

may be imposed is not to be imposed; it is simply referring these petitions to them for consideration under the rules of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER. I am rather inclined, on considering the matter, to the view that no notice is necessary and that the motion is in order.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What I want to know is this: Are we departing from the usual practice and procedure of the House? If so, why are we doing that?

Mr. L. G. McCARTHY. We are not.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. If we are not there is no objection to that, but I understand we are.

Mr. L. G. McCARTHY. We are really putting in operation an absolutely new rule which is unfamiliar not only to the members but to the clerks. The application of the rule is in doubt and we will not know exactly what it does mean until we get a final decision on it. The new rule says that petitions cannot be received except within the first six weeks, and that nothing can be done when the six weeks have expired by way of suspension of the rules or otherwise unless the Standing Orders Committee reports on it.

Mr. TISDALE. Why not apply to the committee?

Mr. L. G. McCARTHY. This motion is to refer to the committee under this rule.

Mr. SPEAKER. It may be well to explain the reason for the ruling I gave yesterday. My understanding of our practice is that the word 'received' has a particular meaning in a parliamentary sense; the meaning being that before a petition can be received, first, it must be presented, and second, there must be a lapse of one clear day, or two days excluding the first and including the last day. Until these preliminaries have been complied with no petition can be received. I interpreted the motion of yesterday as being in effect a motion that this rule should be suspended, although it did not say so in express terms. I consider now that in order to get these petitions properly before the House the rule must be followed and a motion made to send the petitions to the Committee on Standing Orders so that a report may be secured from the committee which if satisfactory to the House might lead to a motion to suspend the rule and receive the petitions.

Mr. SPROULE. It appears to me that the defect is that we are leaving it to the committee to decide whether these petitions are regular or irregular. The one day's delay is to enable the clerk to consider petitions, who reports to the House the next day and then Mr. Speaker asks the question: Shall these petitions be received by

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the House. It is then that the petitions are received, if the House consents. But they ought to be first referred to the House before they are referred to the committee.

Mr. L. G. McCARTHY. Mr. Speaker has said that the House would not receive them and hence it is necessary to go to the committee. It is at the suggestion of Mr. Speaker that the motion was made to refer them to the committee.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Why has the House refused to receive them?

Mr. L. G. McCARTHY. Because Mr. Speaker has ruled that the six weeks have elapsed.

Mr. SPEAKER. Yesterday was the last day to receive these petitions, but before they are received there are two things necessary; one: that they shall be presented; and two: that a certain period shall elapse between the time they are presented and the time they are received. These petitions did not comply with these requirements.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I thought that yesterday we were simply dealing with the question of the graduated scale of fees, but now it appears that the petitions are not properly before the House. What excuse is there for the delay in presenting the petitions?

Mr. L. G. McCARTHY. I do not know. I submit that this is not the time to discuss the question of delay, but that it may be more properly done before the committee, when those who presented the petitions can appear and explain. If the explanation is satisfactory the report of the committee will be accordingly. I would remind the House that this is the first time this rule has been put in operation. I have been speaking to the various clerks about it and their opinion was entirely opposed to that expressed by Mr. Speaker to-day. The information given to the solicitors in charge of these petitions was that any petitions presented up to yesterday would be in time, but if the Speaker's decision is correct the clerks of the House have misinterpreted the word 'received'. The six weeks expired yesterday, the petitions were presented the day before yesterday but they are ruled out, and now the only thing remaining is to refer them to the Standing Orders Committee which will deal with the question.

Mr. TISDALE. The hon. gentleman should give notice of motion that at a future day he will move to refer these petitions to the committee and then the House will be able to decide on that point.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. As I understand from Mr. Speaker, the petitions are to be sent to the Standing Orders Committee in order that the persons interested may have an opportunity of making a case for asking us to receive them, and to enable Bills to