

NEWSLETTER



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ONTARIO COALITION FOR BETTER DAYCARE

February/March 1986

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News & Updates From the Coalition

Katie Cooke Task Force is Out!

"A child care system for Canada should be as comprehensive and as universally accessible as medicare and public education". This was the fundamental message of the Katie Cooke Task Force released March 7th in Ottawa. The Task Force turned thumbs down on using increased Income Tax deductions to finance more child care. Nor do they want to rely on commercial centres or informal caregivers. To get dependable high quality care, we must pour public money into expanding the supply of licensed non-profit and public centres and licensed family day care homes.

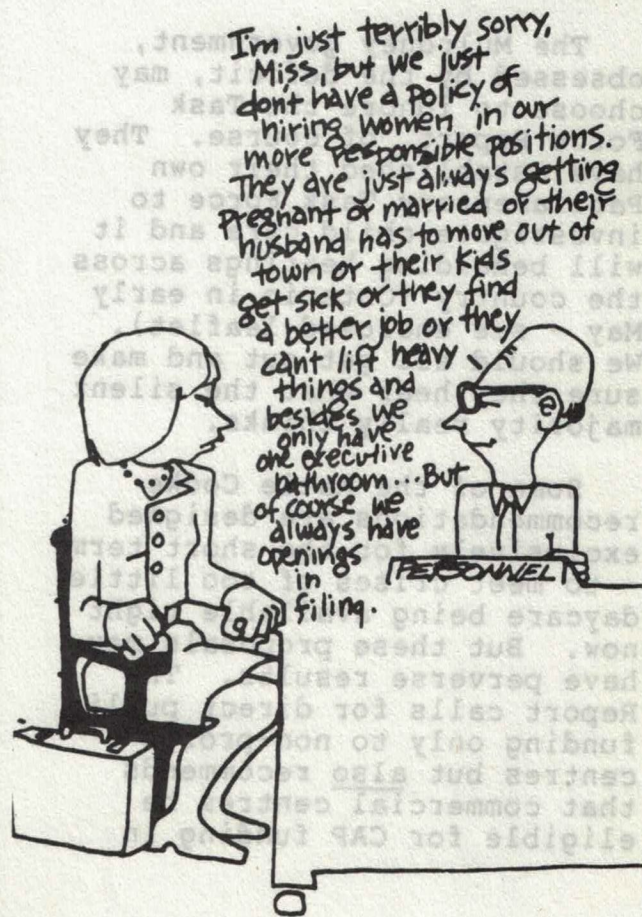
It is truly remarkable to see these opinions, familiar to many of us in the daycare community, presented on newspaper front pages, radio and TV across the country.

The march towards universal quality childcare has truly reached a new plateau with the publication of the Task Force Report. The Report is well worth reading - nearly 400 pages of analysis and data on the need for childcare, how it isn't being met, why private arrangements can't solve the crisis, and how public funding of childcare can. There's also a careful examination of maternity/parental leave policies in Canada and recommendations for more generous and extended provision of parental leave.

Twenty studies were commissioned to help Task Force members analyze the day

care crisis. Their findings have been skillfully woven together in the final Report.

Child care is a provincial responsibility under Canada's constitution. The federal government plays a role in financing care for some families who qualify under the Canada Assistance Plan and gives other families a tax break with the Child Care Expense Deduction. But the Katie Cooke Report is now urging a whole new financing approach on the federal government. Right away the federal government should make direct grants to non-profit licensed day care (\$1 - \$4 per child per day) to stabilize the existing system and allow wages to rise. Over the next



five years the federal government should try to hammer out agreements with each province to cost share grants which would cover half the costs of care provided in non-profit centres or licensed family homes. By the year 2001, these grants would be extended so that federal and provincial governments between them would cover the full cost of universally accessible care.

Initially, the subsidies would cost the federal government about \$116 million, with another \$160 million going towards more generous parental leave benefits. By the year 2001, the cost to all governments would rise to over \$11 billion. Not cheap, but then again good care doesn't come cheap.

The Mulroney government, obsessed by the deficit, may choose to ignore the Task Force Report, of course. They have established their own Parliamentary Task Force to investigate child care and it will be holding hearings across the country (Ontario in early May - see enclosed leaflet). We should all get out and make sure they hear what the silent majority really thinks.

Some of the Katie Cooke recommendations are designed exclusively for the short term - to meet crises of too little daycare being available right now. But these proposals may have perverse results. The Report calls for direct public funding only to non-profit centres but also recommends that commercial centres be eligible for CAP funding in

the nine provinces where they are not eligible today. (Only in Ontario and the Northwest Territories, which use the means test, are commercial spaces funded under CAP. Other provinces and the Yukon use income testing and can only fund profit-oriented spaces if they pay the whole shot themselves). The Report's intentions are good; they want more spaces available immediately to meet present needs of low income families under CAP. But their method is wrong; commercial centres will not help us to build towards a dependable, high quality, non-profit system. Yet this may be the only one of Katie Cooke's recommendations the Mulroney government decides to act on.

When all is said and done, this report is a big step forward on the road to universal and free non-profit care. We are grateful to Katie Cooke, Jack London, Renee Edwards and Ruth Rose-Lizee for their labours and to a research team headed by Christine Blain. It is up to every one of us now to renew our efforts with this new ammunition.



THE FEDERAL TASK FORCE ON CHILDCARE

Send A Message To Ottawa!

Yet another Federal Task Force will study childcare in Canada in 1986! A Parliamentary Task Force was announced on November 27, 1985, by Jake Epp, Minister of Health and Welfare, to report in one year. The Task Force has a mandate to examine and report on the future of childcare in Canada in the context of the changing needs of Canadian families. It will examine: a) The requirements of children for care; b) The role of the federal government in childcare; c) Alternatives for future action by the federal government

Public hearings in Ontario will be held between May 5 - 16, although precise dates and places are not yet available. Groups and individuals who want a hearing before the Task Force must apply by telephone (613-594-3196), or in writing (151 Sparks St., Suite 308, Ottawa, K1N 1C3) before March 15th.

At the same time, the report of the \$750,000 Task Force appointed by the previous Liberal Government, chaired by Dr. Katie Cooke, has not yet been made available. It is expected to be released in March. Recommendations of the Cooke Task Force are expected to provide a significant improvement to childcare services in Canada. But, whether the Mulroney government will agree to implement them, remains an open question.

IT'S UP TO US!

The Federal government must hear about childcare loudly and clearly from many individuals and groups across Canada. The Task Force hearings will be the only opportunity we may have for many years to say again:

Licensed childcare services are inaccessible to most Canadian children

The majority of Canadian parents with young children work to earn a living and support their families, and require childcare to do so.

Most working parents cannot afford daycare fees, which cost between \$4,000 - \$8,000 per year, per child

Quality childcare services demand well-trained staff who should receive salaries and benefits commensurate with the value of their work and educational qualifications.

An equitable employment strategy for women must include access to affordable, high-quality childcare.

Federal initiatives are needed now to implement a directly-funded childcare system and to introduce a new system of parental leave.

The Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association has called upon the Federal government to introduce a Child Care Financing Act, which would provide direct funding to childcare programs across the country.

