

DAY CARE IN MANITOBA  
AN ANALYSIS OF ITS  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC ORIGINS AND OBJECTIVES

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
The Committee on Graduate Studies  
The University of Manitoba

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In Partial Fulfilment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Gordon C. Alvare  
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## ABSTRACT

With the increasing number of working mothers in the labour force, particularly during the past twenty years, there has been a corresponding increase in the popularity of day care for the children of these working mothers. This thesis examines the social, economic and political aspects of day care, from its earliest beginnings in North America and Canada, down to a particular case, the development of day care in the province of Manitoba. More specifically, this thesis looks at the social, economic and political origins and objectives of the day-care legislation introduced in 1974 by the New Democratic Party government of Manitoba, which first came to power in 1969. The following questions about the development of this day-care policy prompted the thesis: was day care a priority issue for the N. D. P. when it was first elected; if it was, why did it take five years for a government policy to appear; how did the policy relate to the social policy objectives of the government; what was the redistributive effect of the new legislation; and what was the role of the professional in the development of the new policy.

The study shows that, as in other areas of policy, the N. D. P. government, labelled as a "socialist" group, focussed its attention most closely on a type of day care that would strengthen its popular support by appeasing the

mistrusting middle class, rather than substantially promote the interests of the lower ones. The policy was delayed by cost-sharing problems with the federal government and by ministerial caution. When it appeared it was mistaken as a device to assist the lower classes (as federal cost-sharing regulations intended). However, its analysis shows that in reality it was a device to liberate middle-class mothers so that they could enter the work force. Like many other social policies, the day-care policy reinforced class disparities. The children of the relatively better-off received an additional head start in a competitive economic system. The professionals contributed to this phenomenon, as shown by the controversy between them and the government during the introductory phases of the policy.

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Thesis Organization

This thesis is divided into three main chapters, each with a different focus. The first chapter details the history of the day nursery in Canada. From the information available, an attempt is made first to present a North American context for the day nursery by discussing its American precursors and their influence on Canadian day nurseries. The subsequent discussion of the Canadian day nursery draws some parallels between Canadian and American developments in early-childhood education. American professionals eventually worked in Canadian day nurseries, and Canadian professionals, lacking a systematic body of knowledge on which to base their work, turned to American documents and practices. Finally, an attempt is made to relate the development of public concern for day care to the social, political and economic trends that appear to have influenced the country's social policies in general.

Chapter II traces the history of the day nursery in Manitoba up to the election of the New Democratic Party government in June, 1969, which in 1974 introduced a provincial policy in day care. It shows how day care developed separately from other child-welfare policies, mainly because it was private and charitable. In this



chapter, as well as in the previous one, the study is restricted to charitable, public day nurseries. Commercial day nurseries that were run for profit have left few, if any, records of their existence. And since there were only two day nurseries in Manitoba until the late 1950s, Chapter II focuses on their history; that is, after a short introductory section on the kindergarten facility that was established seventeen years prior to the appearance of the first day nurseries in Manitoba. Once again, an attempt is made to relate the development of public concern for day care to the social, political and economic trends that influenced the province's social policies generally.

Chapter III discusses sequentially some of the factors lying behind the development of Manitoba's 1974 day-care legislation. Each sequence begins with a brief presentation of the state of the provincial economy as it was reflected in budget addresses presented to the Legislature. Each is followed by a description of whatever legislative debate on day care occurred that year. Thereafter, each sequence presents local developments in the history of the policy.

The Manitoba day-care policy is less than four years old. No examination was made of the forces lying behind the choices governing its provisions. Much has been written about day care in other countries; however, this has dealt mostly with standards, quality of care, and the beneficial or harmful effects day care can have on

children and families. Almost no literature presents the subject from a general theoretical perspective of social change, which prompted this thesis.

The conclusions to this thesis summarize the trends that the preceding chapters have identified, and place the most important developments in their general social context.

## 2. Purpose of the Thesis

This thesis was prompted by a comment appearing in a newspaper article published a few months after the enactment of a day-care policy in Manitoba. The reporter said that the question of day care had been "a first priority for the NDP after its first election in 1969,"<sup>1</sup> but that it had taken a long time for a policy to appear. The reason why the policy was so slow in developing was partially answered, being attributed to ministerial caution and delays in federal-provincial cost-sharing arrangements. But there was no discussion on the question whether or not day care had in fact been a party priority, and if so, why. This thesis looks at these questions and, by relying for the most part on public information, tries to answer them.

Further questions arose: why did the 1974 day-care policy take the shape that it did; what was the relationship between the policy and the general social objectives of the New Democratic Party; what were the social, political and economic circumstances--provincial, federal, international--that lay behind the establishment of such a service; what

was the redistributive effect of the policy? To answer these questions it was necessary to look at the history of the day nursery in Canada and elsewhere, and at the history of working women and mothers, of feminism, and of the rise of the middle classes. Chapters I and II examine these historical perspectives as a background to understanding the development of the day-care legislation that Chapter III discusses.

Finally, it was necessary to examine the influence of the professional in the field of early-childhood education, in its contemporary as well as its historical context. This is an area that bears further study, not only in relation to day care, but also in relation to the development of other social policies in Canada.

### 3. Research Problems

This study is of necessity rather brief and fragmented. For one thing, the study of social policy in Canada is still in its infancy and little, mainly anecdotal, historical material is available on Canadian day nurseries. For another, locating historical material has been a difficult task, due to the lack of systematic documentation in the country. Most information is to be found in newspaper articles, annual reports of day nurseries or social agencies, and in social-agency scrapbooks. The archives of the Social Planning Council of Greater Winnipeg have been an invaluable source of information, despite the difficulties

involved, since the contents relating to day nurseries were scattered here and there in the Council's records (more than 110 boxes). Another stumbling-block has been the impossibility of locating three early studies of Winnipeg day nurseries that were mentioned in the Minutes of the board of directors of the former Winnipeg Council of Social Agencies. These studies were conducted in 1925, 1939, and 1940. (A summary of the findings of the latter two does exist, however, and is discussed in Chapter II.) If and when these studies are located, they should shed much light on Winnipeg's early day nurseries.

The events leading up to the 1974 day-care policy in Manitoba are discussed from the perspective of whatever contemporary information and documents were available. It was impossible to gain access to many confidential Cabinet and other government documents and proposals. This has made the analysis at times necessarily cursory. In effect, there were two stories about the development of Manitoba's day-care policy. One was the behind-the-scenes story, a fascinating one that many officials approached were reluctant to discuss, much less commit to paper. The other is the official story that lies in the realm of public information and newspaper accounts, and is the one dealt with in the thesis.

#### 4. Terminology

It is important to define certain terms used

throughout this thesis. Prior to doing this, though, it is important to answer the question why this thesis does not deal with commercial day-care services. These have left little evidence of their existence. The documentation that exists on the philanthropic day nurseries, on the other hand, is much more comprehensive.

It is also important to explain the use of the term "social control" as it is used in this thesis. The term is used here in a rather narrow sense--that of "social conditioning"--and does not describe those larger influences exerted on individuals by society in general. Nor is it used to refer to the consciously-planned guidance of economic processes.

The definition of various types of day care are taken mainly from the Rutman report on day-care services in Manitoba. They were found to be comprehensive and easy to understand. What follows, then, is for the most part taken from this report.

- (a) Day care has been defined by the United Nations as "an organized service for the care of children away from their own homes during some part of the day, when circumstances call for normal care in the home to be supplemented." The World Health Organization, which quotes this definition, goes on to state: "The primary objective of day-care services is to help parents in the daily care and upbringing of their

children in their own homes."<sup>2</sup>

(b) Day nurseries (day-care centres):

"These programmes provide supervised group care for preschool children for a full day. In addition, the children are exposed to educational and social programmes. This service is usually for children between three and five years of age who require care because of their mothers' employment or other circumstances which affect the family. There are various types of organizations that operate day nurseries. Some are commercial enterprises and others are voluntary social agencies either self-supporting or subsidized by various funds and particularly by the Provincial Government (subsidizing families whose children attend the programme). In Canada there are some municipal governments which operate day care centres, particularly in Ontario."<sup>3</sup>

(c) Family day care:

"These services provide regular or daily care of a child in a family home when his parents are working, absent, or when other circumstances necessitate such a placement. This programme is coordinated by a social agency that examines and selects the home, effects the placement and provides continuous supervision of the day care home, while attempting to maintain a helpful

relationship with the parents. The private arrangement that parents may make with a family is commonly called babysitting."<sup>4</sup>

(d) Lunch-and-after-four centres:

"These centres are sponsored mainly by voluntary organizations and they provide group supervision at lunch time and after school for school-age children, and supervision at lunch and during the afternoon for children who attend kindergarten in the morning. Lunch-and-after-four centres deal with the commonly observed phenomenon of the 'latchkey' child."<sup>5</sup>

(e) The Latchkey child:

"This term originated from the observation that many young school age children of working parents were carrying house keys to gain entrance to their homes between the hours that school closed and their parents returned from work."<sup>6</sup> In many cases the children wore the keys on a string around their necks.

(f) Kindergartens:

These facilities appeared many years before the nursery schools did, yet over the years these two types of child-care institution have become quite similar. In their early years the kindergarten cared for children between the ages of three and five years (and, in some cases, younger) and charged fees. While in some places

they still charge fees, in Manitoba they have become a regular part of the province's general public-school programme, provide half-day care to five-year-olds, and generally function as a form of pre-primary education.

(g) Creche:

For the most part this term is used synonymously with the term, day nursery. At times, though, it has been used to refer to foundling homes and orphanages.

(h) Nursery schools:

"They provide mainly an educational programme during short periods of the day (2-3 hours) for children three to five years of age. However, such services vary from highly sophisticated educational programmes to babysitting arrangements. Generally, these programmes have catered to children from middle and upper-class families. The fees charged by nursery schools are too high for low income families and there is little subsidization of fees for children whose parents cannot afford to cover the cost."<sup>7</sup>



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7. Rutman, p. 8.

## CHAPTER I

### THE HISTORY OF THE DAY NURSERY IN CANADA

#### 1. Historical Background

The care and education of infants and young children became the object of government policy in most industrial societies during the middle years of the nineteenth century. Prior to this there had been some charitable institutions and schools to care for them, such as the Church-sponsored charity and Sunday schools in England. But such schools were intended to strengthen rather than weaken class divisions. Their goal was to keep the lower classes in the state to which they were born, thus adhering to the principle of due subordination, rather than to increase the social mobility of those they attempted to educate.<sup>1</sup> Other institutions like the workhouse, the poor house and the orphanage provided care to those homeless and destitute children whose parents could not provide adequate care for them. There were generally few exceptions to such regulatory institutions. Those that did exist were mainly the work of individual humanitarians or of groups advocating popular rights.

One such humanitarian and innovator in early-childhood education was the English industrialist, Robert Owen, who in 1816 founded a preparatory school for infants

and children whose parents lived and worked in his model community of New Lanark. Speaking to the inhabitants of New Lanark, Owen described the scope and aims of such a school:

. . . the Institution has been devised to afford the means of receiving your children at an early age, as soon almost as they can walk. By this means many of you, mothers of families, will be enabled to earn a better maintenance or support for your children; you will have less care and anxiety about them; while the children will be prevented from acquiring any bad<sup>2</sup> habits, and gradually prepared to learn the best.

Friederich Froebel was another such innovator. His work began in Prussia where, in 1837, he opened the first kindergarten--a term meaning a garden where the children are the plants and the teacher the gardener. He was "the first to formulate a comprehensive theory of preschool education in connection with a detailed method of carrying it out."<sup>3</sup>

In addition to this emphasis on the importance of beginning a child's education in infancy, Froebel stressed the importance of educating the child's parents.

The custodial, educational and social value of such experiments in early-childhood education came at a time when society was showing greater interest in the life conditions and education of the working classes. Industrialization, urbanization and international conflict were creating problems that showed governments how important these classes had become to the continued prosperity and safety of capitalistic society. Fears for national safety and efficiency, along with changing attitudes to poverty and national welfare, lay behind the growing demands for the development of improved

standards of health, nutrition and moral training of the workers' children, especially as society was recognizing that these children were its future citizens, workers and soldiers.

Universal elementary education was instituted partly as a result of the efforts of social reformers, who strove to improve the standard of living among the working classes, as well as to increase national prosperity. This was particularly evident in England where, when it became obvious that industrial technology required workers with certain common, basic skills, industrialists joined forces with educational and social reformers to force the government to universalize education.<sup>4</sup>

As children were moved gradually out of the labour force and into the schools, women workers replaced them. Female labour-force-participation rates grew for this reason, as well as for various others pertaining to economic conditions, such as low wages of the male breadwinner that women had to work to supplement, or interruptions of family income due to market instability, sickness, or accidents. Whereas, in feudal society it had been usual for women to work at home and in the fields while grandparents or older children cared for the young, in the early industrial era, as more people lived in nuclear families, women were expected to stay home and care for their children themselves.<sup>5</sup>

When economic conditions such as those mentioned above began taking an increasing number of women out of

their homes and into the labour force, a cultural lag, to use Ogburn's term, occurred. While on the one hand, women were expected to stay at home, on the other hand, the economic circumstances of the working classes forced many women out of their homes in order to supplement family income. Society at that time did not provide the services or supports that would permit women to live up to the social norms set by the middle and upper classes. It eventually did provide schools to care for the older children of working parents, but the motive behind this was more to meet industrial needs than to equalize opportunities or reduce class disparities. Until such problems as these were recognized as being social rather than individual, their resolution, in the tradition of individualism, was left in the hands of philanthropists.

(a) Early North American Day Nurseries

The first day nurseries in North America appeared in the United States. Like their European counterparts, they were organized and operated by philanthropists. They appeared first in the two largest urban-industrial centres, New York and Boston, at a time when industrialization, urbanization and immigration were beginning on a broad scale. At this time the majority of working mothers came from the lower classes. It was usual for them to work due to economic necessity, since husbands' wages tended to be low and families large. But there were also other socially acceptable reasons for a mother to work: divorce, desertion,

separation; widowhood; a husband's drunkenness, laziness, unemployment or imprisonment.

Through its custodial function, the day nursery was geared to protecting the children of such working mothers, thus performing a role which had previously been that of other family members. The extended-family network so typical of rural social structures was dying out as the nucleated family structure characteristic of an urban-industrial society replaced it. This paring-down of the family rendered child-care arrangements more difficult, particularly for the immigrant family, which in many cases had left potential child-carers behind in the mother country. Many children of such families were either locked in at home or else left to roam the streets unsupervised.<sup>6</sup> Day nurseries attempted to fill this gap and protect such unfortunate, neglected children from harm or from a worse alternative, institutionalization and the family breakdown that this solution occasioned.

Coupled with the day nursery's custodial, protective and preventive functions went a concern for the health and safety of the children. By 1840 new medical discoveries were emphasizing the importance of sanitation and other health measures. It was felt that if public health were to be ensured in the growing cities, then all classes had to observe certain basic standards of hygiene. The day nursery was one place where such standards could be taught to those who needed most to learn them.

Along with this concern for public health went a

concern for social well-being and order. Rapid industrialization, urbanization and immigration were contributing to the creation of a host of social problems, such as urban squalor, poverty, alcoholism, and crime. From this perspective, the day nursery was one vehicle whereby certain social problems could be combatted and hopefully prevented; that is, through the influence and training offered by the day nursery the children of the "dangerous classes" could be taught proper habits, orderliness, and manners.<sup>7</sup> It was hoped that if these things could be inculcated into such children, the threat of their growing up to become social problems and burdens could be reduced.

(b) The First Day Nurseries in North America\*

In 1828 the trustees of the Boston Infant School opened "what might have been the first day care center in America," set up to relieve mothers of "a part of their

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\*There is some disagreement over the date of the first day nursery in the United States. Part of this confusion stems from problems in defining what the day nursery is or in defining what day care is. For example, Owen's infant school at New Harmony, Indiana (1825) included a day nursery for young children. The Boston Infant School was called a school but functioned as a day nursery, since it had been organized to support maternal employment. In later years many day nurseries contained kindergarten components, making it difficult to establish clear-cut borderlines between these two types of child-care facility. Part of this disagreement stems from what appear to be research difficulties. Steinfelds takes 1828 as the date for what could be America's first day nursery. Kerr uses 1838, while three others (Fein and Clarke-Stewart, Mayer, and The Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare) use 1854. Further research may help to shed more light on this problem.

domestic cares" and to enable them "to seek employment."<sup>8</sup> Even at this early date a concern for hygiene was evident. Children arriving at the nursery had to be "clean, washed, and dressed in whole and clean clothes"<sup>9</sup> each morning. Ten years later, in 1838, Mrs. Joseph Hale opened her day nursery in Boston, the purpose of which was to "provide care for the children of seamen's wives and widows."<sup>10</sup>

The third American day nursery opened in New York City in 1854, under the auspices of the Nurses' and Children's Hospital. Admission was restricted to children of those working mothers who had been patients at the hospital.<sup>11</sup> This Nursery for the Children of Poor Women also "provided care for the children of wet nurses (children who often died for lack of sufficient milk) and for infants of working parents."<sup>12</sup> Like the Boston Infant School before it, and in accordance with the prevailing concern for health, the nursery's emphasis on hygiene bordered on antiseptis:

Every twelve children were in the care of a nurse whose first duty was to keep her charges neat and clean. Rule Number One for the children, ranging in age from 6 weeks to 6 years, was to be perfectly clean when presented for admission. Even so, they were to be bathed and then dressed in hospital clothes when they arrived in the morning.<sup>13</sup>

Not much is written about the programmes and standards of child care in these early day nurseries. Such things were individual and "depended very much on the imagination and energy of the director."<sup>14</sup> Available written material corroborates the socialization and



assimilation aspects of day care that were referred to earlier.<sup>15</sup> The children were taught manners, to eat in silence, and to march in lines when leaving the nursery room.<sup>16</sup> One day nursery even operated on a system of token economics. "Tickets were given for punctuality, good behavior, and the proper performance of duties which were redeemable by articles of clothing."<sup>17</sup>

More information is available about the programmes and services offered in those day nurseries that operated at the end of the nineteenth century. It must be borne in mind, however, that the following description does not apply equally to every day nursery of that time.

