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# **Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, May 2, 2013**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Joe Preston**



## Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Thursday, May 2, 2013

•(1130)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC)):** We'll go ahead and get started. We've had to start a little late. I'd still like to finish this session somewhere around the top of the noon hour today, so I'm asking each of our witnesses and all of our members to be as good as they can be at watching the clock, and succinct in their questions, answers, and statements.

We will give each of our members five minutes to tell us their story about their riding, and then members will ask questions. I'm simply going to go left to right, because that's my natural way of doing it.

Mr. Dykstra, would you like to go first, for five minutes?

**Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC):** Sure, why not?

Thank you very much, Chairman.

I am presenting to you a survey we did in my riding. We've already forwarded this to the clerk.

I basically asked people to respond very specifically to the questions that the commission had put forward concerning whether or not they would support the riding changes and whether or not they should remain as is.

As you can see, to the questions that were put there are well over 1,200 responses that said the riding boundaries, based on the questions that the commission asked, should remain exactly the same, and I have 17 responses from those who believe that the riding boundaries should change.

So, when you go out to the people of the city of St. Catharines, when you talk to those folks regarding the Niagara region and how it should be set up, there is strong evidence to show, from the people themselves, that the first choice would be to leave the boundaries exactly the way they are and that the second choice would be to go with the commission's first iteration.

We're a little different down in Niagara. We've now had three iterations from the commission. We believe—Mr. Allison, Mr. Nicholson, and I—that the original boundary changes, if we were going to make them, really put Niagara in a very strong position. They levelled the playing field concerning what the numbers were going to be for each of the ridings. They actually brought in the Niagara region.

Prior to and as of today, we have a piece of Hamilton that is to be considered as inside the Niagara region, as far as the ridings go. The

original changes would have split the Niagara region up equally into four; we're now in a position whereby Dean Allison would have approximately 84,000 constituents and Rob Nicholson, one riding over from him, would have more than 126,000 constituents. So there is a complete imbalance in terms of positioning; there is a complete imbalance in terms of numbers, which I think the commission addressed in its first iteration; it actually put us in a strong position.

Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, that the rationale makes it clear that communities of interest should in fact be considered as communities in moving forward. We obviously have lots of objections to the types of changes being suggested and would rather keep ourselves as whole as possible—if not as originally, then at least as in the first iteration.

The city council of St. Catharines overwhelmingly supported the first iteration of boundary changes. Minister Jim Bradley, the Liberal member of the provincial parliament endorsed the original changes. I know that they change the riding of Welland, and I'm sure Mr. Allen is going to speak to that. But when you look at it from an overall perspective, it really does speak to the fact that we need to have four ridings that are situated within the Niagara region, four ridings that are actually of the same approximate size and that benefit the communities the most.

I'll leave it there, Mr. Chairman, and will respond, obviously, to any questions that anyone may have.

•(1135)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Dykstra.

We'll hear Mr. Allison for five minutes.

**Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll keep my comments fairly brief, given the fact that Mr. Dykstra has already covered them off.

I want to add a comment with regard to Hamilton. I know it's been suggested by other members not from Hamilton—I believe there was a Liberal MP who stated it—that Hamilton should be changed.

All the members from Hamilton are unanimous that the changes that they proposed are fine. I want to reiterate that off the top.

The second thing is that I would reiterate what Mr. Dykstra said. That is, the first proposal would seem to make sense. One of the original reasons we were looking at it is to try to rebalance the riding.

My biggest concern is that I'm going from 115,000 to 85,000 people. I believe that Niagara should have four full seats, which we're going to get, but as Mr. Dykstra mentioned, we're going to have one seat that has more than 120,000, and I'm going to have 25,000 people fewer. While the new changes will certainly benefit my riding, based on the last election, I believe it would be nice to have a balance of population.

The other thing that I'll mention concerns community of identity. That was the second concept. Population was one; this was the second.

Certainly the southern part of St. Catharines doesn't necessarily have much to do with Welland. I think one of Mr. Allen's recommendations or thoughts was that Thorold didn't have a lot in common with the rural parts of Niagara, but I'd also venture to say that the southern part of St. Catharines does not have much in common with Thorold and Welland.

I state this for the record. I realize that what we think would make sense is to balance the population, although I realize that's been challenged by this whole concept of communities of interest. You have my letter; I'm not going to rehash it. I just want to put on the record that we certainly supported the first iteration of the recommendations, before we came out with the second and third options.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Allison.

Minister Finley, it's fantastic to have you here today.

**Hon. Diane Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk):** Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here.

**The Chair:** I know you have to leave by noon, so we're going to let you make your statement and Mr. Allen make his statement. We'll hope that the members can ask you questions before you have to leave.

