

Point of Order—Mr. Gray (Windsor West)

renewable resources in Saskatchewan on January 9, proposing that there be a cost-shared arrangement split 50-50 between the federal Government and the province. I certainly have not received a response to date. If that proposal is not possible, then I would prefer in the short term a contractual arrangement with the private sector. The main thing is that we are going to keep that Centre open and we are going to make an arrangement at an early date.

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CLERK OF PETITIONS' REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petitions presented by the Hon. Member for Westmorland-Kent (Mr. Robichaud) on Friday, January 24, 1986, meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

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POINTS OF ORDER

PRACTICE OF HOUSE RESPECTING CASES *SUB JUDICE*—RULING OF MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: I am in a position to advise the House as to my views on a point of order respecting the *sub judice* convention.

On Thursday, January 23, 1986, the House Leader for the Official Opposition (Mr. Gray) raised a point of order with respect to remarks made by the Solicitor General (Mr. Beatty) in response to a question from the Hon. Member for Capilano (Mrs. Collins). The Opposition House Leader felt that the Solicitor General had breached the *sub judice* convention of the House in his response. After having had the opportunity to examine the matter in detail, I am now prepared to rule on this point.

In this specific case, the Hon. Member for York South-Weston (Mr. Nunziata) and the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps) wrote on January 22, 1986, to the Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission requesting that an investigation be undertaken into certain charges of sexism within the RCMP. As the commission may or may not proceed with such an inquiry, it certainly seems to me that it would be premature for me to rule that such a matter should be considered *sub judice* at this time.

When there are matters which are *sub judice*, it is clear that the Chair does have discretion, and I might take this opportunity to remind Hon. Members of the guidelines set down by the Special Committee on the Rights and Immunities of Members in its first report tabled April 29, 1977. The committee recommended that the Speaker

—should only exercise this discretion in exceptional cases where it is clear to him that to do otherwise could be harmful to specific individuals.

Further, the committee states:

—a Member who calls for the suppression of a matter on grounds of *sub judice* should be obliged to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Chair that he has reasonable grounds for fearing that prejudice might result.

In terms of the specific application made by the Hon. Member for Windsor West, I have not been convinced of such possible prejudice.

I may say to Hon. Members that the freedom of speech accorded to Members of Parliament is a fundamental right without which they would be hampered in the performance of their duties. It is therefore my feeling that the Speaker should interfere with that freedom of speech only in exceptional cases where it is clear that to do otherwise could be harmful to specific individuals.

CORRECTION OF RECORD REGARDING REFERENCE TO MEMBER

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order simply to correct the record. In the House a few moments ago, I referred to the Hon. Member for Shefford (Mr. Lapierre) when naturally I intended to refer to the Hon. Member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Charest), the Hon. Member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mrs. Bertrand) and the Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin).

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to this point of order. The record should be allowed to remain as it is because the Hon. Member for Shefford (Mr. Lapierre) was in the forefront of the fight which caused the Americans to withdraw the dump site. Other Hon. Members may have played a role, but the lead role was clearly carried out by the Hon. Member for Shefford, and the record should continue to make that clear.

● (1510)

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member will know that the record will show what has been said by all those involved.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PETITIONS

SUGAR-BEET INDUSTRY

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to submit a petition today signed by over 18,000 residents of southern Alberta. It concerns the continued existence of the sugar beet industry in Canada. The concern is widespread in view of the fact that while there are only some 600 producers, this petition bears the names of over 18,000 Albertans. Cabinet has before it a proposal with respect to a national sweetener policy—