

Electoral Boundaries Commission

will gain one member in this house. Obviously, this member should represent a new riding in the lower mainland area. Apart from that, if we are to come anywhere close to representation by population—I say that deliberately because I know we will never achieve that—there will have to be other members added to that particular area as a result of redistribution within the province, and perhaps the amalgamation of some of the ridings which have decreased in population or which have not grown. In the very few remarks I am making, I want to underscore the need to give adequate representation to the suburban areas around the major metropolitan centres of Canada.

I should like to suggest also that, contrary to what has been said by many members, the 20 per cent disparity in the average riding in any particular province which is mentioned in the bill is a figure with which I agree. This is the figure which was used in Australia. I mention Australia because it is like Canada in many ways, in that there are large rural areas and the Australians seem to have worked this out quite satisfactorily. As a matter of fact, in Australia they have a party called the country party, and I understand that in recent years this party has been in coalition with the Liberal party to form the government of that country. Perhaps at some future date in this country we will have a coalition of the country party and the Liberal party to form a government, and we will have a better government.

I should like to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that this redistribution which we are considering is long overdue. I hope this bill will not be held up too long, so that the commissioners can be appointed in each province. Then, possibly 12 months from this time they will have completed their work and a bill will be before the house to complete this redistribution. It would be a great shame to go through another election in this country based upon the 1951 census and the improper distribution which exists now. I again urge that the 20 per cent allowance is good enough and you can get a great deal of variation with it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Clement Vincent (Nicolet-Yamaska): Mr. Speaker, before going any further, I want to tell the house that the political future of rural constituencies is at stake as soon as we start dealing with the motion now before us. Furthermore, I wish to put on record certain comments which, in my opinion, can apply to all rural ridings in my province, the province of Quebec.

I should like all hon. members to listen to me closely, because our action in supporting

[Mr. Prittie.]

the bill to come will influence the political future of rural ridings and the quality of the work to be done by each representative of those constituencies.

While conceding that the saying "rep by pop" must be put into practice, we should not lose sight of geographical considerations, the high and the low density of population and all those factors to be taken into account when the time comes for redistribution.

I agree with part of clause 13 of Bill No. C-72, except for the percentage. In that matter, I differ with the hon. member who preceded me, perhaps because I represent a rural riding, but also because we should keep the proportional representation as efficient as possible in view of the future of those rural ridings. To my mind—and according to several hon. members from all political parties—the percentage of 20 per cent would not be high enough. Some will say that there is no difference in representing an urban population or a rural one.

Let us say, for instance, that this percentage of 20 per cent is applied. It would mean that, in the province of Quebec, we would have 70,123 as a quotient after dividing the total population by the number of seats in the house. There would be ridings with a maximum population of 84,147, and others with a minimum population of 55,100. A county like Nicolet-Yamaska, a population of 45,192 which I represent in the house—and this applies to several other rural ridings in the province of Quebec, of which there are 13—should have a minimum population of 55,100.

Therefore, first of all, 12 to 15 parishes would have to be added to the 36 already included in that riding; second, to the 57 municipalities of the riding of Nicolet-Yamaska, there would have to be added another score, which would mean 75 to 80 municipal councils; third, some 15 to 20 post offices would have to be added to the 40 already existing in the riding of Nicolet-Yamaska, which would give a total of 55 post offices, fourth, to the 62 rural mail carriers of this riding 20 should be added to bring the total up to 82; fifth, at present, the rural riding—the example I offer is that of Nicolet-Yamaska—is being served by four offices of the unemployment insurance commission and four national employment offices. It would be necessary to add parishes which would be served by a fifth national employment office and a fifth office of the unemployment insurance commission; sixth, to the parishes of that part of the riding located in five provincial ridings should be added parishes which would be located in a sixth or a seventh