**Hon. Diane Finley:** Thank you. Hopefully they won't have too many questions.

Mine is a very simple concern. The official report's recommendation says that Haldimand—Norfolk, my riding, would have no changes, and yet the accompanying map shows a change, a change of one concession block up in the centre-north corner.

What is in dispute here, and I haven't been able to settle this, concerns that one concession block. Does it belong to Haldimand County, in which case it should be part of my riding, if we're to maintain the integrity of geopolitical boundaries, or does it indeed belong to the Six Nations reserve, in which case it should go with the adjacent riding; I believe it is Brant.

All I'm asking is, could we get some clarity, so that whatever boundary is there for electoral purposes matches the official geopolitical boundaries?

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Minister.

Mr. Allen, it's great to have you here today too.

We haven't been in committee together for awhile.

• (1140)

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Thank you very much, Mr. Preston. That's very true. It is a pleasure to be here. Thank you.

Mr. Dykstra and Mr. Allison have outlined some of the concerns that they have, and certainly there were concerns expressed in the hearings in Niagara Falls, at which I have to say I was the only MP who actually attended, as did two members of the provincial Parliament, one from the Niagara Falls riding who is a Liberal and one from the Welland riding who is also a New Democrat, with 11 other presenters.

For the Niagara Falls riding, as far as the mayors and councils of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie were concerned, they were unanimous in passing resolutions that they wished to stay within the boundaries of the Niagara Falls riding, as much as Justice Valin admitted that indeed this made it a larger riding, but one that fell within the allowable limit.

Notwithstanding Mr. Allison's suggestion and the absolute fact that his riding declines in population, when one looks at the map he has the largest geographical component. In fact, he almost has half the Niagara peninsula, geographically. I'm not suggesting that this is like northern Ontario, if you're in Timmins—James Bay, but in the south it's a pretty big size. He also has four of the fastest-growing communities in the Niagara peninsula inside the Niagara West boundary, which means that it fills out over time.

Clearly, we had some suggestions for the commission. They weren't actually followed through on, but the commission came to some conclusions and changed the map. They had a second hearing in Hamilton, which also included Niagara and which I attended—I believe I was the only witness from Niagara who attended the second hearing—and at that point I suggested to the commission that I was fairly satisfied with what they had done.

They changed it again by moving the boundary in St. Catharines more towards the south, if you will, which more resembled what Mr. Dykstra's riding was—the previous boundary as it is now, minus a sliver on the west end.

My position at this point is that I am very confident and pleased with what the boundaries are as they have been shown in this iteration. So are the mayors of Welland and Port Colborne, and so are the mayors down the riverside because, of the communities of interest that the commission took into consideration, the Niagara peninsula is more of a north-south configuration, the centrepiece being down the Welland Canal.

If you actually look at it, it's Highway 406 and the Welland Canal that drive north to south. When you look at the Niagara River, which is all border communities—Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls, Fort Erie—all have border crossings and they're all on the Niagara River. That's exactly what the commission looked at, at the end of the day.

The only last comment I'll make, Mr. Chair, is that the south end of St. Catharines has been part of the configuration of the Welland—Thorold riding for about four decades. So, speaking to the suggestion that somehow the south end of St. Catharines isn't part of the Welland riding, the distinction is that the folks in St. Catharines, and indeed in Thorold and Port Colborne, don't like the name "Welland". What they want is "Niagara Centre", and they're quite happy to hear that we're going back to being Niagara Centre. It's really the name Welland that disturbs the folks in those other communities, not actually Niagara Centre.

I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'm going to give this panel of witnesses some sort of award for being the briefest. That was fantastic. Three minutes was the top number out of five, and I've never seen politicians use less than half their time.

We'll now go to questions from members.

Mr. Reid, you're going to get five minutes.

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC):** Five minutes? Okay. I copied Mr. Hsu after our joint presentation. He had a little timer that he used, and I went and got his software, so I'm now using his timer.

I want to start with Diane Finley, if I may.

I've taken a look at the very thorough set of materials that you have here. The question that occurs to me, if I understand from looking at this map, is that essentially what was an indent—and you can't possibly see what I'm showing here, but the indent southwest of Caledonia—more or less becomes one straight line, instead of there being a jog to the west. Is that correct?

**Hon. Diane Finley:** The upper jog into the grey areas is what's in dispute.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Yes. How many people live in the area that's in question?

**Hon. Diane Finley:** According to poll maps, there is one voter on that block, but the issue that we have not been able to determine is—

• (1145)

**The Chair:** It's a very solid voter, I take it.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Hon. Diane Finley:** —whether that land belongs to Six Nations reserve or to Haldimand County. We haven't been able to get a straight answer on that.