Parent education was extremely important in day-nursery programming. It was one way to promote socially-desirable child-rearing and health standards and practices in the client families. Fathers were encouraged to visit the nursery. Mothers' clubs were formed. Through lectures and discussions they provided information on child-rearing and hygiene. Along with lessons in sewing, cooking, and English, these clubs also trained mothers as domestic servants or laundresses. The employment bureau for mothers whose children attended the day nursery became another component of the day nursery's services, although the employment was often as domestic servants. To reinforce the parent-education component and also to serve as a way to check up on the client families' circumstances, friendly visiting was introduced. Some day nurseries had lunch-and-

after-four programmes, along with emergency night care during a mother's illness and nurses to care for sick children. Drop-in services were added, as was short-term temporary care in the form of part-day care. Finally, the kindergarten was introduced into the day nursery.<sup>18</sup>

By the 1890s some day nurseries were hiring kindergarteners to assist in supervising the children.<sup>19</sup> In a narrow sense, this brought an educational and developmental aspect to day-nursery programming. But this fostered a conflict over the value of services provided by each type of child care--a conflict that may not yet be resolved. Kindergarten advocates claimed at the time that because the kindergarten emphasized education and child development, which they considered more worthwhile than custodial care alone, their service was superior to the day nursery. At the same time, though, it must not be forgotten that although the kindergarten was the product of a reform movement against the rigid tradition of custody, it gradually lost its initial meaning and became a means of socialization in middle-class conventionalism.\*

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\*It is important to note that neither the kindergarten nor the Owenite infant school played an important role in the development of early day nurseries. The French creche became their model (see Steinfelds, p. 37).

References to the history of the French creche are confusing about the origins of that institution. Kerr (p. 158) claims that it "grew up in France in the early 1900s," inspired by a garderie started in 1770 by a French clergyman to care for children whose mothers worked in the fields. She seems to be referring to the creche that first

As early as 1885 the day nursery came under attack on the grounds that it loosened family ties and encouraged mothers to laziness by taking over some of their responsibilities. Some alleged that the day nursery also weakened the father's responsibility as a breadwinner. Others argued that working mothers kept men's wages low.<sup>20</sup> Even then women were seen as a source of cheap labour. Advocates of the day nursery retaliated to these charges by pointing out that the day nursery was a form of charity, given in response to family problems--usually insufficient income--and that rather than contribute to family breakdown, it helped to preserve, maintain, strengthen and restore family functioning. They also claimed that through the examples of child-rearing it set for the parents, the day nursery promoted better parenting. It was pointed out that those children in day care could be looked upon as junior teachers of other family members, thus encouraging higher health and social standards. The defenders of day care claimed that the day nursery protected society, since it cost less than institutional care, and that the training it gave to children would hopefully lessen the likelihood of their growing up to become social burdens. Their final argument was that

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appeared in Paris in 1844 (see Forest, p. 311). On the other hand, the Canada Year Book (1932, p. 894) mentions the Creche d'Youville that operated in Montreal as early as 1754. While this source makes no further mention of this creche, it seems to be referring to the work of Marguerite d'Youville, foundress of the Grey Nuns order, and to her home for foundlings.

the day nursery was a temporary expedient which, when economic and social conditions improved, would no longer be required and therefore disappear because there would be no further need for mothers to work.<sup>21</sup>

This controversy may have helped to promote the development of professional organization among day-care providers, a move that fostered the search for commonly-accepted standards of day care. As early as 1892 there were enough day nurseries in the United States to warrant the calling of a Day Nursery Conference.<sup>22</sup> By 1898, there were 175 day nurseries in that country, "enough to warrant the creation of a National Federation of Day Nurseries, a federation which hoped 'to unite in one central body all day nurseries and to endeavor to secure the highest attainable standards of merit.'"<sup>23</sup> The National Federation raised such issues in its monthly bulletins.

In summary, then, the early North American day nursery was an organized social response to the needs of the nineteenth-century working-class family. While ostensibly a temporary expedient, the day nursery soon became a small but permanent part of urban-industrial North American society. An educative goal--the teaching of manners and hygiene--was added to its original goal of custody and protection. The appearance of the kindergarten led to further modifications. As kindergarten components were added to day nurseries, the principles and philosophy of the kindergarten changed the nature of day care. Day care became an

educational more than a custodial service. This was perhaps to be expected, since the day nursery's main clientele were immigrants, who needed to learn the prevailing language, customs and values. Finally, the attacks launched against day nurseries, as well as their growing numbers, promoted professionalization and the development of commonly-accepted standards of care and programming.

## 2. Background to the Early Day Nursery in Canada

Canada became a nation almost one hundred years after the United States. The policies adopted by the Dominion Government after Confederation contributed to rapid industrialization, urbanization, and immigration. As one author said: "The factory system had been developing slowly for years before Confederation, but the tariff of 1879 brought it on with a rush."<sup>24</sup> However, the social problems created by such rapid growth were not a concern of the Dominion Government until the 1880s. Even so, the interest shown seems to have arisen more from political considerations than from humanitarianism.<sup>25</sup> The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital in Canada that was organized in 1886 documented the plight of industrial workers, but little if anything was done to help them, despite these findings. Some provinces had already enacted factory acts to protect industrial workers, but in many cases the legislation was ignored or flaunted by many industrialists.<sup>26</sup> On the federal level, various factory

acts were introduced into Parliament during the 1880s, but none were passed.<sup>27</sup> The government was more concerned with economic and political problems and with promoting national unity. Modest pressures from individuals or groups concerned with the condition of the lower classes found little popular support. In the first place, labour organization was extremely weak, and the belief that Canada provided unlimited opportunity for all was so widespread that public opinion tended to see the casualties of economic growth as problems concerning individuals who by nature lacked the ability to adjust and prosper. Poverty (mainly suffered by immigrants and Natives) was seen in racist terms. The poor were thought to be people of inferior stock with strange habits and customs that had to be modified to Anglo-Saxon standards. Therefore, their assimilation was seen as a way of improving their economic status and most policies concerning the poor, as well as public education, had that concept at heart.

It is not surprising, then, that the plight of the working woman, and of the working mother in particular, received little or no government attention. Many women worked at the bottom rungs of the industrial ladder, where they usually did the most menial and low-paying jobs. The rationale given for this, as the above-mentioned Royal Commission documented, was that the majority of them were not forced to be self-supporting, so there was thus no need to raise their wages. It was also argued that raising their wages would cause the price of products to rise to the point

where they would cease to be competitive in the free market.<sup>28</sup> Other women worked at jobs that were considered to be traditionally female, and thus they were ignored--jobs like servant, dressmaker, teacher, farmer, seamstress, tailoress, saleswoman, housekeeper, laundress, and milliner.<sup>29</sup>

The early feminist movement did not help to improve the status or working conditions of such women, either. It was a class-bound movement, restricted to women belonging to the classes that employed and exploited the labouring classes. Early feminism was primarily a middle-class movement, devoted to winning educational and political rights for its members, and to breaking down the traditional social barriers against "respectable" women seeking work. Unlike women of the labouring classes, these women were not forced by circumstances to work; rather, work was a liberating device that would free them from roles that had become redundant. Mid-Victorian women had lost much of their importance in the home and had become mere decorations for the most part. The fight to win rights was their attempt to forge a new role for themselves, one that was more relevant to the changing times. And because these women, if they did work, entered more honourable fields of employment, the problems of those women at the bottom of the job scale were at best quite remote from their interests.

Married women in Canada worked for the same reasons as their American counterparts. They worked because of their husbands' low wages. They also worked because

divorce, separation, desertion, widowhood, a husband's drunkenness, laziness, illness, unemployment or imprisonment forced them to. Because social convention frowned on maternal employment, such women were regarded as unfortunates and their children as underprivileged and liable to become delinquents, charity cases, or both.

Society showed some concern for the plight of such children, however, The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital in 1889 documented quite vividly the terrible treatment that labouring children received at the hands of their employers. The Commission's findings shocked the country.<sup>30</sup> In 1890, Ontario set up a Royal Commission on the Prison and Reformatory System to look into the problems created by lower-class children, who were criminally and delinquently oriented.<sup>31</sup> The traditional solution of placing such children in institutional programmes like industrial schools, orphan asylums, charitable institutions or public schools had proven ineffectual, and other solutions were sought.

The Commissioners criticized the government, and society in general, for their failure to take positive steps to protect those children most in danger of becoming social pariahs, or to assist those that already were. They felt that a lack of parental control, along with a lack of proper training and guidance when young, were important factors in the development of child-welfare problems. As one solution, the Commissioners recommended that provincial



authorities encourage and assist those charitable and philanthropic associations already involved in taking steps to save underprivileged children. In fact, their findings had broad implications for the whole field of child welfare in Ontario.<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, the first day nursery in Ontario opened soon after the Commission published its findings; that is, in 1892.

(a) The First Forty Years of Canadian Day Nurseries (1892-1932)

Canada's first day nursery opened in Montreal in 1888.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, no information was uncovered on the operation of this first day nursery, and so, for a picture of the early Canadian day nursery, this thesis describes the development of day nurseries in Ontario.

While it has been claimed that the first day nursery in Ontario dates from 1890, it seems that 1892 is the more accurate date.\* At that time two Toronto day nurseries opened their doors: The Creche and the East End Day Nursery.<sup>36</sup>

The aims and objectives of The Creche were similar to those of American day nurseries of the time. First,

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\*Elsie Stapleford<sup>34</sup> takes 1890 as the date when the first Ontario day nursery opened. It is probable, however, that she was thinking of the work of Hester How, who in 1890 allowed the preschool brothers and sisters of the students at the school where she was principal to play at the back of the classroom, and in 1892 managed to interest a group of philanthropically-minded Toronto women to form a creche (probably The Creche mentioned above), which became the forerunner of the Victoria Day Nursery.<sup>35</sup>

The Creche aimed at providing day-time care to the children of mothers who out of necessity had been forced to work. Second, it tried to impose middle-class, Christian values on the children and their parents by encouraging thrift among the families served, and by having the care-givers represent appropriate behaviour models to these client families. The Creche also contained an employment bureau. Since at the time almost half of the female labour force worked in domestic service, it is likely that many of the client working mothers were sent as domestics into the homes of the middle-class, Christian women operating the nursery, as well as into the homes of their friends. Perhaps this explains why, in later years, attempts to promote independence among Toronto working mothers met with such strong opposition from these philanthropists.<sup>37</sup>

What information is available on the operation of the East End Day Nursery sheds further light on the aims and objectives of the first Canadian day nurseries. This nursery came into being as a "result of a local mission teacher's discovery that many women in the area were prevented from working because of their responsibility for their children,"<sup>38</sup> and functioned as a family support service to prevent family breakdown. The personnel of the nursery saw themselves as surrogate mothers who could provide better care to the children than the children's own mothers could. Early annual reports show the extent to which these women prided themselves on their ability to improve the

moral character of their small charges and to improve the cleanliness and appearance of the children and their homes. They also took pride in the belief that, by facilitating maternal employment, they were helping families avoid having to live in Toronto's slums.<sup>39</sup>

The establishment of further day nurseries moved along slowly, for it was not until 1909 that the West End Creche opened its doors, to be followed in 1912 by the Danforth Day Nursery and the Queen Street East Day Nursery.<sup>40</sup> By this date there were at least ten day nurseries operating in Canada: one in Montreal; five in Toronto; one in Ottawa;<sup>41</sup> two in Winnipeg (to be discussed in the following chapter), and one in Vancouver.<sup>42</sup> This period has been called a "modest Golden Age"<sup>43</sup> for American day nurseries. In fact, by 1910 in the United States there were at least 450 known day-care centres, and the day nursery seems to have become so accepted in urban-industrial society that some day nurseries even appeared in the public schools.<sup>44</sup>

In general, then, the intentions of the women establishing these early day nurseries in Canada seem to have been noble. They believed that they were contributing to the health and character of the children under their care, as well as to those of the children's families. These Canadian women saw themselves helping the newly-industrialized Canadian state by contributing to the raising of strong, healthy, productive and obedient future citizens and workers.

At a time when institutionalization was the major alternative to such child-care problems, these women believed that they were saving the state money that might otherwise have to be spent on welfare or institutionalization. In fact, this particular claim has lain behind the organization of many day nurseries, and was later used as an argument in favour of mothers' pensions.<sup>45</sup>

There were some questionable aspects to the practices of these day nurseries, however. By supplying domestics to middle- and upper-class families, the nurseries were contributing to the exploitation of female labour. Beyond a concern for imposing middle-class, Christian values, the day nursery organizers showed little interest in improving the economic status of their client families so that the mothers were not compelled to work. This view is borne out by the opposition of these philanthropists to the work of reformers like Mrs. Rowan Ellsworth.

Mrs. Ellsworth was a Toronto reformer whose ideas threatened the very existence of day nurseries. Around 1910 she tried to establish a Working Women's Protective Union, based on communal and co-operative philosophies. She envisioned co-operative apartments in buildings where the Union would set up a variety of businesses, and in which the residents--mothers and single women--lived and worked. Working mothers could thus maintain close contact with their children, who would be cared for by other Union members. In this way, Mrs. Ellsworth felt, the working mother's

independence and self-esteem could be fostered.<sup>46</sup>

Day-care organizers fought Mrs. Ellsworth's novel ideas vigorously. The Victoria Street Creche even went so far as to refuse Union members access to its facilities.<sup>47</sup> Mrs. Ellsworth's plan threatened the very existence of the day nursery, which had been founded on the premise that the working mother was an unfortunate who desperately needed its support, and that the day nursery was a temporary expedient. If the Union concept were adopted and proved successful, then these unfortunates would no longer need such charitable services and their economic circumstances would have improved. Had Mrs. Ellsworth's project succeeded, it may very well have cut off the supply of low-paid domestic servants used by the philanthropists and by other members of their class. The project did not get off the ground, however, and its fate is unknown.

Unlike World War II, which saw the rise of government-subsidized day nurseries, World War I did not stimulate the provision of such services in Canada. The substitution of women for men in wartime industrial employment was not so widespread in Canada as in other countries.<sup>48</sup> Nor was the need for industrial workers so great in Canada during this war as it was during the Second World War. Women's contribution to the war effort was consequently rather small, their most prominent role being played in the munitions industry, which employed 6,000 women.<sup>49</sup> And, unlike World War II, when large numbers of both married and

single women entered the labour force, during World War I most of the working women were single.

Nevertheless, the contribution that these working women made helped in general to break down the social barriers against their employment. Women's job opportunities were expanding, what with the growth of business technology, the white-collar and service industries. The foundation was being laid for women to pass in and out of the labour force at will, although not until after World War II did it become socially acceptable for a woman to work after marriage. Despite the fact that the franchise was extended to include women, it was mainly a vote-catching technique and did not reflect any genuine recognition of women's rights to equal political status.<sup>50</sup> But it helped to change social attitudes towards women.

