

GERRYMANDER FOUGHT TO THE LAST DITCH

Liberals Expose Shameful Behavior of the Government

OPPOSITION ROBBED OF THREE SEATS

Redistribution Bill Railroad- ed Through by Conser- vative Majority

"I cannot allow this bill to pass without registering my emphatic protest against the proposals of the Government. This bill deliberately takes away three members from the minority in this House; it is designed to render the redemption of the ridings affected most difficult; it is most unfair and a shameful exercise of power by the dominant party in this House."

These were the final words of Mr. N. W. Rowell in a three-hours' debate in the Legislature yesterday afternoon against the railroading through of the redistribution bill. On every proposal put up the Opposition made a vigorous protest. Every proposed change was challenged, and in each case the House was forced to a division.

The only change made by the Government was to shift the boundaries of the northern ridings in Toronto. Instead of Avenue road and Queen's Park from College street north being the boundary between Northwest and Northeast Torontos, the dividing line was shifted westward to Spadina avenue and its projection north to the northern boundary of the new ridings.

Bruce County Changes.

The situation in Bruce county came in for the most severe censure. Mr. William McDonald (Centre Bruce), whose riding is to be legislated out of existence, said he had been led to expect that some arrangement would have been made to leave Bruce county practically as it was. It was a deliberate case of stealing a riding from the Liberals.

"If I am going down, I am not going down quietly," he said. "I am going to go into those ridings where Liberals have helped to elect Conservatives and tell them of this shameful gerrymander."

"What did you vote for last night?" asked Mr. Musgrove, suggesting too active participation in the charges against the Provincial Secretary.

"I asked for a fair trial, and not to perpetrate another job of whitewashing," was the reply.

"What about the leader of the Opposition?" interrupted Mr. Hartt (East Simcoe).

"If anybody can bring up charges against the leader of the Opposition I will vote for a Royal Commission."

Continuing, Mr. McDonald said the old party slogan had been changed to "Bold enough to be dishonest and dishonest enough to be bold." It was not a good thing for Conservatives to hibe Liberals all together. The proposed changes would upset the whole geographical arrangement

of Bruce county.

Mr. McDonald had two proposals: one to leave Bruce county as it was, and another to equalize the population by adding to Centre Bruce two municipalities which would add to the Conservative vote. "I think this proposal so fair that no one would ever refuse to accept it." Mr. McDonald supported his proposal by reading extracts from Hon. Edward Blake's speech in the House of Commons on the famous gerrymander of 1882. "I am getting the rawest deal of the whole redistribution of the Province this time," he said.

A Dishonest Arrangement.

Mr. J. G. Anderson (South Bruce) declared that Mr. McDonald had been altogether too moderate in his language. The arrangement in Bruce was clever, but it was as dishonest as it was clever. For himself, he never canvassed for a nomination, but both he and Mr. Bowman would now be thrown into the same riding. He would not be within ten miles of the new riding of South Bruce.

Turning to Grey county, Mr. Anderson said the result of the changes was to strengthen the position of the Conservative members in the North and South ridings.

Dr. Jameson (South Grey) tendered Mr. McDonald the sympathy of all the members of the House. The applause which greeted this remark seemed cold comfort for a man who was being legislated out of his seat. He thought Mr. McDonald should have carried out some of his pre-election pledges and voted more independently in the House. He voted with the Government on Tuesday, and thought if he had done so more often he might have been the Conservative nominee in North Bruce. (Laughter.)

Everyone knew, said Mr. Rowell, that the ridings had been arranged to give the Government supporters an opportunity to win North and South Bruce. So long as there were Conservative members there was no disposition to make any change, but as soon as Liberal candidates were returned there was a rush to make a change, and by means wholly unfair attempt to reduce the Liberal representation in the House.

Dr. Jas. A. McQueen (North Wentworth) also denounced the changes as an iniquity.

Mr. Proudfoot (Centre Huron) forced the Toronto members to endorse the proposed distribution in Toronto. He reiterated the statements made two days ago that the double ridings in Toronto were unfair to the minority, and perpetuated the "checkerboard" system which the Prime Minister had so roundly denounced a session ago.

Mr. Clarke said the effect of the system was to deprive the minority voters in Toronto of any chance of having a representative in the House. The Government had fixed Toronto to suit themselves. It was both absurd and unfair.

Mr. Proudfoot also challenged the division of Essex county to make a rural riding out of Windsor, Walkerville and Sandwich.

Wanted Monck Restored.

Mr. Rowell made a plea for the restoration of Monck, and that such readjustment should be made in the adjoining constituencies as to permit of this being done. Two members on the

Liberal side had already been legislated out of the Legislature, and he did not think that Monck should be removed. Accordingly he moved, seconded by Mr. Proudfoot, that Monck be composed of the same municipalities as at present.

Mr. Marshall, the member for Monck, said the Hon. Provincial Secretary stated this was a situation that they were anxious to adjust so that the riding of Monck would not disappear. It was also intimated that further opportunity would be offered to endeavor to solve this situation. The opportunity was given, and the hon. members for Welland, Lincoln, North Huron and himself were asked to consult in regard to a solution. They did so and arrived at a solution which was taken to the Provincial Secretary and was reported by one of the members