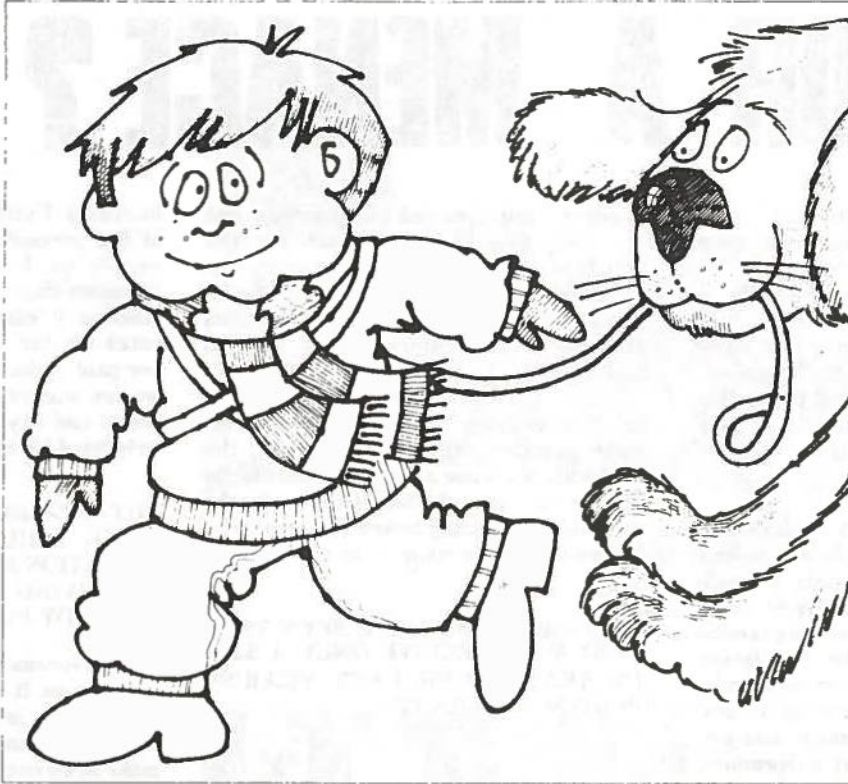


SPRING '76

Good Daycare



Loris Lesynski

All levels of government seem to have been devising ways to cut costs. We've been told that our national goal is now the "affordable society" and that the wages of riotous living is economic collapse. I've listened carefully to the moans about the high cost of day care and, being as inflation conscious as the next person, I've tried hard to think of ways of providing a cheaper day care model.

I really hadn't had much success until we visited friends on a farm one recent week-end. On Saturday afternoon, it came time for our two-year-olds to play outside. As we gently pushed the snow-suited boys out the door, I asked, "Shouldn't an adult go out?". "Oh, don't worry," my friend, Pat, blithely assured me, "Angus will watch them". And Angus did.

Angus, I should explain, is a large black dog, known as a Bouvier of Flanders. He's strong, terrifically alert, gentle with children and will go out in just about any weather.

As I watched the boys eating snow under Angus' steady gaze, a sudden thought struck me. "Of course," I exclaimed, "the

very thing we've been looking for". My mind raced as the plan became more concrete. "Why not," I thought excitedly, "why not have Bouviers provide our very much needed day care service?" "A Bouvier on every block," I thought. That's our slogan."

The first major advantage is, of course, cost. At \$300.00 per dog, you're providing roughly 1,100 Bouviers for the same price as the municipal day care centre. If each Bouvier watches 20 children, we have facilities for 22,000 kids for the same amount of money that we now spend on 100. All we need is a central spot in each neighbourhood where kids and dogs can gather. Actually, as Bouviers were used to herd cattle, we might even be able to arrange a pick-up and delivery service.

Unfortunately, Bouviers do not know how to cook, so bag lunches will be the order of the day. Luckily, kids like a picnic in any weather.

Operating costs? Fantastic. Pat told me that they spend \$1.00 a week for Angus' food. Where else could you get day care staff that exist on Kibble and table scraps? Bouviers are generally contented and

unlikely to agitate for higher wages or enter into an embarrassing collective bargaining process. There are no costly fringe benefits or frills like staff rooms.

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities will be pleased. They're looking for savings at the Community College level and, "a Bouvier on every block" would mean that they could dispense with all those Early Childhood Education courses.

