

2:31 p.m.

[Chairman: Mr. Bogle]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll declare the meeting officially open. Welcome, Doug, to you and to Bob. We welcome input you have for us on your part of the city and more particularly your constituency. We usually have a few comments by the visiting MLA and then go into a general question and answer session. We're on the record, if you're comfortable with that.

MR. MAIN: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, please proceed.

MR. MAIN: Well, first of all, I'm glad to see that the committee is moving ahead with hearing from people and getting suggestions, because I am one of those who believe that this matter must be concluded and must be concluded quickly. There has been a tremendous amount of discussion already. There have been some people upset, angry, advocating a variety of different things and suggesting a variety of motives on the part of whoever is making these suggestions. My main concern is that we get this done, because ultimately the voters want to know where they're going to vote and who their candidates are going to be and when it is all going to happen. My preference would be for this to be concluded sooner rather than later. If your committee, Mr. Chairman, is aiming for a date eight or 10 weeks hence for a conclusion of this exercise, I think that would be prudent and, certainly from the people I've talked to over the course of this exercise, welcome.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're going to do it.

MR. MAIN: Well, that's good to know.

In terms of the kind of representation that's required – I made a presentation to the Liden commission and discussed some specifics and also some general things. I've spoken to a number of people since those days and would make one suggestion to you, although it's not consistent with existing legislation. The whole profile that the boundaries commission exercise has received through its various permutations over the last several months has sort of focused attention on governing and being governed. I would make a suggestion that rather than aiming for 83 constituencies or, as some have suggested, 85 or more, I think the people of Alberta would welcome fewer, that perhaps we could complete this exercise of representation with, let's say, 10 percent fewer constituencies, 75 constituencies. The legislation doesn't allow for that. I throw that out just as a suggestion, as a comment that's been made to me, one that I've discussed with a number of people to whom I am close, not only in my own area but elsewhere. The idea of a smaller Legislature is very appealing for a variety of reasons. However, I don't expect that that will happen. So my presentation today in terms of specific lines and specific needs and community needs will be based on the existing situation, which is 83 constituencies. I just throw out the 10 percent fewer MLAs as a suggestion so someone makes it on the record as opposed to muttering it in the halls.

In terms of specifics for Edmonton, having said that we should have fewer MLAs period, I certainly wouldn't advocate that we have more MLAs in Edmonton. I think Edmonton voters at the provincial level are well represented. I don't see the need for 18 or 19 or more MLAs when you've only got 12 aldermen in the city of Edmonton who do a great deal of work and are doing the kinds of specific things that seem to be most prevalent in the minds of city dwellers.

Stop signs, traffic flow, dog and cat bylaws, licensing bicycles, where we're going to put the garbage: these types of pressing day-to-day civic issues are dealt with by aldermen and dealt with very effectively by 12. It is beyond me how 19 or 20 or 21 or 22 or, as some have suggested, 24 or 25 MLAs are required when the job of a city MLA, especially in the capital, is so different from that of a member from outside a major metropolitan area.

I spent some time this summer in a number of rural constituencies in the north, in the south, in the southeast, in areas far from major metropolitan areas, and in areas adjacent to metropolitan areas, and I am staggered by the difference in the role of an MLA from Edmonton-Parkallen and an MLA from, say, Highwood. The jobs are completely different. In my constituency I might get 10 or 15 phone calls a week; some rural MLAs are getting a hundred calls a day from their constituents who need things to be done. It's completely incongruous to describe representation in terms of pure numbers. So I have always been one of those who advocate that there needs to be some recognition of the difference between rural MLAs and major urban MLAs, especially those in the capital who have zero travel time to the Legislature when the Legislature's in session and who can deal with the seat of government as well as their own constituencies with I guess at the most a 20-minute car ride as opposed to a five- or six- or seven-hour car ride in the case of some members.

So that's the general comment I'd like to make about the number of representatives required in the city constituencies.

With regards to specifics about the area in and around the area that I currently represent, let me hand you some maps. I've got four, one for your other member when he shows. First of all, I deal specifically with three constituencies. The current area that I deal with covers most of the current constituency of Edmonton-Strathcona, all of Edmonton-Parkallen, and all of Edmonton-Whitemud; in other words, the southwest quadrant of the city, generally speaking, between the tracks and the river.

I'll take you to the top right-hand corner of the map where Mill Creek Ravine intersects the North Saskatchewan River. The constituency of Edmonton-Strathcona there in one of the original designs had the line coming right down 99th Street, which in fact bisected a community league. So the constituency line either has to go east of that or west of it, and it seemed to a number of people in the area who met with me during a series of meetings that I had, that Mill Creek Ravine would make a natural easternmost boundary for Edmonton-Strathcona. It would then flow south to Whyte Avenue, east along Whyte Avenue to the tracks, and then south along the tracks, which is a natural boundary, down to Whitemud Drive, westward along Whitemud Drive to 111th Street, then north along that major north-south traffic corridor to the Crawford centre at Belgravia Road, and then westward along Belgravia Road and Fox Drive to the river again. Everything north of that would be Edmonton-Strathcona. In essence, a fully developed area, what I have referred to in the past as landlocked: unlikely to be any growth in population of any huge amount.

The next constituency encompasses part of Edmonton-Parkallen and part of Edmonton-Whitemud. We'll go now to the corner of Belgravia Road and 113th Street, which is the northernmost tip of the centrally defined constituency. This is the 111th-113th easternmost boundary there, down Belgravia Road, south down 122nd, and along 119th to the utility corridor which is just south of Westbrook Drive. The constituency jogs there and takes in a little portion, and this is because of the community league boundaries that are there. Later this afternoon when the mayor brings you the community league boundaries, you'll perhaps see that Blue Quill Estates and Blue Quill, while they are bisected by a major thoroughfare, in fact view themselves as one neighbourhood and

have one contiguous community league. So I would put Blue Quill Estates, which is west of 119th Street, in with Blue Quill, which is east. Therefore, that little jog that you see meets 23rd Avenue. Twenty-third Avenue straight east to the tracks, north to Whitemud, and along Whitemud would provide you with a constituency that could be suggested as Edmonton-Duggan, Edmonton-Blue Quill, Edmonton-something else.

2:41

The remaining portion of that quadrant would become a constituency called Edmonton-Riverbend, which would accomplish a couple of things. It would put all of the Riverbend community into one constituency. It's now split between Edmonton-Whitemud and Edmonton-Parkallen. This I think is clearly recognized as something that has to happen. That fact is recognized in most of the submissions that have been made to date by just about everybody, and I make the same submission: all of Riverbend, the communities of Grand View – I'm working down from north to south now – Lansdowne, Aspen Gardens, Westbrook, and then the recently developed communities south of 23rd Avenue such as Twin Brooks, Blackburne, Yellowbird, Bearspaw.

My objective in drawing lines in this fashion is twofold. One is to minimize disruption in the future. The Strathcona constituency essentially is fully developed. The only change in population would be a couple of houses being torn down and high-rise apartments going up, but I would suggest that if that happens, the change in population would be marginal. The Edmonton-Duggan/Blue Quill constituency: again fully developed, not much room for further expansion in there beyond one or two apartment blocks that may happen.

So future growth is going to be in the Edmonton-Riverbend constituency, and for future redrawing of lines, that should be the only constituency that would require a significant adjustment in boundaries. The other two would remain somewhat stable, I would suspect, not having had the advantage of the '92 census figures yet to get the exact populations. Generally speaking, it seems to me that this would minimize future disruption.

I'll make one other comment about another part of the south part of Edmonton, which is east of the CPR tracks. In the proposals advanced by Biggs and Cripps – both their schedules 3 and 4 show the Edmonton-Mill Woods area spilling into three constituencies. In my mind that's not a good idea. It's currently in two: a large constituency of Edmonton-Mill Woods and then a small portion of it in Edmonton-Avonmore. It strikes me that the more appropriate way to do that would be to take that entire section – everything between the tracks, Whitemud Drive, and the eastern and southernmost city boundaries – and divide that into two constituencies: Mill Woods-North and Mill Woods-South. The lines could be adjusted for community leagues and to take in future growth. What you've got in both of these submissions is essentially much more carving than I think is both required and efficient in terms of representing what in essence is a pretty solid area; i.e., Mill Woods. Just as I've made the argument for Riverbend, it should not be split in two. If you're going to split them, let's minimize the splitting. You can do it with two, I believe: by going out to 23rd Avenue and south of that, and between 23rd Avenue and Whitemud would make another constituency, given the fact that the numbers work.

That in essence is the substance of the submission I would like to make to you. I think the opportunity to take into account future growth should be a minor part of what you're doing, because I think your task is to take a picture today and to make convoluted lines to anticipate future growth. I'm not sure that's the job of the current commission; I expect that will be the job of the next commission.

However, all else being equal and there's an opportunity to recognize future growth, I would guess that at the very end you would do that.

I would also suggest, as I suggested to the Liden commission, that the main thing you want to do is look after communities of interest, recognizing community league boundaries and natural neighbourhood boundaries – that can be accomplished – and if the numbers that you'd get as a result of that fit within your plus or minus 25 percent guidelines, then I think your job is done. If you are slavishly devoted to numbers and then try to bend and twist the boundaries to fit the numbers, I think you wind up doing a disservice to the people, because ultimately the customers here are the people. If the lines make sense and the numbers fit, I think that's a better job than having the numbers slavishly devoted to being close to the line and then trying to rejig your boundaries to make that happen.

So I would stop there, Mr. Chairman, and if you have any questions on these specifics or anything else, I'd be more than glad to answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much.

Pat first. Any questions or comments?

MRS. BLACK: I liked your opening comments very much, I have to admit. I've got to ask you a hypothetical question. Have you thought of where you would cut the ridings from the city of Edmonton? Could you conceivably have the same number of MLAs as you do aldermen?

