

**FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION**

**FOR QUEBEC**

**2003**

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**DISPOSITION BY THE COMMISSION**  
**PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION 23(1) OF**  
**THE *ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT***  
**OF**  
**OBJECTIONS FILED BY MEMBERS OF THE**  
**HOUSE OF COMMONS WITH RESPECT TO THE COMMISSION'S**  
**REPORT DATED MARCH 14, 2003**

## **Introduction**

[1] Pursuant to the proposals that it published in the Supplement to the *Canada Gazette*, Part I, on August 31, 2002 (hereinafter sometimes “the proposals”), and that were distributed across Quebec, and the public hearings that it held in 14 different locations in the province, the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec (hereinafter “the Commission”), after deliberation and in accordance with subsection 20(1) of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, R.S.C. 1985, s. E-3 (hereinafter “the Act”), prepared a report to be tabled in the House of Commons, dated March 14, 2003 (hereinafter sometimes “the report”), in which it set out its considerations and proposals concerning the division of the province into electoral districts, the descriptions and boundaries of the districts and the population and name to be given to each district.

[2] The report outlined with reasons, numerous modifications to the proposals.

[3] On July 18, 2003, the Commission received the objections to its report, detailed in the Forty-third Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (hereinafter “the Committee”), extracts of the minutes of the Subcommittee on Electoral Boundaries Readjustment (hereinafter “the Subcommittee”) and the evidence that was heard.

[4] That date is the starting point for the period allowed by subsection 23(1) of the Act to consider and dispose of the objections.

[5] At the invitation of the Standing Committee, which the Commission thanks for its valued input during its deliberations, while pointing out that it is not bound by the Committee’s recommendations, the Commission, an independent body whose members read all the available testimony and numerous other documents, thoroughly studied the objections, along with the observations and recommendations formulated in the Forty-third report of the Committee and disposes herein of the objections in accordance with the Act, while trying to respond to the desires expressed, subject to the applicable rules and criteria and to the fact that the Act does not require it to adopt to the viewpoints of members of the House of Commons.

[6] During its review, the Commission examined the relevant elements of its report and the comments, views, opinions and desires it had previously heard.

[7] This additional consideration, in light of the report of the Standing Committee and the objections, did not lead the Commission to conclude that it must modify the general principles that it adopted in its report (the reader is invited to refer to the Commission’s complete report of March 14, 2003), and generally speaking and without limitations, amongst others:

- the principles in section 15 of the Act, as interpreted;
- the electoral quotient for the province, set at 96,500 inhabitants for both urban and rural electoral districts;
- an effective representation consistent with isonomy, in this case, the highly democratic principle of “one person – one vote”;
- a fair and equitable individual parity across Quebec as a whole for all citizens of the province, urban and rural, as part of a reasonable and just effort to attain the objective

- of intraprovincial representation departing only occasionally from a tolerable deviation of 10%, which, according to the Committee “in general, this is not an objectionable policy” (par. 10 of the English text/par. 9 of the French text);
- a reluctance, in the interests of justice and equity for the population of Quebec as a whole, to make decisions involving significant deviations from the provincial quotient, remembering, however, that differences can exist between urban electoral districts and rural, northern and sparsely populated districts;
  - a respect for the communities of interest and/or communities of identity of electoral districts and/or their historical pattern, and respect for the regional county municipalities (hereinafter “RCMs”), geographical entities to which many witnesses felt most attached, with the administrative region being subsidiary. The Commission sought throughout to give a high degree of consideration to the concerns of citizens ;
  - the need for adjustments that stemmed not only from population movements, but also very often from anomalies necessarily resulting from previous readjustments, such as urban electoral districts with undesirably high quotients or rural electoral districts with unacceptably low quotients, as explained in the proposals. All of these produced a domino effect of changes that were not arbitrary but, in fact, required by the principles adopted;
  - the maintenance, as much as possible, of the historical pattern with respect to both boundaries and names, which is what was requested by 37 of the 54 MPs heard, under the heading of “status quo”;
  - accepting all these requests, despite the deviations noted in the proposals, would have been a very simple solution for the Commission to discharge the mandate, obligations and responsibilities conferred on it by the Act;
  - naming districts, using no more than two elements, designed to be as representative as possible and chosen on toponymic principles, without making reference to all the geographical, historical and other elements that some would have liked to have seen incorporated;
  - an attentive consideration, respectful of the Act and the principles adopted, of the wishes expressed by those most concerned.

[8] Thus, the Commission, sensitive to the concerns expressed, attentively studied each of the objections, which were sometimes based on grounds that had already been submitted and reviewed, and attempted to make its decisions in a spirit of openness and equity.

[9] In making its decisions, the Commission took account of the 30 objections to its report of March 14, 2003, and the 312 written representations, 199 briefs and 214 representations made during the public hearings after the proposals of August 31, 2002.

### **Montréal**

[10] The Island, and thus the City, of Montréal has 18 federal electoral districts.

[11] Two MPs submitted objections to the boundaries of these 18 electoral districts, Mrs. Marlene Jennings, Member of Parliament for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine and Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos, Member of Parliament for Ahuntsic, that, in the opinion of the Commission, call for relatively unimportant territorial changes.

[12] The Committee writes:<sup>1</sup>

“(c) Recommendations for Montréal

29. As stated previously, we cannot ignore a letter that had been signed by all 14 [sic] Members of Parliament from the island of Montreal requesting that the status quo be maintained. We recognize that a review of electoral boundaries generally suggests that changes will be made and that people must be ready to make compromises. We have heard objections from across the country and know first hand the impossible task of trying to please everyone. Having stated the obvious, one thing we cannot accept is changes to ridings that are made for the sake of change.

30. All of the current ridings on the island of Montreal are within an acceptable variance from the provincial quotient. Thus, changes were not legislatively required. For this region in particular, we are of the opinion that the Commission should take full advantage of the allowable variance to the provincial quotient as set out in the legislation.

31. In addition, the Commission must remain cognizant of the fact that in urban ridings, the territory is much smaller and there is generally more cohesion because the communities are closer together. Thus, having ridings that are more populous does not generally cause a problem.

32. Significantly, we were told that the Commission, in response to the public consultations held in December 2002, agreed to reinstate the current boundaries and names (in some cases with very minor changes) of several of these ridings. It seems unusual that the Commission would agree to the status quo in some cases and not in others when the same factors are at play.

33. We would therefore strongly recommend that the current ridings on the island of Montreal remain unchanged. Even if this is not done, the objections raised in relation to Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and Ahuntsic must be addressed. The Commission should focus more closely on the question of community of interest, and, at the very least, the ridings of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and Ahuntsic should be modified to address the Members' concerns.”

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes are verbatim and the Commission has chosen not to highlight the errors found therein.

## **Comments**

[13] Although, in the 2001 Census, more than 21% of the province's electoral districts were exceptional electoral districts and 29% had a variance of between 10% and 25%, the Commission succeeded in proposing 18 electoral districts, the boundaries of which were identical or virtually identical to those of the 1996 representation order.

[14] Five of these electoral districts were on the Island of Montréal.

[15] And five other Montréal electoral districts underwent minor territorial changes, affecting less than 7% of their population.

