

*Redistribution*

which are now a part of the riding of Huron-Perth. Notice was given at the opening of the debate in this committee of an amendment which would have the effect of leaving within the proposed new riding of Huron-Perth—

**Mr. McIlraith:** Huron.

**Mr. Fleming:** Huron—the three townships of Ashfield, West Wawanosh and East Wawanosh which it was proposed should be added to the riding of Bruce to the north. It is also proposed that two of the townships from the county of Perth be restored to the riding of Perth but that the township of Hibbert, which is not in the county of Huron but in the county of Perth, be left in this riding of Huron. There is going to be a riding to be called Huron, but it does not correspond precisely to the county of Huron. Even in the light of the amendments that are to be offered on the part of the government majority, it is proposed that two townships which are part of the county of Huron be taken out in order to eke out the inadequacy of population in another riding on the northeast, and that a township which belongs to the county of Perth should be put into the riding of Huron.

The very sensible proposal put forward by my colleague the hon. member for Huron North is that instead of doing that carpentry on the county of Huron to make a riding in Huron, there should be a riding of Huron consisting of the county of Huron. It is a very sensible proposal and, as one who was born in the county of Huron, I wish to give it my full and enthusiastic support.

**Mr. Drew:** I simply want to add this. Here is a case where there is a county which, if it is given its natural boundaries, will have a population that would approximate the number that is being taken as normal in the case of a rural constituency. It surely seems that if there are changes to be made elsewhere, that should not be a reason for breaking up a county which happens to have in its boundaries approximately the right number to conform to the general redistribution that is being made.

As the result of the attempt to use parts of Huron for bolstering the population elsewhere, there is an extraordinary separation of parts of Huron from the county; and the most extraordinary separation of all is the separation of Wingham from the county to which it naturally belongs. Having listened to the arguments of the member for Lincoln, which one can understand, I trust that the member for Lincoln will be supporting this

[Mr. Fleming.]

amendment. It would certainly be surprisingly inconsistent to put forward the arguments that he put forward to maintain the population of approximately 90,000 within a single county, and then have him agree to the dismembering of a county which in its own boundaries has approximately the right number by the standard we have—

**An hon. Member:** Even more.

**Mr. Drew:** Yes, some 50,000 people; that is more than the number generally being given to rural constituencies. Now, Mr. Chairman, there have been sound arguments in regard to every one of these amendments that have been put forward; but I think of all amendments this is the one most difficult to dispose of. Here is a county standing within its natural boundaries with a population a little higher it is true, but nevertheless approximately the number that would be allocated to a rural constituency; and the only justification that can be given under the circumstances is that it is necessary to take parts of this county to bolster the population of others.

Mr. Chairman, there are other reasons and we know it. The other reasons are to take parts of this county that will help certain members in the adjoining counties. That is what they think; but my impression is that the people who are being dealt with in that way, as pawns in a political game, may not have the same opinion. However, I would hope, having regard to the sentiments expressed by the member for Lincoln in regard to the great desirability of maintaining county boundaries, sentiments we can understand even in the case of Lincoln with its 90,000, that we will hear the member for Lincoln supporting the amendment and voting for it as well.

**Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce):** I think certain premises which have been described by the leader of the opposition are not correct. He speaks as though this were a dismemberment of the county of Huron by taking from it certain parts which are now in it in order to bolster adjoining ridings. He has omitted the point that the present county of Huron did have parts of the county of Perth added to it twenty years ago in order to maintain a representation of two members in the House of Commons. That part of the county of Perth which has been added to the county of Huron to maintain the representation consists of three townships, and those three townships are presently in the constituency of Huron-Perth.

When the redistribution subcommittee for Ontario came to consider this problem they