MR. MAIN: I'm sorry. Are you talking about a 75-seat Legislature? Well, I guess if you did it strictly on a 10 percent cut, you'd probably cut two seats. I haven't done the work based on that, but if you've got 15 MLAs in the Legislature, then you find 15 areas. Just looking at this and just guessing, not having any numbers, you'd take one from the south, one from the north, Edmonton-Riverbend and Edmonton-Duggan would be one, Strathcona-Avonmore would be another one, Mill Woods would be another one. I mean, you just do it based on the exercise, dividing the population by 75 as opposed to 83.

MRS. BLACK: Okay. The other thing then. You stressed in your presentation to not increase the representation from Edmonton, that that was not from your discussions in the neighbourhood, that that was not something that was sought after by the folks in Edmonton.

MR. MAIN: No, I had a series of four or five meetings throughout the southwest quadrant of Edmonton. I didn't hear anybody say that we need more MLAs.

MRS. BLACK: So then the folks would be happy with redistribution even if it went up to the upper range of the 25 percent.

MR. MAIN: Yeah. What I heard most of all was, number one, that the 'rurban' idea of taking parts out of the city – nobody at either end of that equation liked that. That idea seems to have been put to bed. I didn't hear anybody say: "You know what we really need, Doug? We need to get a hundred MLAs; 150 would be better." People felt that their MLAs by and large were doing a good job. They just wanted to make sure that they had access to that person and that there was some ability for the person to do the work. I think we have that with the current number, so I don't see a need to increase. Now, if you move that ratio, the ratio of metropolitan areas to nonmetropolitan areas, some would make that argument.

MRS. BLACK: Carrying further with your comments, it is easier to be an MLA in the city of Edmonton than it is in any other part of the province.

MR. MAIN: Without question.

MRS. BLACK: We've got somebody's constituency office – I've forgotten whose it is; Mike, you know whose it is – across the street here, and they've got a legislative office in this building. So they can walk there and there in two seconds. They have access to ministerial offices like that, whereas people from any other area in this province have tremendous travel and inconvenience or distance and time, et cetera, that they have to factor in to getting involved with government.

MR. MAIN: You're absolutely right.

MRS. BLACK: So that's something that is maybe not for this group right today but maybe should be taken into account down the road: that Edmonton does not really need the same volume because of the access to the government offices that no one else has. There is a substantial difference there, Doug. There's a heck of a difference. For a person from Calgary it's a seven-hour round-trip to get to a government office in Edmonton. Your folks can go in 10 minutes.

2:51

MR. MAIN: Yes. There's no question that being any elected representative with your constituency in the seat of government gives you tremendous advantages in terms of logistics.

I also think far too much is made about the mathematical weight that we hear so much about, that a rural vote is worth three times more than a city vote, these kinds of things. You just don't see that type of weighting being borne out in government decision-making, certainly in the Legislature. The legislative agenda is presented by the government. Opposition city and rural MLAs vote against it, and government city and rural MLAs vote for it. Whether you're rural or urban makes no difference in voting on a piece of legislation, which is essentially the job of the Legislature. Where the difference comes is in a caucus discussion, the different points of view being brought. I know in our caucus I represent a constituency in the capital, we have MLAs who represent metropolitan areas and all the other major centres and sparsely populated and heavily populated rural constituencies, and all those viewpoints are brought to the table and a decision is reached. The slavish devotion to the mathematical weight that an MLA allegedly brings to the Legislature just doesn't figure in in practical terms in day-to-day decision-making. It's just not an issue in my mind, having observed this close up.

MRS. BLACK: That's a good point. It is very difficult, I feel, as another city MLA, to justify having more MLAs than we do aldermen that represent the same population. That's a difficult sell. Maybe reality has to come in somewhere. Instead of, as you say, the mathematical formula, reality of governing has to come in: that maybe 75 is still too large, that 55 is the ideal if you could get rid of that mathematical number. I know we're off topic, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry, but I find that refreshing.

MR. MAIN: I would make one more comment in terms of the numbers. If you thought about this logically, you would think that the federal representation would have the fewest, the provincial representation would have the next largest – you'd have a few more – and city representation would be the most. In other words, if you had six federal MPs, as you do in Edmonton, you might have 15

MLAs, and you would have 20 aldermen. They're much closer to the people, so you should have more of them. Logic would tell you that. We've got the reverse now and an argument that we go further beyond that. I don't see the logic in it.

MRS. BLACK: It becomes impractical.

MR. MAIN: Yeah, and unnecessary, I might add.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anything else, Pat?

MRS. BLACK: No. Philosophical.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mike?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah. Thank you, Doug. I appreciate your presentation very much. Coming from a rural northern constituency that covers 58,000 square kilometres, I'm really pleased that a person like yourself, living in Edmonton, would be so knowledgeable about the differences when it comes to serving people and delivering programs and services to Albertans. I really truly appreciate that.

When I was looking at the '90-91 census, your Edmonton-Parkallen had a population of 33,865, which would be plus 10.42 percent, which means that it would considerably fall within the allowable 25 percent variance that's provided in the legislation now. As you indicated, you hear Albertans, both urban and rural, say that some adjustments need to be made but not necessarily major adjustments, that we could live with minor adjustments and possibly, you know, look at a long-range plan as to how we can design a province that will provide good service to all Albertans. I think that's very much appreciated.

You outlined some of the areas I've always brought forward: the difference between the urban constituencies and some of the outlying ridings where we do have a large population to cover. When you look at an MLA in Edmonton, for example, you have one city council to deal with, two school boards. The geographic area is very small; normally a person could walk through the riding in one evening and drive through in 10 or 15 minutes. Cabinet ministers are all here. Their deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, executive assistants, the departmental staff are all here. All MLAs have offices, I assume, in Edmonton. I assume you'd have one here, of course. They have offices here, too, either at the annex or at the Legislature. In fact, my MLA, Roberts, has an office which, if the drapes were open, I'd be able to see from here. That's how far it is from the Legislature. Basically, offices are side by side. In a rural area we have such a large area that we have a hard time providing – in fact the dollars that are provided, provide not even near that quality and type of service to our constituents. When the Legislature is in session, for example, our constituents have it tough. We can't make it out there when the House is sitting during the week. It's impossible. When you're in Edmonton, your constituents can come and see you.

The population of MLAs right now would serve, if you use the average of the '90-91 census, 30,669, I believe. Like you mentioned, an alderperson in Edmonton now serves around 50,000 people. The MPs serve 80,000 to 100,000, and it seems to work quite efficiently and effectively. The legislation in Alberta provides up to 50 percent variance, I believe, for up to four ridings in Alberta. That went through the Supreme Court and was supported. In Ontario, for example, right now there are 15 jurisdictions that have a 57 percent variance from the average, and the reason for that is just the extreme opposite of what you've described and what I've gone through here in Edmonton. If that is the case, then I just would like to ask a question, because you seem to thoroughly understand how well the

people are being represented in Edmonton now with the existing system in place. In fact, you mentioned that it's possible to even cut it down a bit to save dollars and still provide a good quality of service. Because the Supreme Court would support a 50 percent variance in rural Alberta or rural Ontario, would it be possible that that 50 percent variance could be used in an extreme opposite riding in an urban setting and still stand the Supreme Court . . .

MR. MAIN: You mean, in other words, could an urban riding with a lot of people be 50 percent over as opposed to Peace River something like 50 under.

MR. CARDINAL: Right.

MR. MAIN: You're asking a theoretical question: whether the Supreme Court would . . . I'm not a judge nor a lawyer nor an expert on all this. I don't know. I don't know why not. I mean, if that's what the legislation says, if that's the ultimate aim of it, if you had an area that was compact and you had 40,000 or 50,000 people left over after you'd done all your work and you needed to go over, I guess you could.

MR. CARDINAL: That's all I have to say.

MRS. BLACK: Just on that point. If you took the four ridings to go over 50 percent and, say, put two of them in Edmonton, then you could accomplish your goal: you could basically cut down the size of Edmonton by four seats.

MR. MAIN: In terms of practicality, it would be easier for someone in Edmonton to represent more people than it would be for someone far away to represent.

MRS. BLACK: That would be a pretty dramatic situation, though, wouldn't it?

MR. MAIN: I don't know. I haven't addressed myself to that, but it's possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Stock, any comments or questions?

MR. DAY: As usual, the minister's remarks have left me without response. I will definitely peruse the *Hansard* for the part that I missed. From what I heard, it's a reflection of your presentation to the commission itself, is it not?

MR. MAIN: Right. Essentially, I made some of the same points here. I know you're considering an enormous amount of input, and I can only speak with some level of knowledge about this part of the city, the southwest. One thing I would note: when I look at schedule 3, Edmonton with 17 electoral divisions as part of Biggs/Cripps, I notice Edmonton-Riverbend crosses the river in a couple of places to take in portions of the west end and portions of Laurier Heights and area. I don't support that. I think there are other solutions available to people writing the map, and I don't think this solution will work. In my mind, I think the river has clearly got to be the boundary of the city of Edmonton, is a line that should not and cannot be breached, and the banks of the North Saskatchewan River are another constraint on you.

3:01

MRS. BLACK: You don't think at any place you could cross that river then?

MR. MAIN: There may be some, but . . .

MRS. BLACK: Is there a reason for that? There's no bridge, or what?

MR. MAIN: No bridges is one thing, and the farther out here you get . . . I mean, here you've got something on 23rd Avenue, I see. Crossing the river north of 23rd – there is no bridge here. The closest bridge is Quesnell, and this is a long, circuitous route. To get from this house to this House is a long, circuitous route.

MRS. BLACK: What is it? Twenty minutes?

