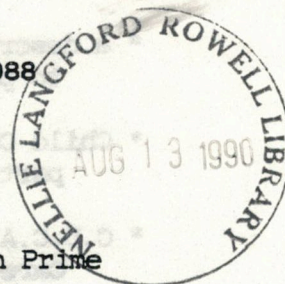




NEWS BULLETIN

OCTOBER 1988

FEDERAL ELECTIONS



Bill C-144, the Canada Child Care Act, died on the order paper when Prime Minister Brian Mulroney called the elections on October 1st. Child care advocates saw this as a major victory. Bill C-144 was fundamentally flawed and could not be used as the cost-sharing mechanism to develop an accessible, affordable, high quality, non-profit system of child care in each province and territory. In August, you were sent a copy of C.D.C.A.A.'s critique of the Bill.

Many groups across the country worked hard to make their opposition to the Bill known to the government. Some sent letters or briefs to the Legislative Committee and to the Senate Committee which studied the Bill. Others made presentations to these Committees. Presentations were made to M.P.'s in their ridings explaining the child care advocates' position. An open letter to the Prime Minister, signed by 14 national organizations, was released to the media and outlined our reasons for opposing the legislation. All this work contributed to making sure that the Bill was not passed before an election call.

Now, of course, it is incumbent upon us to make child care an election issue. We must educate the candidates and the general public so that

- * candidates supportive of our analysis of the issue are elected,
- * and so that the elected Members of Parliament will make the passage of a new Child Care Act a priority.

This election kit has been prepared to help you and your group actively work toward educating the candidates and the voters. It is important to act now because candidates are listening, child care is being discussed in the media and voters are trying to make sense of how each party's election promises will affect them on a day-to-day basis. The kit contains:

- * a blue leaflet that can be copied and handed out at meetings (copies of this leaflet are available at the C.D.C.A.A. office);
- * A New Federal Policy for the 1990's, a sheet outlining the principles that must underlie a good child care policy;
- * What You Can Do In This Election Campaign, a list of ideas for action, including some suggested questions for candidates;
- * the text of the Child Care Accord, prepared by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women;

- * a description of **Child Care Week**, in which you are encouraged to participate (a list of suggested events is included);
- * **Child Care: Proposals of the 3 Federal Parties**, a tabular summary of the parties' election platforms;
- * C.D.C.A.A.'s document **Bill C-144: A Critique of the Proposed Canada Child Care Act**;
- * a copy of the **Open Letter to the Prime Minister**, signed by 14 national groups;
- * **Child Care in Canada - Fact Sheet**, a series of statistics.

Feel free to use and reproduce any of the documents enclosed in this election kit. Extra copies of the kit are available in limited quantities. Extra copies of the blue leaflet are available in bulk.

Child care advocacy is entering into a new phase. We have achieved much in the last few years. It is a measure of our success that all three major federal political parties have child care as one of the major issues on their election platform. But until we actually have a new Child Care Act establishing a viable cost-sharing mechanism for capital grants, operating grants and subsidies to low and modest income families, we must continue our efforts on behalf of Canadian children.

The federal election campaign is an opportunity that we cannot afford to miss! Please be active. And do let us know of your lobbying efforts.

A NEW FEDERAL POLICY FOR THE 1990's

We do not want...

1. INCOME REDISTRIBUTION SCHEMES

Vouchers, child care deductions and other income redistribution schemes do not build a system of child care.

2. PROFIT-MAKING CHILD CARE

Profits in the commercial child care sector should not come from our financially starved child care services and inadequately paid child care staff.

3. LIMITED CHILD CARE OPTIONS

The present child care options are limited, piecemeal and fragmented. Without access to a choice of child care services, families experience problems.

4. UNREGULATED, INFORMAL CHILD CARE

Proposals for unlicensed, informal care as a cheaper solution to the child care crisis are unacceptable.

5. INEQUITABLE ACCESS TO CHILD CARE

Many families are barred from child care services because of accessibility and/or affordability problems.

6. USER-FEE CHILD CARE

Child care funded solely by user fees denies many children access to the services because their parents cannot afford the fee.

This is what we want...

1. A CHILD CARE SYSTEM

We need the creation of a Canadian child care system that will ensure enough quality spaces for all who need them, and at affordable cost to parents.

2. NON-PROFIT CHILD CARE

Good child care must be non-profit, and parent-controlled. Serious concerns have been raised about the quality of commercial child care.

3. COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

We need a well-planned, coordinated range of child care services that will offer parents real flexibility and choice.

4. LICENSED, REGULATED CARE

Children and their families need high quality child care. Provincially licensed, regulated and monitored child care services provide some assurance that minimum standards of quality are being met.

5. UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE CHILD CARE

All children must have the same right of access to child care. Only a universally-accessible system of child care will guarantee this.

6. PUBLICLY-SUPPORTED CHILD CARE

Just as Canadians have supported the use of public dollars to fund universal education and health plans, child care should receive direct public funding.

WHAT YOU CAN DO IN THIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Child care votes count! The future of child care in Canada rests RIGHT NOW upon getting the commitment of the parties to our position. Bill C-144 died on the eve of the election call. We don't want it re-introduced. We want to go back to the drawing board and bring forward BETTER legislation!

During election campaigns, candidates and leaders make promises based on political pressure and perceived public opinion. The more pressure you can bring, the more promises will be made. We can then have the chance to make them carry out their promises.

Here are some ideas for action:

THE CHILD CARE ACCORD: This is a position paper initiated by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) to ask candidates for a commitment. The Child Care component of the Accord (see text on separate sheet) has both a federal and local use. NAC will be distributing it to party leaders.

You can use it effectively with your local candidates to get a commitment from them on what they will do if elected. You can then contact the media (letters to the editor, contact friendly media, hold a news conference) to let them know which candidates endorsed the Child Care Accord.

POSTCARDS are quick and easy tools to show support for the issue and educate candidates and voters. Get the parents and staff at your day care centre to send postcards.

LETTER WRITING allows a two-way communication between writer and candidate. Outline your points clearly, make a demand and ask for a response.

TELEPHONE CALLS: Call your candidates' offices, make your points, make your demands and ask for a response. All telephone calls are logged and responded to. Organize other people to call on the same issue.

TALK SHOWS are another opportunity for you to state your point and get commitments from candidates. Check schedules, prepare questions and comments in advance. Ask other people to phone in.

DEVELOP A MEDIA CAMPAIGN: It's very important during an election to keep the profile on the child care issue.

- * Respond to all articles that touch on child care in the national and local press.
- * Write articles for newsletters, alternative or ethno-cultural papers and community networks.
- * If there aren't any articles on child care, send letters to the editor.
- * Make contact with media representatives. They may be able to do a feature story or arrange interviews.

ALL-CANDIDATES' MEETINGS provide a public forum for getting information about the candidates' position and for us to get across our position on child care.

- * Distribute a pamphlet clearly setting out the child care position. You could photocopy the pamphlet included in this election kit (entitled "Non-Profit Child Care for All Who Need It - Your Vote Counts!") or make up your own.
- * When asking questions from candidates, make sure you ask clear, specific questions and get clear specific answers. (See sample questions below)
- * Organize beforehand to have supporters in the crowd; sit close to a microphone and don't be afraid to follow-up on your questions if you don't get a clear answer.

HOSTING A CHILD CARE FORUM: Try to arrange a forum on the child care issue during the election campaign. Invite all candidates, day care centres, trade unions, women's organizations, teachers, social service agencies in your area. Try to get the media to cover the debate.

GET OUT THE VOTE DURING THE CAMPAIGN: Talk to friends, co-workers, neighbours, anyone who will listen! Ask them about their concerns. Encourage them to vote.

QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

Will you oppose the reintroduction of the Canada Child Care Act, Bill C-144 or similar legislation?

Will you introduce new legislation which will establish national objectives and guidelines for quality, availability and affordability? What would be the central features of this legislation?

Will you introduce new legislation which will offer capital and operating funds to non-profit child care programs only?

Will you introduce amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act to provide 17 weeks of maternity benefits for birthing mothers, and an additional 24 weeks of paid parental benefits to be taken by either or both parents including adoptive parents?

THE CHILD CARE ACCORD

(The text of this Accord was prepared by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. You are encouraged to ask the candidates in your area to endorse the text of the Accord by signing it. Please send us copies of any copies that you managed to have signed so that we can follow up with the elected endorser after the elections.)

"The government's proposed Canada Child Care Act is a backward step for child care in Canada. Instead of helping to expand services, the legislation introduces new ceilings on spending. The Act lacks national objectives and guidelines for quality, availability and affordability. With guidelines and a long-term vision, the Act will entrench the current fragmented child care situation across Canada.

The Act will make operating grants available to commercial child care for the first time, providing an incentive to the growth of commercial care which has been shown to provide poorer quality child care. The Act's use of tax credits in place of direct subsidy is a poor use of scarce resources; giving parents \$100 to \$200 does not help them find non-existent services or afford fees of \$5000 per year. Federal government dollars should be put directly into the development of services and programs.

COMMITMENTS.

