

Electoral Boundaries Commission

provincial riding; seventh, this would considerably extend the mileage, the distance between the limits of the riding, and render difficult the communications between the member and his electors. As the rural telephone lines are shared by several parties in a rural constituency, there is no question of confidential conversations over the telephone. Moreover, the elector must always pay for long distance calls when he wishes to speak with his representative.

The members for rural ridings have a lot to do. The people in these ridings rely on their member; often times, he is the only channel through which they may communicate with their fellow citizens belonging to other classes of society.

Let us avoid passing a measure which could only muffle the voice of this section of the population which is too often overlooked.

These added parishes would mean extra work for the member of a rural riding who is already burdened with other official functions. This would compel him to spend more time visiting community centres, for such centres wish to keep their own entity, of which they are proud—and I do understand them. The member would then have to meet with more municipal authorities, to look into a greater number of postal problems, and so on, and this would apply in every field. In a word, the member for an overly enlarged rural riding would have less time to devote to his legislative duties.

As a concrete proposal, I ask the government—not only on my own behalf, but also on behalf of the representatives of rural constituencies—to include in this bill a tolerance of 33½ per cent instead of 20 per cent. With such a margin, in a Quebec constituency the maximum population would be 93,500 and the minimum about 46,750. This maximum number would enable to divide in half some constituencies now overpopulated while increasing only by a few thousands the population of rural constituencies.

The representatives of urban ridings will object and maintain that there is too much difference between the population of urban and rural constituencies. Quite frankly, we must admit that this is a very important improvement and I intend to prove it with a few figures taken from the last census of the province of Quebec.

But before having a quick look at the constituencies of the province of Quebec, may I submit another argument in favour of the widening of that margin. If that tolerance remained at 20 per cent, several rural constituencies would disappear. Is that the wish of the house? Or is it the wish of the government? I do not think so, at least, I hope not. Our duty, as members of parliament, and the duty of the government, is to protect those

constituencies in order to avoid too great a decrease. We will all have to answer for the action taken in the next few days or weeks. If the margin was set at 33½ per cent, 47 constituencies with more than 46,750 people but less than 93,500, would not be affected.

Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to read the list of those constituencies but, with the consent of the house, I should like to have it printed in *Hansard*.

[Text]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten): Order. Does the house give unanimous consent to the hon. member to have this table printed in *Hansard*?

Mr. Pickersgill: I apologize to the hon. gentleman for not catching what the table was about, and I would be grateful if he could indicate precisely what it is.

Mr. Vincent: This is a list of the ridings in the province of Quebec that would not be affected by the margin of 33½ per cent.

Mr. Pickersgill: Could the hon. gentleman say who did the arithmetic?

Mr. Vincent: The census of 1961.

Mr. Pickersgill: Then I am only too happy to have it put in.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten): Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Editor's note: The table above referred to is as follows:*]

Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes, Beauce, Beauharnois-Salaberry, Berthier-Maskinonge-Delanaudiere, Chambly-Rouville, Champlain, Chapeau, Charlevoix, Chateauguay-Huntingdon-Laprairie, Chicoutimi, Drummond-Arthabaska, Gaspé, Gatineau, Hull, Lake St. John, Lapointe, Levis, Matapedia-Matane, Mégantic, Cartier, Hochelaga, Lafontaine, Outremont-St. Jean, Papineau, St. Antoine-Westmount, St. Denis, St. Henry, St. James, St. Mary, Verdun, Portneuf, Quebec East, Quebec West, Quebec South, Richelieu-Vercheres, Richmond, Wolfe, Rimouski, Roberval, St. Hyacinthe-Bagot, St. Jean-Iberville-Napierville, St. Maurice-Laféche, Saguenay, Sutherland, Sherbrooke, Rivière du Loup-Temisouata, Three Rivers, Villeneuve.

[Translation]

Mr. Vincent: While this margin of 33½ per cent would affect these other ridings by increasing or decreasing their population, whichever may be the case. Once again, Mr. Speaker, I request permission to place on record a list of the ridings the population of which would be less than 46,750 or more than 93,500.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.