MR. MAIN: Oh, it's 15 minutes, 15 annoying minutes. Of course, 15 minutes in a rural constituency is bonus, but here it's annoying.

MR. CHAIRMAN: From our readings, Doug, we've noted that previous boundaries commissions crossed the river rarely. When they did, they did so where there was a bridge, and it was usually in the downtown core.

MR. MAIN: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think based on what we've been able to ascertain to date, their preference clearly is not to cross the river if at all possible.

MR. MAIN: If you were to include Riverdale . . . [interjections]

MRS. BLACK: We weren't laughing at you. Mike was saying that at least you've got a road.

MR. CARDINAL: We don't have roads; never mind bridges.

MR. MAIN: Riverdale, the community here south of the river and across the James Macdonald Bridge: that linkage is pretty easy. But others I think would be difficult and very, very difficult to accept.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. MAIN: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I appreciate your input, Doug.

[The committee adjourned from 3:02 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we'll reconvene and welcome Halvar.

MR. JONSON: Good afternoon, everyone.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The process we've been following is that the visiting MLA has gone through either a written presentation or has given an oral report, and then we've had an exchange of questions, answers, comments after that which is very informal. We're on the record, with your permission.

MR. JONSON: Certainly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let's proceed.

MR. JONSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, and I thank you for the opportunity to have time to present some thoughts with respect to electoral boundaries as they apply to the Ponoka-Rimbey constituency. I've endeavoured to keep

my presentation succinct and to the point. I've placed in front of you – I don't know if you've had an opportunity to look at it as yet – a short brief with respect to the Ponoka-Rimbey boundary situation. I have a map, although I'm afraid I just have one copy thereof, which I'll leave with the chairman.

I would just like to make four or five points with respect to the overall situation. As I think everyone at the table knows, Ponoka-Rimbey is a primarily rural constituency with three major centres within it: the town of Ponoka, the town of Rimbey, and Hobbema. One of the major concerns that I've had, even prior to the beginning of the whole process of reviewing electoral boundaries because it extends back into 1986, is that although the native people of the Four Nations reserves certainly have participated in elections and have every right to do so, they do not show up in the complete sense in the Canadian census statistics. In 1986 the Ermineskin, Samson, and Montana bands were not included, not involved. As near as I can tell, the Louis Bull band was, but only to a certain percentage. That warped or had an effect upon the statistics that we used in the interim boundaries report based on the 1986 census. Now we are dealing, as I understand it, with the 1991 census, which is good, but once again the same problem exists, in that it is my information that the Ermineskin, Samson, and Montana bands have not been included in those calculations. It's a very significant number of people, and I might add as a side note that it's a population which is growing at a steady rate.

So if I could direct you to the brief that I prepared, just two pages. If we take the current situation, which is really in a sense my first proposal, if that very important and significant adjustment was made whereby the figures for the Ermineskin, Samson, and Montana bands were added – and I get those statistics by referring to the federal office, the office of the manager of estates and trusts of Canada, which does take a census or a count of on-reserve people, and I would like to emphasize these are on-reserve, on a monthly basis – these are the figures that we come up with: Ermineskin, 2,241; Samson, 4,283; and Montana, 573. If you factor those people into the 1991 census population for Ponoka-Rimbey, which I understand to be 17,900, you come up with a total of 24,997, which in terms of the variance is minus 18.5 percent. I would suggest to you that that falls within the variance provided for in the legislation that was passed by the Assembly.

I'd like to just go on, however, to a second proposal or second possibility which I would put before the committee. If it is felt by the committee that there should be some additions to, some variance, in terms of the boundaries of the existing Ponoka-Rimbey constituency, I would suggest that that could be effectively provided for by extending the boundary of the existing constituency to the east, not anywhere near to the degree that was provided for or suggested or recommended in the interim report but to the range line just east of Highway 21. This is, I think, Mr. Chairman, marked in the map that I have and will leave with you. This new area would include the communities of Bashaw, Ferintosh, and New Norway and the surrounding rural areas. By my calculations, this would increase the population of Ponoka-Rimbey, if this was found acceptable, to 27,479 residents, which would be a variance of minus 8.4 percent from the provincial mean or provincial average.

I recognize that this proposed extension would impact the ridings of Camrose and Stettler. In the case of Camrose, I believe that they are well within the range currently. It would more adversely affect the constituency of Stettler. I would only note that in the discussion or hearings that were held with respect to the interim report, while I think it was natural in all cases that people would like to stay with the ridings they were with at the time – I think it's a tribute to the representation that they've had in Camrose and Stettler – there was,

as I recall from reading the transcript, no objection to Bashaw being placed within Ponoka-Rimbey as was proposed in the interim report. There was, I acknowledge, concern with respect to the Camrose area being drawn into the Ponoka-Rimbey area. But as a constituency which is over the average or which it is felt needs to part with some of their residents, they could logically be included within Ponoka-Rimbey, because that particular area, as opposed to areas around Bawlf and so on farther east, their trading area is identified with, probably on an equal basis, Ponoka, Wetaskiwin, Camrose. So they have relationships in three directions in that regard.

Mr. Chairman, that is essentially my presentation. My primary concern – and I don't mind saying that over the months it has been a real frustration, and it goes back actually years – is that a very significant population somehow or other doesn't seem to be able to get recognized in the Canadian census, and that's well documented. It's a serious matter, and I think that we should be doing so. Then in terms of the task before you, in terms of coming within the 25 percent variance, I've made a second suggestion.

3:20

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Just before I ask for questions or comments by committee members, I'd like to give you the reassurance that we're working very hard to identify the various native peoples who were missed or refused to take part in the census count. We have been pursuing that matter because we notice that a number of areas are severely impacted by the fact that large numbers of native people were not counted.

Questions or comments. Stock?

MR. DAY: It was pretty straightforward. I appreciate the concerns.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Pat?

MRS. BLACK: Halvar, I'm just glad you brought this to our attention, because I think it's one thing we heard when we met as a committee before this grouping, that a lot of the reserve people had not been included. That's not acceptable, and as Bob has said, we're working on that now.

MR. DAY: I couldn't hear you there, Pat. "The reserve people" which?

MRS. BLACK: Who had not been enumerated for voting and, in the shift to counting population, have got to be included in the population count in the areas. Now, naturally I would assume that in your current situation, if in fact the reservations you've mentioned here were included, that would bring you up within the range for your existing riding. The only thing I don't understand is the Louis Bull reserve. Do you know or not know whether that's been included in the census?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Chairman, Pat, as my footnote indicates, I placed that in there in brackets with an asterisk and a footnote because this is the Canadian native affairs count for the Louis Bull band. I think you're perhaps struggling with the same thing I am, and that is that the '91 census statistics are in but not all the details are available to us. My experience with the '86 situation was that yes, some count had been done for the Louis Bull band, but it didn't jibe with what the Louis Bull recorded or said their population was. I'm just suggesting here, as I said, that the '91 census total for the Louis Bull, whatever it is – and I'm not sure; I know there was some count – should be checked against this figure, which is the figure

provided from native affairs Canada. I think it might be somewhat lower than 1,112, but that's my point.

MRS. BLACK: Where did you get the other numbers for the other bands?

MR. JONSON: I've referenced them. This is on the basis of the monthly count done by Canada native affairs, and I've got the phone number and so on in the brief.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you.

[Mr. Day in the Chair]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Bob had to slip out for a minute. Mike, have you got any other questions?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah. Halvar, I'm glad you brought such a specific representation, taking into consideration the Indian reserves. Once you calculate your total if you do include the Indian reserves, of course you'll be minus 18.5 percent from the average. The workload that will be created, or probably is there now with your constituency office – I assume a considerable amount of the workload is from the Indian reserves.

MR. JONSON: There's a significant amount. The types of concerns and the matters that one deals with are a bit different from the county of Ponoka, town of Ponoka, town of Rimbey; more, I think, of an emphasis in terms of attending and becoming familiar at meetings with some of the broader concerns of the Indian people. We have a college there, Muskwachees college, which I've spent some time with on quite a few educational concerns and so on. I suppose most recently one of the areas where I think there's been some progress and which is very important is in terms of more local control over law enforcement. There's been some progress made there. So the pattern or the priorities of the people there are somewhat different sometimes from the other areas where certain things like law enforcement have been established over a long-term basis, but certainly there's quite a bit of contact, yes.

[Mr. Bogle in the Chair]

MR. CARDINAL: One more comment is that I think because of the high population of native people on these Indian reserves and settlements and the continued poverty people live in, it's going to take a period of time before that changes. It will change, and we're making moves as a province to make sure that happens. I know it's a ways down the road. But in any area that has such a large population and a lower standard of living in such a condensed area, rather than making the riding geographically larger, I would suggest that we seriously look at considering making the riding smaller for a period of time and go closer towards the 25 percent, so the MLA for that particular area could have more time to deal with these problem areas. I don't think anyone in Alberta, urban or rural, or in Canada would not support that move for a period of time until we reach a point where most people have a good average standard of living, and then at that time, of course, move towards what is out there on the average for all Albertans. So I think your recommendation is very valid. In fact, again I would say I think at this time we should consider looking at going towards closer to 25 percent and making your riding smaller rather than adding more, as your workload is definitely there with that large a native population.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any other comments?

Thanks very much, Halvar. Halvar, we've had a lot of representation, both when our committee was part of an all-party committee and in reading the *Hansard* transcripts to the commission, that when adjustments are made, the adjustments should follow preferably municipal boundaries or, if not municipal boundaries, natural boundaries. In your second alternative you suggest going into the county of Camrose.

MR. JONSON: That's correct, yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further observation relative to following municipal boundaries or natural boundaries?

