

*Redistribution*

I am going to endeavour to avoid making a specific structure on the commission because, as I have said, I recognize the difficulty of its task. But it is certainly my impression, based upon the attitude of the commission at the various public hearings that were held, that it felt itself bound by the 1961 census population figures. Indeed, I believe members of the commission are on record as saying, "We are not allowed to take into account your views", that is, the views of those appearing before them, "as to the rates of growth that have taken place, the trends of population growth and the shifts that have become evident since 1961."

The commission in being bound by its own rigid, and in my submission erroneous, interpretation of the act, erroneous by virtue of the provisions of section 13(c)(i), was bound to produce certain anomalies, and while I have said anomalies, if you look at one or two of the ridings they are monstrosities, unworkable monstrosities and certainly the commission erred in that it failed to give due regard to the other relaxing principle set out in the act contained in section 13(c)(ii), namely, that it could depart from the strict application of the equality rule where:

—any special community or diversity of interests of the inhabitants of various regions of the province appears to the commission to render such a departure necessary or desirable.

Those words were not put into the act without purpose. They were put in with the desire that the commission would pay attention to them as being principles parliament properly wished to apply in making adjustments in the constituency boundaries, and the commission has in several important respects completely disregarded that statement of principle.

Next, Mr. Speaker, may I give some examples of the result of the commission's failure to apply these principles I have just read. Before coming to those examples I should say that not only has it failed to apply those principles as they are written but it has failed to apply other principles which are inherent in any approach to the problem of redistribution. These are, first, the principle of accessibility of various parts within a constituency, one to the other and, second, the further principle of the practical feasibility of anyone who may be elected serving his riding efficiently and the practical feasibility of the residents of a constituency obtaining access to their member of parliament when he is back home.

● (2:00 p.m.)

An examination of the proposed map of the redistribution of British Columbia ridings indicates conclusively the disadvantages which will be produced with respect to all these matters unless the commission substantially revises its present proposals. Let me give to the house and record, in the hope that the commission will give very serious consideration thereto, some examples of the kind of things I mean. They are to be found in paragraph 6 and the various sub-paragraphs thereof of the motion which is recorded in the pamphlet at the pages to which I have referred.

In my examples I refer especially to the results that would follow the creation of the two new ridings, Coast-Chilcotin and Okanagan-Kootenay. As a result of the creation of those ridings the following situations will occur. In the one riding of Okanagan-Kootenay will be located the cities of Vernon and Fernie, a riding extending in one great arc from Vernon in the south central part of the province to Fernie in the southeast corner. These are cities which have no community of interests and are quite impossible to serve by one member of parliament.

You will have, for example, in the creation of the Coast-Chilcotin riding, the Queen Charlotte Islands off the coast of British Columbia, one of the most typical coastal areas, having no community of interests with the town of Williams Lake which lies in the interior dry belt area, but both will be included in the same riding.

As a result you will have a riding with areas not only having no community of interests but one which will require a member of parliament, in order to serve the area, having to undertake a journey of some 800 miles first by some means of transport from the Queen Charlotte Islands either to Prince Rupert or to Vancouver—and I suggest the second would be more likely—then travelling from the city of Vancouver up through two Fraser Valley ridings, through a portion of the remainder of the riding of Kamloops and back into his riding of Coast-Chilcotin in order to serve that part. That is an absurdity, Mr. Speaker.

Coupled with that fact one finds that the proposal involves the necessity of the member of what is left of the riding of Kamloops having to go through a part of the new riding of Coast-Chilcotin—that part which has been carved out of the Kamloops riding—in order