The introduction of mothers' pensions in Canada in 1916 was seen by some as a recognition of society's obligation to provide family supports in times of need. The motive here seems to have lain more in the discovery by many governments, as they mobilized for war, that large numbers of people suffered from ill health, malnutrition and other problems that made them unfit for military service. The Canadian government was alarmed to learn that the morbidity and mortality rates among Canadian infants were higher than those of many other nations.<sup>51</sup> Considering these circumstances, and the limited scope of the mothers' pension programme, it seems reasonable to assume that concern for

the health of future citizens was not completely humanitarian. But mothers' pensions must have had some effect on the day nursery. Through the pensions, many sole-support mothers were enabled to stay at home to raise their families rather than go to work, although the provisions of these pensions did not allow for a life style much above one of genteel poverty.<sup>52</sup>

After the War, the Canadian Government, like other governments, began to recognize the need for social policies to protect women, families, workers, and children. In the Preamble to the Peace Treaty signed at Versailles, the signatories recognized that industrial nations had to introduce social policies for their workers. As this involved a certain cost which would affect the cost of production, and therefore the competitiveness of domestic products in international markets, specialized international organizations were maintained and new ones established to set up minimum provisions in the countries of the signatories. A large number of conventions were signed by the member nations of the International Labour Organization and other bodies developing such standards. This did not lead to uniform standards internationally, but the conventions became a political argument in favour of such policies in various countries. Canada signed many of the conventions, but few of them became domestic law due to the country's confederated political structure as well as to its lesser involvement on the international scene.<sup>53</sup>

During the 1920s there was a world-wide increase in the amount of protective legislation relating to mothers and to working women. International conventions proposed the regulation of hours of work, including night work. Health and safety conditions in certain industries were improved. By 1923 all of the provinces except Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick had minimum wage laws relating to female employment. Mothers' pensions had become common, as were programmes providing maintenance to deserted wives. Equal guardianship of children had been introduced, along with legislation on maternity protection and the protection of child labour.<sup>54</sup>

With regard to the day nursery in Canada, by 1920 the total number of day nurseries in the country had risen to nineteen. Two day nurseries had opened in Hamilton and London, Ontario, and the other seventeen were distributed as follows: one in Nova Scotia,<sup>55</sup> seven in Quebec, six in Ontario, two in Manitoba, and one in British Columbia. This compares to a total of 110 such nurseries in England at the time.<sup>56</sup> As mentioned earlier, the introduction of mothers' pensions may help to explain the modest number of day nurseries in Canada. Other reasons may be extrapolated from American events. Gesell, writing in 1923, noted that there was considerable confusion over the function of the day nursery and the standards it observed.<sup>57</sup> Studies conducted in various American cities showed that many day nurseries were being under-utilized. The reasons for this may also help to



explain why there were so few Canadian day nurseries. The distance of the day nursery from the mother's home was found to affect her use of the facility. So did the standards of cleanliness and dress required by the nursery, and the early hour at which a child had to rise if the mother were to drop him off there and get to work on time.<sup>58</sup> In fact, if one looks at Canadian studies from the 1950s and 1960s, one sees that distance and time were still crucial factors in the use a working mother made of day nurseries.

With regard to the programme of care offered in day nurseries during the 1920s, the appearance of the nursery school in Canada (1926) may have had a significant influence. With its emphasis on education and the social and intellectual development of the child, the nursery-school philosophy most likely infiltrated the day nursery, especially as some day nurseries employed nursery-school professionals, many of whom had been trained at the University of Toronto's Institute of Child Study.

It was at this time that the day nursery underwent significant changes; that is, if we are to believe what occurred in the United States. In that country, the nursery-school movement led to the increased status of and respect for all child-care workers, thus encouraging research into child development. The Child Study Movement stressed the mental health of the child, the study of children under controlled conditions, record-keeping, and mental and educational measurement. In addition, play was recognized as an important

factor in child development.

Professionalism was perhaps the most influential factor in what proved to be the decline of the day nursery in the United States. As professional nursery-school teachers and social workers began to work in day nurseries, the day nursery stopped opening its doors uncritically to all and instead became a residual service offered to problem families. While at first the nursery-school teacher upgraded the quality of care offered, she was not trained to handle infants and younger children. This resulted in the admission age being raised, thus banishing infants from day nurseries.

Through the social worker's influence, the day nursery became a service for problem families. Upholding the prevailing social norm, the social worker believed that mothers belonged at home with their children. Economic necessity as a factor was disregarded. Because they took responsibility for investigating the family situations of those applying for day care, social workers controlled access to it and therefore, in view of the above factors, may have contributed to its declining popularity in the United States. The final blow came when social workers got the power to decide where day nurseries should be located.<sup>59</sup> According to them, placing a day nursery in a low-income area might encourage mothers to work, thereby avoiding their family responsibilities--responsibilities that the social workers defined. Social work philosophy apparently did not admit that a mother might meet her family responsibilities more

effectively through working. Distance thus became a very real disincentive to the use made of day nurseries.

The early day-nursery pioneers had seen poverty and the need for day care as resulting from conditions external to the family--conditions such as urbanization, industrialization, or immigration. At the same time, though, they did not minimize the effect these factors had on the family. Social workers, on the other hand, saw poverty and the need for day care as resulting from conditions internal to the family (which they had defined as deficient or pathological). This was frequently an unrealistic stance, since many mothers worked to supplement inadequate income or to avoid the stigma and pain of welfare.

The extent of the above influences, insofar as the affected the Canadian day nursery, is difficult to substantiate. What adds to the difficulty is the fact that, while the Depression "decimated"<sup>60</sup> the number of day nurseries in the United States, there was a slight increase in the number of them in Canada, when the New Brunswick day nursery that opened in 1933 brought the national total to twenty.<sup>61</sup> One explanation for this may be that the day nursery provided a source of employment for trained professionals. Another may be that the need for day care did not diminish because the Depression in Canada did not affect women workers as severely as it affected men, and many married women were able to find work while their husbands were not. Indeed, during the Depression, female labour-force-participation rates for

Canadian women over fourteen years of age rose slightly, from 23.4% in 1931 to 24.3% in 1938, while the figure for men dropped from 90.1% (1931) to 88.2% (1938).<sup>62</sup>

(b) The Next Forty Years (1933-1973)

The Depression years saw the publication of the results of what was probably one of the first day-care studies conducted in Canada. In 1933, the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare published a small booklet on day care which, in addition to providing some historical and philosophical background, presented the results of a day-care survey carried out by the Child Welfare Council of Toronto.<sup>63</sup> The historical and philosophical material have been incorporated into the preceding discussion of Canadian day nurseries and will not be gone into here. What is most interesting about this booklet, however, is the results of the survey and the other sections of the booklet. These will be discussed here.

Of 201 families studied, over half (132) were married couples with young children. The remainder included deserted wives, separated parents, widows (and one widower), unmarried mothers and couples. The reasons why these parents required day care for their children are the same as those discussed earlier. In descending order of importance they were: the irregular employment or insufficient earnings of the father, his illness, recurrent drunkenness or desertion; and the mother's inefficient management of household income.<sup>64</sup> All shared one common problem--poverty.<sup>65</sup>

Poverty was related to inadequate accommodation and poor health. Only a small percentage of the families studied (12.6%) lived in adequate housing, while the majority (57.2%) lived in three rooms or less.<sup>66</sup> Only 12.5% of the mothers surveyed were in perfectly good health. The rest suffered from either some active ailment or else general states of poor health. Two-thirds of the children suffered from some physical ailment. Thirty-six percent were in poor general health, while ten percent had active tuberculosis or else tubercular tendencies. The investigators also learned that more than half of the families in the sample had at one time or another received financial assistance from various Toronto social-welfare agencies prior to utilizing the day nursery's services.<sup>67</sup>

Families in the study tended to be small: 41.8% had one child; 28.9% had two; 14.5% had three; 8.9% had four, and 1.5% had over six. They also tended to be young. The majority of parents were under forty years of age.<sup>68</sup> The authors of the booklet saw this as a ray of hope, since young families could, they felt, benefit from the social support offered by day care. The fact that the parents worked in order to keep their families together also distinguished them from clients of those relief, family or child-caring agencies and institutions that dealt with families that had already broken up. No relief relationship existed between the day nursery and its clients; rather, the day nursery provided a service, at the parents' request, "to children

who belong to, and remain in the custody and responsibility of the natural parent."<sup>69</sup> Finally, while half the children were preschoolers, 39.5% ranged between the ages of five and twelve years, and 9.9% were infants.<sup>70</sup>

To conclude the presentation of the survey results, the authors note that the day nursery provided a double service. On the one hand, there was the child, who required special care. On the other, there was the family situation, characterized by economic difficulty and social problems, and requiring understanding and treatment.<sup>71</sup> In fact, for the day nursery to provide adequate services, the authors said, the family and its situation was just as important as the child and his needs, since the day nursery was trying "to salvage this child for himself, his parent and his community."<sup>72</sup>

Following their presentation of the survey results, the authors discuss minimum desirable day-care standards. Here the American influence is quite clear, since the standards were taken from those set down by the National Federation of Day Nurseries.<sup>73</sup> This supports the impression that American influences on Canadian day nurseries were quite strong.

In the interests of hygiene, the authors recommend that infants be separated from the other children in the nursery, and that for them the desirable child-staff ratio be eight-to-one. This ratio was not to exceed ten-to-one for the "proper physical care and mental development"<sup>74</sup> of

the preschoolers. While no ratios are given for school-age children, it is recommended that they be housed in a separate department, "with a planned programme of recreation, under competent supervision, and with adequate equipment."<sup>75</sup> As far as general health and nutrition were concerned, the standards advised periodic medical examinations, along with immunization where necessary and the isolation of sick children. Meals were to be planned scientifically under the supervision of "qualified food workers," and toilet-training was to be made part of a general programme of habit-training.<sup>76</sup>

The influence of mental hygienists and educators was recognized by the authors as a significant contribution to early-childhood education and to the growing awareness that the preschool years were critical to the child's development and later mental health. The day nursery was considered to be a place where some of the deficiencies in the child's social and economic background could be remediated, especially as the children were underprivileged, unfortunate, or came "from a home with some problem".<sup>77</sup> These comments indicate the negative image that day care was acquiring, and probably the influence of professionals on that image.

Play was seen as an important part of programming. It was emotionally valuable as well as necessary for sensory and physical development.<sup>78</sup> Peer-group relationships were also seen as valuable. In order to ensure that these were controlled in the best interests of the children, the authors

recommended that qualified workers--especially social workers--be used in the nursery.

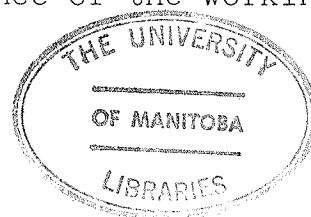
The role of the social worker resembled that of American social workers discussed earlier. It was, first, to investigate the families applying for services and to perform a liaison function between the day nursery and other social-welfare agencies. Second, since it was believed that parents using day care suffered from social and personal problems, the social worker was expected to help strengthen the family, the mother, and the home--not only emotionally, but also in terms of the home's actual physical conditions--in order "to reduce the intensity of family problems, which tend to corrode and disrupt family life".<sup>79</sup> The extent to which day care had by this time become professionalized is seen in the recommendation that the superintendent be either a qualified social worker or nursery-school professional, and that if possible the rest of the staff be highly qualified, so that a consistently high-quality service could be offered.<sup>80</sup>

Along with this concern for quality went an awareness of the importance of parent education. Since the function of the day nursery was preventive, "operating to reduce the break-down of family life and the growth of family pauperism,"<sup>81</sup> parent education was seen as a tool for modifying the behaviour and values of the client families. Once again, this component of service was essential in the delivery of a high-quality service.



In terms of financing and of the social value of the day nursery, the authors point out that high-quality day care is an investment in the future. Supporting this view, they use an analogy from the business world--the analogy between efficient and inefficient machines--and conclude that "it is unsound business practice to continue an undertaking which gives no guarantee of the desired returns."<sup>82</sup> This seems to be a combination of two common arguments in favour of day care that had been used often in the past: (1) day care is cheaper than institutionalization; and (2) cheap day care is in the long run costly. These arguments are still heard.

The authors of the booklet also pay attention to the notion that day care is a temporary expedient. According to them, day care would not be required if family and relief agencies were able to do adequate casework, if mothers' pensions were adequate, if minimum wages ensured a decent living standard, and if foster day care were included in the programmes of community child-placing agencies. At the same time, though, the authors recognize that another, "more modern" school of thought holds that even if the above objectives were realized, there would still be a need for day nurseries, "because an increasing number of those seeking day nursery care fit neither of the above categories" and because an increasing number of mothers were working out of choice rather than need.<sup>83</sup> This bears witness to the statements made earlier concerning the social acceptance of the working mother.



The appendices of the booklet are interesting, because they show in detail various aspects of the day nursery's programming, planning, operation and activities. The first appendix outlines the hourly activities of the children, from the time they arrive (somewhere between 7:00 and 8:30 in the morning) until they leave (around 5:00 p.m.). The second appendix contains sample menus, while the third shows standard serving portions for various common foods. In the fourth appendix there is a list of play equipment. The fifth shows three sample day-nursery operating budgets. A sample individual history and behaviour card is presented in the sixth appendix. The card illustrates how specialized day care was becoming, for it contained space for comments on motor ability, eating and elimination habits, play and sleep patterns, emotional behaviour, self-assertion, and knowledge of sex. The seventh appendix reiterates the need for close liaison with other social agencies, while the final one presents a book list.<sup>84</sup>

The Council's booklet is a valuable source of information for several reasons. While it provides an early source of historical and philosophical background to day care in Canada, it also shows how closely the day nursery and the nursery school resembled one another by 1933, and how professionalized the service had become. The Toronto survey results demonstrate that by that time the day nursery was performing a residual function, trying to prevent family breakdown and ameliorate potential social problems. But it

did so from the point of view that client families were problematical, if not pathological. As in the United States, the social worker by this time controlled access to day care and, if the recommendations on the qualifications of the director were followed, controlled the nursery itself. Programming had become specialized, with a particular emphasis on child development and education, yet the hygiene and health concerns of the early day nurseries were still as important as they had always been. Finally, the Council recognized how common it was becoming for a mother to work out of choice rather than need, and looked to the day when the day nursery would become a self-supporting educational and social-service agency instead of a philanthropic, charitable social agency. This indicates that as early as 1933, part of the way was paved towards greater social acceptance of the working mother, and provides a justification for the wider use of women that industry made after World War II.

By the end of the Depression, the number of day nurseries in Canada was dwindling. The number of day nurseries dropped from twenty to thirteen in the four years between 1933 and 1937. New Brunswick had closed its day nursery. There were only three in Quebec, and Ontario had only six. Manitoba, however, still had its original two day nurseries, and British Columbia its one.<sup>85</sup> But by 1940 the number of day nurseries in Canada had risen to fifteen, with the opening of two day nurseries in Ontario.<sup>86</sup>

As mentioned above, the Depression contributed to

the breaking-down of social barriers against working mothers, especially as many wives were able to find work while their husbands were not.<sup>87</sup> The wife's economic dependence on the husband was weakening, along with the traditional patriarchal family structure. The Second World War broke down these barriers further. War once again placed demands on industry for the production of crucial items. Since large numbers of men were entering the services, a labour shortage soon developed, and women were once again seen as the solution to the problem. From this perspective, women were a reserve pool of labour to be called upon in times of need.

In March, 1942, the government began mobilizing women for War work. Publicity campaigns were launched, and training programmes for female workers mapped out. Pressures were put on employers to hire female workers. Civil Service regulations were modified, thus easing the previous restrictions against the hiring of married women. The National Selective Service began the compulsory registration of all female workers, married or single, between the ages of twenty and twenty-four. All women, with the exception of graduate nurses, teachers and domestics, could seek employment only through the N.E.S. By June, 1943, however, even teachers had to comply with this regulation.

Between June, 1941 and June, 1943 the number of working women in Canada increased from 746,000 to 1,029,000, while the number of women working in various war-related industries rose from 40,000 to 230,000.<sup>88</sup> The supply of

single women workers was insufficient to meet wartime production needs. To facilitate and encourage the employment of married women, the Dominion Government made provisions for the care of these women's children. The Dominion-Provincial Agreement of July, 1942 was the policy developed to do this. It was a plan whereby the government agreed to cost-share with the provinces the development of day-care programmes for the children of working mothers. The terms of the Agreement covered three types of subsidized day care: foster-home care for children under two years of age; day nurseries for preschool children; and programmes of care for school-age children outside school hours, on Saturdays, and during school vacations.<sup>89</sup> Consistent with previous findings about the poor health of military recruits and with government concern for the health and well-being of the nation, special emphasis was to be placed on nutrition and health of children in such government-subsidized day-care programmes.

First priority for such services was given to those children whose mothers worked in war-related industries. Children of other working mothers could be accepted only if they did not comprise more than twenty-five percent of the total number of children being cared for in a particular centre, and only if there was no waiting list. This restriction was eased in 1944, when the end of the War was in sight, but such modification was kept subject to the approval of the Dominion Minister of Labour.<sup>90</sup> Despite this

later flexibility, though, children whose mothers worked on wartime production lines still had priority over others.

Provincial advisory committees were to be set up to administer the programme and oversee the care of the children.<sup>91</sup> Those groups wishing to organize day-care services in their communities could receive government assistance provided they co-operated with the provincial authorities. Co-operation meant that the group should request the province to appoint a local committee to control the operation of the planned day-care facility, or else allow the province itself to appoint one. In some cases, too, a committee could organize first and then apply for provincial approval.

Besides approving day nurseries, these committees were responsible for keeping abreast of labour-market and maternal-employment conditions. They were also responsible for periodic inspections of the nurseries, for advising the province on policy matters relating to such programmes, and for controlling the number of personnel and the services to be set up to care for the school-age children. In addition, they could control the location of the day nurseries, which were, whenever possible, to be situated near the homes of working mothers and away from factory districts. This went directly against the prevailing view of social workers that locating centres close to the homes of working mothers would encourage maternal employment, but the times demanded such a move. A wartime society could not afford the luxury of believing that all mothers belonged at home with their

children, and so the norm was modified by this development. The committees could control the choice and planning of the buildings to be used for day care, too. They could also set certain standards regarding space, sanitation, lighting, play space, equipment, and health. And to ensure that health and nutritional standards were observed, the centres were required to work closely with local boards of health.