THE FEDERAL TASK FORCE

What Can We Do?

1. Make copies of this flyer and distribute it.
2. Contact your local CDCAA representatives (Jane Bertrand, 416-667-3273), and Julie Mathien 416-979-2393), your local daycare coalition, or the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare (416-766-4691) to find out when the Task Force is coming to your area.
3. **Apply before March 15th.** Ask for a hearing before the Task Force. You don't need to make a formal presentation - a brief personal statement about your own childcare experiences is most effective.

Phone 613- 995-8633, or write 151 Sparks St., Suite 308, Ottawa, K1N 1C3.
4. Find out what activities are planned for the Task Force's visit in your area. If nothing is planned, get something started!
5. Ask for a group meeting with your MP to discuss childcare.
6. Attend the Task Force hearings
7. Collect names and donations for the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare's *Globe and Mail* Campaign. Their address is 1260 Bay St., Toronto, Ontario, M5R 2B5, (416) 766-4691.

8. The seven members of the Parliamentary Task Force are:

Chair:	Shirley Martin (PC) - Lincoln, Ont.
Members:	Roger Clinch (PC) - Gloucester, N.B.
	Suzanne Duplessis (PC) - Louis-Hebert, Que
	Rob Nicholson (PC) - Niagara Falls, Ont
	Leo Duguay (PC) - St. Boniface, Man.
	Lucie Pepin (Lib) - Outremont, Que.
	Margaret Mitchell, (NDP) - Vancouver East, BC

ComSoc Hints at Big Changes

At the recent quarterly meeting of the Coalition Council, Gerry Duda, Senior Policy Coordinator, Ministry of Community and Social Services, presented an informative "update" on the Policy Review which has been in the works since October. This informal exchange provided a tantalizing sneak preview of the upcoming events. It certainly seems as if the Liberals have been listening closely during all those years in opposition. The language of the NDP-Liberal accord seems to be trickling down the pipe to the frontline. Duda made it clear that daycare remains a high priority on the Premier's list of things to change and that the direction will be toward "making it more of a public service".

Duda stressed that the policy review is a government review and not merely a ministerial review conducted by ComSoc., He emphasized that the Women's Directorate played an equal role in influencing and directing it. Other ministries that are included are: Education, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Treasury, Citizenship and Culture, Agriculture and Food, Northern Affairs and Health. The review itself will provide a new framework, program and financial, for child care. It sounds as if obtaining Cabinet approval will include some fancy footwork in the next few months but it is scheduled to be presented to the OMSSA Committee in June. (Make sure to check the list of Cabinet Ministers and call the closest

one to you; ask about the policy review and when it will be released; then call back a week later for an "update".)

He did say that the goal is to get it through Cabinet and into the Speech from the Throne which is anticipated in April. It sounds as if we can expect to see new and /or revised legislation which will require formal consultation before becoming law.

He discussed the broad themes of daycare availability and accessibility (in light of the goal to make daycare more of a public service.) In discussing the availability of

services across the Province, he emphasized the role of municipalities that now are reluctant to participate in what can be an expensive program. There must be new approaches to encourage them to make this public service available. These include: changing the cost-sharing and/or providing incentives to municipalities that implement programs; and adopting methods to make the service less discretionary. (Could this mean that daycare becomes a

FANTASIES



ComSoc Hints at Big Changes

mandatory service which municipalities must provide?) Consultation with A.M.O. and local municipalities will be critical.

With regard to availability of resources, there is clearly an imbalance between the demographic distribution of children and the level of resources. Approximately 70-80% of all child care resources are in Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton. However, rural areas, defined as those with less than 50,000 population, are home to 30% of children under 10 years but have only 16% of the resources. This disproportionate distribution points out the need for planning at the local level. This planning needs to be flexible but to operate within some parameters and targets. The Province will have to provide leadership and more generous levels of financing to improve the distribution of services.

In order to address accessibility, the Province will have to deal with affordability. There was clear acknowledgement that the average daycare fee of \$4,800 per year was more than middle income families in Ontario can afford to pay. At the same time, the current subsidies do not meet the needs of those who do qualify. Duda outlined two options for achieving the goal of reducing fees and increasing salaries. First, direct financing or funding was mentioned as an effective way to reduce the cost of daycare for everyone. (This might translate into a direct

grant for every licensed space or some licensed spaces.) There are probably limited opportunities for cost-sharing with the federal government under the current arrangements. Second, income testing instead of needs testing: This would allow middle-income families, with incomes of up to \$45,000 to receive some subsidy. This instrument is simpler to administer, is less intrusive, and has no discretionary items such as rent or debt allowance. Thus, it can be applied more equitably across the Province. (He explained that using the current needs testing formula now eliminates many farmers from eligibility because they have the asset of a farm, even though actual income may be low.)

The third option is to implement a combination of direct funding and income testing. However, he commented that even if the level of service was expanded greatly, direct financing was instituted, and income-testing was used, there still would be the problem of securing adequate wages for daycare workers.

With regard to the Provincial role at the Federal level, he commented that this is not a favourable time to replace C.A.P. with new open-ended funding. So, Ontario will try to make maximum use of C.A.P. with maximum flexibility and try to obtain cost-sharing for capital and direct operational funding.

Gerry Duda said he'd keep us posted on developments.

Indirect Subsidy Safe -- For Now

When Gerry Duda came to speak to the Ontario Coalition's quarterly meeting on February 15th, he agreed with Coalition representatives that it did not make sense for the province to be enforcing its instructions to municipal daycare centres to increase their fees to full per diem costs at the same time as the government was conducting a full-scale view of funding alternatives. He agreed that easing the problems of affordability created by eliminating the indirect subsidy were the very thing that the province was attempting to deal with. He agreed to return to his office and discuss the matter with other colleagues.

Last week, when Sue Colley talked to him he informed her that indeed there did seem to have been an oversight and that the Regional Directors were meeting with the Policy Branch this week to discuss a new policy which would relax the rule requiring municipal centres to raise their fees to full cost by the end of 1986.

Contact your Regional Child Care Director for more information.

COALITION PRESENTS BRIEF

Last month the Coalition presented a brief to the UI Commission calling for improved and extended maternity and parental leave. Copies of the Brief are available from the Coalition office (\$2) on request.

GRAPHICS WANTED

Your views and local news are always welcome. Also we are in desperate need of photos, drawings, cartoons, local press clippings, etc. Please send freely!

DID YOUR PARENTS LET YOU WATCH THE TELEVISION SHOW ABOUT NUCLEAR WAR?

YEAH - AND THEY WERE THE ONES WHO GOT SCARED



WHAT PART MADE THEM SCARED? THE PART WHEN I ASKED THEM WHAT THEY WERE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT



Rural Daycare Initiatives

The provincial government and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture are currently collaborating to set up four innovative pilot rural day care projects in four Regional Counties, Northumberland County, Lambton, Dufferin County and Temiskaming. These are pilot studies intended to gather information to enable the province to develop more comprehensive day care policy to serve the needs of farming communities. This issue has been identified as an urgent one due to the growing concern about the farm safety of children around machinery, chemicals and animals.



