

seat has been eliminated, and to that course I note my hon. friend has taken no exception. Coming to the mainland another seat had to go. We might have played politics in another way with the constituency of Antigonish-Guysborough. My hon. friend has suggested that it was for political reasons that we did not carve Colchester in the manner his colleague suggests we should carve Pictou. I say it was because there was no natural boundary by which we could do it, as there was in the county of Digby. What we have done is this: We have placed an hon. member of this house, who has represented his constituency with satisfaction to his party and to his constituents—I refer to the hon. member for Digby-Annapolis (Mr. Short)—in a position whereby, if he is again a candidate, at an advanced period of his life he will have to take on a very onerous task to retain the representation of his constituency. I am not for one moment suggesting that the proposed constituency of Digby-Annapolis-Kings represents a fair division of the population as between constituencies—not by any means. But unless we are going to divide the constituencies on the basis of counting heads, for one or two reasons which I shall indicate, no fairer proposal could be made. In the first place my hon. friend has referred to that constituency as being purely rural. I take exception to his description. It has within its borders seven incorporated towns, towns of some importance. Many of them have rich historic associations. Beginning with the town of Windsor, which formerly was the seat of King's college, we continue and pass through the town of Wolfville, the seat of Acadia university.

Mr. RALSTON: Are you speaking of the new constituency?

Mr. RHODES: Yes.

Mr. RALSTON: Then you should leave out Windsor.

Mr. RHODES: Yes, quite so. We begin with the university town of Wolfville, then go on to Kentville, Annapolis and Digby. Not only is there a comparatively large urban population, but there is no constituency to be found within the confines of the maritime provinces which irrespective of its size, is so compact from the point of view of community of interest and culture. They are a highly cultured people; their interests are common. There is no point of conflict between any two of these constituencies. The same may be said with respect to the constituency of Colchester-Hants. They come together natur-

ally; they are contiguous. A portion of east Hants I venture to say does as much as if not more trading with, and has more communication with the town of Truro in the neighbouring county of Colchester to-day, and has for years, than it has had and will have with respect to the town of Windsor, the shire town of the county of Hants.

I do not desire to say any more on that phase of the matter, except to reiterate that with the possible exception of the Halifax Chronicle, which will always of course take an extreme partisan political point of view—I have not seen it with respect to this proposed redistribution—it has remained for my hon. friend to suggest for the first time in the house or out of it that there has been anything political in the manner in which this redistribution has been carried out.

My hon. friend has referred to the reduction of representation for the maritime provinces. I do not propose to follow him in detail with respect to the various phases of that question, and particularly with respect to the feelings of the people in the maritime provinces, although it is a very interesting subject. But let me say that any argument my hon. friend has to propose looking to the remedies which he suggested should be addressed to the committee on redistribution. That committee should make its report to the house, and as a result there should be a joint address, which would result finally in an amendment to the British North America Act. This ground has all been canvassed before very fully. I recall that very well because I had the honour of being a member of the redistribution committee in 1914. That subject was argued before us at that time at very great length. If my hon. friend will refer to the report of that committee he will find the following:

Your committee also, have had under consideration the claim of the province of Prince Edward Island to have its representation restored to six members, as at the date of its entrance into confederation. The case on behalf of the province was very ably presented by the Honourable J. A. Matheson, the premier and the Honourable John McLean, member of the council. We have been unable to find that the case presented would justify us in recommending an amendment of the British North America Act for that purpose. For this reason, we have concluded that the representation of Prince Edward Island must be reduced to three members, in accordance with the provisions of section 51 of the British North America Act.

Let me say to my hon. friend that that report containing the paragraph I have just recited was agreed to unanimously by all parties on that committee.

We are of opinion, however, that it was undesirable and indeed incongruous that any province in Canada should have a similar rep-