

PUBLIC HEARING HELD AT THE BEST WESTERN, WETASKIWIN  
23 OCTOBER, 2002

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1 Public Hearing held at The Best Western, Wetaskiwin  
2 23 October, 2002, commencing at 7:30 P.M.

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4 THE CHAIRMAN: Good evening, ladies and  
5 gentlemen, and welcome to the Wetaskiwin hearing of  
6 the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission.

7 Our purpose tonight is to consider the proposal  
8 which we have published in this form. It is also on  
9 the Web. The address is up there. And it came out in  
10 the major newspapers in summary form in a handout like  
11 this. We had some of these copies to hand out during  
12 our swing south but they're all used up so if anybody  
13 wants one who doesn't have one, would you please  
14 consult with our secretary, Ms. Petryshyn, sometime  
15 this evening and she will be glad to mail you one.

16 I would like to introduce the Commission. My  
17 name is MacCallum. I'm a judge of the Court Of  
18 Queen's Bench of Alberta in Edmonton. On my right is  
19 Ritu Khullar, a practicing Lawyer from Edmonton, and  
20 on my left is Mr. Donald J. Barry, a Political  
21 Scientist from Calgary, teaching at the University of  
22 Calgary. I was appointed by the Chief Justice of  
23 Alberta and my colleagues were appointed by the  
24 Speaker of the House of Commons.

25 We are an independent Commission, appointed under  
26 the Federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act of  
27 1985. We are intended to be and we are entirely free

1 from my political or administrative influence  
2 whatsoever. We are expected to interpret the law and  
3 the facts and serve the public interest in the wide  
4 sense, which means that we have to decide and balance  
5 competing interests.

6 We welcome constructive suggestions, of course,  
7 but you must understand that all of these suggestions  
8 must be evaluated in terms of the big picture. So if  
9 a particular point of view is not adopted by us, I  
10 hope the person advancing that view will not feel  
11 insulted. You may rest assured that every submission  
12 made to us will receive the attention that it  
13 deserves.

14 The final word in this process is ours but it is  
15 a consultative undertaking. We must follow the legal  
16 guidelines set out for us under Section 15 of the Act  
17 and Section 3 of the Constitution in producing our  
18 proposal and we have tried to do that.

19 The next step is to hold public hearings, of  
20 which this is one, and it is getting near the end. We  
21 will be finished this week. As a result of what we  
22 hear during these public hearings, we, of course, will  
23 change the proposals if we deem it advisable.

24 We will then prepare our report, which will be  
25 sent to the Speaker of the House of Commons, and from  
26 him, to a Committee of the House, where it will be  
27 considered by Members of Parliament and they will have

1 a chance to make their contributions.

2 After that, we will receive and consider their  
3 objections, if they have any, and we will modify our  
4 report again, if we deem it advisable.

5 We then send the final report to the Chief  
6 Electoral Officer, who drafts a Representation Order  
7 and this goes to the Governor in Council for  
8 proclamation.

9 All of this must be done by July of 2003, so next  
10 summer. The new boundaries, so established however,  
11 are not in use until July of 2004, so any election  
12 called before then will operate on the basis of the  
13 existing boundaries.

14 The object of the exercise today, ladies and  
15 gentlemen, is electoral boundary readjustment and it  
16 is not the redistribution formula, which allocates the  
17 number of seats to each Province. That is fixed by  
18 law and something that we have no control over. There  
19 is a booklet available at the back reading or entitled  
20 Representation in the House of Commons of Canada that  
21 sets out the history of the allocation formula. It's  
22 a very useful piece of literature so if you have an  
23 interest in that topic, please feel free to take a  
24 copy.

25 In view of the widespread interest there is in  
26 it, I will just explain the allocation formula very  
27 briefly to you but I must caution you that it is a

1 subject which otherwise is not open for discussion at  
2 this meeting tonight.

3 One starts with 282 seats which existed in the  
4 House of Commons in 1985. You then subtract one seat  
5 for each of the northern territories, the Yukon,  
6 Northwest Territories and Nunavut. That leaves you  
7 279 seats.

8 You take the population of the ten Provinces and  
9 divide by 279, and that leaves you with the electoral  
10 quotient which is divided into the provincial  
11 population in each Province and there you have the  
12 number of seats allocated to each Province.

13 You then apply the Senatorial clause and the  
14 Grandfather clause, and the Senatorial clause provides  
15 that no Province shall have fewer seats in the House  
16 of Commons than it had Senators in 1915, and the other  
17 one provides that no Province shall have fewer seats  
18 in the House of Commons than it had during the 33rd  
19 Parliament in 1976.

20 Seven of the ten Provinces get more seats as a  
21 result of the application of those two clauses, one or  
22 more of them or one or the other of them, than they  
23 would have by application of the simple arithmetical  
24 formula.

25 Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario have  
26 increased in population and therefore they are  
27 entitled to the number of seats which is derived

1 mathematically.

2 For the purposes of our discussions tonight, just  
3 remember that Alberta has 2.9 million people. It has  
4 26 seats now. It will have 28 seats in the next  
5 Parliament, assuming that it is -- an election is not  
6 called before the time I referred to.

7 The provincial quotient per seat, the objective  
8 that we aim for is 106,243. We are required, under  
9 Section 15 of the Act, to create electoral districts  
10 as close as reasonably possible to this quota. That  
11 is our first mandate.

12 Secondly, we are required to take into account  
13 other factors, such as community of interest,  
14 community of identity, historical pattern and a few  
15 others which relate to agricultural areas or very  
16 large sparsely populated areas of the Province.

17 The hearing procedure this evening will be as  
18 follows: Each speaker will have 15 minutes. The  
19 secretary will hold up -- oh, sorry, I forgot to  
20 introduce the staff.

21 This is Dawn Mathews over here and she is from  
22 Ottawa. She is our Geography Specialist. Ms. Miranda  
23 Petryshyn is the Commission Secretary, and Ms. Olga  
24 Koval is our Stenographer for tonight, our reporter.  
25 She is taking everything down verbatim so when you  
26 come up to speak, please don't speak as fast as I am  
27 right now or she'll have a hard time getting it.