[16] The Commission, on page 105 of its report, wrote:

“The search for the much-requested historical continuity of borders and the desire to balance Montréal's urban population with its domino effects are the main sources of the changes made.”

[17] The neighbouring electoral districts of Pierrefonds—Dollard and Lac-Saint-Louis had positive variances greater than 14%.

[18] An equitable parity based on the principles adopted did not therefore make it possible to preserve the desired status quo.

[19] The changes made produced a domino effect on other electoral districts.

[20] Sixteen of the members of Parliament from Montréal, that is, almost 90%, did not file objections and can be assumed to be satisfied with the configurations.

## **Decision:**

[21] The Commission rejects the Committee's recommendation for Montréal.

## **Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine**

[22] Mrs. Marlene Jennings, Member of Parliament for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, filed an objection calling for the status quo that reads in part:

“... ”

The result of the Commission's recommendation is a riding population almost identical to the population of the present riding. To include Dorval, it must be stated, is acceptable as this community does share common interests with the former City of Lachine. Indeed, prior to 1997, most of western Lachine formed part of the Lac St-Louis federal riding along with the former City of Dorval. Therefore, the Commission's recommendation to include the former city of Dorval with that of Lachine, can be viewed as appropriate in

that it respects the legislative criteria of community interests based upon historical facts. Formerly, both formed part of the same federal riding and residents of both former municipalities have created many community associations and groups serving all their residents.

What is objectionable, however, is the division of the NDG community into two – retaining the western half of the NDG—Lachine riding while displacing the eastern half to another federal riding, that of Westmount—Ville-Marie.

Let us now examine whether the Commission's proposed boundary amendment, as it pertains to the NDG community, respects the second set of criteria, that of community of interest, cultural identity or historic evolution as prescribed under the Canada Elections Act.

...

With this as a background, I would propose one of the two following options, in order of preference:

. A first option would be to preserve the current boundaries, with Décarie remaining as the eastern boundary.

. A second option would be to accept the FEBC(Q)'s recommendation that Dorval be added to the NDG—Lachine riding, but that the NDG portion of the existing riding itself remain intact according to the community of interest and other arguments outlined above. This second option, while expanding the total number of constituents to approximately 115,000-116,000 (8-9% above the provincial average), would still maintain the population well below the 25% cap set above the provincial average. ”

[23] The Committee's conclusion was presented in paragraphs 32 and 33 of its report.

### **Comments**

[24] No objections were filed by the members of Parliament for the surrounding electoral districts, which suggests they are satisfied with the boundaries.

[25] In the opinion of the Commission, there was a need to balance the electoral districts on the Island of Montréal, particularly the western portion, because they significantly exceeded the norms adopted. The Commission thus reconfigured the western portion of the electoral district of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine by adding the former municipalities of Dorval and Île-Dorval.

[26] While the Commission was able to retain the northern boundaries from the 1996 representation order, the existing populations forced the transfer of a sector to another portion of the former municipality of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce in the electoral district of Westmount—Ville-Marie, with which it has an affinity.

[27] Statistics Canada data indicate that adding the sector suggested by the objector would give this electoral district a population of 120,969, a variance of plus 25.4%.

### **Decision**

[28] The objection is dismissed.

### **Ahuntsic**

[29] Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos, Member of Parliament for Ahuntsic, presented an objection calling for the status quo that reads in part:

“ ...

We ask that the present boundaries of the electoral district of Ahuntsic be retained.

...

In addition, we firmly believe that effect of the Commission's recommendation that the eastern boundary of the electoral district of Ahuntsic be changed will be to jeopardize the existing community of interest and community of identity, which is contrary to the principles of the Act.

...

In the alternative, if the Committee were to conclude that the electoral map of the district of Ahuntsic must absolutely be changed, we suggest that the Commission instead exclude the section of the district located in the St-Michel neighbourhood, which does not at present have any community of interest with the rest of the constituency. ”

[30] The Committee writes:

“25. Ms. Bakopanos argued that the Commission was much too restrictive in trying to match the provincial quotient on the island of Montréal. She noted that the legislation allows for variances of up to 25%, but that the Commission made changes to several ridings on the island even though they were nowhere near this limit. In the case of Ahuntsic, the variance would be +9.7% if it retained its current boundaries.

26. Ms. Bakopanos explained to the Subcommittee that the objection she raised was firmly supported locally, including the Ahuntsic-Cartierville Borough Council. She made it very clear that the proposed change would jeopardize the existing community of interest and community of identity that exists in this area. Many of the voters who would be removed from the riding are served by the same local institutions as those who would remain in the riding.

27. Ms. Bakopanos argued that the changes being made were pointless alterations that produce no public interest and were based purely on mathematics. She indicated how the current boundaries are dictated by geography, the major road transportation axes and municipal division.

28. Ms. Bakopanos indicated that if any change was absolutely required, it would have been much more logical to remove the section of the riding located in the Saint-Michel neighbourhood, which does not, at present, have any community of interest with the rest of the riding. ”

### **Comments**

[31] No objections were filed by the members of Parliament for the surrounding electoral districts, which suggests they are satisfied with the boundaries.

[32] The southern boundaries of the electoral district were not touched because of the domino effect this could have had on other electoral districts.

[33] The minor modifications affected less than 6% of the population compared with the status quo.

[34] The demography of the sectors the objector wants to exchange is similar.

[35] The 27 boroughs of the new City of Montréal must be divided up among 18 federal electoral districts.

[36] The Commission still feels that, under the circumstances, the configuration described in the report is quite consistent with the applicable criteria.

### **Decision**

[37] The objection is dismissed.

### **Laval**

[38] The two objections filed by the members of Parliament for Laval concern only the proposed names.

[39] Neither concerns the division of this city into electoral districts nor the proposed boundaries.

[40] The Committee writes:

“34. Two of the members of Parliament for Laval appeared before the Subcommittee to object to the proposed names for the ridings in this area. In the context of these discussions and other less formal discussions, we are of the opinion that significant



changes are required in relation to the Laval ridings. The objections are set out below and they are followed by our recommendations for the area. ”

[41] The two objections concerning the proposed names made by Mrs. Raymonde Folco, Member of Parliament for Laval West, and Mrs. Carole-Marie Allard, Member of Parliament for Laval East, will be studied and commented on later; for the moment, we will concern ourselves with the major reconfiguration suggested by the Committee.

[42] The Committee’s comments must be quoted in their entirety:

“44. More importantly, we recommend that the Laval region be constituted of only three electoral ridings. It is clear that the Commission felt that the growth in this area required adding a new half riding. We do not agree and note that the fourth proposed riding involved two distinct areas with little in common. In creating this riding, the criteria of community of interest, community of identity and historical pattern were simply ignored. This is a solution we cannot accept.

45. Our solution is to retain the three current ridings with minor boundary changes in order to better balance the population. We propose the following boundaries:

- Laval West: commencing at the Rivière des Prairies northerly along Autoroute des Laurentides to Notre-Dame Boulevard; thence easterly along said boulevard to Curé-Labelle Boulevard; thence northerly along said boulevard to the hydroelectric transmission line lying south of Edith Street; thence easterly along said transmission line to the north-south hydroelectric transmission line; thence northerly along said north-south transmission line to where it intersects the Rivière des Milles Îles.
- Laval East: commencing at the Rivière des Prairies northerly along Boulevard des Laurentides to St-Martin Boulevard; thence westerly along said boulevard to the Canadian Pacific Railway; thence northerly along said railway to the east-west hydroelectric transmission line lying north of Papillon Street; thence easterly along said east-west transmission line to René-Laennec Boulevard; thence northerly along the production of said boulevard (as projected in the development plans of the City of Laval) to Riopelle Street; thence along said street to Boulevard des Laurentides; thence northerly along said boulevard to Papineau Avenue; thence northwesterly along said avenue to Athanase-David Bridge.

