

Oral Questions

child care strategy, in co-operation with the provinces, which will ensure high standards of child care in Canada.

Let me say as well, with respect to this nonsense about not meeting with people, that we offered on Friday to have the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare meet with the group. It did not want that. It wanted the Minister. I can understand that because I have met them many times. However, there was an offer for representatives of this Party to be there. So I am not taking that kind of nonsense from the Hon. Member.

We will be putting in place a child care strategy for the first time since it was declared an urgent problem. It will have its own legislation. It will meet the needs of communities of different sizes and different objectives all across Canada. That is what the people of Canada want. That is what the women of Canada want. They have said that themselves by the thousands, not 200 marching on the Hill.

[Translation]

PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister was not here this morning when over 200 delegates to a conference condemned the Conservative strategy on day-care. Their message was clear: The national strategy proposed by this Government is not an acceptable solution to the problems related to child care.

My question is this: Will the Prime Minister now admit that his Government has only one choice, which is to withdraw its program and completely revise it?

[English]

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we reviewed the child care situation in Canada very carefully before we introduced this strategy by looking at all the material that we had on hand. In addition, a parliamentary committee went across Canada to talk to different women and different individuals in different communities. It responded to the family needs that were presented in the strategy that we brought forward.

Our negotiations with the provinces continue. Clearly, the provinces have a strong role to play in this. They are continuing. The funding will be put in place as soon as those negotiations are completed.

I would like it to have been done instantly, but it is not possible. We are setting up a brand new strategy under a brand new body of legislation. That takes longer than we would like, and longer than the Hon. Member would like. But it is going to be done, and it is going to be done right.

GOVERNMENT POLICY—NUMBER OF DAY CARE SPACES

Ms. Marion Dewar (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the people of Canada are not satisfied with that

type of strategy, a strategy that really says that there will not be more child care spaces in the country.

Did the representatives of the Minister's Government tell the people today that fiscal responsibility was more important and that reducing the deficit was more important than our children? Is that why there is a strategy that is not increasing spaces?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, there were 10 Progressive Conservative MPs at the event today. It was well attended by this Party, and by representatives of the Government.

When this plan is over we will have 200,000 new subsidized spaces in Canada. There are about 100,000 now, thus we are tripling the number of subsidized spaces.

At the end of the initial period of this strategy, of course we will be reviewing it to see what comes next. However, we are going to get it up and running and working for the parents of Canada and for the children.

This debate is about children, not just about women's groups. That is the most important thing that we have to remember. We are adding 200,000 spaces for children. At the end of that time we will review it to see what the needs are at that time.

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● (1440)

AIRPORTS

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT—TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT TO LOCAL AUTHORITY

Mrs. Mary Collins (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Transport.

The announcement last Friday in Vancouver that the federal Government was prepared to proceed with negotiations to transfer the management and development of the Vancouver International Airport to a local body was indeed welcome, as it will help the airport to fulfil its potential as an economic generator.

Could the Minister tell the House if there are criteria established by his Department for this transfer, and an anticipated time frame for the completion of such negotiations and the establishment of an appropriate local authority?

Hon. Gerry St. Germain (Minister of State (Transport): Mr. Speaker, following discussions with the provincial Government there has been a consensus that Vancouver International Airport remain a federal asset. A negotiating group will be appointed shortly to deal with the possibility of turning the airport over to a local authority. The negotiating group will proceed along the lines of the federal Government's April 1987 policy. If there is a recommendation, first and