1           You will get a 3 minute warning notice from  
2           Ms. Petryshyn before your 15 minutes is up. I have to  
3           enforce relevancy, if subjects other than those which  
4           we are here to consider are raised. We simply don't  
5           have the luxury of discussing them at this meeting.  
6           You can see from page one of our proposal what our  
7           position is, if you are interested in more detail.

8           The presenters are invited to put questions to us  
9           if they wish, during the course of their remarks, but  
10          we won't answer them immediately. If you allow us  
11          enough time between the conclusion of your remarks and  
12          the 15 minutes, we'll be happy to try and answer them;  
13          if not, we will simply take them under advisement.

14          There will be no submissions or questions from  
15          the floor. The first presenter this evening that I  
16          have listed is Mr. Jerry Iwanus. Is he here? Come  
17          forward, sir please?

18       MR. JERRY IWANUS:           Good evening Commission Members.  
19          I am representing the Village of Bawlf, which is about  
20          20 minutes east of Camrose. It is -- we passed a  
21          resolution here in August that whereas the Village of  
22          Bawlf is located in the County of Camrose and whereas  
23          the Village's primary political orientation is  
24          westward towards the City of Camrose and the County of  
25          Camrose, and whereas the Village's primary economic  
26          interaction is with the City of Camrose, be it  
27          resolved that I make a presentation recommending that

1 the Village of Bawlf be included in the same Federal  
2 electoral riding as the City of Camrose and the County  
3 of Camrose. I guess the thing with us here is that --  
4 would it be all right if Camrose went first? Excuse  
5 me for that.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, all right. Sure.

7 MR. JERRY IWANUS: I would like to give some thought  
8 to this first.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: That's fine, yes. That would be  
10 Mr. Norm Mayer, Mayor of Camrose.

11 MR. NORM MAYER: Thank you. Excuse me while I chew  
12 up the peppermint I just stuck in my mouth. I'm used  
13 to that from Council but I didn't think Jerry would do  
14 that to me.

15 Welcome Commission Members and thank you for  
16 allowing us to do a presentation this evening. If I  
17 may, I will read in a copy of a previous written  
18 report and I can provide a copy of that to you in case  
19 I do read too quickly on it.

20 Our concern, the Municipal Council of the City of  
21 Camrose has recently reviewed and received the  
22 proposed Federal electoral boundaries which include  
23 the City of Camrose just inside the east boundary of  
24 proposed Wetaskiwin district. While our council  
25 appreciates the need to balance the population of the  
26 electoral districts to the electoral quota, we also  
27 acknowledge that the Commission shall also consider

1 the community of interest, or community of identity or  
2 historical pattern of an electoral district in the  
3 Province.

4 With all due respect, we do not feel that the  
5 inclusion of the City of Camrose in the proposed  
6 Wetaskiwin district has addressed our community  
7 interest or historical identity at all.

8 The City of Camrose population, 15,253, has been  
9 and will continue to be the centre of trade and  
10 commerce, health care, education, recreation,  
11 entertainment, and culture for east central Alberta.  
12 Our trading area of 100,000 plus, as indicated on the  
13 attached map -- and I will provide a copy of that for  
14 you as well -- extends almost exclusively to the east  
15 and south of Camrose.

16 The recent commercial growth in Camrose has  
17 expanded this trading area, and based on a recent  
18 survey, the expansion continues to grow to the east  
19 and south of our municipality. Over the years, our  
20 municipality has shared an interdependence with the  
21 residents of rural east central Alberta with respect  
22 to agriculture, employment, transportation, health  
23 education, and municipal services, needs and  
24 expectations.

25 The proposed electoral boundaries places Camrose  
26 at the extreme east boundary of the Wetaskiwin  
27 district that extends past Highway 2 to the Rocky

1 Mountain House area, with whom we have very little in  
2 common either from a financial, social, culture or  
3 political basis.

4 We therefore wish to register our objections to  
5 the inclusion of Camrose in the Wetaskiwin district  
6 and solicit your cooperation and insistence in  
7 maintaining our cherished historical partnership with  
8 the rural communities to the east and south of  
9 Camrose.

10 The current Crowfoot district, or an extension to  
11 the north, certainly addresses the geography and  
12 common trading areas and services shared by east  
13 central Alberta residents and preserves the  
14 intercommunity relationships, interests, and  
15 organizations to one electoral district.

16 On behalf of the City of Camrose, I therefore  
17 strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed plan and  
18 to give consideration to our comments to the  
19 non-population related parameters and the retention of  
20 the Crowfoot district.

21 I trust these comments will receive your due  
22 consideration and appreciate the opportunity of  
23 meeting with you this evening and doing this  
24 presentation.

25 As I said, I will provide a copy of the map  
26 outlining the areas that shows where the major 78  
27 percent of our trading area is and that is east and to

1 the south of Camrose.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: You see now Camrose in the  
3 northwest corner, Bawlf and Drumheller. Does that do  
4 anything to address your concerns, sir?

5 MR. NORM MAYER: Yes. The area that -- our  
6 traditional trading area, of course, is that -- the  
7 area that we are primary involved, the trading area,  
8 goes right out to the border and down in this area,  
9 and the area across here, this would be our main  
10 service area.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Including Wainwright and  
12 Lloydminster?

13 MR. NORM MAYER: Lloydminster, limited, although  
14 there are people because of our health region who are  
15 common trading people to Camrose, but Wainwright,  
16 definitely. There are people from the Wainwright area  
17 who come in on a regular basis to the Camrose area as  
18 well. We are at this stage the largest centre in the  
19 east central health region, and while the health  
20 regions will be changing, we feel they will probably  
21 be changing to include a good portion of Lakeland  
22 region into east central region and we would still be  
23 the main centre to provide health region services. So  
24 we look at that as being our trading area out to this  
25 east area. Whereas, yes, Wetaskiwin, we have the odd  
26 thing in common with but very, very little.

