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Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare

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March 1987



The Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care Newsletter

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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.

Submissions should be sent to:

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Childcare: What the Public Said

An analysis of the cross-Canada hearings of the Special Parliamentary Committee on Childcare

A clear consensus favouring childcare funding has emerged from an analysis of the transcripts of the public hearings held last spring by the Special Committee on Child Care. The results of the analysis are summarized in a report, Childcare - What the Public Said, released by the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association (CDCAA).

The report shows strong support for universally-accessible childcare, for a non-profit operation, for comprehensive services, paid for in part by public dollars directed toward the services, and for some parent fees.

The study was a joint project by Martha Friendly, Coordinator of the Daycare Resource and Research Unit at the University of Toronto, Julie Mathien, Board Member of the CDCAA, and Tricia Willis, an M.S.W. student. The authors identified 8 central issues in the child care debate and, with a team of trained volunteers they reviewed the 51 issues of parliamentary transcripts to determine the views expressed in the presentations to the Special Committee.

"This analysis of the public hearings shows that all across the country, Canadians are calling for high quality, universally-accessible childcare. We hope that the Special Committee and the federal/provincial territorial governments will be guided by the public view," stated Lynette Billard, President of the CDCAA.

The public views on the eight issues which were coded are summarized below:

1. Delivery of Funds

Of the 519 respondents who addressed this issue:

76% called for funding to be directed to services.

16% called for funding to be directed to parents.

8% called for funding to be directed to both.

Childcare advocates have long held that direct operating and capital grants would expand spaces and strengthen existing ones, while reducing costs to parent-users.



Childcare: What the Public Said

An analysis of the cross-Canada hearings of the Special Parliamentary Committee on Childcare

2. Effects of Childcare on Children and Families

Of the 437 respondents who addressed this issue:

89% believed that childcare outside the family could be a positive experience for children and families.

11% did not see childcare as beneficial; most of these would it as a necessary evil, but would tolerate it a necessary evil, but would target care to cases of great need.

3. Funding of For-Profit Child Care

Of the 533 respondents who addressed this issue:

77% opposed public support of for-profit programs.

23% called for public support of for-profit programs.

Note: of the 23% who called for funding of for-profit programs, 50% were owners of for-profit programs.

The majority view was demonstrated in all provinces except Newfoundland, where most of the limited care available is privately-owned, and where 72% of respondents favoured funding profit centres.

4. Universal Versus Targeted Accessibility

Of the 533 respondents who addressed this issue:

86.5% called for a universally-accessible child care system.

13.5% recommended that funding should be targeted only to needy families.

5. Parent Fees

Of the 265 respondents who addressed this issue:

77% said that parents should pay some childcare fees.

23% said that childcare should be entirely publicly-funded.

Parent fees are not inconsistent with universal accessibility; parent fees would have to be much lower than they are now, however, so that no parent would be prevented from using the services because of inability to pay.

6. Support for a Comprehensive Childcare System

Of the 642 respondents who addressed this issue:

83.6% said that all parents, whether in the labour force or at home, should have access to a comprehensive range of services, including varied full and part-time programs for children from infancy to school age, parent-child programs, and parental leave.

7.8% said that parents should be encouraged and financially supported to stay at home with young children.

8.6% recommended both the development of a comprehensive range of services and financial support for stay-at-home parents.

continued

7. Work-related Childcare

Of the 96 respondents who addressed this issue:

5% recommended that work-related childcare be encouraged over other options.

95% said that this should be but one of many options in a comprehensive system.

8. Wages of Childcare Staff

37% of all presenters (361) noted the very low wages of child care staff.

In summary, the report demonstrates a strong consensus on childcare. The respondents represented Canadians from across the political, social and interest spectrum: 45 national groups, 188 individuals, and 742 provincial and local organizations such as women's groups, labour groups, church groups, childcare groups, community groups, professional associations, local governments and others. On most issues, the consensus was consistent in very province and territory, and among groups and individuals.



Federal Update

Federal/Provincial First Ministers met in Vancouver in November to discuss Women's Issues. One of the top items on the agenda was child care policy. Brian Mulroney gave strong support to making "significant changes" to the child care system couching his promises in rhetoric on employment equity for women. At this meeting, Ontario's Premier Peterson had promised that Ontario would be introducing direct grants and switching to income testing. Also in November, the Special Committee on Child Care requested an extension for the delivery of their Report to March 31, 1987.

The Coalition also stressed the need for funding pay equity adjustments. The Coalition pointed out that here was another example of switching to income testing. Also in November, the Special Committee on Child Care requested an extension for delivery of their Report to March 31, 1987.

On January 14 Jake Epp, Minister of National Health and Welfare fuelled anxieties about the lack of federal commitment to child care when he told a Globe & Mail Reporter that parents at home, not day care, was the best way to rear children. This caused a mass reaction on the part of parents, women and advocates across the country. By the time of the Social Services Ministers meeting in Ottawa on January 22, Epp had definitely tempered his views and assured the Social Services Ministers that day care was the top priority on the social policy agenda. Jake Epp later wrote a retraction modifying his statements in the Globe and Mail. At the Social Services

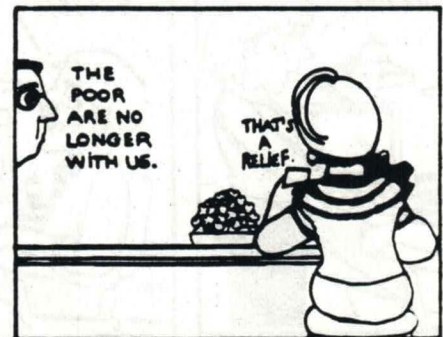
Minister's Meeting, he announced the federal government's plan to fast track discussion, negotiation and consultation on child care policy to ensure that the federal government would have a policy position by April 30th, policy in place by the end of June and new legislation in place by the end of the Session. The following is a summary of the planned schedule:

February 1:

begin series of bilateral meetings between individual provinces and federal government officials.