I and my party will oppose the strategy contained in the Canada Child Care Act and introduce a new Child Care Act with national objectives which will:

- * establish long-term cost-sharing agreements with the provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive, high quality, accessible, non-profit, ethnoculturally-sensitive child care system;
- * provide more generous cost-sharing for less affluent provinces and territories;
- * dispense with schemes to fund child care programs through tax deductions and credits;
- * ensure capital and operating funds for child care programs serving Native Canadians; and
- * guarantee subsidized child care for low-income Canadians under the Canada Assistance Plan until the Plan has been replaced by a better funding mechanism.

I and my party will introduce amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act to provide 17 weeks of maternity benefits for birthing mothers and an additional 24 weeks of parental benefits to be taken by either or both parents, including adoptive parents."

Candidate's Comments:

Candidate's Signature: _____ Date: _____

CHILD CARE ACTION WEEK!

An important and effective method to ensure that both politicians and the media are talking about child care is to focus the activities that you and your group will organize in a specific time period. We have declared the week of October 31st to November 6th as CHILD CARE ACTION WEEK during this federal election campaign, and we need your help to make this a success!

Please give some thought to organizing some public event during this week. Events can be put together with a minimum of work and maximum effectiveness; remember that candidates want to be seen during the campaign and the media like photo opportunities.

TWO EVENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN SCHEDULED:

- * In Halifax, on October 31st, Halloween day, there will be a parade, the theme of which will be "No more TRICKS - it's time for fair TREATment".
- * In Toronto, on November 5th, a rally and parade from the parliament buildings to the Tory election headquarters is scheduled as part of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care annual conference.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EVENTS YOU CAN ORGANIZE:

- * Hold an open house in your day care centre. Invite the candidates and the media.
- * Organize a parade and/or rally and involve day care children, parents and supporters.
- * Plan a special children's event - art work day, visit of one day care centre to another, special field day, etc. Invite the candidates and the media.
- * Put up mall displays and distribute pamphlets, flyers and other literature on the importance of child care as an issue in this campaign. Feel free to use any of the material in this election kit.
- * Plan a recognition banquet for child care teachers and staff. Again, invite the media and candidates.

Call the C.D.C.A.A. office collect (613-594-3196) to let us know of any events planned in your area for CHILD CARE ACTION WEEK.

IT IS CRUCIAL TO TALK ABOUT CHILD CARE NOW WHEN THE PARTIES ARE LISTENING. ANY EVENT THAT YOU CAN ORGANIZE WILL HELP!

CHILD CARE: PROPOSALS OF THE 3 FEDERAL PARTIES

October 1988

	PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY (based on Bill C-144 and National Strategy)	LIBERAL PARTY (based on October 5th announcement)	NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (based on August announcement)
1. NEW SPACES	200,000 new spaces by 1995	400,000 new spaces by 1995	200,000 new spaces by 1992
2. COST TO FEDERAL GOV'T	\$4 billion by 1995	Unspecified.	\$2.4 billion by 1992
3. SUBSIDIZED SPACES	Can be cost-shared at a level determined by each province and territory.	Parent fees based on sliding fee scale; average income family would pay 50% of child care costs; low-income families would have free access. Financed by Child Care Tax Deduction to be converted to a credit and by cost-shared operating subsidies.	Child care provisions of C.A.P. would remain in place for phase-in of plan.
4. CAPITAL GRANTS	Amount unspecified - available for the creation of non-profit spaces; federal share is 75% of cost.	Amount unspecified - available through National Child Care Foundation for the development of non-profit community child care.	An average of \$850 (federal) per space for the development of non-profit spaces.
5. OPERATING GRANTS	Can be cost-shared at a level determined by each province and territory.	Cost-shared operating subsidies to services would in part ensure that parent fees are based on a sliding scale according to parents' ability to pay.	An average of \$1260 (federal) per space per year.
6. NATIONAL OBJECTIVES	No national objectives.	National Objectives will be set.	Legislation would contain national objectives to ensure accessible, affordable, flexible, quality care.
7. FOR-PROFIT CHILD CARE	Funding of operating grants and parent subsidies to for-profit sector left to prov./terr. discretion.	Funding of for-profit centres available; priority given to small, independent operators.	Federal child care funding would go to non-profit operations only (or commercial operations that agree to convert).

8. TAX MEASURES

Child Care Expense Deduction:
\$4000/year/child under 7 yrs
\$2000/year/child 7 to 14 yrs
Child Tax Credit increase:
\$200/year/child aged under 7

Convert the Child Care Expense Deduction into a credit.
Make the married credit both transferable and refundable.

