

I do not know exactly how much they are paid but they seem to take pleasure in starting their work over and over again. I say this and everybody here knows it is true, because it is the third time the same thing happens. After three times, they have not managed to submit something sensible that would truly reflect their own objective.

Mr. Speaker, for this reason, I think that the commission should reconsider its position and look further into the question.

I do not mean that we should allow ourselves to be influenced by the hon. members, but I think that those who know something about the population, the economic and the community interests of an area are the members of this House, and I did notice during the same hearings in Trois-Rivières last August that the chairman of the said Commission would quite maliciously snub me as he interrupted me during my speech telling me that we had nothing to do in this particular matter and that fortunately the matter was not our responsibility; he told me so many nasty things then. My answer is: Sure enough, it was perhaps fortunate that the matter was not our responsibility but, as for as I am concerned, I think that it is unfortunate that it was theirs.

Mr. Speaker, when you consider all the stupidities that have been done such as cutting up North-Western Quebec and the north shore of the St. Lawrence River, you may think this is an excellent opportunity to correct some of the anomalies. But not only the situation is not corrected but it is worsened.

As a consequence, I am utterly confounded and this is why not only do I firmly object to the electoral boundaries readjustments, but I am also objecting to those who have established them. I think that another Commission like this one should simply be set up. The commissioners, even after years of work in this field, cannot manage to accomplish anything better than what we see in this report. I think they only deserve a bad mark and I think we should ask ourselves not only whether these boundaries should not be set anew, but also whether that Commission should not be completely revamped because its members seem to be absolutely incompetent.

Mr. Antonio Yanakis (Berthier-Maskinongé): Mr. Speaker, after having heard the previous speaker who stated his case on the redistribution of electoral boundaries, I must say that I was present when he made some representations to the Commission during the hearings held last August in Trois-Rivières. It is perhaps unfortunate that my colleague should have tried to point out the political undertones of the Quebec Redistribution Commission and this is perhaps why he was unable to intervene, as he would have liked.

I myself, was called after him before the Commission and I must say now that the Berthier-Maskinongé constituency was to be abolished after the tabling of the first electoral map. However, when I pointed out the rural character of my constituency, the Commission reconsidered the problem and asked me to table my submission and I am pleased to say here this evening that I obtained all I had hoped for, since Berthier-Maskinongé has remained untouched, the rule providing that rural constituencies be considered as such being complied with to the letter.

Electoral Boundaries

However, Mr. Speaker, some municipalities have been carved off the constituencies of Saint-Maurice and Trois-Rivières, and thus I received representations from the new mayor of Saint-Étienne-des-Grés in the constituency of Saint-Maurice who has regretfully noted that the municipality of Saint-Étienne-des-Grés is scheduled to be carved off the constituency of Berthier-Maskinongé.

● (2120)

This village's population is under 2,000 and, considering the rural nature of this municipality, I understand very well their dismay, since I have been representing this municipality for the last eight years. I believe I had to rise today, Mr. Speaker, to ask the Electoral Boundaries Commission to review this decision to take Saint-Étienne-des-Grés of the riding of Berthier-Maskinongé.

There would also be in the riding of Trois-Rivières certain municipalities which belong to the provincial riding of Saint-Maurice, which I have also been representing for the last eight years and which in my opinion should also belong to the riding of Berthier-Maskinongé. And I will mention the municipalities of Saint-Barnabé, Saint-Sévère, Yamachiche and Sainte-Anne-de-Yamachiche. Those represent a population of a little more than 4,000 which, added to the federal riding of Berthier-Maskinongé presently proposed by the commission, would give a population of about 70,000 for the riding of Berthier-Maskinongé.

I feel the four municipalities I have just named should belong to the riding of Berthier-Maskinongé because of their rural character. Saint-Barnabé has an agricultural fair that groups all the parishes in the municipalities of Maskinongé, Berthier and Saint-Maurice. That fair has been held in that area for over 100 years now, and the municipalities I have just mentioned would like to belong to the rural area I have described.

Mr. Speaker, following the tabling of the report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission on March 1st last, I made representations on March 26, on four specific points: that the name of Berthier-Maskinongé, for which Berthier was substituted, remain as it was formerly. Barely a year ago, I believe, I introduced a bill to the House asking that the riding be named Berthier-Maskinongé. I note that in the new redistribution, the name of Maskinongé is nowhere to be found. This is a minor point, but I do feel that, to be fair with all my constituents, the name Berthier-Maskinongé should also appear.

The new boundary added about ten Joliette parishes to the Berthier-Maskinongé riding. Those new parishes are Saint-Côme, Sainte-Béatrix, Saint-Alphonse-Rodriguez, Sainte-Mélanie, Sainte-Marceline-de-Kildare, Saint-Cléophas, Sainte-Élisabeth, Sainte-Émilie-de-l'Énergie, Saint-Félix-de-Valois as well as a hamlet which is not a township in that sense that there is no administration office, and which is incorporated, if I am not wrong, to the village of Saint-Félix-de-Valois.

I am pleased to note that the people of those towns are very happy to belong to the new Berthier-Maskinongé riding since I did not receive any representation to the contrary, and they have accepted gladly to be included in the new constituency.

These are some of the claims I wanted to make to the Electoral Boundaries Commission through you, Mr. Speak-