

riding of Ontario which has been added, under the proposals now before us, to the riding of Victoria-Haliburton. Georgina township is part of York county. It has a natural association of very long standing with the south and the west, as opposed to the north and the east. I think the commissioners have failed to give adequate consideration to the community of interest and to the natural lines of communication and association of the people of Georgina by adding it to the new, proposed riding of Victoria-Haliburton.

I made representations, along with others, in this connection when a public debate was held before the commissioners, to try to ensure that Georgina was either maintained in the existing riding of Ontario or, at the very worst, added to the south and to the west with the rest of York county.

● (1700)

The municipality, the people and the press in that area are very concerned about being associated with Victoria-Haliburton, where there is no community of interest and where in fact the riding will extend for an area of well over 200 miles. This is unacceptable to those people and I am disappointed that the commissioners did not give adequate consideration to the representations I and others made in connection with the location of Georgina township.

The third point I should like to make representations about is in respect of the name of the riding. At the time of the last election and the one prior to that, Ontario riding, as it is presently called, consisted of the township of Georgina, the municipalities of Uxbridge, Scugog, Pickering, Ajax, part of the town of Whitby, Whitby township, and part of the town of Oshawa, East Whitby township. In terms of keeping within the limits this riding could well remain exactly the same riding after redistribution as it was prior to it, and I strongly recommend that is the ideal course of action to be taken by the commissioners. However, if the commissioners deem that it should not remain toward the high element of the quotient, then Georgina should be put into the York region, not into Victoria-Haliburton, and Scugog township, consisting of the former townships of Scugog, Reach and the town of Port Perry, should be added back to the riding now termed Durham West.

Furthermore, I argue that under this redistribution the name Durham West makes no sense whatsoever. It is a very confusing name because there is a community called Durham now in riding 24 which is the new proposed riding of Grey-Bruce. I understand that the people up there resent the new region of Durham in my own area, being called by that name because of the confusion with their own community. This is further complicated by the fact that there is a provincial riding called Durham West which almost parallels the new, proposed federal riding of Durham West, and having two ridings with precisely the same name, even though in differing jurisdictions, will cause a great deal of confusion for the local electorate.

I therefore recommend that riding No. 14, presently considered to be named Durham West, should be renamed Ontario riding, or at the very least, if the representations of the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham bear any

fruit about the changing of the name of his riding to Durham-Northumberland, then it would make some sense simply to call the riding Durham. There is no Durham North, no Durham East, no Durham South, and no Durham at all under redistribution, and it seems a bit silly to call the one riding with the name Durham, Durham West. West of what, I do not know. I hope the commissioners will give consideration to making a change in that respect.

The next point I should like to make is with respect to the size of non-urban ridings. I think the hon. member for Thunder Bay (Mr. Penner) illustrated the point quite well when he spoke of the importance of ridings in rural areas, particularly large rural areas, having a population toward the low end of the limit in terms of redistribution because when the geographical area is very large it is difficult for a member of parliament to provide service. People in rural areas expect better representation, or at least more direct representation, than smaller, more confined urban areas. I think the commissioners did not adequately take this factor into account in their deliberations. They should try to keep large areas down to the low end of the quotient, and urban areas should tend more to the higher end in terms of population distribution.

I agree with the hon. member for Thunder Bay that on the surface it does not make very much sense that the northern end of the province, which has large ridings, should end up losing one seat when the whole province has gained, I believe, eight or nine seats. In my opinion, that does not make any sense, and I think the point the hon. member made was well made although I have no direct interest in it. It is a point upon which I made representations before the commissioners in the public hearings to show them that the concern for the rural areas of northern Ontario and others is shared by many hon. members, even those from more urban areas in southern Ontario. I certainly hope the commissioners will give consideration to the need for some adjustment in that regard.

The last point I wish to make—and I will not belabour it—is in connection with the question of uncertainty in this act. I will be very brief indeed. Today I tried to express, in the clearest terms I knew, the central point that redistribution, in light of the allegation that the essence of the act was not complied with by the commissioners, may cause some uncertainty and possibly mean that the whole process will be set aside by the courts at some subsequent date. Some may believe that this is not a possibility. I cannot really conclude that. I personally think it is a very real possibility and I strongly suspect that the question will end up before the courts.

I simply want to express this concern to the commissioners. Although, I regret very much that they did not take time to give the reasons underlying their recommendations. I am not being critical of the commissioners per se, prior to the recommendations we see before us now, I made representations, as did almost all municipalities which I represent, and they bore a great deal of fruit. The new map we see before us reflects many of those concerns although not all of them.

Therefore, I think the commissioners have been very responsible. They have worked very hard on this job, and I think it is important that they bear in mind the difficulty we as parliamentarians and as citizens of this country may