March 15:

report of parliamentary task force and comprehensive response to it.



Federal Update

March 15 to mid-April:

Public consultation on Special Committee Report.

April 30:

National strategy formulated

May:

Formal federal/provincial negotiations

June:

Federal/provincial agreement
Meanwhile, the Special Committee continues to prepare its report. It now appears that this report will only be one contribution to the development of federal child care policy. Our present estimate of the recommendations contain the following:

- Estimated recommended expenditure in the region of \$1 billion.

- Revamping maternity leave provisions to allow for a shorter period of maternity leave and a longer parental leave (available to either parent), totalling about 26 weeks of benefit.

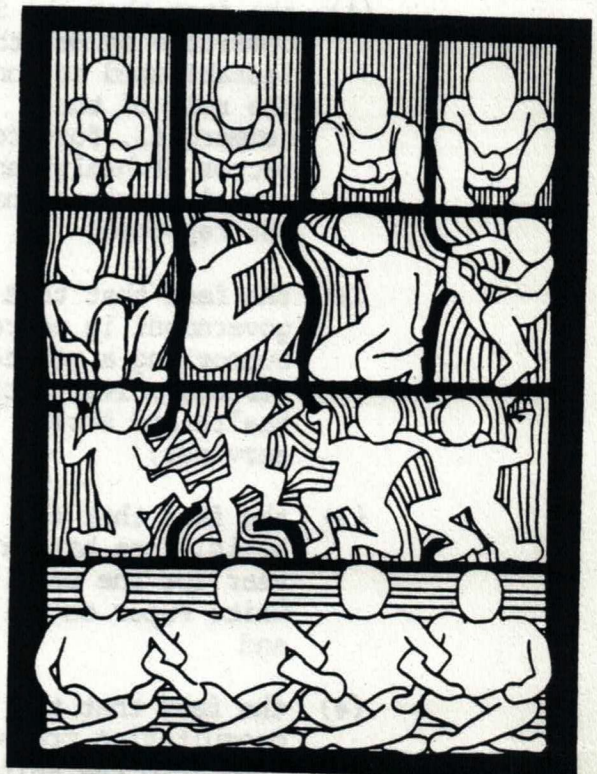
- Two forms of tax credits.

(a) A tax credit for parents who have children in a receipted day care situation up \$3000 per child.

(b) A tax credit to all parents with preschool children in the region of \$150-\$200 per child per annum.

- Cost-sharing provisions for capital and operating grants for child care programs under new Childcare legislation. It is understood that the provinces will decide whether this money should go to commercial and/or non-profit day care. It is estimated that this recommendation will only amount to 10-15% of the total recommended expenditures.

- Other miscellaneous programs include support for resource centres, informal care registries, research, day care development groups, pilot projects, workplace day care, etc.



NDP Backs Non-Profit Care

"The quality and cost of the childcare system is up for grabs and I am asking this Legislature to opt for high quality and financial accountability," said Evelyn Gigantes (NDP, Ottawa Centre) as she tabled a private member's resolution in the Ontario Legislature on January 29, 1987.

"My resolution calls on elected representatives to stand up for a system of childcare that is built on a non-profit base. We do not want to see the mistakes of a profit-oriented nursing home system repeated in the field of childcare."

Resolution:

That in the opinion of this House, since

- (1) the fact that the Select Committee on Health (established to consider the role of the commercial, for-profit sector of health and social services) has not yet reported;
- (2) the fact that this government is on record as supporting a moratorium on further privatization of health and social services;
- (3) the fact that the Legislature has waited a year for the promised White Paper on child care, and
- (4) the fact that the consultation process to lead into the White Paper

on child care has not begun;

the Government of Ontario should prohibit direct public funding of commercial child care programs, for the following policy reasons;

1. the effective use of government revenue.
2. the growing evidence that non-profit child care programs are superior in quality to programs provided in commercial setting; and
3. the experience of inadequate service and lack of public accountability in the similar field of care programs for the elderly (i.e. commercial nursing homes).

Not surprisingly, the Resolution was defeated, 16 votes in favour and 48 opposed. Only NDP members voted for the resolution.



Childcare Forums: Organizing Across Ontario to Support Non-Profit Care

The Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care and the Ontario Federation of Labour are working together to pressure the Liberal government to make adequate funding for non-profit daycare a top priority.

We will be travelling to thirteen centres in Ontario to hear from presenters about their concerns regarding childcare, particularly about commercial childcare and to discuss solutions to these problems.

After the tour, the submissions will be synthesized into a brief for presentation to the Ontario Cabinet.

If you would like to have more information on the forums, please contact us or Carrol Anne Sceviour, Human Rights Director, OFL (Women's Issues) 15 Gervais Drive, Suite 202, Don Mills, Ontario, M3C 1Y8.

Forums:

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| April 6, 1987 | Ottawa |
| April 9, 1987 | Kingston |
| April 13, 1987 | Windsor |
| April 15, 1987 | London |
| April 21, 1987 | Dryden |
| April 25, 1987 | Thunder Bay |
| April 28, 1987 | Sault Ste. Marie |
| April 30, 1987 | Sudbury |
| May 5, 1987 | Hamilton |
| May 7, 1987 | Peterborough |
| May 12, 1987 | Guelph |
| May 14, 1987 | North Bay |
| May 23, 1987 | Toronto |

Doonesbury



First Anniversary of Queen's Park Centre!

