

Redistribution

or four members of parliament could not do a better job in this regard.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I would ask them to reconsider their decision on another basis, namely, that diversification of economic activity in a riding adds variety to it. In the constituency of Bow River we have the parks, the hard coal mines of Canmore, the ranches of the foothills, the city people of Calgary and the farmers and soft coal miners of Drumheller. During my years as a member of parliament I have not found it difficult to put the interests of these various sectors before the house or the departments of government. I have been able to represent these various interests properly and obtain for them proper administration at the federal level no matter whether the government was Conservative or Liberal.

To summarize my argument, Mr. Speaker, we ask that constituency No. 17, Rocky Mountain, be eliminated and that the boundaries be restored to their original position, changing and adding to the population of the three constituencies I have mentioned. We ask that Calgary and Edmonton each receive another constituency. We also ask that the commission reconsider Calgary and Edmonton on the grounds that they are probably the two fastest growing cities on the North American continent and they must take into consideration the future growth of these cities if the formula is to be effective until the next census or the one thereafter.

I trust that the commission will consider the remarks I have made this afternoon. I hope they appreciate that I am not being critical in the sense of criticizing their work because I appreciate the difficulty. My submissions have been made on the grounds that I hope they will be helpful to everybody concerned, not only to me as the member of parliament at this time but to all future members representing Alberta. I know at least two members of the commission and am sure they are thoughtful, intelligent and capable men. I trust they will take these submissions into account and make the necessary changes, not only to satisfy the members who speak today but the majority of the people of Alberta.

Hon. D. S. Harkness (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, when I first saw the proposed redistribution map for the province of Alberta it would be putting it mildly, I think, to say I was astonished. I was astonished because, in the first place, the proposed redistribution creates a large, unwieldy constituency which

did not exist before and which I can see no good reason for creating. The hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Woolliams) has mentioned some of the disadvantages of the proposed new constituency of Rocky Mountain. I should like to mention some of them also.

To begin with, Mr. Speaker, I believe only one of what have been generally accepted as the principles to be followed in redistribution has actually been followed in this case. I refer to the principle that there shall be a reasonable approach to representation by population in the constituencies. So far as the other considerations are concerned, namely, a community of interest and putting together in one constituency people with a community of interest, ease of communication from one part of the constituency to another, the least disturbance to the traditional pattern, and some attention to growth pattern, none of these, it seems to me, have really been given much consideration.

● (4:50 p.m.)

The hon. member for Bow River referred to chapter 13 of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act and noted some of the provisions that were put into the act to indicate those matters which should be taken into consideration. I will not take up the time of the house in reading them again. In essence they are the matters I have just mentioned. I should like to stress one in particular, the density or relative rate of growth of population of various regions of the province. In the debate on this bill in the house I presented an argument to the effect that one of the factors which the electoral commissions, which at that time it was proposed to set up and which were subsequently set up, would have to take into consideration would be what the growth had been since 1961 when the census was taken and what the growth potential was in different areas. My understanding was that this principle would be carried out according to the phrase I have just read. However, this does not seem to have been done and I will come back to that later.

The effect of creating this large new constituency of Rocky Mountain, some 450 miles from north to south and over 200 miles from east to west at its widest point, was to push all the other constituencies into an unnatural form. In other words, the creation of that constituency made it impossible to redistribute the constituencies in the province on a reasonable basis, in my opinion at least, one