

*Redistribution*

problem that is presented by his riding being plended with the riding of Brandon, represented by a brilliant young member who won that seat just over a year ago.

Then we have the directions that were given in regard to Huron, another riding described last night by the hon. member for Huron North as a riding with great pride in its own traditions and its history. We have the extraordinary fact of Wingham being taken out of that riding and placed in a riding with which it has had no historic association at all. There is no reasonable explanation of what has been done in that case, nor has any reasonable explanation been offered.

Then you have Frontenac. There again you have the combining of two ridings represented by Conservatives, significantly enough. There you have the member for Frontenac and the member for Hastings confronted with the necessity of deciding which of them shall continue to represent the ridings that they have represented so well for so many years. That is gerrymandering in the exact sense of the definition of that term given in this house by the Right Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King. No satisfactory explanation has been given of that kind of readjustment.

Well, there are these ridings; and I use the term "riding" in Ontario where it is the term commonly accepted for electoral districts as distinguished from the term "constituency" employed in most of the rest of Canada or "district" in the province of Quebec. In these cases we have the significant joining of ridings which confront Conservative members with a choice of that kind, and still we see a situation of this kind, of which the riding of Algoma is an example. Algoma East remains with only somewhere between 32,000 and 33,000. Then again there are other ridings represented by ministers where that feeling that there must be some readjustment upward to conform with the changes that have taken place does not seem to press with anything like the same urgency it did in these cases to which I have referred.

All this brings us back to the fact that the sins of omission are as great as the sins of commission. There has been no real attempt to explain away, except on the grounds of political exchange, the gerrymandering of Lake Centre with its effect on the distinguished member for that constituency. There has been no attempt here to give any sound explanation for the fact that it was necessary to gerrymander the ridings of Souris and Brandon. There has been no satisfactory explanation for the gerrymandering of Frontenac and Hastings. There has been no satisfactory explanation

[Mr. Drew.]

of the greater gerrymandering in the case of Haldimand and Brant. There has been no explanation of what has been done in Huron and the truncating of that historic riding. There has been no explanation of a number of other cases that have been put before hon. members which affect members of other parties, the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar and others in this house, as has been mentioned in the discussions that have already taken place.

There has been no satisfactory explanation yet of the difference in totals arrived at in the case of the redistribution of Annapolis-Kings and the different totals arrived at in the adjoining constituencies. Nobody is questioning the desirability of associating one part of any province with another part. That is not the point. It is whether representation by population under some understandable principle has become a reality at some time or whether it has not.

I have reviewed the situation, Mr. Chairman. I have raised once again the very cynical approach to this important problem because of the fact that the people of Canada are going to form their impressions as to the way they are being served by the extent to which they are convinced that this is done in the interests of the people of Canada instead of in the interests of political expediency, which is the only thing that can be taken from what has already occurred.

If the government will recognize the opportunity it has, it can still do something to restore the confidence of the people of Canada in the action of this government. This is one case where every member of the house should hope that the government, no matter what party forms that government, should do what it can to establish respect for the institutions of government and parliament by what is done for the people of Canada in arranging for their representation in the next parliament.

We are only now at the first clause. It will be a long time before we dispose of subsequent clauses and the schedule in this bill. There will be ample opportunity for the government to reconsider its position. The amount of time that will be taken will be measured by the extent to which the government will at this stage seek to give some reality to the statement that was made by the Prime Minister when this subject first came up for consideration. If the Prime Minister's statement was intended to be a statement of government policy, then may I ask members of the government to re-examine that statement and see how far they have strayed from it in giving the instructions