

Redistribution

constituency lines. Everything was taken into consideration; the representations were not neglected. However, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that if this presentation of our new map will be accepted, many of the inconveniences and representations by the rural people to one member and by the urban people to another member would be more satisfactory than it is at the present time.

There is very little I can add to what has already been said so eloquently by the leader of our party, the right hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker), and also by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton). However, I know I speak for all the people of my constituency of Humboldt-Melfort-Tisdale when I say they will not be pleased to be attached to the Saskatoon constituency. The new constituency as outlined at the present time will be strictly an agricultural area; it will be divided from the Prince Albert constituency by the South Saskatchewan River. It will also leave out some other areas which were attached to Saskatoon.

It gave me great concern when I saw the new map. I do not know if the people of my constituency would want to nominate me again according to the new map or the new redistribution system, but if I were elected again I would have to serve about two thirds of the people in the city of Saskatoon, urban citizens, and the rest would come from the agricultural area of Saskatoon-Humboldt. On the other hand if a member from Saskatoon, who may not be informed about agricultural matters and grievances, represented such constituencies pertaining to matters of agriculture, I believe this would be a hardship to the people.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the commissioners, who will be presented with this new map, give serious consideration to the matters which have been brought up in this debate. It is not a matter of just criticizing the commissioners from Saskatchewan, but one of presenting the facts as they exist in our province.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): It is not my wish, Mr. Speaker, to take part in the debate on Saskatchewan boundaries in any sense of arguing with the points which have been made by the members from that province. However, there was one statement made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) which I believe should be corrected, at least for the purposes of the record. His statement was to the effect

that the Saskatchewan population had declined; the inference was that its population is down now from what it used to be. In particular he inferred that the population had declined during the years when a socialist government was in power.

Let us look at the figures, just for the record. According to the 1921 census there were in Saskatchewan 757,510 people and in 1931, there were 921,785. In the next ten years, from 1931 to 1941, the population declined to 895,992. Then in the next ten years, 1941 to 1951, during which the C.C.F. government was in power for part of the time, it continued to decline to 831,728. However, the most recent census, taken in 1961, recorded a population in Saskatchewan of 925,181. During that ten-year period, from 1951 to 1961, when there was a substantial increase in the population of Saskatchewan, the C.C.F. government was in power the whole time.

I do not think there is any particular connection here, but the Leader of the Opposition saw fit to try and make a connection between the government which was in power, and facts which he did not state quite correctly. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the population for Saskatchewan in 1961, listed at 925,181, was the largest in the entire history of that province. As I say, I just felt that this fact should be on the record. Obviously, the reason Saskatchewan suffers a loss of seats is not that Saskatchewan has suffered a loss in population, but that other provinces, notably Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia, have gained in population at a rate more rapid than is the case for Saskatchewan. We also know that the reason the drop at this time is from 17 to 13 seats is that there was a Gardiner floor which protected the representation at 15 seats ten years ago.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, I am not arguing with the case the members have made; I believe they have made a good case for their map to be reconsidered. However, I think the case would be even stronger if the facts were stated as they really are. I submit that in fact the case which Saskatchewan has for consideration is strengthened by the fact that its present population is not one of decline; but its present population is the largest it has ever had in its history.

• (5:00 p.m.)

Mr. Deachman: May I ask the hon. member a question? I want to know whether he felt