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Vivian McCaffrey, March 8, 1987

The Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care Newsletter

Published bi-monthly from September to June, by the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care, and distributed free to members. Subscriptions to non-members available for \$10/yr.

Readers are encouraged to submit news of interest, photos, graphics, cartoons, local press clippings, letters, and comments. Copy deadlines are the 15th of March, May, July, September, November and January.

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Thanks to the Ontario Teachers' Federation for generously donating the printing costs of this Newsletter.

Stop Press

Nixon Tables Budget

As we went to Press last night, we took with us the details of the 1987-88 budget. The highlights for child care were as follows:

- * \$26 million for child care initiatives - expected to cover additional subsidized spaces - raising the total commitment to \$185 million.

This would provide for 5,200 additional subsidized spaces - a rate consistent with the past two years. If it was instead used for the direct grant to all spaces in Ontario, it would amount to something like \$1.25 per space; we would anticipate then that either Nixon is asking to get laughed out of the Legislature or is NOT planning anything in the budget for direct grants.

- * \$33 million over three years for capital funding. This amounts to \$11 million per year, - an amount consistent with last year. It will provide 2,200 new spaces at an average cost of \$5,000 per child space.

- * Planning to provide child care spaces in all new schools and to encourage municipalities to require child care facilities in new commercial buildings.

- * "We believe that a national policy should provide support for non-profit and commercial centres," says Nixon. This is by far the most important indicator of direction in the budget. This budget makes the strongest commitment yet made to the commercial day care sector in Ontario by the Peterson Government.

The commitment to continue support for the commercial sector and no announcement of the direct grant, anticipated after the Speech from the Throne last week are two big disappointments in the Budget. We would support suggestions that day care centres be put in all new public schools - in fact we suggested it to them ourselves in a recent brief - but this is really icing on the cake.

After two years of waiting for a promised review and a commitment to the creation of a comprehensive child care system in Ontario, the only major differences between the Tories and the Liberals are (1) the amount of talk and promises; and (2) the fact that they actually spend their estimated budgets whereas the Tories always turned back huge amounts at the end of the budget year. (That's why so many of you got calls asking if you'd like money to spend at the end of the budget year. For those of you who didn't, perhaps you might like to make sure your name goes on the list for the next budget year end).

Policy on Commercial Childcare to be Set by Select Committee

HEARINGS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE
ON HEALTH

COMMERCIAL CHILDCARE IN ONTARIO

A two-year-old promise to hold an investigation into the role of for-profit health and social services in Ontario has finally resulted in the beginning of Select Committee hearings. The Select Committee on Health opened what will be a lengthy process of consideration of services with three weeks of public hearings on the role of commercial childcare in Ontario. Unfortunately, the Committee hearings followed a decision already made by the government to move towards expanding support for commercial childcare.

All-Party Committee

The all-party committee with a majority of government Liberal members heard from childcare, women's, labour and voluntary groups and individuals as well as from two childcare owners and the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario, the "only united voice of commercial operators in the province". The three presentations from the commercial sector were interesting for several reasons. First, they were the only voices which supported the government's announced intention to support commercial childcare.

Owners reject idea of opening books

Second, they declined to make a commitment to accountability for public funds. Joe Cordiano, Liberal M.P.P. for Downsview, queried Joel Zelikovitz, owner of two Toronto centres "...would you make your financial documents available to the public for scrutiny by all"? Mr. Zelikovitz replied "I would rather

not. It is my business", echoing the sentiments already expressed by ADCO in its presentation to the Committee.

Liberal Women's Committee rejects funding to for-profit daycare.

All the other presentations to the Select Committee opposed the use of public funds for commercial childcare programs. The diverse range of groups included the Ontario Family Studies Coordinator's Council, the Peel Lunch and After School Program, the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, CUPE, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and Women's Perspective, a grass roots Liberal women's organization established by David Peterson to advise him when he was in Opposition.

Opposition was focussed on two areas of concern. The first area which the Committee heard about again and again was the quality of care offered by the commercial sector.

Poor Wages and Working Conditions

Groups told the politicians about the commercial sector's poorer wages and working conditions, high staff turnover, skimping on staff-child ratios, supplies, equipment and food, concerns about lack of parent involvement in commercial operations, and how the commercial sector had traditionally lobbied against high standards. Indeed, the Committee was concerned enough about alleged violations of the Day Nurseries Act that they requested the appearance of representatives of the Child Care Branch who confirmed the lack of consistency and information which characterizes

the enforcement of the day nurseries standards.

No public Accountability

The second area of concern the Committee heard about was the lack of accountability for public funds and, also, irrationality of using public funds to supplement childcare budgets which already allowed owners to make hefty profits. A presentation of comparative childcare centre budgets by Jane Beach graphically illustrated where the dollars go in a commercial budget. The point that paying public dollars to commercial childcare owners is a poor use of taxpayers' money was repeatedly emphasized.

Government Position Prevails Despite Evidence Opposed to Profit

The proceedings of the Select Committee on Health were to no avail, however. The Liberal members of the Committee parroted the same sentiments at the end of the hearings as they did at the beginning: "What will we do about the 50,000 children using commercial care in Ontario? Can we forget about them?" That the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare had made a presentation revealing the inadequacy of the government's statistics, and demonstrated that there are considerably fewer than 50,000 commercial spaces was consistently disregarded.

Suggestions for Conversion Rejected

As well, the recommendations of groups appearing before the Committee concerning ways in which a transition from the present childcare situation which relies on commercial care could be made were disregarded as well. The Ontario

Advisory Council on Women's Issues, for example, proposed that direct grants be made available for three years to commercial programs who committed themselves to conversion to non-profit status, and the OCBDC offered a comprehensive list of proposals for transition to a non-profit system. No specific plans for moving away from the present situation were discussed seriously.

After lengthy discussion of recommendations for future government action, the Liberal and Conservative members of the Select Committee voted against an NDP recommendation to the effect that direct grants only to non-profit childcare programs be initiated. **Government Members Support Grants to Existing Profit-Making Centres**

The government members proposed a counter recommendation to the effect that direct grants to non-profit and existing commercial programs be introduced. As this position was the government's at the beginning of the Committee's hearings, as one observer commented "It's enough to make one cynical about the process of social policy development".

Reuben Baetz, a P.C. member of the Committee, pointed out the Liberal's inconsistency in, on the one hand, declaring themselves committed to a non-profit childcare system, and, on the other hand, introducing a new funding arrangement which supports commercial operators. Baetz did not touch on the morass of problems which the government will have in implementing direct funding for operators who are unwilling to account for public funds, are often recalcitrant in meeting the Day Nurseries Act, and provide no opportunity for parent input.