The projects are being jointly financed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The province is also expecting some federal grant money under Challenge '86, a summer youth employment programme which would enable them to hire ECE students.

All of the projects are expected to be short term, using small group centre models during harvest time. For example, a group centre may be set up, on a day camp model, for a couple of weeks during harvest time when itinerant farm workers come to work on harvest and need day care for their children. Other projects may involve trained caregivers may be on call to go into homes that need day care on particular days and this might involve grouping neighbouring children into one program in one location.

The projects are being evaluated and we will provide regular updates.

Early Primary Education Project Report

The Early Primary Education Project Report was released on March 3 with very little fanfare. The Coalition will be examining the Report closely over the next couple of months and submitting our response to the Ministry of Education. In the next newsletter, we will publish a fuller analysis of the Report. In the meantime, we reprint here the Executive Summary of the Report and hope that you will all get hold of a copy and take a few moments to drop us a line with your comments.

The Early Primary Education Project was initiated to examine the education provided for children in the early years of the Ontario school system. Its goal was to propose new directions that the Ministry of Education and school boards might take in order to place renewed emphasis on these critical years.

The Project followed a broadly-based consultative approach, inviting expressions of opinion from a variety of people across the province. On the basis of input received through this process and through commissioned studies, the Project has made 42 recommendations. These deal with the child, school and community; teacher education and certification; linking of community services to support families with young children; and implementation of the actions proposed.

In regard to curriculum, the central recommendations are that junior kindergarten (JK) be phased in throughout Ontario, and that the five years of the Primary Division (JK-Grade 3) be organized as an integrated unit. This unit would be characterized by

continuity in both planning and program development, flexibility in pupil entry and progression, close attention to individual learning styles and developmental stages, and strong communication links with parents and others concerned with the education and well-being of young children. Consistent with its emphasis on an individualized approach, the Project recommends that "child learning profiles" be developed to identify the talents, interests, and needs of each pupil and suggest specific program adaptations.

A vital component of the Primary Division will be the level of specialized training of the teachers. To ensure that qualifications are maintained at a high level, the Project makes several recommendations addressing minimum requirements, content of pre-service programs, opportunities for specialization, and establishment of bridging mechanisms between programs offered by teacher education institutions and colleges of applied arts and technology. To enhance pre-service and in-service teacher education, the Project recommends the creation of Teacher Education

Early Primary Education Project Report

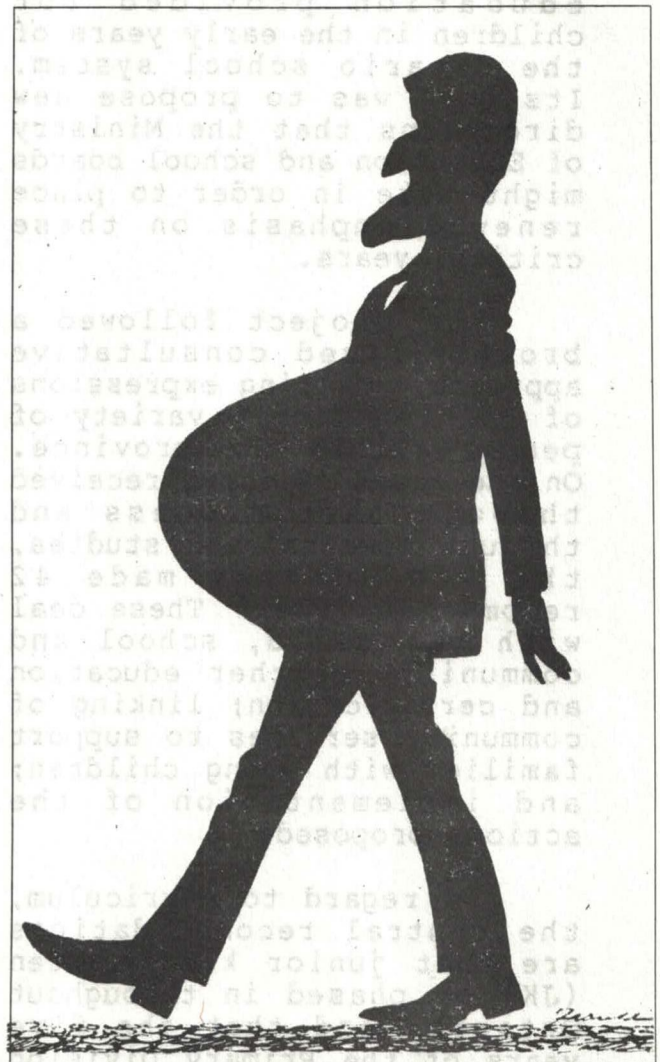
Centres (English and French) that will offer opportunities for cooperative research and development and supervised practical experience in school settings.

In view of social changes affecting families, the Project puts forward a number of recommendations designed to foster greater cooperation among institutions and agencies that serve families with young children. One of the key proposals is the establishment of family resource centres, in schools or elsewhere, that will provide a range of services responding to the particular needs of families and children in the local community.

Finally, the Project recommends an implementation plan that includes identification of pilot boards, establishment of a branch within the Ministry to support the aims of the Project, and appointment of enablers in Ministry regional offices to help school boards implement the changes approved.

The consensus of opinion among participants in the Early Primary Education Project was that implementation of its

proposals would constitute the first phase of a renewal of elementary education in Ontario, a renewal that should be carried forward through the Junior Division and beyond.



Labour Board Rules on Unionization

The Ontario Labour Relations Board has ruled that caregivers who provide day care services in their homes but are dependent on a private home day care agency for referrals are eligible for unionization. The ruling came last week in the case of Cradleship Creche of Metro Toronto, a private home day care agency which refers children to private homes it has approved for day care and pays the people who care for the children out of funds provided by the Municipality of Metro Toronto.

OPSEU had organized the 100 or so day care providers, but Cradleship Creche challenged the union at the Labour Relations Board, arguing that the providers were independent contractors - self employed - and therefore not eligible for unionization.

The board agreed with the union's argument that the daycare providers were sufficiently dependent on the agency for their livelihood that they should be considered employees. "Their limited opportunity to obtain income from other sources of entrepreneurial activity or employment points readily to an economic dependency on the Creche closely paralleling the dependency associated with an ordinary employment relationship," said the majority decision, written by vice-chairman N. B. Satterfield.

The decision opens the way for the providers to negotiate a contract with the

agency and for the providers to apply to the Employment Standards Branch for "employee status" which would automatically entitle them to minimum wage of \$4 per hour, compared to the average \$2.61 per hour they currently receive.

This decision has serious implications for Ontario's licensed private home day care programs. Initially instituted by the provincial government as a means to cut the costs of day care programs, private home day care costs now threaten to escalate. The Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care has always supported supervised private home day care as one of the child care options for parents but have also argued that under the present system, providers are exploited.

The solution would be for private home day care providers to be paid a salary in the same way that group day care teachers are paid. With continual government emphasis on spending restraints, however, it is clear that we will have to mount a concerted campaign just to save supervised private home day care, let alone and expand and improve it.



