

another group of government members to categorically and firmly oppose a bill which had then been introduced. We were dissatisfied for a number of reasons. One of them was the fact that Quebec would lose two seats. The other was that it was based only on the population criterion, with a percentage of more or less 25 per cent, which meant that the electoral boundaries commission was only playing a mathematical game, putting a puzzle of sort together, joining constituencies together while applying the rule of more or less 25 per cent.

We had indicated at that time that we objected to this method for a number of reasons. One of them was the fact that Quebec had a smaller representation mainly for the following reasons: First, because the electoral boundaries commission was not taking and would not take into account geographic and economic considerations, nor the communication problems within constituencies and between various constituencies.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, we were objecting because electoral boundaries were established according to the act, according to the method used to determine the number of constituencies. We had the same problem over and over again.

The House, composed of Liberals, Progressive Conservatives, New Democrats and Social Creditists, will agree by the time limit of December 31, 1974 on a procedure for the distribution of constituencies among provinces to make this Parliament representative.

Referring to Part II of Bill C-36 now under study one can wonder what the outcome of that bill will be. We shall be faced with exactly the same situation as in the past, meaning that the task will be assumed by commissioners. These are frequently judges, helped in that matter by commissioners sitting at the top of their ivory towers. They try to apply a method based on stupid mathematical criteria, in order to establish electoral boundaries without taking any particular cultural, historical, economical or social factor into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I made tremendous efforts when that bill was introduced. I went to the court in Trois-Rivières and met with the commissioner. I prepared a report of over 65 pages in order to prove, as evidenced by figures—figures that were not drawn from my imagination, but from Manpower centres, from Statistics Canada and other organizations—to prove, as I said, that it was important not to accept the electoral boundaries of the Lotbinière constituency as proposed. I was heartily and very politely welcomed, but to no avail at all.

Private members are most concerned with electoral boundaries. Generally speaking, our party is satisfied with Bill C-36. We are glad that the government accepted to propose, to use the so-called "amalgam" formula which seems by far the best of all proposed formulas. We had a choice of several alternatives. In fact, five distribution methods were suggested, which fell into two groups, two of those methods advocating a considerable increase in the number of members, namely the amplified method and the so-called mitigated parity method.

We also had the choice between three other methods for a moderate increase in the number of seats: the compensation method, the Quebec plus 4 formula and, finally, the

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amalgam formula. My colleagues and myself carefully studied all these proposals. For this, we referred to the statements of the former President of the Privy Council and the documentation available, as well as to the committee on procedure, which has studied these matters.

We concluded that this government proposal is valid, justified and necessary. We are in favour of its implementation. But, Mr. Speaker, since there must always be a but, Part II says that Bill C-36 will be implemented immediately, which means that our famous boundary commissions, from their ivory towers, as I said earlier, will amuse themselves by drawing lines anywhere and try to balance the figures. With all due respect, I strictly condemn the working method of these people, Mr. Speaker. They bring about the kind of situation where the constituency of Drummond, for instance, will be integrated with half the constituencies of Richmond and Shefford. Shefford will end up in the constituency of Saint-Jean d'Iberville. Lotbinière keeps what it already has and extends to Thetford Mines. The rural constituency of Frontenac disappears and the redistribution goes on haphazardly.

As for us, we want to ensure an equitable and serious representation for Canadians. We are willing to accept suggestions. What is important is the final result; when we look at the maps as a whole, we wonder if those constituencies and members of parliament will be representatives, if they will find it easy to work in their constituency and to represent it ably. We find then that the legislator's will has not been complied with in practical matters, and we still end up with something that does not make any sense, with ridings which are too large, which do not respect the natural boundaries of the territory, or which are ill-divided.

Consequently, my remarks will deal with that matter. I would like to get something before I vote on this bill at any stage, and I want to be understood at this stage. Even though I support this bill, as I have said earlier with my colleagues, I want to say to this government, not behind its back but to its face, that I will do my utmost to stop the bill, to kill it if necessary, unless the minister gives us a sound and formal guaranty that the method which will be used by the commissioners in accordance with Part II of Bill C-36 will be more modern and more developed.

The President of the Privy Council said in his opening speech to introduce this bill that he hoped the commissioners would want to set up some sort of a model riding taking into consideration cultural, socio-economic and historical factors. Those are pious wishes. I have good faith in the President of the Privy Council but I do not trust the civil servants who will be responsible for implementing that legislation, and I feel the point I am raising here is extremely important.

Mr. Speaker, we are democratically elected in the riding. I see here the former leader of the NDP (Mr. Douglas) who was the premier of a province and who realizes as I do the importance of representation. When one is elected in a riding, and civil servants who were never elected in their damn life think of a way of implementing legislation passed by Parliament, draw maps no matter how, having fun at night while taking a beer, and make proposals that do not make any sense, one asks himself questions.