

When I was in the House of Commons, it was a difficult time for Mr. Mulroney because the exchange between the Liberals and Conservatives was vigorous. I always said that as long as the Senate exists, it has a constitutional duty to exercise. I was always proud to defend the Senate, never believing that some day I would end up in the Senate. My wish was to be Minister of Foreign Affairs.

You may laugh. You can laugh loud and clear now, but I was deprived of that great opportunity.

The Senate has a duty. Some people were very upset when the Senate exercised its authority killing a bill concerning abortion. Mr. Mulroney was full of displeasure. That is what I call the Senate at its best. However, we must not ahead of time say that we shall bow to whatever comes from the House of Commons. I will not be part of that.

With respect to Bill C-69, I find some senators — I do not want to say “flip-flopping.” Some senators hesitated from day one by making amendments to the bill. I am talking to Senator Murray and others. When they made amendments to the bill, they knew they would delay the maps. If the opposition amendments had carried, the new process would have started and new maps would have been drawn up. Now, nothing will be ready before June 1997 and expenses will be doubled. The \$6 million will be thrown overboard, and another \$6 million will be found.

What would have happened had we kept the process that worked so well in the past? I keep repeating that I believe in that process. I went to the commissions. I lost. The best part of my seat was taken over by the Honourable André Ouellet. I worked hard, but I lost what I had worked for. Four times I changed. I did not complain; I did not cry. I went to the commission.

I am arranging for people to go to the committee of the House of Commons collectively to make one last presentation. I suggest they do the same in Winnipeg. It makes no sense in Winnipeg to split the seats on the Red River. What is happening in New Brunswick makes no sense.

I share the opinion of the commissioner who is the only minority commissioner in Canada in this report. I read them all.

Tell your members of Parliament that they have until July 22. Any 10 members of the House of Commons can table a motion with the clerk of Mr. Milliken's committee saying, “We, the undersigned, wish to make the following presentation.” There is no reason why some of them could not win, because in the past many of them have been successful. That is the process.

I find myself in very good company with the *Gazette*. I have been spoiled by the *Montreal Gazette*. That may explain why I was elected so many times.

Imagine William Johnson. Who does not know William Johnson? He was a great speaker at a dinner for *Cité libre*. In a July 7 article in the *Montreal Gazette* entitled “A bad bill: Senate should stand up to Commons on redistribution,” Mr. Johnson wrote:

The Senate is our only recourse against MPs intent on making life easier for themselves at our expense.

If ever the Senate has a justification for its existence, this is the time.

For 30 years, I kept saying to my colleagues, “Do not gerrymander this issue.” It was bad, but it was corrected over the years by Mr. Pearson and Mr. Trudeau. The process worked. As a Liberal, I was happy to follow the process. I do not mind the process in which members will have the last say between September 19 and October 19. That is the process; that is the law.

Of course, the government had to come up with a bill like Bill C-69. It makes sense. They had to justify why they dropped the other bill. They came up with three maps, and now the Speaker will be involved officially in doing what he always did. Believe me, the Speaker always consulted privately with political parties. I was consulted. Is that clear enough? So were others. We were consulted, and the system worked.

This country is full of exceptions. My esteemed colleague Senator Beaudoin was absolutely astounded to hear about the grandfather clause. People say 15 per cent should be the case, not 25 per cent, but it is impossible to apply the provision across Canada simply because this country is full of exceptions. Saskatchewan should have 10 seats, but it has 14. Quebec should have 71, and it has 75. That is the grandfather clause. Manitoba should have 11, but it has 14. Nova Scotia has two too many, but one is protected by the grandfather clause. What can I do if I do not agree with the amendments? I cannot say to the House of Commons that I will bow because if I bow to the House, that means I accept their Bill C-69.

• (1650)

I will not abstain. I will let the process continue in the hope that if we continue our study, then the actual process will take its natural course. We will have maps based on the 1991 census for the next election. Come the next election, we could have another bill like Bill C-69.

The Hon. the Speaker: It was moved in amendment by the Honourable Senator Carstairs, seconded by the Honourable Senator Cools:

That the Fourteenth Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs be not now adopted, but that it be amended by striking out the sixth and seventh paragraphs and replacing them with the following:

However, as the Honourable Herb Gray noted, any potential difficulties would be rendered moot by the early passage of Bill C-69.

Consequently, the Committee recommends that a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that House that with respect to its message to the Senate dated 20th June, 1995, regarding Bill C-69, the Senate does not insist upon its amendments to which the House of Commons has disagreed.