

Canada Child Care Act

this program be improved. In the years to come, Mr. Speaker, I think we will be able to build on this basis and increase once again the number of day care spaces available.

Mrs. Pépin: I would like to ask the following question to the Hon. Member for Argenteuil—Papineau (Mrs. Bourgault). She mentioned earlier the problem relating to the latch-key kid. Being a Member from Quebec, she said that Quebec Education Minister, Mr. Ryan has indicated his willingness to do everything in his power to solve this problem. Consequently, I only want to remind my colleague that schools in her province now have 30,000 spaces, which is unique to Quebec. I also want to draw to her attention the fact that the present Bill, introduced by the Government, contains a clause where it is said that none of this money will in fact go to education . . . funds will not be cut? So, I want to know how she will be able, with her Government and this Bill, to help, or let us say bypass . . . I don't know if we would have to amend the Bill, to continue to offer help to those children. We heard the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) tell us how important it is to fight the drug problem. But we know too well that the teenagers mainly facing this problem are the same children who are alone at home after school, and actually, one of the problems with this Bill is that it does not do anything for the latch-key kid. Secondly, it says in the Bill that the funds allocated for education will be cut. I do not see then how the Hon. Member will be able to solve this problem.

Mrs. Bourgault: Mr. Speaker, that is quite obvious. The provinces will first establish their standards with respect to this program. When I referred to Mr. Ryan a while ago, I was saying that there are 30 000 day care spaces, but that that is not enough in the schools. And we must not forget that parent and community groups are involved in this. There is a lot of volunteer work in this field. But I think that the Member from Outremont is stuck with her party's decision. She cannot state she agrees with the bill. But I understand her very well. If I were in her place . . .

An Hon. Member: In her heart, she is.

Mrs. Bourgault: In her heart, she must be and I thank my colleague for informing me of that. But I am sure that, being an Opposition Member, her job is to oppose. However, she has participated in the committee's work and she has heard the testimony of families, parents and day care workers. She is, I think, satisfied with the effort the Government is making in the field of day care. Once again, I thank her for her support.

Mr. Keeper: I would like my colleague to tell me if she is aware that the existing program, the Canada Assistance Program, does not put a limit on day care expenses. And because of that, the rate of increase was 15 per cent this year. The amounts spent on day care have increased by 15 per cent a year under the Canada Assistance Program. But, with her government's new program, the rate of increase will be brought down to 10 per cent a year. Why has this government decided to postpone the day where we will have an adequate

day care program for the children of this country? Has it put a limit on day care expenses because it also wants to spend 8 billion dollars on submarines? Is that the reason why the government has come up with a program which limits day care expenses?

Mrs. Bourgault: Mr. Speaker, once again, the New Democratic Member is obviously mixing apples and oranges. He talked about the Canada Assistance Plan. I just want to point out to him that, under the basic calculation, the federal Government will pay to the provinces 50 per cent of operating costs of commercial or not-for-profit child care agencies as well as 75 per cent of their capital costs during the seven-year period ending on March 31, 1995.

Mr. Speaker, I know why the New Democratic Party is against this initiative. It's because it wants to nationalize child care services like we did for medical care. But you cannot compare the two. Come on!

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Member for Argenteuil—Papineau (Mrs. Bourgault) if she thinks it fair that, under the Conservative policy, the Government offers less tax rebates to low- and middle-income families. Why has the Government not introduced a system giving tax credits instead of deductions to help, for example, a woman working as a baby sitter in her constituency and earning the minimum wage who will get a lot less in terms of income deductions than a female Member of Parliament?

Mrs. Bourgault: Mr. Speaker, here is a question I am tremendously pleased to answer. In the first place, I suggest Liberals have become masters at distorting figures. This is quite clear. It must be remembered, Mr. Speaker, that Paris was not built in one day. What we were left with was a financial mess. And when a country finds itself in such a financial mess as the one we inherited from the Liberals, we cannot remedy overnight all the calamities left by the Liberals. For that reason I feel that our record over those four years is still exceptional, and I for one will quite confidently defend that performance before my constituents, with the conviction that the next four years of Conservative Government will build on the first four ones. And then Canadian men and women will realize the Conservative Party is the Party that should be governing the country, for the benefit of everyone.

[*English*]

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Waddell: I thank my colleagues very much for that round of applause. As a matter of fact, I just heard them telling the story of one of their distinguished colleagues—who no doubt not from our Party—who spoke on the abortion debate and said that he was not intending to speak on the abortion debate but he had missed his bus so he thought he would take the opportunity to speak.