

Oral Questions

So I am looking for a 200 per cent increase over seven years in that sector.

• (1200)

Additionally, the provinces have responsibility in this field. I listened to what they said, looked at their reports, and looked at the trend lines which they projected. We believe that with those trend lines and our money we can meet their requirements as well.

The Minister from Quebec said:

My first reaction is I think it's a good program. It's very flexible and it respects the jurisdiction of the provinces. With the help that we are having from the federal Government, it will help Quebec to develop and also diversify the choices.

Mr. Sweeney from Ontario said:

It seems the kind of things we wanted to see in our program in terms of who we wanted to fund and the dollars look to be appropriate.

With respect, I know that this is an emotional issue, but there has to be an understanding of both capacity and fairness. I have tried to be as fair as possible keeping in mind that I had a bottom line. I wanted to increase spaces, and I am not going to impose upon parents one system for taking care of their children.

FINANCING OF NATIONAL STRATEGY

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The Minister's use of 40 per cent of the child care money through tax measures offers an insulting \$17 a month to low-income women rather than licensed quality child care services, while by 1991 he will have grabbed one-third of their child care benefits through deindexation.

Will the Government be fair and honest with Canadians for once? Will it put child care dollars into child care?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I am being honest and very straightforward. Through the Canada Assistance Plan we are putting \$140 million per year into child care spaces and the subsidization of them. We will increase that on an annualized basis over a seven-year period to \$600 million plus. By any measure that is a substantial increase and is in addition to what the provinces are putting in.

I ask the Hon. Member to be honest for once and to recognize what I have done.

AVAILABILITY OF CHOICE TO PARENTS

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, the Minister says that his program gives choices. I would like to know what kind of real choice a low-income person has who does not pay income tax and is now paying \$800 a month for child care. She has absolutely no choice. Will the Minister tell her what choice she has?

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to answer that question. I have analyzed the NDP response to the Special Committee on Child Care. Our system will provide for 200,000 subsidized spaces. Dividing that by seven we arrive very quickly at a rate of growth of roughly 28,000 spaces a year. The Hon. Member and her Party were willing to put in 21,000 spaces a year.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: I wish to advise Hon. Members that there will be a question from the Hon. Member for Richmond—Wolfe followed by a question from the Hon. Member for Mackenzie. That will close off Question Period.

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[Translation]

TRADE

FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—EFFECT ON QUEBEC AGRICULTURE

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond—Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister.

The UPA held a convention recently in Quebec City, where farm producers had an opportunity to express their profound concerns.

Also, Minister Pagé has said he is very concerned about the fact in the Agreement, Section 11 of the GATT is not mentioned or even referred to.

Could the Minister and the Prime Minister provide assurances that a specific reference to Section 11 will be included in the Free Trade Agreement and furthermore, could the Prime Minister give us the assurance that there will be no negative impact on Quebec agriculture as a result of this enterprise?

[English]

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I can give that assurance. I think the free trade agreement is excellent for all of agriculture, not only Quebec agriculture. The marketing boards are in place.

I saw that they were concerned about hatching eggs, for example. I met with farmers in the egg-hatching industry. Twenty-five per cent of hatching eggs now come across the border from the United States. There is a 3.5 cents a dozen tariff on them which will be reduced over a ten-year period. They admit that that has no effect on importation.

That is one of the concerns which was raised at the meeting and I could go on to list many more. It is still protected under the quota system. I believe that Quebec agriculture is treated very well in this agreement.