

*Redistribution*

The development of British Columbia has been primarily north and south. I fail to understand why the commission did not take this into consideration. I take tremendous pride in the highway development that has gone on in the last few years in the province of British Columbia, but it has not yet reached the point where one can travel hundreds of miles directly east and west across our great province with the ease that would be required to make the proposed Okanagan-Kootenay constituency work.

It seems to me that once the commission had determined the population tolerance within which it could work and had realized that the corner of our growing province occupied by the Kootenays and the Okanagan would of necessity lose one seat, the commission should then have taken three centres and from those three centres have radiated the boundaries of their proposed constituencies until they had arrived at the population balance that would have fitted the tolerance the commission thought there should be. It would not have been necessary to fit it as closely as the commission seemed to feel that it must. As far as I can determine, their aim seems to have been complete equality rather than to use the fairly generous limits of tolerance they were assigned. I submit that had that been done they would have had a constituency that it would have been possible to serve. It would have been possible to develop a unified approach to the very many problems that present themselves to a constituency today.

The north end of the Okanagan Valley has been further divorced by the proposed redistribution from the rest of the Okanagan area. The north end has been attached to an area hundreds of miles away. This has been done just at a time when the northern Okanagan area is enjoying a period of development that promises a great future for it. It will be very difficult for whoever serves the proposed constituency to serve the two opposite ends adequately.

● (2:50 p.m.)

Although the trans-Canada highway makes a fine link between Vernon and Calgary, it does not therefore make a fine link between Vernon and Cranbrook or between Vernon and Fernie which will also be within this proposed constituency. Tremendous transportation problems will arise within the constituency. This morning a radio commentator said that members speaking in this debate were

concerned only with their own political fortunes. I should like to deny this statement utterly. I was concerned about the constituency before I ever thought I would represent it. The plan proposed was bad then, and now that I have the fortune to represent the constituency I find it is still bad. But there is still time for the situation to be corrected. I trust that the commission, on the urging of all the members who have spoken on the subject of the boundaries in British Columbia will reconsider the whole matter very carefully and make those changes, not only in the proposed Okanagan-Kootenay constituency but also in the proposed Coast-Chilcotin constituency and in other constituencies mentioned, which it seems to me are absolutely necessary for the future development of the province. I can understand the commission being concerned not to favour any one political party when drawing boundary lines. At the same time it must not be made impossible for all political parties to form any workable organization in the new constituency.

This is what happened in Kootenay and elsewhere. If not corrected it will become a question of "us against them". A member would never be able to reconcile the conflict of interests which would constantly be presented to him, whoever he might be, when he came to represent the area. It is, of course, my hope that such a situation will never come about and that the commission will reconsider its conclusions and redraw the boundaries.

Finally, I should like to add a few observations on behalf of the hon. member for Cariboo (Mr. Leboe), who is unable to be present in the house this afternoon, with reference to the changes made in that constituency. He puts forward the following points:

1. The name of the new constituency should be Portage Mountain, not Prince George-Peace River. The next redistribution will see another constituency in and around Prince George.

The area from Lucerne West to Crescent Spur should not be included in Kamloops. The interests of these people are tied to Prince George and should be included with Prince George. The present suggestion of the commission fails to make sense.

3. Quesnel area is oriented to Prince George. It does not present its representative with the problem that the section north of