27 THE CHAIRMAN: You know, we are sensitive to

1 suggestions which we have received even before these  
2 meetings and we always make an effort to accommodate  
3 the suggestions and see how they pan out in terms of  
4 population and other factors, and we just came up with  
5 that and thought -- it is not a great deal different  
6 actually than your existing riding, except that north  
7 of the Battle River you have Crowfoot area which we  
8 have not included there. That sort of arrangement  
9 would put you back in Crowfoot and would balance off  
10 the population pressures that we are feeling to the  
11 south and west.

12 MR. NORM MAYER: Does that -- how far north does  
13 that go? Does that go north up into Tofield and  
14 Riley?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: No.

16 MR. NORM MAYER: No. But as I say, I guess our  
17 concern is that we have very little trading or  
18 communication as far as the area that we are presently  
19 being proposed in, Wetaskiwin and over to Rocky  
20 Mountain House area.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: In distinction, that would meet at  
22 least some of the concerns that you have with our  
23 proposal.

24 MR. NORM MAYER: By keeping it to the east?

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

26 MR. NORM MAYER: Yes. Anything that can be done  
27 that way is certainly --

1 THE CHAIRMAN: I notice that the Mayor from Bawlf  
2 had expressed a desire -- if I understood his --  
3 MR. NORM MAYER: Before you choked him up, he was  
4 suggesting --  
5 THE CHAIRMAN: Somebody said at one of the  
6 meetings -- I think I misinterpreted his letter -- he  
7 didn't want so much to be in Wetaskiwin as he wanted  
8 to be in the same riding as Camrose. Is that right?  
9 So this one, sir, we have just done a revision, for  
10 your consideration, which would see you back with  
11 Camrose in Drumheller or, as it is presently called,  
12 Crowfoot.  
13 MR. JERRY IWANUS: That would be, that would  
14 definitely --  
15 THE CHAIRMAN: That would answer your concerns?  
16 MR. JERRY IWANUS: Everything else is basically  
17 negotiable from our prospective.  
18 THE CHAIRMAN: We certainly have your point,  
19 Mr. Mayer.  
20 MR. JERRY IWANUS: I will provide a copy of that for  
21 the record.  
22 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Iwanus, if we haven't  
23 taken the wind completely out of your sails...  
24 MR. JERRY IWANUS: That is why it wasn't really a  
25 problem to ask them to go first for the simple reason  
26 that I think we are on the same page.  
27 The only point I would make is that the paper

1 that -- the newspaper thing that we got and what we  
2 found on the internet are different. One suggested  
3 that we would be in Vegreville-Wainwright and one  
4 suggested that we would be in Drumheller. If we go on  
5 the internet and type in our postal code, it gives us  
6 the Drumheller constituency. So it's a small village.  
7 It doesn't take much to confuse us, you know. I don't  
8 want to take up a bunch of time here.

9 Our point is that we -- you know, it is not like  
10 we are an agricultural service centre or anything like  
11 that. We are a bedroom community of Camrose in a lot  
12 of ways, and our primary economic interaction is with  
13 Camrose. So we would please ask for consideration  
14 that regardless of where the boundaries are eventually  
15 drawn, that we would be included with Camrose. Thank  
16 you.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Mr. Iwanus.

18 Mr. Ed Chuboucha?

19 MR. MARVIN MOLZAN: Mr. Chuboucha isn't here tonight.

20 My name is Marvin Molzan. I'm a Council member for  
21 Leduc County and I also have two of my colleagues,  
22 John Wayley and John Chomley, from Leduc County with  
23 me also.

24 First of all, I would like to thank the  
25 Commission for the opportunity to address you and  
26 Leduc County understands the difficulties in  
27 establishing electoral boundaries with the shift in

1 population in Alberta and across Canada.

2 Leduc County has concerns regarding the proposal  
3 change to electoral boundaries in Alberta, as our  
4 municipality would be federally represented by four  
5 MPs, Edmonton Beaumont, Edmonton Leduc, Vegreville  
6 Wainwright, and Wetaskiwin. Leduc County suggests  
7 rather than splitting our municipality into various  
8 ridings, the Counties of Wetaskiwin and Leduc Counties  
9 to be kept within the same riding to allow a better  
10 understanding of rural needs.

11 Agricultural remains a vital component of  
12 Alberta's economy and a strong rural voice is needed  
13 to promote the interests of agricultural sector. We  
14 believe there needs to be more consideration for  
15 community interests in setting boundaries, as well as  
16 geographic size in sparsely populated ridings.

17 Rural constituencies must have effective  
18 representation. The right to vote means the right to  
19 effective representation; without effective  
20 representation, the right to vote can be rendered  
21 meaningless.

22 Constituencies, in the less populated areas, when  
23 forced to be represented by population, results in a  
24 large riding. The MP's ability to effectively meet  
25 the needs of the constituency is severely compromised.  
26 There needs to be a balance to allow each riding to be  
27 composed of constituencies of common interest and the

1 ridings to be of a manageable size.

2 Secondly, the proposed boundary change combine  
3 rural areas with the City of Edmonton. It is very  
4 difficult for an MP to represent all points of view.  
5 We are not one big homogeneous area that can be simply  
6 sliced up in various pieces.

7 In Alberta, our economy is heavily dependent on  
8 natural resources, development, and extraction. These  
9 activities take place in a rural area and a strong  
10 voice is needed.

11 The Leduc County region is composed of eight  
12 municipalities that are dependent on each other for  
13 quality services, deliveries to the region,  
14 rural/urban blend. This cooperative approach has  
15 created strong ties across the region. With these  
16 common interests, it would be easier for a Member of  
17 Parliament to understand and effectively represent the  
18 constituency's point of view at a Federal level.

