

the House at what stage is the compensation payment program?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I am sure that the hon. member would want me to answer, through you, some of his allegations about the expenses which will confront the farmers. I am sure he knows that every increase of \$4.50 on a barrel of oil means a \$20 per ton increase for nitrogen fertilizer, which they need. The program is before cabinet at the present time and it is being considered.

Mr. Towers: Madam Speaker, this program has been considered for a long time. I would ask the minister what stage it is at. The Prime Minister said that he is going to study it as well. It could be studied to death.

Mr. Whelan: Madam Speaker, I want to make it clear also that the program does not only cover the grain producers of western Canada but also the grain producers of central Canada. It took a lot of detailed work in order to come to the position where we could make recommendations to the government. I had hoped to do that last November, but the recommendation was made to the government this January. It is being considered by the departmental committees at the present time and I hope it will soon come forward to the government.

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● (1500)

INDIAN AFFAIRS

THEFT OF BUILDING MATERIALS IN SASKATCHEWAN REGION

Mr. Lorne Greenaway (Cariboo-Chilcotin): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. It deals with the theft or misuse of building materials in the Saskatchewan region. In October 1980 one Patrick McCaffrey was convicted on four counts of fraud involving the theft of building materials. During his trial he alleged that two complete house packages and a semi-trailer load of building materials disappeared. He is also alleged to have given the RCMP a list of 65 people who, he said, had been stealing materials from the department. This was last October. Can the minister tell us what has happened with regard to this investigation?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): No, I cannot, Madam Speaker. Perhaps the hon. member could have given me notice of the matter in this particular case. However, I can assure him I will check into it and I will endeavour to give him an answer first thing tomorrow.

Mr. Greenaway: Madam Speaker, I brought this matter to the attention of the House about two weeks ago through a motion under Standing Order 43. I think it bears out the Auditor General's report that the financial auditing and the

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accountability of the department are in an appalling mess. Has the minister done anything to see that this matter is being corrected?

Mr. Nielsen: Come clean, John. Where did you put the loot?

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Madam Speaker, with regard to the financial auditing of the department, the hon. member may know that there are many Indian leaders who are prepared to defend the department's practices, mainly on the grounds that excessive intervention of this kind is anything but allowing Indians a degree of self-government, which is so necessary if we are to correct any of the problems. I believe that is the sentiment of the hon. member himself, and perhaps the hon. member might temper his remarks in that context.

I might tell the hon. member that I missed his motion under Standing Order 43 which he is talking about, but I will check into the matter and give him a report tomorrow.

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PRIVILEGE

MR. SMITH—RADIO ADVERTISEMENT—RULING BY MADAM SPEAKER

Madam Speaker: Some days ago, the hon. member for Don Valley East (Mr. Smith) raised a question of privilege arising from an advertisement he heard over the radio in Toronto. He also advised the House that this advertisement was currently being broadcast elsewhere in Canada and he read a transcript of it to the House.

The hon. member submits the radio advertisement is a slur on the integrity of members, an affront to Parliament, and constitutes a prima facie case of contempt of Parliament. I tend to agree with the hon. member that the advertisement in question reflects improperly on Members of Parliament and technically might amount to a contempt of Parliament.

As hon. members are aware, the Speaker's role in privilege matters is simply to determine whether a factual situation presented by a member constitutes a prima facie case of privilege. At the time the hon. member raised his complaint he did not offer a motion, but if he wishes to do so now, an appropriate motion could be received by the Chair. Alternatively, if a motion is not now forthcoming, I shall consider the matter closed.

Mr. David Smith (Don Valley East): Madam Speaker, when I first heard this advertisement on the radio, I could hardly believe what was being said. I might point out that a transcript of the advertisement in question can be found on page 7218 of *Hansard* for February 13, 1981. The second time I heard this advertisement I really got mad. I felt a question of principle was involved and that the matter should be raised in the House because it is something which affects all members of Parliament. The hon. member for Brampton-Georgetown (Mr. McDerimid) was prepared to second any motion that I