The Anti-Inflation Board will be ecstatic. We're actually cutting costs and increasing service -- a seemingly impossible task. Do you suppose they're giving out awards?

These are only the advantages I've thought of in the first flush of discovery. I'm perfectly happy to turn the idea over to those wonderful social planners at Queen's Park. Remember? They're the folks who brought us the proposals to change the Day Nurseries' Act back in July of '74. I feel confident that they will be able to come up with advantages that I haven't even dreamed of. Just think, "a Bouvier on every block". Universal day care at last.

Daycare Reform Action Alliance 15 Birch Avenue, Toronto 925-3137

CUTBACKS: A THREAT, OR A MENACE?

STOP INFLATION is currently the rallying cry of every level of government and is almost unanimously supported. The day care community like everyone else is hard pressed to deal with an inflation rate of more than 10%. Budgets drawn up in January are short well before December, food and rent prices soar and pay raises have to exceed the inflation rate or they aren't raises. So the response is "Good - but how?"

The Ontario government has chosen to make its contribution to inflation control through cut-backs in government expenditures. They began this process in June, 1975 by setting up a committee to examine programs; it produced the Henderson Report in November whose recommendations included cutting government expenditures, encouraging individuals and private institutions to take over government functions, and more stringent use of means tests. Day care, interestingly, should "be recognized as part of the educational program of the province and be made available at reasonable cost to working parents who may wish to avail themselves of it; and the province's portion of the funding be provided through a reallocation of priorities within the education system".

THE DAYCARE COMMUNITY LIKE EVERYONE ELSE IS HARD PRESSED TO DEAL WITH AN INFLATION RATE OF MORE THAN 10%.

Now implementation is occurring. Municipalities have been told they will receive only a 5.5% increase over last year's provincial grants. With inflation at a much higher rate, this means that actual cuts in services will have to be made. The whole procedure of limiting costs is probably illegal since the province is committed under existing legislation to paying a certain percentage of municipal expenses in given programmes as Metro Toronto Chairman Paul Godfrey has pointed out. It may be that municipalities could incur the

expenses and then bill the province and sue to collect. One way out for the province would be tightening up on regulations and the Minister of Social Services James Taylor has already stated that the Form 7 means test will be tightened up.

In Toronto many local politicians have, under pressure, tried to argue against the cutbacks, but some are already moving to implement them. In fact some cutbacks were initiated locally before the provincial government even made its announcement.

MUNICIPALITIES HAVE BEEN TOLD THEY WILL RECEIVE ONLY A 5.5% INCREASE OVER LAST YEAR'S PROVINCIAL GRANTS.

Increases in day care budgets have been limited and ceilings have been placed on the number of subsidized places in each centre.

The implications for parents and day care workers are disastrous. Restrictions on subsidized places mean that parents will put children in cheaper and inferior care or will finance care out of money needed for food and rent. Tightening up the Form 7 (already unrealistic about real costs) will produce the same results. Day care workers will have even more difficulty than in the past in prying decent wages out of inadequate budgets.

Meanwhile the federal government is moving on a different tack, that of income and price controls. A close scrutiny of the rulings of the Anti-Inflation Board reveals that it is much more effective at controlling wages than prices. The Globe and Mail pointed out in an editorial that the AIB ruling that Loblaw's could change the name of a store to Ziggy's and sharply raise prices because it was part of its ongoing market policy was grossly unfair. Unions have ongoing policies of raising the wages of their members but that has not stopped the AIB from blocking those

increases. Furthermore the basic concept of flat percentage increases means that people on lower wages get smaller increases than people on higher wages. In addition it eliminates any possibility of catch-up for workers in particularly low-paid jobs. This means that both women workers (the majority of day care users) and day care workers are particularly hard-hit by the controls.

BUT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT HAVE CHOSEN TO CONTROL INFLATION BY FURTHER LOWERING THE LIVING STANDARDS OF THOSE ALREADY POOR.

The government could make its cuts in other areas. It could solve deficit financing problems by increasing taxation on richer individuals and corporations. It could make price controls more effective. But all levels of government have chosen to control inflation by further lowering the living standards of those already poor. The human price will be badly cared for children, malnutrition, substandard housing, harassed parents, some driven back on welfare and underpaid and resentful day care workers. The opposition of the day care community and other social service groups is covered elsewhere in this newsletter. But make no mistake about it - you have to get involved because we're fighting for our lives.

BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT - YOU HAVE TO GET INVOLVED BECAUSE WE'RE FIGHTING FOR OUR LIVES.

FILM AVAILABLE

The DCRAA will have a film on daycare available around the middle of May. The film deals with many levels from "how to" to an analysis of funding on the provincial level. It looks to be a great film. If you are interested, contact the Alliance or the National Film Board.

IS THERE AN ECONOMIC CASE FOR PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN HIGH SUBSIDY DAY CARE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WELFARE?

The Social Planning Council's latest research bulletin examines the cost to governments of paying for day care as opposed to welfare. Costs and savings are considered for both the short-term and long-term.

The short-term, one year analysis compares the costs of providing day care with the cost of providing welfare for two typical single-parent families in 1976. This analysis reveals considerable short-run cost savings for 1976, averaging \$1,008 for each family, or \$807 per year for each child provided with high-subsidy day care as an alternative to welfare.

The long-term analysis covers a 17-year period and examines costs and savings when day care is provided instead of welfare, for single-parent families who would otherwise have long-term dependence on welfare. This analysis suggests that, over the longer term, providing subsidized day care saves the taxpayer approximately \$52,000 for a mother with one child and \$39,000 for a mother with two children.

Thus, both the short-term and long-term analyses show that the public saves money when day care is provided as an alternative to welfare.

The Council also notes that enabling a sole-support parent to work reinforces the work ethic, reduces welfare rolls and helps break inter-generational dependency on welfare. By being able to command a higher income than welfare, single-parent families are more effectively removed from marginal poverty.

(The bulletin is available from the Social Planning Council, 185 Bloor Street East, Toronto M4W 3J3; Free)

INTERESTED IN PROVINCIAL STRATEGY AROUND DAYCARE?

Come to a meeting 27 March 1976 in Guelph. For more information and directions, contact Pam Archibald. Ph. 519-824-8135. Address: 55-201 Silver Creek Parkway, Guelph.



LET THEM PLAY

Cognitive theories of development abound these days and if one interprets cognitive broadly enough, many of these theories can be exciting and fun to use with children. The giant of these cognitive theorists, Jean Piaget, says that only as a child's thinking changes will her/his actions and behaviour change. Thus at different developmental stages children will play in different ways.

Piaget's 'sensory-motor child' manipulates objects in physical and sensory ways, i.e. mouthing, listening, touching. The whole child seems to react to all stimuli, i.e. body tense and alert while the child listens or watches, body kicking and moving to express delight. This child loves water, mud, movement, mirrors, and sound.

Many of these needs for tactile and sensory stimulation remain as the child ages, but there is also a great desire for and use of fantasy both to act out difficult situations, to help explore new concepts and to fit existing experiences into

comprehensible structure for her/himself.

Again as the child grows older she/he enjoys more rule-bound ritualistic play and needs this to understand the adult world's rules and regulations as well as needing the repetition and security which repetition of the game properly played provides.

Yes, let's set up activities for children but let them decide how the matter will be used and for how long. It's important to label for children and to discuss with them but it's equally important to provide them with some privacy to play 'talk' alone and to encourage lots of peer play.

The importance of play has been undermined in recent child development literature. What with trying to accelerate language development, conservation-awareness, classification, etc. many have forgotten that children learn through doing and acting on their environment themselves and that most acceleration is simply make work for the staff and rote learning for the child.

committee against daycare cutbacks

On Wednesday, November 26, 1975 the Department of Social Services of Metropolitan Toronto announced to the Metro Day Care Study Group that the number of subsidized children in Metro Toronto would be allowed to increase by a fixed percentage in 1976. Ten per cent would be absorbed by the four municipal centres that are expected to open in the next year, and some family day care. Existing centres with purchase of service contracts (contracts with Metro Toronto to provide care for subsidized children) would be able to increase their number of subsidized places by ten per cent.

In addition, subsidy rates for individual centres would be allowed to rise by ten per cent. This ceiling would make the financial existence of day care programs even more tenuous.

Purchase of service contracts for 21 new centres were "in limbo". Many of these centres had been in the planning stages for over a year and would not be able to open if they could not take subsidized children. Nine other centres had been open a very few months and were allowed ten subsidized places each.

