

commissioners but, as happened at the hearing, it is hard to know whether or not they will take them into account.

**Some hon. Members:** Long live democracy!

**Mr. Gendron:** After listening to the hon. members for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) and for Kamouraska (Mr. Dionne), I would sincerely confess that I am under the impression that it would be easier between members even of opposite parties to come up with an agreement on a rational redistribution which would take into account the social and democratic facts as they exist in our area. In my opinion, it is a good thing to insist upon this for people are sometimes confused about it and everybody knows that at the provincial level the National Assembly has kept for itself the privilege of decision-making while, in this instance, we can only make recommendations to the commissioners without knowing whether they will take them into account. But since Easter is forthcoming, I would, therefore, suggest to them that they take heed of the representations made by the members for Bellechasse and Kamouraska, as well as mine, if they truly intend to perform their Easter duties.

**Mr. Speaker,** since we have instructed the commissioners to proceed with this revision, before the establishing of new electoral boundaries which often gives the impression of being more of an arithmetical exercise than the pursuit of a

true objective, we should seek to gather in as much as possible people having common economic, social, or ethnic interests.

I think that if we really wanted to go along with this quotation we should first seek advice from our people, from the members of parliament, as well as from the electoral county councils, the municipal councils. The latter actually know very well where exactly there are common interests, where there is a sense of belonging and they could readily indicate to which riding they wish to be attached.

However, this first consultation which should have been the preamble to the layout of the proposed electoral map was never done. I have not met a single voter in my riding, who has told me he had had any contact whatsoever or any opportunity to make any representations concerning the revision of the electoral map. And when the time of the public hearings came, these were only announced around mid summer and advertised in one newspaper only, *Le Soleil* which is read by only a quarter of the population so much so that a very large number of people knew nothing about it. And when they are faced with the facts, and hear that their riding has been eliminated, of course they go through the roof, they get mad and lose all patience and they cannot be blamed for it.

This is why, Mr. Speaker, I invite the commissioners to reconsider this revision. I would not like to have to rehash all the briefs which have been submitted. I still shall indicate that, from a historical point of view this riding has been in existence since 1854. It has been illustrated by names which made the history of the riding and of the country, such as the Mailloux, the Pouliots, the Grandbois, the Gauvreaux; and as the hon. member for Kamouraska said earlier, the man who best illustrated this riding has been the Hon. Jean-François Pouliot who was a member from 1924 to 1957, that is for 33 years, and represented this

### *Electoral Boundaries*

riding in the House of Commons. I believe that if he were here tonight he would certainly explode in anger at the thought that a riding which was so dear to him should disappear.

There are some historic reasons which are easy to understand since that constituency has developed near main arteries. All the civilizations of the world were to be found in the vicinity of thoroughfares leading to the area where parishes and municipalities became established. There we find the Trans-Canada Highway, the Témiscouata railway and today the electronic system and the press. There are some common projects such as an outlet to the sea, the famous seaport the project of Gros-Cacouna, the airport and also all the government and judicial services, and others, which gives a riding a sense of identity and its people a feeling of belonging with the will to preserve it.

**An hon. Member:** It is justified.

**Mr. Gendron:** Yes, it is justified.

Then what could be done? I am referring to the statement made earlier by the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) to the effect that it was possible by strictly following the objectives of the Commission to preserve the riding and I shall quote here from the submission of the Regional Board to the commissioners.

We believe that this margin of availability is sufficient to enable a sensible electoral redistribution in which the riding of Rivière-du-Loup-Témiscouata may be maintained, thus safeguarding the geographical, social and economic entities around which the various population centers of Eastern Quebec are gathered.

Let us have a quick look on the following list of counties:

1) Gaspé	62,500 of population
2) Bonaventure	62,900
3) Matane	67,009
4) Rimouski	74,882
5) Kamouraska	75,210
6) Bellechasse	74,099
7) Beauce	72,313

which amounts to a total of 488,913 people for seven (7) counties, or a total of approximately 68,000 people over the quota, which leaves a sufficient reservoir to keep the riding of Rivière-du-Loup-Témiscouata.

And surely this kind of redistribution, as the honorable member for Kamouraska (Mr. Dionne) pointed out, may give rise to public protests, to parochial disputes, while we need so badly in this particular region to put our energies together for the development of a region which is currently being drained of 95 per cent of its youth on average as well as its most active adult population, a region which suffers from a considerable alienation feeling from the social and economic point of view and which, for these very reasons, needs the most adequate representation possible. And we think we must delete one riding, when we are able to maintain it under the legislation.

I respectfully submit to the commissioners the need to proceed to this readjustment. Nevertheless, the two ridings of Kamouraska and Rivière-du-Loup which are to become the proposed riding of Kamouraska should not feel so much frustrated as to experience an alienation feeling that would paralyze their common efforts to put their energies together for the development of this part of the country. I think it is possible, and it was done within the great portage in school boards, it was done also in regional