Senate OK's Reseat Plans for All of La. Legislature

Bills Sent to House for Further Action

By C. M. HARBOUR

The Senate, by a 21-6 vote, on March 19, approved both the reapportionment bills that would provide new districts for Louisiana, a new district for Orleans Parish, and new districts for Jefferson Parish.

The Senate also passed bills that would create a new district for Orleans Parish, and a new district for Jefferson Parish. The Senate voted 21-6 on the bills, with Senators Michael H. O'Keefe of New Orleans and H. G. Hargrove of Monroe voting against the bills.

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Senate Okays Reseat Plans

Sen. DeBlieux proposed an amendment to make the entire bill single member districts.

"Somebody had a nightmare when they drew this plan," complained Sen. Duval. He noted it called for one senator to represent Houma and Thibodaux, taken outside their parish.

"If I ever have seen a Chinese puzzle, this is two of them," declared Rayburn. He said he was not too much concerned as to what happened on the bill... what we’re doing here is to make those judges earn their salaries a little bit more."

By 9 to 29, the Senate rejected the amendment.

Sen. Garber attempted an amendment that one senator in his new district reside in either Claitoux, Bienville, DeSoto, or that part of Caddo outside the city of Shreveport. The two were to be elected from Caddo and the fourth from either Bossier or Webster. Sen. C. M. Brown objected.

The Senate voted 14 to 21 and rejected the amendments.

**Correct Error**

Sen. O’Keefe offered amendments to correct an error in census figures and would restore the reapportionment plan that approved in committee Monday. Sen. Mollere objected that this was the one voted on and amended a short while earlier except it took a different part of Jefferson Parish, all of Ward 7. Sen. Samuel B. Nunez of Chalmette also objected to the O’Keefe amendments.

Sen. Fink said his area did not want to be included in the new district O’Keefe proposed. "We ask the people of the silk stocking district to vote with the cotton stocking area," Fink said. "Please vote this down."

Sen. Smithers said as the bill stood without amendment. New Orleans would be reduced to four and Jefferson increased to four. "New Orleans needs and should have more than six senators," he said.

O’Keefe declared this was not a reapportionment of Jefferson, but of Orleans. He said Orleans needed 20,000 from somewhere and had to take them from Jefferson.

**Posts Asked**

Fink asked him to further amend the plan, to establish posts A and B, with one senator from each. O’Keefe declined.

The O’Keefe amendment passed 19 to 16.

Sen. Mollere came back with an amendment to establish a "fifteenth" district, naming that one of the two senators in the district shared with Orleans should come from Jefferson Parish. He said the state constitution provided the same thing—that when two parishes are included in a multi-member district, both parishes should be represented. He said Orleans was entitled to 6.38 senators, thus less than a claim to the seventh senator than did Jefferson. He confessed he thought all the other districts would float right out of the courts.

O’Keefe asked the amendment be rejected. He said it defined the one-man-one-vote rule.

The Senate voted 12 to 25 and the amendment was rejected.

Sen. Garber again tried an amendment, two senators from Caddo, one from either Bossier or Webster, one from the other parishes outside the city of Shreveport, all to be elected at large. Sen. C. M. Brown said when the O’Keefe amendment was accepted he decided not to oppose the Barham amendment. But Sen. Davis did object.

Davis said it cut down the voting strength to which Caddo was entitled.

The amendment was adopted 19 to 17.

Barham had another amendment to provide that one senator in the Monroe-West Monroe district be elected from those districts, the other allotted to the district from outside the city. All to be elected at large. Sen. W. D. Brown of Monroe objected. He said it would divide Ouachita Parish into two separate parts.

Barham withdrew the amendment.

Fink put another amendment in, to provide one member come from the 15th ward of Orleans and one from the remaining district of the new district shared with Jefferson. Sen. Smithers objected.

The vote was 23 to 16 and the amendment was adopted.

**Duval Gets Idea**

Sen. Duval said he got the idea of what was going on. He asked his district be designated that he and Sen. Harvey Pelletier be named the two senators. By 33 to 4, the amendment was adopted.

Sen. Guste then proposed an amendment to remove the Fink amendment which provided that one of the two senators in the new district shared with Jefferson come from the 15th ward. Fink said he saw Gust confer with certain individuals at the rail and then offer the amendment.

**Rail Addressed**

Fink addressed "the rail." He declared, "It is true that I voted against certain labor bills... because the laboring man did not go along with everything that labor wanted."

"I feel we have wasted about two a half or three hours of our time and not accomplished a cotton picking thing," said Sen. A. C. Clendons. He said the Senate had "accomplished absolutely nothing."

The Senate voted 15 to 22 and the amendment was rejected.

DeBlieux offered amendments which he said would bring the bill into line with the Mississippi court decision on folterial districts as pertained to urban areas. Sen. C. M. Brown urged the amendments be rejected.

The vote was 3 to 34 and the amendment was rejected.

Sen. Guste then proposed an amendment to reject a previous amendment by Barham relative to Caddo Parish. He said it was not representative government. Adecok noted Barham was absent and he was reluctant to do anything in his absence.

Sen. C. M. Brown asked the amendment be rejected. "I don’t know what kind of shape it’s in, but let’s keep it as constitutional as possible."

By 33 to 3, the amendment was adopted removing the previous amendment.

On final passage, the Senate voted 33 to 4 and the bill was finally passed.

The Senate adjourned until 11 a.m. Wednesday.