

Redistribution

Chamber of Commerce, the Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce and the Spallumcheen Chamber of Commerce.

It was a presentation that had been worked out with a great amount of co-operation throughout the constituency. It was extremely ably presented, as were the representations from other political parties. The former member for this constituency, who had chosen not to run again, appeared to plead about the problems in organization that the new constituency would present to whoever should happen to take his place.

I was impressed by the carefulness, the logic and the clear development of the arguments used against the establishment of this constituency that was being constructed. I wondered at the time whether in this modern age the protests were sufficiently dramatic. I thought possibly that if the people protesting had picketed the courthouse or if somebody had done a sit-in or if there had been a hunger strike or some really dramatic effort, possibly the commission would have been impressed, although it should have been impressed by the carefulness of the presentation.

On the appearance of the final map that we have before us it became apparent that no attention at all had been paid to any of the presentations that were made. This, I feel, is most regrettable. It seemed to me that the commission erred in presenting the maps prior to the hearing. Once a map is drawn there is some pride of authorship, some sensitivity to criticism that there would not be or that would not be a factor if no maps had been prepared. It would have been better if the commission had heard presentations throughout the province and had then caused the maps to be drawn based on the wisdom it had gained by travelling through the province.

If people feel that they had a part in making a plan then they will also do something to make it work. But if they feel that the plan finally handed to them is not only something they did not have any part in making but is something in direct contradiction to their wishes, then it is unlikely that they will make it work.

By concentrating too narrowly on the single criterion of population and by interpreting their terms of reference in such a way as to eliminate any consideration of population trends, the Redistribution Commission for British Columbia has produced a set of constituencies that will guarantee less adequate and even less democratic representation than

[Mr. Johnston.]

the province has had in the past. In its concentration on this one factor, which is admittedly important, the commission has ignored such considerations as community of interest between areas, geographical relationships, economic similarity, transportation routes and historical and traditional patterns of unity.

I have no objection to the proposed name of the constituency but I would point out to the commission that the very words that are used to make up the name of Okanagan-Kootenay come from two languages that are totally unrelated. The people who spoke the languages do not have linguistic relations or historical ones.

Mr. Herridge: We hardly speak to one another.

Mr. Johnston: The native peoples of the Kootenays and those in the Okanagan area were so far away from each other as to be two quite different groups. The Kootenay people, proud and able as they were, had no relationship to the great interior Salish group that made up the majority of the peoples of the interior of British Columbia.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Explain.

Mr. Johnston: The previous speaker referred to his proposed constituency as a Pakistan situation. I was going to use that term myself but as it has been preempted and does not really apply to the constituency I now speak of I shall not do so.

In order to create a Pakistan situation there must be compelling reasons to link two areas widely separated. In the case of the original Pakistan it was unity of religion which made it essential that two widely separated parts be made into one country. There is not this kind of relationship between east Kootenay and the north Okanagan and Revelstoke area. It would be much better to describe it as an Austro-Hungarian empire. I am afraid that once it is set up the two parts will very quickly fall out and you will have a situation that will only ensure a great deal of conflict until such time as another commission sits to rectify the error that this commission has made in regard to this constituency.

It will also happen to have the two parts surrounding the principality, so to speak, of the hon. member for Kootenay West. Again, in this regard the constituency further resembles the Austro-Hungarian empire. An hon. member beside me says that I should not refer to a principality. It is a Baronetcy.