

*Committee Reports*

office in Ottawa approximately three weeks ago to discuss all the problems which they presented to me. Naturally, I disagreed with them on how great some of their problems are. Concerning GATT negotiations, all I can say is that we have made those representations. In answer to the hon. member's question as to what we will gain from it, that is unknown at this time.

## PRICE STABILIZATION PROGRAM FOR POTATOES

**Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Agriculture if he has reconsidered his decision with regard to the quantity of potatoes to be subsidized under the price stabilization program. Has he had representations with respect to the quantity of potatoes for which each producer may expect a payment, in view of the fact that the initial amount which he stipulated will be paid on a pro rata basis depending on the number of acres planted, rather than the number of acres produced? There are serious complaints from potato producers on that basis.

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, my officials were in New Brunswick—they also met representatives of the potato industry from P.E.I.—in the area of greatest concern, about which the hon. member is speaking. I have not received a report because some of them are returning to the capital only today from their meeting in New Brunswick.

● (1202)

**Mr. McCain:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the severe difficulties, can the minister advise when he will be able to determine what the final payment will be? Will he take under advisement the idea of changing the regulations which are strangling the amount of the payment to farmers?

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Speaker, we have one of the fairest stabilization programs for farmers in the world. We will be reviewing it. But no matter what I offer, the hon. member will still have some criticism of it.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

## NATIONAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC WORKS

Fourth report of Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works—Mr. O'Connell.

[Mr. Whelan.]

[Translation]

## PRIVILEGE

## MR. LAVOIE—PROCEDURAL DIFFICULTY IN MOVING CONGRATULATORY MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 43

**Mr. Jacques Lavoie (Hochelaga):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege because at the beginning of the sitting of the House I moved a motion under Standing Order 43 to enable the House to send a message of congratulations to all the French Canadians who make up one of the two founding groups of the country, a French-speaking and English-speaking community. I think, Mr. Speaker, that all hon. members were surprised to see that you did not put the motion so that hon. members could vote on whether they accept it or not. I understand that later you made a remark about motions under Standing Order 43 concerning congratulations and so on, but I remember, Mr. Speaker, that motions under Standing Order 43 were introduced in the House to congratulate the Canadian hockey club, to wish prompt recovery to some hon. members and for similar reasons. I think particularly that we have come to a turning point in our history where we talk more and more about Canadian unity and by that means—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I must correct the hon. member. If he examines the circumstances which in the past surrounded the presentation by an hon. member of such a motion or of a motion of congratulations to a certain group in the country, he will see that they were always moved by an hon. member but never by the Chair. That is the difference. It is impossible to prevent an hon. member who wants to move such a motion under Standing Order 43, but this is something completely different from the Chair putting a motion or asking for unanimous consent. That is simply the difference I explained this morning.

**Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, unless you consider you rendered a decision, I would like to raise under the same question of privilege as the hon. member for Hochelaga (Mr. Lavoie), if you allow me to do so—

**Mr. Speaker:** I said that if some members intend to discuss the difficulty of interpretation of Standing Order 43, I invite them to agree between themselves and submit their ideas later next week, but this is certainly something I will consider carefully.

**Mr. Pinard:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is precisely on Standing Order 43 that I want to make a remark. In the past, and I recognize the procedural argument of the Chair, you have dismissed with good reason motions under Standing Order 43 because they were frivolous like the motion of the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Grafftey) whom we can hear now, because preambles were too long, because motions were politically oriented, or were speeches in themselves, and I recognize that the Chair was right in dis-