/continued on back page.....

For those of you who missed a great piece by **Doris Anderson** in the Toronto Star, here's your chance.



That Dick-and-Jane Stuff's a Myth, Jake

To Jake Epp,
Minister of Health and Welfare,
Ottawa, Canada

Dear Jake:

We're worried about you. We can't understand how you can head a department with a budget of over \$28 billion a year, have a staff of over 10,000 people, and not be better informed than you are.

Your department turns out a lot of good stuff, Jake. I get at least one or two publications a month. A forest of Canadian trees must be used up to tell us the facts of Canadian life—\$6.6 million is spent just on books and booklets alone right in your own department. It's too bad you're not on the mailing list.

But you seem to be living in Rip Van Winkle Land as far as the family is concerned. It's familiar territory. The pious right talk about it all the time. Undiluted, thick as warm porridge, Dick-and-Jane times straight from your old Grade 1 reader back in Winnipeg.

There's Daddy going off to work. There's Mummy at home where she should be, waving him goodbye, flanked by Dick and Jane holding Spot and Fluff. There they all go off to church on Sunday, when they aren't visiting those charming, white-haired grandparents on their quaint, old-fashioned farm.

No AIDS. No pollution. No bomb. No drugs. No murder-a-minute TV. No latchkey children. No abortion. No homosexuals (or if there are, they are discreetly stashed in the closet—not marching about demanding their rights and getting married).

With mother at home, no need for nursery schools or car pools. No kids spending Christmas with mom and New Year's with dad in his new pad with his new girlfriend.

In those days, all brides were virgins. All parents were perfect. All children were wanted.

It's a world cuddly and warm enough for a family of Care Bears. The only trouble, Jake, is that it was mostly a myth. And today, according to stats from your department, only one in seven families fits the Dick-and-Jane model.

Take Beatrice and Marv. They have a girl, 4, and boy, 8. And a mortgage for \$120,000. If Beatrice stayed home, how would they ever get it paid off? Like almost two-thirds of Canadian women with kids under 16, (from your own department stats, Jake) Beatrice works to help out. Vicki, the 4-year-old, stays with a neighbor. It's not the greatest arrangement, but it's the best Beatrice can manage because (from your own stats, Jake) there's only enough spaces in

Boomers Song



Canada for 5 per cent of all the kids who need supervised child care.

Or take Trudy, a single mom living with two kids on \$9,152 in a one-bedroom apartment in Parkdale-and that's about (from your own department, Jake) \$7,500 less than they need to get them up to the poverty line.

But that's no Dick-and-Jane kind of life, Jake. That's plain poverty and under your government, one in five Canadian children are being raised that way.

There's even lots of material (again from your own department) to prove that your favorite kind of family never was the norm. Even in Victorian times, when the myth started, most women worked.

The government first started worrying about working women in poor families in the late 1800s when fertility rates started dropping and immigration rates started rising. Worried about "race suicide" of Anglo Saxons, the government started to encourage women in working-class families to stay home and have babies.

Togetherness took over after World War II. Working moms were supposed to be the cause of all evil as study after study tried to prove a link between them and delinquency. No link was found, yet under the guise of keeping the family intact, everyone turned a blind eye to other nasty family goings-on such as child and wife battering and child abuse.

Another thing that puzzles us, Jake - you must do a lot of travelling in your job. Hasn't it seemed strange to you that every industrialized country has some form of government-sponsored day care - except Canada and the U.S?

Meanwhile, for starters, why don't you do a little homework on the \$15.6 million worth of videos and publications your own department turns out every year? You'd learn a lot.

Finally, are you sure you're in the right job, Jake?

Concerned, Yours truly, Beatrice, Marv, Trudy and me.

Special Parliamentary Committee Report Tabled in Ottawa

The major recommendation of the Special Committee are tax credits to replace the current Child Care Expense Deduction:

1. The Child Care Expense Credit available to parents in the workforce who can obtain receipts from their child care providers. They would be eligible for a tax credit of up to \$900 per child (30% of the cost of service up to a limit of \$3,000 per child);
2. The refundable Child Care Tax Credit available to parents unable to obtain receipts and to parents not in the workforce. They would be eligible for a credit for children 5 and under of \$200 for the first child, \$100 for the second child, and \$50 for each subsequent child.

Putting a bit more money into the pockets of parents does nothing to increase the supply of quality child care spaces.

Along with the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association and other major organizations, the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care has argued that public dollars should be used to fund child care services directly. Operating and capital grants channelled to non-profit services are the way to increase the supply of quality spaces, reduce

parents' fees and raise the wages of child care workers.

The following facts (drawn from Table A.8 of the Report) illustrate the weaknesses of the tax credit proposals:

Fifty-one per cent of all Canadian families would either experience no change as a result of the transformation of the deduction to a credit or (a minority) see reduced benefits.

Of the forty-nine per cent of Canadian families which would see an improvement in their situations as a result of the change from the tax deduction to a tax credit, the average gain would be \$222 per year.

Of the families which would gain from the proposals, 43% are two-parent, one-income earner families.

In keeping with the neo-conservative ideology of the majority on the Special Committee, no two-parent single-earner families lose from the recommendations.

All the families which would see no improvement or see a reduction in benefits as a result of the new tax credits are single-parent or two-parent families where the parents are in the paid labour force.

Most of the new public money recommended by the Special Parliamentary Committee would go toward the proposed tax credit. Almost four times as much money is suggested by the Special Committee for this measure than for direct

grants to non-profit child care services (for 1989, \$114 million for grants compared to \$434 million for tax credits).

greater access to capital funds be made available to for-profit child care operators through the Federal Business Development Bank.

A Family and Child Care Act: Funding Commercial Operators

The Special Committee recommends that the federal government introduce a Family and Child Care Act which would permit the federal government to cost share with the provinces operating and capital grants to child care services. These grants would be available to profit as well as non-profit child care services. The Act is seen as complementing rather than gradually replacing the Canada Assistance Plan.

Child care remains, for the Special Committee, essentially a welfare service for the poor, or a commodity to be purchased in the marketplace for everyone else. The proposed grants are intended to "complement", rather than replace, the Canada Assistance Plan, which is a piece of welfare legislation under which the federal government currently cost shares with the provinces subsidies to parents who pass certain means or incomes tests.

