

Electoral Boundaries Commission

they may carry on some sort of small agricultural enterprise and sometimes not so small.

In the case of my own city of Calgary, for at least 20 miles in every direction around Calgary perhaps two thirds of the total population are people who work in the city of Calgary, who gain their livelihood there but live outside the city limits. This is another reason why I think a certain amount of what I call mixing of urban and rural areas is a good thing. The fact is that in many cases the attaching of a portion of rural area to a city riding simply means that you are including in that riding for the most part people whose interests are primarily in the city rather than in the rural area. These are the only two suggestions I wish to make. With regard to the first one in particular, I hope the minister can find some way to include it in a definite form somewhere in the bill.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Chairman, I have a suggestion I should like to put forward, but first of all may I say I do not agree with the statements made by some that because New Brunswick has a senatorial floor everything is rosy. We are going to have some very serious problems when the final decisions are made. We have communication problems. In addition, the French-English situation in New Brunswick has to be considered in the new constituencies. I see that the hon. member for Charlotte is following the debate very closely. His riding is alongside mine. The population of my riding is four times that of his, but I think we both have many problems. He has to cover the islands and a tremendous extent of coastline. I do not consider that either one of us works harder than the other, but there is the problem of keeping in touch with people which looms larger in a rural riding than in a large metropolitan area.

This leads me to my proposal. I suggest that when we come to clause 13 it might be possible in some way to stagger the tolerance so that, looking ahead to the census of 1971 and the results that might be anticipated then, we could have some fairly general objectives. There will probably be two elections before 1971. There will be a census, of course, in 1966 and another in 1971. I do not want to go into any detail now, but it might be possible to place the tolerance at 30 per cent now and 20 per cent in 1971 with the result that we would have some objectives to work toward.

I think this would have a fairly good effect, in that it might answer some of the problems raised by the hon. member for Queens (Mr. MacLean) with regard to the tremendous

growth of urban areas. I looked at the parliamentary guide where there are some interesting facts. My own constituency includes the greater Saint John area, which I suppose is the population centre of New Brunswick, although Fredericton and Moncton are becoming larger each day. I noted that in 1867 the constituency was Saint John city. A little later it became Saint John city and county. Then Albert county was added and it became Saint John city and county and Albert county. Saint John city and county and Albert county had two members, but before 1935 one member was taken away from the dual constituency. This is the situation now. There is one member from Saint John city and county and Albert county. I would imagine that after the changes are made resulting from this legislation we will almost be back where we were in 1867, regardless of the tolerance, with one member for Saint John city as we know it now, in the same way as there was one member for Saint John city in 1867. I do not know what this proves. I suppose it shows that after 100 years we are right back where we started so far as redistribution is concerned.

But without entering into all the details of my constituency or with regard to New Brunswick generally. I throw out the suggestion quite seriously that it might be possible to formulate some definite idea as to what our final objectives should be for 1971 so that the dislocation of constituencies and members will not be as great. This factor looms very large in the maritimes. I am not speaking in any partisan political way, but I would point out that in the maritimes the member becomes closely identified with the voters. If we start to change the constituencies then, no matter whether the member is hard working like the hon. member for Charlotte and myself, it will take quite a few years for the member to become identified in the same way with his constituents. If we could spread out the process over a ten year period it would not be undemocratic and I think everybody would be better off.

There is another point that has not been put forward lately but which I think should be considered. It has to do with the tolerance, but I merely bring it forward in a general way so that we can be prepared for it. I should like to know what difference there would be in the actual boundaries with a tolerance of 20 per cent as opposed to a tolerance of 30 per cent. In other words, are the serious initial changes not made at the 20 per cent level, and how much greater would the difference be at the 30 per cent level? I am thinking of a figure of 30 per cent and I am wondering what greater dislocation there would be with an additional 10 per cent tolerance.

[Mr. Harkness.]