

necessary for a review committee to step in at this time and shut down the public process”.

• (1615)

We as members of this House do not have ownership of our ridings. We should not feel threatened by changes proposed if these changes recognize representation by population. This is one of the main reasons for having our 10 year census so that boundaries can be drawn which accurately reflect population distribution.

If Bill C-18 is approved we may be fighting the next general election on the boundaries which reflect population as it was distributed in 1980. If the government is so vitally concerned about the process of redistribution and whether it creates ridings which accurately represent rep by pop then there is nothing to prevent the procedure and House affairs committee under its mandate and under the new rules to study the matter at length and bring in a bill in due course which would replace the existing boundaries readjustment act.

Why suspend the process of redistribution under the present act while this is being done? Surely the government is not thinking that it won a majority under the existing boundaries, so let us make sure there are no changes prior to the next election. Surely this is not the new politics described in the red book.

If Bill C-18 passes and the process of redistribution is held up once again due to political manoeuvring and if as I suggest there is not enough time after the procedure and House affairs committee reports to put new boundaries into place, then we will be party to the kind of politics which the Canadian people rejected at the last election.

Surely this is not the wish of the government. It is not the wish of the Reform Party of Canada. Therefore let us go forward now with the system we have presently in place. Let the public hearing process begin. If we do this we are assured that new boundaries will be in place prior to the next election. Money already spent will have been spent for results.

However if the government is adamant that the boundaries readjustment process is flawed, and it may very well be, then the government members know what they can do. They can utilize the new rules, have the procedure and House affairs committee study the issue, report back and bring in a bill which we would consider. If it is reasonable, we could look at agreeing to it so that a new procedure will be in effect to accommodate the results of the next census.

In closing, I again want to reiterate my opposition to the closure motion. We have not had a full debate on this motion. This is vitally important. It is a matter of principle for this House and for Canadians. Do we allow the government to limit debate so that Liberals have a chance to fight the next election with the boundaries unchanged since 1980 or do we take costs

### *Government Orders*

and work done into account and public pressure on politicians to clean up their act?

Obviously the government is willing to ignore the wishes of the people. Well, we are not. That is why we oppose this motion and why we oppose the bill.

This morning a government member found it incomprehensible that Reform would support a process that would see the House continue to grow in numbers. I find it incomprehensible that the member was not aware that this was one of the very reasons Reform could not support Bill C-18. There is not, I repeat, there is nothing in this bill that puts a cap on or limits the number of seats. Had it done that, the government might very well have had the support of Reform on this.

I am concerned about one other thing. The member I believe from Waterloo mentioned that he and his constituents were very comfortable with their riding as it is and I can understand that, but I wonder, has his riding not grown in numbers. My riding of Mission—Coquitlam was 116,000 in 1991, having grown 26 per cent from the previous census and is now approximately 125,000. Do I just forget that because I am comfortable with the way things are? What about representation by population?

It is far past time that we started to be accountable as politicians.

• (1620)

**Mr. Brent St. Denis (Algoma):** Mr. Speaker, I am quite amazed at some of the things I have been hearing today. It is quite incredible that we see the opposition to this legislation that we are seeing from the Reform Party.

Significantly, one of the first phone calls I got on this matter some weeks ago was from the Reform Party Association in my riding which was quite concerned that the changes that were proposed would so change the riding of Algoma that neither the present member nor any future member could adequately serve the constituents in a way that they have become accustomed to.

It also was amazing to hear the Reform Party argue for continuing the process as it has been put in place. There is an expression in business and more than most, business influences Reform like no other group.

There is an expression that says “cut your losses”. Yes, several millions of dollars have unfortunately been utilized to start this process but what about the untold millions of dollars of mistakes that might occur should we allow this process to proceed? I say that we should cut our losses.

We could ill afford to allow this process to proceed given a set of rules that do not adequately serve Canadians nor adequately serve Parliament. I do not mean that we should have rules that serve individual members of Parliament. I would be pleased in the new riding of Algoma—James Bay to serve communities in