A large group met on December 1 including parents, staff members and directors of day care centres, students and teachers of E.C.E. courses, groups who had been working to set up specific centres and members of the D.C.R.A.A. This group -- which decided to call itself the Committee Against Day Care Cutbacks, felt that an immediate response was necessary to let Metro know the opposition to the budget restrictions.

THIS GROUP FELT THAT AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE WAS NECESSARY TO LET METRO KNOW THE OPPOSITION TO THE BUDGET RESTRICTIONS.

A policy statement was drawn up. Specifically the Committee takes the following position.

Existing non-Metro day care centres should be allowed to increase the number of subsidized children without restriction because parents of these children are most in need of day care.

Emerging non-Metro day care centres, already in the process of setting up, should be allowed to enter into purchase of service agreements. Without these contracts, new day care centres will find it difficult, if not impossible to open, a great deal of community effort will be wasted, and most impor-

tantly, day care service for hundreds of children will be lost.

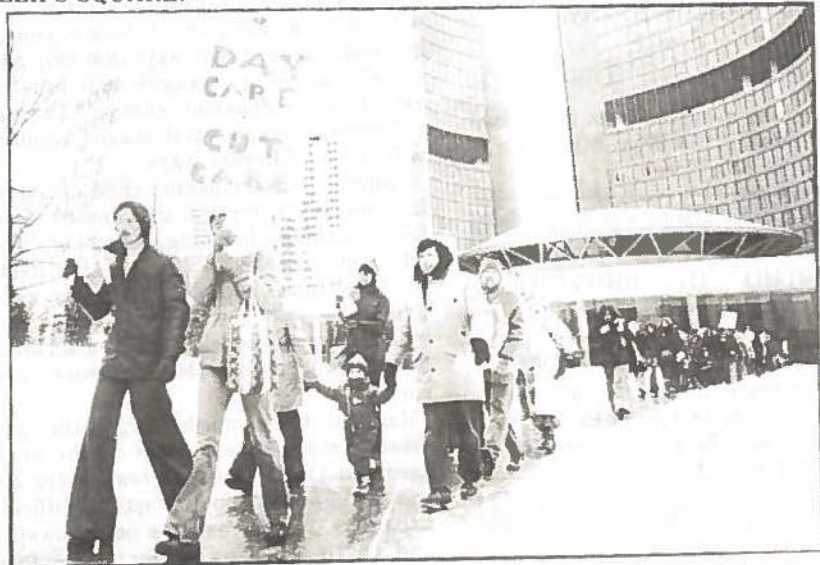
The expansion of Metro Day Care Centres according to the five-year plan is inadequate and any more away from this position is unacceptable.

The ten per cent ceiling on 1976 operating budgets should be removed. This arbitrary action does not take into account the varying financial problems facing existing day care centres. It does, however, ensure that wages of day care workers will remain depressed in 1976.

Inasmuch as 80 per cent of Metro Social Services day care funding comes from the Ontario government, our opposition is directed at the Province as well as the City.

ON JANUARY 24, OVER 200 PEOPLE CAME TO A RALLY AT NATHAN PHILLIPS SQUARE.

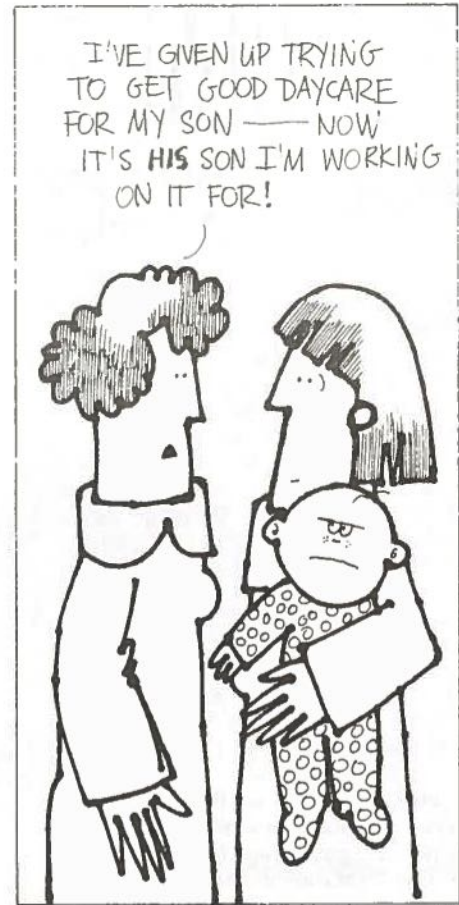
Since November 26, a number of contradictory statements have been made by various members of Metro Social Services



The Globe and Mail, Toronto.



