

56,000 there, we distribute them so that we have the number of people we are asked to include, that the act requires us to include.

But the act gives no indication as far as name changes are concerned, for instance, and the commissioners do not care for statute when it comes to that. The Bonaventure riding, before Magdalen Islands were included, was named Bonaventure. After 1968, and indeed Mr. Speaker the situation is the same in your case, I introduced a bill to change the name of Bonaventure to Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine, and the bill was passed by Parliament.

Well the commissioners, who should act according to statute, decided in their wisdom that the riding when proclaimed should still be called Bonaventure. Mr. Speaker, I take exception to the way they go contrary to statute. If it is contrary to the act to maintain Magdalen Islands as an independent riding because there is not enough people there, it is also illegal to change the name of a constituency called Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine. And I hereby serve notice, Mr. Speaker, that since there is no other way, I shall introduce another bill that will cost money to Canadians once more. It will also cost money to commissioners, because they also have to pay taxes, and to my constituents in Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine. I shall take the time of this House and introduce a new bill that will cost more money to Canadian taxpayers, because of an error by the commissioners.

There is a lot I could say on that subject, but what is in order here is not to criticize judges, but maybe to criticize Parliament and ask that the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act be amended to give justice to all the people, to our Canadian rural citizens, to our urban citizens and also to our members of Parliament representing these huge constituencies without being paid a penny more than those representing small constituencies.

Mr. Jacques Lavoie (Hochelaga): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be able to contribute to the debate on the readjustment of electoral boundaries, especially as it concerns Hochelaga.

To better explain my position to the commissioners and also to express my agreement with what the hon. member for Champlain (Mr. Matte) has said earlier to the effect that the commissioners had somehow distorted the major intent of electoral boundaries readjustment by giving greater significance to numbers than to municipalities or sectors, it is important for me to be able to tell the House and the commissioners that the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve sector is made up of two former municipalities which were amalgamated with the city of Montreal, Hochelaga in 1883 and Maisonneuve in 1918. Even though the area is very well established geographically with natural boundaries, it remains that this separation between the two municipalities is still present in the minds of the residents. The life in this community and the feeling of belonging are something vital to our people.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, as I represent since October 14 of last year a constituency which is somewhat well delineated, I would naturally have liked to have the number of my constituents increased—at any event, I would like to say by the way that the commission did not have to add to my riding because I actually serve a great many people

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around Hochelaga. On the other hand, the commissioners could have done it by taking a part of Maisonneuve and a part of Sainte-Marie, and the Hochelaga constituency would still have remained the Hochelaga constituency.

But the way it is done Hochelaga actually replaces the Sainte-Marie riding, giving another fifty polls to Hochelaga. This means that the difference of 125 polling stations goes to the Maisonneuve riding. I still do not know the feeling of the people from Hochelaga because I have not dared inform them of the fact so far.

Mr. Speaker, these modifications can only cause confusion in the people's minds. Sometimes they do not know which riding they belong to and most often they do not even know which representative they should turn to. However you should notice that in Hochelaga the people know who is their member of Parliament!

I would like to make another point, Mr. Speaker. If the population of Hochelaga has diminished so considerably, it is not because of the people of Hochelaga, but especially because of so many demolitions in the southern part of the Hochelaga riding. When I said that we should have made encroachments to the east and to the west, this would have helped solve the problem and this is indeed what I propose.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the electoral boundaries should not be established so radically. The modifications should be made more logically and before I finish my speech, because I would like to give a chance to the other members who want to take the floor, I would like to suggest that next time around the Electoral Boundaries Commission organize meetings with the members of Parliament from each riding because they are the people concerned in this case and they should be consulted once and for all.

It is important that these commissions which have been given the task of making changes take the advice of the elected representatives of the people before getting down to work.

This wish I express to the House and the commissioners, hoping that the boundaries of the Hochelaga riding will be just and equitable so that I can better serve the people I have represented since October 14.

● (2140)

Mr. Charles-Eugène Dionne (Kamouraska): Mr. Speaker, quite regularly, whenever there is a readjustment of electoral boundaries, there are bursts of protests from everywhere which show that this approach is certainly not the best.

To determine the population figure in a given area and then to set at 70,000 or 80,000 the number of constituents in any one riding is not a very difficult exercise. It is important to consider the geographical location, the distances, without forgetting the services to which the constituents are entitled when they wish to meet their member and make their representations all the right time. It is the legislation which provides that a commission has to use such an approach that should be changed to be better adapted to the situation. Several proposals have been made with respect to the number of seats. This personal should be considered. It would probably be possible to improve the situation in that respect.