Friends of the fledgling workplace day care centre at Queen's Park in Toronto gathered for a fundraising event last week to celebrate the centre's first birthday. Guests at the informal party included Premier David Peterson, Social Services Minister, John Sweeney, Opposition Leader, Larry Grossman and NDP Social Services Critic, Richard Johnston.

Proceeds from the event were shared with Curve Lake Day Care Centre. Curve Lake Director, Dixie Shilling, attended and was among the speakers who addressed the gathering. Parents, volunteers, supporters, staff and politicians brought gifts of toys and cash and then stayed to share four large birthday cakes donated by the Queen's Park caterer.

Some guests, like the Premier, brought duplicate gifts for the two centres. Others, such as the staff of Queen's Park Child Care Centre, designated their gifts especially for Curve Lake. Extra benefits of the fundraiser, whose theme was "Now We Are One", included opportunities for working parents to talk day care with key decision-makers, and the recruitment of a new volunteer who wants to spend some lunch hours walking babies. Photos of the party appeared in the three Toronto daily newspapers, helping to maintain the public profile of day care generally.

Curve Lake Day Care is a community and culturally based centre on Curve Lake Reserve north of Peterborough. It was founded 15 years ago by Dixie Shilling and the then band administrator, William

Whetung. The centre is licensed for 33 toddlers, pre-schoolers and schoolage children and is managed by the Band Council.

Queen's Park Child Care Centre is a non-profit centre run by a parent board, located in the provincial government buildings at Bay and Wellesley Streets in Toronto. It has 64 spaces for infant to pre-school age children. The admission policy is first-come-first-serve, with no preference for government employees.

Barbara Hewett
Board member, Queen's Park D.C.



Did They Really Say That?

A national survey of 1000 day care centres concluded that non-profit daycare centres provide significantly higher quality care than those run as businesses. The results of their assessments of 1000 daycare centres across the country found that **one out of every four owner-operated centres across the country are of poor or very poor quality compared to about one out of every ten non-profit centres.** Day care centres operated as part of a chain of centres stick very close to provincial regulations - the minimum acceptable. Even here, however, **one out of six profit-making chains are below provincially accepted standards of quality.**

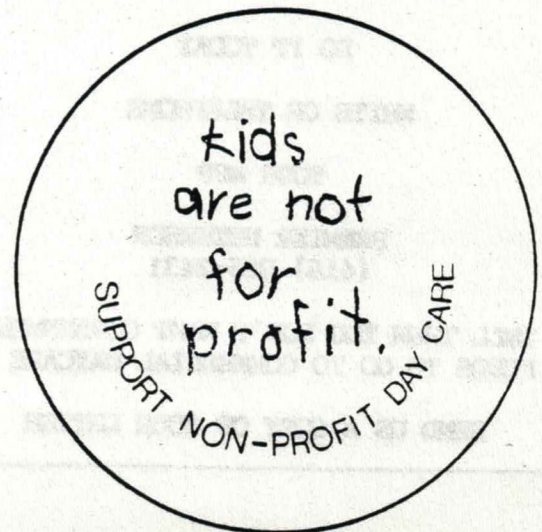
Centres were measured in detailed rankings as well (ten measures of child development, nine measures of services to working parents, eight other measures). **Non-profit centres ranked above commercial centres of either kind on twenty-six out of twenty-seven measures.** The only factor commercial centres can boast about is "availability/ease of getting a space." Naturally enough, it's easier to find empty places in commercially-operated day care. When day care consultants were asked to rank the "typical" chain day care centre in their area, chains were rated poorly on child development measures. **On ten measures of child development, the typical chain ranked below adequate levels of care on seven out of ten criteria.**

Despite the study's conclusions about quality, the Special Committee study recommends expanded funding for both commercial and non-profit daycare. The study's authors believe that profit-making

care has not been receiving sufficient government subsidies up until now and this is the main reason for its relatively poor quality. Along with subsidies, provinces need better regulations and monitoring of daycare quality, the study asserts. "Expansion of public subsidies to for-profit centres must be accompanied by a high level of assurance that these subsidies are directed to improved quality of care."

The study's conclusions are based on an uncorroborated hypothesis. The study's authors acknowledge that for-profit day care tends to cut corners, cheat on staff:child ratios, and hire staff with few qualifications. But their hypothesis is that this behaviour can be effectively controlled.

What this study recommends has already been tried in Alberta, which gives very generous operating grants to both commercial and non-profit centres. It hasn't worked. In fact, the quality of commercial care in Alberta is quite deplorable as Professor Chris Bagley, who has studied this issue, has made clear.



Did They Really Say That?

Because government grants to the commercial sector, childcare in Alberta has become almost totally for-profit. These operators have subsequently become a powerful lobby group. They are now refusing to improve standards unless they receive more government funding; they refuse spot checks and insist on being informed prior to inspections; and attempts to close down centres where children have been abused have failed. When a province becomes heavily dependent on commercial enterprises to provide essential daycare services, the political will and resources necessary to effectively control for-profit daycare just aren't there.