Loris Lesynski



Loris Lesynski

OUR OPPOSITION IS DIRECTED AT THE PROVINCE AS WELL AS THE CITY.

Committee. It has become clear that cutbacks by the province are on the agenda across the social services field. The province finally decided that no money will be approved for building new day care centres after the end of the fiscal year, March 31, and that existing subsidized day care centres will be required to hold their operating budget increases down to 5.5%.

It is a crushing blow for subsidized centres in Metro. The cost-of-living increase will more than eat up the permitted 5.5 per cent increases. Metro Social Services Department has already sent letters to all subsidized centres telling them to freeze the number of subsidized children attending.

The Committee first organized itself with a co-ordinator for each district whose responsibility is to inform all day care centres and interested people of on-going events.

The co-ordinators then assembled and distributed to all Toronto day care centres information including area maps along with names of Metro Council members and a list of M.P.P.'s. This facilitated communication by letter from parents, staff and interested community people to their elected representatives in order to protest the metro and provincial cutbacks.

Deputations have appeared at almost every meeting of the Social Services and Housing Committee and the Metro Budget Sub-Committee. Our presence has been felt at many meetings of Metro Council.

The Committee prepared a delegation to meet with D'arcy McKeough when he was scheduled to meet with Metro politicians January 16. Mr. McKeough cancelled the meeting because of the teachers' strike, but the C.A.D.C.C. joined with many other groups gathered there to form a coalition of social service areas to protest provincial cutbacks. The Day Care Reform Action Alliance is a participating member of this coalition.

A rally attended by 200 men, women and children in sub-zero weather was held on January 24 in Nathan Phillips Square. Ross MacLellan, Dan Heap, Margaret Campbell, and Elody Scholz spoke about the cutbacks, encouraging continuation of protests and urging that the fight be carried to the provincial level.

Our efforts have had some effect. The Social Service Department has suffered relatively few cuts in service and day care is well-off compared to other social service areas although the picture is still bleak. Here is the proposed Metro budget

Five out of the six proposed municipal day care centres will be scrapped.

- ☐ Per diem rates will be allowed to rise ten per cent in 1976. The twenty one new centres now without purchase of service contracts will receive them. However, we do not know how many subsidized children each centre will be allowed to enroll.
- ☐ A new program for school-age day care has been curtailed. Start-up grants of \$1,000 are no longer available.
- ☐ Until further notice, the freeze on the number of subsidized children continues in centres that now have purchase of service contracts.

THE FIGHT IS A CRUCIAL ONE.

Although we're better off than we were two months ago, daycare has been dealt a severe blow. Because of capital cuts on the provincial level and limits on the numbers of subsidized children, expansion will be almost non-existent in the 1976-77 period unless we can convince the province to change its stand on budget guidelines. The fight is a crucial one.

FORM 7

Summary: Daycare Subsidization Policies in Peel: a Preliminary Report

The preliminary report was compiled as the Peel Regional Council was planning to review and amend some of its current subsidization policies during the Fall of 1975. The final report will be prepared in the Spring of 1976. The preliminary report is divided into two parts. Part I is a comparison of policies in four regional municipalities and the 1975 report of the Standards Committee of the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. Part II deals with a set of subsidization issues on which there is little policy agreement among municipalities.

The prime focus is on the Ontario Day Nurseries Action, Form 7 -- Determination of Available Income. To date, the use of this form has been suggested to municipalities. As well, the Ontario Government has forwarded a set of "suggested" guidelines for implementation. This form constitutes the means test used for determining daycare subsidization and it is within this that municipalities have set specific policies around allowable earnings and expenditures for applicants.

Most of the concern regarding Form 7 relates to the section -- Monthly Expenditures. Many of the items met with common policy agreement among municipalities. The table below reveals those items where variations existed.

