

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I believe I said to the house previously that this matter had been under active consideration. It was discussed this morning at a meeting of the cabinet. We have been obtaining advice from the government of Italy as to their most needed requirements at this time. When we have that information we hope to help meet those requirements.

**Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, the problems arising out of the housing situation in Canada are under active study by the government. In fact we have had a discussion today and several times within the last week. There will be further discussion by some of us this afternoon and I hope the government will have some announcement to make within a day or so.

**CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS****CHANDLER-CASCAPÉDIA—DIRECTIVE  
RESPECTING TRAVEL SPEEDS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. J. R. Keays (Gaspé):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Minister of Transport. Will the minister inquire immediately into why the C.N.R. has issued orders that all passenger, freight and mixed trains operating in the Chandler and Cascapédia subdivisions travel at less than 30 miles an hour and that the railiner carrying 99 per cent of the passengers travel at 50 miles an hour? To assure our people of safety and comfort will the minister inquire into the motives behind this decision?

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sure the minister has noted the representation made by the hon. member. Unless he wants to discuss the matter during the adjournment debate perhaps this question could be placed on the order paper.

**Mr. Keays:** Mr. Speaker, with all due deference to your ruling on this matter, there is a deep concern on the part of the travelling public because they feel if 30 miles per hour is a safety factor they should not be subjected to speeds of 50 miles per hour.

**HOUSING****ACTION TO CORRECT SHORTAGE—BONUS  
FOR WINTER CONSTRUCTION**

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario):** I would like to address a question to the Minister of Labour. In view of the report of the Economic Council of Canada to the effect that swift action is needed to head off a severe housing shortage caused by tight credit conditions and rising costs, will the minister consider making money available for the construction of homes and the re-institution of the \$500 bonus for winter construction of houses?

**FINANCE****REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF SALES TAX ON  
PURCHASES BY MUNICIPAL AGENCIES**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Barry Mather (New Westminster):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Can the minister say what consideration he will give when preparing his second-look budget to exempting from sales taxes the purchases made by municipal type agencies, such as drainage and diking boards?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, this question has been considered before every budget I have prepared and, I gather, before every budget prepared by many of my predecessors. It will be given serious consideration again, but this may have the same result.

**REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF SALES TAX  
ON BUILDING MATERIALS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. G. L. Chatterton (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. In view of the fact that the report of the Economic Council of Canada indicates that the 11 per cent sales tax played a significant part in the increase in price of building materials, would the minister now consider removing this tax?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, when government policy is made in this respect, it will be announced in the ordinary way.

**BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM****INQUIRY AS TO REPORT OF ROYAL  
COMMISSION**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. William Skoreyko (Edmonton East):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Is he now in a position to advise the house regarding the progress being made by the commission on bilingualism and