19 Next, the proposed new boundaries remove the  
20 heavily populated areas of Leduc County region, being  
21 Leduc and Leduc area, Beaumont and the Beaumont area,  
22 and instead have included Camrose area to the east.

23 We suggest Leduc County region north boundary  
24 remain within the existing Wetaskiwin electoral  
25 boundaries.

26 In conclusion, Leduc County would like to  
27 encourage the Members of the Commission not to divide

1 Leduc County region into four Federal ridings; and  
2 secondly, to ensure there are a number of rural  
3 ridings in Alberta to provide a strong rural voice at  
4 the Federal level; and third, we hope that you would  
5 consider common interests of electoral boundaries and  
6 ensure a manageable geographic size when establishing  
7 an electoral boundary.

8 Thank you very much.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Molzan, you, of course, are  
10 here on behalf of the County and not the City of  
11 Leduc?

12 MR. MOLZAN: That's correct.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't think anybody is for the  
14 City. What are the eight municipalities which depend  
15 on the County?

16 MR. MOLZAN: We have, on the very eastern side,  
17 it's New Sarepta, we have Beaumont, Calmar, Warburg,  
18 Thorsby, Devon to the north, Leduc city, and along  
19 with the County, we comprise, you know, quite a  
20 sizeable portion of the Federal constituency.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, and you say they are  
22 dependent on each other for quality service delivery  
23 to the regions, rural, urban blended constituency.  
24 What exactly are the services that pass between these  
25 communities?

26 MR. MOLZAN: Well, rurally, Thorsby is a farm  
27 trading centre, Warburg, Calmar -- our urban people go

1 to those areas. We also go down to Wetaskiwin, which  
2 is a major trading centre for the rural people. And  
3 for us to be placed into another constituency, an  
4 urban constituency, it really doesn't make sense, in  
5 our opinion. Leduc tends to be more of the focal hub  
6 in our area. It is the largest municipality, about  
7 15,000. So we have a lot of people coming from the  
8 Warburg, Thorsby, and even in the New Sarepta area  
9 that use Leduc as a shopping area. Unfortunately,  
10 rurally, for example, the grain elevator has now  
11 disappeared. There aren't any equipment dealers  
12 anymore. All those things come to Wetaskiwin now.  
13 Like the equipment operators, they are all located  
14 here. So for us to be put into Edmonton, even though  
15 we shop in Edmonton, drive to Edmonton -- from a rural  
16 perspective, an MP in Edmonton really couldn't  
17 represent us the way a riding in Wetaskiwin could.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: I think I understand your point,  
19 sir. You are saying there is a real community of  
20 interest between Leduc as represented by -- as  
21 containing all of those various communities you have  
22 talked about.

23 MR. MOLZAN: Yes.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: And the City of Leduc, even though  
25 that might apply a rural/urban mix, you say that they  
26 could be represented by one Federal representative.

27 MR. MOLZAN: I believe so.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Our approach, I must say, is on a  
2 larger scale, basically, the same. We see Leduc as  
3 being a bedroom of Edmonton, as well as a city in its  
4 own right, a bedroom community. A lot of people live  
5 in Leduc, live in Edmonton. The two places share  
6 common transportation links. They share all kinds  
7 of -- there is a big commonality between the City of  
8 Edmonton and its surrounding satellite cities and  
9 towns.

10 Our approach to the matter is not a lot different  
11 than yours. It just differs in size, I would suggest,  
12 sir. That was sort of -- I don't want to debate the  
13 point with you, and I'm glad to hear your point of  
14 view, but I just wanted you to you realize what ours  
15 was.

16 DR. BARRY: I just wanted to ask -- do you  
17 have a sense of how many -- what portion of the  
18 population of Leduc County works in Edmonton and  
19 travels back and forth on a regular basis?

20 MR. MOLZAN: I've just seen these numbers -- I  
21 think in Leduc, probably about 25 to 30 percent of the  
22 Leduc population itself.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: The county or Leduc --

24 MR. MOLZAN: Just Leduc proper, but the big  
25 thing that we have --

26 THE CHAIRMAN: You don't have any figures?

27 MR. MOLZAN: No, not those kind of figures, but

1 the big thing that we have in the Leduc County is the  
2 Nisku Industrial Park, which is probably Canada's  
3 largest energy industrial park, and we have between 12  
4 and 14,000 people working there, and a large portion  
5 of say Leduc, surrounding areas, use that as a work  
6 place. It has a tremendous draw. We even draw from  
7 Edmonton several thousand people, but it is a major  
8 supplier of jobs in our region.

9 DR. BARRY: What about the town of Beaumont?  
10 Do you have any sense of what the linkage would be  
11 there? I'm trying to figure out if the County is an  
12 undifferentiated whole or if in fact it is mixed and  
13 there are portions that have relatively high  
14 interactions with the city.

15 MR. MOLZAN: Beaumont does have a fairly high  
16 interaction. It probably has more -- considered more  
17 of a bedroom community than Leduc is of Edmonton, but  
18 from the perspective of our Council, we have a strong  
19 working relationship with Beaumont and there is a lot  
20 of interaction with our rural people into the Beaumont  
21 area, as we do with all our urban communities.

22 MS. KHULLAR: I don't know if you are aware,  
23 sir, but just to let you know that the Mayor of  
24 Beaumont appeared at the Edmonton hearings and was in  
25 support of the proposed ridings as it affected  
26 Beaumont.

27 MR. MOLZAN: He may have been, yes. We didn't

1 compare notes.

2 MS. KHULLAR: That explains a bit of where we  
3 are coming from. We have heard different things from  
4 different parts of the county.

