

## MEDICAL CARE

### HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL PREMIUMS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Madam Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The Minister has been making a number of statements relative to the present controversy in the health care field. Does the Minister regard hospital and medical premiums as part of the extra billing controversy?

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to receive the first question on Medicare, a month after Parliament has reopened, from my friend on the other side. I compliment him on having been made the medicare critic. I therefore know he is interested, and I appreciate that.

On the question of premiums, it is a practice in three Provinces. I have always said that, in terms of equity, premiums are a very regressive form of taxation. Unfortunately the Constitution does not permit us to take action in the coming Canada Health Act. As I said, in the case of Alberta, where thousands of people are cut off from having their doctor's visits paid by Medicare, if that Province had gone the route of justice and general taxation, it would not be in the mess it is.

### SITUATION IN YUKON

**Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Madam Speaker, if the Minister says this is a regressive form of taxation, I agree. Can the Minister explain why she levies hospital premiums in federal hospitals under her care, namely, in the Yukon, up to \$318 per family per year?

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** I don't, Madam Speaker.

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## ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

### NATIVE SYSTEM OF JUSTICE

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. In a speech to an audience of native people in western Canada two days ago, the Minister said, and I quote:

I think that we are now finally beginning to realize that the native peoples of Canada have the right to expect a system of justice that reflects elements of their own cultural heritage—

He went on to say that the Government is busy working on a plan to codify the Indian law and to establish special courts, confirming the suspicion that Indian people have, that the Government is not really interested in consultation but is once again off on a tangent, putting in place a blueprint that is disrespectful of the legitimate aspirations which Indians have for themselves. Why has the Minister chosen this time to confuse the issue, just days before a parliamentary committee,

## Oral Questions

which has met in 60 locations in Canada over the past year, will be reporting to the House on these very questions?

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice):** Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member has considerably embellished the statement that I made last week. It is true that the Government is concerned about attempting to ensure that the law that is applied to our Indian citizens as far as possible adequately reflects their cultural heritage. In fact a conference will be held in Saskatchewan next week, of which my Department is a partial sponsor, to look at this question. It is a native peoples' conference. We have been having the fullest possible consultation with native peoples on this issue. The native peoples' group to whom is made that statement last week welcomed it. I will welcome the report which the parliamentary committee will be presenting.

### POSSIBILITY OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River):** Madam Speaker, the Minister, through his executive assistant, also speculated on the right of aboriginal peoples to some form of self-determination, although it is reported in the press that he was very careful to mention "self-government" rather than using the term "band government", which was his choice. Will the Minister assure us today that no decisions will be made with regard to the establishment of any form of band government, or any new system of justice, before the parliamentary committee has the opportunity to lay its report before the House and for the native people to react to the report? That is crucially important.

**Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice):** Madam Speaker, questions involving Indian government are very much to the fore in the constitutional discussions which are going on between the Government of Canada and the native peoples and which will also, of course, very soon involve the provincial Governments. We are having a meeting of officials in several weeks. We are having a meeting of responsible Ministers early next month. These are all questions which are on the public record. Nothing is being done secretly or behind the scenes. It is all being conducted so far as possible in public, certainly with full consultation both with the native groups and the provincial Governments.

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## ENERGY

### ONTARIO AND QUEBEC PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH HYDROGEN INSTITUTES

**Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Bruce-Grey):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Minister will know that the Government of the Province of Ontario, in co-operation with the University of Toronto, established an Institute for Hydrogen Studies in 1981, and that they have asked for federal co-operation and assistance. He will also know that it now seems likely that the federal