Under the terms of the Agreement, local employment offices were required to provide counselling services to mothers who wished to work. The main purpose of this service was to make the mothers aware what day-care services were available, and to assist them in making alternative child-care arrangements where necessary. In this respect, the Agreement stipulated that there was to be no discrimination against the mothers because of their nationality, race, or religious or political affiliations.

To save on the costs of developing day-care facilities, the government recommended that wherever possible existing facilities be used. Many day nurseries and day-school programmes therefore operated out of church and school buildings, or else from converted houses. For example, in 1943 four of the six Toronto day nurseries funded under the Agreement were located in church buildings, while the other two used converted houses. The day nursery in Oshawa was located in what had once been a Children's Aid Department isolation ward for sick children.<sup>92</sup>

In November, 1942, the Canadian Welfare Council

issued a memorandum to explain to local committees the terms of the Dominion-Provincial Agreement and to point out areas where careful planning was required.<sup>93</sup> The memorandum discussed such issues as the adequate size of the day nursery, the use of existing facilities, space and health considerations, lighting and ventilation, equipment, personnel, and the daily programme to be followed. With the same attention to detail, the Council also discussed the care of infants and school-age children.

What is most interesting about this document is the light that it sheds on the changing philosophy of day care, particularly when compared to the Council's 1933 booklet, which was published under its former name of the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare.<sup>94</sup> While recognizing that in the past society had frowned on mothers working unless exceptional circumstances forced them to do so, the Council looked forward to the day when day care would become a service to be used by normal families, too. This change in attitude came about partly as a result of the entry of large numbers of married women into the labour market in response to wartime industrial needs, and partly as a result of the growing acceptance of the working mother. This normalization trend is also reflected in the government plan, which encouraged the articulation of day-nursery principles and practices with those of the nursery school. Administratively, this was brought about when the government appointed Miss D. A. Millichamp of the Institute of Child



Study to head its wartime day-care programmes.<sup>95</sup>

Ontario and Quebec were the only two provinces to sign the Agreement and set up day nurseries under the terms of its provisions. They were the two provinces producing most of the wartime products, and thus made the widest use of working mothers. British Columbia considered signing the Agreement, but changed its mind after a survey showed that there was no pressing need for such services.<sup>96</sup> Alberta signed the Agreement but did not establish any day nurseries under its terms.

The first day nursery funded under the Agreement opened in Ontario in September, 1942. By the end of the war, Ontario had opened a total of twenty-eight such day nurseries, along with forty-one school-day-care programmes and six kindergarten units. Quebec developed only six day nurseries, all of which were located in Montreal.<sup>97</sup>

The Dominion-Provincial Agreement was terminated at the end of the war. Quebec's agreement terminated on October 15, 1945. Ontario's was due to terminate on March 31, 1946, but at the request of the province it was extended three more months. Faced with the prospect of reduced day-care services, those parents using the services petitioned the provincial government for assistance; in response, the government of Ontario legislated a Day Nurseries Act that allowed such subsidized services to continue. It was the first legislation of its kind in Canada.<sup>98</sup>

The Dominion Government terminated the Agreement

because it expected that war would be followed by a depression and high unemployment. Terminating the Agreement would hopefully drive many working mothers back to their homes and make room in the labour force for men returning home from the war. Contrary to government expectations, however, a depression did not follow the war. Instead, there was a period of rapid expansion and high employment. Between 1946 and 1973 the Canadian economy expanded rapidly, at an average rate of five percent per year,<sup>99</sup> punctuated by brief recessionary periods.

Immediately prior to the end of the war, however, plans were made to move women out of the labour force and back to their homes. Here the Canadian and American developments parallel each other. Magazine and journal articles, which in both countries during the war had described how successfully mothers could work and still raise their families (praising them for it, too) began extolling the virtues of housewifery and warned of the disastrous effects on the children that substitute care could have. Misinterpretations of Bowlby's work provided a rationale for much of this negative propaganda.<sup>100</sup>

Despite attempts at discouraging maternal employment, and despite the post-war baby boom, many mothers continued to work. The hard times of the Depression, coupled with the shortages of wartime, had created a huge demand for consumer goods that stimulated economic expansion and created many new jobs. Expectations were rising faster

than wages, and many husbands' wages were insufficient to provide necessities fast enough. So it seemed logical as well as necessary that a wife work in order to raise the family's standard of living. Technological advances had reduced the significance of the wife's contribution to the family economic unit, so with less to do, work seemed a valid and important way to fill time, to socialize, and to earn the money to buy those luxuries that made life easier. The rapid growth of white-collar occupations and other non-commodity-producing sectors of the economy, where labour is lighter as well as cheaper, created a "pull" of mothers into the labour force.

Nevertheless, there was a slight post-war drop in the number of working women in Canada--from 33.2% in 1945 to 23.7% in 1950, after which the labour-force-participation rates of women began to rise again.<sup>101</sup> This may have been due both to the effect of post-war propaganda against working mothers as well as to the post-war baby boom. But by the 1950s, married women were once again entering the labour force in larger numbers. A change in the life cycle of Canadian working women had also become evident.<sup>102</sup> Formerly, the lives of Canadian women had been divided into two phases: the pre-marital phase, during which they worked; and the marital or child-rearing phase, when they left the work force permanently. A third phase now appeared, one characterized by the re-entry of married women into the labour force, generally after the youngest child in the

family had entered the public-school system. The number of married women in the female labour force had more than quintupled in the years between 1941 and 1961, rising from four percent to twenty-two percent.<sup>103</sup> Between 1961 and 1974 it more than doubled again, soaring to the point where 57.1% of the female labour force is composed of married women.<sup>104</sup>

Economically speaking, then, from World War II to the mid-1950s, Canada underwent a period of almost consistently high employment, coupled with increases in productivity and total output. By the mid-1950s these expansionary forces had lost their strength, bringing in a period of relatively high unemployment, slow gains in productivity and total output. This was caused by a loss of momentum in the American economy, by a major deterioration of Canada's international competitive position, and by a major shift in the posture of economic policies towards restraining expansionary forces. A recovery began in 1961, at which time Canada was expected to have a labour-force growth rate that was more rapid than any other industrially advanced nation of the Western world. In a reversal of the trend of the 1950s, the labour force began to grow faster than the population.

The Canadian government's concern with employment and productivity began in earnest in the 1960s. The Economic Council of Canada was established. Its reports underlined the importance of employing workers at their full

potential, and that those working below this level not only earned less, they contributed less to national prosperity. This was also the time when the War on Poverty began in the United States. It quickly spread to Canada. It is well-known and well-documented that sole-support mothers comprise one of the largest groups of the total number of welfare recipients. International influences were at work, too. As Canada began to take on a larger role in international economic and political life, not only did her social policies have to be brought up to international standards, but she began to be influenced by developments in other countries, which were devoting more attention to the place of women in their societies and establishing various commissions and studies to investigate the status of women.\*

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\*Great Britain seems to have been one of the first countries to recognize the importance of working women. In 1949, the Royal Commission on Population "reported that it would be harmful to restrict the contribution that women could make to the cultural and economic life of the nation and therefore 'a deliberate effort should be made to devise adjustments that would render it easier for a woman to combine motherhood and the care of a home with outside activities.'"<sup>105</sup> Public discussion in Sweden about the role of women began on a large scale at the end of the 1950s.<sup>106</sup> The American government's Commission on the Status of Women that worked between 1961 and 1963 upheld the same view as the British, a view that was later adopted by the President's Task Force on Women's Rights and Responsibilities (1969-1970). In 1966, the French government organized a National Commission of Inquiry to investigate the status of French women. West Germany conducted similar inquiries between 1962 and 1966, Denmark in 1965, and Austria in 1966. During this period the status of women was also investigated in Great Britain, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Belgium, and other

One of the first indicators of the changing attitude of the Canadian government to women was the establishment in 1954 of a Women's Bureau within the Department of Labour. The Bureau was responsible for keeping abreast of developments concerning female employment, and for disseminating information on the subject. It contributed informative articles on female employment to various issues of The Labour Gazette, beginning in 1954 with a series devoted to an historical review of women's participation in the Canadian labour force. In 1958 the Department of Labour conducted one of the first large-scale surveys of Canadian working married women.<sup>107</sup> With regard to day care, the survey showed that only a small number of the mothers of preschoolers made use of organized day-care facilities to care for their children. The majority did not pay for their children's care; instead, they used grandmothers, other adult relatives or neighbours to mind them. The extent of the need for organized day-care services was evident, but the demand may not have been stated openly due to the mothers' reticence over divulging the type of care arrangements they had made for their children. Cost may have been one reason for this reticence. Embarrassment

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industrial countries.

As in other areas of social policy, Canada came late to share this international concern for the place of women in society, although as early as 1957 it had been involved in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. It was not until 1969, however, that Canada followed foreign precedents by establishing a Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada.

over the adequacy of the child-care arrangements may have been another, along with people's preference for traditional child care through relatives or neighbours.

The above survey was one of the first of what was to become a "rash of studies of day care needs as they existed in different parts of the country"<sup>108</sup> that continued well on into the 1960s. Part of this stems from American influences, as Canada caught that country's anti-poverty fever and began waging its own war on poverty. The thinking behind this movement was based on the idea that poverty resulted from an inability to take advantage of the boundless opportunities that capitalistic society afforded. Educational and work-incentive programmes were heralded as ways to solve the problem. Part of this also came from a general concern over the rising costs of welfare.

In December, 1966, a War on Poverty conference was held in Ottawa. Concern for welfare costs was reflected in various studies, such as Malik's 1966 survey of the school performance of children whose families were receiving welfare assistance.<sup>109</sup> By 1968, the Economic Council of Canada was calling poverty a national disgrace.<sup>110</sup> The Council also noted, in its Fifth Annual Review, that a large number of low-income families were headed by women who, if adequate child-care facilities existed, might work and thus raise themselves and their families out of poverty and dependency.<sup>111</sup> During this period, most major Canadian cities, such as Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Calgary, conducted their own surveys to determine the extent of the need for

day-care services. These studies substantiated what the Economic Council of Canada had said.

By the late 1960s the middle classes were voicing their need for day care. They were perhaps more aggressive and active in organizing day-care services, as well as being more open to institutional substitutes for child care. The demand, according to Hepworth, came first from the universities, "where married students began to insist on day care facilities for their children,"<sup>112</sup> and spread to other groups. At the same time, the federal and provincial governments were paying more attention to child-care problems. For example, the Department of Manpower established training programmes for early-childhood-education workers, and the provinces set up similar programmes in community colleges and universities.

Most significantly, though, in 1966 the Canada Assistance Plan was legislated. The Plan came about in response to requests from the provinces for increased federal contributions to their general assistance programmes, since the provinces were concerned about rising social-welfare costs. In addition, it was felt that existing categorical programmes were too restrictive. So, in an attempt to meet the need, to co-ordinate existing legislation, and because a federal election was in the offing, the Canada Assistance Plan was devised.

The main goal of the Plan, under which all current subsidized day-care services are cost-shared, was to prevent



and combat the causes of poverty.<sup>113</sup> Day care was seen as an important child and family welfare support service that would encourage social-assistance recipients to become self-supporting.<sup>114</sup> The Plan also provided for the cost-sharing of work-activity projects that would prepare the needy for employment, of welfare services to Natives, and for rehabilitation, casework, adoption and homemaker services.

Nova Scotia in 1968 was the first province to enter a cost-sharing agreement for day-care services. At that time the Plan's coverage was not extensive enough to encourage other provinces to participate in it, since only salaries and employment benefits, travel, research, consultation, conference and seminar fees, as well as certain staff-training costs, were eligible for cost-sharing. Extra funds were provided in 1972 to cover the costs of equipment, materials, and other operating expenditures. In 1974, the terms were expanded further, as social and economic eligibility criteria were added to the Plan. Capital costs are included only indirectly.\*

Perhaps the most significant development relating to women in general, to day care and the working mother in

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\*By 1976 all provinces except the Yukon (whose participation in the Plan's provisions for day care was still under negotiation) had signed cost-sharing agreements with the federal government to provide subsidized day-care services.

Rents, mortgage payments, and depreciation of facilities are cost-shareable. In this sense, then, capital costs are indirectly cost-shareable.

particular, was the establishment in 1969 of a Royal Commission to investigate the status of women in Canada.<sup>115</sup> Its findings and recommendations had wide repercussions on all matters relating to Canadian women, and resulted in changes of legislation and the creation of public bodies to document and monitor the status of women.\*

In the section of their report that concerns women and the family, the Commissioners point out that the time is past "when society can refuse to provide community child services in the hopes of dissuading mothers from leaving their children and going to work."<sup>117</sup> They recognized that the working mother had become a permanent part of the Canadian labour scene, and that her need for adequate child-care arrangements was critical. To meet this need, the Commissioners estimated that the government would have to spend \$500 million,<sup>118</sup> an astonishingly high figure. They also urged the government to take the lead in stimulating the expansion of day care by legislating a National Day Care Act.<sup>119</sup> While this has not yet come to pass, this recommendation stemmed from the Commissioners' awareness of the

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\*These changes included the appointment of a Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, along with an Office of the Co-ordinator, Status of Women, within the Privy Council Office. A National Day Care Information Directorate was established in the Department of National Health and Welfare, responsible for collecting statistics and stimulating interest in day care. In terms of legislation, changes were made to the Canada Elections Act, the Unemployment Insurance Act,<sup>116</sup> the Canada Labour Code, and the War Veterans Allowance Act. All of these developments, along with changes in the Canada Assistance Plan to widen day-care coverage, can be related to the Royal Commission's report.

inappropriateness of the Canada Assistance Plan. The Plan was residual in nature, and the Commissioners believed that working mothers were not welfare dependents.<sup>120</sup> The government's later expansions in the cost-sharing provisions of the Plan did not alter the residual thrust of the Plan, however.

In 1970, the Department of Labour's Women's Bureau published the results of a national survey of working mothers and their child-care arrangements that it had conducted in 1967. The Bureau estimated that of the 6,035,000 Canadian children under the age of fourteen years, 1,075,000 or eighteen percent had working mothers.<sup>121</sup> According to their figures, the Bureau estimated that only 9,000 or one percent of all children of working mothers in Canada were cared for in day nurseries or nursery schools.<sup>122</sup> The rest were cared for by their fathers, by other relatives, or by non-relatives outside of the home.<sup>123</sup> Breaking this one-percent figure down, the Bureau found that as far as children under three years of age were concerned, only one percent of the total number in this age bracket were cared for in day nurseries or nursery schools, while three percent of the three-to-five-years group was in care.<sup>124</sup>

In 1972, the Department of National Health and Welfare published the results of its survey of Canadian day-care services.<sup>125</sup> The results showed that as of 1971 there were approximately 1,575 day-care programmes operating in the country, serving a total of 17,400 children of working

mothers.\* This figure represented only one and one-quarter percent of the total estimated number of children (1,380,000) of working mothers.<sup>127</sup> But the number of day-care services in Canada had increased significantly since 1956, when there were slightly more than one hundred day-care centres.<sup>128</sup>

In 1973, the Department's National Day Care Information Centre began publishing its annual reports on day care in Canada. Some of the findings of these reports are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1 shows that by March 31, 1973, the number of day-care centres in Canada had risen to 971, an increase of 289 (42.37%) over the 1971 figures. The number of children in day care had risen to 26,811 by that date, an increase of 9,500 (54.17%). Family day care was included in the statistics, showing 1,562 children in that type of care. The 1973 figures show that of the total estimated number of children under the age of fourteen whose mothers worked (1,538,000), only one and three-quarter percent were receiving day-care services.<sup>129</sup> Table 2 breaks down the 1,538,000 figure to show that under two percent of the 239,000 children under three years of age, 7.15% of the 304,000 three-to-five-year-olds, and 0.18% of the 994,000 latch-key children six years of age and over were receiving

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\*The Department does not specify the ages of the children. However, Status of Day Care in Canada (1973) uses approximately the same figure for 1971 (17,391 children) and there it represents children under the age of fourteen who had working mothers.<sup>126</sup>

TABLE 1

## COMPARATIVE GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF DAY-CARE CENTRES AND THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN DAY CARE IN CANADA, 1971-1976

No. Centres	1971	1973	Increase		1974	Increase over 1973		1975	Increase over 1974		1976	Increase over 1975	
			No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Full Day Care	543												
Lunch & after four	139												
Totals:	682	971	289	42.37	1,528	557	57.36	1,839	311	20.35	1,955	116	6.31
<u>No. Children:</u>													
Full Day Care	16,131	25,268	9,137	56.7	47,833	22,565	89.30	60,757	12,924	27.01	71,956	11,199	18.43
Lunch & after four	1,260	1,543	283	22.41	3,163	1,620	104.99	4,524	1,361	43.03	7,094	2,550	56.37
Totals:	17,391	26,811	9,500	54.17	55,181 <sup>a</sup>	28,370	105.81	69,952 <sup>b</sup>	14,771	26.77	83,520 <sup>c</sup>	13,568	19.40
Total No. Children in Family Day Care:		1,562			4,185	2,623	167.92	4,671	486	11.61	5,367	696	14.90

<sup>a</sup>This figure includes 4,185 Family Day Care spaces.

