one time had 18 members speaking for it in the House of Commons, today has 11 members and would have only 10 if this bill were to pass.

Herein lies the burden of the argument which is being presented by members from all over the country. We all want to see some system arise under which no member has to bear the responsibility of representing 200,000 souls. This is not fair to the people, regardless of the adequacy of their member. I am sure my hon. friend is capable of

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representing 200,000, or even half a million, but certainly those people would not be getting the representation and the voice in our affairs which they have the right to expect.

I should like to say again for the record, bearing in mind that my hon. friend was not here the other day, that there are a variety of factors which must be considered when we address ourselves to the question of redistribution. One of them is the size of a constituency. If anybody doubts the validity of this point of view he should visit the riding of the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Rompkey). As a matter of fact, I am going there this weekend. I shall be in Labrador on Saturday, and I might say it is almost as far to fly to London as it is to fly to the northern part of Labrador from here.

Labrador has an area of more than 100,000 square miles containing some of the greatest amounts of natural resources left in the world. The population is approximately 30,000. One member has to represent all that land mass plus a good chunk of Newfoundland as well. I sympathize with him for having to represent the largest constituency in Canada represented by one member outside of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Circumstances like this must be a major factor in reaching any decision on redistribution.

I talked last week also, as my hon. friend may remember if he has read my speech, about resources as a base for considering the broadening of representation. Today we hear a great deal of argument and discussion about tanker routes, exploration for oil and gas and the shipment of these resources. Among those taking part in all these inter-related arguments and discussions are the members from British Columbia, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) and others. I do not think we would ever get ourselves in a bind if there were eight or ten members from these areas who could consistently, year after year, day after day, week after week, bring problems of this kind before the House of Commons. But with only two members representing approximately half of Canada, how can we see that these resources are adequately protected and managed? We need people here from these areas who can stand up in this chamber and guard against abuses of the land itself.

The other day I mentioned the development at Churchill Falls. A billion dollar project was carried out there through private business—Brinco. At one time, 6,600 men and women were working on this project. It was the largest project in the world in 1971 with the exception, I believe, of the United States space program which employed somewhat more people. While this project was going ahead there was a half of one member in the House of Commons representing the area affected by this huge development. The consequence is that today all this power is being exported. And we are beginning to wonder whether we should not have held this power in reserve for the development of the great iron ore and mineral masses of Labrador, as is being done in Iceland through cheap water power. Today this power is being exported from Labrador and there is nobody here in the House of Commons except