

Redistribution Commission

members of parliament about things of this sort. I stand to be corrected but I have the impression that members of parliament who represent urban constituencies do not have such a large volume of mail as those who represent rural constituencies.

In addition, by the very nature of the geographical size of the constituency the number of matters that are brought to the attention of the member of parliament is greater. This is especially true, I think, of seacoast constituencies. There are constituencies in the maritime provinces that have literally hundreds of federal government establishments of one sort or another within their boundaries. They may be small, but in a constituency like my own there are dozens of lighthouses, dozens of wharves and large numbers of other small federal government establishments and facilities, all of which require a certain amount of attention from the members of parliament for the areas. These are things that do not exist in inland constituencies and do not exist to any great extent in urban ones.

Therefore I think there are many considerations of this sort that should be brought into the balance when the matter of representation by population is being considered. It is a worthy objective as a theory but it is one that can only be approached. It cannot always be achieved.

I think it would also behoove us to consider how many people a member of parliament can properly represent under our system. After confederation each member of parliament in a much smaller house represented only about 18,000 Canadians. Now and after redistribution each member of parliament on the average is and will be representing about 70,000 Canadians. In addition there has been a great growth in the activity of federal governments over the years. For example, 70 years ago in the early 1890's the federal government spent in each year's budget approximately \$200,000 per constituency. At the present time the figure is something like \$22 million per constituency. In terms of dollars, and of course the dollar has not remained constant, there has been a hundredfold increase in the activity of the federal government in the average constituency over the last 70 years.

There are other things that should be considered as well, such as the community of interest of a certain area. If we set out to delineate constituencies of approximately the same size it should be realized that in order to adjust one constituency we will have to adjust the boundaries of perhaps all the constituencies extending in one direction from

that constituency to the border of the province. If one constituency is too small you cannot just simply adjust it by taking a certain amount of territory away from the next one because the surrounding constituencies may not be too large. The result is that a general reaction sets in, and I can visualize that even with a variation of as much as 30 per cent in constituencies in the next redistribution this will be the most far reaching distribution since confederation. It will create a tremendous amount of dislocation.

I would venture to say that it will not be possible to bring the constituencies of Canada within 30 per cent of equality without displacing a large number of the present membership of the house from the constituencies in which they now live. I would venture to say that after the next redistribution many of the present members of parliament will find themselves no longer resident in the constituencies they now represent, but perhaps in adjoining ones. There will be many cases where there will be new constituencies without any resident member of parliament, whereas others will have two or three.

The same thing will apply, of course, to the returning officers. Many of them will have to be re-selected and re-appointed because they have to be electors of the constituency in which they operate. When the boundaries are changed many of them will not be resident in the constituencies in which they now reside.

I should like to say a word for a moment about the question of the Senate floor as far as it concerns the provinces which now have protection under it, namely Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. Some people, perhaps without thinking deeply about the matter, look on it as an ad hoc arrangement that was made without any valid reasoning or justification behind it, but I should like to point out that is not the case. When the various provinces of Canada entered confederation one of the terms under which they came in was that their representation should have a certain weight in the parliament of Canada. The Senate representation, of course, is fixed; but there was an understanding or a belief at least that the weight of provinces, like the maritimes, would continue to bear a reasonable proportion to the whole in the future. Already, of course, the percentage weight of representation from the older parts of Canada is much lower than it was immediately after confederation. If the unit of representation were the same now as it was then, Prince Edward Island would have six members of parliament but the percentage weight of those members to the total house would be much smaller than it was at the time of