

This is particularly true in rural areas. I think there is a good case to be made for the least disruption possible in order to comply with the shift in population, as made evident in the census taken in 1971. Instead of heeding some arguments, the commission brought about a major disruption for no cause whatever. In any event, they did not really justify that major disruption. It listened to arguments that were presented, it heard from the people, yet paid no attention and made only two changes in name. That is all. It never changed boundaries. It changed the name of Battle River and added "Vegreville". I suppose that may please the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) and please the town of Vegreville. The commission also changed the name of Wetaskiwin to Wetaskiwin-Yellowhead. Edmonton-Strathcona, of course, has already been changed.

Why was the commission so concerned about names? Why could they not leave Crowfoot alone? I have had the honour to represent the constituency in two elections, and it bears a name that is of historic importance in the history of western Canada. Chief Crowfoot and Colonel Macleod signed the peace treaty back in 1877. We are approaching the centenary of that important occasion. Chief Crowfoot had a lot to do with bringing about a harmonious settlement between the Indians and the settlers of that time, and I think that name could have been attached to that of the city of Medicine Hat. The commission should have paid respect to the political heritage of western Canada and to that historic event which played so large a part in the settlement of the prairies. If the commission was considering only name changes, it ought to have considered such a change of name.

Without doubt, we do need a completely different system of redistribution every ten years. As the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) suggested, we need a system under which the electoral boundaries commission will need to answer to higher authority and substantiate the changes that have been made. In this instance we have gone through a ritual. The commission has listened to arguments but has not had to substantiate the changes. It need not alter any redistribution that it has devised for any particular riding. I think, also, that the men who are appointed to such a commission should be men who work in each and every area of the province and come from every segment of society in that province.

Having looked at the map of Alberta and studied the personnel of the commission when I appeared before them, it appears to me that they were not interested about our problems. Although they expected to be criticized about the way they dealt with the eastern and central part of Alberta, they did not know if they were right and wondered if I could advise them about possible changes.

It was obvious that some adjustment had to be made to that long constituency called Rocky Mountain, which stretched to the western boundary. But surely they did not have to do what they did on the eastern boundary. The commission could have easily extended Crowfoot west to the British Columbia border and given Crowfoot another 7,000 or 8,000 people, instead of altering the boundaries of the constituency of Lethbridge so as to include part of the constituency of Crowfoot. The commission could have moved Crowfoot closer to Lethbridge and given Crowfoot

Redistribution

a greater population. Under this redistribution proposal, Lethbridge is to have a population of 97,000; Calgary North is to have a population of 77,000 and Calgary Centre a population of 81,000.

I am certain that the Lethbridge board of trade would be disappointed to think that Lethbridge is not expected to grow, even though it is in a growth area of the province. Certainly that is what the commission must have thought in devising these boundaries. It must have felt that Lethbridge will not grow at all. On the contrary, Lethbridge has a future large potential for growth, with the further development of the tourist industry in that part of Alberta. There is its proximity to Waterton National Park and the irrigation area, and as well we must consider that many small industries want to get out from larger centres and locate there. Therefore, Lethbridge has the potential for phenomenal growth in the next number of years.

Apparently, the boundaries commission thinks that Crowfoot has reached its peak and will not continue growing in the next ten years, but it never had to give its reasons for so deciding. The Commission gave part of the old riding to Medicine Hat and suggested that the latter constituency should have a population of 97,000. To me that was an error. It is quite likely that Lethbridge in future will grow more quickly than the centre of Calgary, or even the centre of the city of Edmonton. Therefore it should not have been given an extra population of 15,000.

Actually, that constituency has a population that is 20,000 greater than that of Calgary North. To me, having looked at the map of Alberta, I think what has been done shows clearly that we need a completely new process of redistribution in this country. The present action shows clearly what is wrong with the system. That all is not well is evident from the complaints of members representing city ridings, who have complained even more loudly than those who, like myself, have traditionally represented rural ridings.

It is interesting to point out that the present riding of Crowfoot could include part of the city of Calgary. If the commission had wanted to add to the population of Crowfoot, it could have included six or seven blocks of Calgary in the riding of Crowfoot and so increased the population of Crowfoot without bringing about the major disruption it has brought about in Alberta. Instead it introduced a completely unacceptable concept in representation in Alberta. As I said a minute ago, the commission's action is a perfect example of what is wrong with our redistribution system. I think that the entire system should be thoroughly examined with a view to devising other acceptable ways for bringing about redistribution.

Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, one of the things the commission overlooked in proposing the suggested division for representation in Alberta is the social and travelling habits of the people. Perhaps the riding of Red Deer is affected less than any constituency in the province. Nevertheless, I am sure that the commission did not take into consideration the fact that we, in our riding, are served by 16 newspapers, approximately a dozen radio stations and half a dozen television stations. We have 19 telephone exchanges and are divided by six rivers along with numerous lakes.