

We regret to find that an item which appeared in this paper by error, and which was afterwards rectified, should have been made the subject of discussion in the House of Commons. The return of Messrs. P. M. Brecht and S. P. Porter from an official trip along the boundary districts was noted in this paper a day or two after it had been erroneously stated that they had gone to Edmonton.

It may not be unfitting to say right here that we are strongly opposed to official interference in elections. We felt the full brunt of it in 1896, when the editor of this paper was a candidate, and the whole official horde of the dominant party of that day was let loose. It was not a matter of choice with some of them. To go out and fight for their masters was a command which no official of that regime dared disobey.

We believe Messrs. Brecht and Porter took some part in the last general election, but both resigned before entering upon the campaign. That they have been re-appointed speaks well for their efficiency in either capacity.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Occasionally that form was gone through, of having them resign thirty days before an election, and having them re-appointed a few days after the election.

Mr. SCOTT. My hon. friend knows that there is a very high precedent for that in the case of Sir Charles Tupper.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I am not talking of precedents. I am talking of the form gone through; but I am told that that form is not always gone through, but that a great many officials take part in elections openly.

Mr. SCOTT. I would ask the hon. gentleman to take with a grain of salt such statements with regard to Northwest officials.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. Does the hon. gentleman pretend for one moment that Mr. P. M. Brecht was not actively engaged prior to the last election assisting himself?

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. P. M. Brecht some time before the election resigned his position and then took part in the election.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. Was he not present at the meeting at Moosejaw at which the hon. gentleman was nominated, and was he not an official then?

Mr. SCOTT. A great many things occurred at that meeting that I would not like after so many months to have to undergo cross-examination on.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. I have the evidence here to show that he attended the meeting that nominated the hon. gentleman and made a speech on his behalf. When the hon. gentleman talks about statements being made to the hon. leader of the opposition that are not borne out by the facts, we are prepared to discuss these statements with him at any time.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Have a special session for that purpose.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. Yes. I do not propose to go into the matter now, but I will deal with it at a more opportune time. The hon. gentleman knows that Mr. Brecht is not the only official in his riding who actively engaged in his behalf prior to the last election. Mr. Brecht has since been appointed to a position at an increased salary, doubtless due to the assistance he gave to the hon. gentleman.

Mr. SCOTT. I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon. He is working at the same salary he had before his resignation.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. That shows that the resignation did not amount to anything. The salary went on after a certain day.

Mr. SCOTT. It did not go on while he was taking part in the election.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I may say that before officials are called upon in future to take part in a general election there will be a law applicable to the new provinces similar to what is applicable to all the other provinces of the Dominion. It will be scarcely possible to single these new provinces out for special treatment, and I apprehend that if there is any necessity for the provisions which the hon. leader of the opposition has referred to, they will be dealt with in a general Act.

Amendment of Mr. R. L. Borden negatived on division.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. I desire to move that the Bill be amended by adding the following as sections 6 and 7:

6. Every officer or clerk who is guilty of any wilful misfeasance or any wilful act or omission in violation of the said Act or any amendment thereof shall forfeit to any person aggrieved by such misfeasance, act or omission, a sum not exceeding five hundred dollars, in addition to the amount of all actual damages thereby occasioned to such person.

7. Every officer or clerk who refuses or neglects to perform any of the obligations or formalities required of him by the said Act or any amendment thereof shall, for each such refusal or neglect, forfeit the sum of two hundred dollars to any person who sues therefor.

Amendment agreed to; Bill reported as amended, and amendments read the first and the second time, and agreed to.

CENSUS AND STATISTICS.

Mr. FISHER moved second reading of Bill (No. 163) to amend the Census and Statistics Act. He said: This is simply an Act to substitute the names of the new provinces for the name of the Northwest Territories in the Census and Statistics Act, which were passed in the early part of this session.