

soon is "soon", and why, in our democratic society, does the Minister display such an obdurate disdain for the reasonable requests of elected municipal leaders?

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[Translation]

VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

TRIBUTE TO VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Claude Lanthier (La Salle): Mr. Speaker, I should like to repeat the comments made last week by my hon. colleagues in praise of our dedicated Canadian volunteers.

Polls carried out over the past year indicate that 32 per cent of all Canadians are involved in some sort of volunteer work.

For the millions of Canadians men and women who devote their time and effort to charitable work the satisfaction of improving the living conditions of their fellow human beings is their only reward.

Mr. Speaker, all these volunteers operating within the framework of community organizations, devote their spare time to recreational activities, such as the Laurendeau—Dunton, as well as cultural and church activities. They provide institutionalized and hospitalized patients, as well as the aged with comfort. A great many of them are also involved with new Canadians, young people, as well as individuals faced with legal or mental problems.

Mr. Speaker, volunteer work is the very backbone of social life within our Canadian democracy.

Good luck to all these Canadian men and women volunteers!

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[English]

CHILD CARE

CALL FOR WITHDRAWAL OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, hundreds of parents, child care workers, and interested people have joined in Ottawa this week to send a message to the Conservative Government. The so-called national child care package of the Government is simply not going to work and should be withdrawn. The message came through loud and clear that parents want to be able to have available spaces, and safe spaces, so that their children might be well looked after when they are outside of their own care.

This morning all three Parties had a chance to meet with representatives of the child care movement across the country and to make a commitment so that we will have a move toward a universally acceptable child care system that ensures a safe atmosphere for every child across the country. It is a crime

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that in today's society in a country as rich as Canada our most precious resource is left oftentimes as latchkey children in unsafe spaces, and outside the care of a really good situation.

● (1405)

We call on the Government—it has a last chance to recant on the road to election—to bring in a national child care strategy that really deals with child care.

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WESTERN GRAIN STABILIZATION ACT

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTERIM PAYMENT TO FARMERS

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, in 1985 our Government amended the Western Grain Stabilization Act to provide for interim payments to be made in time for spring seeding. Under Western Grain over \$500 million was paid out in 1985, \$859 million in 1986, \$1.398 billion last year, and now the Minister of State for Grains and Oilseeds (Mr. Mayer) has announced an interim payment of \$695 million for the current crop year.

In the Province of Saskatchewan, 61,000 producers will share some \$380 million. A final payment will be made in the fall once complete figures for the current crop year are available.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has said that the Government will spare no effort in assisting the farm community during these times of low international prices. These payments constitute further concrete tangible evidence of this Government's commitment to the Canadian grain and oilseeds sector.

This Government has delivered time and time again for Canadian agriculture, and it will continue to deliver.

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SOCIAL AFFAIRS

POVERTY STATISTICS—SITUATION OF CHILDREN

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands): Mr. Speaker, in today's *Toronto Star*, Leonard Shifrin writes "Poverty in Canada has a new face—the face of a child".

In the 1981 census people over the age of 65 had the highest incidence of poverty, but the poverty rate for seniors has now dropped, thanks to increases in the Guaranteed Annual Income Supplement, and seniors were able to organize and fight off the Mulroney Government's dishonest attempt to deindex their pensions.

But who speaks for children in Canada today? Twenty-one per cent of Canadian children under six years of age live in poverty. For children six to fourteen years of age the rate is 19