46. These boundaries would produce the following population counts and variances from the provincial quotient:

- Laval West: 112,000 and +16.7%
- Laval Centre: 116,216 and +20.4%
- Laval East: 114,196 and +18.3%

47. It is important to note that this recommendation allows us to add a new riding elsewhere in Quebec, an option that became extremely important to address the concern of under-representation in rural Quebec.

[43] There is no consensus on where to put the electoral district created by the Committee:

“51. Mr. Gagnon raised concerns that the proposed changes would mean that the Mauricie region would lose a Member of Parliament, which would result in the loss of one-third of its representation. This was unacceptable, according to Mr. Gagnon. He therefore recommended the status quo for the current riding of Champlain.

52. We are of the opinion that Mr. Gagnon has presented compelling arguments that cannot be ignored. As a result of our changes in the Laval region, there is an electoral district that is effectively “up for grabs” in Quebec. As stated earlier, certain members of the Subcommittee were of the opinion that the Mauricie region could benefit to a greater extent from this addition. Others, meanwhile, were of the opinion that the extra riding should be allocate to the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region.

53. It is clear that if the riding is added to the Mauricie area, that will have consequences throughout the region. We would recommend maintaining the status quo (1997) with only minor modifications if they are absolutely necessary. ”

[44] And later the Committee adds:

“74. We are extremely sympathetic to the objections of these four members (*Mr. Sébastien Gagnon, Member of Parliament for Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay; Mrs. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold, Member of Parliament for Jonquière; Mr. André Harvey, Member of Parliament for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord; and Mr. Michel Gauthier, Member of Parliament for Roberval*) and find their arguments compelling. It is clear that the loss of a riding in a region is extremely difficult to swallow, a problem that is exacerbated in the case of regions facing economic and other related difficulties. As indicated previously, members of the Subcommittee debated at length whether a riding should be added to this area. The Subcommittee was unable to reach a consensus on where the additional riding available for rural Quebec should be allocated. ”

## **Comments**

[45] No objections were filed by the members of Parliament for the surrounding electoral districts, which suggests they are satisfied with the boundaries.

[46] The Committee does not cite any specific request nor any support from the population of the region or from Laval authorities nor the source of its “other less formal discussions” to reduce the representation of the populations of the City of Laval and the adjacent northern region.

[47] The Commission received much information outlining the close links that unite the populations of Laval and the adjacent northern region.

[48] The sociodemographic profile on both sides of the Mille Îles River is homogenous.

[49] The communities are often active in the same sporting, cultural and community organizations.

[50] Transportation links are easy and a number of Government of Canada services are grouped in the Laval/Rive-Nord sector.

[51] Laval municipal authorities and certain organizations from the adjacent northern region have indicated their support.

[52] The new configuration ensures the equitable respect of intraprovincial parity, which would not be possible otherwise.

### **Decision**

[53] The Commission maintains the City of Laval and adjacent northern region configuration.

### **Mauricie**

[54] Mr. Marcel Gagnon, Member of Parliament for Champlain, filed an objection calling for the status quo in the following terms:

“A- The current district of Champlain is too big for an MP to be able to cover the area effectively and satisfactorily serve the population.

B- The geographical size would remain virtually the same if the City of Shawinigan were added and Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Sainte-Marthe and St-Louis-de-France were removed, but the number of voters would increase by approximately 11,000, for a total population of 97,893.

C- The people of the RCM of Les Chenaux have no community of interest with the City of Shawinigan; their lives are bound up with Trois-Rivières, which is also their business centre.

D- The new electoral boundaries will cause the Mauricie Region to lose an MP. The region needs all of its representatives and all of its power, and it is unacceptable for it to lose one third of its representation in Ottawa.

E- I recommend that the riding of Champlain remain as it is now. ”

[55] The Committee writes:

“50. Mr. Gagnon also indicated that the RCM of Les Chenaux has no community of interest with the city of Shawinigan. Rather, it is associated socially and economically with Trois-Rivières.

51. Mr. Gagnon raised concerns that the proposed changes would mean that the Mauricie region would lose a Member of Parliament, which would result in the loss of one third of its representation. This was unacceptable, according to Mr. Gagnon. He therefore recommended the status quo for the current riding of Champlain.

52. We are of the opinion that Mr. Gagnon has presented compelling arguments that cannot be ignored. As a result of our changes in the Laval region, there is an electoral district that is effectively “up for grabs” in Quebec. As stated earlier, certain members of the Subcommittee were of the opinion that the Mauricie region could benefit to a greater extent from this addition. Others, meanwhile, were of the opinion that the extra riding should be allocate to the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region.

53. It is clear that if the riding is added to the Mauricie area, that will have consequences throughout the region. We would recommend maintaining the status quo (1997) with only minor modifications if they are absolutely necessary. ”

### **Comments**

[56] No objections were filed by the members of Parliament for the surrounding electoral districts, which suggests they are satisfied with the boundaries.

[57] The need to reconfigure the region because of its demographic deficit, the reality of the new City of Trois-Rivières and respect for the integrity of the RCMs meant that it was not possible to maintain the status quo while respecting the principle of intraprovincial equity.

[58] The new City of Shawinigan is located in the centre of the electoral district, as is Road No. 155 leading to La Tuque.

[59] Mauricie, which keeps the electoral districts of Trois-Rivières and Saint-Maurice—Champlain, also occupies a predominant place in the electoral district of Berthier—Maskinongé.

### **Decision**

[60] The objection is dismissed.

## **Québec City area and Côte-Nord**

### **a) Manicouagan**

[61] Mr. Ghislain Fournier, Member of Parliament for Manicouagan, filed an objection that reads in part:

“ ...

- Whereas, owing to the lack of transportation infrastructures, certain parts of the electoral district can be accessed only by plane, boat or helicopter in summer or snowmobile in winter;
- Whereas the lack of communication infrastructures in certain areas makes it difficult to communicate using new technologies;
- Whereas the population of Manicouagan, which was assessed at 52,561 inhabitants in the *2001 Census*, is distributed over 268,000 km<sup>2</sup>; that is, an area that is 22 times the size of the average electoral district;
- Whereas, pursuant to the Elections Act, every individual is entitled to a Member of Parliament who is present and not constantly travelling in the electoral district;
- Whereas there is a great disparity and diversity of needs between the residents of the Lower North Shore and the residents of the Baie-Comeau area;
- Whereas the Commission undertook to respect only one aspect to the Act, namely the 10% discrepancy rule, without taking into consideration the other important aspect of this legislation; that is, the area to cover in order to achieve objectives;
- Whereas the briefs submitted and presentations made during hearings held in Sept-Îles unanimously support maintaining the current boundaries;

That the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs object to the electoral boundaries proposed by the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec for the electoral district of Manicouagan, and that it maintain the boundaries in effect before the August 31, 2002 recommendation. ”

[62] The Committee writes:

“65. The Committee agrees with the objections that were raised in relation to this region. There is no doubt that the riding of Manicouagan is an extraordinary riding and that the Commission should have utilized the discretion granted in the legislation to allow a variance from the provincial quotient of more than -25%, in this case -45%. We are quite aware that such a solution cannot be used excessively. However, if the riding of Manicouagan is not considered to be a proper case for the use of the discretion granted in

the legislation, we do not see when this power would ever be used and why it would have been set out in the legislation.

