

*S. O. 31*

1976 to visitors from around the world, especially China where Dr. Bethune's humanitarian works were considered heroic.

• (1110)

On March 3, in conjunction with Frontier College, the Gravenhurst Public Library and Muskoka Literacy Council, Bethune Memorial House hosts a celebration of reading with story telling in honour of Dr. Bethune.

I wish all participants well as we celebrate Dr. Bethune's birthday.

\* \* \*

### VISION AWARENESS WEEK

**Ms. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is important for me to bring to the attention of the House that March 6 to March 11 is Vision Awareness Week in Canada. This year's theme is "Hope is in sight: good vision and literacy, there is a clear connection".

It is a sad fact that many Canadians cannot read well simply because they cannot see well. One in six children has a vision problem that makes learning and reading difficult. If our children cannot focus on the chalkboard or on words in a book, how can we expect them to learn to read?

This problem is not unique to children. Three-quarters of adults with poor literacy skills also have problems with their vision.

The difficulty is that not all vision problems are easily detected. We know the earlier problems are detected and corrected, the faster we can get children and adults alike on the reading track and the faster they will be literate.

Awareness is the key. I ask my colleagues to join me and 2,800 optometrists in reminding Canadians—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Order, please.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### SOCIAL PROGRAMS

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the income security minister Jeanne Blackburn yesterday denounced in no uncertain terms the federal government's withdrawal of funding for provincial welfare, education and health programs. In spite of the \$7 billion lost over three years due to federal cuts, the government of Quebec will still have to provide assistance to 240,000 children whose parents have turned to welfare as a last resort.

Like a blind executioner with an axe in hand, the federal government is hacking away at social programs without realizing the impact these cuts have on people. With a single stroke of the pen, Ottawa is forcing the Quebec government to make

painful choices among social services without so much as suffering the terrible consequences of its decisions.

It is high time for Quebecers to protect themselves from such unilateral cuts. The only solution available to us is to repatriate the taxes we pay to Ottawa and then decide among ourselves how much of the joint assets we shall share.

\* \* \*

[English]

### CHILD CARE

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Human Resources Development has fumbled the ball on his plan to reform the child care system in Canada.

Various child care programs cost over \$8 billion per year, yet many still live in poverty and our courts are filled with charter challenges by families fighting the discriminatory nature of government policy.

My private member's Bill C-247 provides for a straightforward tax deduction per child to any taxpaying parent, regardless of the method of child care chosen or marital status. By empowering people to take more responsibility for themselves, the bill will give them tax free money to do so.

In the social reforms paper the minister addressed day care spaces and flexible work arrangements for parents but said nothing about current taxation inequities, charter challenges or stay at home parenting. "Such a move", he said, "would have been too racy", with which I am sure the member opposite would probably agree. I fail to see what is so racy to the member for Halifax about a tax break for overburdened parents.

It is obvious that someone with a different agenda—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Order, please.

\* \* \*

### FRESHWATER FISHERY

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian freshwater fishery has an important role to play in the economy of the country, in particular the economies of the northern regions of the provinces.

The Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans has completed a much needed review of the operations of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation and has made recommendations to the minister of fisheries.

Those recommendations go too far according to reports I have received from groups involved in the fishery in Saskatchewan concerned about the future of the industry and therefore the future of those regional economies.

Changes can and must be made to the freshwater fishery that will improve participation, opportunity and income for the people involved.