<sup>b</sup>This figure includes 4,671 Family Day Care spaces.

<sup>c</sup>This figure includes 5,367 Family Day Care spaces.

Compiled from Tables in Canadian Day Care Survey, 1972, and Status of Day Care in Canada, 1973-1976 editions.

TABLE 2

- (a) COMPARATIVE AGE BREAKDOWN OF THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN DAY CARE IN CANADA, 1973-1975.
- (b) ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN DAY CARE ACCORDING TO AGE GROUP, EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 15 OF WORKING MOTHERS.

	No.	%	No.	%	% Increase 1974 over 1973	No.	%
(a) IN DAY CARE							
Under 3	3,526	12.42	11,351	20.57	213.04	10,859	-4.37
3-5	21,742	76.63	38,952	70.59	76.46	53,730	37.94
6+	<u>1,543</u>	5.44	<u>4,878</u>	8.83	175.12	<u>5,363</u>	9.94
Totals:	26,811		55,181			69,952	
(b) NO. CHILDREN							
Under 3	239,000	under 2%	345,000	3.29		250,000	4.34
3-5	304,000	7.15	439,000	8.87		312,000	17.22
6+	<u>994,000</u>	0.18	<u>1,436,000</u>	0.12		<u>1,805,000</u>	0.3
Totals:	1,538,000		2,220,000			2,367,000	

Compiled from: Health and Welfare Canada, National Day Care Information Centre, Status of Day Care in Canada, 1973-1975 editions.

day-care services.

In its 1974 publication, the National Day Care Information Centre reported that the number of day-care centres had risen to 1,528, an increase of 557 (57.36%) over 1973. As Table 1 shows, the number of children in family-day-care situations rose to 4,185, an increase of 2,623 (167.92%). The total number of children in care increased to 55,181, a rise over the previous year of 28,370 (105.81%). Of the total estimated number of children under the age of fifteen whose mothers worked (2,220,000), Table 2 shows that 3.29% of the 345,000 under-threes were in day care, as were 8.87% of the 439,000 three-to-five-year-olds, and 0.12% of the 1,436,000 latch-key children six years of age and over.

The 1975 edition of the Centre's booklet on day care showed that by March 31, 1975, there was a total of 1,839 day-care centres in Canada, an increase of 311 (20.35%) over the preceding year. As far as family day care was concerned, the number of children in this type of care rose to 4,671, an increase of 486 (11.61%). As Table 1 shows, the number of day-care spaces (including 4,671 family-day-care spaces) rose to 69,952, an increase of 14,771 (26.77%) over the 1974 figures. Table 2 shows that of the total estimated number of children under the age of fifteen whose mothers worked (2,367,000), only 4.34% of the 250,000 under-threes were in day care, as were 17.22% of the 312,000 three-to-five-year-olds, and 0.3% of the 1,805,000 latch-key children six years of age and over.

As Table 1 indicates, the greatest increase in the number of day-care centres and spaces occurred in 1974. By 1973, there was an evident trend away from commercial day-care centres and a corresponding growth in the number of community-board-operated day-care facilities. In fact, in 1974, the number of parent-co-operative day-care facilities increased dramatically--422.81%.<sup>130</sup> But by 1975 these co-operatives were beginning to decrease in number. Commercial day-care centres seemed to be on the rise again, growing from 42% of the total in 1974 to 47.01% in 1975.<sup>131</sup> The meaning of this trend is not clear.

Possibly in response to the growing number of day-care services available in Canada, the Canadian Council on Social Development in 1973 published a set of standards for day care which it hoped would be useful in establishing day-care services.<sup>132</sup> This publication represents the first set of Canadian standards for day care (those set down by the Council in 1933 had been based on American ones). The guidelines will be discussed only very briefly here.

The guidelines fit nicely with the concept of a federally-cost-shared programme of day care; that is, they are a set of standards that can be used by each province entering a cost-sharing agreement with the federal authorities. Every aspect of day care is covered, but from a Canadian perspective, which gives the guidelines a distinctively Canadian flavour. For example, they include a discussion of day care in rural or isolated communities,



of provincial day-care structures, and the legislation of day-care services. In other words, they take into account the confederated political structure of the country, as well as social and economic considerations. But the Council does not go as far as the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada did and recommend a National Day Care Act be established. Instead, the Council urged that each province consolidate its own day care under a day-care act.<sup>133</sup>

The Council presents day care as a service for children and families, and does not point out the benefit to the economy that working mothers can have. It must be noted, though, that the Council is a private body; therefore, there is no compulsion to follow its guidelines. If the guidelines had been formulated by a government body, then the country might have moved towards a universally-standardized form of day care for the children of working mothers.

### 3. Summary

The North American day nursery developed as a philanthropic, charitable response to the needs of the working mother who, while forced by necessity to work, required someone to care for her children. The provision of such services stemmed from a growing concern and awareness of the problems that urban-industrial society created for the lower classes. The day nursery provided a custodial service, developed at a time when there were no public social-welfare policies or supports available to meet such needs. Public

schools provided some care, but only for the older children of working mothers.

Day nurseries also functioned as instruments of class or social control. The belief that the country offered unlimited opportunity to those who adapted themselves to the Anglo-Saxon standards was reflected in the day nursery. It attempted to assimilate, acculturate or socialize children from the lower classes (as well as immigrant children) by training them in the prevailing social values upheld by the Anglo-Saxon ruling classes. There was an added advantage: the day nursery cared for the children of mothers who worked as domestic servants in the homes of the day-nursery organizers and their friends. The class-bound nature of day care during these early years is quite obvious, then. The fact that the early feminist movement did nothing to help those lower-class women who worked indicates how narrow that movement's concerns were. In addition, during its early years the day nursery had been founded on what may be called the Charity Organization Society philosophy; that is, on the individual approach to social problems, which sees them as resulting not from the failure of the social or economic system, but from individual deficiencies and pathology, or from the vagaries of fate. The philanthropists did little, if anything, to improve those economic or social conditions necessitating maternal employment, and even strenuously opposed attempts of reformers to encourage greater independence and self-sufficiency among working mothers. The introduction

of social workers and nursery-school teachers into the day nursery merely reinforced the individual approach. Mothers' pensions did little to improve the situation. Instead, they had the effect of draining off any pressures that might have been building to create social change or to develop social policies to protect working mothers and their children through government-subsidized day care. Mothers' pensions thus helped to define day care as a residual service.

Government-subsidized day care first appeared in Canada during World War II, when large numbers of women were induced to go to work in order to replace men who had enlisted in the armed forces. The fact that so many women went to work and did such good jobs helped to destroy prejudices against married women working. Technological changes, business innovations and changes in the structure of the economy led to expanding job opportunities for women. These required lighter labour and paid lower wages. Women thus began to form a large component of the Canadian labour force.

International influences played an important role in the development of government-subsidized day care. Other industrial countries were upgrading the status of their women, and Canada followed their lead. Canada was also becoming more aggressive in international economic and political life. This contributed to the upgrading of social policies.

The anti-poverty fever was another factor that

provoked government action on subsidized day care. It led to the development of the Canada Assistance Plan, under whose terms day care is subsidized. It also led to the discovery that a major portion of welfare expenditures went to sole-support mothers who might work if day care were provided.

At first, the Plan's provisions were not broad enough to encourage the provinces to enter cost-sharing agreements. Gradually, though, the terms were modified to the point where almost every province has entered a cost-sharing agreement with the federal government. But the Plan is geared to combatting poverty and dependency. This has relegated day care to being a residual service. The stigma of day care has not yet disappeared.

Thus, despite the hopes of private organizations that day care would one day become universally available like education or health care, or that the day nursery would become a self-supporting educational and social-service agency, the care of the nation's preschool children has been accepted only grudgingly by governments in Canada. Statistics documenting the extent of day-care services bear out this conclusion.

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8. Steinfels, p. 36.
9. Ibid.
10. Kerr, ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Steinfels, ibid.
13. Ibid. As another example of discrepancies between researchers, Fein and Clarke-Stewart, writing about this same day nursery but using different sources, claim that the children ranged in age "from 15 weeks to 3 years" (p. 15).
14. Kerr, p. 158.

15. See supra, pp. 15-16.
16. Fein and Clarke-Stewart, p. 15.
17. Ibid.
18. See Kerr, p. 158; Fein and Clarke-Stewart, pp. 15-17; Steinfelds, pp. 42-44.
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## CHAPTER II

### THE HISTORY OF THE DAY NURSERY IN MANITOBA

#### 1. The Socio-Economic Background

The growth and development of the province of Manitoba is in a sense the story of the growth and development of the City of Winnipeg. Geographically, Manitoba in its early years was very small, and did not attain its present size until 1912. Politically, the city was the seat of government. Economically, it was the distribution and trading centre for the rest of the province, and the economic goals and objectives of Winnipeg's most powerful citizens (mostly Anglo-Saxon settlers from Ontario) influenced what happened in the hinterlands. Socially, Winnipeg was the largest town, the centre of much of the province's social and cultural life. In fact, nearly all of the more than 500,000 immigrants who came to western Canada between 1896 and 1911 had to pass through the city, and almost one-tenth stayed.<sup>1</sup>

The pattern of growth and development followed by the city and the province was generally determined by the policies set by Winnipeg's commercial and business elite. Their interests, moreover, were closely connected to the national plans designed in Ontario--plans for rapid and sustained growth that operated often at the expense of the West and the lower classes. As a result, many social

problems were ignored. Once the growth boom had slowed down, the city was faced with unresolved problems that rapid urbanization, industrialization and immigration had caused. The myth of unbounded opportunity in western Canada interfered with the development of a community consciousness of these problems, and subsequently with the development of social policies designed to meet the needs of the city's less fortunate residents. In fact, the social effects of the rapid urbanization, industrialization and immigration that were mentioned in the previous chapter can be seen at closer hand in this look at the history of Winnipeg.

Winnipeg urbanized rapidly, as it rushed to become the greatest grain-handler on the Continent. Rapid urbanization, coupled with a lack of city planning, resulted in a city that grew up like a weed on the prairies. The city divided very quickly into areas that were geographically, socially, and economically distinct. In many cases, the public and social services necessary for an urban centre were ignored. Public attention focused instead on more visible and tangible problems, like prostitution, crime, and alcoholism.

The city fathers directed their efforts to promoting policies that would make Winnipeg attractive to business and industry. By 1914, Winnipeg had become a sprawling metropolis that in terms of industrial output was surpassed only by Montreal, Toronto, and Hamilton. As early as 1911, Winnipeg had become the banking, jobbing and shipping

headquarters of the prairies, accounting for one-half of the prairie provinces' manufacturing output. Wheat was king, the largest industry, and it turned Winnipeg into the "Chicago of the North."<sup>2</sup>

Immigrants flocked to the Canadian West in search of opportunities. As a result of Dominion policies and the efforts of the city fathers, the size of the city grew quickly--from 241 in 1871 to 7,985 ten years later. In the next ten years, the population more than tripled, so that by 1901 it stood at 42,340. At this time, there was a huge influx of northern European immigrants, especially Slavs and Jews. Winnipeg's population rose to 90,153 by 1906, jumped to 136,035 by 1911, and by 1916, Winnipeg was a metropolitan city with a population of 163,000.<sup>3</sup> While Winnipeg never lost its Anglo-Saxon majority, this massive immigration of people had a profound impact on the city.<sup>4</sup> It was a young population, too. In fact, during the 1891-1916 period, over eighty percent of the population ranged in age from 0-44 years. This had a retarding effect on the pace of social change. As Artibise said: "Only as Winnipeg's population became older and more evenly balanced in terms of sex would programs (such as city beautification) that measured social, as opposed to strictly economic, returns grow in popularity."<sup>6</sup>

The pressures created by rapid immigration caused problems for residents as well as for newcomers. The immigrant family tended to be nucleated, having left relatives

behind in the old country. The breadwinner tended to be unskilled and to work for wages that were at or below the poverty level of the time, a fact that necessitated maternal employment, and at times the employment of the children of such families. The large number of immigrants faced with this life situation gave Winnipeg a large population of poor people. As the number of such persons increased, the citizens became gradually alarmed over the problems of disease, infant mortality, and juvenile delinquency, that were emanating from the poor immigrant family.

Education and the public schools were seen as one way to combat some of these problems, as well as to promote the assimilation of immigrant children. In this sense, education was more an instrument of social control and cohesion than it was a social service designed for public benefit. The history of the Manitoba School Question shows this quite clearly.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, despite the provision of schools, compulsory school attendance did not come into practice until 1916, partly as a result of learning that the illiteracy rate of Winnipeg's young was dramatically higher than the rates in other Canadian cities.<sup>8</sup>

Public health was another social policy designed as a response to the potential threat to health that the immigrant class posed. Studies of periodic epidemics had shown that disease came from the working-class or immigrant quarter. While early policies that were developed protected the ruling classes more than they met the needs of the less

fortunate, the city public health department was a progressive force in the community. It stimulated a more humane outlook on the problems of the poor and the immigrant family, along with more effective public action to meet the needs of citizens, particularly those in the North End ghetto.<sup>9</sup>

In general, though, it was the numerous voluntary and charitable organizations that were left to meet the social needs of these groups, because during these early years the government either ignored or did not wish to deal with such problems. Those setting policies were more interested in developing policies for economic and industrial expansion. The many ethnic groups had their own social and cultural organizations that provided assistance to people in economic or social distress. Agencies like the Margaret Scott Nursing Mission and All People's Mission, which attempted to meet some of this distress, showed that not all Anglo-Saxons in the city were so compellingly concerned with economic growth and private profit. But, the opinion of those self-interested groups always prevailed and influenced the general pattern of services for those in distress:

In the final analysis it was the overriding commitment to growth that provides the most profound reason for Winnipeg's failure to develop an all-encompassing community life in the first forty years of its history. With economic growth the unquestioned priority, few public resources were left over to guarantee for all in the city a satisfactory standard of living. In 1914 the poor of Winnipeg lacked steady, well-paid work, adequate housing, and decent medical care. They were segregated into one-third of the city, ill-protected



from crime, their children without good schools or adequate recreation. The vast majority of Winnipeggers, the working and middle class, lived in adequate but ugly shelters and were over-regimented by the conditions of work and the constraints of their urban environment. Despite the protection of unions for some and affluence for others, the mass of Winnipeggers lacked any effective means to humanize their lives.<sup>10</sup>

## 2. The First Thirty Years of the Day Nursery (1909-1939)

During the first thirty years in the history of the day nursery in Winnipeg, both the city and the province continued to expand. Immigration had slowed down, and the process of assimilating the newcomers proceeded, albeit slowly and with much difficulty. Just prior to the First World War, there was a severe economic depression in the city, during which unemployment intensified the other problems that had been developing. The period up to the 1920s is one of greater social concern and reform, particularly after the election in 1915 of a Liberal reform government that introduced such things as compulsory school attendance, mothers' pensions, and the franchise for Manitoba women.

After the war and the 1919 strike, there was an industrial slump and unemployment reappeared.<sup>11</sup> This problem continued on and off through the 1920s. In terms of economic development and expansion, however, Manitoba's economy diversified. The year 1927, for example, saw the establishment of some fifty-six new industries in the province.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, wheat was still king.

As far as the female labour force during this period is concerned, statistics show that in 1911 the city's female

Robinson emphasized learning through the use of hands, and social development through play.<sup>16</sup> A kindergarten was even included in the school's operations. Unfortunately, Miss Robinson did not keep a scrapbook, which might have been a valuable source of information on early day care in Manitoba. In addition, it is difficult to assess the impact that Miss Robinson's school may have had on the city's day nurseries and kindergartens during the twenty-five years of her work until 1959, when she retired.

(a) The Winnipeg Free Kindergarten Association (1892-1951)

It is worthwhile to examine the main features and operations of Winnipeg's first kindergarten and child-care facility.<sup>17</sup> The function and purpose of this kindergarten were similar to those of Canadian day nurseries and kindergartens described in the previous chapter. Moreover, a brief examination of this kindergarten will help to point out some of the similarities between it and the day nursery that were discussed earlier. The main features of this kindergarten will be described in the following paragraphs.

The Winnipeg Free Kindergarten Association (its original name had been the Kindergarten Settlement Association of Winnipeg) accepted children between the ages of three and eight years. There is some overlap with the public-school system here, since the Manitoba Statutes of 1890 considered a kindergarten to be a facility providing care to children between the ages of three and six years.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, though, it was a private kindergarten and therefore not subject to the provisions of the Act. The public schools were crowded at the time, and some school-age children were enrolled in the kindergarten. In fact, some public-school applicants were forced to wait a year or two before they could enter the school system,<sup>19</sup> so in this sense the kindergarten provided a pre-primary education to some of those school-age children unable to get into the schools.