5 MR. MOLZAN: We are basically looking at the  
6 area -- like Beaumont is surrounded by very rich  
7 agricultural soil. Even though we have a lot of  
8 country residential people there, basically until, in  
9 fact, you go right up into the city limits of  
10 Edmonton, it is agriculture, and those people, very  
11 seldom do they use Edmonton as an agricultural trading  
12 area. It is mostly south.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: I did want to say something, sir,  
14 about the fact that your county will be divided by  
15 different Federal electoral boundaries, as far as our  
16 proposal is concerned, and that is a thing that we  
17 don't encourage for sure, but unfortunately it is a  
18 fact of life -- and we hear this complaint at every  
19 meeting we come to -- for the simple reason that there  
20 are more than 60 MDs or counties in the Province and  
21 we are only trying to create 28 Federal districts, so  
22 it is obvious that the borders cannot be contiguous.  
23 Something has to give somewhere. We have redrafted  
24 our maps more than once to try and accommodate  
25 requests like that which are, of course, legitimate  
26 because the community or at least the boundaries of a  
27 municipality or a county do define in a certain way a

1 community of interest. There is no denying that.

2 There is also the reality, of course, that those  
3 county boundaries themselves were established for  
4 reasons which may not exactly be current -- for  
5 example, a number of them derived from old 4 by 4  
6 school districts and they haven't been changed over  
7 the years so that the reason for them having been  
8 there in that way has disappeared. But still, other  
9 matters, other communities of interest have grown up  
10 over time but you see our problem. We can't simply  
11 design a map that leaves intact the boundaries of  
12 municipalities or counties -- in some cases yes and  
13 some cases no.

14 I don't know if you can say you would be better  
15 off with four MPs taking care of your interests than  
16 one -- I'm unable to say. In fact, it is difficult to  
17 demonstrate exactly how much a municipal council has  
18 to do with a Federal MP.

19 MR. MOLZAN: Relating to ours, he makes pretty  
20 well a yearly visit to our council, as he does with  
21 most of his --

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, that's interesting to know,  
23 yes.

24 MR. MOLZAN: One of the latest -- and my time  
25 is slipping here -- but one of the latest acquisitions  
26 to our county was in the north end when a lot of the  
27 Strathcona County was annexed into the City of

1           Edmonton. We took in approximately two miles.  
2           Probably about a half mile north of Beaumont, there is  
3           a two mile stretch that was annexed into or the  
4           Minister of Municipal Affairs gave that to Leduc  
5           County, and we owned up to it and it has been ours now  
6           for about 15 years at least.

7   THE CHAIRMAN:                Thank you very much, sir. We  
8           appreciate you coming tonight and helping us out in  
9           this way.

10                 We will move then to Mr. Steven Wildeboer?

11   MR. STEVEN WILDEBOER:    Thank you Members of the boundary  
12           committee. It's a wonderful opportunity to be here to  
13           make this presentation.

14                 It is none too small a task to redefine the  
15           electoral boundaries. In general, people do not like  
16           change and will often struggle against it. I realize  
17           completely that change is needed to be made in Alberta  
18           with the addition two new seats and a change in  
19           demographics for Alberta have contributed to this.  
20           Unfortunately, out of your control is the fact that we  
21           are still under-represented in the House of Commons.

22                 The following proposal that I am going to be  
23           making are on behalf of myself and Wetaskiwin MP  
24           Dale Johnston. He is unable to be here tonight. He  
25           is actually in the House of Commons right now, but he  
26           read through this today and agreed with what I have  
27           written here.

1           We have many concerns such as the City of Leduc  
2           leaving the Wetaskiwin constituency and the addition  
3           of the City and County of Camrose being removed from  
4           its trading block, but we don't have time to deal with  
5           these and these have already been dealt with by other  
6           people. We do have, however, two major concerns that  
7           we would like looked into.

8           The first concern is the fact that with the  
9           exception of two ridings in northern Alberta, the  
10          population for each riding was brought in very close  
11          to the 106,000 amount. It is our feeling that when  
12          representing a rural riding that the population should  
13          be lower to offset the vast area an MP and staff need  
14          to facilitate. This is not a huge concern in  
15          Wetaskiwin as it is one of the smallest rural ridings  
16          in Alberta and can be reached from every corner in  
17          about two and a half hours driving time, and most of  
18          the population in Wetaskiwin is concentrated around  
19          the Highway 2 corridor.

20          Of concern is such ridings as the Drumheller,  
21          Yellowhead, Banff-Cochrane, Vegreville Wainwright,  
22          where it could take a day to travel from corner to  
23          corner and back. It would make it very difficult on  
24          the MP and his staff to visit with the constituents of  
25          a riding like that.

26          On the other hand, in most urban ridings, an MP  
27          could be from one corner to the other and back again

1 in less than half an hour. This leaves the MP with  
2 much more time to visit with the constituents. For an  
3 urban MP an extra 10 or 15,000 people would make  
4 little difference in time required for visiting in a  
5 constituency.

6 On the other hand, 10 to 15,000 less people in  
7 the rural constituency would save the MP valuable  
8 time.

9 Our request is to allow the rural areas the  
10 latitude allowed in population to limit the size and  
11 area of the constituency. This would still permit all  
12 voices to be heard but lessen the load on the rural  
13 MP.

14 Our second concern, or more like a suggestion, is  
15 to try to follow the county lines when drawing the  
16 constituency boundaries -- and I notice you already  
17 alluded to that and I know it's a difficult task.  
18 This will allow rural residents to easily identify  
19 which constituency they reside in because it is in the  
20 county within which they reside in. We realize that  
21 this is not always tangible when considering a medium  
22 sized urban centre such as Red Deer. It needs some  
23 rural areas to fill out its population, but the County  
24 of Red Deer contains too much population to make into  
25 a single constituency.

26 Our specific concern for the Wetaskiwin  
27 constituency is the southern portion of Lacombe

1 County -- and I noticed on your new map you've already  
2 addressed partially that. The southeast portion is to  
3 be in Drumheller, the area of Alix, Joffre, have  
4 little in common with the Drumheller constituency.  
5 These people work and do business primarily in Red  
6 Deer and Lacombe, the farmers of the area sell their  
7 grains to the agricor or Lee Dreyfuss elevators around  
8 Lacombe. Churches in Lacombe and Red Deer are  
9 attended by these people. They all go into Lacombe to  
10 pay the property taxes. These people belong with the  
11 rest of the County of Lacombe in the Wetaskiwin  
12 constituency.