66. We also note that the changes made to the other ridings in this area are as a result of the Commission's decision not to grant extraordinary status to Manicouagan. This means that the option of recommending the status quo in this area is available to us and is entirely appropriate. This Committee cannot accept change for the sake of change. The other current ridings involved are: Charlesvoix, Beauport—Montmorency—Cote-de-Beaupré—Ile-d'Orléans, Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, Louis-Hébert, Quebec, Quebec East, and Portneuf.

67. Our recommendation is supported by every witness who appeared before the Subcommittee, as well as other members of Parliament who indicated their support by way of conversations with Subcommittee members. In fact, an opened letter published in *Le Soleil* indicated that all Members of Parliament in this region favoured the status quo. In our opinion, our recommendation would lead to more effective and efficient representation, particularly in the riding of Manicouagan. ”

### **Comments**

[63] The electoral district had a variance of minus 45.5% in the 2001 census.

[64] The size of the territory, of which some 90% is uninhabited, does not justify exceptional status when compared with the electoral districts of Baie-James—Nunavik and Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

[65] The City of Baie-Comeau, which was added to the electoral district, neighbours Franquelin, the last locale in the current electoral district of Manicouagan. It is the nerve centre of the RCM of Manicouagan, which is entirely within the same electoral district.

[66] While the needs of the population of the Baie-Comeau Region are different from those of the Basse-Côte-Nord, they resemble those of the Sept-Îles Region.

[67] No objections were filed for the electoral districts of Beauport, Charlesbourg, Louis-Hébert, Québec and Louis-Saint-Laurent which, located entirely within the new City of Québec, might be subject to a domino effect if there were a return to the status quo for the electoral district of Manicouagan.

### **Decision**

[68] The objection is dismissed.

## **b) Charlevoix**

[69] Mr. Gérard Asselin, Member of Parliament for Charlevoix, the electoral district adjacent to Manicouagan, supported the objection of his colleague from Manicouagan, stating:

“Therefore:

We call upon the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to oppose the changes in the boundaries of the ridings of Charlevoix and Manicouagan proposed by the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec. We call upon the Committee to maintain the existing boundaries for Charlevoix and Manicouagan, and to give Manicouagan exceptional status as authorized by the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act* with respect to riding size.”

[70] The Committee’s recommendations concerning this objection were cited previously (see Manicouagan).

## **Comments**

[71] The electoral district takes in all of four RCMs in Quebec’s National Capital Region and the RCM La Haute-Côte-Nord, which was already part of it and has a similar emphasis on tourism. It also takes in part of the borough of Beauport, which serves as a link to Orléans Island.

[72] It respects the principle of intraprovincial parity more than the status quo could have.

[73] Returning to the status quo would have a domino effect on the neighbouring electoral districts of the new City of Québec, for which no objections were filed.

## **Decision**

[74] The objection is dismissed.

## **c) Portneuf**

[75] Mr. Claude Duplain, Member of Parliament for the electoral district of Portneuf, filed an objection calling for the status quo that reads:

“That the House Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs review the following objection:

Whereas a major imbalance stemming from the new distribution of the population would lead to the riding of Portneuf losing 4,471 voters.

Whereas there is a major disparity between the sectors.

Whereas an important area would find itself hemmed in by the new proposal. ”

[76] The Committee’s recommendations concerning this objection were cited previously (see Manicouagan).

### **Comments**

[77] Pursuant to the representations, part of the RCM La Jacques-Cartier was returned to Portneuf to keep it whole.

[78] The new configuration provides greater parity for the entire Québec and Côte-Nord regions; it is also more consistent with the reality of the new City of Québec.

[79] It allowed to incorporate many of the recommendations formulated in the briefs and during the public hearings.

[80] No objections were filed for the electoral districts of Beauport, Charlesbourg, Louis-Hébert, Québec and Louis-Saint-Laurent, which are located entirely within the new City of Québec.

### **Decision**

[81] The objection is dismissed.

### **Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean**

[82] Mr. Sébastien Gagnon, Member of Parliament for Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay, asks in his objection:

“And that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs oppose the electoral boundaries for the Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean region proposed by the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec, and insist on the retention of the region’s four ridings.”

[83] Mrs. Jocelyne Girard Bujold, Member of Parliament for Jonquière, presents substantially the same request.

[84] Mr. Michel Gauthier, Member of Parliament for Roberval, filed the following objection:

“ ...

The reform provides for the elimination of an electoral district in the Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean region, reducing the number of districts from four to three. This would reduce the political impact of the region within Quebec’s parliamentary deputation. In addition, by being moved from the Roberval district to the James Bay-Nunavik district, the cities of Chibougamau and Chapais would be transferred from the Saguenay region to the Abitibi



region, which is difficult to justify from either the geographical or regional economic standpoint.”

[85] Mr. André Harvey, Member of Parliament for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, filed an objection on similar grounds that concludes:

“I PROPOSE THAT:

1. The Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region continue to be represented by four MPs, and continue to have four counties
2. The boundaries of the Chicoutimi-Le Fjord district remain the same except for the addition of the municipalities of St-Fulgence, Ste-Rose-du-Nord and the southern portions of St-Paul and St-Pierre
3. The district retain the name Chicoutimi-Le Fjord.”

[86] The Committee writes:

“74. We are extremely sympathetic to the objections of these four members and find their arguments compelling. It is clear that the loss of a riding in a region is extremely difficult to swallow, a problem that is exacerbated in the case of regions facing economic and other related difficulties. As indicated previously, members of the Subcommittee debated at length whether a riding should be added to this area. The Subcommittee was unable to reach a consensus on where the additional riding available for rural Quebec should be allocated.”

### **Comments**

[87] The Commission was faced with three electoral districts in this region with a deviation of more than minus 25%.

[88] Intraprovincial parity thus made the status quo unacceptable.

[89] The transfer of the cities of Chibougamau and Chapais and the Oujé-Bougoumou Indian Reserve to the electoral district of Baie-James—Nunavik has no influence on the number of electoral districts in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean.

[90] When reconfiguring the electoral districts, the Commission took into account the boroughs of the new City of Saguenay and the specific requests made.

### **Decision**

[91] The objection of the MPs from Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean is dismissed.

## **Baie-James—Nunavik**

[92] Mr. Guy St-Julien, Member of Parliament for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik presented an objection proposing, among other things, that:

“ ...

The city of Amos and the surrounding area be included in the electoral district of Baie—James—Nunavik...

...

The regional municipality of Kativik, including the northern village municipalities ..., be included in a special electoral district...