**LET'S MAKE SURE THESE MISTAKES
ARE NOT REPEATED IN ONTARIO!**

DO IT TODAY

WRITE OR TELEPHONE

YOUR MPP

**PREMIER PETERSON
(416) 965-2431**

**TELL THEM YOU DON'T WANT GOVERNMENT
FUNDS TO GO TO COMMERCIAL DAYCARE**

SEND US A COPY OF YOUR LETTER

Select Committee on Health to Begin Hearings

(The Select Committee on Health has been established to investigate the commercialization of health and other social services)

Some people may remember that this Committee was struck last summer to look at the commercialization of health and social services. For many months, it seemed dead. Public hearings weren't planned and very little profile attached itself to the committee. Now, just before an election, the Committee is moving into high gear. A research project collecting data on ownership of health and social services has been completed and the Committee hopes to publish an interim report containing these figures by the end of the month. Public hearings will begin on March 23rd and take four weeks covering child care and hospital management services. Child care is first on the agenda. The hearings will be held in Toronto and there are no plans for the Committee to travel unless it receives many requests from one city; then it will consider travelling. Travel subsidies will be considered on request.

**PLEASE CONTACT DEBORAH DELLER,
CLERK, SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH,
QUEEN'S PARK, TORONTO, ONTARIO;
TELEPHONE (416) 963-2977 WITH A
REQUEST TO MAKE A SUBMISSION. THE
COMMERCIAL ADVOCATES WILL BE
DELUGING THE COMMITTEE WITH
REQUESTS; LET'S MAKE SURE THAT WE DO
THE SAME.**

Queen's Park

Amidst rumours that delivery of the phantom white paper was imminent, John Sweeney appeared at a meeting of the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario in early December. At this meeting he announced that there would indeed be a continuing role for commercial operators although future development would be concentrated in the non-profit area. He made it clear that commercial operators would be eligible to receive direct grants and that the province would approach the federal government to change CAP regulations to allow parents in commercial centres to receive subsidies by means of the "income test."

This statement was followed up by aggressive questioning in the Legislature by the NDP. Sweeney confirmed his remarks at the ADCO meeting, justifying his stand on the grounds that he could not discriminate against the "50,000 families with children in commercial centres". The Coalition promptly called a press conference, attended by representatives from OCBDC, the CDCAA, NAC, Direction 2000, and the OFL. Enhanced funding to commercial centres was opposed. A fast mailing was organized, urging supporters to telephone Peterson's office and their own MPP opposing any moves to provide additional public funding to commercial day care. (If you have not already called, PLEASE do so now!)

After Christmas, the OCBDC focussed its efforts on government preparations to attend the Federal/Provincial Social Services Ministers Meeting in Ottawa. It was decided to leak the study prepared

by SPR Associates for the Special Committee on Child Care. This study found that non-profit day care was significantly better than chain or small owner-operated child care. Provincial day care consultants across the country were asked to rate the quality of care in commercial, non-profit and government-run day care centres. One thousand centres (a sample of about one quarter of Canada's day care centres) were covered and consultants were asked to pick the best, the worst and the most typical centre of each type by auspice and give more detailed ratings on 27 indices of quality. However, the report went on to recommend that increased subsidization and regulation of commercial day care centres would result in improved quality. This analysis, however, was not based on any firm data analysis and is merely one hypothesis to be drawn. Further scepticism concerning the Report's conclusions were confirmed when a Globe & Mail Reporter published excerpts from a letter written by the authors of the study to the Child Care Management Association (the federal commercial operators' lobby) which offered to sell the information to the Association. At last, we have a



Queen's Park Beat

Canadian study demonstrating a clear difference between non-profit and commercial day care - a fact that has been known to many of us through other research for many years.

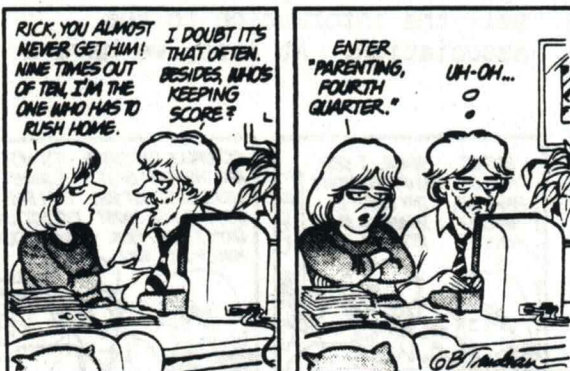
On January 20, the OCBDC hosted a press conference with representatives from the CDCAA, OFL, OTF, and NAC when the Report was leaked. Our press conference was followed by an ADCO press conference. The press focussed on ADCO's response to the Report. Earlier that morning, representatives from the CDCAA, NAC, OFL and OCBDC had met with Sweeney, urging him not to go to Ottawa requesting changes to CAP to support commercial child care. Sweeney, however, would not give such a commitment. On January 14, Cabinet approved the day care policy but no announcement strategy has yet been announced.

Third National Daycare Conference

The Canadian Daycare Advocacy Association is sponsoring the Third National Daycare Conference in May, 1988, to be held in either Ottawa or Montreal.

Book your time off now, because this will be an important and exciting event.

For more information, call Julie Mathien at 979-2392 (h), or 591-8364 (w).



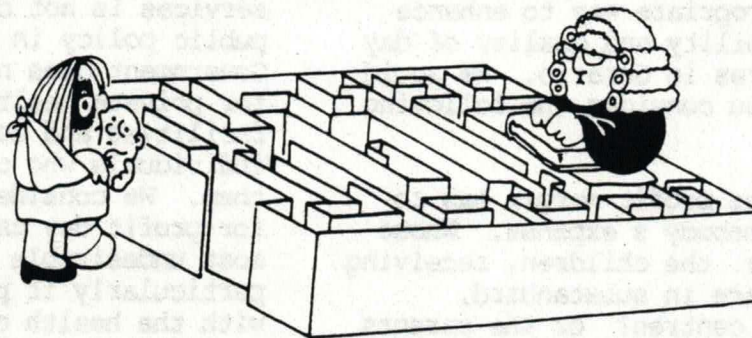
Childcare Workers for Women's Shelters

In October, 1986, the Ministry of Community and Social Services earmarked \$1.1 million dollars in order to guarantee that each Ontario shelter would be able to hire a full-time child care worker.

