

Redistribution Commission

the function or mechanics of the proposed legislation will be very favourable to anyone on our side of the house. There are some indications that possibly we are more fearful than is justified, and in this connection I quote the words of the Secretary of State. They were not his own words, as he indicated, but he uttered them in this house in such a manner that we must take it he agrees in every sense with every word he put on the record. He went on to say, as recorded at page 5114 of *Hansard* for November 26:

There is no thought of changing the senatorial floor provided in the constitution which, at the present time, protects the representation of the provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

This of course is one of the problems we are confronted with in considering such a legislative measure. How will this situation be resolved—maintaining the senatorial floor in one part of the country where the population is rather small, in accordance with our constitution, and then dealing with the situation as it exists in some of the larger provinces? The problem that does arise is that we must bear in mind the number of people in these sectors of the country in comparison with the number in other sectors where some of us think changes might be made.

I am not afraid of the political surgeon's scalpel being drawn in my direction, but I am concerned if this is done in a very broad manner. Therefore I come to the point that was raised by the hon. member for York-Scarborough. He indicated that there are approximately 36,000 people in my constituency, whereas the 1961 census indicated there were 267,000 people in his riding, and of course he made the point that this was too many people for one member to represent.

Then he was somewhat complimentary in his subsequent sentences, but not overly so, because in the final analysis he said the committee would not hear much objection from me, probably, because I was energetic enough to be able to represent more people. Maybe that is so in the manner he indicated in his speech, but I wonder why the hon. member for York-Scarborough did not use the constituency of one of his colleagues as an example. Indeed I myself could point to several constituencies represented by colleagues of mine, constituencies that are similar in size to my own.

The hon. member for York-Scarborough referred to my constituency in approximate terms of being in the ratio of seven to one with his own, but I must at once point to the constituency of Iles-de-la-Madeleine which, when compared with my own, is in a ratio of one to four. Therefore I feel that the people

I have the honour to represent justify a member in greater measure than the number of people in Iles-de-la-Madeleine. I do not object to the hon. member for Iles-de-la-Madeleine having a seat in this house, but I would point out that in representing the people of Grey-Bruce in the House of Commons I do so in such a manner as to stay in constant communication with them.

My home is in that constituency and I visit there frequently. I understand there are quite a number of members who do not care to represent their ridings in this way and that, of course, is their prerogative. For instance, the hon. member for Iles-de-la-Madeleine is, I believe, resident both in the domiciliary sense and the business sense in the city of Montreal and does his representation by a sort of remote control. More power to him, if he has the ability to do it this way.

I do not know how the Secretary of State carries on in his riding. I doubt very much if he goes there too frequently, but he may have some other election machinery there to look after his affairs. But I put this forth, so that when the time comes and political considerations are being examined, that this should be taken into account just as much as any of the words used by the hon. member for York-Scarborough; because they are of equal importance.

I can remember a previous redistribution that affected my constituency, which at that time was represented by a Miss Agnes Macphail, the first lady member of the House of Commons, and a very worthy one at that. She was not a Grit, but it was the Grit chalk, the Grit black pencil changing the constituency lines that eliminated her from this house in the very next election, and she disappeared from the federal political scene.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder would the hon. gentleman permit me to ask him a question? Miss Macphail, I recall, was defeated in 1940, and if I remember correctly the redistribution previous to that was in 1933, when Mr. Bennett was prime minister. Is he suggesting that the Liberals were responsible for that redistribution?

Mr. Winkler: I think the Secretary of State has a certain propensity for doing things this way, but if he examines the record he will find—

Mr. Teillet: The truth.

Mr. Winkler: The truth? Well, I think the truth on that side of the house is judged in halves and quarters, not in full measure, because I think if the Secretary of State investigates very carefully, and in conjunction with the weatherman in that 1940 election, he will find it was a pretty cute political manoeuvre to eliminate Miss Macphail.