

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

founding people of this country. Accordingly, it seems to me this interference with valid medical decisions should be ended and that Indians should be given freedom to make decisions for themselves under proper medical guidance.

I would be very interested in hearing either from the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Laing), who I know has a sympathetic regard for this sort of problem, or from the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mrs. Rideout), to see whether or not this policy is going to be reversed, and what are the plans of the departments to look after what to me appears to be a very serious problem.

**Mrs. Margaret Rideout (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I have checked with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Laing) about the question the hon. member has raised, and I have been advised that he has received no letters protesting the action that his officials allegedly took in connection with medical sterilization and the use of contraceptive pills by Indians. In any event these matters would normally come within the purview of the Department of National Health and Welfare. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has also informed me that his officials did not send out a directive regarding sterilization or the use of contraceptive pills by Indians.

AGRICULTURE—POTATOES—IMPORTS FROM  
U.S. INTO WESTERN CANADA

**Mr. Ed. Schreyer (Springfield):** Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Beer) is present to listen to the subject matter which I wish to bring to the attention of the department and the minister. What is involved is an application by the Canadian Horticultural Council, on behalf of the potato growers organizations of Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia, made to the minister in an attempt to get him to consider imposing value for duty on the importation of potatoes from the United States.

The application for the imposition of value for duty was made on January 22, by which time the groups involved had already become concerned about the effect which American surplus potatoes was having on prices paid to producers in western Canada. The application was followed up by a delegation which came

[Mr. Brand.]

to see the minister in Ottawa in February. Since then there has been no indication from the minister as to whether he will accede to this request.

Last week I asked the minister if he was in a position to say whether his officials had made any calculations to determine whether in fact there was dumping of American potatoes in Canada. The minister has said that one of the reasons the government has not as yet agreed to the imposition of value for duty is because of the opposition to such a course of action by maritime provinces potato shippers. It is not clear in my mind, nor in the minds of western potato growers and their representatives, whether the potato shippers from the maritimes are truly representative of the growers or whether they are more representative of the wholesaler and distributor segments of the potato industry in that part of the country.

In any case I would like to point out that section 40(7)(b) of the Customs Act provides that the minister may have a calculation made as to the importation of any fruit or vegetable into this country to determine whether or not the price at which they come in constitutes dumping. The minister should do at least that much. He should indicate to the people who have made this request to him six weeks ago what the findings of his officials were with regard to their application. He should not just simply sit back and say that they are giving the application consideration, but that because they have this opposition from the maritimes they do not feel it would be wise to take any action just yet.

● (10:10 p.m.)

The fact of the matter is that very often when a value for duty imposition is requested by producers, if action is not taken within two or three weeks it really loses its effectiveness. At the time in late January when the application was made approximately 40 per cent of western Canadian potato production was still not marketed. As a result of the procrastination and the failure to impose the value for duty there has been a depressing effect on prices to the producers in western Canada. Twenty per cent of that 40 per cent has still to be marketed.

When does the minister intend to take action in this regard and impose a value for duty? If another six week period goes by he might as well forget it. It should be said in closing that the potato growers in western