If it belongs to the reserve, then I support moving it in to keep the reserve intact; if it is indeed part of the County of Haldimand, then I believe it should be included with the riding. But I have been unable to determine whose land it is.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Right.

**Hon. Diane Finley:** There are conflicting reports.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Yes. That has been in the news the odd time over the past couple of years.

For the other presenters, Mr. Dykstra, I'd like you to submit your questionnaire to the clerk. She has to translate it before she can circulate it to us. It would be helpful for us to then be able to see what the questions were.

I just want to be clear. Mr. Dykstra, Mr. Allison, and Minister Nicholson—who isn't with us—all have the same agreement.

Mr. Allen, you are not in agreement with what they're saying. Would that be a fair summary, or do you agree with them?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** In Madam Finley's case, it has no impact on my riding whatsoever, so I have no comment to make about the minister's riding. The discrepancy would be depending on what's being asked for here. If both parties, Mr. Allison and Mr. Dykstra, are asking to go back to the original iteration, then I would be opposed to both of them.

If not—

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Because that affects the boundaries of your riding at that point.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** That's correct.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** If it doesn't affect the boundaries of your riding, then that's not the substance of your point. You came here to make the point that you like your boundaries the way they are now.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** That's correct.

In reading Mr. Allison's written deposition as well as Mr. Dykstra's, in Mr. Dykstra's case, asking for his boundary to be extended to the west, to the urban boundary line of St. Catharines, has no impact on my riding. I'm mute on that point.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Okay, great.

Then Mr. Dykstra and Mr. Allison, you and Minister Nicholson are making the same presentation. That is, all three of you are asking for the boundaries to be in the same... There's no disagreement among you on where you're going with that.

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** That's correct.

When we originally saw the changes that were made in the first iteration, they made sense. They obviously were researched, and they actually position the Niagara region in a much stronger way in terms of representation.

Mr. Allen comments about how, geographically, the Welland Canal is part of a way to determine how the riding should be split up. I would argue that in fact the Niagara Escarpment runs right along from a north to south line. It's a perfect switch in terms of where the changes should be made with respect to the ridings. How Mr. Allison's Niagara West riding actually encompasses a piece of that makes a lot more sense than the way the ridings are set up today, if we're going to use things like the Welland Canal and the Niagara Escarpment as position points.

The complaint of people in the south part of St. Catharines is not that they're called the Welland riding, but that they do not feel as if they're part of it. They feel much more like they're a part of the city of St. Catharines.

I certainly could have brought in a lot of evidence today to show how many people from that part of the city come to my office and look for assistance. They have never understood why the boundaries were set up the way they were.

These changes actually impact that.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Sorry, I only have 15 seconds, and I have one question I want to get out here.

There was an extra set of hearings in your region.

Am I right that there were only, as was the case everywhere else, the initial proposal map and then the second report map? There were just two set of maps, but an extra set of hearings. Is that correct?

**Mr. Dean Allison:** Yes.

I'll just speak to Mr. Allen's point. The reason that there's no representation from us is that we were happy with the first set of maps.

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** Yes, we told the commission that we were satisfied.

**Mr. Dean Allison:** We told them that we were happy, so we didn't go there to argue the point that they should be changed. That's why we weren't there.

**Mr. Scott Reid:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Reid.

Madam Latendresse, five minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses for their statements.

I will start with Ms. Finley, as I gather she has to leave soon.

Ms. Finley, according to what you said, the minor change you are proposing affects the riding of Brant, is that correct?

**Hon. Diane Finley:** Yes.

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** I wanted clarification on that.

Do you have the support of the member for the riding?

**Hon. Diane Finley:** It is Mr. McColeman, and there is no problem. It has to do with the integrity of the boundaries for the first nations? The issue is whether it falls within the Haldimand-Norfolk riding?

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** Very well.

Obviously, when we prepare the report, it is easier when there is a consensus among those affected by the change.

**Hon. Diane Finley:** It affects just one person.

I would like the electoral boundaries to remain the same so as to preserve the integrity of both ridings. But I wasn't able to figure out whether that piece of land is part of the reserve or not.

• (1150)

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** Fine. Thank you.

On the screen, can we see the proposed version and the version that appears in the report for the ridings in the Niagara region? We could look at the Niagara West region, for example. It's to get a better sense of what's involved.

My question is for Mr. Allison.

In your letter, you make proposals. You want to make certain changes to the riding. Do you know exactly how many people would be affected?