One of the reasons behind the establishment of this facility in 1892 had been a concern for young children who were being left unsupervised and who were roaming the streets of Winnipeg unless an older child cared for them.<sup>20</sup> Yet, despite this concern, the kindergarten took children for half-days only. In this respect, it was not meeting the problem head-on and solving the question of supervision of preschoolers and their young caretakers. Perhaps this is a shortcoming in the thinking of the time. As the preceding chapter showed, day-nursery organizers generally ignored the problems that caused working mothers to need their service. The same irony can be seen in the case of the Winnipeg Free Kindergarten Association facility. Organized out of a concern for child supervision and safety, the kindergarten provided part-day care only. For the other half-day, the children were left as unsupervised as they ever were.

The educational goals and objectives of the Association's kindergarten resembled those followed by

early Canadian day nurseries. Like day-nursery care-givers, the kindergarten teachers tried to impose middle-class, Christian values and habits on their small charges, and to train them "to bend their faculties in the right direction, to teach them the first principles of correct living--mainly good manners, habits of cleanliness and industry--and to train them to exercise their powers of choice wisely."<sup>21</sup> Considering the fact that the kindergarten first located in the North End of the city, and that at the time there was a concern for assimilating immigrant families and children, the kindergarten seems to have been one way to promote such assimilation. It was in this sense a private arm of the public-school system.<sup>22</sup>

The kindergarten proved quite popular--so much so that while it opened in 1892 with five pupils, five months later there were forty-seven, and by 1907 the Association was operating three kindergartens in the city, with a total enrolment of 355 children. Like many day nurseries described in the previous chapter, the kindergarten sent representatives to visit the students' homes. This practice ensured that the children were receiving proper care at home and that "correct" social values were being upheld. The introduction of mothers' meetings was another way to reinforce this, for at these meetings the mothers were taught how to provide best for their families' material needs. Here, too, the immigrant mother could make friends and learn the English language.

The American influence on early-childhood education is quite clear here. The kindergarten's first teachers had been trained and educated in American kindergarten practices and principles. They trained other teachers who eventually worked in kindergartens across western Canada. While for approximately the first twenty years of its operation the kindergarten adhered to Froebelian teaching principles, its programme was gradually modified according to American developments. For example, the concept of language development and Montessori teaching methods appeared in Winnipeg's kindergarten quite soon after their appearance in the United States. The same pattern of influence was followed when the Child Study Movement became popular.

The length of time the kindergarten operated indicates its popularity and the need in the community for such services. Established in 1892, the kindergarten functioned until 1951. By that time, public-school kindergartens had become common, and several were located in the same area as that served by the Association's facility. Feeling that there was no longer a need for its services in the community, then, in 1951, after fifty-nine years of serving community children, the Winnipeg Free Kindergarten Association disbanded.<sup>23</sup>

Having seen the main features of the kindergarten in the private sector, let us now look at some private day nurseries.

(b) The Joan of Arc Day Nursery (1909-1968)

In 1909 two day nurseries opened their doors to Winnipeg children: The Mothers' Association Day Nursery (now called Day Nursery Centre, Incorporated) and the Joan of Arc Day Nursery, operated by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. Like the Winnipeg Free Kindergarten Association facility, the Joan of Arc Day Nursery also operated for fifty-nine years before closing its doors. This day nursery will be discussed first, because there is little information available about its operations in comparison to what is available on the Mothers' Association Day Nursery. All that could be located were a few newspaper articles over the years, along with some material in the archives of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

Like Winnipeg's first kindergarten, the Joan of Arc Day Nursery functioned in the city's North End district. It was a component of the sisters' mission-house activities which (like All People's Mission, established in 1892) were directed to helping the poor and immigrant families in the North End.<sup>24</sup>

The bulk of the information available on the operation of this day nursery dates from 1959. By that time the nursery operated between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. It accepted children between three and six years of age, although an occasional exception could be made for children two and one-half years of age. Children were not admitted on a temporary or casual basis. None were refused admission on racial or religious grounds. By 1959, sixty-five percent of

the children were Roman Catholic, twelve percent were Greek Catholic, nineteen percent were Protestant, and three percent were of other faiths. The nursery population was composed mainly of children of northern European extraction, and reflected a broad ethnic, racial and religious spectrum: twenty-one percent Hungarian; twenty percent Ukrainian, eighteen percent English, twelve percent Yugoslavian, and the remainder were German, French-Canadian, Negro, Italian, Polish, Jewish, Metis, Japanese, Chinese, Portuguese, or Maltese.<sup>25</sup>

All children were required to undergo medical examinations prior to admission. While the capacity of the nursery varied from fifty-five to sixty children, in 1959 the sisters cared for an average of 54.5 children per day, collecting an average daily fee of seventy-three cents on actual operating costs per head of \$1.40 per day, or \$7.00 per week. As far as the need for service was concerned, thirty percent of the children were in care because a sole-support mother worked, sixty-two percent were in care because of the family's financial need, and only seven percent received care because of their own special need for such services. A home-visiting programme was maintained, and home visits by a public-health nurse were encouraged. In terms of staff deployment, one sister functioned as a social worker, while two permit teachers were hired to supervise the children.<sup>26</sup>

There is some confusion over when and why the Joan

of Arc Day Nursery closed its doors. One source maintains that the nursery closed on January 4, 1968.<sup>27</sup> This was apparently because the Vatican in 1967 had decreed that all its institutions return to their original aims. The sisters reassessed their goals and decided that a missionary order should do missionary work. Lack of community support made their decision to close inevitable. On the other hand, though, the Social Service Audit states that the nursery closed in 1966, for reasons that were "not related to the need for its services."<sup>28</sup>

(c) The Mothers' Association Day Nursery (1909-present)

The Mothers' Association was formed in 1908, and had developed out of a conference held to discuss the question of juvenile delinquency and other youth problems in the community.<sup>29</sup> Its goal was the "upbuilding of a more enlightened motherhood, to co-operate with all organizations that had for their object the welfare of the boys and girls of the community and opposing all influences that would endanger their lives and characters."<sup>30</sup>

The mothers' first efforts were directed to "the welfare of the boys and girls of the community" after learning that the city had a great need for suitable "recreational facilities, play space and supervision."<sup>31</sup> A supervised playground was established as a demonstration project. The ladies vigorously promoted the establishment of playgrounds throughout the city until the city Parks Board eventually took responsibility for them. The demonstration project and



the ladies' efforts may also have influenced the city's decision in 1909 to set up a total of eight public parks.<sup>32</sup>

Once they had improved the city's recreational facilities for boys and girls, the ladies looked about for something else to do. Public health questions were just then becoming a major concern of some citizens, mainly through the efforts of the city's progressive health department, whose statistics on infant mortality in Winnipeg were startling.<sup>33</sup> Rather than confront economic questions (the health department, in "a major breakthrough in the thinking of the time" reported that "economic conditions are responsible for a large proportion of the infant mortality"<sup>34</sup>), the Mothers' Association turned its attention to combatting those influences that threatened the lives and characters of children. As a result of learning of the death of a young child who, while in the care of an eight-year-old had smothered to death in its cot, the Association decided to open a day nursery. It opened one on March 12, 1909, on Stella Avenue in the heart of the North End.

Like other Canadian day nurseries described in the preceding chapter, the Mothers' Association day nursery provided care to children whose mothers were forced by circumstances to work. Children between the ages of a few months and seven or eight years of age were cared for. Like the Winnipeg Free Kindergarten Association, the Mothers' Association Day Nursery, by taking children up to the age of eight, picked up the slack that the schools could not handle.

The nursery's programming reflects the social conditioning aspects so prevalent in other contemporary Canadian day nurseries. The children were taught cleanliness, regularity, and Canadian customs. The older, larger children were taught patriotic songs, the "leading principles of the Dominion, together with those of the Empire, so that when they enter public school they will have a knowledge of those things."<sup>35</sup>

The Mothers' Association was active in one other area bearing on child care--the legislation of mothers' pensions. Prior to the enactment of this legislation in 1916, the Association had undertaken the support of a couple of widows and their families to demonstrate to the government that this form of care was cheaper than institutionalization. The passing of such legislation may have affected the future growth of day nurseries in Winnipeg until the late 1950s; that is, as Forest already noted,<sup>36</sup> mothers' pensions allowed many mothers to stay at home with their children instead of being forced to go out to work. On the other hand, the Manitoba legislation applied to citizens only, thus excluding most immigrants. This may help to explain why the community still needed day nurseries.

(d) The Last Pre-War Developments (1939-1940)

In 1939, Miss Nan Ord, a trained nursery-school graduate, conducted a survey of Winnipeg's day nursery facilities. A year later, Miss Marjorie Moore, directress

of the Family Bureau, supervised another study of day care, one that this time was conducted by Mrs. Allan Bowman, a temporary caseworker with the Bureau. Unfortunately, the results of these studies are not available. While they are mentioned in the Minutes of the Winnipeg Council of Social Agencies, they were impossible to locate. All that the Minutes contained was a final report on the two studies, delivered to the Council's board of directors in 1940.<sup>37</sup> The two studies will be discussed in the following paragraphs, on the basis of what information this final report contains.

The Budget Committee of the Community Chest had requested both studies. Naturally, the main concern was for the children--particularly their mental, social, and physical development. This was the focus of Miss Ord's study, which had been presented to the Council's board of directors on November 19, 1939.<sup>38</sup> Miss Moore, on the other hand, had been a member of the Council's long-standing Committee to Study Day Nursery Services. Her study dealt with the families of the children--whether the day nurseries understood their problems, and whether those families with problems were referred to the appropriate social agencies for treatment. The study was begun in March, 1940, and lasted six months.<sup>39</sup>

One of the studies had learned that children in the day nurseries were receiving no health inspections from either a doctor or a public-health nurse. Subsequent arrangements were made with the public health department to provide regular medical inspections of the two day nurseries, as well

as the Winnipeg Free Kindergarten Association facility, which was also surveyed.<sup>40</sup>

While the need in the community for the kindergarten was established, there were problems with regard to the Joan of Arc Day Nursery. These problems concerned primarily other programmes offered by the sisters. The Kindergarten Association was praised for having a "vigorous" board of directors, and for being "keenly alive to the changing social conditions of recent years;" it was also "particularly successful in attracting and retaining the services of volunteers," and its work with families was carried on with "devotion."<sup>41</sup> Despite this praise, however, the committee that summarized the findings of the two studies questioned whether or not the kindergarten should be funded through the school system.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, in 1943, kindergartens began to appear in Winnipeg's public schools.

### 3. The Next Thirty Years (1939-1969)

During World War II, only four percent of Dominion war work was allocated to Winnipeg. With such a small percentage of the total war work, industry's demand for female workers to replace men in the services was much lower than it was in either Ontario or Quebec. As a result, there was less demand for married women to enter the labour force. The need for day-care services to children of mothers working in wartime industries was thus low, and Manitoba did not take advantage of the terms of the Dominion-Provincial

Agreement. It had also been learned that for the most part the majority of working mothers had school-age children, and that lunch-and-after-four care was therefore more important than preschool day care. Nevertheless, during this period one day nursery did open for a brief time in Winnipeg. In 1943, the members of the Zeta Tau Alpha fraternity started a day nursery as a demonstration project.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, nothing could be located about its operation.

In 1942, the Canadian Welfare Council began a survey to determine the country's need for day care. This was undertaken in order to furnish information to the National Selective Service on the characteristics of the married female labour force in Canada. A Winnipeg survey was carried out, but by 1943 the Council of Social Agencies decided the school-survey method it had used for collecting data was not sufficiently inclusive. The Council considered using a block-survey approach, but eventually scrapped the idea as being too unwieldy. In fact, by 1943 the Council was not sure if there was any need at all for more day-care services in the province, and its board sought the opinion of the National Selective Service.<sup>44</sup> The results of this correspondence are not known. But the preliminary material assembled by the Council out of its school survey showed that of a total of 3,589 children whose mothers worked, only 374 were preschoolers. As for the mothers themselves, 1,351 worked full-time, and only 732 worked part-time.<sup>45</sup>

The post-war situation in Manitoba paralleled that

of the rest of Canada during this period. Manitoba entered a period of high economic growth and employment, as between 1946 and 1950 some 200 new operations opened in the province.<sup>46</sup> But the population increase of the province was the second lowest in Canada, after Saskatchewan.<sup>47</sup> This may help to explain why any demands for more day-care services were unnoticed or unexpressed. In general, though, Manitoba's married women went to work to improve the family's standard of living.<sup>48</sup>

(a) Day Care During the 1950s

During the 1950s there was increased activity and interest in day care in Winnipeg. The foundation for this seems to have been laid by the new wave of immigration affecting the city. This time, rural residents were flocking to Winnipeg, so that by 1961 almost half the provincial population had located in metropolitan Winnipeg.<sup>49</sup>

In 1954, the Mothers' Association conducted a self-study that resulted in the organization changing its name to Day Nursery Centre, Incorporated. A new director was hired--Mrs. Gretta Brown, a graduate of the Toronto Institute of Child Study. She worked full-time for the Centre, until her recent retirement, and strove diligently to improve the image of day care through the professionalized services that the Centre offered to children.

Social work services became an integral part of the Centre's operations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the introduction of social workers to day nurseries

contributed to the negative image that they developed. One of the responsibilities of the Centre's social worker was to screen families applying for service, in order to ensure that there was a definite need for the service--a need that the social worker defined. The social worker also tried to ensure that the day nursery was not becoming "a dumping ground for parents who desert the child to put more money in the family pocket-book."<sup>50</sup> This is difficult to understand without reference to a dogmatic view, according to which working mothers were not pushed into the labour market out of a "real" need, but because of greed for luxuries. The nursery was not to serve such mothers, but those who had to work for the subsistence of their families.

Under Mrs. Brown's direction, the Centre expanded. In 1955, through various grants, the Centre opened a new day nursery at 650 Broadway Avenue. This was followed in 1970 by the opening of a nursery in Holy Trinity Church, and in 1971 by the opening of a new building constructed to replace the old Stella Avenue unit, which for sixty-two years had been the original day nursery used by the Centre.

In its 1960 United Way budget presentation, the Centre appended an analysis of its services for 1959.<sup>51</sup> The organization's two facilities cared for a total of 142 children, who came from 132 homes. The social situation in those homes was as follows: thirty-three of the total number of 132 parents worked to supplement family income; twenty-seven children needed day care because of a disturbed home situation, while four required day care due to their

special needs. As far as the family being known to other social-service agencies is concerned, sixty-five of the 132 families were not known to the Confidential Exchange, while forty-one were known but inactive cases, and only twenty-six were active.<sup>52</sup> This analysis also pointed out how professionalized the service had become. It was primarily educational in nature, directed towards meeting the child's mental, emotional, and physical needs. But it was also preventive, being geared to helping those children who showed early signs of disturbance due to broken homes or other social problems.<sup>53</sup>

(b) St. Joseph's Day Nursery

In April, 1957, the Sisters of Providence opened St. Joseph's Day Nursery, thus becoming the third organization in the city to open a licensed day nursery. The Sisters had learned during the 1950s that their buildings were emptying rapidly due to a change in the philosophy of institutional care that had supported the need for their orphanage. Rather than close the orphanage, which had operated since 1938, the Sisters decided to branch out into the field of day care. There were twenty-five children enrolled in the day nursery when it opened. Shortly afterward, the number increased to thirty-six (twenty-one in the senior nursery, and fifteen in the junior one).

Feeling that there was a need for a full-day kindergarten, too, the Sisters received funding from the Winnipeg



Foundation in August, 1967, for a six-month pilot project. The kindergarten soon reached full capacity, and by 1969 it was being funded through the Special Dependent Care provisions of the Social Allowances programme.<sup>54</sup>

One of the most significant aspects of this operation is the discovery by the Sisters that by the 1960s the characteristics of their clientele had changed. This is important, because it helps to substantiate the claims made in the preceding chapter that the demand for more day care increased during the 1960s, when the middle classes began to make use of such services. When the St. Joseph's Day Nursery first opened, most of the families served represented the working poor. By the latter part of the 1960s, however, most came from the middle classes. The Sisters speculated on the meaning of this. They felt that this group of parents was more aware of social change and better able to formulate clearer objectives for themselves and their families. They also had higher expectations, and were working in order to earn the money that would provide their children with better lives.<sup>55</sup> This corroborates Hepworth's claims,<sup>56</sup> and also shows the class-bound nature of day care prior to this period.

(c) Day Care During the 1960s

The first significant development in day care during this period occurred in 1962, when the Community Welfare Planning Council published the results of a study it had

conducted to determine the need for day-care services in the city of Winnipeg.<sup>57</sup> The stimulus for the study had come from the June, 1959 report of the Areas in Transition Committee of the Council. This is a most interesting document, and will be discussed before looking at the Council's 1962 report.

In the spring and summer of 1958, the Council received three requests for "consultation and study of the social needs and community services in specific areas in or near the changing down-town areas of Winnipeg."<sup>58</sup> As a result of these requests, the Areas in Transition Committee was set up.

