

I have here the 338 Tory promises which were made during the election campaign. If you look through this directory of campaign promises you will not see anything about redistribution. You will not see anywhere in that directory of campaign promises that the Government planned to move away from the amalgam formula or that it was going to reduce the amount of representation in the House of Commons. However, today there is a motion before the House to close this debate.

The Parliamentary Secretary talked about having this Bill passed and having the redistribution commissions fan out across the country. This Bill was supposedly introduced to save money. However, a redistribution commission has already fanned out across the country. It has held public hearings, gone through a massive advertising process, and heard objections by Members of Parliament. Those debates have commenced. Only another two or three hours of debate is required in the House of Commons and redistribution can go ahead immediately. Within a year redistribution would come into effect. Riding boundaries would be newly proclaimed and local riding associations could be established.

With this Bill the House of Commons will be chopped down in size by 10 Members of Parliament. Outlying areas of the country will lose representation because of the reduction in the number of Members of Parliament that will be provided through the new redistribution. It will cost at least \$5 million or \$6 million to establish those new commissions. We will have to come back to the House of Commons for further debate, but rather than debating this matter in the Chamber itself, it will take place in a parliamentary committee.

● (1120)

We must question why the Government is in such a hurry to carry out this change and reduce the representation in the House of Commons. The Hon. Member opposite talked about the Opposition not being able to have enough members here. That is true. Sometimes we do not have enough members to cover every parliamentary committee. There are only 70 members on this side of the House. However, the Government Party, with 211 Members of Parliament, sometimes had only one or two members in the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections when this Bill was being discussed. It is rather interesting to note that even with its massive majority, which it is using to impose closure, it is unable to provide a quorum at parliamentary committees. We should keep that in mind when we are considering this matter.

I am also concerned about the power of the Government as it relates to this proposed new formula for representation. In the report stage we were able to suggest certain amendments which would have provided additional floor representation for areas like northern Ontario, which has been an issue for many years. When the Bill was first introduced I made representations and wrote to Tory members on that committee, asking them if they would support an amendment to give us a floor of 11 seats for northern Ontario. While I received support from members of the New Democratic Party and members of the Liberal caucus, I certainly did not receive support from the

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Government caucus. One can see from the vote taken on that day a couple of weeks ago that all the Tory members opposed that floor.

The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Hnatyshyn) said that this Bill would be a great move forward and it would provide a floor under the representation for provinces like Manitoba and Saskatchewan, based on the present representation in the House of Commons. While the principle was acceptable and desirable in some cases, it was not in others.

According to this current redistribution, which will almost certainly take place, we will lose representation because Ontario will lose six seats from the present redistribution which is going ahead. Tory members from northern Ontario will have to explain not only to their own constituents but to others throughout the North why they spoke and voted against that representation. It will not only affect representation in this redistribution but will continue to do so in each succeeding redistribution. The average number per constituency will be 87,000 people. After 1991 it will be 95,000, and then 99,000 people. Under this scenario, unless there is some magnificent new resource development, we will likely lose representation from an area that encompasses 88 per cent of the land mass of Ontario.

The Government's closure motion is unacceptable. The Bill, rather than being forced on the House of Commons, should go back to the committee because it is ill-conceived. If it passes, we will see new redistribution commissions being formed across the country costing another \$6 million. This redistribution will come into effect during the summer of 1988. There will be massive confusion regardless of whether we are with the old boundaries or the new boundaries because that will most likely be the year of a general election.

I hope the Government will not force this resolution on the House of Commons through this closure motion today.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, this is the sixth time that the Government has moved a time allocation motion in this Parliament. Most of this has occurred recently. At a time when we are supposed to be discussing parliamentary reform and recognizing the rights of individual Members of Parliament to state their opinions and change legislation, the Government has a secret agenda which is to ensure that it can use its majority in the House to prevent any adequate discussion of legislation. This has become increasingly evident.

We only have 10 minutes each to speak on a time allocation motion but if time permits I will quote what Conservative back-benchers in opposition said about time allocation when it was introduced in the House by the previous Liberal administration. It is very ironic to see that same Party using time allocation on a regular basis.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Lewis) listed occasions when the Government had brought in time allocation and the Opposition was unable to continue debate even though there was approximately a day left for debate in the House of Commons. I do not believe that