A major problem with the grants proposed by the Special Committee is that they would be available to PROFIT as well as non-profit child care services. We oppose any expansion of public funding to profit-making child care services.

There are no recommendations which would assist community groups wishing to set up non-profit child care services, despite an acknowledgment in the Report that such groups face serious problems obtaining start-up funds. Yet the Special Committee recommends that

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THIS CHILDCARE CENTER IS WONDERFUL! SUCH A WARM, STIMULATING ENVIRONMENT! WHAT ARE YOUR FEES? ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS.



Hi & Lois



	<u>SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CHILD CARE, Sharing the Responsibility</u>	<u>LIBERAL MINORITY REPORT, Choices for Childcare: now and the future</u>	<u>NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY MINORITY REPORT, Caring for Canada's Children</u>
1. DIRECT OPERATING GRANTS TO SERVICES	*Short-term: contingent on provinces matching funds, \$3 per day for infant spaces, \$2 for pre-school spaces, \$.50 for school-age spaces, additional \$3 per day for disabled children.	Short-term: *no direct grants except to services in danger of closing because of lack of funds.	*Short-term: federal grants for the first five years of \$8 per day for a disabled child, \$5 for infant or special needs child, \$4 for pre-schoolers, \$2 for after school or half-day care.
	*No medium or long term projected increases in level of grants.	*No medium or long term recommendations.	*Medium-term: by 1992, through Child Care and Family Support Services Act, federal-provincial/territorial cost-sharing of 50% of operating costs. *Long-term: full public funding of child care.
2. CAPITAL/ START-UP GRANTS	Short-term: *federal grants of \$300 per space for pre-schoolers, \$200 for school-aged children, additional \$200 for disabled children - for three years. Medium term: reassessment of need.	Federal grants, via the National Child Care Foundation, to individuals, employee groups, employers and voluntary non-profit boards; no specific amounts.	*Short-term: federal grants for licensed non-profit child care of \$1000 per space per preschooler, \$500 for school-aged children, \$1,500 for disabled children, \$500 for licensed family home care. *Medium-term: by 1992, through Child Care and Family Support Services Act, federal-provincial/territorial cost-sharing of 100% of capital costs of child care services.
3. TAX MEASURES: FUNDING TO PARENTS	Parents choose between *refundable tax credit (non-receipted) of \$200 for first child, \$100 for second child and \$50 for each additional child under 6 years of age. or *child care expense credit (receipted) of up to 30% of child care costs - maximum \$3000 per child, \$12,000 per family.	*Convert the child care expense deduction (maximum \$2000 per child, \$8000 per family) to a credit at same expenditure level. *Convert the spousal exemption (currently \$3,660 in 1986) to a refundable home-maker's tax credit at same expenditure level.	*Convert the child care expense deduction to a tax credit until full public funding is in place.
4. SUBSIDIES TO PARENTS IN NEED: C.A.P.	*Continue CAP subsidies for five years - reevaluate after five years.	*Short term: increase number of children receiving subsidized care under CAP - suggest five-fold increase in next five years by amending CAP *Long term: encourage intended use of CAP toward federal "likelihood of need" turning and break-even points or through a national child care act, negotiate new federal-provincial cost-sharing agreement with the eventual objectives that parents at average income should pay no more than half of the cost of child care. BASED ON FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL CONSENSUS ON A SET OF BASIC NATIONAL STANDARDS.	*Eventual elimination of child-care funding under CAP, to be replaced by full cost-sharing by the federal and provincial/territorial governments.

Special Parliamentary Committee

5. FOR PROFIT DAY CARE	*No recommendation: matter referred to provinces and territories.	*Federal funding to non-profit and public services unless provinces decide otherwise and as long as profit services meet national standards.	*Subsidize non-profit and public services only. Interim funding to for-profit services which agree to become non-profit in three years.
6. PARENTAL BENEFITS	*Amend Unemployment Insurance Act to eliminate two-week waiting period; extend benefits from 15 to 26 weeks by 1992 - ten weeks to be taken by mother as maternity leave, rest as leave to either parent.	*Amend Unemployment Insurance Act to extend benefits to 26 weeks by 1992 with benefits raised from 60% to 70% of replacement value of salary.	*Amend Unemployment Insurance Act to eliminate two-week waiting period; extend benefits to 34 weeks by 1992 with benefits raised to 85% of insurable earnings (either parent being eligible for last 17 weeks); in the long term, extend benefits to 41 weeks, with benefits raised to 95% of insurable earnings (either parent eligible for last 24 weeks).
7. EMPLOYER-SPONSORED DAY CARE	*100% tax write-off on capital expenditures.	*Tax write-off on capital expenditures of more than 100%.	*No special tax write-offs.
8. FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES	*\$15 million yearly fund (Child Care Development Program) to cost-share family support services, eg support services for informal care providers, information and referral programs, family resource programs, services to help ease the stress of single parenthood, to prevent adolescent pregnancies and to promote the development of parenting and support programs for adolescent mothers.	*No recommendations.	*\$26 million (1987) Child Care Development Fund to develop new services targetted at special needs, family support services, ECE research and training. *Recommend 10 days of paid leave for family-related responsibilities be incorporated in Canada Labour Code.
9. INFORMAL CARE	Parents could choose to spend their tax credits on informal (unlicensed, unmonitored) care. Specific informal care initiatives could be funded through the Child Care Development Program and the Initiatives and Research Fund.	All recommendations directed towards formal (licensed, monitored) care. Parents could choose to spend their tax credits on informal care.	All recommendations directed towards formal (licensed, monitored) care. Parents could choose to spend their tax credits on informal care.
10. COSTS FOR 1987	From \$533 million to \$646 million. (tax credits \$363 to \$414 million)	Do not say.	\$320 million.
11. OUTCOMES	<p>*Through tax credits, one-half of families would receive an average tax credit of \$222; child care will not be more affordable.</p> <p>*Child care would be profit and non-profit.</p> <p>*It is questionable whether the low levels of capital grants would permit a great expansion of formal child care programs.</p> <p>*Direct operational grants would be available only when cost-sharing arrangements would be negotiated. The low level of grants would not ensure adequate staff salaries, lower costs to parents and the quality enhancement of programs.</p> <p>*The major problem with CAP (low provincial take-up) is not addressed.</p> <p>*Despite the report's claims, parental choice would not be ensured because program options would not be created in sufficient quantity to satisfy the need.</p>	<p>Creation and expansion of formal child care programs with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *fees geared to family income (welfare model) *profit and non-profit *developed through local planning boards (bypassing provincial/ *meet basic national standards of quality <p>*It is unclear how local boards would be developed.</p> <p>*At least in the short-term, the system would rely on CAP funding. It is not specified how CAP would be amended to ensure a higher provincial take-up.</p>	<p>Planned step-by-step expansion of var formal child care program that are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *accessible and affordable *comprehensive and flexible *developed with parent and community participation *non-profit

Northwestern Ontario

NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO REGIONAL DAY CARE FORUM reconvened in Thunder Bay on April 24-25, 1987.

