

*Canada Child Care Act*

We know that in some provinces,—and without naming any, I am thinking for instance of the Atlantic region—is highly seasonal, particularly in fishing. Both parents work so many months, mostly in summer, at which time the children are left to themselves. We were even told in committee that children ten or twelve years old take care of their brothers and sisters because there are no child care services and a sitter at home is too expensive. I think child care services in the workplace would solve this problem.

As my colleague the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) indicated earlier, our party suggests that businessmen should be encouraged to set up daycare facilities in the workplace through tax rebates. One of my NPD friends was right when he said that the federal Government should definitely set the tone. Actually, an employee who had a baby last May called me to say: Listen, I cannot afford to pay \$7,000 a year for daycare services and I cannot get a space as an employee in the daycare facilities we have here. I suggest therefore that the federal Government should set up daycare facilities first in all the buildings on Parliament Hill, and then in all the federal buildings throughout Canada. I think this is a good suggestion that the government should consider implementing.

I should like to deal also with Motion 22 which I feel is one of the most important ones because it seeks to develop childcare spaces in after school setting to meet the needs of children between the ages of 6 and 14. Two weeks ago, the Prime Minister rose in the House to deal with daycare services. He insisted on the need to create programs to fight drug abuse and to protect our teenagers. One of the most effective preventive measures would be to develop after school settings to meet the needs of children between the ages of 6 and 14.

Mr. Speaker, we know that 57 per cent of all children throughout Canada are left by themselves. As recently as last week, some witnesses stated that they had received 12,000 phone calls for the city of Toronto alone. They call them “warn calls” for they have open lines which children who are by themselves can call to be reassured. There were even teachers who came to say: We teach our children how to lie. We teach them how to answer the phone when they are by themselves at home, because we know that there are grown-ups who get their kicks out of abusing these children, especially when they know that they are alone at home. They complained that they had to teach children to lie as a mean to protect them.

On the other hand, we know that we have to pay \$44,000 a year to take care of each and everyone of our young offenders. By developing childcare spaces in after school settings, we might save a lot of money and make solid and long term investments in the future. I heard the Minister refer earlier to such services as social services.

Child care is not just a social service. Child care should be considered part of education. And that is why we are very

concerned when we see the clause that services in any way connected with education will not be covered, because services provided to children of 6 to 14 cannot be considered social services. I think it is as important as education.

We know what percentage of teenagers commit suicide. I think that very often, if we dig a little deeper, if we do some research, we see that at some point, these children felt that there was no one to look after them—nobody cares!

And I think that it would be a good foundation for them and it would definitely show vision for Canada if the Government took care of our children and provided them with what they need so that later, they can do what is asked of them. We know that we have problems with our adolescents and youth. Many are homeless. But if we do some research into this, we find that these young people tell us that nobody cares. No one wanted to look after them! But if we did this as a society and not as a social service, I think that we would have a goal and later on, good citizens.

[English]

I would like to say that it might also help to remedy the perception of every child care group and parent in this country that the Government is just giving away the candy store with this Bill.

[Translation]

It is very important that something be done for children and in Quebec, let me emphasize this for the Minister, they are very concerned with this amendment whereby amounts intended mainly for educational services will be withdrawn, because we have 30,000 spaces for these children, and although we are told the Bill meets this demand, the Government of Quebec is very worried now that it will not have the money available.

So I urge the Minister to accept this amendment and also the amendment concerning childcare in the workplace. I think that if we want to have children and want to help the family, this is a most important piece of legislation and we must provide support services such as the two that we just mentioned.

[English]

**Ms. Mitchell:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could ask the indulgence of Members of the House to allow me to speak briefly.

When I spoke earlier, it was my understanding that you were calling for debate on Motion No. 18. At that time I did not realize that you were including Motion Nos. 21 and 22. If Members are agreeable, I would appreciate saying a few words on those two motions.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Is it agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Hon. Member for Vancouver East.