

tions. If a new parliamentary committee on child care is to play a useful role, it must start from those recommendations and get right down to working with the provinces to come up with a system that will be acceptable to all those who have jurisdiction in this area. Parents have been waiting a long time for it.

One of the studies for the Cook task force report on the task force on child care shows that Canada ranks number 22 out of 23 for paid maternity leave and parental leave of provisions for child care. I might point out that number 23 was the country of Greece under its previous Conservative Government. It has since improved considerably the provisions for parental leave. I suspect if these figures were redone, we would see that Canada is number 23 out of 23 countries. That is not acceptable. We have a very long way to go before we see that parents get support and that provision is made for parental leave and adequate child care.

The Canadian Child Care Advocacy Association is waiting. They are tired of the excuses and so are we. We need legislation, we need programs and we need the \$300 million as an immediate infusion into the existing system.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Gabrielle Bertrand (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to answer the Hon. Member's question about the Government's promises and commitment concerning child care.

It is clear that because of changing family needs, child care has become one of the major items on the social agenda. However, a number of questions have yet to be answered about how best to respond to the pressing need for day care services.

That is why, as promised in the Throne Speech, the Government decided to set up a parliamentary task force that will be responsible for defining Canada's future policy in this area.

● (1825)

The task force will play a major role in developing Government policy on child care by inviting the public to participate

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and by preparing feasible recommendations for future alternatives.

The parliamentary task force will provide a forum for useful and constructive public debate on questions and concerns that are essential to an understanding of our commitment as a society in this respect. To help reach a consensus, we have asked that the public's attention be focussed on child care within the general context of the changing needs of the family. By considering family needs from this perspective, we can try to understand how Canadians perceive the need for providing day care services for all children, not just the children of working parents.

We have also asked that the work of the task force focus on the respective roles of parents, employers, persons in charge of day care services and other parties, in order to determine what role Governments should play and the appropriate fundamental measures they should take.

To fulfil its mandate, the parliamentary task force would have to go beyond philosophical discussion and seek practical solutions to the problem of providing child care. It should remember it is the provinces' responsibility to provide day care services, and it will have to consider the financial capabilities and constraints of all public authorities concerned.

If we let the members of the parliamentary task force have a frank and open approach to the task they have undertaken, I am convinced that the result will be a broad range of valid options for meeting the commitment of Canadians to providing child care. I believe that the discussions and conclusions of the task force will be of vital importance to the Government and its commitment to establishing a Canadian child care policy that will respond to the needs of all Canadians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 3(1).

The House adjourned at 6.27 p.m.