

Redistribution

I notice the hon. member for High Park (Mr. Cameron) in his seat and I would not want to say anything to cut down the force of the objection he proposed to make. Generally speaking, the work carried out by the commission in the Toronto area from which I come, which is comprised of 20 to 25 ridings, has been done in a reasonable and fair manner. I think it only proper to say this, so that when the record of this debate is read it will not be assumed that all of us are in the position so eloquently and vigorously expressed by the hon. member for Carleton, who called the work of the commission one colossal gerrymander. He said if this had been done by the members of this house it would have caused a howl from coast to coast. I may not be quoting him accurately, but I think he used similar picturesque language.

In fairness I want to say to the commissioner that I, and I think I speak for a good number of members in my area, think that a fair and reasonable job was done in that particular area, and we are not anxious to see any substantial changes made, or any wholesale reconstruction of the work of the commission.

Although perfect results may not have been obtained, I for one believe that the principle of having this done by a non-partisan commission is sound. If we had taken the advice of the hon. member for Carleton, this would be thrown back into the arena of politics, and would have resulted in great difficulty.

I want to put on the record my view that the commissioners, perhaps with some exceptions in certain areas, which I think they will correct, have done a reasonable job, and that parliament should be satisfied with its own decision not to throw this into the arena of parliamentary discussion.

Mr. J. E. Brown (Brantford): I should like to add a few words to this debate. I am very glad that both the hon. member for Carleton and the hon. member for Greenwood have expressed the views they have, because I believe each in his own way has given a picture of the situation which the commission should review.

I do not want to speak in any way disrespectfully of the commission, but I was one of the members of parliament who signed an objection to the suggested new boundaries that the commission fixed for the riding of Brantford and for the proposed new riding of Brant.

In doing so I want to make clear that I do not wish to accuse the commission of wrongdoing in this regard. However I believe that some of the general criticisms that were levelled by the hon. member for Carleton were just, and really should be considered by the commission.

Mr. Winkler: Hear, hear.

Mr. Brown: I refer specifically to his appeal that a riding, that a constituency to be represented in the House of Commons, should be based on a cohesive unit socially, culturally, and economically as far as possible. That makes the job of the commission very difficult.

I, for one, know that the Electoral Boundaries Commission had a very difficult task in front of it. But we, coming from this house, also have had a good deal of experience in these matters. I have represented the constituency of Brantford for a number of years in the House of Commons, and I feel that the matters raised by the hon. member for Carleton should be studied. They are very important. I am very glad that he quoted from the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, who gave a lifetime to public service and who had a great deal of experience in this regard.

I feel that a constituency should be a definite cohesive unit. For these reasons I should like to refer to the specific objections which have been raised, not by me, but by the constituents of the various municipalities in the new proposed electoral riding of Brant. Accordingly, I should like to commence by referring to the township of Ancaster, which in the commission's report is to be annexed to form part of the constituency of Brant.

● (7:40 p.m.)

Now Ancaster township goes to the city limits of the city of Hamilton. This means that the new constituency which I or someone else will be representing in this house would extend to the Hamilton city limits. There have been widespread objections in the press and elsewhere from the residents of Ancaster township to the effect that never in history have they had anything in common, any common association, with the people of Brantford. This is regrettable as far as I am concerned. I love my city and I want to say right now that I would love to represent the township of Ancaster in this House of Commons, a beautiful township if there ever was one. I want to make it abundantly clear that I have no political reason for stating this. But