

No. 112

JOURNALS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF CANADA

OTTAWA, THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 1973

2.00 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: Yesterday, on motions, the Honourable Minister of Communications (Mr. Pelletier) proposed, under Standing Order 41(2), to table a document entitled: "Government of Canada Review of the Canadian Transport Commission Decision of March 30, 1973 on Bell Canada's Application "A"."

The honourable Member for York South (Mr. Lewis) objected to this procedure, alleging that the Minister should instead have submitted the document in the form of a statement to the House, under Standing Order 15(2). Since at the time I did not know the nature of the document, I suggested that I be allowed to study it in order to determine whether it was of the kind that can be placed on the Table of the House in accordance with Standing Order 41(2). It appears that my words were not fully understood at the Table, for the document tabled by the Minister has indeed been accepted, as is shown by the *Votes and Proceedings* of the House. The comments of the Chair are therefore somewhat academic. I will, however, say a few words on the problem of procedure raised by the honourable Member for York South, supported by his colleague, the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles).

It seems to me that the Standing Orders must be interpreted to mean that a Minister's statement on any government action or policy should be made on Motions, under Standing Order 15. This provision is, of course, aimed at giving the Members of the opposition parties the opportunity to reply to such statements.

Having studied the document tabled yesterday by the Minister of Communications, I have the impression that it is of an informative nature, which could, in my opinion, be tabled under Standing Order 41, as the honourable Minister did yesterday.

Generally speaking, I accept the suggestion made by the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre and the honourable Member for York South that the text of a Minister's statement of the kind normally made on Motions under Standing Order 15 cannot be tabled pursuant to Standing Order 41. However, this does not seem to be the case since, in my opinion, the document concerned was one of those which can be tabled rather than presented to the House as a ministerial statement.

Maybe the objection of the honourable Member for York South can be interpreted to the effect that the Minister should have made a statement, pursuant to Stand-