At the June conference of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transitional Houses, only eleven shelters in Ontario had a full-time child care worker. Although all shelters recognize the needs of children who live in them, funding restraints have made these "junior residents" almost invisible in terms of programming.

The Coalition of Children's Workers (a Toronto based group of shelter child care workers) has been meeting since May, 1984. Statistically, children comprise approximately 60% of residents in shelters. The Coalition has been advocating that the staff dealing with children reflect this statistic.

The role of the child care worker encompasses recreational activities, parenting support, public education, direct counselling, liaison with outside agencies and follow-up. These responsibilities are often



overwhelming for just one child worker. Ideally, a minimum of two full-time workers would be able to meet the needs of children residing in a given shelter.

The Ministry has recognized, with their new funding formula, the importance of full-time workers but the monies allotted are not sufficient. Guidelines for hiring child care workers, as well as program content, should be decided amongst individual shelters.

The effects of violence on children are devastating. The voices of these children need to be heard.

Sylvia Samsa
Interval House, Toronto.

Letters

January 26, 1987.

The Honourable David Peterson
Premier of Ontario
Queen's Park,
Toronto, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Peterson:

Re: Opposition to Full-Funding to
"For-Profit Day Care Centres"

On behalf of the Sandy Hill Health Centre, a non-profit community service centre, I wish to register concern regarding your announced intention to accord full funding to for-profit day care establishments.

We agree with the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare, and other concerned groups, that this is not an appropriate way to enhance the availability and quality of day care services in Ontario. We would ask that you consider the following points:

1. The profit margin has to come at somebody's expense. Whose will it be: the children, receiving inferior care in substandard, understaffed centres? or the parents and taxpayers, paying increased costs to maintain both the profit margin and an adequate level of care? or will costs be kept down by paying the staff less than they would receive in non-profit centres?

We do not feel that quality should be compromised, nor do we support placing the burden on parents, many of whom are already expressing hardship in paying for day care. While we agree that more public monies should be allocated to day care, we consider the non-profit sector to be a better investment of

our tax dollars. Finally, even in the non-profit centres, day care staff are among the worst paid workers in Canada. We would not condone further exploitation of this largely female group, nor should your government, committed as it is to employment equity.

2. The increased costs associated with for-profit day care would necessitate more income-testing and needs-testing of individuals, notably among the working poor. This would not only entail greater administrative costs, but would also force increasing numbers of Ontarians into this demeaning process.

3. The provision of public funding to private sector social services is not consistent with public policy in other areas. Government does not provide funding for private health or educational facilities and does not subsidize individuals who choose to utilize them. We consider that funding of for-profit day care would set a most undesirable precedent, particularly if parallels are drawn with the health care system. We believe that the non-profit sector should be supported, promoted and encouraged, and that it should always be the first choice in providing services to the public. That is the Canadian way.

I look forward to receiving your response to the points raised in this letter.

Kate Wardrop
President
Board of Directors
Sandy Hill Health Centre

Childcare: What the Polls Say

Close to two-thirds of Canadians support government funding of day care, according to polls by both Angus Reid Associates and a separate poll by Goldfarb Consultants.

The Angus Reid question on day care was part of a major public opinion survey of women's and family issues commissioned by Southam News and conducted between January 10 and 13.

Sixty percent of men and 66 per cent of women agreed that "governments should provide funding to ensure that everyone who wishes to use quality day care can do so".

Although the poll found little difference between women and men on issues involving women and the family it did indicate a generation gap. Seventy per cent of respondents between 18 and 34 years support more public funding of child care. Among those aged 35 to 54, sixty per cent want more funding, while for those 55 and over the figure is only 43 per cent.

The poll also found that many were concerned that working women have had a negative impact on family life, and that their children have a harder time. However, even among this group, a majority supported public funding of child care.

The telephone poll of 1,667 Canadians is accurate to within 2.5 percentage points 19 times out of 20.

The Goldfarb Poll found that:

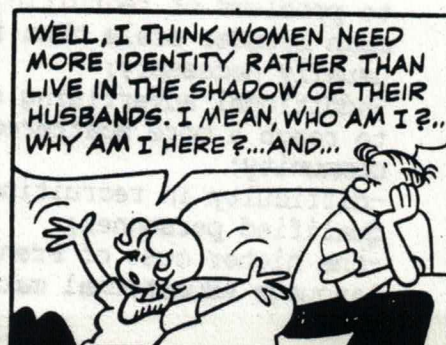
79% of Canadians thought that day care spaces should be ensured;

74% believed that the money should be spent on day care centres;

75% thought that government should provide schoolage day care.

76% thought that parents should not be compensated for staying at home.

78% thought that the subsidy should go to the centre rather than to the individual parent.



Francophone Services

Despite the fact that franco-ontarian children now have access to elementary and secondary education in French, the same cannot be said for childcare services.

When compared to the English language network of existing daycare centres - in itself insufficient according to most - it becomes obvious that the network of French daycare centres is seriously underdeveloped.

A study commissioned by the Ministry of Community and Social Services in 1982 showed that there were only 26 French daycare centres throughout Ontario - representing only 1.5% of all daycare centres, while 5% of Ontario's population is francophone. The situation has not improved much since, recent Ministry lists account for only 28 French daycare centres.

