

Representation Act

On clause 1—*Halifax-Dartmouth and County*.

Mr. Morris: Perhaps I might make a brief statement in order to clarify the purpose of this measure. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of Bill No. C-44 in my name is solely to change the name of the federal electoral district of "Halifax" to "Halifax-Dartmouth and County". The present bill makes no other change either in representation, dual voting or boundaries of the riding.

The present name "Halifax" has given rise in many places to the misunderstanding that the federal electoral riding, as presently defined, is confined to the great and progressive fortress and port city of Halifax. In fact, it contains the city of Halifax and also the city of Dartmouth and the whole territory encompassed by the municipality of the county of Halifax.

In 1951, the population of the riding was 162,217. Five years later, it had increased to 197,948, and the final population count arising out of the 1961 census of Canada, which has just been published, is 225,723, making it the third most populous federal riding in Canada.

Because the single word "Halifax" is the name of both the capital city of Nova Scotia and the name of a county, it is sometimes assumed that the present name of the riding applies to that historic city alone. During the last session of parliament the former town of Dartmouth, founded in 1750 and now having amalgamated with several contiguous areas, proudly achieved city status and rightfully proclaims that it is now the fastest growing city in Canada. The prime purpose of the bill is to give electoral recognition to the status of Dartmouth as a great city of Canada, and at the same time to give recognition to the fact that the federal electoral district encompasses the whole county, and not alone the city of Halifax, to which assumption the single name "Halifax" sometimes leads.

Bill No. C-44, which I am hopeful the house will now pass, has been publicly endorsed in most gracious terms by His Worship the Mayor of Dartmouth on behalf of the more than 45,000 citizens of that city, and I recommend it now to the sympathetic consideration of the house.

Mr. Fisher: Could I ask the sponsor a question arising out of figures recently issued by the dominion bureau of statistics which indicate that compared to other areas in Nova Scotia represented in this house, Halifax has a disproportionate number of electors?

I was just wondering if the hon. member might not be somewhat premature in proposing this particular title in view of the fact that the adjustment which is soon to come

[Mr. Morris.]

will quickly render the new description an inaccurate one. Maybe the hon. member could at least express his opinion on that.

Mr. Morris: I think it would be premature to do so. It is not possible to forecast what the proposed electoral boundaries commission might or might not in its wisdom and judgment decide would be the merit of delimiting the present boundaries of the dual riding of Halifax. In any event, sufficient unto the day is the need thereof, and it is my hope that the constituency, in the not hypothetical present, would take account of the misunderstanding actually arising from the single name, and I am hoping that through this bill electoral recognition will be given to Dartmouth and the rest of the country.

Clause agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

AMENDMENT TO CHANGE NAME OF CONSTITUENCY

Mr. W. F. Matthews (Nanaimo) moved the second reading of Bill No. C-46, to amend the Representation Act.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Chown in the chair.

On clause 1—*Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands*.

Mr. Matthews: I should like to take a few minutes of the time of the committee to thank the hon. member for Timiskaming for his kindness and also to thank all members of the committee for allowing this bill to come forward. I might say that, as found in the explanatory note, the purpose of this bill is to change the name of the electoral district of "Nanaimo" to that of "Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands". The reason for the change is that this particular part of British Columbia has grown. It is a thriving community. Other parts feel they also would like to be named as part of that very fine constituency. The name "Cowichan" goes back for 90 years in the lumbering business and it is certainly entitled to that consideration. I might say that the beautiful islands there certainly are proud to have their name included in this list. I might also mention the fact that to these islands—I refer to the gulf islands—probably come more pleasure boats and tourist boats during the tourist season than come to any place else in Canada. I should at this time like to extend an invitation to any hon. members who may wish to visit these beautiful spots. There