

*Redistribution*

• (6:10 p.m.)

For example, there was an area that had been cut off by the South Saskatchewan River from its ties with the city of Medicine Hat. I asked that this be included in the riding of Medicine Hat. There was another small town where the boundary cut through the middle of it, half of the main street being in one riding and the other half in another. There were also a number of others. Every reasonable request that was made at those hearings was acquiesced in by the commission, and this is shown in the revised proposal before us today.

Having said that, I agree in part with what hon. members who have spoken have said with respect to constituency No. 17 known as Rocky Mountain. I believe there is some justification for arguing that this constituency could in fact be parts of three or four constituencies immediately to the east of the area now comprising this riding. But I would caution the commission, if I may, Mr. Speaker, that if they take the necessary action to do away with this constituency they must be careful not to put themselves in the position of setting up another constituency somewhere else in Alberta with the same kind of problems as this one so far as communications and so on are concerned.

While I agree in general with the argument that this would be a difficult constituency for a member to represent and for the people of the area to gather together for conventions to select candidates and so on, I do not accept all of the arguments which have been advanced in this regard. For example, I can see the problem of communications being equally as difficult in constituency No. 1 known as Athabasca or equally as difficult in constituency No. 14, known as Peace River. Therefore I do not think it is fair to argue that because no road runs from north to south throughout the proposed Rocky Mountain constituency this by itself is sufficient reason to suggest that these are the wrong type of electoral boundaries to set up.

I say that for this reason. After all, if we do convince the commissioners that they should put one more seat in Calgary and one more seat in Edmonton, making seven seats inside those two cities, we would still have 12 rural ridings or semi-rural ridings with smaller towns and cities in them. These would have to be readjusted to come within the tolerances laid down by the act.

[Mr. Olson.]

The caution I am now expressing is that we do not set up another constituency somewhere along the eastern boundary of Alberta or in the northern or northwestern part of Alberta with the same kind of problems of communication. I am sure the commission is well aware that these sparsely settled areas along the eastern boundary and in the north and west present the same kind of problems if the constituency is extended far enough to include sufficient people to meet the tolerance required.

There is one other point, Mr. Speaker. Roads and railroads are not the only factors to be considered so far as community of interest is concerned. Such things as the area covered by certain television and radio broadcasts and news media are also matters which are involved in the question of community of interest. For example, the television and radio stations in Calgary cover the Banff area. The same is true with regard to Lethbridge and the Waterton park area. This is a matter which has to be considered with respect to the need for a candidate to be able to communicate with those in his constituency during an election campaign, as would a member of parliament when elected to serve these people.

I think that is all I want to say. I agree that if something can be done to readjust the boundaries in Alberta so as to do away with the constituency of Rocky Mountain and create an additional constituency in the cities this might meet the situation. But I would caution the commission to exercise some care in adjusting the borders of the 12 rural and semi-rural constituencies which will be left so that we do not have any other constituencies in some other part of the province winding up with at least as bad, perhaps even worse, problems of communication in the form of roads, television, radio and newspaper media.

**Mr. H. M. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** Mr. Speaker, I want briefly to register some complaints from the present constituency of Jasper-Edson concerning the proposed redistribution. I was very sorry to hear the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson) make the remarks he did because no area in the eastern part of the province is comparable with the Rocky Mountain trench so far as communications and transportation are concerned.

I should like to point out that this idea of a Rocky Mountain constituency, which is the key to the redistribution of the seats in Alberta, is the obsession of the chairman of