

*Adjournment Debate*

specific answers. As usual, the Hon. Member for York East (Mr. Redway) has his facts correct. His information is excellent concerning what has gone on and the danger which exists.

I would make one point on the dioxin. I think it is important that the general public understand there are different kinds of dioxin. The 2, 3, 7, 8 dioxin isomer which we are talking about here is indeed the most deadly chemical substance we know of. The other dioxins found in drinking water along the St. Clair, for instance, are far less deadly and are not found in concentrations anywhere in waterways which are used for drinking water which would, at least to this point in time, give anyone cause for concern.

The specific point I would like to make regarding the 102nd Street chemical waste landfill site is that there have been some delays in the tests. I was the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who stopped any further chemical disposal on this site when they built a dike back in the early 1970s. From 1979 on there have been surveys and tests of the soil. In the summer of 1985, dioxin was found in the neighbourhood of 630 parts per billion. Anything over one part per billion is considered by the EPA to be potentially hazardous and remedial action is necessary. Where we are at right now with this dump is that the ongoing tests will determine whether there has been any migration of the chemicals. The Hon. Member is quite right to say it is reasonable to assume this could have happened. We are right now at the stage of determining whether or not this is the case and whether any further remedial action is necessary.

As to the Hyde Park site, we have responded to the American court. We indicated very clearly that our opinion is that the action suggested thus far will not accomplish zero discharge. We suggested technical changes in their approach and we have urged them to take action on what they have before them. We are hopeful they will take into account our suggestions so that we will have at least proof that what they are doing is adequate and we will then be able to determine what further remedial action might be necessary.

*[Translation]*

SOCIAL SECURITY—CHILD CARE SERVICES—GOVERNMENT AID—GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. (B) GROUPS' REQUEST FOR FUNDS

**Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood):** On February 12, Mr. Speaker, I raised a very important question concerning child care services. During the election campaign the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), then Leader of the Opposition, responded favourably to two representations from groups working in that field.

First, he promised to appoint a parliamentary committee to look into this matter. That he has done. Second, there is the matter of money, in other words the \$300 million for child care services that need immediate assistance.

In answering this request the Prime Minister did not mention a specific amount, but he showed he was aware of problems in that sector and promised financial assistance. But

what has he done to live up to that promise? Not even a nickel in the Budget. In answering my question the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) was quite satisfied with having to wait for the report of the parliamentary committee, even though the need is urgent and immediate.

The objective of the committee is to consider a new assistance plan, a restructuring. We should not wait for that report to improve the situation, critical as it is: shortage of affordable places, minimum wages for men and women who work in child care services, unequal access to services throughout the country.

The Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) has too much confidence in the study committee—as yet undeserved confidence.

We in the New Democratic Party fear that this committee will simply duplicate the work already done by the task force, that it will be a convenient excuse to put off implementing the recommendations of Mrs. Cooke's task force.

What this committee should do is to begin by considering the recommendations of the task force with a view to setting up the structure of a child care service system.

● (1820)

*[English]*

What do we want to see, what kind of system? We want to see a national system, one that is worked out with the provinces, one that is jointly funded on the same basis as medicare and other social programs. We want to move from a welfare-based program where recipients have to prove need to a system where there are provisions for all. Quality child care is expensive, as are quality schools. We have moved to accepting the burden collectively for the provision of schools. We must do the same for child care. This is what the movement for child care wants, and it is what the NDP has been recommending for many years.

Many parents want to look after their children at home and do not want day care centres. They do not get the assistance they need either. It should be an option. It should be possible for parents to have a shorter work week and for both parents to share the care of children at home as a child care option. We need flexibility so that parents do not have to make the choice of full time at home or full-time child care, so that these tasks can be shared and different possibilities worked out for families as they wish them.

Tax support for child care is inadequate. The deductions do not permit coverage of full costs. The system is regressive, giving the greatest assistance to highest income earners. We have a long way to go to put in place a really good system.

The Cook task force which is reporting this week, cost three-quarters of a million dollars. It commissioned more than 20 studies. It made international comparisons and looked at the tax system. It even had some public meetings before they were called off. A very comprehensive study was made of the system. We are expecting good things in those recommenda-