... ”

[93] The Committee writes:

“77. One proposal included a request that the city of Amos and surrounding areas be included in this proposed riding. We accept this suggestion and note that it is not only supported by Mr. St-Julien, but more importantly, also by the people of Amos themselves. Therefore, we find it very difficult to justify a rejection of this suggestion. We are fully aware that this would mean splitting an RCM, which should be avoided when possible. The wishes of a community are more important, however.

78. Another proposal suggested the creation of an extraordinary riding which would include the Kativik Regional Government. We are sympathetic to this request but acknowledge that it cannot be acceded to at this time. The addition of a riding to the province of Quebec at this point would basically require a re-drawing of all ridings in the province, a suggestion that is not practical.

79. It should also be noted that Mr. St-Julien was pleased with the addition of the Chibougamau-Chapais region to the proposed riding. He is opposed to any transfer of this region back to its current riding. This is a very contentious issue, made obvious by the conflicting objections made by Mr. St-Julien and Mr. Gauthier. Even at the local level, there is no unanimity as to where this area should be located for the purposes of electoral boundaries. We were made aware of the conflicting wishes of the mayor of Chibougamau and its councillors. We would note, however, that this area is currently in the riding of Roberval. Furthermore, with the addition of the residents of Amos and surrounding areas to the Baie-James riding, that riding could become very difficult to represent effectively based on its immense size and the increased population.”

## **Comments**

[94] Keeping the RCMs intact, whenever possible, was a constant concern for the Commission.

[95] Since the City of Amos does not border the electoral district of Baie-James—Nunavik, it would have to take certain territories with it.

[96] Detaching Amos and its environs from its RCM and dismembering it to increase the population of the largest federal electoral district of Quebec and one of the largest electoral districts in Canada is not acceptable.

[97] Notwithstanding the sympathy it feels for the population of the Kativik Regional Government, the Commission has already announced its position on adding a new electoral district and, out of concern for intraprovincial parity, cannot accede to this request.

[98] The unanimous desire to attach Oujé-Bougoumou to the electoral district of Baie-James—Nunavik made it possible to put the entire Cree community together, which has a cascading effect on the neighbouring cities of Chibougamau and Chapais, which are part of the Baie-James Region and on which the opinions were mixed.

## **Decision**

[99] The objection is dismissed.

## **Compton—Stanstead**

[100] Mr. David Price, Member of Parliament for the electoral district of Compton—Stanstead, filed an objection, in which he states:

“ ...

For reasons of affinity I am objecting to the commission’s decision to add the former City of Bromptonville to the riding of Compton-Stanstead instead of adding the former Town of Lennoxville (currently a proposed area of the Sherbrooke riding).

The former Town of Lennoxville with a population of 4952 people has similar characteristics and a strong relationship with the semi-rural riding of Compton-Stanstead. The citizens of Lennoxville already identify with Compton-Stanstead as their riding and frequently use the services of the Compton-Stanstead riding office.

Whereas, the former City of Bromptonville with a population of 6013 people, is largely an industrial town and has no direct relationship to the semi-rural riding of Compton-Stanstead. On the other hand, it has strong ties to the riding of Sherbrooke and the City of Sherbrooke, with whom it borders.

Therefore, I am proposing that the former Town of Lennoxville become part of the Riding of Compton Stanstead and that the former City of Bromptonville become part of the riding of Sherbrooke.

The above proposal is supported by the two Member's of Parliament directly affected (Compton-Stanstead and Sherbrooke), the three Member's of Parliament from the surrounding ridings (Richmond-Arthabaska, Brome-Missisquoi and Frontenac-Mégantic), as well as the Ville de Sherbrooke borough presidents for Lennoxville and Bromptonville. ”

[101] The Committee accepted the MP's objection in these terms:

“82. We agree with Mr. Price that the current proposal is illogical in this respect and recommend that the Commission make the appropriate readjustment. We note that this would have no real impact on the populations of the affected ridings. ”

### **Comments**

[102] The former City of Lennoxville is part of the current urban electoral district of Sherbrooke under the 1996 representation order, and has been so since 1966.

[103] The former City of Bromptonville is part of the current urban-rural electoral district of Richmond—Arthabaska, under the 1996 representation order, and, since 1947, has been part of a similar territory where the word Richmond was always part of the name of the riding.

[104] Here again, the Commission had tried to preserve the status quo to the extent it could, changing the existing boundaries as little as possible.

[105] In any case, the Committee's recommendation is accepted. This readjustment, which has the support of all the interested parties and authorities in the boroughs concerned, is not inconsistent with the principles adopted.

### **Decision**

[106] The objection is accepted.

### **Outaouais and Laurentians**

[107] Mr. Mark Assad, Member of Parliament for Gatineau, filed an objection that reads:

“That the House Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs review the following objection: **“the inclusion of the former cities of Buckingham and Masson-Angers in the new riding of Pontiac”**. I give the following reasons.

Apart from the fact that the Commission is required to keep as closely as possible to the established standard and consider, where applicable, any special circumstances in terms of the population in setting boundaries for new districts, **the Commission must also in its proposals take account of:**

- **the community of interest or community of identity in, or the historical pattern of, an electoral district**
- **a manageable geographic size for districts in sparsely populated, rural or northern regions of the province.**

In the report submitted by the Commission to the House of Commons on March 28, 2003, these two principles were not considered. Indeed, the Commission did not take into account the fact that there is no community of interest or community of identity or even a similar historical pattern between Buckingham and Masson-Angers, and Pontiac. Buckingham and Masson-Angers are important constituents of the new City of Gatineau and they have always been considered to be an integral part of the National Capital Region. That is why the community of interest between these two cities is much more with the City of Gatineau. We thus see no affinity with Fort-Coulonge and the Pontiac, nor with Maniwaki and Rapid Lake. Moreover, with a geographical area of 31,174 km<sup>2</sup>, the new district of Pontiac looks much more like a province than a reasonably sized riding. ”

[108] The Committee writes:

“84. He stated that there is no community of interest or community of identity or even a similar historical pattern between Buckingham and Masson-Angers, and the Pontiac region. He claimed that there was neither a historical link nor a linguistic affinity. These two regions are important constituents of the new City of Gatineau and have always been considered an integral part of the National Capital Region. Mr. Assad also argued that the new riding of Pontiac is too large and should not include the two cities.

85. Mr. Assad presented additional information to the Subcommittee following his presentation. He proposed that part of the former city of Aylmer be transferred to the Pontiac riding rather than Buckingham and Masson-Angers. We are unable to support this objection. First, the transfer of Buckingham and Masson-Angers to Gatineau would result in Gatineau having a variance of +29% and the Pontiac riding –29%. While Mr. Assad suggests transferring parts of Aylmer to Pontiac, no indication is given as to which areas should be transferred. This suggestion would also seem to require transferring parts of Gatineau to Hull-Aylmer to make up for its loss. Finally, there is no indication that such a change would be supported by other Members of Parliament in the area. ”

## **Comments**

[109] Mr. Assad asked to return to the boundaries suggested during the proposals, although there were many objections to that scenario.

[110] The Committee adopted a good position in this case by recognizing the importance of increasing regional parity.

## **Decision**

[111] The objection is dismissed.

## **Trois-Seigneuries**

[112] Mr. Mario Laframboise, Member of Parliament for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, filed an objection that reads in part:

“ ...

- Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec took into account demographic concerns only, and not the sense of belonging felt by local people towards their ridings;
- Whereas the municipality of Saint-Colomban is linked both geographically and socially with the City of Mirabel, with which it shares municipal police services;
- whereas the residents of Saint-Colomban have circulated a petition in favour of merging their municipality with the City of Mirabel;
- Whereas it would be damaging to separate Saint-Colomban from Mirabel by attaching it to the riding of Laurentides (Rivière-du-Nord);
- Whereas Saint-Colomban has been part of the riding of Argenteuil--Papineau--Mirabel since 1933;

Therefore, that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs oppose the transfer of the municipality of Saint-Colomban to the neighbouring riding of Laurentides (Rivière-du-Nord) as proposed for the riding of Argenteuil--Papineau--Mirabel by the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec, and that the Committee require that Saint-Colomban remain within the riding of Argenteuil--Papineau--Mirabel. ”

[113] The Committee writes:

“88. Mr. Laframboise adds that the only reason such a decision could have been made is based on the population of the proposed ridings. He indicated that the population in the Argenteuil-Papineau region was not increasing and that while Mirabel had seen some increase, this would be tempered by the closure of the Mirabel Airport in the near future. He also added that the proposed riding of Rivière-du-Nord is part of a very dynamic demographic growth zone that should allow it to make up fairly rapidly any loss of population.

...

90. We strongly support Mr. Laframboise's objection and recommend that Saint-Colomban be transferred back to the riding of Trois-Seigneuries, to which it has a close and natural affinity.

91. The Committee realizes its recommendation goes against the general principle of not splitting RCMs across electoral districts. In general, the Committee respects the Commission's decision to align riding boundaries with the RCMs; but in this specific case, given the close attachment of Saint-Colomban to Mirabel and the riding Argenteuil-Papineau-Mirabel, and given the long history of this attachment, we believe that community of interest concerns override the recent provincial redistribution of municipal boundaries.

...

95. Given the characters of these ridings, particularly the dense, urban ridings of Montreal, as well as the testimony the Subcommittee heard describing these particular ridings — in particular that testimony concerning Trois-Seigneuries and Laval — we believe these readjustments are justifiable and would lead to more effective representation throughout Quebec.

96. We strongly recommend that the Commission adopt the suggestions presented here and recommend that the boundaries be readjusted as described above. ”

### **Comments**

[114] Four electoral districts in the Laurentides and Lanaudière regions had a deviation of more than plus 25%. Concern for intraprovincial parity made some changes necessary.

[115] Saint-Colomban is part of the RCM La Rivière-du-Nord, which is completely within the new federal electoral district of Rivière-du-Nord.

[116] The electoral district of Trois-Seigneuries takes in three complete RCMs and parts of two others.

[117] The proximity of the new City of Saint-Jérôme, a regional centre, makes it so that the population of Saint-Colomban uses its services.

[118] The Commission received no objections from the neighbouring electoral districts.

### **Decision**

[119] The objection is dismissed.

## **Beauharnois—Salaberry**

[120] Mr. Serge Marcil, Member of Parliament for Beauharnois—Salaberry filed an objection that reads in part:

“ ...

That the electoral district of Beauharnois-Salaberry be kept completely intact, which is to say that its composition should remain the same as it was on November 27, 2000.

The new proposal by the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec is based strictly on a mathematical calculation without taking geographical size (currently approximately 2,500km<sup>2</sup>), the number of municipalities and communities in the district or communities of interest into account.

The new proposal is completely different from the first. Why make such a change unless it is an attempt to address problems in other electoral districts.

### **1. Concern to keep the geographical size of rural regions from becoming too large:**

The principle of wanting to combine RCMs under the jurisdiction of the same MP is a worthwhile objective, but it is not obligatory. The evidence clearly shows that it is difficult to achieve it in a mainly rural environment because an electoral district often includes two RCMs and part of another. Including the whole of the third RCM, as suggested in the proposal, would increase the number of municipalities and enlarge the district. It would have a considerable impact on the MP because the MP would have to deal with a larger number of needs, more communities, but with the same means. At the moment, it takes approximately one and a half hours to travel from the westernmost to the easternmost part of the district by road and it is difficult to understand why anyone would want to increase the time involved.

It is also important to note that municipal affairs are a matter of provincial jurisdiction. Relations between the provincial MNA and the municipal council are much more frequent.

### **2. Community of interest**

Most of the cities, towns or RCMs affected by the changes being proposed by the Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec have asked that the status quo be maintained.

Saint-Rémi and Saint-Michel have natural social and economic interests with the City of Châteauguay, the largest in the region, whereas Saint-Édouard and Saint-Jacques-le-Mineur have obvious interests that match those of the City of Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, as Saint-Jean is the home town for many of the residents of the former.



The 25 per cent rule, more or less, would make it possible to readily maintain the status quo for the Beauharnois-Salaberry electoral district, and at the same time it would also make it very easy for Châteauguay and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu to incorporate the municipalities of Saint-Rémi and Saint-Michel, as well as Saint-Édouard and Saint-Jacques-le-Mineur. An analysis of demographic growth for Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and Châteauguay shows that these two electoral districts will not have reached the maximum allowable size, even after the next ten years. ”

[121] The Committee writes:

“100. The Committee notes that the design of Beauharnois-Salaberry is awkward, with the major road networks requiring considerable indirect travel to get from one part of the riding to another. It also notes that Beauharnois-Salaberry is a large, largely rural riding, sharing little community of interest with the dense, urban eastern corner of the riding as proposed.

101. According to numbers available from Election Canada, Mr. Marcil’s proposed changes place Beauharnois-Salaberry at 92,772, with a variance of -3.9% from the provincial quotient; Châteauguay at 110,977, with a variance of +15%; and Saint-Jean at 97,864, with a variance of +1.4%.

102. The Committee believes that given the urban and rural differences split across these three electoral districts, as portrayed in Mr. Marcil’s proposal and his testimony to the Subcommittee, these variances are acceptable. It supports Mr. Marcil’s objection and recommends the boundaries be readjusted as he describes. ”

### **Comments**

[122] No objections were filed by the members of Parliament for the surrounding electoral districts, which suggests they are satisfied with the boundaries.

[123] The electoral district contains three whole RCMs, thus respecting the communities of interests.

[124] The electoral district, in large part, maintains the same boundaries as in the 1996 representation order, as well as the name it was then given, the whole in a spirit of historical continuity to respect, as much as possible, the current configuration.

[125] The new configuration respects intraprovincial parity.

### **Decision:**

[126] The objection is dismissed.

## **Lower St. Lawrence, Gaspésie and Chaudières-Appalaches**

### **a) Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine**

[127] Mr. Georges Farrah, Member of Parliament for Bonaventure—Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok filed an objection, supported by his colleague from the neighbouring electoral district of Matapédia—Matane, Mr. Jean-Yves Roy, proposing that the RCM La Haute-Gaspésie be transferred to the electoral district of Matapédia—Matane, and that the RCM Avignon become part of the electoral district of Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

[128] The Committee writes:

“109. The Committee strongly supports Mr. Farrah’s suggestions and recommends the boundaries for these two ridings be adjusted according to his suggestion. ”

### **Comments**

[129] Moving these RCMs has the support of the two MPs and the authorities concerned.

