

Electoral Boundaries

Roman Catholic Church, which is one of the largest parishes between Pembroke and North Bay, Mattawan Township, Calvin Township, Bonfield Township, the latter two are on the north-west side of the town of Mattawa, St. Alban the Martyr Anglican Church, St. Andrew's United Church and the Catholic Women's League, plus a petition Who is left?

● (2150)

An hon. Member: Len Hopkins.

Mr. Hopkins: He is left, and I hope he will be. All these communities are tied together by highway 17. The hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton said he had received representations from people in Mattawa. Who are these people who are misinforming him? I phoned Mattawa tonight and talked with some people, and they are livid about an MP who lives in Kanata talking about their town which is 190 miles away, and about which he knows very little. They also told me to inform him that he is all wet, and the best thing for him to do is mind his own business because they are quite capable of handling their own affairs and when they express their views they at least check their facts first.

These people said they identified themselves by going on record before the commission and they feel that those people who are passing on this misinformation to the hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton should also identify themselves instead of helping that hon. member drag this kind of red herring across the floor of the House. I am sure the Electoral Boundaries Commission will look at this simply in the light in which it was presented. They will recognize it as a pure and simple—very simple—partisan, political play.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Never heard of in this House!

Mr. Hopkins: I want to congratulate the Electoral Boundaries Commission as I think it had sympathy, understanding and a feeling for what it was doing. In the case of the village of Madawaska, which is a community of approximately 300 in my riding which is situated on the highway between Whitney and Barry's Bay, this little community was placed in the constituency of the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling), which would mean he would have to drive through a large section of my constituency to get to that centre, while at the same time I would be driving through his riding in order to get to communities just a few miles beyond. Three delegations came down from that small community presenting the case, and the recommendations were accepted by the commission.

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Then we have Lake Traverse and Brent which are two small communities in Algonquin Park. Access roads to both those communities are off highway 17 along the Ottawa River. These two small places were also placed in the riding of the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka. I had a discussion with him about this matter. Representations were made and the commission for that as well.

[Mr. Hopkins.]

A very important thing the commission did was, to a very large degree, unite the county of Renfrew once again. There are three townships plus the town of Arnprior not in the constituency, and county council and the various municipalities across the county are very pleased that they are united in that way instead of being split up into three different ridings.

Another point the Electoral Boundaries Commission accepted was the new name for the riding which we suggested of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; Renfrew to include the town of Renfrew and the county of Renfrew, and Nipissing to include those townships in Algonquin Park and the Mattawa area. Then we have the city of Pembroke which is the only city in that part of the valley. They also returned Mattawa, Papineau, Mattawan and Cameron to the constituency at the request of those resident people. There is a very strong desire on the part of Calvin and Bonfield Townships on the northwest side of Mattawa to remain in the constituency. They were not left in but each has written a letter to me requesting that the Electoral Boundaries Commission take another look at their situation. They feel much more at home with a large number of small municipalities and smaller places than in a riding with a large urban centre such as North Bay. That is really the basis of their argument.

In addition the Township of Calvin is on the border of Papineau Township and the town of Mattawa. That is really their small centre and they want to retain their relationship with it.

Some of my present riding will be going into northern Ontario. This will be adding to the population of northern Ontario, but I can sympathize with those people there who would like to retain their 12 ridings. I have spent some time working in the north and I have a feeling for it. I know how people feel up there and how important it is to have members who travel great distances maintaining liaison.

I am not concerned about the size of my new riding. Quite to the contrary, as I said at the beginning, I am very pleased with it. In the past years I have looked after many problems in the northern part of the riding of Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton as well as problems in the northern part of the riding of Frontenac-Lennox and Addington simply because the members for those two constituencies live some distance away. The two constituencies come within 10 or 12 miles of my home. As a result the people come to me because I am closer. These people will be coming into the new constituency of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I get letters from Renfrew, too.

Mr. Hopkins: Yes, and I hope you look after them as well as we try to do up there. I am sure you do.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Better.

Mr. Hopkins: You are noted as a very conscientious member of parliament, and I am sure you will allow me to conclude my remarks. May I call it 10 o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps I could ask the hon. member if he has many remarks left. Perhaps the