

*The Budget*

working poor, would go a long way toward rectifying the problems.

The other area that I am concerned about is day care and the Canada Assistance Plan program for day care. Our committee had recommended that the 5 per cent limit on the Canada Assistance Plan, which applies in the three provinces that currently do not receive equalization, be lifted for the subsidized day care program alone. This was not done by the minister and I am disappointed about that. He felt that he did not have sufficient money. I do not think it is a big ticket item at the present time. Currently, we spend \$275 million on subsidized day care. If you lifted the limit I do not think that too many provinces would be able to dramatically increase that at the present time, although of course provinces like Ontario would get a recovery because of the fact that they are now picking up an awfully large amount under the Canada Assistance Plan.

I think in the long term the program would develop slowly to increase the number of subsidized day care spaces. Having worked on this issue since 1972 in Toronto, it takes time to get day care centres built, it takes time to train workers. So it would be a gradual increase.

That program is geared to income. It helps the very needy and it helps people to work. I think very strongly that we should be expanding that program and assisting the provinces, because it is a provincially initiated program, to develop it. We also recommended various measures which could encourage business, schools and churches to take an interest in the day care issue and to help provide space and lower operating costs so that the cost of day care could be affordable to a lot of people.

In my community every single school has a day care centre and the high schools have them as well. The people who can afford to attend are the people who do not need subsidy. We have very few subsidized spaces now in Toronto. I personally find it repugnant that people who need to work or would otherwise be in poverty cannot get the subsidy that would allow them to have their children properly looked after. When you are in an urban area such as ours, there are very few people at home who can look after children, so the system of getting the neighbour down the street does not really work very well. Of course, at the income levels we are

talking about, many of these people would not be eligible for very much of a day care expense deduction. So I think that subsidized day care program is extremely important in helping people to work.

We had also recommended that the day care expense deduction be changed to a refundable child care tax credit. I understand that the numbers that the Department of Finance came up with were rather dramatic. Once again, I think as long as you are charging a fee not everybody is going to take advantage of this. People who want to stay home with their very young infants will juggle their timetables to have a parent there. They will take their holidays and so on. I do not think there are outrageous amounts of money involved. I hope our committee will be looking further at that. I certainly intend to pursue the matter.

I think we made a very major step here and I think those who are standing up and saying that—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I regret the hon. member's time has expired.

**Mrs. Coline Campbell (South West Nova):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the hon. member. I, too, am very pleased to see the use of the income tax system to provide, even if it is only in terms of a child benefit, a uniform income, for a start anyway. By this time next year, without any future stimulation to the economy, you may have to provide it to all people on social assistance across Canada. That may be the start of the guaranteed income. This is just the start of a guaranteed child benefit.

• (1650)

However, my question is one of concern. I realize that a person receiving a disability pension under Canada Pension, receives increments each year, according to the indexation. If they are also on family benefits, perhaps not in Ontario, but certainly in Nova Scotia, the family benefit is decreased by the amount of the increase of the Canada Pension. It is directly related. The provincial social services will take it away immediately on the payment. I am wondering if there is anything that the member can do to impress upon the minister there should be guidance given to the province, as the member so well said here about it, that it should be over and above, it should be help for.