

Oral Questions

understand the question. What we are concerned with is the fact that the SIN will be used as a single identifying number and will thereby represent a massive invasion of privacy of the people of this country, without parliament first having had an opportunity to fully debate it.

For example, does the minister consider the use of the SIN in the gun control legislation to be proper use of the social insurance number? There are other areas as well where it is being used.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, invariably, with people using names and numbers, a program can be better administered as a result of using numbers, whether it is for income tax, bank accounts, or whatever. I indicated in my answer that as far as the use of SIN numbers is concerned, we do not encourage their use outside the federal government. We indicate that individuals are not required to give that particular information. If you are asked that, I would say go and "sin" no more.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

* * *

HEALTH AND WELFARE

PROGRESS IN FIELD OF BEHAVIOURAL MEDICINE

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. What progress is being made in the field of behavioural medicine, the dream child of the previous minister, who believed that this would cut the galloping costs of health care by not only cutting down the accident rate but in preventing disease in its incipiency and by full-scale inoculations, environmental changes, good hygiene and exercise?

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I have adopted the child left by my predecessor. We are continuing to put the emphasis on promotion of health, which the hon. member has referred to as the prevention of ill health. He has always supported the efforts of all governments and every Canadian in that respect. He knows it has more to do with a change in attitude than legislative change.

I am pleased to inform the House that the rate of hospitalization, one of the criteria that can be used to measure progress in the promotion of good health in Canada, decreased by 8 per cent between 1971 and 1975, the time when we put forward this new proposal to Canadians. Also, the proportion of death of Canadians by the two leading causes has decreased, motor vehicle accidents by 24 per cent between 1973 and 1976, and heart disease by 3 per cent during the same period. These are indicators, and no more; but I want to put on record that progress is being made. I thank the hon. member for having given me notice of this question.

[Mr. McGrath.]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

COVERAGE OF FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister ask the Secretary of State to inquire of the CBC why it persists in trying to portray to Canadians an impression that this country faces insurmountable problems for which no solutions can, or will, be found, and have the Secretary of State report back to the House so that we can determine whether the CBC is trying to fulfil or thwart its mandate as a force for unity in this country?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows that the Secretary of State can, and will, convey the representation to the CBC. However, he has no control over what they do. He cannot give them direct instructions unless the House wishes him to do so.

I am sometimes amused when the CBC talks about the terrible state of the country, considering the terrible state of the CBC.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

TRANSPORT

MOVEMENT OF FREIGHT IN NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Mr. Wally Firth (Northwest Territories): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, I will direct my question to the Minister of Transport.

In view of the fact that the sea lift operation in Frobisher Bay has been aborted due to severe weather conditions and late scheduling, will the minister indicate what steps the government is taking to guarantee that food and other essential supplies will be transported to Frobisher Bay at the earliest possible date, and will he also tell this House if any emergency operations will be conducted without cost to the people affected by the sea lift termination?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport and Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, at least part of that question is not within the area of my responsibility. I can say that Transport was willing to give whatever assistance it could and, indeed, attempted to help by improvising helicopter pads and the like during the time of the unsuccessful loading.

I am sure the parties involved will be looking at the manner in which they can move this food and other supplies to their destination and will be consulting with various departments of government at different levels.