[130] This change has no effect on other electoral districts.

[131] This readjustment does not contravene the principles adopted.

### **Decision**

[132] The objection is accepted.

### **b) Rimouski—Témiscouata and Rivière-du-Loup—Montmagny**

[133] Mr. Paul Crête, Member of Parliament for the current electoral district of Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques filed an objection that reads in part:

“ ...

The Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec took a step in the right direction by agreeing to maintain four ridings in the regions of the Lower St. Lawrence, the Gaspé and the Magdalen Islands, instead of the three ridings in their original proposal, and by respecting the boundaries of the Regional County Municipalities (RCMs). However, the decision to divide the riding of Kamouraska--Rivière-du-Loup--Témiscouata--Les Basques in two, putting the RCMs of Les Basques and Témiscouata with the municipality of Rimouski and the RCM of Rimouski-Neigette to form the new riding of Rimouski--Témiscouata, and putting the RCMs of Rivière-du-Loup and Kamouraska with the RCM of Montmagny et l'Islet to form the new riding of Montmagny--Rivière-du-Loup, would break a natural economic, social and cultural region in two pieces and create a riding overlapping the two separate administrative regions of Bas-Saint-Laurent and Chaudière-Les Appalaches. Its Member of Parliament

would then have to work with two different regional offices of Canada Economic Development and Human Resources Canada.

I suggest that the four ridings be maintained in eastern Quebec, including one exceptional riding justified by the geographical reality of the Magdalen Islands.

I therefore propose that the existing riding of Kamouraska--Rivière-du-Loup--Témiscouata--Les Basques be maintained, and I suggest the boundaries set out on the following page for the four ridings of eastern Quebec.

However, whatever boundaries are finally chosen, I would ask that you name the riding after the RCMs it groups together. ”

[134] The Honourable Gilbert Normand, Member of Parliament for Bellechasse—Etchemins—Montmagny—L’Islet filed an objection requesting the status quo for his electoral district and for the four other existing electoral districts in eastern Quebec.

[135] He alleges among other things:

“ ...

**Whereas** the population of the constituency can no longer comment on the final proposal made in the report to split the riding in two, even though this had never been considered as a scenario.

...

**Whereas** the new constituency of Rivière-du-Loup-Montmagny does not take the administrative regions of Quebec into account.

...

**Whereas** these significant administrative differences [*which he alleges in the preceding paragraphs*] would create two classes of citizens within the same riding.

...

**Whereas** the population of the new district of Rivière-du-Loup-Montmagny would increase by more than 10,000, and affect the representation of citizens. ”

[136] The Committee writes:

“121. The Committee understands and sympathises with Mr. Normand and Mr. Crête. However, the return of their two ridings to their original boundaries would have a ripple effect throughout the region. It notes that the adjacent ridings on either side of Rimouski-Témiscouata and Rivière-du-Loup—Montmagny have not filed objections to their

boundaries. We reiterate that the suggestions made by Mr. Crête and Mr. Normand are not feasible in conjunction with the suggestions made by Mr. Farrah, and which the Committee has recommended the Commission accept.

122. Furthermore, the Committee notes, just as for the objection filed by Mr. Odina Desrochers (see below), their proposals hold potential ripple effects for Lévis-Bellechasse and Beauce, and perhaps beyond. The Subcommittee investigated whether there was an opportunity, through the combined objections of Mr. Desrochers and the two objections here, to solve the issues raised on both sides of the city of Lévis, but could find no means to solve the distribution problems raised by any of the three objections.

123. The Committee, with regret, cannot support the objections filed by Mr. Crête and Mr. Normand regarding the electoral districts of Rimouski-Témiscouata and Rivière-du-Loup—Montmagny. ”

### **Comments**

[137] Pursuant to the public hearings, the Commission thoroughly reviewed its proposals for the Lower St. Lawrence and Gaspé regions.

[138] It then deviated significantly from the electoral quotient for three neighbouring electoral districts, Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Matapédia—Matane and Rimouski—Témiscouata, without, however, preserving three electoral districts that, according to the 2001 Census, were all exceptional, since they deviated by more than minus 25%.

[139] The RCMs were kept whole.

[140] These changes, designed to protect the community of interest while deviating as little as possible from intraprovincial parity, had a domino effect that unfortunately necessitated changes to certain electoral districts without notice to their inhabitants.

[141] The status quo sought by these two objections would have repercussions throughout the region.

[142] The objection regarding the electoral districts of Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine and Matapédia—Matane was accepted.

[143] The Committee's non-recommendation seems well founded.

### **Decisions**

[144] The objections made by Mr. Paul Crête and Mr. Gilbert Normand are dismissed.

**c) Mégantic—L'Érable and Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière**

[145] Mr. Odina Desrochers, Member of Parliament for Lotbinière-L'Érable, filed an objection that reads in part:

“ 1. Whereas the prefect and all the mayors of the RCM of L'Érable have expressed, through a resolution, their desire to keep the existing name of the current electoral district of Lotbinière-L'Érable

2. Whereas the agencies and socio-economic representatives of my electoral district have indicated that they wish to preserve the agricultural and rural identity of the region, the only one of its kind in Quebec

3. Whereas the St-Nicolas and St-Étienne-de-Lauzon sectors of the new City of Lévis wish to remain in an electoral district that includes the whole of the current geographical area of Lévis

4. Whereas the RCM of Lotbinière refuses to be incorporated into the City of Lévis, out of fear of being overwhelmed by an urban centre, with 75 per cent of the demographic weight located in the western part of the City of Lévis

5. Whereas section 15 of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act* states that, in preparing its report, each commission for a province shall take into consideration the identity or the historical pattern of an electoral district in establishing reasonable boundaries. ”

[146] The Committee writes:

“127. Mr. Desrochers realizes that the current variance of +28% for Lotbinière-L'Érable is not supportable under the legislation. He proposes joining the RCMs of Lotbinière and L'Érable to St-Nicolas, St-Étienne-de-Lauzon et St-Rédempteur. The Chaudière River would become the natural boundary for the region. These municipalities, in conjunction with the former municipality of Bernières have worked together for several years to create economic development. Hundreds of families from Lotbinière have settled in these three municipalities.

128. To make up the numbers, Mr. Desrochers proposes that the municipalities of the rural sector of Bécancour be annexed to the new electoral district of Richelieu. The six municipalities of RCM Arthabaska could be placed together in the new electoral district of Richmond—Arthabaska. St-Lambert-de-Lauzon would remain [in] Mr. Desrochers's proposed constituency of Lotbinière—L'Érable.

129. According to data available from Elections Canada, the effect of Mr. Desrochers' proposal on the affected electoral districts is as follows:

- Beauce: +5.8%
- Levis-Bellechasse: +38%
- Mégantic-Érable: -34.5%
- Richmond-Arthabaska: +1%
- Richmond: -4%

130. Obviously, changes to other ridings would have to be made to accommodate Mr. Desrochers's primary goal of uniting the two rural ridings. It seems unlikely that such large variances can readily be accommodated without a severe cascade of boundary readjustments throughout the region. The Committee investigated whether a minimal number of readjustments would be able to solve the issue, but was unable to come up with a solution. We sympathize with Mr. Desrochers but see no means to achieve his objection. ”

### **Comments**

[147] No objections were filed by the members of Parliament for the surrounding electoral districts, which suggests they are satisfied with the boundaries.

