

Census Debate Requested

duty to deal with every manifestation of patronage immediately it occurs.

I would draw to the attention of the house the fact that I have had correspondence from young students who are seeking jobs.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Is the hon. member addressing himself to the question of urgency of debate?

Mr. Lewis: Indeed I am, or in my opinion I am, and I hope I am right. I was saying that I have received letters from some students who were seeking jobs as census takers— young Canadians who wanted to earn their university fees for next year. They were told they had to go to the Liberal organization in order to get recommendations for the job, and when I raised objection to this through the newspapers in Toronto the song was changed; they had to go through the local member of parliament. I now have letters from people who are seeking recommendations for these jobs.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Lewis: Just let hon. members opposite hold their laughter. They do not need to demonstrate their cynicism about these things; we know it without this demonstration.

I have dictated letters to these people telling them I do not propose to recommend them for any jobs, and I have given them the names of the Liberal commissioners so that application may be made to them.

This kind of action should end now, because we have come to a state in Canada where this miserable type of patronage should not take place. I urge upon you, Mr. Speaker, that the question raised ought to be debated now.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Charles Cantin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I submit that the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) and the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire) have proven neither the urgency, nor the importance of the debate.

There cannot be any urgency unless there are irregularities. The commissioners were appointed by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Winters), under the provisions of subsection (1) of section 5 of the Statistics Act. The minister only used the powers he has with respect to the appointment of the commissioners.

[**Mr. Lewis.**]

As for the importance of the debate, the question of the competence of the commissioners chosen was not raised. Therefore, it is neither urgent, nor important.

[*English*]

Mr. Terence Nugent (Edmonton-Strathcona): There is one argument in support of the urgency of this debate which has not been raised. Since this matter involves the reputation of the government, I believe every member of the house would like to see it debated at once because it shows that despite this government's reputation for lousing things up it has done a beautiful job of patronage.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would appreciate it if hon. members were to limit their comments to the question of procedure which is before the house.

Mr. Nugent: I think we should waste no time—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Nugent:—in giving the government the opportunity to prove they can be efficient, even if it is in the area of political skuldugery alone.

Hon. John M. Turner (Minister without Portfolio): In addition to the citation referred to by the Minister of Public Works I should like to refer Your Honour to page 90 of *Beauchesne*, where citation 100(3) states:

"Urgency" within this rule does not apply to the matter itself, but means "urgency of debate", when the ordinary opportunities provided by the rules of the house do not permit the subject to be brought on early enough and public interest demands that discussion take place immediately.

I think it would be in the interests of the house that this question be discussed at some time when estimates are before us for consideration, or on a supply motion. The hon. member for York South, together with his seatmate, representing 20 years of government in Saskatchewan, might show us how this should be done.

Mr. Lewis: It will not do any good, but we shall be glad to try.

● (3:20 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, members of the government party may scream their heads off that the question is not urgent, that it is not important, that there has been no patronage and so on, I am of the opinion that this is a