

*Representation Act*

remove famous names from the electoral map, thus creating a most important precedent.

**Mr. Grégoire:** Would the hon. member allow a question?

**Mr. Lachance:** Certainly.

**Mr. Grégoire:** After hearing the hon. member for Lafontaine, I feel he would probably be in favour of holding a plebiscite in his electoral district, in this connection. Is that what he means when he says that everyone would like to be heard? Is that what he is suggesting, that a plebiscite be held in the district of Lapointe?

**Mr. Lachance:** Mr. Speaker, I am in a good position to answer this question, for I have not spoken of a plebiscite but only of the resolutions put forward by various public organizations. The hon. member for Lapointe introduced the subject himself, saying he had received representations from various municipal councils, public organizations, chambers of commerce and others.

I have not seen as yet the resolution by those public bodies or those municipalities.

I do not know if the hon. member for Lapointe has resolutions from those public bodies. This is not a question of a plebiscite. I did not say that the voters of the constituency should cast their votes to decide if it must change its name, if it must be called the constituency of Lapointe or if it should be changed to the constituency of Jonquière or, as suggested or mentioned by the hon. member for St. Jean-Iberville-Napierville (Mr. Dupuis), to the name of Kenogami-Jonquière-Arvida.

We are prepared to accept the word of the hon. member for Lapointe when he says that representations were made to him. Only we did not see those representations, and we would be interested in questioning those people through some committee which might be interested in hearing them. Changing the name of a riding is a very serious matter.

Those were the remarks I intended to make on that issue. I am not against the change, but I would like this matter to be considered more closely by a special committee or by the privileges and elections committee.

**Mr. Grégoire:** How many members would sit on the committee? Would this matter be referred to a parliamentary committee?

**Mr. Lachance:** Mr. Speaker, I believe there is a committee which could examine the case quite properly, the privileges and elections committee.

However, Mr. Speaker, I was talking more particularly about the committee which is

looking after redistribution at present. That was the agency I was referring to when I mentioned that a committee or a public body could be appointed to examine this question.

**Hon. Théogène Ricard (St. Hyacinthe-Bagoit):** Mr. Speaker, I commend the hon. member for Lafontaine (Mr. Lachance) for his speech on the bill before us. I agree with his views and on the way he looks upon the situation.

First of all, I think the constituency of Lapointe, as was clearly pointed out by the hon. member for Lafontaine, was named after great public men, two great French Canadians: Monseigneur Lapointe and Right Hon. Ernest Lapointe.

As French Canadians we are proud that the name of one of our great Canadians who distinguished himself in public life be preserved forever in our memory through the designation of a county, an electoral constituency in the province of Quebec.

Here may I recall a souvenir going back to the first days of the war. It seems that I can still hear Hon. Ernest Lapointe, one fall evening, speak for Canada in bidding godspeed to those of us who were about to go and defend our liberties outside the country.

It was most edifying to hear Hon. Ernest Lapointe, and I am convinced that it was especially so across French Canada where the people were particularly proud to see the fate of Canada in the hands of such a great man.

There are also many other reasons, as mentioned by the hon. member for Lafontaine, why we should keep the name of Lapointe for the county represented in the house by the sponsor of this bill. I think the hon. member for Lafontaine made a strong case when he suggested that the whole question be fully considered before a decision is reached. There is also the matter of redistribution and I am afraid the county of Lapointe will not be spared.

There again, changes will be made and, for all these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I feel that the hon. member for Lafontaine is perfectly right.

I cannot but wonder in seeing that the present member for Lapointe who usually attaches so much importance to Canadian names and who calls for special attention concerning anything of interest to French Canadians, has thought of suggesting a new name for his riding. He may not have done