Can We Change CAP? Part II

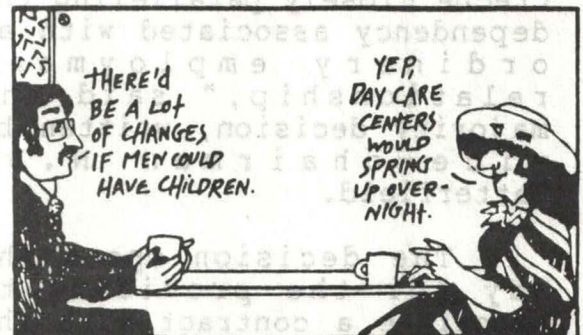
Many of you know that a major review of daycare policy in Ontario has been underway at the Ministry of Community and Social Services since shortly after the Liberal Government took power last year. Since last fall, there have been hints that serious consideration is being given to moving to access federal dollars for daycare subsidies through the welfare services route of the Canada Assistance Plan, as other provinces do. (See November Newsletter for article on CAP).

The Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care and its member organizations have strongly maintained that daycare must be funded through a direct funding mechanisms outside the Canada Assistance Plan. Therefore, it is important to examine closely the directions in which it appears the province is likely to move.

What would it mean for daycare in Ontario if income testing were established as the mechanism for determining eligibility for daycare subsidies? What choices would the province be making about the eligibility mechanism and the provincial daycare budget in general? Which parents and which programs could be eligible? Could this be the long-term solution to the problem of daycare funding in Ontario, or an interim solution?

It is critical to understand that the federal government sets maximum income levels for provinces to use when they set their own guidelines for deciding who they will subsidize. No province, however, uses provincial guidelines which approach the levels to which the federal government will cost share. Table 1 provides the NET monthly incomes up to which the federal government will make their dollars available for subsidies.

A change to income testing could allow families with net annual incomes of up to \$50,000 to receive some subsidy for their daycare costs if the provincial government were to use the federal maximums. In addition, if the provincial government were to initiate a direct funding mechanism for daycare programs, the federal government would cost share



Can We Change CAP?

Part II

50% of these direct grants for people who were subsidizable under new provincial income guidelines. Generous income guidelines would make more money expended on direct grants cost-shareable by the federal government.

Another thing to consider is how municipal discretion in Ontario has worked for or against daycare. Generally, municipal discretion in

now. The question of whether it is fair to treat parents using commercial programs differently than those using non-profit or municipal programs has arisen. It is important to recognize that other provinces already have in place several mechanisms which treat for-profit programs differently than non-profits. For example, direct grants are not available to commercial programs in Quebec and Manitoba. If one wants to encourage the phasing out of commercial daycare in Ontario,



setting the terms of needs testing has had the effect of limiting eligibility around the province. The effect of setting a standard income guideline for subsidy eligibility, provided it is high, could play a substantial role in dealing with unevenness of access to daycare in Ontario.

Under the present CAP definition of the kinds of programs which are eligible for cost-sharing under the welfare services (income-testing) route, for-profit programs would be excluded. Parents using for-profit programs could continue to be needs-tested and continue to receive subsidies as they do

as the Liberal Government has suggested they do, this kind of move would be in the right direction.

Another question about how this kind of change could work has to do with the size of the provincial daycare budget for subsidies. In order to make this kind of change meaningful, the province must be prepared to spend substantially. Right now, under the present funding arrangements, parents can be eligible for a subsidy and find that no subsidy is available. Although in some municipalities, it is the budgetary restriction imposed by the municipality which is to blame, in Metro Toronto, it

Can We Change CAP? Part II

has been the provincial unwillingness to spend which has limited available subsidies. It would be less than useful to open up the eligibility criteria for daycare subsidies and leave parents on long waiting lists



if funding was not available.

In summary, although a move to the welfare services route in Ontario in no way moves daycare out of the welfare system, with its baggage of eligibility criteria and testing, it COULD have the effect of helping make daycare more accessible to Ontario families. As a short term or interim solution, for the provincial government to consider, it could be welcome.

Bolton Tragedy

The inquest into the blaze at Bolton on November 14, 1985, killing Joan Bulpit and all four children in her care, recommended, amongst other things, better tax breaks for day care costs.

Although it is not news to us, great importance was placed on the fact that of the 466,000 Ontario children using alternative child care arrangements, 86% of them are in informal care. It is in this sense that the Bolton inquest represents a watershed in public awareness around day care issues. It triggered an unprecedented public response which popularized three important turning points:

- It affirmed that underground daycare exists in large numbers;
- It put the responsibility of the problem squarely on the shoulders of the government; and
- It reaffirmed our assumption that day care is an issue whose TIME HAS COME.

No amount of public education, press coverage about the numbers children in informal childcare have quite captured the imagination of the press and public in the same way. We've known for some time that there has been an enormous increase in women's workforce participation rate from 40% in 1975 to 60% in 1985. Or, that in 1961 65% of families were the typical family with father at work, mother at home looking after the children, but by 1981 there were only 16% of such families.

Bolton Tragedy

It is indeed gradually dawning on the the press and politicians - at least - that there is a huge child care underground and that it has reached its limits of workability. If 60% of women with children under 6 are in the workforce then, there are far fewer women to take care of children at home than there were twenty years ago. It means that parents have fewer options and even when they succeed in finding a satisfactory caregiver, then they are also at risk of losing that caregiver one, perhaps two, maybe even six months later. The child's care becomes destabilized all over again.

It is no accident that every recent study conducted has suggested that parental choice for children in the over 3 age groups is a group centre, even when they can't such a centre space. It's partly because parents want higher quality care, but it's also because of the instability of the "underground babysitting network".

And so the Media, along with the Coroner, have woken up, shocked, unanimously outraged that this situation is occurring. The burden of guilt has been placed squarely on the shoulders of the government - where, of course it belongs. Five years ago, this wouldn't have been the case. Five years ago, a large proportion of the blame would have been placed on the shoulders of Mrs. Bulpit; and the rest on the parents of the children for placing them in

insecure situations.

So, the media are asking the question: "Why can't we have more government regulation?" We don't want anymore tragedies. And the Government is embarrassed. After our years of lobbying they, too, admit the problems. They know that they are sitting on a time bomb - a time bomb which is under Ontario's children.

Indeed, the Liberal Government has paid lip service to the problem in its accord with the NDP. It committed itself to transform day care from a welfare service to a public service and they are currently carrying out a review which will be looking at how to increase day care. They know that hiring hundreds of inspectors to run around making sporadic checks on private homes is not the answer, but setting up a universal quality system would involve building a bridge that they are not yet ready to cross.



Sheba Press/Britain

Multi-Cultural Bandwagon

Is the day care profession conscious about racism in our programs? Are child care professionals actively opposing it? To begin discussion about this issue and stimulate your comments and ideas about the Canadian situation, we reprint below an article which appeared in the National Childcare Campaign Newsletter from Britain, written by Marcia Scantlebury. **We hope you will write to us about your experiences.**

The bandwagon for anti-racist care has really started rolling, but there has been tremendous confusion between anti-racist strategies and multi-cultural resources. It seems that anti-racist childcare policy and its practical implementation has moved into an abysmal grey area.