New federal funds for child care would be used to create needed spaces, and not for tax measures.

9. PARENTAL LEAVE

The National Strategy on Child Care is silent on this issue.

Extend parental leave to 26 weeks.
Raise parental leave benefits.

Extend parental leave to 34 weeks and enrich parental benefits to 85% of salary by 1992.

Prepared by the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association, 323 Chapel St., Ottawa, Ontario, (613) 594-3196.

BILL C-144: A CRITIQUE OF THE PROPOSED CANADA CHILD CARE ACT

The Canada Child Care Act, introduced in the House of Commons in August, 1988, will be a major step backwards for children and families in Canada. The Child Care Act, Bill C-144, has been presented by the federal government as a way of providing choices for parents which will enhance their chances of accessing the child care they need and as a step towards social and economic equality for women.

It is neither of these things. Nor can it serve as a foundation for the development of a child care system. The Canada Child Care Act is a profoundly flawed scheme which is not in the best interests of children, families or women in Canada.

THE PROPOSED CANADA CHILD CARE ACT:

1. LACKS NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

National objectives and federal criteria for provincial participation in cost-sharing are essential features of other effective national social programs in Canada. Federal leadership in establishing criteria for the quality of and accessibility to child care services is critical. Without the inclusion of strong guiding principles setting out a long-term vision for a national child care system, Bill C-144 will entrench the current fragmented approach to child care in Canada.

2. LACKS VISION IN OFFERING CHILD CARE CHOICES

The Canada Child Care Act fails to recognize or support the diversity of needs for high quality child care across the country. Although provinces may choose to offer a variety of child care services (for example, regulated family day care, infant care, school-age care, care for ill children, nursery schools, programs to accommodate special needs children, extended hours care and parent-child centres) there is no assurance that these will become available to parents across the country nor is there sufficient funding to allow them to develop broadly. In addition, Bill C-144 omits recognition of the unique concerns of native Canadians regarding child care.

3. INTRODUCES NEW FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

The Canada Child Care Act introduces new ceilings on child care spending. Provinces which replace the open-ended cost-sharing of the Canada Assistance Plan with participation in the new Child Care Act will be moving from an open-ended mechanism to a limited fund. The \$4 billion fund currently allotted as the maximum federal contribution over the next seven years is not assured, as actual expenditures are subject to annual appropriation by Parliament. This is expected to accommodate all child care needs including operational grants and subsidies for low income families, now guaranteed to the provinces through CAP, and new capital spending.

4. ABANDONS TRADITIONAL FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOW INCOME CANADIANS

The Canada Child Care Act fails to guarantee that even current levels of financial assistance available under the Canada Assistance Plan to help low income families meet their child care needs will remain in place, let alone be enhanced.

5. RESTRICTS CHILD CARE GROWTH

The Canada Child Care Act envisions the creation of about 200,000 new child care spaces in Canada over the next seven years, leaving out at least 3 of 4 children who need non-parental supplementary care on a regular basis. Estimated natural growth under the current arrangements would create more than 300,000 new spaces by 1995.

In addition, Bill C-144 does not provide federal support of capital costs after 1995, curtailing continued development of needed child care.

6. ENTRENCHES POOR QUALITY CARE

The Canada Child Care Act undermines the development of high quality child care by extending federal funding to commercial child care services. New public funding to for-profit child care will lead to rapid growth, including expansion by large American chains with substantial venture capital and the ability to move quickly into new markets. There is good evidence that the quality of commercial care is poorer than the quality of child care in the non-profit sector in important areas like staff:child ratios, staff training, staff turnover, health and safety, and wages and working conditions for staff. Also, there is no opportunity for significant parental involvement in the program and the decision making in commercial centres.

Bill C-144 fails to ensure that provinces will support existing or new non-profit services with direct operating funds. Without direct operating funds, not only will high fees make child care inaccessible for families but salaries for child care staff will remain low. Services will continue to be plagued with existing financial problems and the high quality care children need will remain out of reach.

7. PROVIDES DISINCENTIVES TO "HAVE-NOT" PROVINCES

The Canada Child Care Act undermines the incentive for "have-not" provinces to significantly increase child care services due to rapid phasing-out of needed variable cost-sharing.

8. OFFERS LITTLE PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY FOR FUNDING OR SERVICES

The Canada Child Care Act provides only minimal provision for public accountability for public funds or for monitoring and enforcement of minimum provincial standards as well as moving away from accountability for service delivery by parents by entrenching the expansion of commercial child care.

9. OFFERS NO PARENTAL LEAVE PROVISIONS

The Canada Child Care Act is unaccompanied by any legislation dealing with enhanced maternity leave, parental leave, or family responsibility leave, all major aspects of a comprehensive national child care plan.