With regard to the inclusion of day care in its study, the authors of the Areas in Transition Committee report noted that "Ministers and Priests, School Principals, Nurses and Social workers expressed great concern for the large numbers of children of working parents who were without supervision during extensive periods each day."<sup>59</sup> In other words, the problem of children roaming the streets unsupervised had reared its head again after a fifty-year hiatus.

The Committee recommended immediate study of the day-care needs of the preschool and school-age children of working mothers "in order to provide adequate care and supervision of all Greater Winnipeg children requiring such service."<sup>60</sup> As a result of this recommendation, the Welfare Planning Council established another committee to investigate the problem further. The new committee soon discovered that

a review of the literature available on working mothers in Winnipeg was impossible, because of a severe lack of specific information on them. Rather than adapt information from American or other Canadian sources, the committee decided to undertake its own survey.

First, the committee divided the city into ten geographical districts. Out of a total of 70,325 dwellings in the city, a two-percent sample (1,406 dwellings) was selected for detailed investigation. Of the 1,179 working and non-working wives interviewed in this two-percent sample, fourteen percent were working mothers, and fourteen percent were childless working wives. Thirty-six percent of the sample was comprised of mothers who did not work, while another thirty-six percent was comprised of non-working, childless wives.<sup>61</sup> In other words, fourteen percent of the total number of mothers worked. Put another way, twenty-eight percent of the married women in the survey worked, while seventy-two percent did not. Projecting the figures for the city as a whole, the committee estimated that there were approximately 16,000 children in the city whose mothers worked. The committee estimated that of this number, twenty-five percent, or 4,000, were under six years of age; 6,000 ranged in age from six to ten years, and another 6,000 were between eleven and fifteen.<sup>62</sup>

Concerning why the mothers worked, sixty-seven percent of those interviewed said they worked primarily to earn money. A further twenty-five percent gave reasons such as

boredom, career aspirations, or loneliness.<sup>63</sup>

The committee's conclusions are worth looking at. There were only 307 children in the sample who had working mothers. Just over half (fifty-eight percent, or 178) were receiving adequate care. Two percent (six children) were in unknown care situations. Seventeen percent (fifty-two children) required improved care, and eighteen percent (fifty-six children) were in desperate or acute need of improved care. Projecting these figures for the city as a whole, the committee estimated that 9,434 children did not need improved care, but 2,968 fit into the category of acutely needing improved care.<sup>64</sup>

While this survey documented the extent of the need for day care in Winnipeg, it did not lead to any rapid expansion in the number of day-care spaces in the city. One reason may be assumed from the manner in which the data were presented, showing that the seriousness of the problem was assessed on the basis of the number of children involved. As the committee said, the number of children that did not need improved care was, "happily, the largest."<sup>65</sup> Only eighteen percent of the total were in a critical situation; since the figures were projected from such a small sample, there was the possibility that they were skewed in either direction. Another reason may have been the finding that just over one-quarter of the mothers with children worked, while almost three-quarters did not. Statistically-speaking, the need could well appear to be far from critical.

In any event, the later development of day-care services in Winnipeg was slow, a pattern that the following will demonstrate. The committee's first recommendation was for a pilot project to provide lunch-and-after-four care be established in the southern section of the city's North End.<sup>66</sup> The first such programme to appear in the city opened in 1965, when Westminster United Church, far from this area, set up a lunch-and-after-four programme. Other programmes followed: in September, 1966, one opened at Home Street United Church; the following year saw one established at Crescent-Fort Rouge United Church; and in September, 1969, Windsor Park United Church established one.<sup>67</sup>

In its second recommendation, the committee suggested that wider use be made of family day care. In 1965, the same year that the first lunch-and-after-four programme started, the Family Bureau began a two-year family-day-care pilot project.

Thirdly, the committee suggested that a training course be established for "nursery school personnel, foster day parents and potential Day Nursery staff."<sup>68</sup> The Extension Department of the University of Manitoba was seen as "the first step in the development of a credit course in child study."<sup>69</sup> The University's "thunder" was stolen by the Manitoba Institute of Technology (now Red River Community College) which in 1966 established a two-year pilot project course to train child-care workers. It soon became a regular course, and was followed later by the University of Manitoba's

Faculty of Education, which set up an early-childhood-education course to train nursery teachers in the public-school system.

The committee recommended fourthly that the municipal government department responsible for setting and maintaining day nursery and nursery school standards create the position of a "consultant qualified in early childhood education."<sup>70</sup> This has not yet been done on a municipal level, but in 1971 the provincial government hired such a consultant to assist it in planning the current day-care programme. Mrs. Elaine McLeod was the appointee, and at that time she worked as an early-childhood-services co-ordinator in the planning and research division of the Department of Youth and Education.<sup>71</sup>

Finally, the committee recommended the creation of public awareness about the problems in day care. This was to be promoted through a public-education programme organized through "the co-operation of schools, churches, industry, YMCA, YWCA, neighbourhood houses, employee groups, etc."<sup>72</sup> The purpose of such a public-education programme was to make the community aware of the "possible ill effects of inadequate care on young children."<sup>73</sup> This has not been done on any large scale.

To conclude this discussion of the report on day care, the committee's findings corroborate certain statistics from the 1961 Canadian Census. Ostry, using data from this Census in her study of female employment in Canada, found that as late as 1961, the majority of married women in Canada did not work.<sup>74</sup> Marriage at that time still acted as an

"extremely powerful" deterrent on female labour-force participation.<sup>75</sup> The 1961 labour-force participation rate for married women in Canada stood at 25.5%, while the 1964 figure for Manitoba was 24.1%.<sup>76</sup> From the early 1960s on, then, the number of working married women increased rapidly, both nationally and provincially, so that by 1971 the national participation rate was 40.4%, and the 1974 provincial figure was 36.7%.<sup>77</sup>

As was mentioned earlier, the Family Bureau established its family-day-care pilot project in September, 1965. The purpose of this programme was to provide an option to nursery care for preschoolers, particularly for those babies and children under two years of age, who were generally ineligible for regular day care in nurseries, and for those children "requiring individual care for special health or personality reasons."<sup>78</sup> This programme was more flexible than day-nursery care, since family-day-care homes could be located in the children's own neighbourhoods. The Family Bureau selected, screened and approved the homes, matching the caregivers to the children and their needs. Because so many of the children in the programme came from single-parent families, the Bureau's staff tried to place them in homes where the family was a two-parent one.

The City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department underwrote the per-diem costs for those families where the mother was the sole supporter. Two-parent families were asked to contribute to the cost of care along a graduated fee scale.<sup>79</sup>

For the first year of the Family Bureau's programme, a total of twenty children from thirteen families received family day care. When the provincial government took over the funding of the programme in October, 1968, the programme expanded quickly.<sup>80</sup> But the demand for family day care exceeded provincial estimates, so early on in 1969, the province cut back on its financial assistance, forcing the Bureau for almost a year to reduce the number of children in the programme by half. In 1970, however, the province purchased enough days of care to enable an average of fifty children to receive family day care during any one month.<sup>81</sup>

At the annual meeting of the Day Nursery Centre held in March, 1968, a city alderman suggested that the federal, provincial and municipal governments co-operate to provide capital costs for building day nurseries in neighbourhood social-service centres.<sup>82</sup> He suggested that without such services, urban renewal efforts to raise the standard of living of core-area residents might fail. But it seems that little was done at the time on the basis of this approach, which has since become popular. Nevertheless, by December 31 of that year, the city Council was considering changes to licensing requirements for day nurseries.<sup>83</sup>

A special sub-committee of the Council's Health and Welfare Committee studied the question for three months before presenting its report and recommendations. The sub-committee suggested additional regulation for the licensing of what it termed a "modified day nursery."<sup>84</sup> This term



referred to a day nursery caring for more than four, but less than fifteen preschoolers. The modified day nursery was to be a custodial facility, not a nursery school or kindergarten, and if the number of children in care exceeded eight, there were to be two adults to supervise them.<sup>85</sup> The welfare institutions by-law was amended in 1971 to include the modified day nursery.<sup>86</sup>

The final development in this chapter on the history of the day nursery in Manitoba prior to 1969 is the appearance of the report of the Community Welfare Planning Council's Social Audit Committee. The report was published a month before the 1969 election. It had been a long and arduous task to prepare the report, involving almost four years' work and the study of 278 agencies, 203 of which were voluntary.<sup>87</sup>

The Committee adopted the position that the need for more day-care services in the city had become urgent since the publication in 1962 of the Council's report on day care. It proposed a system of day care whereby Day Nursery Centre would operate all public day nurseries in the city, thus centralizing their administration, staffing, and training. The purpose was to guarantee a uniform standard of service and reduce administrative costs, so that a wider range of staff could be provided to give a more effective service.<sup>88</sup> The Committee also recommended that the provincial government assume responsibility for subsidizing public day nurseries.<sup>89</sup>

When the Committee was studying the question of day

care, there were only four licensed, non-profit day nurseries in the city. With only four of them in existence, centralizing appeared simple.

In terms of lunch-and-after-four care, the Committee once again recommended that Day Nursery Centre be responsible for planning and administering them.<sup>90</sup> The Centre already provided consultative and social work services to such programmes already operating in the city, so once again it seemed logical that the Centre co-ordinate and standardize these programmes.

The Committee report was delivered to the sponsors and the public on June 17, 1969, just eight days before the election that brought the New Democratic Party to power. Because of problems inherent in a change of governments, no work was done on the Audit until about a year after it was published.<sup>91</sup> Since that time, there has been considerable controversy over some of the Committee's findings, and the recommendations relating to day nurseries were not adopted.

#### 4. Summary

The history of day care in Manitoba to 1969, presented in this chapter, in many respects parallels the history of day care in Canada that was discussed in the preceding chapter of this thesis. In both cases, the motive behind the development of such services came from a concern for the care, custody and protection of the children of working mothers. At the same time, too, both chapters have

underlined the role that social control or assimilation played in early day care. The picture of early Winnipeg day care is a closer view of that process. In Winnipeg, the day nursery and the early kindergarten were what could be called a private arm of the public-school system, particularly since they cared for older children who could not be enrolled in public schools due to their overcrowding.

Both chapters show that those philanthropically-minded women organizing day care did little if anything to change the social or economic circumstances that forced mothers to work. Mothers' pensions in Manitoba were one way to deal with the problem; however, they were restricted to citizens, thus disqualifying many immigrant mothers from their benefits.

The role of the Manitoba social worker in day care was not documented until the 1950s. At that time the social worker, as was the case earlier in other parts of Canada, controlled access to day-care facilities, in an apparent effort to guarantee that the need for day care was genuine. Professionalization in day care was advanced, too, with the hiring of a nursery-school professional to direct the operations of Day Nursery Centre. From that point on, it seems that the programming in Manitoba day care became more educational and formalized.

Although, as was said earlier, day-care services expanded when the need for such services was also felt by the middle classes, it must be remembered that the children

of lower-class mothers roamed the streets, causing many problems. Local professional interests in Winnipeg felt the need for their supervision in the late 1950s, some years before the middle classes in other parts of the country began to demand day-care services for their own children. But government intervention for more expanded services with a middle-class outlook was possible only when the middle classes started demanding the service.

Nevertheless, in the 1960s there was growing awareness and study of the need for more day care in Winnipeg, as well as more experimentation with programmes like lunch-and-after-four care and family day care. Developments were slow, but they paved the way for government interest in day care and the eventual development of a provincial policy to provide it. This will be shown in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER III  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DAY CARE POLICY  
(1969-1974)

1. The First N. D. P. Term in Office (1969-1973)

The New Democratic Party took control of the provincial government at a time when federal-provincial relations, especially with regard to cost-shared programmes, were at a very low ebb. Budget addresses for some years prior to 1969 had noted problems and concerns with cost-sharing. The Conservative government's last budget address in 1969 pointed out that "after little or no prior warning or consultation" the federal government had announced that it would withdraw from a long list of programmes.<sup>1</sup> Changes to the National Welfare Grants scheme were expected to result in reduced federal aid to provincial social-service projects. Cutbacks in the National Health Grants programme had come "at the very moment when a universal federal Medicare scheme was being imposed."<sup>2</sup> Manitoba's annual grant under the Health Resources Fund was also cut back, "again coincidental with the pressure to go ahead with Medicare."<sup>3</sup>

With unemployment rising, the federal government announced that it was also cancelling the Winter Works assistance programme. Further cutbacks were expected to affect "Hospital Insurance, the Canada Assistance Plan,

post-secondary education aid, manpower programmes, as well as an increasing number of Indian health and social services."<sup>4</sup> Most of these and other cost-shared programmes had been "promoted vigorously" by the federal government, "and because of their formulae the provinces were obliged to participate often against their better judgment."<sup>5</sup>

The N. D. P. government, therefore, came to power at a time when the future of social planning in the province was highly uncertain.

Day care had not formed any major part of the Party's election platform. Indeed, it was only since 1967 that Party conventions had passed resolutions concerning day care. But there was some interest in day care; that is, if post-election statements are taken at face value. Shortly after the election, the Premier, in an interview, made some statements in support of day care. Not only did the Premier say that he supported the need for more day-care centres, but he also advocated the provision of day-care services to non-working mothers who might need some time away from their children. As he said: "I don't think this is expensive, but I think it is something very concrete that can be done towards the quality of life for young mothers with young families."<sup>6</sup>

Five days later, another newspaper article noted that most wives of N. D. P. Cabinet ministers did not work.<sup>7</sup> This is interesting in the light of suspicions from some quarters that conservative attitudes and chauvinism on the part of some important government officials may have either

slowed down the development of a day-care policy, or else at least affected some of the policy's provisions.

(a) 1970

In its first budget address to the Legislature on April 30, 1970, the N.D.P. government stated its social commitment: "For us, people come first--not because of sentiment--because only that makes any lasting economic sense."<sup>8</sup> But its policy thrust was directed more towards expensive projects that benefitted a larger portion of the population than day care would, projects that would help broaden the N.D.P.'s popularity during the first stages of its regime. For example, Medicare at reduced rates was introduced. And, on September 21, 1970, the government-controlled automobile insurance programme, Autopac, became law.

Discussions in the Legislature in 1970 show that there was some government interest in day care, reinforcing what the Premier had said earlier about it. In response to a call for a cost-benefit analysis of day nurseries, the Minister of Health and Social Development announced that day care and "foster day care services for working mothers" were a "priority."<sup>9</sup> He announced at the same time that a \$40,000 building grant had been given to Day Nursery Centre to aid in the construction of its new unit on Flora Avenue.<sup>10</sup>

At the annual meeting of Day Nursery Centre that year the director, Mrs. Gretta Brown, pointed out that the Manitoba

government was the only provincial government in Canada to provide such grants. She emphasized the growing public and government interest in day care by noting that the latest development in providing day-care services to preschoolers was the establishment of a day-care centre at the University of Manitoba, "where staff and students are showing increased interest in a centre on campus."<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, despite what the Minister of Health and Social Development had said about day care being a priority, the government was not yet ready to make any definite commitment to day care by developing a policy. The government did admit, however, that it was "acutely aware of the problem," but that at the same time any commitments it might make would be affected by finances.<sup>12</sup> Concurrently, the federal government was showing a more active interest in day care by considering changes to the Central Mortgage and Housing regulations that would permit the construction of day-care centres to be included in public-housing funds.<sup>13</sup>

In August, 1970, however, the government entered the field of industrial day care by launching a pilot project to furnish day care to children whose mothers worked in local garment factories. This became known as the "Monarch Wear project," and was said to have resulted from a recognition that the local garment trade needed workers, and that some local women needed jobs. The result was that a contract to provide such services was signed by the President of Monarch Wear and by the Department of Health and Social Development.<sup>14</sup>

Construction of the centre was to begin immediately, being completed by the fall of 1970. The centre would care for forty to fifty children between the ages of two and six years. Full-day care, including lunch and snacks for the children, was to cost the mothers about \$2.00 per day.

But by January, 1971, this "imaginative venture" had closed its doors.<sup>15</sup> The main reason seems to have been that the service was under-utilized by the mothers working in the garment trade. Many were immigrants from other countries where it was common for other family members or relatives to care for the children while the mother worked. It also seems that this facility was not prepared to provide the cultural (customs and language) training that foreign traditions required.

One of the most interesting aspects to this project is the fact that in this case a social service, day care, had been developed to meet the needs of local industry more than those of community members. It was a programme developed for immigrants, who did not use the service to its fullest advantage, or who did not understand it because the service did not meet their needs. This may help to explain why for so many years in Winnipeg there were so few day nurseries.

Planning of the project in this respect may have been short-sighted. Moreover, the failure of the project could have been interpreted as an indication that the need for day care was not so great as some professionals and other groups claimed. The project's failure could easily have been used

as an argument against the development of a day-care policy, interfering with the later development of one. It could also have become an argument in favour of caution in planning for day care. The total effect of the project's failure is, however, difficult to assess at this point.

