

press and you, Sir, for remaining with us during the course of this debate.

Petitioners appeared at the Electoral Boundaries Commission hearing for the province of Alberta in Red Deer last September 8 asking that they remain in Red Deer constituency instead of being placed outside the then proposed east boundary of the Red Deer River. I wish to commend the members of the commission for acceding to that request, a step in the right direction. This was of utmost importance to those residents because of the lack of bridges on the Red Deer River in their area, which would more or less have isolated them. Had the recommendation to place these people in the constituency east of the Red Deer River not been withdrawn, I would have lost faith in the work of the commission.

However, I am disappointed that favourable consideration was not given to the representation made, primarily by Mrs. John Talsma of Bentley, at that hearing, to include residents of that locality in Red Deer constituency. They are accustomed to doing their business in the city of Red Deer and are familiar with the surrounding community and all the related activities and events. If the north boundary line running east along the northern boundary line of Township 41 could be extended even as far as Gull Lake, the wishes of the Bentley people would be met. This proposal is certainly worthy of further consideration, and I hope the members of the commission will take another look at this legitimate request.

Should the commission feel that this proposed boundary line cannot be extended straight east to join the west boundary of Acadia constituency, surely it could agree to the plea of residents in the Joffre and Blackfalds region on the north side of the Red Deer River in the extreme southeast corner of the proposed Wetaskiwin constituency, who also want to be within Red Deer constituency. Formerly these residents were included in Red Deer constituency; then their constituency was changed to Battle River; and now the new proposal would place them in Wetaskiwin. This is extremely unfair and unnecessary. Why should one human being treat another this way without a legitimate reason? All that is required to place these people in Red Deer riding is to move the suggested northern boundary farther north.

In the original presentation the commission yielded to the residents on the west side of the Red Deer River, allowing them to remain in Red Deer constituency and saying that the river is a natural boundary in that area. Such is not true in the Joffre and Blackfalds area because there are three bridges there by which to cross the river. While the river does form a boundary on the lower reaches of the Red Deer River, it does not in this particular section.

I want to read some of the representations submitted to me with regard to the proposed boundary changes in Red Deer constituency. The first letter is sent to the members of the House of Commons and reads as follows:

Although the federal electoral boundaries commission for Alberta decision stated that our district (in the Joffre area) should go into the Wetaskiwin riding, we urge the members of the House of Commons to listen closely to the arguments presented by Gordon Towers why our area should be in the Red Deer riding.

In the original petition presented to the Commission 98% of the voters asked that we be part of the Red Deer riding; this, in itself should be reason enough to have this area in the Red Deer riding. Some

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of the other reasons we request that we be in that riding is that the city of Red Deer is only 12 miles from the centre of our area and is our banking, shopping, recreation and advanced education centre thus we are more attuned to what happens in the Red Deer area than Wetaskiwin which is 50 miles away.

Thank you for you time.

This is signed by Mr. A. Brock, Pat Brock and Douglas Brock.

The next letter reads as follows:

To Whom It May Concern.

We wish to register our strong disapproval of the proposed electoral boundary change, presently located in the Battle River Constituency, whereby we would be included in the Wetaskiwin constituency.

Residing eleven miles east of Red Deer, north of the Red Deer River, it would seem much more logical that this area could be served by the member from Red Deer better, being aware of the area residents' needs.

The boundary change some years ago from the Red Deer to Battle River Constituency made representation more difficult, this proposed change to Wetaskiwin would seem to us as a further step in the wrong direction.

This is signed by Donald Graham, Colleen Graham, Alex Graham and Amy Graham.

The next letter is addressed to Mr. Gordon Towers, M.P. for Red Deer Electoral District, and reads as follows:

Would you please present on our behalf, during debate on electoral boundaries, an earnest request that this area (the twp line between 38 & 39 being an extension of Hwy 11, range 25 and that portion of 26 to Red Deer River) be included in the Red Deer Electoral District.

We feel that since the land survey system in the west is on a straight line basis, such a division of boundaries would be less confusing, more realistic and more readily determined.

Portions of this area were originally within the Red Deer Riding. In view of present day road and transportation systems, rivers are no longer considered natural obstacles to communication. Residents of this area have close association with Red Deer area residents since business, health care, education and recreation are all obtained there.

We believe that becoming electors within the Wetaskiwin Riding would make it extremely difficult to have true representation and would therefore for practical purposes be almost disenfranchisement as many would not bother to vote.

We thank you for any efforts you make in our behalf.

This is signed by Mayme Morton and John Morton.

The next letter is to Mr. Gordon Towers, Member of Parliament, Red Deer Riding, and reads as follows:

Would you please represent our interests in getting this area transferred to the Red Deer Riding?

In the past and in the future Red Deer is the centre for business, hospital, markets and education for this area.

We feel geographical boundaries are quite arbitrary and the river bridge eliminates any communication problem that could exist.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Ken & Sally Morton

Here is another one:

Dear Sir: We are writing in regards to having to go into Wetaskiwin constituency.

Most of our business is done in Red Deer.

And we feel we would have much better representation in the Red Deer constituency.

This is signed by Mrs. Betty Glover and Doug Glover.

Another letter reads:

Dear Mr. Towers: