

the-Lake and a small part of St. Catharines. A point to note here and one which shall be elaborated upon later, is that it is the City of St. Catharines which has always served as the urban centre and service centre for the Niagara fruit belt area stretching from Niagara-on-the-Lake as far as Grimsby.

The 1976 Report now proposes a major shift away from the traditional community ties as defined by the present Lincoln federal boundaries, by describing Lincoln as consisting of that part of the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth contained in the Town of Stoney Creek and the eastern part of the City of Hamilton; and that part of the Regional Municipality of Niagara contained in the Towns of Grimsby and Lincoln.

The loss of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Pelham and West Lincoln to three other ridings, completely fragments the common agricultural interests which forms the dominant economic and social make-up on Lincoln and ends the sharing of the many historic and traditional links long held in Lincoln.

On April 9, 1974, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen in a statement made to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, remarked that:

"redistribution in Canada has been a continuous endeavour to find an equitable compromise between the affirmation of the principle of representation by population and the practical recognition of the particular nature of our political, social, cultural and geographical characteristics.

That population should not be the only criterion in redistributing seats among the provinces, is a concept well established in Canadian history.

Principle of representation by population alone has never been achieved as an absolute objective because of various conditions essentially flowing from our federal structure and geographical and social make-up, such as the requirement that no riding boundary may cross a provincial boundary, community of interest, density of population, etc.

Successive Parliaments have seen fit to accept, as well as the principle of representation by population, other equally valid principles relating to Canada's rather particular geographic, constitutional, historic and ethnic backgrounds."

These principles as expounded upon by the Honourable Allan MacEachen, are especially applicable to the case for Lincoln. In terms of historic, traditional, cultural, social, economic and community interests, Lincoln riding where it contains Niagara-on-the-Lake, Lincoln, Grimsby, Pelham and West Lincoln—is and always has been regarded as, considered and thus treated as a definite community unit.

This aspect can be viewed in economic terms—the Niagara Peninsula fruit lands present a unique and essential industry and agronomy in Canada. Aside from some fruit production in British Columbia and Nova Scotia, the Niagara region alone offers the important opportunity of growing such a wide variety of fruit for Canadians. The

fruit industry in this area is one with many problems and particular interests and is one which will not be served well should it be divided among five different federal ridings and thus, become an insignificant concern in each of the five ridings. It is generally agreed upon by government and the public that the fruit industry in this area must be preserved and supported—it needs a unified strong representation from a federal member. It would be in the interests of all concerned and indeed for all Canadians, if the rural fruit-growing lands could remain together in a federally designated riding in order that a strong and united representation can be made on its behalf.

The boundaries set forth by the Commission in its 1976 Report also digress from the provincial riding boundaries, municipal and regional lines. On page 4 of the Report, the Commission states the principle that:

"Keeping in mind density of population as well as community interests, the Commission has drawn the boundaries of the major cities . . . so as to follow municipal boundaries wherever possible."

This principle was ignored in the case of Lincoln by bringing together sections of the Regional Municipality of Niagara and of Hamilton-Wentworth—which in terms of historic, social, service, commercial and general interests, are diverse and represent and reflect very different community ties and concerns.

Urban encroachment is already a serious problem and especially so in the Niagara Peninsula. The problem would be further augmented by tying together rural areas with highly industrialized centres such as Hamilton. In the fifth Report and Review by the Canadian Council on Rural Development (1973), it is stated:

"The problems which develop in rural areas, particularly in the vicinity of large urban centres are such as to jeopardize not only the traditional but also the new roles of rural areas. The process of uncontrolled urban sprawl . . . results in the alienation of good farming land and the destruction of the rural nature of an area much greater than the land directly lost to urban uses."

(pg. 15—footnote: "Urban Shadow, Urban Theory and Regional Planning"—L. O. Gertler)

The Report goes on to say that the urban shadow results also in the inefficient use of farmland: there is no incentive to maintain its agricultural use because there are not agricultural support services in these areas. (pg. 16)

It is the opinion and view of most people that there has to be a definite and strong commitment to the development and vitalization of the rural economy—the benefits of which would be for all Canadians. Such development and support must come through effective policy lines and programs through the participation of unified political representation. A great deal of agricultural policy is found in the areas of stabilization programs, import and export controls, trade and tariffs, etc.—all federal responsibilities and concerns.

The fruit industry as found in the rural constituency of Lincoln containing Niagara-on-the-Lake, Lincoln, Grimsby, West Lincoln and Pelham, represents an important and