

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Further to the questions I asked of the Prime Minister on Monday and Wednesday on this subject, I had put it to the Prime Minister that this should be a matter of government policy and that a statement should come from the Prime Minister himself with regard to the matter, particularly since it has so much to do with Canadian agricultural products now. Is it the intention of the government to make a statement or declaration of policy on this subject to the House?

Mr. Pepin: Without being pretentious about it, Mr. Speaker, I thought I had just done that.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): It is not true that a summation of what the minister has said amounts to the fact—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

INDIAN AFFAIRS**MORTALITY RATE—APPEARANCE OF MINISTER AND OFFICIALS BEFORE COMMITTEE**

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Would he and the officials of his department who have been dealing with the question of the mortality rate among the Indian people be prepared to appear before the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development to explore this matter?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): As a prelude to that appearance, would the minister be prepared to table certain documents? He has now tabled two memorandums having to do with the subject. Would he be prepared to table in the House, or make available to the committee, the relevant documents and other information used in the preparation of the material he has so far made available?

Mr. Munro: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Statistical analyses have been available for some time to the public and to the hon. member had he wanted them. As for the mortality statistics on which these memoranda were based, we expect they will also be published in the normal course, that is to say, within a week or ten days.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

[Mr. Pepin.]

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): My question is also directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. About a year ago he indicated he felt medical services for the people in the north and isolated regions of Canada would be improved when medicare was instituted. Would he care to say that the service of doctors to the people in the north and in isolated places has in fact been improved?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I thought the hon. member had a further supplementary question to ask on the same subject. I suggested to hon. members a few moments ago that perhaps we ought to move on to another subject. However, the hon. member for Skeena might be allowed to ask a supplementary to his earlier question.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): My supplementary question has to do with the comment the minister made on the subject of documents. I was about to ask whether he was aware that we on this side follow these matters a great deal more closely than he does.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: You showed it today.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): You, too.

Mr. Trudeau: Read about it in the papers. Look at the Canada Year Book. It is there.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): What are you smiling about, Pierre?

Mr. Speaker: I suggest we go on to another subject.

IMMIGRATION**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS**

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Minister of Manpower and Immigration whether he will take the first opportunity on motions to explain to the House, first, why the number of immigrants entering Canada fell by 10 per cent during the first nine months of the year and, second, why 25,000 fewer people came here from Europe than during the same period a year ago? Would he also explain what steps the government plans to take to restore the number of people coming to Canada each year to a level commensurate with the needs of this country?