

*Canada Child Care Act*

**Mr. Cassidy:** It is a lousy Bill to put into place.

**Mr. Crosby:**—that their fears will not be realized, that that is not the purport of the Bill, and I will tell you why. It could not possibly be, because the Bill provides that national strategy will provide \$100 million for a child care innovative fund. That means new directions for child care and that handicapped children who cannot be accommodated in current child care facilities will have an opportunity to have financial expenditures that will allow them to be accommodated. Are the members of the Opposition against that?

**Ms. Mitchell:** We want child care to be accessible. That is no way to make it accessible.

**Mr. Crosby:** If they are, stand up and say so. Stand up and say that you are against innovative action for handicapped children in our care system.

The other day I received a call from a woman—believe it or not—listening to the debates in the House of Commons. She explained the situation. She has three autistic children and she cannot find accommodation for them on a subsidized basis. This kind of innovation may resolve that problem.

Members of the Opposition say: “Stop the Bill. Get the Senate to stop the Bill. We do not want this”. They are acting against the interests of Canadians when they say that. Then they say: “We want a national system. We want a national system right here. We in the House of Commons are going to establish a system for all Canadians, and we are not going to listen to anybody from the provinces when we do that”. That is not a system of government in Canada.

We have a federal system, and each provincial Government plays a role in that system. I defy any Member to say differently. We all stood up and endorsed the Meech Lake Accord that assured each province participation beyond what they are now guaranteed in the Constitution of Canada.

**Mr. Cassidy:** What about national objectives? We have the right to do it. Do it.

**Mr. Crosby:** Now they want us to go back and say: “No, no, no. National standards. Forget about the promises”. Pay no attention to them. They do not know anything about child care.

I ask the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy): What does the federal Government know about child care?

**Mr. Cassidy:** Nothing, according to this Bill. Nothing at all.

**Mr. Crosby:** I have not seen the federal Government under the Liberals in the last 20 years establish any day care centres. I have not seen them change any orphanages to new, modern institutions. That has been done by the people of Canada in the provinces, and they are represented by their Government, just as they are represented in this Parliament of Canada.

• (1150)

What we need is co-operation: co-operative federalism. Do Hon. Members want to go back to the Trudeau days? Do Hon. Members want to tell the provinces to shove it, that we are not paying any attention? That is not what national reconciliation is all about. National reconciliation is getting together, recognizing the problem, and proceeding to resolve it. That is what the national strategy on child care is.

I want to mention one other aspect of child care, which is tax reform. I did not stand up here the other day like the Leader of the Opposition did when he changed his view from March, 1987, threw out his documented views expressed in March, 1987, and took a new tack on child care. I started my campaign in 1981, and I have the *Debates* in the House of Commons to prove it. In 1981 I asked the House of Commons to change the tax laws relating to child care. Finally, eight years later, after four years of refusal by a Liberal Government, the Progressive Conservative Government is finally changing the laws with respect to the tax treatment of child care expenses.

We propose a child tax credit that will increase to \$760 in 1989, doubling the allowance for child care expenses from \$2,000 to \$4,000 and removing the limit of \$8,000. That is exactly what we asked for in 1981. It has taken all that time because, first, the Liberals would take no action for four years. The New Democratic Party never will be in power, so it does not make any difference what its Members say about it. Now we have a Government that will look at the problems, will study the issue, and will recognize that we have to be financially responsible in implementing these matters. The Government had a parliamentary task force look at the whole situation, responded to the task force, and came up with a piece of legislation that creates a proper balance between the needs of people in the area of child care and the limits of the nation and each province within the nation to provide that type of child care.

We have achieved that balance. It is not the end; it is not the ultimate; it is not a panacea. Canadians will still have to be careful in their expenditures. They will still have to be prudent in how they provide for their families. They will not get a bonus beyond that which they have earned. What we are getting is a balanced system and a recognition by the national Government in 1988, and never before recognized, that there is a serious obligation to provide child care in Canada. It is a serious obligation to the women of Canada who should have the full opportunity to participate in the labour force. However, more important, it is in pursuance of an obligation to the children of Canada to see that each child receives the type of care that will allow them to be nourished and to flourish in our society. If we do not, we will pay a price down the line. What we save in child care and in other social benefits, we will expend in other ways.

Let me conclude my remarks by saying that we have a goal in child care and we have a national strategy to implement