

Redistribution

used as a norm for a riding. This would make a reasonably compact riding and at the same time it would still be a large suburban area. But a riding of Delta-Richmond without the Burnaby part would make a good deal more sense than the proposed new riding of Burnaby-Richmond which is going to contain three different parts.

When the maps were published last summer a number of protests were made by the people of Burnaby and the weekly newspapers in Burnaby. It is unfortunate that our municipality, which is the second largest in the province, second only to Vancouver—it happens to have more people than Victoria, the capital—is divided in three ways. We have Burnaby-Richmond. We are to have Burnaby-Seymour and a third part of the municipality is to be in the proposed new riding of New Westminster.

I maintained at the time, and was supported by the weekly newspapers in the constituency, that it would have been quite possible to create a riding entirely of Burnaby, with the additional population in another riding which would be associated with another municipality. Instead we have the municipality divided in three ways. I do not think that this is the best job the commissioners could have done.

I made my views known to the commissioners by letter some time ago. Unfortunately I was not able to appear when they held their public hearings. However, I would urge them again to take another look at the lower mainland and particularly at the type of situation which exists in the proposed ridings of Burnaby-Richmond and Burnaby-Seymour. In both cases the ridings are divided by bodies of water. I suggest that the commissioners could redraw the maps so that we would have constituencies which would be compact and not separated by bodies of water.

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, it gives me considerable pleasure to echo the opening statement of the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) regarding the redistribution proposed for the province of British Columbia. I was not a member of the house when it turned this task over to an independent commission so I will reserve my comments on the wisdom of that move until another time. My one concern at the moment is to endeavour in some small way to improve the proposed electoral map for British Columbia.

I might tell the hon. member for Kamloops that when I announced my candidacy for this house I was living in his constituency and for several days had a busy time. When I went downtown in the village of Salmon Arm I met people who told me that they would have to make an agonizing decision, and I was able to inform them that the decision might not be all that agonizing because I was running in the neighbouring constituency. However, I was unable to reach all of them. I do know that come voting day there were six people who went to the polls determined to vote for Johnston and on receiving their ballot forms were amazed to find that that name was not on the ballot. The closest they could come to it was Jones, and they had their doubts about that; but their loyalty overrode their doubts and the N.D.P. candidate was at least six votes closer to the hon. member for Kamloops than he really deserved to be.

This, Mr. Speaker, is the kind of confusion that existed prior to the redistribution now proposed. A geographical area was divided; the people in the area customarily did their business in the nearest large town, which is the city of Vernon, and they were confused as to which constituency they were in. That confusion has not been remedied by the proposed changes but has been compounded enormously owing to the fact that the boundary on the eastern side has been extended clear to the Alberta border and from there right to the United States border, thus making up a most amazing constituency.

• (2:40 p.m.)

I first heard of this constituency when the original proposal was presented. At that time I had no idea that I would be campaigning to enter this house. Yet on hearing what had been done to the constituency in which I had grown up and lived through all of my formative years I was very concerned. I went to the public hearings that were held in the city of Vernon and listened carefully to the presentations made to the commission there. They were most ably made by a variety of groups. I have one of those presentations with me, although I will not read from it at great length.

I would point out that this presentation had the support of the Liberal association and the Social Credit association. It had the support of the corporation of the district of Coldstream, the township of Spallumcheen, the city of Armstrong, the corporation of the city of Vernon, the city of Revelstoke, the Vernon