Item	Toronto GWA rates	Waterloo GWA rates	Hamilton GWA rates	Niagra GWA rates	OMSSA GWA rates
Item 10 Food, clothing					
Item 18 Rent	\$200/mo. ceiling \$ 25 per bedroom	\$200	actual	actual	actual
Item 19 Mortgage	\$300 (ceiling)	\$200 (ceiling)	actual	actual	actual
Item 20 Property taxes	actual	actual	actual	actual	actual
Item 21 Debt payment	\$50/mo	\$100/mo	\$150/mo	\$100/mo	\$100/mo
Item 22 Travel/Transportation	TTC/mileage	\$40	\$25.30	actual	reasonable
Item 28 Other	specified items	specified	specified items	specified items	specified items

The following recommendations were made in the report:

- Item 10 -- There should be clarification as to how the amount for food and clothing is assessed by the Ontario Government.
- Item 18 -- The actual rent should be allowed with no ceiling.
- Item 19 -- The actual mortgage should be allowed with no ceiling.
- Item 20 -- The actual property taxes should be allowed.
- Item 21 -- The minimum allowed should be \$200.00 with municipal discretion to exceed this if necessary.
- Item 22 -- Mileage should be allowed at 17 cents per mile for both parents.
- Item 28 -- This item should include actual costs of babysitting; life and fire insurance; special expenses such as leg braces, tuition fees, books, auto insurance, coin laundry costs and other items as deemed necessary by the Commissioner of Social Services.

Aside from the use of Form 7, another tool for subsidization is the lease upon which the cost per child per day is calculated. At present, the "per diem" charge is often below the actual cost of operation; thus all people are subsidized to some extent.

There are two polar positions on this question. First of all, the per diem and the actual cost could be made to coincide and

subsidy tied to the means test. The alternative is free universal daycare with payment related to income tax into general government revenues.

There are two problems associated with changing per diem rates to reflect actual costs. If done over a short period of time and in the absence of an equitable and realistic means test, there could be considerable disruption and hardship. Secondly, municipal daycare centres probably have a strong influence on the fees of private sector centres and a raising of fees in one sector may lead to raises in the other.

Thus the key points of the report are

- policy relating to the Form 7 be changed to improve the equity between municipalities.
- the per diem rate not be changed until the municipality thoroughly investigates the consequences of such a change.
- the means test, if used, should be changed to reflect a "realistic" picture of actual expenditures of families within municipalities.

ontario regional daycare conferences

Approximately 900 people participated in the four two-day regional day care conferences sponsored by the Ontario Welfare Council in Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Hamilton and Windsor in November.

In addition to providing opportunities for parents, workers, government representatives and concerned citizens to exchange valuable information about the "hows" of succeeding in developing and improving the services of community day care programs, these conferences provided a wealth of information about the difficulties commonly experienced by people needing day care and day care workers throughout the province. Strongly felt concerns which were very much in evidence at the conferences focused on:

□ the need to achieve a reversal in community attitudes and public policies which regard day care as second best to home care and as a service which is primarily needed by the weak, the poor or the handicapped (who must participate in frequently demeaning administrative procedures to prove the validity of their needs);

frustration with the extent to which day care in comparison with other services is expected to do the job with shoestring resources
the need for greater recognition by all levels of government of the fact that quality supervised day care is economically inaccessible to the majority of Ontario families needing day care - not only to the very poor;

the absence of commitment by all levels of government to gathering data and developing other planning measures which indicate a serious intent to meet the needs of young children with a level of competence parallel to planning measures for the development of highways, transportation systems, etc.;

□ the difficulties experienced by day care workers and parents

who want to become seriously involved in government planning processes;

□ the problems and excessive tenuousness involved in community efforts to develop and ensure the surviving of new neighborhood day care programs and the need for greater recognition by government of the financial and organizational assistance needs of fledgling programs;

□ the urgent need to develop strong local and provincial organizations committed to the goals of ensuring effective access to quality day care and more adequate recognition of day care workers in Ontario.

Basic funding for these first regional day care conferences was provided to the Ontario Welfare Council by the Department of National Health and Welfare -- International Women's Year Grants Program, and the Department of the Secretary of State. The success of individual conferences reflects the dedication and hard work of the members of each regional planning committee, the invaluable assistance provided freely by the staff of Social Planning Councils and the fact that Community Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology provided free facilities in each of the host communities.

It is most important that the commitment and determination which was very evident in all four conferences not be weakened especially at this time when planned restraints in government spending threatens to seriously erode existing community day care programs throughout the province.



This newsletter was written and edited by Pat Schultz, Julie Mathien, Heather Richardson, Susan Muckenfuss, Ted Harvey, Sandy Stienecker, David Miller, Elizabeth Burrows, Cathy Gallagher, Marlene Haywood and Evelyn McKee.

