

*Electoral Boundaries*

its environs. Strangely enough, and most pertinent at this time, those same recommendations were unchanged as a result of the representations made in the public hearings. Therefore the comments made for the public hearings are as pertinent today as they were then in September of 1975.

The proposals for redistribution in 1973 met with severe objections on a province-wide basis. Such objections, both in general and in particular, applied to the Edmonton city constituencies. They are well known to the commission since two of its members are on the present commission. Outside of a very few minor modifications, the proposals are repeated in 1975 initial report. They are subject to much the same objection in the 1976 report we are now considering.

Our colleagues in the House from all provinces have insisted that reasons must be stated. As far as the city of Edmonton is concerned, Edmonton East is eliminated as a constituency. Why? The report is silent. Areas within city boundaries are carved up and recast most drastically. Again, I ask why? The report is silent.

Edmonton Centre is turned around and made to include districts far to the west and east. The same question is put: why? No reasons are given.

A solid traditional piece of Edmonton West, comprising some 25,000 people, is tacked on to what is now called Edmonton South, with which it has no demographic connection. Again, why? Surely there must be a reason and we are entitled to have it. Preliminary reports must give reasons for change. Nevertheless, very few were given in the preliminary report, and I suggest that the present report does not include many more. Certainly none of the questions I have asked—and they are pertinent questions—have been dealt with satisfactorily. Since I was the principal protagonist for statutory change in this field, I respectfully suggest to the commission that the reasons given are not sufficient to support the changes proposed.

The reason advanced in connection with the fixing of constituency boundaries within the limits of the city of Edmonton is at best an arguable case, and there is the same thread running through the 1973 report and the 1975 report. I notice it too in the reports of some of the other commissions. I should like to know the inspiration of the idea that a city constituency must not go beyond the city boundary.

I will say at the outset with regard to this argument that the net result of the Commission's proposals has been totally the reverse. Its intention presumably was that the city should not dominate the adjoining rural area. But the commissioners have only translated it over one degree because in and around the city of Edmonton what the commission has done has been to set a constituency of Pembina with all Edmonton's dormitory suburbs. The result is that Pembina which should be, if it is to exist, a rural constituency, is dominated entirely by the urban suburbs and the rural subdivisions which pertain to the city of Edmonton.

In many ways, too, the recent changes made to the proposed constituency of Yellowhead place the emphasis on population which is urban-oriented. People who work in Edmonton, shop there, go to school there, exert a tremendous influence on the new constituency of Yellowhead. I will leave my colleagues from other parts of the

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city to indicate what happens with respect to other communities within the Edmonton metropolitan area and to call attention to factors which completely neutralize the reason advanced by the commission in connection with city constituencies.

I would suggest that since the commission treats Calgary and Edmonton the same way, it forgets that the Calgary city boundaries extend much further afield than those of Edmonton. They are, in effect, city and metro boundaries. Such is not the case in Edmonton which has a much larger metro population just outside its corporate boundaries. Surely it is the metro area which has the greater community interest. Where do the people work, where do they shop, where do they go to school, where do they worship? That is what matters. These people should not be put in the position of the flea on the end of the dog's tail. The Edmonton metro area seats should be recast with this in mind.

I intend to recommend that the Edmonton metro area—and this is a matter of record as described in the so-called Hanson Report—should describe the perimeter boundaries for the Edmonton metro seats and that these should be six in number, two south of the Saskatchewan River and four north of the Saskatchewan River. The commission can readily draw, based on population, the dividing line in the south between what should be Edmonton-Strathcona on the west side and a new constituency which would include Sherwood Park and the Millwoods to the east. They could select whatever name they wished, but again I say I do not care for the mere descriptive terms "north", "south" and so on; there are some strong traditional names which ought to be considered.

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On the north side we have Edmonton West. The north boundary of the three seats on the north side should be 137th Avenue, which is a natural division. We have Edmonton West, Edmonton Centre, and Edmonton East. The commissioners propose to abolish Edmonton East. Edmonton East is an old, traditional name, an old, traditional constituency that should not be abolished. Then north of 137th Avenue they could take in the town of St. Albert and the new subdivisions north of 137th Avenue, and go to the east to include Fort Saskatchewan.

There is a rural part included if one goes north to what I call the Mayo correction line, a natural division that existed for Edmonton West going back I do not know how many decades. These rural areas are filled with subdivisions of 10, 20, 30, 40 homes. The people work in the city of Edmonton and live in and around St. Albert or Fort Saskatchewan. Theirs is the interest and this is what should be considered.

Bearing in mind that constituency boundaries should be readily identifiable, that constituency boundaries should be changed where absolutely necessary, that constituency boundaries should take in people who have a community of interest, and all the demographic principles that are based on the parameter of the 25 per cent tolerance on either side, it seems to me that so far as the city of Edmonton is concerned the basic principle of the metropolitan area of Edmonton should be the guiding principle. To that extent I once again commend this idea to the commission so that it