[*English*]

**Mr. Dean Allison:** I guess the challenge is that the original proposal would leave all the ridings balanced, which was the original intent—the balance of population—and which would give all of us approximately 115,000 people. What it means now is that I'm going to go down from 115,000 people, which is what I had, and that included Hamilton. All of Hamilton is happy, but I lose 25,000 people. Once again, the proposal now is that I go from 115,000 under the first proposal down to 85,000 people, and my concern is that the original intent of the commission was to balance the population.

Now, I also realize that there's this community of interest, which is the second piece of that, but purely from a population point of view, it means that I lose 25,000 people. It makes my riding stronger, according to the last election, but I believe it's important to balance the population as well.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse:** Very well.

Mr. Allen, you attended the commission's public hearings. Could you please explain why you prefer that the boundary run north to south instead of east to west, as we see here? What did you say when you appeared before the commission?

[*English*]

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** In the Niagara region itself, which is a homogenous region and actually has a regional government, its axis is in transportation corridors to the north-south, not just the canal, but Highway 406, and it's the QEW that comes from the north in St. Catharines to the south in Fort Erie. Most of its major arterial roads are north-south. Most of its infrastructure is north-south. In fact, the economic gateways, as defined by the Niagara region, are Welland, Thorold, and Port Colborne, in my riding, and Niagara Falls and Fort Erie, which are in Minister Nicholson's riding.

The businesses and chambers of commerce who came before the commission, such as the chamber of commerce in Thorold and the business association in downtown Thorold, wanted to be aligned with Welland and Port Colborne. The chamber of commerce in Fort Erie wanted to be aligned with Niagara Falls. The mayors and councils were unanimous in Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie that they wished to be aligned in a north-south axis because of the river. The fact is that all three communities of interest are border communities based on that Niagara River that borders the U.S.

Look at things like school boards, for instance. The school board is the District School Board of Niagara, but superintendents are responsible in a north-south axis. In the Niagara Regional Police Service system, when you look at how sergeants and divisions are, it's a north-south axis. The divide of a geographical piece called the Niagara Escarpment is a wonderful place to grow wine on the Bench in Beamsville, but beyond that, there is no divide between that.... If that were the case, then the top end of St. Catharines would never be with St. Catharines, because it's above the escarpment.

I understand that it's a geographical piece; it's just never been used as a political boundary. As I said earlier, the south end of St. Catharines, in one iteration or another, has literally been part of the Welland—Thorold constituency for decades. It's not a new iteration. It's actually an old one.

The last point I'll make is that the maps did change from the first time. A new hearing was held in Hamilton as part of that piece. That was the opportunity to challenge the changes to the map from the first, and I was the only person who went.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Monsieur Dion, you have five minutes.

[Translation]

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.):** Thank you kindly, Mr. Chair.

[English]

Mr. Allen, I have no questions for you. I think you made your point very clear.

I have more questions for my other two colleagues. I think the stakes are much bigger.

I would like to know if you are equipped to give to this committee, Mr. Allison and Mr. Dykstra, for the four ridings involved, information on what the gap is between—together with the plus and minus—the provincial quota with the proposal of the commission, the last one, and with the one you propose. I ask because your main argument is that the four ridings will be more equal in size. Are you able to put numbers on that?

If you're not, maybe Madame Boisvert and Mr. Montpetit are. It's important for this committee that we figure out what is at stake.

• (1155)

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** Through you, Chair, to Mr. Dion, the numbers are really clear that in the first iteration, in the changes that were made by the commission, there was a balance of between 113,000 and about 117,000 for each of the four ridings.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** One hundred and thirteen and one hundred and...?

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** Seventeen.

When you move to the changes that are now defined with the third iteration.... And here I would like to say that just because you don't go to present at a meeting that is being held.... In fact, the process you can use is a lot wider and broader than just attending a meeting. That's what both Mr. Allison and I have done in putting our objections forward.

To your point, Mr. Allison's riding will have approximately 84,000 to 85,000 people and Mr. Nicholson's riding will actually have around 126,000 people.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** The biggest one will be Mr. Nicholson's.

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** Yes.

I think Mr. Allen and I have—

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** As a percentage of the provincial quota, what does that mean?

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** Right at the edge of the two, I think the minimum threshold is to be approximately 84,000, and the maximum threshold was to be about 126,000 or 127,000. They fit within the threshold, but it actually defeats the purpose, or at least one of the main principles in Niagara, of what redistribution was supposed to do, which was to equalize this out.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Are these mostly urban ridings?

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** No, I would say that I have the most urban riding. In fact, I have the only urban riding of the three.

Mr. Allen definitely has some urban and he also has some rural areas. The other three ridings are a mix of urban and rural areas.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Would you say that since one riding is more rural than the others, it's maybe a justification for this riding being less numerous?

