

*Redistribution*

and the rural constituencies in those provinces can be kept down to a reasonable size. We find that that is happening in the last redistribution of the population. For example, Ottawa West seat to-day contains 94,746; Eglinton, Toronto, 72,953; Spadina, 86,431; Montreal St. Mary, 83,444; Montreal Mercier, 85,380. Thus provinces which have large industrial centres can keep the areas of their rural seats to a reasonable size. But in the case of a province which is almost entirely agricultural, the principle of basing the unit of representation upon populations which are increasing because of the rapid growth of industrial centres means that rural seats—in Saskatchewan for instance—will soon be so large that members cannot do justice to their constituents. That is the consideration which I think justifies the minimum requirement provision which obtains in the case of the maritimes and should apply, I suggest, also to the prairie provinces. As has already been pointed out, Prince Edward Island has four senators, and has been protected for some time by the regulation to which I have referred. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have each ten senators; one of them will be protected by that regulation in the next redistribution, and the other is in a position to receive the protection right away. But, in the wisdom of those who set up the representation for western Canada in the senate, it was provided that all that section of the country should have twenty-four senators. That means that the representation of Saskatchewan in the senate is six. Therefore there is very little protection for Saskatchewan in that provision, and I submit that some consideration should be given to that aspect of the situation.

The present population of the seat which I have the honour to represent is under 40,000, which means that that seat, already so large as to occupy me pretty continually in keeping in touch with it, will have to be increased in size over twenty-five per cent. As I see the population of Quebec increasing, partly because of the big and growing metropolis of Montreal, I recognize that as a consequence the seats in Saskatchewan will be enlarged to such a size that it will be almost impossible to have them adequately represented in parliament. That does not apply quite so much to Manitoba, because that province contains the big city of Winnipeg. They can therefore provide, as they have done, that the city seats shall have a much larger population, so that the country seats do not have to be quite so disproportionately enlarged. For example, Winnipeg North has a population of over

[Mr. Tucker.]

70,000. As regards British Columbia, of course it has the two cities of Vancouver and Victoria.

Mr. MacNICOL: The Manitoba constituency of Churchill is a very large one.

Mr. TUCKER: Yes; it is a very large seat, but of course the population is mainly to be found in a few areas. The whole problem is one to which any committee assigned to study it will have to give close attention. Alberta is in somewhat the same position as Saskatchewan and Manitoba, except that its two cities of Calgary and Edmonton have a tendency to grow fairly fast, and that helps them out in some measure.

I have here some figures which I found very interesting and which I thought I might bring to the attention of the house. I do so because at one time I thought of suggesting that our representation should be based upon the result of the quinquennial census which will be taken in western Canada next year. Therefore I tried to get some figures on the trend of population in western Canada in the last three years. The only figures I could get from the bureau of statistics were based on the issue of ration books, and I found to my disappointment that the trend which had set in after the outbreak of war up to the taking of the census in 1941, consequent upon so many of our young people having come east to take part in industrial work and the war effort in general, had continued in increasing measure up to 1944. According to a study made by the bureau of statistics, in the period 1941 to 1944 the migration from Saskatchewan amounted to no less than 86,000. If we do not give time for that situation to cure itself—and it will not be cured by the time the quinquennial census is taken next year—if we base ourselves upon that census, instead of losing four seats in Saskatchewan it looks as though we might lose even more, which accentuates the importance of giving consideration to the argument I have already advanced.

The house might be interested in the trend in regard to other provinces.

Mr. BRACKEN: Perhaps the hon. member could give the numbers that left Saskatchewan before 1939. Does he have them?

Mr. TUCKER: No; I just have them from 1941 to 1944. I do not think it would be possible to obtain figures for the period 1939 to 1941, because the statistics which were furnished me were available on account of ration books having been issued, and that gave them the chance to study the trend.