MR. JONSON: Well, I think that both municipal and natural boundaries – I assume that by natural you mean significant geographic barriers, which I don't consider the Battle River to be. Certainly in terms of local municipal boundaries, that's a very worthy objective. It's just that I currently have represented roughly a third of the county of Wetaskiwin, and I think that while I would hope that the committee would strive towards following municipal boundaries as much as possible, I also recognize that that won't always be possible. The only other comment I would add is that in terms of the nature of the economy and the population, I think there's an affinity or a similarity between the eastern part of the county of Ponoka and that portion of the county of Wetaskiwin and the county of Stettler just as there is with the county of Lacombe to the south, or the southern portion which currently is within the county of Wetaskiwin to the north.

3:30

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MRS. BLACK: Could I ask a question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

MRS. BLACK: Presently your riding is basically in county No. 3?

MR. JONSON: Yes, it's basically the county of Ponoka No. 3 plus a southern strip out of the county of Wetaskiwin and the northern end of the MD of Clearwater.

MRS. BLACK: Now, if you follow your second suggestion, then you would be going over into county 22.

MR. JONSON: Which is Camrose, yes.

MRS. BLACK: Naturally, I would think the county office would be in Camrose. Is there a suboffice in New Norway or Bashaw?

MR. JONSON: No. Bashaw is in the county of Stettler.

MRS. BLACK: It is?

MR. JONSON: Yes. The three counties sort of come together.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you sure? It doesn't show on our map.

MRS. BLACK: It looks like it's in county No. 22.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, there may be an error.

MR. JONSON: Oh, I'm sorry; it is in Camrose. Yeah, you're right.

MRS. BLACK: Is there a county office there?

MR. JONSON: Not in Bashaw. They liaise with Camrose, I guess.

MR. PRITCHARD: Bashaw is in the current Stettler constituency.

MR. JONSON: It's in the Stettler constituency, but it's in the county of Camrose, right, and they're part of the county of Camrose school system.

MRS. BLACK: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Anything else?
All right. Thanks very much, Halvar.

MR. JONSON: Thanks very much.

[The committee adjourned from 3:32 p.m. to 4:02 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; we'll reconvene the meeting. A special welcome to you, Mayor Reimer, and to the two officials who are with you, Elizabeth and Harvey.

With your permission we will stay on the record for the meeting. It's been our practice with other guests to listen to their presentation and then to go into a general question, comment, answer session. We'll proceed.

MS REIMER: Mr. Chairman and hon. members of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries, thank you for inviting me to speak to you on behalf of Edmontonians, and also thank you for accommodating my schedule. I was very pleased, and I guess I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the government for the co-operation they've given Edmonton in seeking to solve our regional landfill difficulties. Certainly I think with the announcement today we're well on our road, and I hope that co-operation can extend to the case I'm about to plead before you.

Today I will identify exactly how the current Electoral Boundaries Commission Act adversely affects the people of Edmonton and urge a full and fair review of the terms of the current Act by an independent Electoral Boundaries Commission. As you know, the city first expressed concerns about the commission Act in May of 1991, and these concerns were again repeated in our presentation to the Electoral Boundaries Commission at public hearings in March of 1992. The Act itself presents numerous problems for the people of Edmonton and as well city council. The electoral boundaries as proposed under the Act threaten to compromise us all: first, by allowing too few districts within the city of Edmonton to fairly represent our population and, secondly, by radically splitting community interests.

After considerable discussion and deliberation on this complex issue, the independent Electoral Boundaries Commission appointed by the Legislative Assembly was unable to come to any consensus on proposals for new provincial electoral boundaries. Edmonton city council has reviewed the final report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. We believe that the commission was faced with an impossible task given the terms of its mandate under the Act. The problem does not lie with the decisions of the commission but with the Act itself. Edmonton city council agrees with the conclusion of the majority of commission members: to allow for fair and equitable redrafting of electoral boundaries, specific conditions within the Act must be revised. Further, it is council's belief that an independent commission is still the only appropriate structure to develop new electoral boundaries. However, the commission must be given the

proper legislation to work with in order that it can present fair and equitable proposals.

I would like to respectfully submit the following facts, facts that led directly to the city's conclusion. Fact one: the Act creates population inequities. Under the terms of the current Electoral Boundaries Commission Act the average population per district in Edmonton would substantially exceed the provincial average. If all parts of Edmonton were included in the 17 electoral districts allowed under the current Act, the average population of Edmonton districts would be more than 18 percent above the provincial mean. Individual Edmonton districts may be even more disproportionately large. In recent decisions the Supreme Court of Canada and the Alberta Court of Appeal have said that deviations of up to 25 percent or more in population per district do not in principle offend voter parity. I'd like to stress they said this is as long as these deviations are used only when needed.

The Alberta Court of Appeal also found the prescribed split between urban and rural districts in the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act to be, in its words, troubling. Why? Because it produces an overall trend towards larger than average populations in urban districts and smaller than average populations in rural districts. Members of the Electoral Boundaries Commission have expressed concerns that this provision may not comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and the recent ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada requiring relative voter parity. I wholeheartedly agree with these commissioners and the court rulings on this case. As mayor and as a resident of Edmonton, I too am troubled by the inequitable allocation of electoral representation in Alberta. It is logical to conclude that under the terms of the current Act a vote in most urban districts has less effect in the selection of an MLA than a vote in any other area where the population per district is lower.

Fact two: the use of 1986 data ignores increasing disparities. The extent of this inequity in allocating seats was to some extent masked by the requirement of the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act to use 1986 data. The data I presented earlier is based on 1986 federal census data. These numbers are six years out of date. They do not show the impact on the faster rate of urban population growth over the last six years. StatsCan has indicated to our administration that the results of the 1991 federal census will be available within the next couple of weeks. Much of the population data is already available. Current data must be used to develop new electoral boundaries in order to accurately reflect patterns of population growth both within cities and between urban and rural areas as members of the Electoral Boundaries Commission were unanimous in stating that population trends since 1986 cannot be ignored.

Fact three: the terms of the Act allowing for hybrid districts contravenes the principle of community interest. It is important that elected legislators be able to reflect their constituents' common concerns, their common interests. However, the provision in the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act for hybrid or mixed urban and rural districts would directly threaten these communities of interest. Consider, for example, the great differences in issues and needs facing urban and rural citizens. Urban residents often focus on issues such as housing, crime, and public transit. Rural residents, on the other hand, share concerns about agriculture, federal trade policies, and rural transportation needs. How can an elected legislator address the common interests of such a diverse group? Hybrid districts jeopardize the interests of both urban and rural voters. The result is that neither group is well served.

The Alberta Court of Appeal has expressed concerns that hybrid districts – and I quote – “might . . . permit the repression of the voice of those who become permanent minorities” within a hybrid district. The independent Electoral Boundaries Commission had to resort to

hybrid districts in their draft proposals just to keep the population of Edmonton's 17 allotted districts within 10 percent of the provincial average. However, four of the five commissioners stated in their final report that they too could no longer support the concept of hybrid districts and splitting communities of interest. The commissioners state that their conclusion is based in part on widespread objections to the hybrid districts voiced at public hearings in both rural and urban Alberta. The commissioners unanimously concluded that communities of interest within a city as well as those reflected by existing neighbourhoods and community leagues must also be respected. Edmonton city council agrees with this position. The splitting of communities is not an acceptable solution to the equitable terms of the Act. The solution rather is that the Act needs to be changed.

This brings me to fact four. The basic principles of equity and community of interest cannot be respected under the terms of the current Act. For example, it is impossible to respect communities of interest within a city and between urban and rural areas under the terms of the current Act. I refer to a map prepared by the city's planning department at council request. That's map A. This map shows the city of Edmonton divided into 17 electoral districts with no hybrid districts and no splitting of community leagues and neighbourhoods. You will note that one of the districts shown on the map has a population of more than 25 percent above the provincial average. You couldn't do it. This confirms the fundamental problem of the existing Electoral Boundaries Commission Act. There is no way we can simultaneously divide the city into 17 districts, respect the principle of community of interest, keep each district's population within 25 percent of the provincial average, and provide overall equity in provincial representation. It cannot be done. So I suggest there is no fair alternative other than to review and re-evaluate the conditions of the original Act.

A more equitable allocation of electoral districts would provide 20 seats entirely within Edmonton city limits, based on a total of 83 districts provincially. This would provide for overall voter parity with the average population of Edmonton districts being very close to the provincial average. Communities of interest would be respected, there would be no need for hybrid districts, and neighbourhoods and community leagues within the city would remain intact.

4:12

The second map, which is map B up here, indicates one way in which this could be accomplished, but I really want to make a strong caution here that this is again based on 1986 data. Population growth and shifts have occurred since then: we have whole new neighbourhoods. Recent trends in population growth as reflected in the 1991 federal census should be taken into account in drawing the final boundaries. As requested by the committee, we have also provided a map showing population density based on census tracts for the city of Edmonton, and that is map C up here. Again this is based on '86 data. Population patterns within the city have changed since then. We'd be more than pleased to provide you with maps based on current data if that is what you so choose.

In closing, I strongly urge this committee to recommend that the provincial Legislature change the Act to allow more districts within the city of Edmonton and to remove the provision of hybrid electoral districts. Further, the city requests that the Act be changed as soon as possible. To ensure fairness, new districts must be established and prepared well in advance of a provincial election. It is also the city's request that the Electoral Boundaries Commission be reconvened. Only an independent commission can redraft electoral boundaries without being placed in a position of conflict of interest.

I thank you again for the opportunity to make this presentation, and I wish you wisdom in your task at hand. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Questions or comments from committee members?

MR. DAY: That's quite a presentation. There's a lot there. We will have a lot of time to go over this point by point, Your Worship, and I look forward to being able to do that.