13 The southeast side of Lacombe County has as its  
14 boundary the Red Deer River and the vast Red Deer  
15 River valley, a very good natural boundary. It would  
16 appear to be a more substantive border than the County  
17 road that is currently used for the majority of the  
18 southern boundary -- sorry, the currently proposed  
19 really.

20 The south centre and southwest. The residents of  
21 this area are proposed to be in the Red Deer  
22 constituency primarily. It is impossible to argue  
23 that the people in the Town of Blackfalds do not do  
24 business in Red Deer. They work in businesses in Red  
25 Deer and spend much of their income in Red Deer. Yet  
26 they all chose not to live in Red Deer. Many would  
27 identify themselves as rural people. Many left the

1 big city for the small town living and can therefore  
2 identify their concerns with a rural constituency.

3 Our request is that you consider adding the  
4 entire Lacombe County to the Wetaskiwin constituency  
5 as it belongs here instead of divided three ways.

6 Thank you for your time and thank you for  
7 listening.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: So the entire Lacombe County  
9 should be in Wetaskiwin riding?

10 MR. STEVEN WILDEBOER: Primarily, yes. That is what we  
11 would like to see.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Just a few points in a preliminary  
13 way, sir. I think we find that the County of Red  
14 Deer, in fact, is not too populous to form a Federal  
15 electoral district. It is very close to the quota.

16 Secondly, Red Deer is getting to be a big place.  
17 Before too much time passes, it's going to be big  
18 enough to merit a -- I mean the city -- a Federal  
19 electoral district all by itself. So the larger that  
20 urban centre becomes, the more the surrounding  
21 constituency must shrink in order to keep the primary  
22 objective of which I spoke in mine and that is the  
23 equality of the vote.

24 So if we had suggested in the Red Deer meeting  
25 that places as close as Blackfalds should not be in  
26 their riding, I don't know if we would have gotten  
27 away with our lives. They want to go a long way in

1 every direction. A number of people will say things  
2 like, well, we don't care if we have 125 or 130,000  
3 people in the riding. We simply are so happy with our  
4 Member of Parliament and the service he provides to us  
5 that he could easily do that, no problem.

6 There is only one problem and that is the law.  
7 We have to get as close as reasonably possible to the  
8 electoral quotient and there's no way you can get  
9 around those words, as close as reasonably possible.  
10 It's up to us to determine what's reasonable. We have  
11 to draw these lines some place but we, of course, are  
12 sensitive to historical patterns and things like that,  
13 and communities of interest, and we try to adapt to  
14 them as much as we can without creating some  
15 ridiculous looking riding that nobody can identify  
16 with.

17 You heard me speak about the county lines and  
18 inherent problems there. What I have just said, of  
19 course, responds in part to your thesis that the size  
20 of the rural ridings should be much smaller than we  
21 proposed, even if it means going 20 or 25 percent  
22 below the quota. Well, I can only repeat, sir, what I  
23 did as to what the law happens to be. I might say, as  
24 a matter of interest, that 26 of the proposed ridings  
25 are in the geographical southern half of Alberta, only  
26 two in the northern half of the entire Province. So  
27 if the Members of Parliament in this part of the world

1 think they have a long ways to go, they should see  
2 Peace River and Fort McMurray.

3 MR. STEVEN WILDEBOER: The difference with Peace River is  
4 that you've got concentrations of population. You  
5 know, you deal with somebody like Drumheller and the  
6 population is spread --

7 THE CHAIRMAN: There is somebody here and all  
8 over the place.

9 MR. STEVEN WILDEBOER: Yes, you've got 500 people here,  
10 500 people there. That is the difference between  
11 those big ridings. We understand that.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: We do hear -- we heard from an  
13 expert witness recently, whose opinion was that  
14 although there is a thought that rural ridings are  
15 more difficult to represent than urban ones, he said  
16 that is no longer true because of the diversity that  
17 has come to be present in urban ridings and an MP has  
18 an even more difficult time in a large city than he  
19 would in the country.

20 So as I said at the beginning, we have to balance  
21 competing interests and I will ask my colleagues now  
22 if they have anything to ask. No?

23 Well, thank you very much, sir. That was more  
24 than helpful and I hope that we can design something  
25 in the end that will leave somebody happy anyway.

26 Mr. Vern Hartwell?

27 MR. KEN WHITE: Good evening --

1 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, Mr. Hartwell, before  
2 you start out, I don't know if I mentioned to begin  
3 with, the need to speak slowly. Most of us do it when  
4 we're not reading something and then as soon as we  
5 begin reading something, speed up. So, please, and  
6 I'm sorry to interrupt.

7 MR. KEN WHITE: Good evening, Honourable Chair  
8 McCallum and Members of the Commission. I'm honoured  
9 to be able to present to you tonight on behalf of  
10 Vern Hartwell, who is the Chair of our Board of the  
11 Alberta Capital Region Alliance. My name is  
12 Ken White. I'm the Executive Director of the  
13 Alliance.

14 I don't know if you know a lot about the  
15 Alliance. There is a little bit of a change of pace  
16 here tonight. I will be speaking on behalf of the  
17 Edmonton region versus Wetaskiwin and central Alberta  
18 but I do live in the County of Wetaskiwin, so I guess  
19 I do have some prerogative here.

20 ACRA is a voluntary municipal organization  
21 comprised of 22 municipalities in and around the  
22 greater Edmonton area, including the City of Edmonton  
23 representing approximately one million people. ACRA  
24 would just like to point out to the Commission that  
25 considering redrawing Federal electoral boundaries,  
26 population should not be the only concern. And I know  
27 you've alluded to other aspects in previous

1 presentations tonight, but I just want to bring that  
2 to the attention of the board, that population  
3 shouldn't be the overriding element.

