

Electoral Boundaries

more than anything else is the diminution in the speaking power of the rural representatives of Canada. This situation of course has altered over the years, but this is a subject which I hope the commissioners, when they prepare their final report to the House of Commons, will emphasize. This matter was mentioned recently by the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Andres), and was also alluded to by members from northern Ontario.

I hope the commission will recommend to the House of Commons that at the next redistribution these things be taken into consideration and that they consider not only the number of people in a constituency but also the fact that many constituencies have a large land mass, and the fact that we would like to see these ridings have as much say as the urban ridings.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I should like to conclude by thanking the House for this opportunity to raise the points I have brought forward. In addition I wish to congratulate the commission for the work it has done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The House having considered the objections it is my duty, pursuant to section 20 of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, to refer the Report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the province of Ontario, together with copies of the objections and also a copy of the *Debates of the House of Commons*, back to the commission for reconsideration thereof.

OBJECTIONS TO COMMISSION REPORT RESPECTING QUEBEC

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank you and my colleagues for permitting me to proceed immediately as the lead off speaker for the Quebec group. I shall try to be as brief as possible because I realize that hon. members would like to go to supper now.

[Translation]

First of all, I would like to address the Electoral Boundaries Commission through you, Mr. Speaker. I had the opportunity to meet with the commission members last summer when I appeared before them on behalf of the seven hon. members for the centre area of Montreal to suggest to them major changes in the boundaries of the seven ridings in the south of Montreal.

First, let me extend my sincere thanks to the commission for accepting the proposal I brought forth on behalf of the seven hon. members. I also would like to congratulate the commissioners for improving my original proposal in two ways, first by giving the Westmount riding the benefit of a north to south extension, and second by balancing the population of the constituencies, which I had unfortunately been unable to do, since I do not have the skills of the cartographers working for the commission.

I would like to recall for the benefit of the commission the highlights of the proposal providing for the ridings in the south of Montreal to be divided on a north-south basis rather than an east-west basis. The advantages of this proposal—and the commission was well aware of them—are that the ridings thus divided on a north-south basis are much more similar to what they are now. This means that all political associations, social organisations and even religious groups will be able to keep operating within the limits that are the closest to what they know now.

In addition, I had said that each riding would thus lie partly north and partly south of Sherbrooke street, which would enable each member to represent richer and poorer people, which I felt permitted a more balanced distribution.

I had mentioned also that a member of Parliament was more representative when he represented people of all social classes, because it is obviously too easy to represent a very specific section of the community and to ignore the views of the others.

However, I should like to point out to the commission that my remarks, even if they receive increasing support from most members for the southern part of Montreal, do not apply to the western portion of Westmount. I think I have made this very clear to the commission.

Now, speaking of the riding of Westmount, I should like to mention here that I am very pleased to support the remarks made by the hon. member for Westmount and Minister of Public Works (Mr. Drury).

The hon. member rose yesterday in this House and asked to be given back that part of the riding of Westmount that he will lose through redistribution. He spoke of the area bounded on the north by the Camilien Houde Parkway, on the east by Peel Street, on the south by Sherbrooke Street and on the west by Côte des Neiges Road. The hon. member has every reason to ask that his constituents be returned to him because they have far more in common with the central part of Westmount than with the proposed riding of Saint-Henri in which they would find themselves.

That leaves in the riding of Saint-Henri the area which lies east of Peel Street, McGill University, whose student population extends in an easterly direction to Saint-Lawrence Boulevard, and which was included in the former riding of Saint-Jacques, now part of the proposed riding of Saint-Henri. In fact, an attempt is being made at regrouping the population around McGill University.

I can but support the remarks of the hon. member for Westmount; I am also happy that he should be pleased to welcome in Westmount the constituents of Saint-Henri, some of whom he represented in the past. Still, I should like to stress that there is a problem; I will deal with it only very briefly because I believe one of my colleagues wants to discuss it later on, and that is the problem of choosing names for the downtown ridings.

The proposed riding of Saint-Henri cannot be called Saint-Henri simply because the Saint-Henri parish, which gave it its name, is now part of the new riding of Westmount. In fact, the riding of Westmount should be called Saint-Henri-Westmount; then the people of Saint-Henri would have a greater sense of belonging; more-over, I am told that the riding did bear that name at one time. Still, I will leave it to my colleague from Saint-Henri to discuss this as he has indicated to me that he intends to pursue this matter.

One fact remains: the Saint-Henri parish will not be located in the proposed riding of Saint-Henri; when it come to choosing a name, the commissioners should have settled on either Saint-Jacques or Saint-Henri to take into account the areas added from other ridings. I think it is by mistake it was called Saint-Henri. However I leave it to