MS REIMER: Certainly we're prepared to make available our city staff and myself as best we can.

MR. DAY: Great.

I'll make some initial remarks, but in fairness to the work you've put into this, I hope you understand that we'd like to also take more time and reflect on it.

I'm glad to see that we're in agreement on a number of areas. That's encouraging. When you talk about community of interest, I think that's something that really does have to be looked at and looked at in depth. We've already had some representation from an Edmonton MLA today about that very fact, so I think that's something that indeed needs to be done. I agree with you, too, in terms of '86 data, and that's why we will be using '91 data. That will greatly ameliorate, I think, some of the difficulties.

MS REIMER: Wonderful.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me a minute. You weren't aware of that?

MS REIMER: No. The Act stipulated '86.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But the motion which created this committee requires us to use 1991 data.

MS REIMER: No, we weren't informed of that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. DAY: We'll have to check on our communication links between ourselves and other jurisdictions to make sure all of this information gets communicated.

MS REIMER: We also, I guess, started to get our presentation and had council authorization for it before you were struck.

MR. DAY: That could be too, yes.

The hybrid districts. One of the other members, maybe the chairman, will elaborate on that at some length. We agree, too, that there's some real difficulty with what the commission was proposing in terms of some of the so-called hybrid districts, so I think we've got some good agreements, some good basis to work together.

On the areas that at least at first blush I probably wouldn't agree with the city's presentation. The so-called impossible task: that was an identical consideration or concern that resulted in the Saskatchewan case going to the Supreme Court.

MS REIMER: We followed that but did not intervene.

MR. DAY: Right. In that particular one there were some real parallels. What happened, as I see it, has also happened in the case here in Alberta with some people who have concerns about the constitutionality, the absolute parity, or even relative voter parity.

I think what happened in the Saskatchewan one, as the Supreme Court justices, at least the majority of them, brought out, was that the people bringing the case to the court – first they reached a wrong conclusion; then they went back to make their case. The wrong conclusion was that they were given an impossible task. The Supreme Court and the Alberta appeal court, which we subjected our legislation to, in fact said that the approach to so-called voter parity, absolute equality, or even relative equality was constitutionally sound. In Saskatchewan they allowed for up to 50 percent, and one of the justices even makes the remark that in the southern ridings in Saskatchewan, which included urban ones, there was allowance of up to 25 percent and that that in no way affected the constitutionality. So in fact the justices determined that in Saskatchewan those people were not given an impossible task. They saw it as impossible, but constitutionally and as far as the Supreme Court went, it was not impossible.

MS REIMER: But it was, as I cited in my brief, only when needed, as long as those deviations were only where needed. I'm not familiar with how the Saskatchewan government brought forward their legislation, but they did not hold by legislation the urban municipalities to certain representation.

MR. DAY: No. They absolutely provided, just as we did, that any time there is going to be any deviation, it absolutely has to be stated what the reasons for that are, and those are listed.

MS REIMER: We have them here.

MR. DAY: I don't want to bore you with a long dissertation on the Supreme Court ruling.

I'm just curious. We get certain information from – no pejorative sense intended here – our lawyers, which is always valuable to us, but we also find it's valuable to look at the document ourselves. I wonder if you in your busy schedule, Your Worship, had the time to actually read the Supreme Court document itself.

MS REIMER: Well, we had a synopsis of it in a presentation by our lawyer in camera at executive committee.

As you may know, because of the way the court case went, the city of Calgary did intervene to the Supreme Court. The city of Edmonton did not. We have our own legal opinions as to why we did that.

MR. DAY: Yes, sure. I certainly can't speak for my colleagues, but I know when I'm provided a legal opinion, I appreciate it, but on something as important as this I like to get it firsthand myself.

In fact, we stipulated right at the start when we created the Act that this has to go to the Alberta Court of Appeal; it has to be judged. It said the Act does create a permissible deviation from voter parity of 25 percent more or less. Those are some things that were stated clearly, and that was just a reflection of what the Supreme Court also said.

Even going on to the question of relative parity, in the Supreme Court decision it is very clearly stated that in fact – and I understand you're not saying it should be absolute equality, because that's something that's not our Canadian history, and we understand that – absolute parity, as we know, is impossible, and relative parity may not even be desirable. Again, the reasons for the deviations indeed have to be justified, and that's why the courts upheld our Act: those particular reasons were justified. We are to guarantee effective representation, which the Supreme Court clearly points out is different than the U.S. model of one person, one vote.

MS REIMER: We're not in disagreement there, but as I understood the Alberta Court of Appeal, it was on an individual basis and only when needed. I would hope that you have listened to my pleadings here. Particularly if you are using the '91 data, I think you will find constraining yourself to the 25 percent an impossible task. Couldn't do it under the old data if you don't have a 'rurban' riding. So that's your challenge, and I think you'll come to the same conclusion as did the members of the commission, that Edmonton is deserving of more seats.

MR. DAY: Well, that is indeed our challenge, and I can assure you we're taking that on very diligently. What we're finding is that in looking at the report that came out – obviously, all of us as Albertans were looking forward to a majority report. It didn't happen, but it's interesting that when you look carefully at each of the minority reports, there are some common points.

MS REIMER: Such as the city deserves more seats.

MR. DAY: That may be the result. So we don't see the commission – though they failed in terms of unanimity, I don't think they failed in terms of each individual pointing out some positive things that can be found. That's what we're trying to link together. Also, everything we do has to indeed go before the Legislature and also go to the court test. That has been our determination from the start. Just for your information, in terms of an independent commission, we made that decision to go that route, but the Supreme Court pointed out in the Saskatchewan one that the Legislature did not even have to do that if they didn't want to. We did that. We've got certain things we can glean from it.

I guess my assurance to you, Your Worship, is that everything that is going to be done is going to be subject to your scrutiny, obviously, the people of Alberta's scrutiny, court scrutiny, and legislative scrutiny.

4:22

MS REIMER: Except that there is another court, sir, and that's the court of public opinion and public trust. Certainly I think it's important to the voters to know that they are being fairly treated and I guess would remind you that while the Saskatchewan court and the Supreme Court upheld those boundaries, I think the people of Saskatchewan found they were not fair boundaries.

MR. DAY: Well, that's why I said and I put first on the list “your scrutiny . . . the people of Alberta's scrutiny.” The people of Alberta do respect law and order. Sometimes we grumble about Supreme Court decisions. We want to scrupulously follow those. We want to be fair, and I think you'll see that it will be. So I appreciate those comments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thanks, Stock.
Mike.

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah, I have a number. I just wanted to indicate that as a member who was involved in the development of the legislation and as a rural member representing an area in northern Alberta that covers 58,000 square kilometres, I don't believe that the task is impossible. I think Albertans want fair representation, and the legislation, I believe, is in there to do that. I know we can do it and will do it.

I know the hon. mayor is asking for more constituencies or more representation, and that's normal. If I were the mayor, I'd do the same no doubt. When you really look at the present legislation that's provided, looking at the 1991 census, only seven out of the 17

constituencies would fall out of the allowable 25 percent variance right now. I look at the comparison of the types of work required of an urban MLA, in particular in Edmonton where a lot of services are provided, as opposed to a rural riding like Athabasca-Lac La Biche constituency, for example. Using the 1991 census, on the average, if the 83 were used, we'd be serving 30,669 population. An alderperson in Edmonton presently serves 50,000 population. An MP in Edmonton would serve anywhere from 80,000 to a hundred thousand population. An Edmonton MLA, for example, would be of course serving one city council, while for urban members it's just the complete opposite: two school boards . . .

The geographic area is very small; a person could drive through the riding within 15 minutes, no doubt, and walk through it in a short while. In fact, the availability of constituency offices – each urban MLA has an office here and also an office in town, just a little way from here. My MLA, for example – I'm in Edmonton-Centre – has an office I can see from here. The service, of course, would be that much better to the constituents, which is nice. Cabinet ministers are all here. Deputy ministers are generally all in Edmonton. Assistant deputy ministers, executive assistants, the staff, and so on generally are all in Edmonton; they're accessible also. When the House is sitting, of course the MLAs are all here. Edmonton residents are fortunate that they can have full access to their MLA. So I would feel that to add a whole lot more ridings in Edmonton and bring the average down considerably lower than the allowable 25 percent would not be doing justice to some of the rural ridings where the extreme opposite than what is available to an Edmonton member applies.

In fact, the legislation allows up to four ridings to go up to a 50 percent variance. In jurisdictions in northern Ontario 15 ridings allowed up to 57 percent variance and seemed to withstand a Supreme Court challenge. That's because the constituencies are in a setting that's the extreme opposite of what I've described in an urban setting. Therefore, I feel that if 57 percent is allowable in some jurisdictions and would stand a Supreme Court challenge, why couldn't we do the extreme opposite in an urban riding like Edmonton or any other urban centre?

MS REIMER: What I hear from your argument, sir, is that because we're the capital city we should have inequitable representation, and I have difficulty with that argument. The issue is not numbers; the issue is the equity of representation and the power of the vote.

MR. CARDINAL: For me it's just a bit of the opposite. Of course, that's very, very important, and I take that seriously, but when I look at effective representation, when you look at the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, section 3 indicates that we should seriously consider the standard of living you're able to provide to your constituents. When I look at some of the sparsely populated rural areas, we have a lot of poverty out there.

MS REIMER: Then they come here, as Mr. Bogle well remembers from his previous ministry.

MR. CARDINAL: I realize you do have that here in Edmonton, and we need to combat that.

Just a final comment is that maybe it is not necessary to make great adjustments all at one time. Maybe we should look at a longer range plan when we're adjusting the constituencies.

