

Redistribution

fair to his party. However, his remarks indicate anything but satisfaction with the fair way in which the matter was handled.

Second, after he had finished his remarks and the minister from Nova Scotia had replied I felt that the minister had answered satisfactorily the criticisms that had been made. But when the hon. member for Annapolis-Kings had to commandeer or rally to his support outside help, so to speak, by calling upon members from other provinces and even from distant parts of Canada I decided that I should say a few words. Why did he not commandeer the Conservative members for Cumberland and Colchester-Hants to support his fallacious contentions? They at least know the conditions in Nova Scotia.

As far as the contention is concerned, which was made by opposition members, that an understanding had been reached by our subcommittee at its first meeting, this is not in accordance with the facts. I do not think that the member for Annapolis-Kings or the other members are deliberately misrepresenting the understanding that was arrived at during that meeting. To be fair to them all, I believe they simply misunderstood that understanding which was that we would not change the boundaries of the riding known as Digby-Annapolis-Kings from the description which it bore from 1935 to 1949 when Nova Scotia was a twelve member province. I think the member for Annapolis-Kings surely understood. Otherwise, why did he make the suggestion that the whole constituency of Queens-Shelburne, which it was agreed was the constituency to go and which, mark you, meant the loss of a Liberal and not an opposition member, should be added to the riding of Lunenburg? Why did he suggest that Queens and Shelburne should both be added to that riding? He did state later in the committee that this was said facetiously but if he understood, as he claims, that the matter had been decided at the first meeting, then even a facetious remark was unnecessary and uncalled for.

Before 1945 Nova Scotia had twelve members but following the redistribution in 1947 an extra member was allotted to us, and the constituency of Queens-Shelburne again came into existence in 1949. When we learned recently that Nova Scotia had to lose its extra member the natural course for us to follow, unless we were to drop a Tory seat, was to consider the plan of reverting to the boundaries that had been in existence before 1947 and which boundaries, I may add, had been decided upon by the Conservative government when in power during the 1933 redistribution.

[Mr. Kirk (Antigonish-Guysborough).]

In drawing up the constituencies several factors were taken into consideration, not only population and area but community of interest which was another factor. The industrial life of the people living in the riding, race, creed, culture, etc., were combined to make up what we thought to be a homogeneous group of ridings. With respect to population, as already indicated the present high population of the proposed riding is made up in part by a floating military population which may well disappear in large measure when the present military activities become less necessary.

All in all I cannot think that the opposition can find great fault with the decision to revert to a division of ridings which they themselves set up in the first place, especially when it is a Liberal riding which we have eliminated. As a member of the subcommittee on redistribution for the maritime provinces, I am still satisfied, in spite of everything that has been said, that the right redistribution was made.

Mr. Fleming: There is one aspect of the statement made to the house this morning by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, who was chairman of the redistribution committee, upon which I should like to make specific comment, and I am glad the Prime Minister is in the house because I think it also concerns him. Last night, when the leader of the opposition was speaking on this subject, he said, as recorded at page 4079 of *Hansard*:

At the time this subject was first raised—

That is the subject of redistribution.

—the Prime Minister expressed the hope that in dealing with this we would avoid political controversy, and that if there was any complaint the views would be expressed to him so that if possible steps might be taken to meet those objections. Following that request and following subsequent discussion of this subject, which was in no way confidential but related to the business of this house, I placed before the Prime Minister the views in regard to Haldimand which I hoped would receive some consideration. Nevertheless the course originally intended has been followed in regard to Haldimand, and there is gerrymandering of the very kind that was criticized so vigorously by the late Right Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King in this house and outside the house, and by other Liberal members in this house.

Further, the leader of the opposition also said last night, as found at page 4080:

The amount of time that will be taken will be measured by the extent to which the government will at this stage seek to give some reality to the statement that was made by the Prime Minister when this subject first came up for consideration. If the Prime Minister's statement was intended to be a statement of government policy, then may I ask members of the government to re-examine that statement and see how far they have strayed from