Many childcare workers think that because a wok is in the toy cupboard or the nursery has a cultural day once a week, that an anti-racist strategy is in full swing. In this article I want to concentrate on the practical use of multi-cultural resources.

Multicultural resources are just one of the ways towards anti-racist childcare. They can come in the form of toys, books, puzzles, posters etc, that positively reflect the variety of cultures that we have in society today. The problem with multi-cultural resources is that they can have an adverse effect if they are used incorrectly. Therefore, just because a toy or a book has a multicultural resources label, it does not necessarily mean that it is in any way anti-racist.

The problem arises because

there are very few good quality toys or ones that can be truly deemed as anti-racist and those that are available are usually very costly. There is always the danger that these resources reinforce stereotypes, for example, dolls that proclaim to be anti-racist may well be derogatory, with thick lips, goggle eyes and woolly hair. Problems also arise with books. Books can be divided into three categories:

a) Racist books - which express the superiority of one race, usually white, over another.



Elizabeth Eddy

Multi-Cultural Bandwagon

b) Non-racist books - books that do reflect other cultures, but not in a positive way. Although they do not express white superiority, they do nothing to actively challenge it.

c) Anti-racist books - books that project positive images of black and ethnic minority people. They challenge racist attitudes and practices, while helping children to understand and confront racism.

Points to look out for are:

i) Is the book actually valuing other cultures (without being patronising),

are black characters operating within their own culture, or are they being judged by white standards, white norms and expectations?

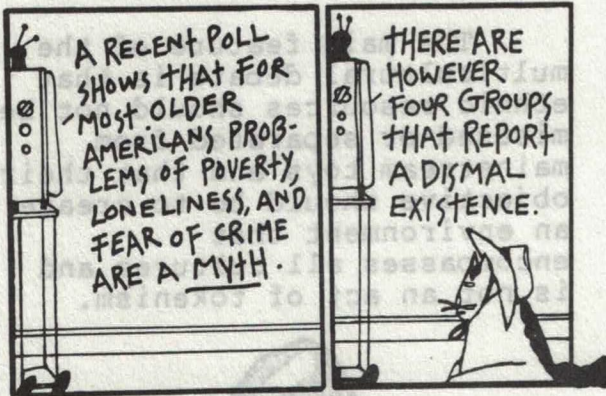
ii) How are relationships between children of different cultures depicted? Is the black child being portrayed in a subconsciously submissive fashion?

iii) The use of language, eg, black depicted as ugly, evil, uncivilised etc.

Language can be very derogatory. Some of the terms are particularly unnecessary. For example, 'black ice' has none of the physical attributes of its title, but is a description of its treacherous and deceptive nature.

Although the author may be attempting to write in an anti-racist way, she may be caught up in her own indoctrinated perceptions. This can apply to both black and white writers. The inclusion of black characters is not enough. Thus, multicultural resources can be, on close inspection, reinforcing stereotypes.

Another example is dressing up clothes. When effectively used, clothes and multi-ethnic costumes can be very beneficial. They can help to develop positive attitudes to other racial groups but problems arise out of the way they are used. They too can reinforce stereotypes. One



Multi-Cultural Bandwagon

cannot assume that black children know about traditional dress. Many black and Asian children were born in Britain and therefore may have adopted the British culture. The parents may have lost links with their native culture. Also, different Asian religions have different languages, customs and traditional dress, ie, the sari does not represent the whole Asian race. Not forgetting the fact that not all black children are African or identify with Africa and there are several West Indian islands apart from Jamaica. Dressing up should never be presented as peculiar, a chance to laugh at others 'funny dress'. It must be emphasised that this exercise is not for ridicule but an insight into other equally valued cultures.

One of the basic aims of multicultural resources is to deliver the message that we are not all the same, we do not all look alike or share the same values, but in the same breath, we are all equal and can benefit and grow from each others experience. It must be remembered that multicultural resources must not be isolated, put into a separate cupboard but built into the mainstream aspect of the nursery. By bringing out the ethnic toys once a week and having a special day, this, in itself, is a racist action. This makes the children feel in some way different, weird and in some way do not fit in.

Because of the misuse of multicultural resources that I

have just described and the sheer lack of good resources, some groups have come up with ideas of their own. The need for books that reflect the children's own community are very much lacking. One group of black women decided to illustrate the kind of things their children did, ie, swimming, bathing the baby with mum, at the dentist, as an alternative. They felt that the children could relate better to this photographic representation, rather than plastic sweet potatoes and green bananas. A world that reflects the child's own environment is cosy, but does not really put a foot towards the outside realities. Maybe the solution should be that with every multicultural toy, there should be a guide to use.

The main feature of the multicultural debate is that ethnic resources should not be misused or separated from mainstream toys and that their objective should be to create an environment that encompasses all cultures and is not an act of tokenism.



Private Home Daycare Conference

The Private Home Day Care Association of Ontario was created primarily by people delivering licensed private home daycare in Ontario. The Association, since its beginning in 1982, has been very active. We have provided educational opportunities for members, acted as a medium for the exchange of information within the sector, acted as liaison with government, and lobbied on behalf of the field with government.

On November 4th and 5th, 1985 the Association held its Third Annual Meeting and Conference. The Conference, entitled "Stepping Into The Future", was attended by over 200 people. It included workshops on building self-esteem in children, supervision, role-playing, peer relations, children's literature, legal liability, work-related daycare, body language, infant development and program implications, clay with children, puppeting, time management, effects of separation on children, writing a proposal and computers.

At the Annual Meeting the President reported on the activities of the Association over the past year. These included presentations to the Government of Ontario, focussing on the need for a comprehensive daycare policy in Ontario, provider related issues, funding concerns and so on. The Association completed a 27-page analysis of, and recommended changes to, the Day Nurseries Act.

This analysis was presented to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Other activities included monitoring of the liability insurance issues, organizing regional workshops and so on.

The 1986 Annual Meeting and Conference will be held in Ottawa on October 23rd and 24th. For further information, write to the Private Home Day Care Association of Ontario, 380 Sherbourne Street, Toronto, Ontario, M4X 1K2

John Pepin



New Coalition for ECE Students

University & College Students Coalition for Quality Child Care has been formed to support universal, publicly-funded, non-profit day care system which will provide quality child care services to all children. The new Coalition will be focussing on the issues facing ECE students. It plans to build a network of students who are going to be day care workers and are interested in day care issues. For more information, contact: Pamela Sielski, 1391 Wendigo Trail, Mississauga, Ontario L5G 3W1 416-274-0525

Queen's Park Daycare Opens

Amidst balloons and fanfare, Queen's Park Daycare Centre was officially opened on March 4. Word has it that there is already a waiting list for the twenty infant spaces. With an enrollment of 31 children and a licensed capacity of 64 children, it will be hard not to have a deficit. We'll watch to see how Queen's Park deals with the daycare dilemma under its own nose!

CAP Commission Report Expected Soon

Nielson Task Force On Canada Assistance Plan Report

WATCH FOR RELEASE OF CAP TASK FORCE REPORT ON MARCH 11!



Australia:

In Australia there are a number of groups actively campaigning for more childcare provision. In 1982, Andrew Jones, previously chair of Australia's leading advocacy organization in Australia, and now at Bristol University for two terms, visited us in Toronto. The following article adopted from the NCCC Newsletter updates us on the changes since the Hawke Labour Government took office.

One of the vote winners in the 1983 election in Australia, which Labour won with a landslide victory, was childcare. Government ministers campaigned on a platform of substantially increased expenditure on childcare and stated their commitment to childcare as of right. Their manifesto said:

'Access to childcare is a right and the aim of such care is to provide all children with developmental and social activities in safe surroundings provided by skilled and caring people for the range of hours which meets the children's needs and those of their parents/carers.'

Has this really happened? Andrew argues that although provision has doubled, and the Government has claimed credit for its actions, nevertheless the starting base was so low, and resources so scarce, that the Government underestimated grossly what it had to do to meet demand, and is being forced to consider less than satisfactory arrangements to meet rising expectations.

Since 1983 there has been a 42% increase in expenditure on childcare. The budget has nearly doubled, and 40,000 new places were created, including

two aboriginal childcare centres, and a great many out-of-school schemes. The amount of daycare places doubled from 4.6% of the child population to 9.5%. The Government has funded this expansion by joint financing and joint planning with the States so that development has been relatively systematic. The Government has also rejected tax rebates and tax subsidy for childcare, since it mainly benefits upper income groups, and would result in unacceptable expansion of the private sector.

However, 33% of mothers of young children now work full-time. So the unmet need, the mismatch between supply and demand, is gross. Unlike the previous Government, the Hawke administration is not prepared to finance the expansion of childminding as a cheap option, although some fairly well-regulated family daycare schemes have been supported as a part of the overall programme.

Its answer to the problem of scarcity has been to try to jiggle around with the fees that parents pay for daycare. Childcare is not free, but costs are heavily subsidized. The Government now proposes to change the rate of subsidy, and make parents pay more, so that the Government money can go further.

Not unexpectedly, there has been opposition to this. Critics have also pointed out that the Government has not done anything to resolve the contradictions between care and education, and put all the responsibility for nursery education on the States, withdrawing central government funds.

OCBDC Council

Thirty OCBDC Council members attended the quarterly Council meeting held in Toronto on February 15. Since the fall Conference, groups and individuals across the Province have formalized their involvement in the Coalition. Representatives from Windsor, Sarnia/Lambton, Guelph/Waterloo County, Hearst, Thunder Bay, Hamilton, Windsor and Metro Toronto provided a thorough picture of the state of daycare services in Ontario. Representatives from provincial-wide organizations provided another perspective. Those represented were: Ontario Public School Teachers Federation; Federation of Women Teachers Associations of Ontario; O.F.L. Women's Committee; Ontario Federation of Students; Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association; O.P.S.E.U.; C.U.P.E. 2484; Organized Working Women; Action Daycare. Several observers from new communities also joined the meeting.

The full-day meeting considered business issues, the Provincial Review, the Parliamentary Task Force and the common problem of municipal centres being forced to charge the full cost of daycare to parents. In addition, CBC responded to our press announcement which deplored the situation in Bolton, Ontario in which an unregulated caregiver and four children perished in a tragic fire in November, 1985. For about one week before the Council meeting, the press had reported the results of the Coroner's inquest into these

deaths. The inquest had revealed a number of alarming factors; the caregiver had an unusually high alcohol level in her blood and the smoke detectors in the home did not have the correct batteries. Parents of the children who died said that in that community there were few choices for people, especially those who want care for infants or school age children. While Peel Social Services Commissioner James Crozier claimed that this type of care is the "...Backbone of daycare in Ontario, we called for more high quality, regulated, affordable daycare options for Ontario families. CBC radio and TV interviewed OCBDC reps during that week. In the near future, the Toronto Star is likely to do a series on the current issues in daycare.

Special acknowledgements to Secretary of State, Women's Programs and the Women's Directorate, Province of Ontario, that have made grants to OCBDC. The federal grant of \$49,700 has enabled us to work with local Coalitions, to prepare submissions to the Parliamentary Task Force and to continue all the other organizing and membership tasks. Laurel Rothman was appointed Public Education Coordinator, February through June 30, 1986. Eileen Condon assumes the position of Administrative Assistant. With the grant of \$13,500 from the Women's Directorate, we will produce the Child Care Video Project. This project will involve the production of local consumer videos. These graphic illustrations of local child care concerns will be

OCBDC Council

shown to the hearings of the Parliamentary Task Force.

A discussion of the Provincial Review initiated by a presentation from Gerry Duda, Executive Policy Coordinator of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, was the major focus of the afternoon session. (See Queen's Park Report for detailed comments.)

The Council elected the Executive Committee and empowered it to pass interim policy. The new members are:

Vivian McCaffrey, Ontario Public School Teachers Federation;

Beth Williams, Ontario Federation of Labour, Women's Committee;

Sue Prentice, Ontario Federation of Students;

Janet Davis, Action Daycare;

Michelle Schryer, Windsor Coalition;

Verla Wilson, Metro Coalition;

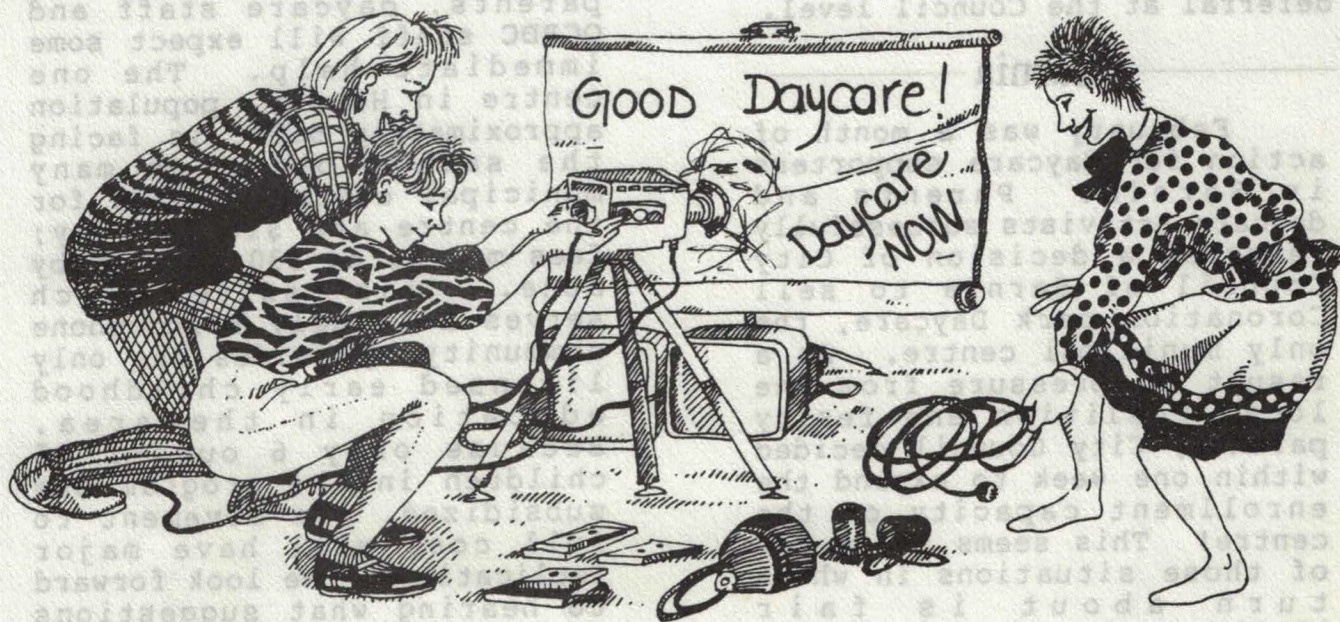
Lesley Russell, Hamilton Coalition;

Shelly Brown, Carnia/Lambton Coalition;

Paula Prieditis, individual representative.