A number of barriers to the establishment and survival of French daycare centres have been identified. The most notable of these are:

1. The lack of specific policies and funding criteria vis-a-vis French childcare services that take into account such factors as:

- the longer start-up time due to problems of recruiting on a much broader scale than is usually necessary;
- additional advertising needed to reach a more scattered community;
- difficulty in recruiting qualified personnel;
- the higher cost of French-language educational material.

2. The lack of an overall policy in the allocation of subsidized spaces in order to ensure a minimum allocation to French daycare centres.

3. The problem of transportation due to the larger territory covered by most French daycare centres.

4. A general lack of information as to the existence of French daycare centres, as well as a lack of information for daycare staff as to the latest methods and materials available.

In order to develop greater awareness of the problems specific to French daycare centres, the Association Canadienne Francaise de l'Ontario (ACFO) has prepared a



Francophone Services

brief to the provincial government. Generally speaking, ACFO would like the government to officially recognize the need for a complete network of childcare services, in



French, equivalent to that which exists in English. This means that the Ministry of Community and Social Services must take a more active approach in helping to develop such services and in ensuring that they meet the specific needs of Ontario's Francophone community.

At an age when the acquisition of a child's mother tongue is most sensitive, it is imperative that young Francophones have access to a fully developed network of childcare services in their language in order that they can develop a solid cultural and linguistic base.

For more information, contact Catherine Lengyel, ACFO, at (416) 962-6120.

Copies of the brief in French are available through the provincial offices of the ACFO, 255 Montreal Road, Vanier, Ontario, K1L 6C4 tel: no: (416) 749-1910.

Catherine Lengyel

DAY CARE DUDS:

Here are a few: Please let us have yours!

"Establishing a day care centre in the old Mormon Church on Stockdale Road would be like dropping an atomic bomb in the neighbourhood" Area resident opposed to setting up a day care centre at 611 Stockdale Road. Reprinted from the North Bay Nugget, November 18, 1986.



"Welcome to another boondoggle - a national system of "affordable" day care. There's no stopping the juggernaut; it's wearing down all the rearguard reactionaries and sentimentalists like me who don't venerate day care as a universal social right."

Norm Ibsen, Editor,
Free Press, London, Ontario.

Pay Equity: Bill 154

The new Pay Equity Bill, Bill 154, has now passed second reading and is expected to become law within the next few months. Its stated goal is to end pay discrimination for female-predominated work; that is work traditionally performed by women. The government stated in its Green Paper on Pay Equity:

"Pay equity is a fundamental goal of the government.

The achievement of this goal for women is not at issue. Only the methods by which it will be achieved are open for debate."

Child care workers have frequently been referred to as offering the best example of undervalued and underpaid work. The work involves a level of responsibility, skill and effort which should result in child care work being among the better paid in the province. Instead most day care workers earn far less than park attendants and zookeepers.

It is quite understandable that many have been looking to Pay Equity legislation as a means of substantially raising the pay of day care workers.

Well don't start spending the money yet! Because of the way the legislation is written, most day care workers may never benefit.

The problem arises because the bill says the wages of women's work go up if it can be shown that she is paid less than a male job, which is of equal value, **in the same establishment**. The jobs are compared according to skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions. If a secretary, working

for the City of Sudbury, for example, can prove her work is of equal or comparable value to that of a truck driver who also works for the City of Sudbury, her pay must ultimately be raised to be the same as that of the truck driver.

In other words, the key to using the legislation is finding a male job **in the same establishment** which is of comparable value to your own. Unfortunately, most day care centres don't have any jobs that are filled mostly by men, so we can't use the legislation.

The exception is, of course, those day care centres who have as their employer a municipality. Day care workers who work for the Municipality of Metro Toronto, for example, will be able to compare their wages to a male worker in Metro. They should see their wages substantially increased, albeit slowly.

Ian Scott, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, has said in a statement to the House, that the problem of all female establishments, such as day care centres, will be addressed by the soon-to-be established Pay Equity Commission and that all day care workers will, in the end, be able to use the legislation. Thus far, however, the government has not introduced any amendments to Bill 154 which would allow this to happen. Letters urging the Minister to do so should be sent to:

The Honourable Ian Scott
Minister Responsible for Women's
Issues
900 Bay Street
4th Floor, Mowat Block
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1C2

Coalition Presents Pay Equity Statement

On Monday, March 2, the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care submitted a brief to the Standing Committee on the Administration of Justice expressing its concerns about the effective elimination of day care workers from pay equity legislation.



equity increase, then workers at Cherry Street Day Care (where there are no men) could apply to receive the same increase.

The Coalition also stressed the need for funding pay equity adjustments. The Coalition pointed out that here was another example of the need for government funding for daycare. Clearly, parents are unable to pay the increased cost of wages; equally clearly, day care workers should not continue to subsidize the day care system through low wages. The Coalition recommended that the government set up a pay equity fund to be used for pay equity adjustments.

The brief pointed out that there were serious problems in the legislation for those workers who may be covered by the legislation - such as municipal and community college day care workers. The exclusion of casuals from the legislation, the length of time of implementation and the limited role for unions in the pay equity process will all create problems for day care workers and the smooth operation of day care centres.

Perhaps most important though, is the effective elimination of 86% of day care workers because they are concentrated in all-female establishments and will not therefore have a male comparison group to compare their jobs to for pay equity purposes. The Coalition suggested that day care workers be allowed to apply to the Pay Equity Commission to be awarded the same wage increase as municipal or community college workers are awarded for gender discrimination. For example, if a municipal day care workers are awarded a 20% pay

Comparable worth is just a disguised attack on our free enterprise system.