Representatives from Thunder Bay, Long Lac, Geraldton, Dryden, Red Lake, Marathon, Manitowadge, and Fort William were all in attendance. The intent of the forum was to continue to plan and undertake regional (and local) action to ensure the security of existing day care centres and the development of new day care services in Northwestern Ontario.

Active workshops were held which focused on the concerns of day care advocates in the North West, including:

1. The transitional grant and its implications for the future stability of day care programs.
2. The direct grant desperately needed by non-profit centres not receiving the transitional grant.
3. The long-awaited provincial policy.
4. Strategies for a provincial election; and,
5. Implications of the Special Committee on Child Care report on the Northwest Region.

Participants in the conference resolved to continue to resist attempts to phase out the transitional grants and not get side-tracked by the Province's program reviews of day care programs.

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Hi & Lois

Speakers at the forum included Julie Mathien from the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association, Sue Colley from the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care, Dusty Miller, local Councillor and Ian Angus, MP for Port Arthur.

At the last workshop, participants developed a comprehensive electoral strategy and made plans to participate in the federal COUNTDOWN FOR CHILDCARE Campaign.

A steering committee of representatives from all five northern constituencies was set up to coordinate future activities and information.



Ontario Federation of Labour and OCBDC Take Forums on the Road

The Ontario Federation of Labour and the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care have been travelling across the province for the last month and have so far visited eleven communities. Meetings have occurred with politicians and child care advocates and a public forum has been held in every place to hear people's views about child care problems and solutions.

One of the highlights of the Campaign has been the issue of for-profit child care. Our arguments for non-profit child care have been supported by a study done for the federal Special Parliamentary Committee on Child Care, as well as massive evidence submitted to the Select Committee on Health concerning the inadequacies of for-profit child care.

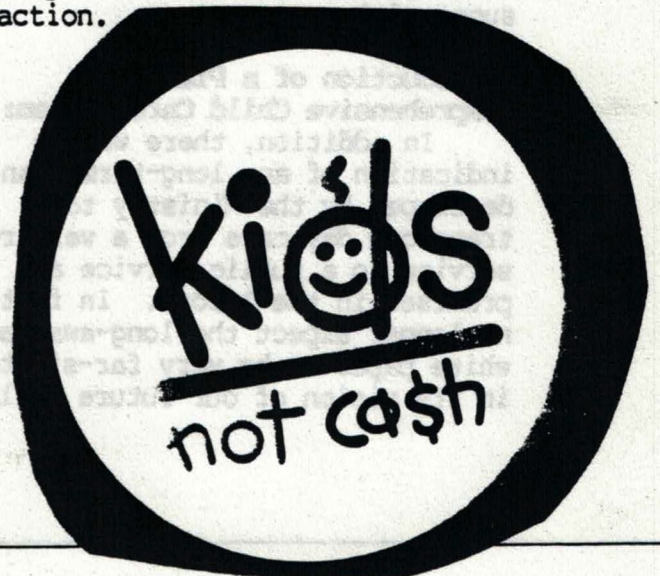
In every place visited, the panel heard from staff and parents horror stories about for-profit day care centres. In Guelph, a day care worker talked about infractions of the regulations which were reported and ignored; in Sudbury, a detailed report was read to the forum on behalf of a child care worker in a commercial centre who could not personally deliver the statement for fear of losing her job. In both cases the centres are still operating.

Everywhere, people talked about the lack of infant day care. The situation was so desperate in Kitchener-Waterloo that two women had to mortgage their homes in order to set up a non-profit infant centre. People talked also about the lack of school-age programs, the lack of programs for children with

special needs, the difficulties of setting up new non-profit programs without adequate capital grants and, of course, the cost of the service.

In 1981, the OFL made a similar tour of the province and heard about all of the problems. Six years later, we are still hearing the same problems, but the interesting difference now is the fact that people have concrete ideas for solutions. Almost universally, people opposed funding day care through tax credits, talked about the need for a universally-accessible system and direct grants to non-profit centres. Only in Kingston and Hamilton did we hear support for money to commercial centres and these came from commercial operators themselves.

The Campaign still has to visit Toronto on the 23rd May at the Metro Toronto Reference Library at Bloor and Yonge. If you're in the area between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., try and drop in. Then, we will once again draft a Brief for presentation to the Cabinet and hope that this time they will not only listen but take some concrete action.



SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

In the April 28, Speech from the Throne, the Liberal Government indicated that there would be improved financing for both non-profit and for-profit child care and a requirement that childcare spaces be created in all new schools. It also suggested that municipalities attempt to change zoning laws so that child care space will be included in all new office buildings. Discussion about expansion of subsidized spaces and a general commitment to improved services was announced, but beyond this there were, of course, no specifics.

Grants to For-Profit Day Care Programs:

An air of optimism was expressed by the Ministry and other people as a result of this statement, but on closer discussion with the Ministry, it became quickly clear that this was NOT a recommendation not to give direct grants to commercial centres. What in fact we are expecting is that the government will immediately announce direct grants to non-profit centres only and promise direct grants to existing commercial centres if negotiations to allow federal cost-sharing for commercial centres are successful.

Introduction of a Plan for a Comprehensive Child Care System:

In addition, there was no indication of any long-term plan developed by the Ministry to transform day care from a welfare service to a public service as promised in the Accord. In fact, we no longer expect the long-awaited white paper to be very far-sighted in its vision of our future child

care system.

Switch to Income-Testing:

The promise to switch to income-testing carries with it a lot of problems as we have been saying to the Ministry for many months. The Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care adopted a position favouring the switch to income-testing several months ago. We felt that there could be a number of positive outcomes as a result of this:

1. The process for receiving a subsidy would be less degrading for the parents.
2. If the Province administered it like every other province - involving a 50-50 cost-sharing arrangement with the federal government, this would eliminate the restriction on access to subsidized spaces presently experienced in many municipalities which either do not consider day care to be a high priority or cannot afford the 20% contribution.
3. It would enable the provincial government to easily receive cost-sharing for direct grants to non-profit programs and would not allow cost-sharing for commercial centres.
4. The maximum federal guidelines under income-testing would allow more parents to be subsidized (in most cases) than the present needs test levels, so day care subsidies

would be more accessible to middle-income parents.

However, when the Liberal Government talks about switching to income-testing, they have not so far dealt with any of these issues. We have heard talk of them allowing subsidies up to \$30,000 or, perhaps, \$35,000 net income per annum. This would mean a cutback for many families across the province who already receive subsidies at higher income levels.

They have not discussed the role of the municipalities in a new funding system at all and are planning to await the recommendations of yet another review: the Municipal Social Services Review being conducted jointly by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. If the municipalities are not prepared to increase their contribution levels, then we cannot see that there would be much advantage to introducing income testing.

The Liberal Government has been leading the provinces in the discussions to allow commercial day care centres to receive cost-shared dollars under the income-testing route of the Canada Assistance Plan in the federal-provincial cost-sharing negotiations currently being conducted behind closed doors.

We understand that this issue is extremely complex and we don't pretend to have covered all the bases here. We are just raising some serious questions about government policy for you to be raising at the local level. At the May 24th OCBC Council Meeting we

will be holding a full workshop on this issue and if anyone is interested in learning more about this, please plan to attend.

Capital Funding:

The Government did make some useful suggestions to increase the supply of non-profit child care spaces. The idea of including day care centres in all new schools, encouraging municipalities to loosen up on the zoning restrictions for day care and requiring commercial developers to include day care in new buildings will all make a contribution. However, there was no discussion of a new capital funding program which would allow parent groups to establish day care, nor was there any discussion of funding community development groups, like Direction 2000 and the Ottawa Federation of Parent Cooperative Day Cares.

In conclusion we hope that the budget will increase day care expenditures significantly, including capital funding, direct grants and more subsidized spaces. To ensure a really comprehensive non-profit system, however, we will clearly have to make child care a vital issue in the upcoming election.

Transitional Grants

Day care centres across the province are still concerned about what will happen to their day care centres with the official termination of the "indirect subsidy". This "indirect subsidy" was allowed to most municipalities across the province for years as a way of reducing the fee to the parent whilst maintaining the budget of the day care centres. Essentially, the indirect subsidy

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Preparing for a Provincial Election

Despite promises from the Liberal government, we have seen little change in actual policy or legislation since the Liberal government took office two years ago. The 10,000 new subsidized spaces were spaces already promised by the preceding Tory government; there has been no sign of the promised "White Paper"; and the commitment of Peterson and Sweeney to move to a system of non-profit child care has not occurred.

Clearly, we must make child care an election issue if an election is called within the next few weeks.

What Can We Do? We have divided our actions into two areas:

1. Participating in all-candidates meetings
2. Other Events to stimulate focus on the day care issue.

1. All-Candidates Meetings:

We should try to attend all-candidates meetings wherever they are held and raise questions on the day care issue. Some sample questions are listed below.

As well as asking questions, we want to get press on the day care issue at these meetings so that child care is publicly seen as a

major issue. Some ideas coming from the Northwestern Region Day Care Forum suggested that we be as visible as possible at these meetings. This might include taking children from the day care centres; taking some pictures drawn by children; taking a frieze of paper dolls - one for every child who cannot get or cannot afford a day care space.

2. Other Events to Stimulate Focus on the Day Care Issue.

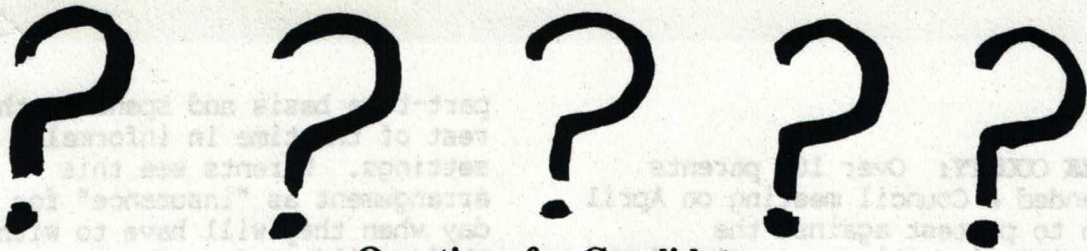
Other ideas, some of which were suggested at the Northwestern Region Day Care Forum, included:

(a) Holding Open Houses at your day care centres and inviting the politicians to come to you to express their position on day care. Inviting the Press to come also.

(b) Holding an all-candidates meeting in your area on the day care issue exclusively. At this meeting you could organize a discussion specifically on day care issues and challenge the politicians to debate their positions; again the press would be invited.

(c) Organizing an event, like last election, Balloon Day for Day Care where we designate one day as Campaign Day Care Day and get everyone to rally, hold open houses, visit City Hall or whatever to put attention on the day care issue.

Please phone or write to us with other good ideas. **Good Luck.**



Questions for Candidates

General:

In the Accord with the NDP, the Liberal Government promised to transform day care from a welfare service to a public service. This did not occur. If elected would you commit yourself to a plan to develop a comprehensive, high quality, non-profit child care system with public funding?

What would be the first three priority actions you would take to ensure that universally-accessible, high quality child care was created in the province of Ontario?

Direct Grants:

Under the Transitional Grant Program, many municipal day care centres around the province are already receiving operating grants averaging \$8 per day. If elected, will you ensure that these operating grants remain in place? And further, will you ensure that all non-profit day care centres receive equivalent grants?

Supplementary: Would you ensure that all non-profit day care centres received direct grants? If so, how much per day?

Non-Profit Child Care:

A study commissioned by the federal Special Committee on Child Care confirmed that non-profit child care is of significantly higher quality than for-profit child care and that four out of ten commercial day care centres were of poor, or very poor quality. In addition, the Select Committee on Health received overwhelming evidence against government funds to for-profit child care. If elected, would you ensure that commercial operators received no new government funds such as capital and operating grants?

Capital Grants:

If elected will you ensure that a capital funding program is put in place to ensure the creation of 10,000 spaces per year? And would you ensure funding for organizations such as Direction 2000 and the Ottawa Federation of Parent Cooperative Day Cares to develop non-profit day care?

ESSEX COUNTY: Over 100 parents attended a Council meeting on April 15th to protest against the Council's intentions to raise fees to the per diem costs immediately. After excellent presentations from the parents, the Council agreed to eliminate the \$25,000 ceiling on the income; to raise the fees more slowly; to allow a reduced rate for the second child; and to allow a reduced rate for parents paying fees in advance.

WINDSOR: Council has moved to increase fees to full per diems of \$19.50 by September.
Michelle Schryer

NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO

In the northwestern region of the province we've had little or no concrete information about the promised transitional grants or the requisite reviews. A climate of uncertainty is growing which is having detrimental effects in various communities.

None of the centres I canvassed--including **Red Lake, Balmertown and Dryden**--have had any clear indication of the review timetable and are finding it very difficult to formulate this year's budget.

In **Balmertown**, they are experiencing a drastic decrease in enrolment. It has dropped from about 60 children to 46, with only two fulltime children. According to the centre supervisor, they have lost eight to ten children to the Junior Kindergarten program established this fall. At the same time, parents seem reluctant to depend on daycare because they expect the fees to go up. Consequently, most children are in the program on a

part-time basis and spending the rest of the time in informal settings. Parents see this arrangement as "insurance" for the day when they will have to withdraw their children from formal care. The supervisor also said that younger siblings of children who are now in public school are not being enrolled in daycare, again because parents anticipate fee increases.

The municipality does expect to raise fees, which are currently \$13.00/day, to \$14-15.00/day. In a community which benefits from many hidden subsidies provided by the large gold mining operation, parents balk at those fee increases. They don't realize how low they are by provincial standards.

The drop in enrolment means that **Balmertown** has lost one fulltime program position as well as their night cleaner. Program staff are now doing the housekeeping.

Both **Balmertown and Red Lake** are finding it very difficult to encourage parents to apply for subsidy even when they are clearly eligible. People simply will not go to the town office to apply. This is worrying because the Ministry policy is expecting the municipalities to make more spaces available under the subsidy arrangement.

With regard to subsidy, the situation in **Dryden** is quite different. The municipal centre has undertaken a publicity campaign to encourage parents to investigate subsidy arrangements. Parents do seem more willing to apply and out of a current enrolment of 45, 30 children are on full or partial subsidy.

Windsor & Essex County

The following petition has been prepared by a parent of a son with special needs seeking additional funding. Please sign and return to the Coalition office as soon as possible.

To the Members of the Provincial government of Ontario:

We, the undersigned, want the Government of Ontario to be aware of our problem, in Windsor and Essex County, of the desperate need for help for the underdeveloped children in our community. The Regional Children's Centre of IODE Hospital and The Child's Place of Labelle Street, Windsor, are not adequately funded. The waiting list at both of these establishments is very long. Every day we wait, the need for more money to help these children grows. These children are our future governments of Ontario. Let's not let them down. Please show us that the buck does not stop in London. Let the people of Essex County know that we are a Canadian county and that the Government of Ontario does care!

Name	Address	Signature
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The Outcasts

by Ben Wicks



There is another interesting development in **Dryden** which is worth monitoring. Two individuals are currently doing a needs survey in the community with the view to opening a non-profit centre in the summer of this year. Apparently these people already have approval for 32 spaces from the Ministry.

The woman who will be the centre supervisor told me that they intend to keep costs down by employing program staff only. Their fees will be \$330/child/month. Two children will be \$520/month with half-day children at \$220. They do not plan on any subsidized spaces initially. Given the number of children on subsidy at the municipal centre, it seems possible that **Dryden** could have a class system within its daycare services in the foreseeable future. The **Dryden** municipal council has given its support in principle to the initiative, as long as the new centre does not infringe on the municipal centre's enrolment. It's not yet clear exactly what the Ministry's role has been in this situation.

In our region, the province's assurance that centres will be protected is in no way translated into a stabilization of daycare services. Throughout the region, people are feeling anxious and frustrated.

Holly Rupert

CITY OF TORONTO

Joanne Campbell leaves City Politics for Now

The recent appointment of Joanne Campbell, Metro Councillor from Ward 7 in the City of Toronto, to the chair of the Social Assistance Review Board is viewed

with mixed feelings. Daycare advocates have long regarded Joanne as a bright, articulate, hard-working, principled politician who works closely with the community.

As chair of the Metro Community Services and Housing Committee and the City of Toronto Daycare Grant Committee, Joanne was instrumental in turning around opinions on daycare and thereby raising the position of daycare on the municipal agenda. First elected in 1982 to Metro Council, Joanne has also played a prominent role in the struggle for affordable housing for singles. While she is moving on to an arduous task of administering the new, expanded Review Board, Joanne has not ruled out the possibility of entering the political arena again. We plan to keep in touch with her as she moves up University Avenue to Queen's Park.



City Daycare Grant: What is its Future?

As the third year of the grant ends, planning for the next stage is beginning. It is expected that the 1987-88 grant will allocate approximately \$3.1 million to more than 105 non-profit daycare centres; the funds must be used to increase salaries while keeping fee increases to a minimum. When

Toronto City Council initiated the grant in 1983, the expectation was that it would take three years to raise the average salary in community-based daycare to the average entry-level Metro daycare salary. The program is close to meeting this goal.

In 1986, the average salary, including the grant, rose to \$17,358, while Metro entry-level salary was \$17,789. The Budget Review Committee is anxious to determine what involvement the City will have when the Province and/or Federal government initiates operational funding. The City is committed to continue the program throughout the transition period, but the longer future of the program is uncertain. If you have ideas about the future of the City Daycare Grant, now is a good time to forward them to Joanne Campbell.
Laurel Rothman

BROCKVILLE:

Day care advocates from Brockville are extremely concerned about a recent court decision which has ruled that the Day Nurseries Act violates the right of single parents and low-income earners in Brockville to earn a living.

Provincial Court Judge Ron MacFarlane ruled that a local babysitter can continue to run an illegal day care centre out of her home because if enforcement of the Day Nurseries Act forced her to shut down, it would add to a shortage of day care spaces in the Brockville area. He added that the right to pursue a livelihood was guaranteed under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The judge stopped short of declaring the act unconstitutional throughout Ontario.

But he ordered that proceedings against King be halted and already other babysitters around the province have taken the cue from King and are beginning to operate illegal day care centres in their homes. Given that there are shortages of day care spaces in most parts of the province, it would not be hard to argue that the King ruling provided a precedent elsewhere.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services is appealing this decision and we have written in support of this response, but if the Ministry is not successful, it could have grave consequences for our day care system and, more particularly, for the rights of children in this province.



**Federation of Women Teachers'
Associations of Ontario:
Primary Campaign**

The Association is continuing a province-wide campaign to stress the need for more funding for primary education.

There is no question that conditions under which young children learn best will cost money, more money than the provincial government is now spending on elementary schools. It makes no sense at all to spend three or five or ten times as much per student on secondary and university students as we do on young children. We believe older students need adequate support too, but there are two things to be considered.

First, we are spending enormous amounts of money on a small elite, the 20 per cent of our children who go to university. Surely we should be able to find more money for the 100 per cent who attend our elementary schools.

Secondly, if we were able to do an even better job than we now do in diagnosing and teaching young children, we could perhaps increase the numbers of the elite who attend university, and save numbers of them from the disabilities which they carry through life. High school and university are too late.

What Can You Do?

You can write and speak to your MPP. You can write the Minister of Education, Sean Conway; the Treasurer, Robert Nixon; and the Premier, David Peterson, urging them to use the new prosperity of Ontario in the interests of young children. Ask your friends and people in the Home and School or other organizations to which you belong to write letters too. You can write letters to the editor, and you can let the school board know that you support smaller classes in primary grades.

Transitional Grant:
continued from Page 13...

is a direct grant on behalf of every child in the day care centre.

The Tory government planned to eliminate this subsidy two years ago, and last October, the Liberal government announced its intention to keep it in place as a "transitional grant", whilst reviews of day care programs were being conducted. These program reviews are now underway but day care staff and parents are still unsure what it means for their long term future. Some of the transitional grants amount to as much as \$11 per day.

At the same time as the municipal reviews are being conducted, program area officers are working with the municipalities to raise their fees to the parent and to encourage more parents to seek full or partial subsidies. In most municipalities, the maximum provincial guidelines under the needs test are being used and this is helping to subsidize more parents.

However, it does nothing for centres such as Wingham where only a handful of parents are eligible for a subsidy and yet cannot afford fees of \$25 per day. The Northwest Region Day Care Forum urges that maintenance of the grant be a central plank in the day care election strategy.

Countdown for Childcare Campaign

Span the Country with Green Ribbons

Minister Mulroney in mid-June.

The Countdown for Childcare campaign has been launched by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association and the Canadian Labour Congress because we need urgent action on child care.

The Special Committee on Childcare tabled its long-awaited report at the end of March. The Committee's recommendations do nothing to create a system of quality, non-profit child care accessible to all who wish to use it. Our analysis of the Report above illustrates the problem of relying on tax credits to finance a child care system.

The federal government is planning to introduce its childcare policy at the end of June. Now is the time to send a clear message to Ottawa that we want a comprehensive, universally-accessible, non-compulsory, non-profit, high quality child care system. The Countdown for Childcare "We Care" petition calls upon Ottawa to implement this vision.

Time is short. Start collecting signatures today. Petitions must be returned to the provincial address at the bottom of the petition by June 1st.

The petitions will then be attached to lengths of ribbon. The Countdown for Childcare Campaign will be symbolized by lengths of ribbon spanning the country and uniting our commitment to quality child care. These ribbons and the attached petitions will be unfurled on Parliament Hill in front of Prime

Local ribbon events are also being organized in your area. Get involved! Contact us to find out more about events in your area.

WE ARE COUNTING ON YOU TO:

- Circulate and return the petition
- Copy the petition and get it out to other groups
- Mail it out - or get it into other groups' mailings.
- Write a letter to the Editor of your local newspaper supporting the aims of the campaign.
- Take the petition to conference and meetings - collect signatures
- Write or phone your MP saying you support our child care position
- Phone into an open line show to talk about the need for a quality child care system.
- Contact your provincial representative to work on a ribbon event in your community.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL SUE COLLEY (416) 532-4031 OR PAULA FLETCHER, NATIONAL COUNTDOWN FOR CHILDCARE COORDINATOR (416) 531-2121.



"Parental Choice" -- Empty Words?

A new wrinkle which we should be prepared for has to do with the language in which government officials seem to be preparing to present their childcare policies. In the beginning of May, Jake Epp, Minister of Health and Welfare was on the stand before several crowds interested in the federal government's soon-to-be-announced childcare policy, first at a childcare conference at the University of Guelph and then at the lobby of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. On both occasions, Mr. Epp responded to queries about expected federal initiatives to support informal and commercial childcare with aggressive statements that he supported a broad range of choices for parents. On both occasions, childcare advocates pointed out that our recommendations emphatically support a range of childcare services to provide real choices for parents, and pressed the minister to describe his notion of parental choice. The minister failed to respond with specifics.

OUR CHOICE includes a comprehensive range of services including group childcare programs, full-day and part-day, well regulated and supported family care, resource or drop-in centres for parents and other caregivers, other supplementary services like toy libraries, and adequate parental leaves for birth and child illness for children aged 0-12. All families, including those in rural areas, with unusual work schedules, and with other special needs would have access to appropriate programs in their communities through substantial public funding.

Childcare services would be high quality and non-profit to allow parents to be involved in decision-making in meaningful ways.

JAKE EPP'S CHOICE seems to be based on a notion that childcare is a marketplace service—a commodity rather than a human or educational service. Mr. Epp's conception of childcare appears to ignore the importance of good quality experiences for children in their early years, and the importance for parents to have opportunities to be involved in their child's early care. Mr. Epp couches the idea of parent choice not in terms of offering a range of high quality services from which parents can make real choices but from a perspective that all ways of caring for children are equivalent choices.

JAKE EPP'S CHOICE offers parents limited choices including unregulated care of unknown quality and commercial childcare of dubious quality. OUR CHOICE offers parents a full range of high quality childcare choices—real choice.



CALENDAR

Letters

The following letter was composed by one of the younger participants at the recent National Action Committee on the Status of Women Conference in Ottawa. The letter was addressed, as you might guess, to the Prime Minister:

I am an 11 year old girl and I am already learning that you are not being fair with the women of Canada. I am very surprised because when you were running for prime-minister you let the people know that you would be equal to women but I see now that you haven't kept your promise. I think that it was very unprofessional of you to cancel one day of the year to hear from the women. If you want to stay in the role you're in then I think you should make some changes!

Jackie Burns

Owen Sound, Ontario.