The Annual Conference Committee, composed of Gaye Clarke, Jan Kaufman and Christine Peets, has set the 1986 tentative dates either at the end of October or beginning of November.

The next quarterly meeting of the Council will be held on May 24th, 1986.



Thunder Bay

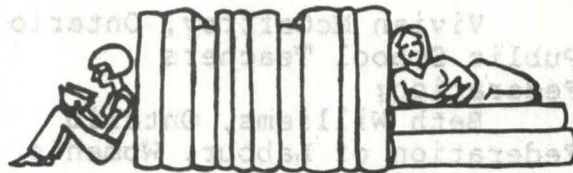
March 10th is the critical day for determining whether day care continues to thrive in Thunder Bay. On that day, Council is considering City recommendations to raise the fees to the full cost of the per diems - either \$26.33 if cost-cutting measures are introduced, or \$28.86 if not. Cost-cutting measures include renegotiating contracts with daycare workers for a 10 month year and/or referring parents to supervised private home day care. Either way, Thunder Bay day care centres enroll over 50% of non-subsidized children and because parents cannot afford these fees, they will be facing closure of at least two out of the four centres. Advocates in Thunder Bay are organizing to present briefs and depositions before Council and with the latest news that the provincial government is planning to relax its requirements to force day care centres to charge full cost to parents, they are keeping their fingers crossed for a deferral at the Council level.

Sarnia

February was a month of action for daycare supporters in Sarnia. Parents and daycare activists successfully reversed a decision of City Council of Sarnia to sell Coronation park Daycare, the only municipal centre. As a result of pressure from the local Coalition and feisty parents, City Council decided within one week to expand the enrollment capacity of the centre! This seems to be one of those situations in which turn about is fair play(ground)!

Windsor

The Coalition's years of work was instrumental in achieving the opening of a new municipal daycare centre in January. Like other municipal centres, this new program will mainstream handicapped children. The Coalition continues to monitor the 150 "lost" private home day care spaces that were allocated but not yet used. Word has it that local officials are awaiting the decision of the Labour Relations Board regarding the status of caregivers. (See "Labour Board says Yes to Unionization").



BARBARA SANFORD

Hearst

When the Hearst action group meets with Rene Fontaine, local MPP and Minister of Northern Affairs in April, local councillors, parents, daycare staff and OCBDC staff will expect some immediate help. The one centre in Hearst, population approximately 5500, is facing the same problem as many municipal centres. Fees for the centre are \$15 per day; fees may go to \$30 per day by June. This centre, which serves a largely Francophone community, provides the only licensed early childhood education in the area. Because only 6 out of 45 children in the program are subsidized, the movement to full cost will have major implications. We look forward to hearing what suggestions the Honourable Fontaine has!

Ottawa

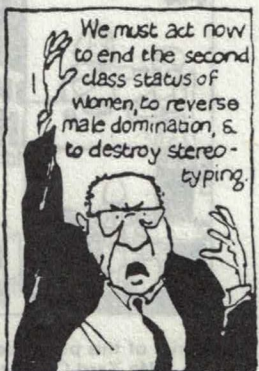
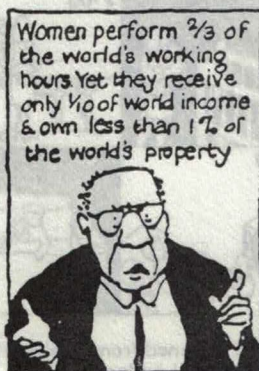
Local daycare activists have been busy on several fronts. A small group met with COMSOC officials to discuss the need for major capital funding. The Federation of Parents Daycares did an extensive survey of parents preferences and found that people do, in fact, support non-profit, group care. Provincial officials commented that they support expansion of the non-profit sector but made no further commitment. The non-profit, purchase-of-service centres have been successful in obtaining higher per diems that recognize the real operating cost. This victory is a result of a two-year battle! Infant per diems in Ottawa are \$40. Almost all these spaces are occupied by subsidized children.

Hamilton

In the last newsletter we reported that the Social Services Committee of Hamilton-Wentworth Regional

Council recommended that a reasonable level of per diem increases be approved even though the Province would not agree to cost share them. Unfortunately, Regional Council turned down those recommendations. So, most centres received no more than 3.5% per diem increase for 1985. The average preschool per diem paid by the Region is \$15. For centres like the workplace daycare at Chedoke McMaster Hospital, this is at least \$5. less than the real cost. The Hamilton Coalition will continue to pressure the Council, that is also appointing a new Commissioner at Social Services.

The Hamilton chapter of AECEO is conducting a major survey of salaries and working conditions in the Region with the goal of presenting the findings to the Parliamentary Task Force. Copies should be available by May 1; write to Lesley Russell, 1967 Main Street West, Unit 49, Hamilton L8S 4P4 for the completed findings.



