

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, January 30, 1961

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

PRIVILEGE

MR. PICKERSGILL—CORRECTION OF REMARKS IN DEBATE ON JANUARY 27

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillin-gate): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I spoke too hastily on Friday last when I implied that under the previous government there had been no delays in holding by-elections which had the effect of depriving constituencies of representation for the whole of a session of parliament. I do not want to leave this misinformation uncorrected.

I find there were several cases both before the 1953 general election and the 1957 general election when by-elections were not called, apparently because it was common knowledge that a general election was approaching. But there were two other cases where there was no such extenuating circumstance. The Prime Minister reminded me that Brandon-Souris became vacant late in 1950 and the by-election was not held until June of 1951. That also happened in one of the seats in Queens, Prince Edward Island, at the same time. I doubt whether either of these precedents would commend itself to the government, since in both cases members of the opposition were elected and both members then elected are today ministers of the crown.

In expressing my regret to the house for having misinformed hon. members may I also thank the Prime Minister for the assurance that there will no longer be any similar delays in the calling of by-elections.

MRS. FAIRCLOUGH—CORRECTION OF PRESS REPORT OF SPEECH AT GUELPH, ONT.

Hon. Ellen L. Fairclough (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege with reference to a Canadian Press dispatch reporting an address I delivered to graduate students at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph last Friday night. In the first paragraph of this dispatch, which appeared in a number of morning and evening newspapers on Saturday, I am reported to have said that future immigration into Canada would be "limited to persons with a craft, skill or profession".

This paragraph, in which I was incorrectly reported, was subsequently corrected in two later Canadian Press leads, but unfortunately the original story received such widespread circulation that I feel it necessary to set the record straight. The text of my Guelph address is available to the public. I was speaking of the effects of the technological revolution on Canadian agriculture and industry. What I said was quite clear, and I quote:

We certainly shall have to do everything within our power to make it clear to everyone, and especially to our young people, that there is going to be little room for the unskilled or the half-skilled worker in the world of tomorrow. It ought to be quite clear to everybody that employment opportunities—for native Canadians as well as immigrants—are going to be limited in future for people without some kind of trade, skill or profession.

There was nothing in my Guelph speech suggesting that immigration would be restricted to those with skills and trades.

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUGGESTED DATES FOR RESUMPTION

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the house that I have written to the prime ministers of the provinces suggesting that the dominion-provincial conference on fiscal arrangements which adjourned late in October should be resumed. The dates I suggest for the resumption of the conference are February 23 and 24. If these dates are not convenient for a majority of the provincial premiers, then the meeting will be convened on March 23 and 24.

TRADE

RUSSIA—ANNOUNCEMENT OF SALE OF WHEAT

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I should like to make an announcement that has to do with a question asked by the hon. member for Acadia on January 24, 1961, and which can be found on page 1350 of *Hansard*. The question dealt with the sale of wheat to the U.S.S.R. and was answered by the Prime Minister as follows:

Mr. Speaker, negotiations have been going on with representatives of the government of the U.S.S.R. I am hopeful that agreement will be arrived at in consequence of those negotiations for the sale of 150,000 tons of wheat.