MS REIMER: I guess, sir, the only comment I would make is just because one group is underrepresented doesn't mean the other group should be too. If you're going to have effective representation, you should have effective representation in rural Alberta, and you should

have effective representation in urban Alberta. There are different concerns, and I think that's why the 'urban' ridings have not gone over with great anticipation. That community of interest is recognized. I recognize the problems in the north, but as I recall looking at the maps, the northern communities generally were within the range, and it was some geographically very small ones in southern Alberta where you saw more of the very small numbers electing one MLA.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pat.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you. I'd like to thank you, Your Worship, for coming today. I know you have a very, very hectic schedule on your slate right now, and I appreciate the time in coming over to our meeting.

I had a brief discussion with Harvey before your arrival, and I've asked because of the change in using 1991 boundaries that we get a community map for the city of Edmonton with the current 1991 census numbers on that community map to look at addressing the community of interests. I think that's an important thing within the urban setting. I come from the largest urban setting in the province, of course, from Calgary, and community interests and community boundaries are very important in Edmonton as well as in Calgary. So I appreciate that fully.

Let me go back, first of all. You keep talking about hybrid ridings. That was not any more successful in Calgary than it was in Edmonton. "Hybrid" is a term that somebody developed. The legislation does not talk about hybrid ridings, and it's not there. In fact, I know where it came up. 'Rurban' came out of a presentation from the county of Strathcona. It was not part of the legislation. What was talked about was multimunicipalities, and the intent was to allow, particularly around Calgary, recently annexed acreages to maintain their rural setting even though they had been annexed into the city boundaries. That was the extent of it. As a Calgarian and a former member of the first committee, I know that when I saw the maps, I practically dropped dead on the spot. I couldn't believe the carving out that had taken place. So that clearly was not an acceptable situation for Edmonton or Calgary. Or the rural settings: they didn't like it any better than the people in the city. So that I think clearly is a common thought. Hybrid is not part of the legislation, never has been, and never will be.

We're into the 1991 census. Again I don't think anyone liked 1986. I know we certainly didn't as a committee, but that's all that was available. In fact, we're having a devil of a time getting all of the detail of the '91 census even today.

MS REIMER: I understand it's ready in two weeks.

4:32

MRS. BLACK: Well, it was ready two weeks ago; then it's another two weeks, and it seems to go on and on. So I think using '91 and switching to population is a fundamental change that had to take place as opposed to using enumerated voter, because I don't think that truly represented the people throughout the province. But in using '91 population, when I look at Edmonton itself – I don't know how accurate this is, but it's a summary of the ridings – you've got one, two, three, four, five, six, seven ridings well below the mean, one of them 21.6950 below the mean. So there's room for adjustment to fit within the plus/minus 25 percent.

MS REIMER: Yes. That's what we've got with map A. In trying to . . .

MRS. BLACK: Is that '86 or '91?

MS REIMER: It's '86 data.

MRS. BLACK: What were the variances then? Section 12 is the one that is over, and I understand it's over by only 114 people or something. Harvey?

MR. CROME: The maximum would be 35,630, and this was 35,770. So it's 140 over. There was another riding, 13, which was just 60 under.

MRS. BLACK: What about 10, 11, and 16?

MR. CROME: Ten is 34,460; 11 is 34,650; and the next highest one is 17 at 35,000.

MRS. BLACK: And 16 was . . .

MR. CROME: Thirty-three thousand, eight hundred.

MRS. BLACK: So there's room in 33 for those.

Okay, I guess the point that I'm making is that you have to look first of all, number one, at 1991 numbers.

MR. CROME: Which obviously these are not.

MRS. BLACK: If we could get those numbers from you, that would be a big help. The second thing is that you've gone through a change in your own ward boundaries. I didn't realize Edmonton had only six wards.

MS REIMER: Uh huh.

MRS. BLACK: I thought you had 14 wards.

MS REIMER: No. We've had 6 since 1980.

MRS. BLACK: But you've got a variance of 26 percent between the low and the high.

MS REIMER: Yeah, that's right. But not 10 percent above average. Sixteen percent below average.

MRS. BLACK: I'm wondering, how do the people in the city of Edmonton feel when, say, there's that much difference between the most recent? If you're looking at voter parity, how do they feel in having a 26 percent spread between ward populations with the same vote? Do they feel their vote is not representative?

MS REIMER: This is population, but it's not electors either, and that also affects the numbers.

MRS. BLACK: Well, this is population for ours as well.

MS REIMER: I guess the only place we've had grumbling is ward 5.

MRS. BLACK: Ward 5? Yeah. I would have thought 6 would have been a little annoyed.

Can I ask another question? Why did you keep your centre of the city, which probably would have very little growth potential, at the lowest? Is that where your main growth potential is?

MS REIMER: As you know, with the river valley redevelopment and the ravine development along Mill Creek, we are seeing in the

outer areas more and more pressure coming into the inner city, which I think is a good trend. I guess it's also an attempt to respect community of interest and community league boundaries. The last time we reviewed the boundaries, which would have been . . . About '86?

MRS. BLACK: Ninety-one.

MS REIMER: Yeah, but I think '86 was the last time we had the review. No, I guess it would have been '89. Just before '89 was the last time we reviewed them. We went with the view as well to long-standing requests, because we, too, used to split up community leagues. There are some groups like west Ingle where they're more than one community group but see themselves as a group, so we went back and worked with them to draw the boundaries. But I should point out that it's the Clerk who brings to council an independent assessment of when we need to have the review.

MRS. BLACK: Yeah. We tried the independent assessment.

MS REIMER: Well, ours has worked, so . . .

MRS. BLACK: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks.

Well, I'll just recap by pointing out, as Stock did, that we're in agreement on more areas than I think we're in disagreement. First, on the use of 1991 stats, I might point out that it certainly would have been the preference of the former select all-party committee to use 1991 stats if we could have. The fact that the detailed work and breakdown are still not available now, the last day of August 1992, is the very reason the legislation dictated that we use 1986 stats. There was no way an independent commission could be struck, could do its work, and could report back to the Assembly and presumably have all the work done by this point in time using statistics that were not yet available in a detailed way. We're struggling, as you are, to get the statistics now. We have been directed by the Legislative Assembly to use 1991 stats, and we're doing our very best and working almost daily with Stats Canada and census Canada to gain the necessary numbers.

On the removal of the hybrid districts, which was one of your recommendations, as Pat has pointed out, that was never the intent of our original committee. The intent was that if there were recently annexed areas that contained acreages and farms, the option should be left that if the residents in those areas wished to stay with the traditional riding, the rural riding they had been in, they would be able to. We were horrified, as you were, to see the combined urban/rural ridings. Quite frankly, that was an example of democracy at work. There was a strong outcry in smaller centres as well as our larger cities against the concept. The commission backed away from it. That was positive.

Communities of interest. We've listened to the heads of the Urban Municipalities Association, the rural MDs and Cs, and the Improvement Districts Association, and they've all told us the same thing: in the case of rural areas, wherever possible follow municipal boundaries; in the case of urban areas, follow communities of interest. Any help you can give us on updating your district map to 1991 stats again would be appreciated.

The time lines. This is really one of the key issues, and it's something that troubled all of us as legislators. Our preference, of course, would have been to turn back to an independent commission. You said in your brief on page 12 that you would like to see that done well in advance of a provincial election. So would we, and we believe the only way we can ensure that will happen is if the work

is done by November 15 of this year, presented to the Legislature, and passed before the end of the calendar year so the Chief Electoral Officer can do the necessary work to get the mechanics in place for the new constituency boundaries. So we are determined to meet that commitment of having the work done in advance of the next provincial election.

MS REIMER: Are you going to bring them forward for public scrutiny and comment again?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The public scrutiny and comment would be in the sense of the legislation. Once the legislation is introduced after November 15, it's public. There will be scrutiny and comment at that time.

MS REIMER: Certainly from the city of Edmonton's point of view, we do have the community of interests within the city as well. I think that's unique in the province in that we've had the community leagues for almost as long as we've been a city with very specific, defined boundaries. Certainly they organize events, and schools and everything respect those community league boundaries.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Jan, the fact that your wards follow community boundaries is certainly evidence you practise what you preach.

MS REIMER: I guess that's where I said – and Mike caught on to it – the impossible mission is in drawing up 17 districts and not splitting community leagues and respecting the plus or minus 25 percent. You can't do it. I mean, our staff couldn't do it; maybe you guys can.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I want to conclude with the comment that while we are committed to the plus/minus 25 percent as approved by both our own Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada, we have no intention of violating that rule in any municipality in the province.

MRS. BLACK: Actually, in all fairness, if we get the '91 numbers, which we don't have at this point, on a breakdown of Edmonton – these are all based on '86 numbers – it'll be important then to look at the individual community leagues and the new numbers from '91 before we make any decision as to whether it can or can't be done. You haven't done that exercise as yet, have you, Harvey?

MR. CROME: The numbers aren't out, so we can't do it yet.

MS McEWEN: If I can add, we know enough about the 1991 census to know that if you put all of Edmonton into only 17, you're maybe within 25 percent, which will be more than 18 percent over the provincial average. I think that has also been a consistent point of the city: that to average more than 18 percent in Edmonton over the provincial average is not fair.

4:42

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, Elizabeth, that point is in your brief, and we'll certainly give it consideration.