[148] The RCMs were kept whole.

[149] Recreating the electoral district of Lotbinière-L'Érable is not an option because, like the Committee, the Commission was unable to find a solution that did not create significant impacts on the surrounding electoral districts.

[150] Moreover, in this case the name change requested by Mr. Desrochers cannot be accepted; the name L'Érable, which had appeal to many, has been given to the new electoral district of Mégantic—L'Érable, which contains the RCM L'Érable.

### **Decision**

[151] The objection is dismissed.

### **Name changes**

[152] The Commission which had drawn inspiration from the recommendations of various commissions on toponymy, some of whose guidelines were cited in its proposals, in its decision to use a single geographical not repeated name to designate each federal electoral district. It is apparent from the comments received, however, that the approach adopted by the Commission did not receive unanimous support and approval. When writing its report, the Commission agreed to modify its views and accept names with two elements. Even though there was often no prior request to that end, the Commission here accepts the requests for names with two elements supported by the Committee, as follows:

<b>By</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
Mr. Ghislain Lebel	Chambly	Chambly—Borduas
Mr. Robert Bertrand	Labelle	Laurentides—Labelle
Mr. Guy St-Julien	Baie-James—Nunavik	Nunavik—Eeyou
The Honourable Paul Martin	LaSalle	LaSalle—Émard
Mr. Robert Lanctôt	Châteauguay	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant
Mr. Yvan Loubier	Saint-Hyacinthe	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot

[153] Subject to what follows concerning the special requests relative to the names of the electoral districts in the City of Laval, the Committee sent the Commission the following requests, which involve more than two components:

<b>By</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
Mr. Mario Laframboise	Trois-Seigneuries	Argenteuil—Papineau— Mirabel
Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay	Rimouski—Témiscouata	Rimouski—Neigette— Témiscouata—Les Basques

[154] In addition, Mr. Paul Crête, Member of Parliament for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, at the end of his objection, asked that his electoral district be given the names of the RCMs it contains, that is, Kamouraska, L'Islet, Rivière-du-Loup and Montmagny.

[155] The Committee does not appear to have expressed itself on this request.

[156] Given the difficulty of choosing all the relevant geographical elements in each electoral district, it was thought best to keep the names given to the province's various electoral districts simple.

[157] It is in everyone's interest to choose names with only one element for the electoral districts—two as a last resort.

[158] Moreover, allowing further extensions at this stage might offend those who, although they would have liked a name with more than two elements, did not file an objection because the Commission had clearly expressed its views on this matter in its earlier reports.

[159] Therefore, the Commission cannot accept the Committee's recommendations regarding the name changes requested by the following MPs: Mr. Mario Laframboise, Mr. Paul Crête and Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay.

[160] However, in the case of the electoral district of Trois-Seigneuries, this new name, which was chosen as a result of representations, seems less appropriate. Even the person who suggested it has asked to revert to the status quo. The electoral district will henceforth be called Argenteuil—Mirabel. This double-barrelled name has a historical reference: the name Argenteuil

has been associated with the electoral district since Confederation. It also reflects the current reality: the City of Mirabel is the most populous in the electoral district.

[161] The Commission agrees with Mr. Gilles A. Perron, Member of Parliament for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, and with the Committee, that Rivière-des-Mille-Îles takes in a number of communities, including Deux-Montagnes. It accepts the objection and the electoral district will keep the name Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

[162] As mentioned previously, the Commission did not think it wise to reconfigure the borders of Laval. Names that make use of cardinal points, which often create translation problems and are a source of geographical inaccuracy and imprecision (such as the former electoral district of Québec East), are to be avoided.

[163] However, the Commission will accept the first suggestion that Mrs. Raymonde Folco made to the Committee. The electoral district called Île-Jésus in the report is renamed Laval—Les Îles, even though this means that the neighbouring electoral district will contain the element Laval.

[164] Mrs. Carole-Marie Allard, who had expressed doubts about the name Duvernay suggested by the Commission in its proposals and who, in a subsequent letter, suggested the name François-Berthelot, which the Commission deemed acceptable in its report, is now asking for the name Alfred-Pellan, if a name with a reference to cardinal points is not chosen.

[165] Although the Commission feels that the name François-Berthelot, the second seigneur of Île-Jésus, the name of that island since 1636, has a great historical connotation, it will accept Mrs. Allard's new request and rename the electoral district called François-Berthelot in honour of that great Canadian painter, Alfred Pellan.

### **Decisions regarding names**

[166] The objection of Mr. Ghislain Lebel is accepted.

[167] The objection of Mr. Robert Bertrand is accepted, as stated above.

[168] The objection of Mr. Guy St-Julien is accepted.

[169] The objection of the Honourable Paul Martin is accepted.

[170] The objection of Mr. Robert Lanctôt is accepted.

[171] The objection of Mr. Yvan Loubier is accepted.

[172] The objection of Mr. Mario Laframboise is rejected. However, the electoral district of Trois-Seigneuries will henceforth be called Argenteuil—Mirabel.

[173] The objection of Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay is rejected.



[174] The objection of Mr. Paul Crête is rejected.

[175] The objection of Mr. Gilles A. Perron is accepted.

[176] The objection of Mrs. Raymonde Folco is accepted, as stated above.

[177] The objection of Mrs. Carole-Marie Allard is accepted, as stated above.

### **Conclusion**

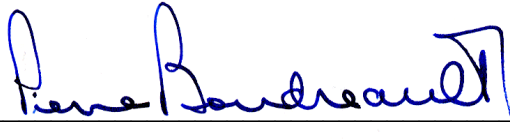
[178] The Commission hopes that the thoughts and efforts that went into the proposals of August 31, 2002, the report of March 14, 2003, and the decisions made here will facilitate the next electoral readjustment.

[179] In particular, the efforts made to attain a better numerical balance of populations, rather than maintaining the status quo, should smooth out future difficulties.

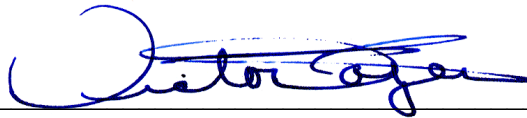
[180] However, the Commission recognizes that population movements may mean that the work will remain complex and present equally hearth-rending challenges.

[181] Therefore, the Commission's report dated March 14, 2003, is subject to the changes approved in this text. The report thus modified constitutes the final report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec for the purposes of section 23 of the Act.

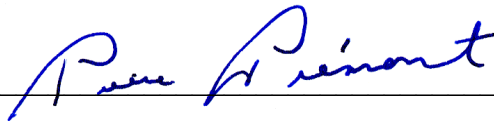
Dated at Laval, Quebec, this 11th day of August, 2003.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Pierre Boudreault", positioned above a horizontal line.

Honourable Pierre Boudreault  
*Chairman*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Victor Cayer", positioned above a horizontal line.

Victor Cayer  
*Deputy Chairman*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Pierre Prémont", positioned above a horizontal line.

Pierre Prémont  
*Commissioner*

CERTIFIED copy of the disposition of objections to the Report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Quebec.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Claude Despatie", positioned above a horizontal line.

Claude Despatie  
*Secretary*