

*Oral Questions*

is an inconsistency or conflict. The provision in the American statute—and it has nothing to do with the American system—is exactly the opposite. It provides: “In the event of a conflict between U.S. law and the agreement, U.S. law shall prevail”. Therefore, every other law to be passed by the American Congress can amend the agreement and their Bill. How can the Minister tolerate such a difference in provisions? Why doesn't he do as much for Canadians as the American Congress is doing for its people?

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, Clause 8 in our Bill is a matter that has been dealt with before the present legislative committee. That is the proper place for this to be discussed. If the committee, for example, wanted to recommend a change, naturally we would consider whether or not there should be a change. But the committee has not recommended any change.

**Mr. Axworthy:** You said we can't.

**Mr. Crosbie:** All that Clause 8 states is that this particular piece of legislation will overrule any inconsistent other federal legislation that has not been amended in the Bill. Twenty-seven federal statutes have been found to have provisions inconsistent with the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. We are specifically amending them. But it is possible that in some obscure provision in some other piece of federal legislation, and God knows there have been thousands of pieces of legislation passed in the last 100 years, there happens to be something that has not been discovered, that we have not seen in our research, that it is inconsistent with this trade legislation, it will be overbound by this federal trade legislation. That is a common statutory provision in our Canadian practice and I see no reason at the present time—

**Some Hon. Members:** Come on!

**Mr. Crosbie:** But if the committee in its wisdom, in looking at this, makes a recommendation, then we will consider it.

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**CHILD CARE**

## REQUEST FOR DIRECT FEDERAL GRANTS TO PROVINCES

**Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Child care is needed over there, Madam, right next to you.

**Ms. Mitchell:** Child care is in far greater crisis than it was four years ago.

**Mr. Crosbie:** There is a crisis over in the Liberal ranks.

**Mr. Manly:** The Tories think this is funny.

**Ms. Mitchell:** Child care is in a far greater crisis than it was four years ago, with long waiting lists, few services for children under three, day care centres closing, under-paid workers leaving, and working parents are very concerned about care for their kids. Despite four years of promises and press releases, the Government has not provided one new federal cent for child care services.

● (1130)

Since it is now obvious that there will be no shared funding available to the provinces before the next election will the Minister consider using part of the \$1 billion that he found this week and allocate at least \$320 million of it for direct good-faith grants to provinces so that they can begin to deal with our child care emergency? Will he do that?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, no, I will not do that, since it is less than what we are doing now. I know that that was the NDP policy.

The Hon. Member says that the Government has done nothing. She is wrong on that point. In the four years since we took office we have done a great deal. There was the \$6.4 billion program over seven years, not to mention the 200,000 spaces, not to mention that after seven years there will be \$800 million per year for spaces only support, almost \$1 billion a year.

Despite all that, since the Government took office that has been increased by 100 per cent in terms of expenditures under CAP. The Hon. Member says that we have done nothing. Like everything else, it gets tiring always to have to correct the Hon. Member. I understand her philosophy. While I disagree with her even on that, I always have to keep changing and correcting her position.

## PROVISION OF FEDERAL FUNDS

**Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East):** Mr. Speaker, if the Minister had listened, I said that there was not one new federal cent for child care services. The money the Minister mentions was only in press releases. Of course he has done some things, but unfortunately they have been the wrong things, in our view.

This week the Senate Committee on Child Care joined many other experts across the country in pointing out the numerous flaws that there are in the child care strategy, including the inadequacy of funding, the need to ensure quality of care, the promotion of non-profit child care, and the need to expand services. Since the announcement this week corrects none of these flaws, and the Minister admitted yesterday that this \$1 billion does not deal with these problems, would it not make practical sense to allocate good-faith grants now in order to have time to redraft the plan so that we can be proud of our first national child care program in Canada?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I did not admit anything of the kind. I did not