

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, March 1, 1965

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

#### INQUIRY INTO ALLEGED FRAUDULENT VOTING IN B.C.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. When I reached my office today at two o'clock there was a letter from the office of the chief electoral officer, le directeur général des élections, dated Ottawa, February 27, 1965, and it is my duty to read it to the house:

The Honourable Alan A. Macnaughton,  
Speaker of the House of Commons,  
Ottawa.

Sir:

I acknowledge receipt of the attested copy of a resolution passed by the House of Commons on Wednesday, February 24, 1965, requesting me to investigate the charges of irregularities in the federal election of 1963 made by a Mr. Ormond Turner in the Vancouver Province of February 22, 1965, and in any subsequent issues thereof, and to make a full report thereon, which copy was forwarded to me by Mr. Léon J. Raymond, the Clerk of the House of Commons.

As an officer of parliament my first duty is to carry out the tasks assigned to me by the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, the Representation Commissioner Act and the Canada Elections Act; consequently, I respectfully submit that it is physically impossible for me to undertake and carry out the request made in the above mentioned resolution.

Yours faithfully,

N. Castonguay

Acting Chief Electoral Officer

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. Since I was the member who moved the motion requesting the acting chief electoral officer to carry out the investigation, which motion the house passed, I should like to say that since the chief electoral officer says that it is physically impossible—I note not legally impossible but physically impossible—for him to carry out this task I think we must respect his wishes in the matter. But I express the hope that the government would be prepared to appoint a judicial inquiry to look into this matter at the earliest possible moment.

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the letter you have just communicated to the house from the

representation commissioner, and in response to the statement just made by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, I should like to say that if it would meet the wishes of the house the government is ready to appoint without delay a commissioner under the Inquiries Act who will be empowered to hold a public inquiry into the alleged irregularities; and the government would also undertake, on receipt of a report from the commissioner when he is appointed, to make that report available to the House of Commons.

**Mr. Douglas:** Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to welcome the statement of the Prime Minister and say that we will be very glad to have such an inquiry. It was never our thought that we should have any kind of inquiry other than a public one. Whether it is conducted by the chief electoral officer or by a judge, in either case it seems to me that there would be, as I would expect, a fair and proper investigation.

### PRIVILEGE

MRS. JONES—GREETINGS ON ST. DAVID'S DAY

**Mrs. Eloise Jones (Saskatoon):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. In order to mark an occasion dear to the hearts of all those of Welsh descent may I bring, on St. David's day, greetings which were first extended in this house by the late member for Saskatoon on March 1, 1962.

I wish to do honour to another Welshman, who wrote the immortal lines engraved over an archway in the peace tower:

All's well, for over there amongst his peers,  
a happy warrior sleeps.

John Ceredigion Jones, born on the day Dewi Sant, a Welsh Canadian vagabond poet, sleeps in the forests of Algoma. Among others in his position, the present Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) played some considerable part in unravelling the life story of this man, who contributed this immortal line to Canadian literature.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of those of Welsh descent in Canada may I say to all "iechyd-da".

MR. BASFORD—REPORTED STATEMENT BY  
N.D.P. LEADER

**Mr. Ron Basford (Vancouver-Burrard):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege