

Referring to the documents under consideration, His Honour the Speaker stated in the House, on May 5, that "the House is not seized of a petition addressed to the members without mentioning the words 'in parliament assembled'"; and that "when petitions are not properly addressed, the Clerk of Petitions reports that they cannot be received".

This practice is confirmed by a ruling of the Honourable Speaker Edgar N. Rhodes on June 13, 1917, dealing with "the precise form in which petitions should be drawn", and quoted, in part, as follows:

While it does not seem to me essential that petitions should use exact or uniform words, it would appear that the practice has invariably been to require substantial adherence to a form which has long been recognized.

Bourinot, 4th edition, at page 234, lays down the rule and provides the precedent which should be followed, the first requisite being that every petition should commence with the superscription: "To the Honourable the House of Commons in Parliament assembled." Thus properly addressed, and the subject matter of the petition being in order, it would still be irregular to receive such a document without a prayer. The practice in the British House of Commons would appear to be substantially the same. May, 11th edition, at page 525, says: "Without a prayer, a document will not be taken as a petition; and a paper, assuming the style of a declaration, an address of thanks, or a remonstrance only, without a proper form of prayer, will not be received."

As the guardian of the observance of the rules of procedure, your Committee has no alternative but to report that the documents in question, purporting to be petitions, are not drawn in accordance with our rules of practice, nor are they properly addressed, and therefore, should not be received.

There is no doubt that the object of those who signed these documents was to register, by anticipation, their objections to being removed from their present constituency. Your Committee feels that their object will have been attained if the said documents are transmitted to the Special Committee on Redistribution as exhibits to be taken into account by the said Committee; and your Committee so recommends.

Mr. MacKinnon, a Member of the King's Privy Council, presented,—Return to an Order of the House of May 5, 1947, for a Return showing:—1. What was the value of imports which entered Canada via Fort Churchill during 1946?

2. How much wheat was stored at Fort Churchill as at April 1, 1947?

3. What ships have been chartered to carry wheat from the port to Europe during 1947?

4. Have Canadian Trade Commissioners or other federal employees taken any steps during the past year, to secure incoming cargoes for the port?

5. How much wheat is it estimated will be shipped from the port during 1947?

Mr. Tucker, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, presented,—Return to an Order of the House of April 28, 1947, for a Return showing:—1. What is the cost of repairs since January 1, 1947, to each home constructed under the Veterans' Land Act in (a) Sarnia Township, Lambton County; (b) Roseland and Oliver Farm Areas, Essex County?

2. Are repairs made prior to January 1, 1947, included in the cost of above homes? If not, what is the amount of such repairs?