

Adjournment Debate

whatsoever. She said that direct delivery of social health services are a provincial responsibility and that is why they were phasing out this program. I have correspondence, Mr. Speaker, from the Minister and her officials to Planned Parenthood in 1981 which says completely the opposite. It is extremely supportive of this national organization. I agree, it does not provide direct services and those are a provincial responsibility. It provides co-ordinating, educational and promotional types of services which are extremely important in the area of family planning.

According to this correspondence the federal grant was to have been \$250,000 for 1983-84 and by agreement it was to be reduced to \$200,000 for 1984-85. Not this year, but two years from now. There was nothing in the correspondence regarding the question of jurisdiction. Therefore, this drastic cut really is a breach of promise. There is no question about that, if you read the correspondence. Planned Parenthood agreed to the cut only on condition that funds they had previously received would go directly to the provincial family planning group. The Minister has not lived up to this deal.

I also want to say that the role of the Planned Parenthood organization is extremely important because of the very high incidence of unwanted pregnancies among teenagers. In 1979 there were 32,000 babies born to teenage girls, an ever increasing number being under 15. In addition to that, we see a barrage of exploitation on TV and in magazines and movies which is really encouraging active and quite irresponsible sexuality in young people today, very young teenagers. So it is most important that there be a national campaign, particularly a media campaign, to counteract this high incidence of adolescent pregnancies.

• (2205)

I would also like to say that the federal Government assumed a very major leadership role in 1977. It signed international agreements that access to family planning is a human right.

I would like to quote from the Badgley Committee Report of January 1977, which was very strongly supported by the House and by the then minister of National Health and Welfare, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde), who said that the federal Government would take the lead in birth planning in Canada. Subsequently a Family Planning Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare was established. It supports three voluntary organizations—Planned Parenthood, Serena, which is a French organization concerned with natural family planning, and also the Canadian Association for Fertility Research. I understand that the budget of this federal Department has been slashed considerably and will be slashed by two-thirds for 1983.

The report of the Badgley Committee indicated:

The extent of induced abortions in the future can be expected to remain the same as at the present time, and its occurrence may gradually rise, unless there are effective changes made in the contraceptive practices of Canadians, particularly among high risk groups . . . these changes may be brought about by

increased efforts through research to find more effective and acceptable methods of contraception and by co-ordinated family planning programs for public education and health promotion.

These are the very things which Planned Parenthood provides. It continued:

Without taking them, there is virtually no likelihood that the volume of induced abortions will be reduced or even contained at its present level.

The report went on to indicate that it was extremely important for the federal Government to take leadership in this whole area.

Finally, it is false economy to cut back on family planning information when adolescent pregnancies are increasing. If I had more time, I could indicate the extremely high costs of this in welfare and health services.

Mr. Jim Schroder (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, further to the question of the Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Mrs. Mitchell) of November 30, 1982, I should like to advise her that the Department of National Health and Welfare has provided sustaining grants to the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada and Serena Canada in accordance with their objectives to provide family planning services to all Canadians requesting them.

The policy of the Department has consistently been to support a portion of central office expenditures of national voluntary agencies, while a portion of the expenditures is covered by revenue from other sources. According to the guide to family planning grants, it is expected that after an initial period of support by the family planning grants these agencies will develop other sources of funding. Over a period of time they will reduce and finally eliminate their dependence on family planning grants for a significant portion of their budgets.

Following the June 1977 Conference of Ministers of Health, there was consensus of the Provinces that family planning services came within provincial responsibility. In order to assist the Provinces in meeting this need, the Department funded a number of projects on a demonstration basis, projects which were later continued through provincial funds. We recognize that it is up to the Provinces to determine the course of action they wish to pursue.

As well, I would advise that because of the period of economic restraint, family planning grants have been reduced by \$1.4 million over a two-year period, which is comprised of \$700,000 per year. The Department of National Health and Welfare attempted to distribute the funds in the family planning program in the most equitable manner in order that each ongoing project would be in receipt of at least minimal operating funds. Federal contributions to family planning services will continue to be available through the Canada Assistance Plan and the Established Programs Financing Act. The Department of National Health and Welfare will also continue its information activities in family planning.