4 As a result, ACRA's key message is the following:  
5 Any changes to federal electoral boundaries must  
6 respect the autonomous identity of and reflect the  
7 historical social economic patterns of municipalities.  
8 ACRA would also like to submit that there are three  
9 general principals that should be used as guidelines.  
10 As I said before, we're not going to -- ACRA's  
11 position is really not speaking in specifics as we  
12 heard earlier tonight but more general guidelines that  
13 can be used to draw the boundaries and districts.

14 The first being clarity of issues. There needs  
15 to be a clear focus on the issues within a riding.  
16 Ridings should be organized on the basis of common  
17 issues rather than dissimilar issues. Elected  
18 representatives, armed with a clear mandate on the  
19 issues in a riding will be best able to serve the  
20 needs of their constituents. For example, urban and  
21 rural municipalities, ridings that include urban and  
22 rural municipalities clearly have different  
23 priorities. Some are compatible and others are not.  
24 It is a inherent difficulty and we do recognize that  
25 sometimes it is unavoidable, but in general, again, as  
26 a guideline, we propose this.

27 Secondly, identity of representation. There is a

1 strong history of autonomy in Alberta municipalities.  
2 This identity is imbedded in the historical, social  
3 economic patterns of each autonomous municipality. It  
4 is critical for Albertans that these electoral  
5 districts reinforce, not erode, the sense of identity.  
6 For example, by adding the prefix Edmonton to  
7 St. Albert may create the perception that St. Albert  
8 is not an entity which is separate and distinct from  
9 the City of Edmonton.

10 Thirdly, as a general guideline, align electoral  
11 and municipal boundaries. ACRA believes that where  
12 possible and practical, electoral boundaries should be  
13 aligned with municipal boundaries. Creating  
14 boundaries that are not aligned just adds complexity  
15 to the mix. It is never easy to split and share  
16 interests of a single municipality across two or more  
17 electoral districts, residents locate within various  
18 municipalities for a choice in lifestyles and when  
19 MP's are asked to represent multiple municipalities,  
20 multiple lifestyles, their effectiveness may be  
21 reduced somewhat.

22 We heard earlier the County of Leduc certainly,  
23 into four ridings, and I guess the biggest interest  
24 from the city of Edmonton being included coterminous  
25 with their boundaries and electoral districts. I  
26 think they share a central district and four  
27 surrounding ridings.

1           Thank you for your time and consideration for our  
2           submission.

3   THE CHAIRMAN:           Thank you very much, sir. Before  
4           I turn to my colleagues for any questions they might  
5           have -- you speak of an MPs effectiveness as being  
6           possibly reduced when he or she is asked to represent  
7           rural people on the one hand and urban people on the  
8           other hand and at the same time. As you know, there  
9           are very many examples, apart from the City of  
10          Edmonton and Calgary, where precisely that sort of  
11          situation attains -- Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red  
12          Deer, Peace River, Fort McMurray -- not so much Fort  
13          McMurray, that is sort of an anomaly in the whole  
14          Province.

15                I'm sure if you ask Mr. Mills if he was -- if his  
16                effectiveness was troubled by having to represent Red  
17                Deer urbanites as opposed to people in Rocky Mountain  
18                House or some farmer to the west, he would vehemently  
19                deny it. So I'm not trying to refute what you're  
20                saying except to point out that there are certainly  
21                points of view out there which are diametrically  
22                opposed to that.

23   MR. WHITE:                Could I respond to that?

24   THE CHAIRMAN:            Yes, by all means, please do.

25   MR. WHITE:                I absolutely agree. In fact,  
26                within our region we have two municipalities, Spruce  
27                Grove and Beaumont, who see themselves more as the

1 City of Edmonton. Again, if you apply the principal  
2 like issues, they see themselves as like issues so, I  
3 mean, it still works and I guess that is our position.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. I understand you. Except it  
5 is not clear to us that everybody does understand our  
6 proposal. We see the overriding community of interest  
7 or community of identity as between Edmonton and its  
8 satellite communities, which by the way contain  
9 about 181,000 people -- the equivalent of two ridings  
10 practically -- we see that agglomeration as being an  
11 urban one, and that the community of interest which  
12 exists between Leduc and Edmonton, and Sherwood Park  
13 and Edmonton, and St. Albert and Edmonton, Spruce  
14 Grove and so on, is one of urban identity. True there  
15 are areas in-between, not very large areas, but there  
16 are areas in-between which contain many small  
17 holdings. There are some farms, some true farms left  
18 in there. We saw the overriding community of identity  
19 as being between urbanites, whether they live in Leduc  
20 or whether they live in south Edmonton.

21 MR. VERN HARTWELL: I understand as well. Thank you.  
22 I do have a written submission.

23 MS. KHULLAR: Thank you very much.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: I wish to invite anyone who wants  
25 to submit additional written materials or written  
26 materials for the first time to do so before the end  
27 of this month, but not after that so much because we

1 will be getting to work on preparing our final report  
2 and it might come too late for our consideration.

3 We have one more presenter. If the reporter  
4 wishes a break, we will take one; if not, we will go  
5 ahead. No? She says she is fine.

6 So Mr. Roger Buxton?

7 MR. ROGER BUXTON: Mr. Chairman, I'm appearing on  
8 behalf of myself. I have done this somewhat before  
9 for other organizations, mainly political parties in  
10 Crowfoot, but I have moved now to the Wetaskiwin  
11 constituency and I see what is evolving here. I'm  
12 concerned about my old constituency, Crowfoot, and my  
13 main reason for appearing here was my concern about  
14 the naming of the constituency because I believe that  
15 the honourable name of Crowfoot should be kept for the  
16 Drumheller riding. I sure would like to see it kept.  
17 I think you probably had a submission on that before,  
18 from what I understand.

19 I'm also concerned that we have a number of  
20 communities in the Wetaskiwin riding that are of more  
21 or less equal status in the way of trading, and yet we  
22 are naming it after Wetaskiwin. I hope the people in  
23 the area there, Wetaskiwin people, forgive me but --  
24 by the way, now I live in Millet, which is not that  
25 far from here and I do trade in Wetaskiwin.

