

Criminal Justice Branch
May 5, 1998

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CHARGES ANNOUNCED IN NANAIMO COMMONWEALTH HOLDING SOCIETY INVESTIGATION

VICTORIA -- Four individuals and one company were charged today in the Nanaimo Commonwealth Holding Society investigation, Assistant Deputy Attorney General Ernie Quantz of the criminal justice branch announced today.

Charged were David Stupich, Elizabeth Marlow, Marjorie Boggis and Joseph Denofreo. Also charged was Democrat Publishing Ltd.

Stupich is charged with 64 counts, including four lottery offences and charges of theft, fraud, forgery, uttering a forged document, and criminal breach of trust. Marlow is charged with 18 counts, including charges of theft, fraud, forgery, uttering a forged document and criminal breach of trust.

Boggis is charged with 16 counts, including theft, fraud, criminal breach of trust, and a lottery offence involving the unlawful management or operation of a lottery scheme. Denofreo and Democrat Publishing Ltd. are each charged with two counts of unlawful management or operation of a lottery scheme.

Summonses have been issued for the accused to appear in Provincial Court in Nanaimo on June 30, 1998.

The charging decisions were made by Special Prosecutor John D. Taggart, appointed under the Crown Counsel Act on June 16, 1995. He was asked to work with RCMP investigators when a new police investigation was begun after release of an interim report by forensic auditor Ron Parks on May 31, 1994 on the financial accounts of the NCHS. Parks had been appointed by then Finance Minister Elizabeth Cull.

Quantz said he and senior members of the criminal justice branch reviewed Taggart's report and accepted his charging recommendations. "A member of the special prosecution team, Mr. Don Sorochan, will present the Crown's case in court. As the matter is now before the courts, it would be inappropriate to comment further on this case."

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A previous police investigation into the NCHS in 1994 with another special prosecutor, A.G. Henderson, had resulted in one criminal charge each against four companies for a lottery offence of operating a bingo without making the minimum required donations under gaming regulations. No individuals were charged.

The 1994 investigation had a different focus. As Special Prosecutor Taggart states in his report for the current investigation: "Mr. Henderson's mandate was determined, however, by the focus of the RCMP investigation. As is usual in such situations, the police investigators during their investigation decide which transactions are the focus of their investigation, which witnesses are to be interviewed and which documents are to be seized."

Quantz added that he has also reviewed a separate report from Special Prosecutor Taggart outlining his decision on allegations that Bob Williams unlawfully received a benefit for giving up his seat, thereby allowing former Premier David Barrett to run for the Legislature. "Mr. Taggart concluded there was no basis for proceeding with the criminal charges and Taggart's report on this matter is being released in the public interest."

Attachments:

Copies of Two Informations
Copies of relevant sections of the Criminal Code

Copies of Special Prosecutor's report on allegations involving David Barrett and Robert Williams are available at the Ministry of Attorney General's Communications Branch (phone 250-356-9596; fax 250-387-1753) or from the Ministry of Attorney General's Executive Office in Vancouver (phone 604-660-2400; fax 604-660-1103).

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