

Adjournment Debate

line and I do not think that speaks well of the government's commitment to its children.

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I know that I can say on behalf of all the members of this House and indeed, on behalf of all Canadians that we share the hon. member's concern regarding child poverty. It is both a difficult and a challenging issue to address, but as the hon. member knows, it is not a new issue. On the contrary, it is a reality that has always faced our society and it has always faced our governments.

• (1810)

The government recognized the seriousness of this problem and that is why we are committed to the children and to their families and that is why currently the amount of some \$15 billion each year is transferred to assist families and children.

In the recent budget this government announced a new child benefit. This is a major step forward in simplifying, targeting and enriching federal income support for children and for families.

Canadians will be receiving their new monthly benefit in January 1993.

We realize that child poverty is a complex issue and that more must be done. The family remains the basic unit of our society and anything that harms it affects all of us.

As the Prime Minister has said, when one child in a country like Canada is in poverty that is one child too many.

There is hope on the horizon. The federal government will be acting further, particularly to improve children at risk. This will include the release of Canada's action plan for children which will fulfil the obligation we undertook at the UN World Summit on Children. It will contain concrete proposals to address the problems faced by children at risk.

Of course we cannot do this alone, it takes all of us working together.

DIPLOMATIC CORPS SECURITY

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question of the parliamentary secretary dealing with the attack over the weekend, April 4, on the Iranian embassy.

It raises the question of security surrounding embassies, for the people who live in those areas and their concern for their safety and also for the safety of those Canadian citizens who may work for those embassies.

I cannot help but recall the incident in my riding in 1985 when Armenian nationalists took hostages at the Turkish embassy. A security guard was killed at that time and the Turkish ambassador suffered serious injuries.

At the time, the former deputy prime minister, Erik Nielsen, said there would be an intensive review of security at all embassies in Canada. Further, the former secretary of state for external affairs is quoted in *The Globe and Mail*, March 13, 1985, as saying: "I emphasize that Canada has a duty and an obligation to protect the security of diplomats who are stationed here and we intend to honour that obligation."

I have 38 embassies in my riding and incidents such as the one that happened over the weekend certainly cause concern and disturb people.

Yesterday the Solicitor General, in answering a question that I put to him, said the measures that had been taken following the 1985 incident were basically that a special emergency response team was established under the RCMP. He noted that it had never been used since its establishment. The question to be put was where were they on Sunday?

I would appreciate receiving some clarification from the government about this special emergency response team.

The Globe and Mail of February 17, 1992 reports that this 50-member anti-terrorist squad is to be disbanded after a \$31.5 million expenditure to develop it.

Is this team still in existence and, if so, what is it doing? Where was it on Sunday? If the team is being disbanded, is it true, as reported in *The Globe and Mail* that the army has taken over the duties? If that is not true, let us have some information as to what is happening.