HOW CAN NON-PROFIT DAY CARE DEVELOP?**DIRECTION 2000 STILL NOT FUNDED**

Since Christmas, Direction 2000 a non-profit day care development organization has been seeking funding as a resource group to give a push to developing new non-profit day care in Southern Ontario. The idea basically is that such a resource group is needed to assist parent groups to get off the ground in their attempt to set up day care centres.

The models exist in the housing co-ops and, of course, with the Board of Education Consultants at

the City of Toronto and North York Boards of Education. We all know how difficult it is to set up non-profit day care with no resources: the group has to be pulled together; a needs survey has to be carried out; a location found; the kind of location that will meet a host of regulations - building code, zoning by-laws, fire regulations, and health regulations. It has to be affordable and once found, the parent group then has to find funding to set up, develop a budget, hire staff and develop a stimulating creative program for the children. All of this involves a lot of expertise, a lot of time and a lot of patience to wind one's way through the vast array of red tape. Provincial consultants once did this job but with the increasing demands for more day care, even they admit that their job doesn't really start until a group has it all together.

Consequently, Direction 2000 with a Board of Day Care experts has been trying to access funding to set up such a resource group. So far they have had no success and no funds for such a project appears on the horizon. If you are talking to your MPP or provincial consultant, mention Direction 2000 and talk about the importance of establishing such groups if the government is serious about its intention to set up non-profit child care in the province. Direction 2000 is now in the process of setting up its first day care in North York.

The Ottawa Federation of Cooperative Parent Day Cares with similar aims but based in Ottawa has not received funding yet either.

CALENDAR

May 23, 1987

Metro Toronto Reference Library
Child Care Forum

Jointly sponsored by OFL and OCBCD.

Please telephone Coalition office to arrange to make a presentation. Please attend.

May 24, 1987

OISE, 225 Bloor Street West, Toronto.

OCBCD Council Meeting. All members welcome.

Workshops on a variety of "hot" day care issues. Presentation from Shannon Hogan from the Ministry of Education. Please attend. Contact Sue Colley at the OCBCD office for details of travel subsidies.

Saturday, May 30, 1987, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Queen's Park, Toronto

PLAY NOT PROFIT: Join Arms Around Queen's Park to support non-profit day care at 12 noon.

A day of entertainment, fun, food and action at Queen's Park.

For more information, call Eileen: 532-4031

June 1-15

COUNTDOWN FOR CHILDCARE CAMPAIGN

National Petition Campaign. During these two weeks green ribbons will be spanning the country, binding together our national support for non-profit day care. Local events will be held to staple our petitions to the green ribbons and these will then be unfurled on Parliament Hill in mid-June.

Please get your petitions signed and take them to your local event, mail them to the Coalition, or bring them to Queen's Park on May 30th.

Mid-June. Ottawa

Petitions will be presented to Brian Mulroney on Parliament Hill. Please call the Coalition office if you wish to attend.

June 10-13

"Growing Together"

Windsor, Ontario

Thirty-sixth annual conference of the Association for Early Childhood Education, Ontario.

For details:

Association for Early Childhood Education, Ontario

266 Adelaide Street West, Ste. 3

Toronto, Ontario

M6H 1X6

November 7, 8 and 9th.

OCBCD 5th Annual Conference

George Brown College,

Details: Contact Eileen Condon

OCBCD, 555 Bloor Street West, Toronto,

416-532-4031

PAY EQUITY

Clause-by-clause review of the Pay Equity Bill by the Justice Committee was completed in April and the proposed amendments made by the Equal Pay Coalition, the NDP and many women's groups were defeated. The only amendments accepted by the Liberal majority were as follows:

1. Bill 154 will now cover the Ontario Public Service as well as the broader public sector and the private sector. (This does away with the uncertainty around the status of Bill 105, The Ontario Public Service Bill, and means that all employees in Ontario will be covered by the same Bill).
2. A cap of seven years for completion of pay-outs in the public sector (Timing for private sector employers remains unchanged).

3. The Pay Equity Office will conduct a study and report in one year into sectors of the economy where no male comparison group is available and/or which are predominately female. (This study should include child care workers and librarians, but this is no improvement on the suggestion made by Ian Scott when the Bill was first tabled.)

The Bill was tabled in the House for third reading by Eleanor Caplan on April 29th, although no date has yet been set for the debate. It is possible that some changes can occur at the third reading stage and it is important that we continue to lobby members of all three parties to make and support further amendments in the debate in the House to make the Bill stronger. Please ask your group to write a letter or telephone the constituency office of MPPs, the Premier and opposition party leaders.



Federal-Provincial Cost-Sharing Negotiations:

Very little information has so far filtered out from behind the closed doors of the federal-provincial negotiations.

An intriguingly simple plan to get federal cost sharing of operating grants to day care centres and homes has been going the rounds at Health and Welfare, Canada. It's appealing because no new legislation is needed, only a change to the Likelihood of Need

Guidelines under the Canada Assistance Plan. These guidelines now set limits on family income levels eligible for cost-shared subsidy. The proposals would replace these income limits with a definition that described all families with working parents or student parents as "likely to be in need" of daycare services. Virtually all families using day care services could therefore be eligible for subsidy. Provinces could use these changed guidelines to claim federal dollars for 50% of the cost of operating grants for each enrolled child, because these grants could now be interpreted as a "partial" subsidy to a child eligible under the federal rules.

Neither did he emphasize that the government cannot at this point even identify which childcare programs are commercial and which are not.

Neither did the government adequately respond to questions from the NDP's Richard Johnston about Ontario's role in leading current federal-provincial childcare discussions in the direction of expanded funding for the commercial childcare sector both through changes to the Canada Assistance Plan and new federal-provincial arrangements. In view of this important role of leadership in the wrong direction, and expansion of funds for Ontario commercial operators, it is impossible to see how the Accord's promise to ...make

daycare.. "a basic public service" has been addressed.

From the point of view of many observers of the childcare scene in Ontario and nationally, Ontario's directions will have a profound effect on the future of childcare in Canada. Unfortunately, the Liberal government has chosen the wrong horse.

The Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care Newsletter

Ontario's only daycare advocacy newsletter, featuring news, reviews and updates about daycare around the province.

-----clip and mail today-----

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- Daycare Centres, organizations, etc.....\$20
- Local Daycare Coalitions.....\$20

(Provincial organizations are requested to contact us for membership fees)

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- Subscription only.....\$10

Donation:

Enclosed please find a donation to support the Coalition, of:
\$10 _____ \$25 _____ \$Other _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Mail to: Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care, 555 Bloor St. West, 2nd floor, Toronto, Ont.
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