We need money! Therefore we decided on a subscription rate of \$5. per year (4 issues). This would go to cover the cost of publication as well as mailing of minutes of meetings. We would greatly appreciate your support and subscription.

It was produced by the Daycare Reform Action Alliance.

If you would like copies of this issue, or of our last issue, please contact the Alliance at 15 Birch Ave., Toronto, or at P.O. Box 571, Station P, Toronto.

coalition against cutbacks

Toronto, 16 January, 1976, Darcy McKeough is to meet with the Toronto Metro Council to explain the Ontario budget restrictions on social service spending. Many groups -- day care, senior citizens, disabled, TTC fare increase, etc. -- plan to be in the audience to express their concern about the effects of these restrictions.

But Darcy McKeough doesn't show up! The concerned groups, angry at having no opportunity to effect the decisions of their government, decide to form the Coalition Against Cutbacks. The Coalition is formed of groups opposing the restrictions put on social service spending by the Ontario budget. These restrictions actually represent cutbacks as the rate of inflation in the last year often exceeds the proposed increase in spending from the 1975 budget. The effects on day care are among the first to be implemented. The Day Care Reform Action Alliance has joined the

Coalition. The government often tries to put pressure groups in the position of sharing smaller and smaller slices of the pie -- squabbling among themselves rather than demanding of the government adequate money to cover social service needs. The Coalition is an important formation as only by all the "special interest" groups fighting together to force more money being put into social services is there any chance of success.

The Coalition Against Cutbacks is organized:

"To inform the public about these (government) proposals, to arouse public opinion in opposition to them, to challenge the legality of these measures, to document the injustices that result from them, to force the Ontario government to acknowledge the disastrous impact of these policies, to fight against them until they are reversed, and to propose alternative principles, based on social

justice, democratic process and human need, for social services and for solving the province's revenue problems."

Several union locals, as well as the Ontario Federation of Labour, have become involved in the Coalition. There is a growing understanding that the cutbacks in social services spending and wage controls both hit the working people -- especially women -- the hardest. The Coalition has planned a large public meeting for 11 March 1976 at Convocation Hall at the University of Toronto. They also are calling for a day of protest for 3 April 1976. There will be a rally and march to end at Queen's Park. We must stop the cutbacks now. We feel we can if we are organized on a province-wide basis, involving all those affected by the cutbacks and the wage controls. If you are interested, contact the Coalition Against Cutbacks, 15 Birch Ave., Toronto, Ont.

Daycare Reform Action Alliance Name _____

15 Birch Ave., Toronto, Ontario. Address _____

Organization _____

Catch Up On Book Reviews

CHILD CARE IN CUBA by Margaret Randall. Women's Press, 280 Bloor Street #305, Toronto. \$0.25

The much celebrated author of "Cuban Women Now" has provided us with an interesting pamphlet on the progressive day care system in Cuba. Randall's own children were educated for a time in Cuba and this is a personal-political analysis of a system where ideology is put into practice. Non-schizoid -- very good.

FREE DELIVERY by Cheryl Anderson. Press Gang 1975 - Free Childbirth Education Centre, 531 Glen Drive, Vancouver B.C. \$1.50

Sound guide to person-centred lay child birthing. Instruction in all areas of

pre-natal delivery and post natal care for mother and child. The best of all is the pictorial guide to liberated kneeling position childbirth -- warm and wonderfully inspiring pictures. A must for those brave enough not to involve any medical people in childbirth.

THE DAY CARE BOOK by Vickie Breitbart et al. Alfred A. Knopf, 1975. N.Y. (The Why, What and How of Community Day Care) \$5.75

This is a well organized resource book on day care in the U.S. It includes thorough political analysis of the demand for day care; a how to set up community controlled day care section, as well as interesting articles on the history of U.S. day care, communal child rearing, sex

stereotyping and much more. The only drawback is that this book covers the American scene and there are important differences. It is nevertheless, a very useful and interesting book.

THE FUTURE OF MOTHERHOOD by Jessie Bernard. Penguin Books Inc. N.Y. Baltimore, 1974. (\$3.25) (paperback)

A must for anyone working with children and their families. Bernard analyses marriage and motherhood from a social democratic and feminist perspective and decides child care must be a community responsibility, and "motherhood" as an institution is in need of drastic redefinition by both men and women. Interesting and topical.