

No. 156

JOURNALS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF CANADA

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1973

2.00 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

Mr. Speaker informed the House that the Clerk of the House had laid upon the Table the Sixth Report of the Clerk of Petitions, which was read as follows:

The Clerk of Petitions has the honour to report that he has examined the petition of Mrs. Ann Young, Mrs. Marilyn Lister and Mrs. Natalie MacPhee, all of the City of Ottawa, Ontario, in relation to broadcast advertising directed exclusively to children and advertising directed to children from American programming distributed on the Canadian cable systems, presented by Mr. James A. McGrath, Member of Parliament, on Tuesday, October 23, 1973, and finds that the petition meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the honourable Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) for his comments but with respect perhaps I should point out to him that they do not refer very much to the procedural difficulties with which I am faced. In fact, it may be that the comments of the honourable Member substantiate the suggestions I have made that it is difficult for the House to consider by way of petition a matter over which jurisdiction has specifically been referred by Parliament to another body.

These are the precedents which have been quoted from time to time in the House in similar circumstances in the past. I am sure that honourable Members will appreciate that in relation to petitions, which is a very ancient and historical right, the Chair must exercise all care and attention to ensure that petitions when they are in order and acceptable from a procedural standpoint should be given an opportunity to be considered and referred if necessary to the appropriate committee. I must tell the honourable Member with the greatest respect that I do not see how I can overlook the precedents to which I should like to refer briefly.

I refer honourable Members to a precedent reported at page 163 of the Journals of the House for Thursday, February 16, 1956. It was ruled that the petition was irregular in that it did not set forth a case in which the House had jurisdiction to interfere, since Parliament had vested in the Governor in Council and in the Minister of Transport the exclusive authority to approve and issue licences for the operation of private television stations. That ruling also referred to citations from May's Parliamentary Practice, 15th edition, at page 814. That is carried into the 18th edition at page 795.

A more recent precedent is recorded at page 2921 of *Hansard* for June 7, 1972. I would also refer honour-