Finally, the federal government itself acknowledges the major weaknesses in The Canada Child Care Act by allowing individual provinces to opt out of the new program and continue instead to access the Canada Assistance Plan, clearly demonstrating that Bill C-144 can not act as the foundation for a child care system which will meet the needs of children, families and women across Canada.

Based on a brief by the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association
to the Legislative Committee on Bill C-144.

For copies of the brief, contact C.D.C.A.A., 323 Chapel St., Ottawa, K1N 7Z2 613-594-3196

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER

September 27, 1988

The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Prime Minister:

We are writing to you to express our opposition to the proposed Canada Child Care Act. Our organizations have had a long history of concern about children, women, and families. We have repeatedly registered alarm with your government's child care policy and have called upon you to either withdraw or substantially amend the proposed Canada Child Care Act.

We believe passage of this Bill would move child care in Canada backwards, not forwards. The legislation:

- * lacks national objectives needed to assure families in all provinces and territories of accessible, high quality child care services;
- * introduces new limitations to federal child care spending for low and modest income families and limits expansion over seven years to meet only 10% of Canada's child care needs;
- * sets a dangerous precedent for federal spending by encouraging commercial care which is known to be of poorer quality than non-profit care;

In 1986, hundreds of organizations and parents told a parliamentary committee established by your government about their child care problems. Their concerns and the solutions they offered are in no way reflected in Bill C-144.

Several weeks ago, a Legislative Committee studying your government's Bill allowed only two days of hearings, preventing a full public debate on the Bill. However, of the 34 groups appearing before the Committee, all opposed the child care Bill. Many of those who did not have a chance to appear will welcome Senate hearings in which to express their opinions. We believe that your government has shown blatant political opportunism in the passage of the child care Bill. After four years in power, your government is ramming through legislation which will move our fragile child care system backwards and which has elicited only public opposition.

On August 30, in a speech to the House of Commons, you said "Soon, Parliament will pass legislation establishing one of the most advanced child care systems in the world." We do not agree. We believe Bill C-144 would impede, rather than assist, working mothers in finding adequate child care and would not create a child care system of which Canadians could be proud. We urge you to withdraw or substantially amend Bill C-144 to truly reflect the child care needs of Canadian children and families.

Yours truly,

Canadian Association of Business and Professional Women's Clubs
Canadian Association of Social Workers
Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association
Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions
Canadian Federation of Students
Canadian Labour Congress
Canadian Teachers' Federation
Canadian Union of Public Employees
Inuit Women's Association
National Action Committee on the Status of Women
National Anti-Poverty Organization
National Association of Women and the Law
National Union of Provincial Government Employees
Public Service Alliance of Canada

CHILD CARE IN CANADA - FACT SHEET

MOTHERS IN THE LABOUR FORCE

An increasing number of mothers with young children are in the labour force and need child care services.

Labour force participation rate of women with children - 1976, 1980, 1985, 1986, 1987.					
Mothers with children:	1976	1980	1985	1986	1987
under age 3	31.7%	41.7%	53.9%	56.0%	57.0%
3 to 5	40.9%	50.1%	59.6%	61.6%	63.1%
6 to 15	50.5%	58.2%	66.1%	68.3%	70.5%

NUMBER OF SPACES IN CHILD CARE SERVICES

Licensed and regulated child care services meet only a small portion of the need.

- Number of children whose mothers work (1987): 3,033,562
- Number of spaces in child care centres: 216,685
- Number of spaces in licenced family child care homes: 26,860
- Total number of spaces: 243,555
- Percentage of children (with mothers in the labour force) served by child care services: 8%

COST OF CHILD CARE SERVICES

It is estimated that a child care space can cost between \$2,000 and \$8,000 a year, depending on the age of the child. The younger the child, the higher the cost.

WAGES OF CHILD CARE WORKERS

- Average salary (1984) for all of Canada: \$14,212.00
- Child care workers earn
 - . 30% less than the average industrial wage
 - . 50% less than a teacher at the elementary level
 - . 30% less than animal care workers on government farms

(Source: Sharing the Responsibility, Report of the Special Committee on Child Care, March 1987.

Status of Women Canada. Statistical Indicators, July 1986.

Statistics Canada, The Labour Force Table 61A, Publ. 71-001, December 1987

National Day Care Information Centre. Status of Day Care in Canada, 1987.

Patti Schomm-Moffat. The Bottom Line: Wages and Working Condition of Workers in the Formal Day Care Market, 1985.

Prepared by the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association
October 1988