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** No, I don't, because I think the commission put together a really sound strategy. Currently, the Niagara West—Glanbrook riding could flow very nicely with respect to another piece of St. Catharines that already has a rural component of St. Catharines in it. Adding the additional piece would simply strengthen what the riding makeup is.

**Mr. Dean Allison:** I'd just like to comment quickly on the quota.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Quickly, because I have only a few minutes.

**Mr. Dean Allison:** Very quickly on the quota: the report states here that 86,000 would be 18.53% below the provincial quota, so my riding would be 18% below the provincial quota, according to the report.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** That is 18%.

**Mr. Dean Allison:** That is 18.5% below the provincial quota.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** You have heard Mr. Allen's concerns about his communities. Why do you not agree that community interest must also be part of the equation?

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** I do, actually. In fact, that's why I'm here today.

I think that our community of interest would be significantly changed, based on the boundary changes, and I think the St. Catharines community and the Greater Niagara community are more fully served under the first iteration put forward.

One of the main questions I asked in my survey of the people of St. Catharines was about the sense of community. Again, each and every person indicated that the strength of a sense of community was

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Is there a way to solve this discrepancy problem, and to solve Mr. Allen's problem at the same time?

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** I think there is. I think the third iteration gets there, but I don't think it's quite there yet.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Did you talk to each other in order to solve your disagreement?

**Mr. Dean Allison:** We agree to disagree.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** To be honest, I'm having a little bit of difficulty understanding where Mr. Allison and Mr. Dykstra are going and whether they're back to the first iteration, or whether they're okay with the third one with some modifications.

If we're speaking to the third map, which is the one you have before you with the modification they proposed in written statements, Mr. Dykstra's proposal to move to the western urban boundary of St. Catharines is an issue between him and Mr. Allison. It doesn't affect the Welland riding whatsoever.

The issue is that Mr. Allison proposes to come into the west end and the south end of St. Catharines, which is presently part of the Welland riding. If that's the proposal, yes, I object to Mr. Allison's coming in to take that piece of southwestern St. Catharines. Actually, under his proposal, he would come in from the southwest and finish at the 406, which would mean that St. Catharines would be divided into three bigger pieces than it is now.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** If I still have time, Mr. Chairman, my question is—

**The Chair:** Sure, one more question. I'll be flexible with you, Mr. Dion.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Is it possible to solve this discrepancy problem within your three ridings while not affecting Mr. Allen's concerns too much? Or is it impossible?

**Mr. Dean Allison:** I would say that it's a challenge.

• (1200)

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** This started off on a bad foot, based on some comments that Mr. Allen made publicly. We've talked about that and we have addressed that issue.

I think we've come some distance to being able to resolve it, but I do think that Mr. Allison is right, that there is a way to strengthen this both from a sense of community perspective and a size perspective by making one more step, and that's what we're asking for here today.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Is it possible to bring to the committee this compromise solution and to work with Mr. Allen on that?

**Mr. Dean Allison:** We've had the discussion and he doesn't agree with our proposal, and that's why we're here.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** I tried, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** I admire the attempt.

Thank you to our witnesses. I think we're going to end at that part. Minister Finley has to leave.

I know, Mr. Cullen, you wanted a minute but—

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Just one minute.

I'm confused about whether there is something unique in this....

**The Chair:** I will excuse Minister Finley, and allow you one minute.

Thank you.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Yes, it's not for Minister Finley at all.

**Hon. Diane Finley:** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** The only thing that's different about this process and that I don't understand is that the commission chose to hold a secondary meeting with the new maps presented. They presented some new maps for the whole region and people testified.

Did the two of you testify? I can't remember, but—

**Mr. Dean Allison:** We were in the House, but we sent submissions.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Right.

You were in the House and sent submissions, but your submissions were that you agreed with this. Then a new map came out that you didn't agree with.

I just want to get the process right. Did the commission then hold another series of public hearings?

**Mr. Dean Allison:** No. It was just the one.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** I'm confused because I heard Mr. Allen say about the secondary....

Were the new maps from the commission presented at that time?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Yes.

The initial meeting was in Niagara Falls for the Niagara region. I think there were 13 public submissions made. They then changed the maps again.

There was a new submission held in Hamilton, and Niagara was allowed to come and go because the maps had changed. It was open to folks in Niagara to go, so I went.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** And that hearing was on these final maps?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

Is there anything else?

Perfect.

Thank you all for coming today. Thank you for all your information and your agreement amongst each other.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** We will suspend for a moment while we go in camera. We have a couple of reports.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]









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