It flies in the face of the values that made this country great!



And exactly what values are those?

Well ... cheap labor for one.



News and Reviews

Family Allowance Increase

At the beginning of this year, the federal government increased family allowances from \$31.58 per child per month to \$31.93, an increase of only 1%. Also, the refundable Child Tax Credit for the 1986 taxation year will provide up to \$454 per child based on family income. A new provision in the Income Tax Act allowed a prepayment of the Child Tax Credit in November 1986 of \$300 for each eligible child to families with a 1985 income of \$15,000 or less.



Financial Times 25.2.86

A wholesale reorganization in the Ministry of Education last January may have major implications for early childhood education in Ontario. Part of the reorganization includes the establishment of a Centre for Early Childhood and Elementary Education. Shannon Hogan has been appointed Director.

The Blueprint for Child Care Services: Realistic Responses to the Need. The Report of the Metropolitan Toronto Day care Planning Task Force, prepared November 17, 1986. Available free from:

Metro Community Services
Children's Services Division
Suite 1550
439 University Avenue
Toronto, Ont.
M5G 1Y8
(416) 392-8128

Leaked Document: "An Exploratory Review of Selected Issues in For-Profit Versus Not-for-Profit Child Care", SPR Associates Inc., October, 1986.

Available from the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care:
\$15.00

Childcare - What the Public Said: An analysis of the transcripts of hearings held across Canada by the parliamentary Special Committee on Child Care (March-June, 1986). Available from the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care.
\$3.00

Close-Up on Daycare: A child's perspective

Submitted by **Melissa Bobrovskis,**
Age 9

An interview with Art Eggleton, the Mayor of Toronto, can be exciting and interesting, especially if you are only nine years old. He is really just like any other person. He lives in Grenadier Heights and has a seventeen year old daughter. Because I have spent most of my life in day care centres, I was particularly interested in his view about day care.

First, I talked to one of my favourite day care workers to find out what problems day care centres face. She said salaries are a real problem. The Mayor agreed that the salaries are way too low. Every year the City of Toronto donates money to day care centres to raise the salaries of day care workers.

Even though the City is doing a lot to improve day care, the Mayor feels that Queen's Park needs to spend more on day care. The Mayor thinks day care is a good idea as long as it is good quality. As someone who spent many of her years in day care, I know they give good care, and I think they deserve better salaries.



Guide to Ministry of Community and Social Service Programs. Outlines assistance programs provided. For a free copy, contact:

Communications Branch
Ministry of Community and Social Services,
Room M1-51,
Macdonald Block,
Queen's Park,
Toronto,
Ontario, M7A 1E9
(416) 965-7825

OCBDC Brief on Pay Equity Bill 154 to the Standing Committee on the Administration of Justice.
Available from OCBDC. \$3.00

Report on Improving Social Services for Children

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has produced this collection of 60 studies from a research program designed to improve the quality of services to children.

Available for \$5 from:

Publications Services Section
880 Bay Street, Toronto, Ont.
M7A 1N8
(416)965-6015
Toll Free: 1-800-268-7540

New Video: The Price of Profit

An in-depth look at the issue of whether Canada needs a non-profit or a commercial child care system

For more information, please contact the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care (416-532-4031)



Leeds-Grenville

The newly-opened Brockville Psychiatric Hospital Day Care Centre can now offer subsidies to parents of the infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers now attending or applying to attend the centre.

The YM-YWCA Day Care Centre also had their subsidy contract increased.

This contract is with the City of Brockville and applies only to Brockville residents. Hopefully, other township councils will follow suit so that all residents of Leeds-Grenville can benefit.

Day Care Day Planned:

The Leeds-Grenville Day Care Association is planning a "Day Care Day" for late April. This will be public education at the "roots" of grass roots education. The focus will be on the simultaneous open houses to be held at all of the day care centres, nursery schools and playgroups in the area. We will be producing an information guide for parents on the various types of programs available.

A funding proposal is being developed with the assistance of the Children's Services Advisory Group, for the Area Office, Ministry of Community and Social Services. Indications are that the proposal will be approved. We will be asking the Ministry to cover publication and distribution costs for the "Guide to Day Care" book, advertising the open houses.

The Leeds-Grenville Day Care Association meets every two months and there appears to be a core "Steering Committee" forming which will meet more frequently.

Christine Peats

St. Catherines

Au Coin des Petits has recently opened up in St. Thomas Separate School, St. Catharines offering day care to 39 French-speaking families. There are an estimated 15,000 francophones in Niagara Region, 4000 or 5000 of them in St. Catharines. The day care centre operates from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and costs \$65 a week for full-time and \$40 per week for half days with a hot meal.

Windsor

The Windsor Coalition has just recently been given a shot in the arm by a visit from Carol Anne Sceviour of the Ontario Federation of Labour. Following her visit our members are eagerly planning our role in the upcoming forum on day care to take place in Windsor on April 13, 1987.

Another encouraging sign is a request from day care workers in Essex County wishing to join our local coalition. We have also been encouraged by the recruitment of new members working in "commercial" day care. Obviously these people are becoming disillusioned with the low pay and poor working conditions existing in the "commercial" system. It is agreed that the input from the "non-profit" and "commercial" workers will give us a broader view.

Hopefully, the recent interest shown by day care workers in our area will, once again, prove Windsor to be a strong local Coalition.

Gail Bereza

Elliott Lake

The Town of Elliott Lake is about to open a French language day care program for eight children. The French program shares the same facility as the English program, but it is run separately.

