

*Oral Questions*

Government of Canada. I fail to see any sensible objection to this being done.

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[Translation]

**STATISTICS CANADA****OMISSION OF QUESTION CONCERNING SPOKEN LANGUAGE FROM QUINQUENNIAL CENSUS FORM**

**Mr. C.-A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the minister responsible for the census or to the Acting Prime Minister.

As the next quinquennial census will begin on June 1, 1976, can the minister tell the House why the question on the use of language at home will be withdrawn and what about the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism suggesting the question which was maintained in the 1971 census?

**Mr. Marcel Roy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** Mr. Speaker, the census will be made on a five-year period; but for the next census in 1981, the matter will surely be considered.

**Mr. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

I want to know why it has been removed. Is it not believed that it will have a tremendous effect on statistics in Canada?

**Mr. Roy (Laval):** Mr. Speaker, as I said, it is the five-year census and when we will take a much more complete census with a much larger sampling, in 1981, this question will surely be considered for its application.

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[English]

**TRANSPORT****FAILURE OF RAILWAY COMPANIES TO REMOVE SNOW FROM BRANCH LINES—REQUEST FOR ACTION—ATTITUDE OF COMPANIES TOWARD BRANCH LINE OPERATION**

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works as Acting Prime Minister. It has to do with the serious situation with regard to the railway lines in western Canada, and particularly in northern Saskatchewan. I refer to branch lines where no serious effort is being made with regard to snow removal, with the result that small towns and villages are actually isolated. Will the minister get in touch today with both the CNR and CPR and impress upon them the necessity for immediate action?

**Hon. C. M. Drury (Acting Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to see that the officials in the Department of Transport do proceed along the line of action suggested by the right hon. gentleman.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I was asking the Acting Prime Minister to do this himself because nobody knows where the Minister of Transport is perambulating today, whether

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

politically or otherwise, and this situation has to be faced now. I therefore ask as a supplementary question if the minister agrees with the widely held view—and I am of that opinion too—that there is a concerted effort on the part of the railway companies to bring an end to branch lines in the western provinces and, in particular, to have no concern for a continuance of passenger service on branch lines?

**Mr. Drury:** No, Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with that view.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** That is the kind of answer the government has given in connection with this whole problem.

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**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****SUGGESTION MR. IVAN HEAD BRIEF MEMBERS OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESULTS OF PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO CUBA**

**Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. When Mr. Ivan Head returns from his trip to London and other capitals to brief ministers and officials on the results of the Prime Minister's discussions with Premier Castro, would it be a courteous gesture if he were to brief the Standing Committee on External Affairs? Would the hon. lady discuss this proposal with the chairman of that Standing Committee?

[Translation]

**Miss Monique Bégin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I feel like taking rather lightly the suggestion made by my hon. colleague from Fundy-Royal, who should know better, as we say in English.

Of course, the Secretary of State for External Affairs is the first to be informed of such visits made in the name of Canada. In any event, I shall convey to the Minister the remark just made by my hon. colleague.

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[English]

**HEALTH****RESPONSIBILITY FOR MEDICAL SERVICES TO WHITES AND INDIANS IN NORTHERN QUEBEC—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Mr. Doug Neil (Moose Jaw):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. As the minister is probably aware there are claims from northern Quebec that isolated communities are receiving no medical facilities because the federal and Quebec governments are in a quandry over jurisdiction. Will the minister please clarify the state of negotiations with Quebec and state who is responsible for medical services for whites and Indians?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I have asked for a report on the situation in Mistassini. This detailed report has not yet been handed to me. As soon as I get it, I will be pleased to