

Redistribution

should by interest and communication be in Prince Albert.

The Battlefords are the traditional historic centres of the area, with roads going to Lloydminster, to Maymont, to Meadow Lake. From Meadow Lake now new roads go to Ile-à-la-Crosse and other places.

I think that all these proposed suggestions, Mr. Speaker, will meet the necessary criteria of 90 per cent of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

I have gone into all these details because this is all the chance that we have of getting before the commissioners the points that we show here. We want to present them in such form that it will be possible for them to accept advice as to the new proposals we make. We do this to help the commission lay out precise, legal definitions of boundaries. Second, although I have checked on the figures and on their accuracy, I expect there will be a few minor changes.

Third, it is hoped that names of constituencies that I have put forward will have some bearing on the commission's thinking. Fourth, I submit that what the commission ought to try to do in the cities of Saskatoon and Regina is to make sure that the cities are not cleaved in two with a "dead centre". A city should be an alive and expanding operation. It should not be dead. If you are going to have boundaries inside Saskatoon and Regina, they should be laid down either on a single street, or else should run through the cities along boundaries such as a river, so that the people in those cities know in which constituency they live.

We do not want a situation say, in Regina, where in the outskirts the people belong to the rural neighboring constituencies and the people in the centre of the city belong to the city constituency so that if people move from one block to another they will suddenly change from an urban to a rural seat.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that I have made the best case I can for a positive, constructive type of amendment for the report of the commissioners. The suggestions I have made may be the result of something that the commissioners by themselves did not see, but are the result of many, many years of practical experience on the part of many hon. members. There is no question of gerrymandering here. It is a question of having a constituency the boundaries of which will be compatible historically and geographically, and will follow municipal boundaries, which will unite the people through the natural

means of communications by way of highways, radio, television, and newspapers that make for the cultural life of the community.

We had a royal commission sit in Saskatchewan from 1952 to 1956 on the agricultural and rural life of the people. That report was published in 13 volumes, and it emphasized that what is strongest in keeping together the thinly scattered peoples of Saskatchewan are the cultural and marketing ties of those people. You might take away a railway line, or any other means of keeping the people together. But the people are kept together by the common ties of cultural pursuits, which might include anything from curling to going to church, or school. That is the one thing that the royal commission emphasized that kept together the thinly scattered people of the areas.

We should like to see this business done properly in our province, so that there can be that cultural life in a community. We want that, instead of having what I can only describe as artificial suggestions for artificial constituencies, which could have no relationship with the needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

I wonder if I might ask the Chair for permission to submit my figures and maps through Mr. Speaker to the commission in Saskatchewan?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Is there unanimous consent for the hon. member to be allowed to table these statistics, have them referred to the Speaker, and taken as part of his speech?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak for a short time on a matter which I believe is of transcendent importance. During my administration as prime minister we decided on a course of appointing a non-political, non-partisan commission to bring about in our country an end to the murky business of gerrymandering.

I was one of those who in two different and successive redistributions found my constituency operated on without anaesthetic by the government of those days for the political purposes of that government. Indeed, if it had not been for their manipulations I would long since not have been in parliament. I owe a great debt to some hon. members who are still sitting opposite, who belonged to the government of those days. I hasten to add