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affect substantial increases in the amount of personnel and the amount of money at their disposal.

Mr. McLean: Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister for those comments. It would appear, though, there would be major cutbacks in other areas in the light of the over-all balance unless there is a secret fund somewhere else.

More and more low-income mothers are going to work. Subsidized care is less available, and day care is costly, especially to people who can least afford it. The number of women in the labour force with children under the age of six now exceeds half a million. This puts enormous pressure on day care facilities. Non-commercial day care centres are 95 per cent subsidized. In 1978-1979 non-commercial day care increased by only 4.8 per cent while commercial and the more expensive day care increased by 28.3 per cent. I do not need to quote the comment made on behalf of the Canadian Council on Social Development on the need for a national day care policy. The minister is encouraging women to re-enter the work force through retraining and affirmative action programs. What is his position on a national day care policy and what has he done to see that this increasing need is getting the attention of the Minister of National Health and Welfare? How many of those available dollars he told us about are going directly to this area of need?

● (2320)

Mr. Axworthy: Along with the hon. member, I feel there is an essential requirement to improve child care services in this country. The difficulty we face as a federal government is that the determination of day care policy is very much a provincial responsibility and jurisdiction. They are responsible for the design, implementation and management of day care programs within each of their provincial regions. Our involvement with day care is to share the funding under the CAP program where we provide 50 per cent of the cost at the present time.

As most organizations have pointed out, in many instances the decision on day care must not only concern increased resources, but increased availability. The Minister of National Health and Welfare made several comments about the need to do a basic review of the Canada Assistance Plan with a view to getting more guidelines or responsibilities attached to it regarding the allocation of these programs.

I do not have to remind the hon. member that there has been some discussion between the provinces and ourselves about the notion of block funding and we have lost control of much of the money we have given because we have not been able to set those guidelines in motion. With the review of the CAP, the Minister of National Health and Welfare intends to take a hard look as to how that can be more directly allocated toward child care programs. In the meantime, I would tell the hon. member that when we introduced the community services employment program this summer, we put a high priority on the employment of people in child care services across Canada.

One of the priority items for social services or community service groups across Canada is some degree of additional

assistance from the federal government by application through the community service program. This is given a very high priority. I do not have the latest figures, but I think close to 30 per cent goes into child care under our direct employment programs.

Mr. McLean: I would like to press the minister a little on this. Is he prepared to use his office to press for the calling of a national conference on day care? I would also like to ask the minister about farm women. It will be known to him that the government recently announced that farmers will be able to claim wages paid to their spouses for farm work. One group excluded from the provisions is the category of spouses. They will not be able to claim unemployment insurance in the event that their jobs as farm wives are lost. What steps does the minister plan to take to remedy this oversight? Has he discussed this with the Minister of Agriculture?

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Chairman, I will give a very short answer. I remind the hon. member that a very interesting conference was held in this city last week by farm women at which a number of these proposals were made. That is probably where the question came from, I would guess. This is a very important issue. If I could return the compliment, I would say that improvements for farm women will be contained in the Minister of Finance's amendments to the Income Tax Act. I hope the hon. member will use his good offices with his House leader to make sure that bill receives very speedy passage through the House so that the measure can go into effect as soon as possible.

Mr. McLean: In the moment or so left, I wonder if the minister could make reference to the Canadian Human Rights Act and the matter of equal pay for work of equal value. What action has the minister taken to persuade Treasury Board to live up to the government's stated commitment to justice and opportunity in the work place? There have been reports of resistance. Can the minister comment on that.

Mr. Axworthy: It seems so long ago, Mr. Chairman, but we had a fairly extensive discussion on that this afternoon. I refer the hon. member to *Hansard*. If it is not there, I will be glad to provide answers to him. Time does not allow a full exposition of a very important subject.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Chairman, I have two or three matters I want to raise with the minister. I will do that as quickly as I can. I hope he can respond to them. I have a fairly simple question. Why is it that under the Unemployment Insurance Act real estate salesmen or brokers who are licensed must turn in their licences before becoming eligible for unemployment insurance? At this time of great difficulty in the real estate business, it is unfortunate and unfair for a licensed salesman or broker to be required, even though he is not working within the industry but may be looking forward to going back when there is an upturn, to relinquish his licence. It is his.

My second question has to do with the construction industry. Can the minister enlighten us as to what became of the recommendations contained in the report by the task force on