

[Later:]

**Mr. Stanfield:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. A few minutes ago I asked the Minister of National Health and Welfare whether he had cause to retract the assurance he gave the house on October 2 that lay dispensers were operating as qualified nurses. He suggested to the house he had said something different. I direct the minister's attention to the following sentence on page 693 of *Hansard*, and I relate my question to it:

The dispensers are trained to give first aid and may dispense simple drugs only on the directions of the nurses in the area with whom they get in contact by telephone to have prescriptions given. If the case is serious the nurse has the patient sent in to the nearest nursing station.

**Mr. Munro:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition. I thought he was referring to the lay dispensers themselves being registered nurses.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Will the minister now state whether he has cause to retract this statement?

**Mr. Munro:** I have no cause to retract because I do not know to what incident the Leader of the Opposition is referring. If he is saying that lay dispensers have dispensed drugs without such direction, I wish he would cite a specific instance and I will look into it.

**Mr. Stanfield:** The minister gave an assurance to the house on October 2. Is he standing by that assurance?

**Mr. Munro:** Yes, I am, Mr. Speaker. If some incident has come to light which would indicate this is not the case and the Leader of the Opposition would point it out, I would look into it right away.

## AGRICULTURE

### INQUIRY AS TO ASSISTANCE TO WESTERN FARMERS

On the orders of the day:

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence, in the ministerial charade, of the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, I would like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the very serious situation on the prairies, brought about as a result of climatic conditions, is an investigation or assessment by the Department of Agriculture or other departments now taking place to ascertain what action can be taken in order to assist the western farmers in a situation that has assumed almost catastrophic proportions?

## Inquiries of the Ministry

**Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Minister of Agriculture would be delighted to answer this question when he is in the house.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is here, and my question covered two departments. I ask the Prime Minister, is he not in a position to let the house know something about this question, in the absence of the two ministers? Surely parliament is entitled to a better attempt at an answer than that. I say with great respect to the Prime Minister that he is playing with parliament by answering in this way.

**Mr. Trudeau:** I will make an attempt at a better answer, Mr. Speaker. The right hon. gentleman asked a question about what was happening in the Department of Agriculture.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** And in the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

**Mr. Trudeau:** And in the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce. I am sure the right hon. gentleman knows there are two ministers who know what is going on in those departments better than I do.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** If that is the best answer the Prime Minister can give, it shows the wrongness of what he has done.

[Translation]

## CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

### QUEBEC—COVERAGE GIVEN FORMATION OF SEPARATIST PARTY

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the right hon. Prime Minister.

Everyone knows—and he must, too—that two important conventions took place in the province of Quebec last week-end: that which saw the creation of a new provincial political party and that of the Ralliement Crémiste.

Since the C.B.C. gave twice as much broadcast time to those who want to destroy Canada than to those who want to build it up and unite it, could the Prime Minister tell us whether he will order an investigation to find out the reason for this behaviour on the part of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation?

**Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, I am not responsible for C.B.C. programming and the powers of the minister responsible for