MR. DAY: Could I just make a further comment on that point, Mr. Chairman. I feel we're in a time where we need to have a view to reaching out to the whole province, just as in all this constitutional stuff that has been going on for so long. I think Albertans and other Canadians realize we've got to try and see a big picture here and, to try and help the understanding, let people know that indeed the Supreme Court and every court that's tested this has allowed a

percentage deviation of 25 percent and has said that does not offend the Charter as long as it's provided for, as long as there are reasons. You've commented on that, Your Worship, and you commented on community of interests, the Appeal Court, as a very significant statement. I'm alluding to it because I see that coming next on the representation list is a rural MLA. He's going to be at the table here. When he stands up in the Legislature bringing a concern, let's say, about Rocky Mountain House, he stands up, one person, for Rocky Mountain House; that's it. He has to get all our attention and convince us. When somebody brings up an issue for Edmonton, as you well know, there's a lot more than one Edmonton MLA to speak for that issue. That's why I think the Supreme Court was correct when they said rural communities are a community of interests and their existence warrants departure from voter parity – not from effective representation, but definitely from voter parity. Given that and trying to reach out and get the province all working together on it, our absolute mandate is to satisfy the people of Edmonton as best we can and also the people from Rocky Mountain House, Lacombe, and . . .

Mayor McGhee in Red Deer had an excellent speech he presented to the committee in which he spoke really strongly for the city of Red Deer, as you speak for Edmonton, as you should, and everybody recognizes enlightened self-interest as positive. He also embraced those larger rural areas and recognized their needs and concerns, and I think working together we can accomplish that. I'm glad you offered your staff to us to work towards that in the future.

MS REIMER: Certainly I know that when Ty gets up, though, he also has lots of other rural MLAs, and they lean on each other.

MR. DAY: No, he's got to drag them in here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS REIMER: Thank you.

[The committee adjourned from 4:44 p.m. to 4:50 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Welcome, Ty and Ron. The process we've been following is that we'll give you the opportunity to go through a presentation. If you would like to read from something you have prepared or you want to just give it off the top, that's fine. Then we'll ask questions and make comments and have a general discussion once you've completed. We are on the record, if that's agreeable to both of you.

MR. LUND: Yeah.

MR. MOORE: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we'll proceed.
Go ahead, Ron.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I have four copies here. I imagine you can use one of them.

MR. PRITCHARD: Oh, sure; that will be dandy.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman and committee members, I fully understand the criteria and the parameters you're working in and what we're looking at. In Lacombe, basically, with the 1991 census figures we sit at 20,675, which is below the approximately 23,000, the bottom figure for the minus 25.

In looking at our situation there, there are three things I took in mind in setting them out. First of all, what would be the best type of constituency to serve the constituents so the constituents would have equitable representation from the MLA? That was number one. Number two was that whenever you suggest changing boundaries – and it's very evident that with a population of 20,675 we had to move into somebody else's constituency. We're very conscious of the impact on that constituency, that we don't create another thing. We live within the boundaries of Alberta, and we must realize that other interests must be taken into consideration as well as ours. So those are some of the things I took into consideration.

Now, if we had a big map, I could show you, but hopefully you can follow along and just visualize this. It's a little hard to see on here, but we'll try and follow it along.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want the constituency map, Ron?

MR. PRITCHARD: Actually, this one might even be better.

MR. DAY: What about schedule 8 that was in our pocket?

MR. PRITCHARD: No, because those are all suggested boundaries.

MR. MOORE: While we're establishing this, my presentation is based on the 1991 census, so we aren't going to relate back and forth or how much you can pack in, because this is the reality of it.

Now we go to the southern edge of the constituency and come along the Red Deer River until it junctions with the Blindman River and then follows the Blindman River. I don't know if you can follow it on there, but that is our southern boundary. What we say here is that the southern edge of the constituency would continue along its present lines until it reaches the Red Deer River, coming east and west there. When it hits Burbank, where the junction is, ignore that; it would continue along the banks of the Red Deer River. The south part would cross the river and continue west along Highway 11. These boundaries can be followed when you have a larger map. It would then cut south at Highway 2 until it reaches the bank of the Red Deer River. Now, you may ask how come we crossed the Red Deer River. The Red Deer River makes a circle in and out. It comes in there and makes a bend south and then west through north Red Deer and then around so that you cross over in one place and have to cross back to get over to Highway 2. So you cross over and follow the river south and west until it reaches the southwest corner of the Red Deer-North constituency. This would give the Lacombe riding polls 1 and 2 from Red Deer-North, totaling about 750 residents. Now, those are the two polls that would move out of Red Deer-North into Lacombe, and we will show the impact of that on Red Deer momentarily.

The southern boundary of the Lacombe riding would continue to follow the Red Deer River southwest until it reaches Highway 2, as I said. It follows Highway 2 north to reach Highway 11. It's just like a little jog in there to pick up polls 1 and 2 of Red Deer-North. It proceeds along Highway 11 west until it reaches the southwest corner of Rocky Mountain House, poll 1. It follows the southern edge of poll 1 until it reaches the intersection of the county 14 line and highway 766. It then follows the county line to just south of Eckville. Instead of turning south on the county line, the boundary would continue west along Highway 11 until it reaches the western edge of county 14. The reason I want to point that out: on the county line, that point on the east-west Highway 11, there's a little jog of the county with about 30 families in it that basically should go in the other constituency. It's just an abnormality of the county. Highway 11 just goes straight across and picks up the county on the other line. So rather than pick up, go down in there for a jog. It just

follows a major highway, a primary highway – use that as a boundary – and then picks up the county line on the other side. You understand why that is? It seems a little complicated until you get it on a larger map. It just shows it cuts that little section off.

It follows the western edge north – and that's going on the county line – to rejoin the southern side of the existing riding just northeast of Withrow. This would take in the complete Rocky Mountain House poll areas. Now, that way you can follow it. It takes in 1, 12, 14, and parts of polls 15, 11, and 8. This would add approximately 1,480 constituents to the Lacombe riding. Combined with the constituents from Red Deer-North, the adjusted Lacombe constituency would have a population of 24,600. It would bring us into that area.

Now I want to talk about the impact. This is a lot of talking because we're jogging a little bit, but it comes to this. This proposal would have a major influence on the Rocky Mountain House riding, taking 1,300 constituents and leaving it with 26,000 residents. I'm suggesting that when I look at it I've got to be conscious of what Rocky Mountain House has an opportunity to cover, and I make that just as a supposition on my part. If the Rocky Mountain House constituency penetrates south to take Sundre, the new Rocky Mountain House district would have approximately 25,500 constituents.

Innisfail, in this little turn down here, would lose poll 19 which comes up on the west side of Red Deer. It sticks up like a little enclave in there. I don't know how they ever got it there before. It would just square that off, take it off Innisfail and move it into Lacombe. It would cost Innisfail approximately 600 constituents. However, were Innisfail to expand into the rural areas of Red Deer-North and Red Deer-South, it would capture 46 from Red Deer-North and polls 1, 2, and 55 from Red Deer-South. This would make up about 1,700 extra constituents for the Innisfail riding.

Now, what does this do to Red Deer? If 1, 2, and 46 are taken from Red Deer-North's constituency by Lacombe and Innisfail, the riding will be left with approximately 29,600 constituents, so they're well within it.

MRS. BLACK: I'm sorry. What was the number out of Red Deer?

MR. MOORE: If we take polls 1, 2, and 46 away from Red Deer-North, they would do. Red Deer-South would lose polls 1 and 2 and 55 to Innisfail and would be left with approximately 28,600 constituents, well within the acceptable frame. What it does: those polls that are coming off Red Deer-North and Red Deer-South are rural polls. They're not going inside the limits of Red Deer. It then leaves Red Deer-North and Red Deer-South very comfortable, as we said, practically the same, 29,600 and 28,600 respectively, but they would then be within the city of Red Deer. We'd take these rural off and they would add in.

Now, from a standpoint of service in relationship to Innisfail, adding those on the southern boundary of Lacombe – one poll from Innisfail and two from Red Deer-North – puts both those areas in a service area that's only 40 minutes away from Lacombe. So they're well within our service area to provide service to them without jeopardizing the integrity of either Red Deer-North or Red Deer-South.

When we look at what we take from Rocky Mountain House – the polls are there; I gave them to you before: polls 1, 12, 14 and parts of 15, 11, and 8 – this does not take away the ability of Rocky Mountain House to adjust to that loss. They aren't blocked in with other constituencies around them. They can move to the south in a shift. There is that opportunity.

Therein lies my submission, Mr. Chairman.

5:00

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Questions? Comments? Mike?

MR. CARDINAL: I don't have any questions right now.

MRS. BLACK: How many people were you proposing to take out of Rocky Mountain House?

MR. MOORE: We would take out 1,480. I see there's a misprint in there. I was in a hurry to put this together this afternoon.

MRS. BLACK: But that would put Rocky Mountain House below the 25 percent.

MR. MOORE: That's why I say they would have to shift.

MRS. BLACK: So where would they shift to?

MR. MOORE: To the south. There's an opportunity to shift to the south.

MRS. BLACK: Which opportunity?

MR. MOORE: Well, in the Sundre area. I realize that comes off Olds-Didsbury, but there is going to have to be a shift in there too. Whatever you do, it makes a domino effect. If you follow it through – and I'm not wanting to go out into your area, because that comes in your area as the domino effect goes. You address that; I'm not there. But as a person looking at the boundaries and the numbers, I can see that this can be shifted in that manner. We must all realize that in this situation I don't think there's going to be one boundary the same as before. That's my opinion. All boundaries are going to shift to some degree in the whole deal, and whenever you shift one, you're going to shift another unless you're going into an area that's got a large number of voters to take off, and there aren't too many of those out there to work with.

This has the least impact, I think, and puts Lacombe into a very viable unit in terms of servicing people and making sure they get fair representation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Anything else, Pat?

MRS. BLACK: I guess the same scenario applies with Innisfail. They would shift.

