

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 7, 1977

The House met at 2 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

JUSTIFICATION FOR INCREASED FREIGHT RATES ON POTATOES
AND REQUEST FOR SUBSIDIES—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I wish to move a motion of urgent and pressing necessity under the provisions of Standing Order 43. In view of the announcement by Canadian National that it intends to force inappropriate equipment on the maritime potato trade which will result in a significant loss of jobs in the agricultural sector of the region, in view of the fact that freight rates on potatoes shipped to the region's primary market in central Canada will rise 35 per cent in one year, costing Prince Edward Island producers alone an additional \$1 million, and in view of the announcement of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) of an Atlantic provinces transportation program which seriously downgrades federal support of rail freight traffic, I move, seconded by the hon. member for South Shore (Mr. Crouse):

That officials of Canadian National be called before the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications to justify these actions; that the Minister of Transport immediately bring in interim subsidies to offset the potato freight rate increase; and that the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard) give urgent attention to the negative impact of the declining rail service and increased rates in the economies of Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick.

Mr. Speaker: Standing Order 43 requires unanimous consent of the House for the presentation of such a motion for debate. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

ENERGY

ALLEGATION BY DR. BROOKS BUREAUCRATIC SLOW MOTION
STALLS CONSERVATION PROGRAM—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of energy but in his absence I will

direct it either to the acting minister, if there is one, or to the Acting Prime Minister. My question to the Acting Prime Minister relates to statements printed recently in the *Toronto Star* by Dr. David Brooks, who was recently a senior energy adviser on conservation matters to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and a man whom the minister responsible recently described as having served the department and Canadians extremely well. In his article Dr. Brooks stated that bureaucratic slow motion continues to stall development of fair and effective energy conservation programs. In light of that condemnation of the government's action on energy conservation by the man in Canada who is in the best position to know, will the Acting Prime Minister tell the House of Commons whether the government accepts Dr. Brooks' criticisms and intends to adjust federal policies to meet the targets and the sense of urgency in energy matters which Dr. Brooks indicates?

● (1410)

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I expect the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to be in the House momentarily and perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would get a more detailed and satisfactory answer if he put the question to the minister when he comes.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, I am quite willing to defer, but I might make the point that we expect ministers of the Crown to be in the House at 2 p.m. when the House meets.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

BREAK-IN AT L'AGENCE DE PRESSE LIBRE—ALLEGED RECEIPT
OF TELEGRAM ATTACHING RESPONSIBILITY TO FORCE

Mr. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Solicitor General I should like to direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: And in everybody's absence.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Last Thursday, in an attempt to split hairs, the Prime Minister said that the letter sent by L'Agence de Presse Libre to the then solicitor general, at present Minister of Supply and Services, did not refer to the RCMP but rather spoke only of the police. It is worth noting that appended to the letter, the then solicitor general also received a telegram