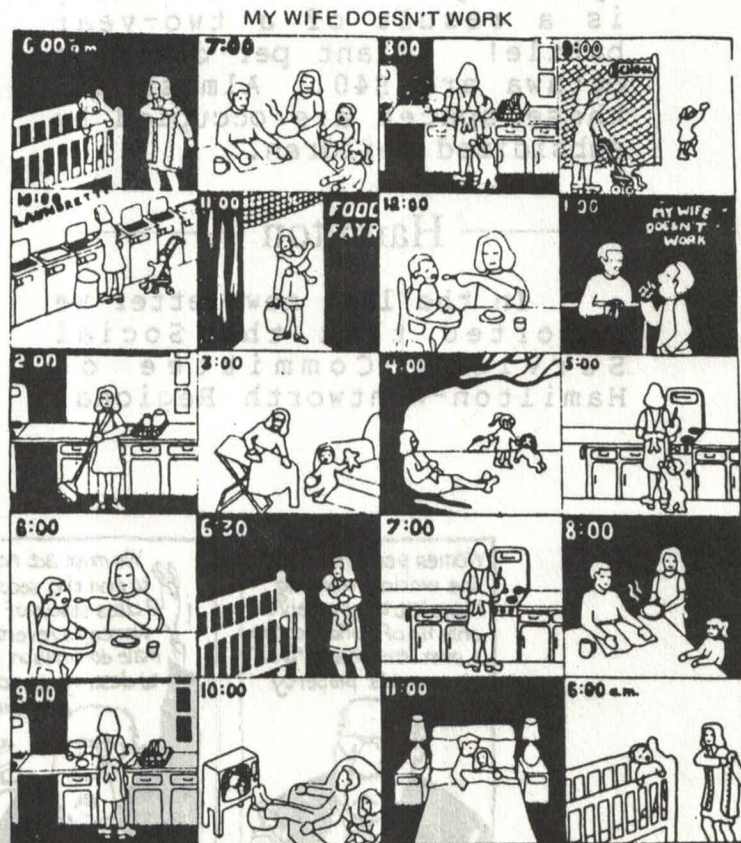
—Guelph-Wellington County—

The need for services in Northern Wellington County and in Guelph has brought together a burgeoning coalition in the area. Jan Kaufman, affiliated with Guelph University and Rebecca Sugarman, Rural Wellington Child Care Network, are coordinating these efforts. Previously, most of the energy has been devoted to pushing the university to open another daycare centre. Lobbyists have written, talked, met in numerous committees for two years and are frustrated! Does this sound familiar? So they are considering the broader issues while still keeping tabs on the university administration that has met with Comsoc to talk about funding. The Wellington County Board of Education has established at least three centres in public schools. The aim is to meet the needs of mature students. It appears that the Board is directly operating these programs, using funds from Continuing Education. Because these salaries are higher than some other centres can pay, there is some tension. While the programs are aimed at students, community families have been able to use them as space is available.

—Red Lake

Holly Rupert is developing a support in Red Lake and working with people in Balmertown to maintain the municipal centres, which operate like neighbourhood resource centres. As Holly

explained to the Council Meeting, "We are so far North that you have to turn over the map!" Approximately 100 miles north of Kenora, these towns have centres that provide full day, half day programs and lunch programs. Balmertown, a prosperous gold mining community, is waiting until the last minute to raise fees, which are now \$12 per day. The real cost is estimated at \$20-25. In Red Lake, communication with the local council is improving: Holly Rupert is organizing a submission to the Parliamentary Task Force.



Copies of this poster can be obtained from The Red Women's Workshop 16a Iliffe Yard Crompton Street, London SE17.

North York

No, the communications industry is not expanding into daycare services, as far as we know! Community Network of Childcare Programs, known as CNCP in North York, celebrated its first birthday on March 4. This umbrella group of supervisors and board members from the community-based, non-profit programs in North York public schools, welcomed the encouraging comments of Caplan, who is Chairman of Management Board, of Cabinet, and is also Minister of Government Services, and one of the local MPPs. She reiterated the Government's commitment to accessible and affordable day care services and to a philosophy of consultation with the community. She stated that the new initiatives will be expensive and that the message from across the Province is the same, that Ontario needs more quality daycare. When asked about the future role of the commercial sector, she was less forthcoming. To date, she said, our support has been for community-based non-profit programs. There has been a place for the commercial sector and the Provincial Review will deal with this issue. When eager constituents ran out the door to make an appointment to lobby her, they were unable to secure a meeting before the end of April.



-- Socialist Women, no. 1, 1972

Metro Toronto

On February 18, the Daycare Coalition of Metro Toronto held an orientation session for Metro Councillors. From all indications, it appears that the Coalition achieved its objectives: to establish the Coalition's profile as a voice for Metro's daycare community; to introduce Metro Councillors to the basic problems with the daycare system; to indicate that these problems are experienced in every area of Metro; and to propose ways in which these problems can be addressed by Metro politicians.

The Coalition contacted local daycare committees in each area of Metro and requested their participation. The response was enthusiastic. Each group developed a brief presentation of the key issues in their community. Several Coalition spokespersons presented an overview which highlighted the problems of accessibility, low salaries, and affordability. The benefits of direct funding were graphically displayed through a comparison of two daycare budgets, one from a non-profit centre in the City of Toronto that receives the City grant and another from a centre in North York where no grant is available. (For more detailed information, contact the Coalition at P.O. Box 102, Station E, Toronto M6H 4E1.)

The Coalition proposed the following actions that Metro can take to assist in

Metro Toronto

improving the daycare situation:

1. Support the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare and the Metro Coalition and lobby the Province for increased direct funding.

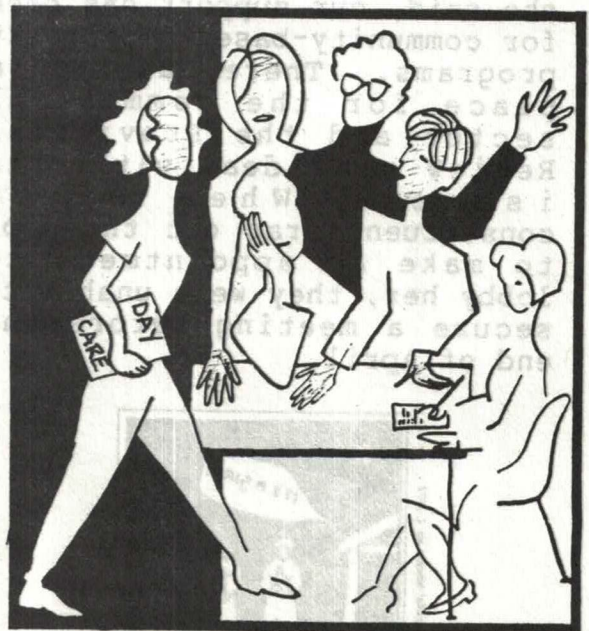
2. Establish a Metro-wide daycare grant such as that of the City of Toronto to help establish fair wages for daycare staff while keeping fee raises to a minimum.

3. Set up a Non-Profit Daycare Development Fund to assist parents and community groups to establish more non-profit daycare services.

If attendance reports had been done, the daycare community would have gotten "A". Approximately 60 people from Scarborough, East York, Toronto and York made the trek to City Hall to educate their Metro reps. About one-third of the Metro Councillors or their assistance attended. Councillors Moscoe, Ashton, Trimmer, Gilbert, Kanter, Gardner, Belfontaine, Grys, Pantalone and Faubert attended, while Councillors Lastman, Layton, Campbell and Shea sent their assistants. While some Metro-watchers say that this is a good turnout, we plan to let them know that we expect better attendance next time!

The Coalition sees this low-key initiative as a beginning stage in the education and lobbying of Metro politicians. Our efforts did not go unnoticed;

one week later on Metro Morning, the CBC radio program, the regular City Hall round-up featured three Metro politicians talking about daycare. Tom Jacobek, Richard Gilbert, and Bill Belfontaine were each trying to outdo the other in their knowledge and support of daycare. We plan to maintain our profile and to press for action on proposals. Contacts in the Etobicoke area are welcomed, so that we can be a more representative group.



CALENDAR

- March 15 Last date for requesting submissions to Special Parliamentary Committee on Child Care!
- May 5 - 19 Special Parliamentary Committee on Child Care holding hearings around Ontario.
- May 24 Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care Council Meeting, Suite 200, 1260 Bay Street, Toronto.
- May 30 to June 1st National Action Committee on Status of Women Annual Meeting in Ottawa.
- End June Last date to submit letter, brief, etc. to Special Parliamentary Committee on Child Care.
- October Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare, Annual Meeting and Conference. Full details and final date to be announced in next Newsletter.
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