MR. MOORE: Well, Innisfail can pick up, and I suggest that. That's my suggestion. There is that opportunity. One poll of Red Deer-North is down there, and three polls of Red Deer-South, which are strictly rural polls, are on the border of Innisfail. Innisfail could just take them in and more than offset what they're losing in that one poll. They would be at least double. But Innisfail still has to pick up . . . I realize they're in the same position. They're going to have to shift to pick up more. In this shift they would come out in a plus position, because what they'd pick up from Red Deer without damaging Red Deer-South or Red Deer-North in any way would be a plus position. They'd have to pick up more somewhere else.

If we looked in reverse, I cannot see Innisfail coming north into Lacombe. There'd be no point in that. Innisfail on that one poll that I take is stuck up there – I don't know how it ever got there in the original thinking, but it is there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Stock.

MR. DAY: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Ron, there's some good work you've done there and I think some stuff really worth looking at,

putting the concerns of the citizens first, which I do and I know you do. At first look here, if you take poll 46 right down in the bottom southwest corner, I can see one difficulty there because that's very heavily populated. That's the Clearview area. Michener Centre is all tied in there. So people in that area south of Lacombe could create some . . .

MR. MOORE: Well, I'm not looking at that one going into Lacombe. I'd say that one would go in Innisfail in offset. It's south of there, and it's around Clearview. If you look on my second page, it says Innisfail would capture . . .

MR. DAY: Okay, that goes to Innisfail, 46. You'd still run into difficulty down there. You know, we'll take more time with this, obviously, as the days go on. But right here in this southwestern tip, this here, that's a big, big subdivision, high-density apartments and everything else. So I think just this area here would feel strange being in Innisfail. But all this here? You're right.

MR. MOORE: Innisfail's on about three sides of it there anyway. It's just a matter of filling it in. That could cut across there and put that in there. That is a small specific to fit in. That's in consideration of people there, which we've got to keep in mind. We've got to keep in mind the position of the constituents, what they want too. That would be one thing to be addressed there.

MRS. BLACK: On that point, Ron, I hope you didn't use the numbers out of this book.

MR. MOORE: No, no. The year is 1991.

MRS. BLACK: You actually got census numbers for that community? Good.

MR. MOORE: We related to 1991 as closely as we could.

MRS. BLACK: Good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anything else?

MR. DAY: No, that's good. Thanks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ron, I note that you adjust your boundary following the county line to take in Eckville, but you continue to cross the county boundary into MD 99 to follow the old boundary. Why do you do that?

MR. MOORE: It's a case of numbers. It's established now in the Lacombe constituency, and I know you realize that, but if we can . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there that many people in that area is really what it comes to.

MR. MOORE: Well, there's enough, but it would put them back into a break-even area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because wherever possible when we're making adjustments, we're trying to go to municipal lines.

Well, that was one question I wanted to ask. The other comment . . .

MR. MOORE: If we get the final figures down solid, it may be that we can take on the county line straight north there in the MD into

Rocky Mountain House. But you've got to remember that the MD goes into Ponoka-Rimbey too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was interested in your comment about Sundre coming into the Rocky Mountain House constituency. I know that Ty's up next and I don't want to pre-empt. Maybe it's best just to hold that question, Ty, until you're commenting, and then my question would be: what kind of ties are there between the Rocky Mountain House area and the Sundre area in terms of communities of interest, recognizing they're in two different municipal jurisdictions? But maybe we can hold that until later.

Anything else for Ron?

Okay, Ron. Thanks.

MR. MOORE: I might justify why I suggested Sundre. The clientele, the constituents – whether it's a service area, I'm not aware; Ty will certainly cover that area – are of the same interest. There's forestry, some agriculture in the gray-wooded soil. They're all the same type of clientele, the same interests, the same deal, as we noticed in a lot of the forest operations now. So Sundre, Rocky Mountain House are tied in together. They are tied in as far as the clientele and their interests. They are similar. We aren't putting, you know, two different types of people together.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thanks, Ron.

We'll take just a brief break until Ty is ready to proceed.

[The committee adjourned from 5:08 p.m. until 5:11 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ty.

MR. LUND: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I certainly don't envy your task because, of course, of this domino effect that we get. You asked Ron when he was making his presentation about following the boundaries of the MD of Clearwater and what effect that would have on his constituency, and I believe it would take in probably about 400 people. It's basically the one poll, poll 1 in the Lacombe constituency. I see there were 336 people on the voters list, so whatever that translates into in total population.

For the Rocky Mountain House constituency – perhaps if we found Sylvan Lake on the map – I think it would be probably not inappropriate to see the portion of the Rocky Mountain House constituency that lies northeast of the lake within the county of Lacombe go into the Lacombe constituency. There are about 500 people in that area. It actually means three summer villages and the rural population in that area. One of the proposals in the interim report was that the town of Sylvan Lake go into the Lacombe constituency, and certainly the people from Sylvan Lake were very much opposed to that. They wanted to stay in the Rocky Mountain House constituency.

Now, if in fact you saw fit that that portion northeast of Sylvan within the boundaries of the county of Lacombe were to go into the county, I would propose that right on the northwest corner of the lake, which is very close to the north boundary of the Rocky Mountain House constituency, that we simply move up there and the rest of the area remain within the Rocky Mountain House constituency, even though it's in the county of Lacombe. I'm well aware that Eckville is within the county of Lacombe, and of course with their school system in the county they do have that business in Lacombe.

Proceeding on west from there, the question about using the municipal district of Clearwater's boundary and the county of Lacombe: that makes sense to me. As we said, that would add about 400 people to the Rocky Mountain House constituency. There

are a few people as well in the west portion of the Ponoka-Rimbey constituency that are living in the MD of Clearwater, so if we are going to follow that boundary, it might make sense to move it there as well.

Moving south from Sylvan Lake, I'm proposing that we don't change that. I recognize that the Rocky Mountain House constituency currently encompasses the rural municipalities of the MD of Clearwater, the county of Lacombe, and the county of Red Deer, but the division there is through a portion of the county that allows for a very large part of the population. Sylvan Lake is within the county of Red Deer; therefore, their schools are administered through the county board of education, so the MLA for Sylvan Lake has already got some connection with the county of Red Deer. I'm sure not proposing that that change.

Now, the population of the Rocky Mountain House constituency as it presently exists using the 1991 census is estimated at 23,976, which puts us about 21.8 percent below, and it's my understanding that there is an objective to move them up closer to the mean if possible. Now, taking in the area of Sundre . . . Actually, if we follow the constituency boundary as it currently exists, rather than going west – if you're looking on your map, where you see Gleniffer Lake there, the current boundary goes west. I'm proposing that it continue straight on south, which would mean that approximately 10 miles east of Sundre on the Olds-Sundre highway would be the line, continue on south of Highway 27 to a point about six miles south of that, then proceed on straight west. Now, I know that's getting into the county of Mountain View, but there are some similarities in the Sundre-Rocky Mountain House.

I know that there's not a lot of trade back and forth there yet because it's only in the most recent times that Highway 22 has been paved through there, but certainly that has made a difference, and I think in the future it will make quite a difference that there's a paved access from Rocky Mountain House to Sundre. There's no question their trade is more with Olds, and I'm sure they probably feel more comfortable with Olds. But if you have to do something there, I don't think, since the topography is much the same, the livelihood, the industry – there are many similarities.

MRS. BLACK: That is a busy highway, between Rocky and Sundre. I've been on that a couple of times, and it's packed all the time, very busy.

MR. LUND: Yes.

So I think with that, Mr. Chairman, I'd entertain any questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thanks very much.

Stock? Pat?

MRS. BLACK: Well, I think I'm going to have to digest the boundaries, Mr. Chairman, before I could . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

MR. LUND: I might just add that if you saw fit to adopt those proposed boundaries, that would boost the population of the Rocky Mountain House constituency to about 27,900.

MRS. BLACK: How many people are in Sundre?

MR. CHAIRMAN: About 1,800.

MR. LUND: About, I guess, and then the surrounding area is quite heavily populated. Taking in that area would increase the population by about 3,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mike?

MR. CARDINAL: I just have one question. Looking at the way the constituencies are laid out now, it seems that Jasper is kind of separated by quite a distance from any area. I just wonder: how accessible is Jasper from the Rocky Mountain House area by road? It seems that looking at it either way, it's a similar distance. I don't know what the population would be in Jasper, but would it be possible to service Jasper better in Rocky Mountain House or West Yellowhead?

MR. LUND: I don't think it would be very desirable, but I'm not sure. The West Yellowhead riding certainly is a big one, and I imagine it's difficult for whoever is the MLA. I guess if you could get the federal people to back off on their no airplanes landing and if the MLA was a pilot, then it could be serviced.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I really appreciate your comments and the supporting documentation re the Sundre area. We're struggling with the constituencies in central Alberta in that we need people in most of them, and we've noticed that Olds-Didsbury can probably grow by going a bit closer to Calgary, which would leave some flexibility in the Sundre area.

Pat, did you have a comment?

5:21

MRS. BLACK: I just wanted to ask Ty: is there much population up at Brazeau?

MR. LUND: No, very little.

MRS. BLACK: Because that's a link to Rocky too.

MR. LUND: There's a gap in the population between a ways south of the north boundary of the present Rocky Mountain House constituency to the Drayton Valley. There's an area in there where very few people live.

MRS. BLACK: Or up in the Pembina area?

MR. LUND: Very few. You have to move over and get in the Buck Lake area or up much closer to Drayton Valley. There are not a lot of people in that 18 miles in there.

One of the things that I maybe should have commented during the discussion about leaving Sylvan Lake in the Rocky Mountain House constituency but moving the south boundary to I think about three miles south of Sylvan: I got a lot of reaction from folks living south of that and concern that we were once again splitting a trading area. They were not happy with that kind of a proposal either.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Anything else for Ty?

MR. CARDINAL: No.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you very much.

MR. DAY: That's good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thanks very much.

[The committee adjourned at 5:22 p.m.]