

'Simpsons' Episode Shows God Taking Orders From the Devil

Turkey's broadcasting regulator is fining a television channel for insulting **religious values** after it aired an episode of *The Simpsons* which shows God taking orders from the devil.

Radio and television watchdog RTUK said it was fining private broadcaster CNBC-e 52,951 lira (\$30,000) over the episode of the hit U.S. animated TV series, whose scenes include the devil asking God to make him a coffee.

"The board has decided to fine the channel over these matters," an RTUK spokeswoman said but declined further comment, saying full details would probably be announced next week.

CNBC-e said it would comment once the fine was officially announced.

Turkey is a secular republic but most of its 75 million people are Muslim. Religious conservatives and secular opponents vie for public influence and critics of the government say it is trying to impose **Islamic values** by stealth.

Elected a decade ago with the strongest majority seen in years, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan and his Islamist-rooted AK Party have overseen a period of unprecedented prosperity in Turkey. But concerns are growing about authoritarianism.

Erdogan last week tore into a chart-topping soap opera about the Ottoman Empire's longest-reigning Sultan and the broadcasting regulator has warned the show's makers about insulting a historical figure.

The Simpsons first aired in 1989 and is the longest-running U.S. sitcom. It is broadcast in more than 100 countries and

CNBC-e has been airing it in Turkey for almost a decade.

“I wonder what the script writers will do when they hear that the jokes on their show are taken seriously and trigger fines in a country called Turkey,” wrote Mehmet Yilmaz, a columnist for the Hurriyet newspaper.

“Maybe they will add an almond-moustached RTUK expert to the series,” he said, evoking a popular Turkish stereotype of a pious government supporter.