

regard to C.R.T.C. appointments up to now and with regard to Dr. Stewart's future plans, one might expect that Dr. Stewart will be employing his many talents in fields other than broadcasting, though what those fields will be it is difficult to say.

I wanted to say some things about the B.B.G. which the house I think would wish to hear, but time does not permit me to do so now. Perhaps within the next 24 hours I might be permitted to continue my remarks. May I call it ten o'clock?

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Order, please. Since it is ten o'clock shall I rise, report progress and request leave to sit again?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Progress reported.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Starr: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the government house leader what surprises the government has for us tomorrow?

Mr. MacEachen: Tomorrow we want to take second reading of the tax bill.

Mr. Knowles: Which one?

Mr. MacEachen: Following that, we shall take the supplementary estimates.

• (10:00 p.m.)

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the house under provisional standing order 39A deemed to have been moved.

INDIAN AFFAIRS—SASKATCHEWAN—MEDICAL DECISIONS AFFECTING STERILIZATION AND CONTRACEPTIVES

Mr. L. M. Brand (Saskatoon): On February 8 I addressed a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development asking whether he had received letters of protest from certain medical authorities in Saskatchewan regarding actions by officials of the department of Indian affairs in making arbitrary and long distance medical decisions contrary to those made by the local doctors with respect to treating Indians in connection with medical sterilization and the use of contraceptive pills.

Quite properly, the minister pointed out at that time that I should have addressed my

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question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare within whose purview the question of the health of Indians comes. However, I should like to point out that I deliberately addressed the question to the minister of Indian affairs because it seemed inconceivable to me that decisions affecting Indians and the manner in which they are treated should be made unilaterally by the Department of National Health and Welfare, without consultation with the minister of Indian affairs.

Needless to say, when this matter was brought to my attention I was very perturbed about two factors in particular, first that there should be bureaucratic interference with bona fide medical decisions and, second, that there should be an attempt by the department, whichever it was, to control Indians—to consider them as some sort of imbecile ward of a government department.

The question came to my mind whether we were encouraging the Indian people toward self-determination by acting in this way, and whether this bureaucratic interference with valid medical decisions should be permitted. In support of my statement I have here a copy of a letter from the Department of National Health and Welfare in which, after a reference to the sterilization of two particular native people who are mentioned, the following appears:

Sterilization for Indians is not condoned as a directorate policy, nor is the routine use of contraceptive device or pill. However, with certain medical grounds contraceptive techniques are allowed under physician guidance.

It is true there are valid medical reasons for sterilization, apart from any policy which might be laid down by a bureaucratic administration. For example one could mention chronic disease, such as kidney disease or tuberculosis where further pregnancies would exacerbate the disease, and where there are several children in the family and it was felt sterilization should be carried out. And there are many gynaecological reasons for precluding further pregnancies unless grave risk to the mother is accepted.

The use of the contraceptive pill may also be justified for valid and cogent medical reasons, not just for the social reasons which we have all come to understand. Today we seem to be asking for self-determination for our Indian people, the development of a spirit of self reliance so that they can look after themselves and play their part to the full in our society because, after all, they are the true