26 THE CHAIRMAN: That is not a change though,  
27 Mr. Buxton.

1 MR. ROGER BUXTON: I know it isn't, but I would like  
2 to suggest that since you are adding all this extra  
3 area, that you name it after geographical anomaly of  
4 this area and it is called Battle River. There was a  
5 constituency called Battle River at one time before in  
6 this area. I believe it was provincial.

7 If Camrose stays in this constituency, we already  
8 have a Wetaskiwin Camrose constituency provincially  
9 and it would be kind of confusing if you name them  
10 both the same and, of course, Camrose being a larger  
11 trading area.

12 I agree with a lot of what the gentleman  
13 representing Mr. Johnson said for what needs to be  
14 changed here in Wetaskiwin riding, but I would like to  
15 point out that if you -- I hate to counter the people  
16 from Camrose, but I lived in that area and I know what  
17 Mr. Malone used to have to go through, and I imagine  
18 Mr. Ramsey had to go through when it come to  
19 representing that riding for travelling. It would be  
20 so much easier if the riding was more square, like the  
21 Wetaskiwin riding. Like one man said, it is easy to  
22 travel from one corner to another in Wetaskiwin very  
23 quickly. If you are a representative from Camrose and  
24 you make a trip down to the south end of the Crowfoot  
25 riding in the southeast corner, it is an overnight  
26 trip. There is no airports down there, you know, that  
27 have ILS capabilities. You are driving. I know how

1           tough it is to do that and give good representation to  
2           that area.

3                   Basically, my concerns are very, very simple, the  
4           names that you have, constituencies that are easy --  
5           you know, as easy as possible considering that the  
6           population needs that you have to bring into those  
7           constituencies. I know eastern Alberta is really  
8           tough to represent.

9                   I know the second map you showed there also meant  
10          that the riding next to the border, which would  
11          include my old community of Concert, would be very,  
12          very long to the north, and whoever represented that  
13          would have a terrible time and it is populated all  
14          over, both of them constituencies. I'm not sure how  
15          far that constituency would have went north, the  
16          Wainwright Vegreville one, if you would have run it up  
17          along the border, but I imagine it would be populated  
18          all over. That's all I have to say.

19   THE CHAIRMAN:                   Thank you, Mr. Buxton. The  
20          eastern Alberta ridings are thinly populated. That is  
21          obvious to everybody and they do present problems of  
22          size to the representative, and these things have to  
23          be taken into account.

24                   As to the name, as you rightly guessed, you are  
25          not the first one to complain about the loss of the  
26          name Crowfoot. Many people in our Drumheller meeting  
27          said that it should remain that way and as well as

1 numerous others in correspondence.

2 So what we have advanced here, sir, is entitled  
3 proposal and that is exactly what it is. We have no  
4 proprietary interest in it. We simply put it out  
5 there for consideration, and if we think that the  
6 objectors have a good point, we will simply change our  
7 naming practices.

8 I can tell you why geographic names or names of  
9 cities or towns have been used. If you look at our  
10 proposal page 5 -- I'll read this, not too fast, I  
11 hope: According to the geographical names board of  
12 Canada, the best names for federal electoral districts  
13 are those that immediately give a sense of the  
14 province, and if possible, the region or part of the  
15 province in which they are located. For this reason,  
16 the commission favours place names. The names chosen  
17 are intended to reflect the core of the electoral  
18 district. Because of the large size of most Alberta  
19 electoral districts, the Commission finds it necessary  
20 sometimes to use double names, indicating two of the  
21 main population centers in each electoral district.  
22 Exceptions are made to this general approach for  
23 historical reasons for the electoral districts of  
24 Yellowhead, Edmonton Strathcona, and Calgary Nose  
25 Hill.

26 And if we follow the suggestions which you,  
27 amongst others have made, we would do the same thing

1 for Crowfoot. That is still a possibility, sir. You  
2 will appreciate, from what I have read, the reason for  
3 following the practice that we have.

4 MR. ROGER BUXTON: Can I respond to that?

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, please.

6 MR. ROGER BUXTON: I would submit that the name  
7 Battle River is a place name very significant to the  
8 history of this area. It is not only the head waters  
9 of the Battle River in Wetaskiwin but there has been a  
10 tremendous amount of history written about the Battle  
11 River basin and the development of western Canada.  
12 There is a total book written about it that I have and  
13 I think -- and also tourist association in, I believe,  
14 eastern Alberta called Battle River. So it is  
15 certainly not an insignificant name in this area and  
16 it is more neutral is my point.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, I wasn't speaking about Battle  
18 River. I take your suggestion. You spoke about 2  
19 things. One was Crowfoot and the other was Battle  
20 River.

21 My colleagues, I think, are satisfied with what  
22 they have heard and we thank you for coming.

23 Do you have any written material to give us?

24 MR. ROGER BUXTON: No, I didn't.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: If you want to, please send it to  
26 our secretary before the end of the month. Thanks a  
27 lot.

1 Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes the list,  
2 and this being our second meeting of our day -- we  
3 started out in Cochrane today and we had Calgary all  
4 day yesterday. We very much appreciate you coming and  
5 rest assured that we will, in the weeks to come, be  
6 examining in detail everything that has been said to  
7 us tonight.

8 Please help yourself to more coffee, if you wish,  
9 and as we are breaking down our material, you can have  
10 a look at the maps. Thank you.

11

12

13 WETASKIWIN PUBLIC HEARING CONCLUDED

14

15 Certificate of Transcript

16

17 I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the  
18 foregoing pages 1 to 39 are a true and faithful  
19 transcript of the proceedings taken down by me in  
20 shorthand and transcribed from my shorthand notes to the  
21 best of my skill and ability.

22 Dated at the City of Edmonton, Province of  
23 Alberta, this 31st day of October, 2002.

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27

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Olga Koval, CSR(A)  
Official Court Reporter