

*Redistribution*

obtain the opinions of the people? Should political maps not be the ones which the people want? It appears that we do not have this, but instead we have a dictatorship that is unwilling to accept the opinion of the people. Is this what we want? Is this what is meant by an independent commission? If this is the situation, and it appears that it is, we have gone backwards rather than forwards. Instead of satisfying the people's wishes we have put the redistribution of federal seats in each province into the hands of a four man dictatorship rather than in the hands of 265 elected representatives of the people.

What were the most frequently mentioned complaints at the hearings last fall? For the record, they were as follows:

1. That it is completely unnecessary to have rural areas in a Winnipeg seat or to have a Winnipeg area in a rural seat. The reasoning is quite clear. People should not be dominated by others who have completely different interests.

• (4:50 p.m.)

2. That the interlake area forms a natural unit and should not be divided into three parts but should form one constituency. If it must be divided, it should be divided along the highways system. There are three main highways running through the interlake, all of which run in a north-south direction. One highway, the St. Laurent-Ashern line, is situated on the west side, and the other two are close together on the east side.

3. The Churchill constituency, which has been extremely difficult in the past, has become impossible by the addition of the northern interlake. In addition, complaints were heard from the people of the northern interlake who feel that they do not belong in Churchill.

What did the commission do about these complaints? First of all, they moved the people of Gimli and Riverton into the Winnipeg-Selkirk seat, making this seat more impossible in that they have allowed additional domination, and in that they have given this seat, which is one third rural, the second largest population of any seat in Canada.

Second, they moved the dividing line between Portage and Churchill a few miles north, reducing Churchill's population by some 3,000 people. Do they actually think that this has eased the Churchill situation? Well, I have represented this area for eight

years and I know that it has not. The member still has to travel three lines, and whether or not he must cover a few extra villages makes no difference. It appears to me that all they saw was population figures and they were determined to reduce the population of Churchill.

It is true that population was an argument, but there is much more to redistribution than population. In making the change, they have cut through two municipalities which were originally included in one constituency. The people of Fisher Branch, Broad Valley and Poplarfield are one family and the commissioners have worsened the situation by drawing a line through that area.

What could they have done without redrawing the map? They could have made great improvements by making changes as slight as they did. First, Brooklands could have been transferred into Winnipeg North from Portage; Old Kildonan and West St. Paul could have been moved from Winnipeg North to Winnipeg-Selkirk. The result is an increase of 1,000 people in Winnipeg North.

There were complaints at the hearings from the town of Brooklands. Those who are almost in the centre of Winnipeg do not want to be dominated by a rural area. Everything in the municipality of St. Andrews that is north of the town of Selkirk could have gone into Portage. If these changes were now made, Portage would have a population of approximately 65,000 and Winnipeg-Selkirk would have a population of approximately 77,000. This minimum of change would have eliminated most of the domination which now exists. The commission could then have redrawn the Portage-Churchill line in order to ease the Churchill situation. This would have little or no effect on the populations of the constituencies concerned.

As I see it, the major faults in the proposed maps are as follows:

1. Lines of communication and community interests have been completely ignored in the Churchill constituency.

2. Metro Winnipeg has not been given its fair share of Manitoba's 13 seats.

3. Lines of communication and community interests have been completely ignored in that the interlake area has been divided into three.

4. The proposed map allows certain areas to dominate other areas which are completely unrelated.