Brantford

The count is now \$125,000 down, \$475,000 to go for the Ohsweken Day-Care Centre. The proposed new 7,100 square foot facility is scheduled to be built next spring on a 1-1/2 acre lot on Bicentennial Trail. Staff at the Six Nations Day-Care Centre, the current facility in Iroquois Village Centre, started a campaign to make up the difference. "The need for the new centre is urgent," said day care supervisor LuAnn Hill-MacDonald. With 32 children, the service already surpasses its capacity of 30. And 49 children are waiting to enter the program. The new centre will accommodate 64 children. Four more teachers will be hired to handle the additional children. The service offers full and half-day programs to children ages 2 to 5, including those with handicapping conditions. A home day-care service for children aged three months to 10 years is also offered.

The problem is how will the day care centre raise the balance of the money. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada refuses to contribute additional money for the new centre. It has told the band it can use part of its capital fund from the federal government for the facility. But that capital fund has already been committed to housing. So much for the federal government's new-found commitment to day care.

Ottawa

The Ontario government has agreed to provide \$375,000 towards the construction of a new day care centre in southeast Ottawa - the first time in more than a decade provincial funding has been available for such a project.

But construction of the centre is still not a certainty. The federal and municipal governments, and the public will have to contribute the remaining \$525,000 towards the total estimated cost of \$900,000.

The new centre will be operated by the Queensboro Children's Centre. Director, Eleonore Benesch hopes the centre can be built in 1987 at the corner of Cahill Drive and Albion Road. It would have space for about 60 preschoolers including four with handicapping conditions.

Renfrew

Renfrew Council has also raised fees in the Renfrew Child Development Centre from \$12 per day to \$15. Council plans to increase fees every year until they reach the full per diem cost. It is not clear what will happen when the Province decides to cut off the transitional grant program. The Centre runs a full-day day care centre, a program for kindergarten children, a nursery school and a resource program. It also integrates children with special needs. It has 81 children enrolled and 60% of families are subsidized.

Metro Toronto

On December 9, 1986, Metro Toronto passed the Task Force's Report, the Report of the Metropolitan Toronto Day care Planning Task Force: Blueprint for Children's Services: Realistic Responses to the Need. The report estimates that there are 90,000 children in Metro whose parents would choose licensed day care if it was available and affordable. Metro's goal is to double the number of licensed day care spaces and provide day care subsidies to twice as many children within the next five years.

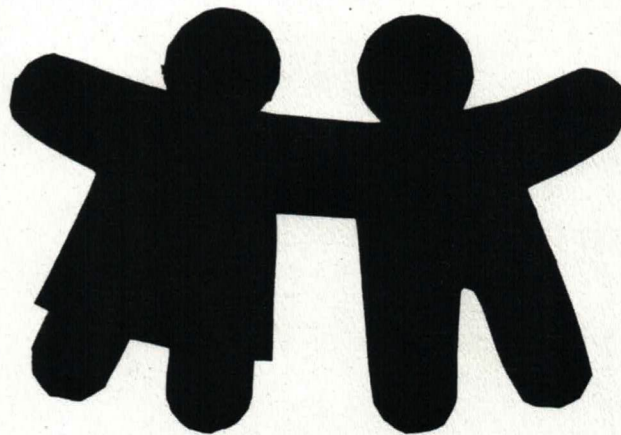
The policy also provides for Metro to play a leading role in promoting higher quality day care, better salaries and lower fees. In an interview with the Toronto Star, Metro Councillor Joanne Campbell, Task Force Chairperson said: "Day care has moved away from being seen as a welfare program. It is an economic issue, not just a women's issue and a developmental service rather than just a babysitting program."

The report also recognizes that the costs of child care services are a significant barrier to accessibility. "Today more than 55 per cent of all licensed day care services are being purchased with the aid of subsidies", the report points out. Shortages of day care were noted for very young infants, toddlers and school-age children.

The Report advocates introducing a grant program similar to the City of Toronto's "salary grant" program which gives money to non-profit day care centres to improve workers' salaries. It also

recommended providing money to help new centres start up and encourage improvements in existing programs.

It is clear, however, that the report is just what it is entitled: A Blueprint for Children's Services. It does not make specific recommendations for immediate action, nor does it recommend dollar figures. The Metro budget is currently being prepared and if we want to see some of these changes this year, it will be imperative for day care centres to begin to lobby their local councillors for a financial commitment to the expansion of these services and the introduction of a salary grant.



Calendar

March 25, 1987

Public Meeting and Screening of new
Video: **Child Care: The Price of
Profit.**

7:30 p.m. Ontario Institute for
Studies in Education, 252 Bloor
Street West, Toronto.

For information:

Call Metro Coalition Day Care
Coalition at (416) 532-4031

May 6-8, 1987

Human Factors in Child Care.
National Guelph Conference on Child
Care.

For information:

Division of Continuing Education
Room 160, Johnston Hall
University of Guelph
Guelph, Ontario
N1G 2W1

May 8,9,10, 1987.

National Action Committee on the
Status of Women, Annual General
Meeting, Ottawa.

For more information:

National Action Committee on the
Status of Women
344 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 922-3246

June 10-13, 1987

"Growing Together", Windsor,
Ontario. 36th Annual AECEO
Conference

For information:

Association for Early Childhood
Education, Ontario
266 Adelaide Street West, Ste. 3
Toronto, Ont.

M6H 1X6
(406) 598-1205



The Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care Newsletter

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

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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

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Enclosed please find a donation to support the Coalition, of:
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Mail to: Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care, 555 Bloor St. West, 2nd floor, Toronto, Ont.
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