

Quebec singer at Carnegie Hall

Gabrielle Lavigne, young Montreal mezzo-soprano, made her *début* at Carnegie Hall, New York, December 6 as soloist in Berlioz's oratorio *L'enfance du Christ*. The National Arts Centre Orchestra, which accompanied her, was conducted by Mario Bernardi; other vocal soloists, all Canadians, were Paul Trépanier, tenor, Gaston Germain, baritone and Claude Corbeil, bass.

After completing her studies at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, at McGill University and at the Quebec Conservatory of Music, Miss Lavigne participated in a series of competitions "for the pleasure of singing in front of an audience". She was among finalists of the *Concours international d'Exécution musicale* in Geneva in 1969 and, in 1970, at the CBC national talent festival as well as the regional auditions of the Metropolitan Opera National Council.

For the past few years, she has been singing regularly on both the English and French CBC networks and with the McGill Chamber Orchestra, the Choral Society, the symphony orchestras of Montreal, Toronto, Victoria, Hamilton, and the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa. In 1971 she gave a series of



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recitals in Paris, Amiens and Cognac (France), where she was very warmly received. In 1972 the Sadler's Wells Opera Company invited her to participate in their new production of *Il Travatore*. She was "a splendid Azucena", according to London critic Robert Henderson.

Early in 1975 Miss Lavigne will leave for Belgium to sing the role of Federica in Verdi's *Luisa Miller* and of Maria in *Mose in Egitto* by Rossini at Ghent's Koninklijke Opera.

from exceeding 15 per cent, and that prevent a province having a greater population from having fewer seats than a province with a smaller population. If the system were unaltered, in the next general election, each of four provinces — Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia — would have its representation on its constitutional floor, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan would lose seats for the next general election.

Proposed new general rules

Four general principles are proposed in the new method:

- (1) No province shall suffer a decrease in Commons representation.
- (2) No province shall have fewer seats than a province with a smaller population.
- (3) No province shall have an average constituency population greater than that of Quebec.
- (4) Reminders resulting from calculations under the proposed new method would be dropped.

Proposed new specific rules

The proposed new method relates the representation of other provinces to that of the province of Quebec, a principle that governed representation of the provinces from 1867 to 1946. For the redistribution that is to recommence if this bill is enacted, the number of seats for Quebec will be fixed at 75. In order to reduce the rate of growth of the average population *per* electoral district for each subsequent redistribution, four seats will be added to the number of seats for Quebec. Thus, for the redistribution following the census of 1981, Quebec will have 79 seats.

The other provinces are divided into three categories: large provinces, with populations over 2.5 million; intermediate provinces, with populations from 1.5 million to 2.5 million; and small provinces, with populations under 1.5 million.

The number of seats for a large province will be determined by dividing the average population for the seats allotted to Quebec into the total population of the large provinces.

The representation of a small province whose population has increased will be determined by dividing its population at the most recent decen-

New bill proposes more equitable representation for provinces

Privy Council President Mitchell Sharp recently introduced in the House of Commons the Representation Act, 1974, a bill designed to provide more equitable representation of the provinces in the Commons and to recommence the process of redistribution of Commons seats, which was suspended in July 1973.

The bill, which seeks to amend Section 51 of the British North America Act, basically proposes the adoption of the "Amalgam Method" of determining the number of seats for each province. This method, which has been the subject of all-party discussions, was first proposed by Mr. Sharp's predecessor, Allan J. MacEachen, to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections last February.

The method proposed in the bill would increase the total number of

seats for all the provinces in the next election from 262 to 277. This does not include seats for the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory, which are not subject to the same rules. According to a population projection by Statistics Canada, of 23,967,800 in 1981 for the ten provinces, the method would increase the number of seats for all the provinces again in the next redistribution following that census, to 307.

Existing rules

Representation of the provinces under the present Section 51 of the BNA Act is determined by a system founded on a basically fixed total number of seats, tempered by rules that do not permit provinces to have fewer Members in the Commons than Senators, that prevent the reduction of seats *per* province