

the pay increases that "members vote themselves." This is a fair statement. The irony is that when *Gravy Train* was released, the press gave a glowing report of the book without any attempt at objective analysis or evaluation. The press seemed willing to perpetuate myths that the public wanted to hear — that they were being "ripped off" by overpaid elected representatives.

The publication of *Gravy Train* comes at a time when the public is debating members' pay and expenses and when a factual and objective analysis of the issues is needed. The absence of the reasons why some allowances are as high as they are; the author's inability to look at both sides of the coin and his obvious attempt to rouse the public's indignation by using provocative words such as "rip off", "barefaced raids on the treasury" and "Gravy Train" disqualify the book as a fair analysis of the issue of members' pay and allowances. Hopefully someone will take the statistical information such as that collected by Fleming and Mitchinson and will combine it with objective analysis of the needs of the public and the members in order to produce a book that can be widely read by the general public. A full public debate on this issue can only improve the public's understanding of their members' role and responsibility. This in turn is bound to improve the respect in which members are held by their constituents.

It is a pity that *Gravy Train* went off the track.

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DOSSIERS SOCIO-ÉCONOMIQUES, Commission de la représentation électorale du Québec: nine volumes comprising a total of 2,276 pages, 1981.

The *Commission de la représentation électorale du Québec* has been hard at work since it replaced, in late 1979, the former Standing Commission on the Reform of Electoral Districts created eight years earlier. By April 30, 1980, it had drawn up a new list of provincial ridings in Quebec after holding public hearings to discuss the matter. Recently, the Commission completed the lengthy process of compiling the socio-economic characteristics of these ridings.

The report totals nine volumes, each of which covers a given geographic region. In each region, data is presented by riding. A wide range of information is given about the population (age, mother tongue, education), agricultural activities and manufacturing industry in each riding. Most of the figures are taken from the Canadian census surveys of 1971 and 1976, while the data on industry are taken from Scott's *Réper-*

toire industriel du Québec. The report also contains a number of election statistics which are of a non political nature, such as the number of voters in each municipality and the number of valid and spoiled ballots. The report also contains detailed maps and charts and a brief summary of the general profile of the riding.

Researchers who have spent countless hours pouring over census figures in order to prepare studies on the sociological phenomenon of elections, will be grateful to the Commission for performing this monumental task. The document will likewise prove invaluable to parliamentarians, political organizers, journalists and all those who are interested in one way or another in election trends in Quebec.

With the publication of this report, Quebec has established itself as a frontrunner in this field. No other government has, to our knowledge, taken such an initiative. Electoral administration organizations in Quebec are envied by similar organizations elsewhere in the country for the generous funding which they receive. In the case of the C.R.E.Q.'s socio-economic report, there is little doubt that the money was well spent indeed.

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