(b) 1971

In its second budget address, the N. D. P. government repeated its commitment to the people of Manitoba by stating: "The essence of this social democratic government is to promote the equality of the human condition."<sup>16</sup> But the general policy outlined seems to have been a mixture of further concessions to various groups in order to expand the Party's popularity. Public-housing plans were enlarged. Construction was begun on the new town of Leaf Rapids. Medicare premiums were reduced further. Property taxes were also reduced, in an effort to ease the tax burden of property-owners. It is hard to see to what extent equality was promoted through these antithetical measures benefitting certain groups more than others.

There was little discussion of day care in the Legislature. In what was probably a reference to the failure of the Monarch Wear project, one member of the Legislature commented that "we've seen examples of day care programs set up which really have fallen because of the lack of demand for the services that they provide."<sup>17</sup> At the same time, though, this member seems to have been aware that day care enabled

sole-support mothers living on welfare to become more independent.<sup>18</sup>

There was some progress towards the development of a day-care policy in 1970. In May, the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet commissioned a survey of provincial day-care services from Professor Leonard Rutman of the University of Winnipeg. At the same time, in order to facilitate policy-making, Professor George Tsalikis of the University of Winnipeg was commissioned to study the pattern of preschool education in the public sector.<sup>19</sup> The results of these two studies were published in January, 1971, and can be viewed as further groundwork for planning the present day-care policy.

When Rutman conducted his study, there were seventeen licensed day nurseries in the province, thirteen of which were located in what is now the Unicity area.<sup>20</sup> While ten of the centres were commercial, seven were non-profit ventures.<sup>21</sup> The total licensed capacity of these seventeen centres ranged between 513 and 529 children.<sup>22</sup> Only four lunch-and-after-four programmes operated in the province, all of them located in Winnipeg.<sup>23</sup> Only three social agencies provided family day care, which served a total of 143 children from 101 families in eighty family-day-care homes.<sup>24</sup> Unlike the day nurseries, which tended to cluster in the city, the majority of the eighty-seven licensed nursery schools in the province were found in the smaller municipalities.<sup>25</sup> Sixty percent of them were commercial, and the total enrolment fluctuated from 1811 to 1945 children.<sup>26</sup>



Let us now see to what extent Rutman's recommendations were implemented into the provincial day-care plan that came into being in 1974. First, Rutman recommended that the province "assume ultimate responsibility for helping families arrange supplementary care for their children."<sup>27</sup> The opposite came into being; that is, responsibility for arranging the service was placed on the client, with consultation, subsidies, licensing and financial structure being the concern of the province.

Rutman's second recommendation concerned fees: "That families using day care services be expected to contribute toward the cost of care on the basis of ability to pay."<sup>28</sup> This was incorporated into the 1974 scheme, along with the third recommendation: "That a Day Care Division be established within the Department of Health and Social Development."<sup>29</sup>

Next, Rutman recommended that the Department of Health and Social Development "provide uniform licensing regulations for the Province."<sup>30</sup> This was partially implemented. The Department approved and licensed facilities outside the City of Winnipeg, but within city limits, the City retained control over licensing of day nurseries. This caused a major problem with regard to the licensing of family-day-care homes within city limits, for the City's licensing regulations were involved and stringent, and a disincentive to those people wishing to provide such services.

This jurisdictional problem interfered with the

implementation of Rutman's fifth recommendation: "That there be a single licensing authority at the provincial level with an interdisciplinary focus--health, social development and education."<sup>31</sup> The Child Day Care Office within the Department of Health and Social Development performs this function.

Rutman's sixth and seventh recommendations gained acceptance and were implemented. The 1974 plan provided "'seed moneys' to parent groups whose children required day care services"<sup>32</sup> through a system of start-up and maintenance grants. The second part of his sixth recommendation concerned "the establishment of several demonstration day care centres within the public school system."<sup>33</sup> They appeared gradually. Rutman's seventh recommendation stated: "That the Department of Youth and Education encourage the utilization of public school facilities for the supervision of school-age children before 9:00 a.m., during lunch and after 4:00 p.m."<sup>34</sup> By 1975, the Research and Planning branch of the Department of Youth and Education planned to provide \$200,000 towards introducing such programmes into the school system, along with a breakfast programme in some schools.

The province followed Rutman's eighth and ninth recommendations. The day-care policy made provision for family-day-care services, and the province absorbed the administrative costs so that the maximum fee paid for family day care by the family was the amount given to the provider of the service.<sup>35</sup> Day care for children with special needs was the subject of the tenth recommendation, and in 1976 the

Family Services Association of Greater Winnipeg (formerly the Family Bureau of Greater Winnipeg) began such a programme as a demonstration project.

Rutman further recommended the establishment of "training programmes which could be complementary or supplementary to the existing two year programme available at Red River Community College."<sup>36</sup> He was referring here to "in-service training programmes and short-term refresher courses"<sup>37</sup> for early-childhood-care workers. Attempts were made to conduct these, but their success has been questionable, partly because those working in the field were unable to take time off from work to attend them.

Finally, Rutman recommended that "a voluntary Day Care Committee be established by a non-government agency to comment on the Provincial initiative in day-care service."<sup>38</sup> The Manitoba Child Care Association, formed at the end of 1971 as a project of the Community Welfare Planning Council, attempted to perform this role. In addition to its consultative role and its interest in promoting research and awareness in the field of day care, the Association hoped to act as a pressure group.<sup>39</sup> During the later controversy over the 1974 policy, the Association was very active and very critical of the government. The government's reaction was to hire some Association members as consultants to its day-care programme, thereby co-opting them and neutralizing the pressure the Association hoped to exert.

The Tsalikis report is interesting because it shows

that in the field of early-childhood education some segments of society benefitted more than others from preschool programmes. Read in this light, the introduction of preschool programmes has served to aggravate pre-existing social disparities. The children of those who were already more advantaged in socially-accepted terms received the additional advantage of more education to strengthen them for competition in the compulsory school system.<sup>40</sup> A later study of day care, conducted some months after the 1974 policy came into effect, showed the same pattern emerging in the day-care field.<sup>41</sup>

The Rutman and Tsalikis reports were made public in June, 1971. A few weeks earlier, news of them leaked out. At the sixty-third annual meeting of Day Nursery Centre, Dr. Lionel Orlikow, a "human development adviser to the planning secretariat of the Manitoba government" stated that he wasn't convinced that the demand for more day-care centres was very great.<sup>42</sup>

A closer look at Rutman's report helps to assess Dr. Orlikow's comments and the press reports. Rutman had noted that many day nurseries were under-enrolled.<sup>43</sup> But he had also said that "all subsidized voluntary day nurseries were operating at full capacity" and that therefore "low-income families did not have access to other centres where they would contribute to the cost of the service on the basis of ability to pay."<sup>44</sup> Rutman also tried to explain the under-enrolment by noting that six of the centres studied had been open only a few months, and thus their enrolment

would probably increase. Parental ignorance of the availability of such services may have contributed to the under-enrolment. Parental prejudice--such as viewing day-care services as residual, reserved for social-assistance cases, or as providing poor-quality care--might have influenced a parent's decision not to use them. The fact that government subsidies were available at some voluntary day nurseries, all of which were fully enrolled, and not at others may have helped to explain the under-enrolment phenomenon further. Finally, the location of the centres may have been another factor. Rutman concluded his discussion of this problem by stating:

The utilization of day nurseries as presented above, could be interpreted as suggesting that it is inaccurate to merely state that we need more day care facilities. However, it might be argued that there are specific needs for more subsidized day nurseries, more facilities for areas currently lacking such services, and more programmes for special groups (disabled, handicapped and emotionally disturbed children).<sup>45</sup>

In the light of this argument, which could be supported by much evidence, Dr. Orlikow's statements seem hasty. The effect they had on the development of the later policy is at present difficult to assess. In a more positive vein, Dr. Orlikow said that within the provincial government there had been a "casual treatment of the pre-school area," corroborating some of the observations made by Tsalikis.<sup>46</sup> He went on to point out that no person or department seemed to have a responsibility for developing this field.<sup>47</sup>

Dr. Orlikow also commented on what later became a highly controversial topic: professionalism in day care. He

suggested that day-care staff should comprise a mixture of "women who are warm, accepting mothers" and those who are "strictly professional".<sup>48</sup> He also hinted at some of the dilemmas the government faced over the range of services to be provided. One was the fear that locating day-care facilities in low-rental housing projects would create educational ghettos, and another was that lunch-and-after-four programmes had "ugly administrative implications and problems of implementation."<sup>49</sup> He may have been referring here to the objections of some teachers to including supervision of such programmes in their job descriptions and to protests that they launched against them.

In August, 1971, Mrs. Elaine McLeod was appointed as an early-childhood-services co-ordinator to the planning and research division of the Department of Health and Social Development. Mrs. McLeod can be considered a specialist in the field, since she had a Home Economics degree, with a major in child development and preschool education, and had taken post-graduate training in California. She also had experience both as a kindergarten and nursery-school teacher.

At the time of her appointment, Mrs. McLeod received office space and secretarial support from the Department of Youth and Education, while the Department of Health and Social Development paid her salary and expenses. This arrangement continued until the spring of 1973, when Mrs. McLeod moved over completely to the Department of Health and Social Development, and further day-care planning originated from that

one office.

The appointment of Mrs. McLeod could be taken as an affirmation that the government "had committed itself to day care and listed it as a priority."<sup>50</sup> Her appointment may also have come about as a result of the developments in day care over the previous two years, which were discussed earlier. Creating the position of early-childhood-services co-ordinator and placing it between the two government departments mentioned above may to some extent indicate that the government was considering an educational as opposed to a purely custodial day-care programme, especially in the light of Dr. Orlikow's comments.<sup>51</sup> But this is unsubstantiated speculation at this point.

(c) 1972

The 1972 budget attempted to deal with the high unemployment problem that in the preceding two years had caused a loss of about \$10 billion to the nation's output.<sup>52</sup> The provincial government announced a job-creation programme that was temporary and would emanate from a Provincial Employment Programme (P.E.P. grants). This provincial programme was similar to the federal Local Initiatives Programme (L.I.P. grants) and the Opportunities for Youth Programme (O.F.Y. grants). While such make-work projects were seen as one way of improving productivity and efficiency, they could also be viewed as ways of developing greater popular support for the N. D. P. government, particularly since an election was due

within a year's time. Such projects were also ways by which the rising costs of income-security programmes could be offset.

Meanwhile, there was some progress made in the day-care field through private initiative and government support. In February, Knox United Church opened its day nursery, furnished with equipment from the defunct Monarch Wear project.<sup>53</sup> In March, Day Nursery Centre opened its new unit on Stella Avenue. The Premier was present at the opening ceremonies. In his speech, he said that day care was one of the five issues that had attracted him to provincial politics, and that he favoured the provision of more day-care centres.<sup>54</sup> The following month, the government subsidized five experimental day-care projects, two of which were patterned after the American "head-start" projects, and funded through the Department of Youth and Education. The other three were funded by the Department of Health and Social Development. These five projects were evaluated favourably that September. While the results of the evaluation report were not made public, the projects were given additional funding and the number of such projects increased to twenty.<sup>55</sup>

In December, 1972, the Barber report on social welfare in Manitoba appeared.<sup>56</sup> Professor Barber noted that the sole-support mother with dependent children formed one of the major groups receiving social assistance. In fact, 42.6% of the increase in social allowance costs in the five-year period from 1967-1968 to 1971-1972 was due to increases in the Mothers' Allowances programme.<sup>57</sup> At the same time, the number



of sole-support mothers with children had risen from 2,698 to 7,913.<sup>58</sup>

These figures lent support to arguments that day-care services would permit such mothers to work, thereby reducing social-assistance costs. Professor Barber recommended that this particular group of social-assistance recipients be studied more carefully to determine the extent to which they could become self-supporting, and cautioned: "This will require more adequate incentives for earning additional income and better facilities or arrangements for child care."<sup>59</sup>

A month prior to the publication of Professor Barber's report, a day-care policy had been developed. The main features of this programme will be described below.\*

The main thrust of the policy was employment or future employment of parents. Special-needs families--those with social, emotional, or educational needs--would have limited access to the programme. Through an Office of Early Childhood Education, a child-care programme, based on local initiative and consumer control, was to be administered. Family- and group-day care were the two components of the programme, and both would comply with

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\*It should be borne in mind that this policy and the description of it will form the basis of comparison or evaluation of the 1974 policy that follows in the subsection dealing with 1974 developments.

standards developed by the province.

Costs were devised according to the ability-to-pay principle, and gross per-diem rates set at \$4.20. Those families with pro-rated incomes of \$3,600 or less per year (pro-rated by deducting \$600 from income for every child in the family) would receive the full subsidy, and those families with pro-rated incomes of \$8,200 or more per year would pay the full cost of the care, which had been set at \$1,092 per year. Costs of space were not included in the calculation of the per-diem rate, since it was assumed that facilities would use existing space in schools, community or recreation centres, or churches. In this regard, a lump-sum equipment grant of \$2,000 could be made to centres, but not to family-day-care homes.

The Department of Health and Social Development was to be responsible for licensing.

This is the basic policy. Because this thesis depends for the most part on public information rather than governmental documents, it is difficult to say whether or not the government intended to legislate this particular version of a day-care policy, or if it had been designed solely for consideration.

## 2. The Second Coming of the N. D. P.

### (a) 1973

The N. D. P. government was elected to a new term of

office in June, 1973. To strengthen its position in the election, the government budget address in March that year (presented by the Premier himself) introduced some new programmes, as well as some changes to existing ones. A Pharmacare programme for some groups was announced. Medicare was to become "freely" available to all Manitobans. The Education Property Tax Credit Plan was renamed and modified to provide greater benefits. School taxes were reduced, low-income housing promoted, and a Pensioners' Home Repair Programme announced. In addition, legal aid services would become free, consumer-protection programmes developed, and recreational and cultural facilities in the province improved. Finally, the government announced that a new work-incentive programme would be incorporated into the social-allowances system, "to encourage the relatively small number of persons receiving assistance who are able to work, but who are not employed, to seek jobs."<sup>60</sup> Through this particular scheme, welfare recipients would be allowed to retain up to thirty percent of their earnings. The remaining seventy percent would be applied against social-allowances income.<sup>61</sup> Finally, the government expected a surplus, an "excess of current account revenues over original estimates of approximately \$43 million for the 1973/74 year."<sup>62</sup>

Legislative discussion of day care shows that the Department of Health and Social Development had set aside some \$500,000 for financing day-care projects.<sup>63</sup> The Minister of Health and Social Development announced that the government

was "contemplating" a programme which was based on the ability-to-pay principle.<sup>64</sup> He was careful to point out, though, that this \$500,000 set aside for day care was ten times more than had been allotted to day care during the previous fiscal year.<sup>65</sup>

Also in March, 1973, the government published its three-volume Guidelines for the Seventies,<sup>66</sup> a publication that at times was attacked as socialistic, and defended by government on the grounds that the ideas it contained were the thoughts of government employees rather than a statement of government policy. Yet the four main principles by which the document's plan for Manitoba's future development complement the N. D. P. government's social commitment mentioned earlier. The following paragraphs concentrate on those parts of the Guidelines for the Seventies concerning working women and day care.

Concerning working women, the authors noted "a particularly large increase in the female labour force" in Manitoba since the 1960s.<sup>67</sup> This parallels the developments in the national economy that were described in Chapter I. In addition, the authors mentioned that there was "an unquantifiable number of women who would work if necessary support services such as child day care were more readily available."<sup>68</sup> This lends support to Professor Barber's statements outlined above.

The Guidelines for the Seventies supported universal day care and emphasized that the low-income or sole-support

parent had "a special need for access to day-care centres".<sup>69</sup> This coincides with the work-incentive thrust of the government's proposed changes in the social-allowances programme, and contradicts Dr. Orlikow's statement of two years earlier doubting the existence of need for day care.<sup>70</sup> The Guidelines for the Seventies further states: "Clearly, there are not enough services to meet present or potential demand."<sup>71</sup> This thinking was based on the fact that almost ninety per cent of Manitoba's day-care facilities were located in Winnipeg, that eighty-five percent of them were commercial ventures, and that lunch-and-after-four programmes were available only in Winnipeg.<sup>72</sup>

Finally, the authors recommended that the provincial government take an "aggressive role" in promoting day-care services "available to all, regardless of income and geographical location."<sup>73</sup>

While day care had formed part of the election platform of both the Liberal and Conservative parties, it did not form any part of the N. D. P.'s.<sup>74</sup> This is an interesting point, for several reasons. As early as November, 1972, the government had a day-care policy for possible implementation. It had announced in the Legislature in March, 1973, that it was setting aside \$500,000 for a new day-care programme that awaited federal cost-sharing commitments. Finally, the government had stated a week before the election that it was providing interim grants to seven day-care centres.<sup>75</sup> Perhaps the Party's silence on the issue of day care was related to the controversy over professionalism

that erupted in April and May of 1973.

The controversy shows the dilemma between quantity and quality of day-care services that the liberal or pseudo-socialist conscience was wrestling with. It also shows how indecisive and confused the government seemed to be about how to implement a day-care policy. The controversy, described in the newspapers, developed as follows.

Meeting with the Premier and four Cabinet members to present a brief to them, the chairman of the Provincial Council of Women's welfare committee criticized the Department of Health and Social Development for its "hard line" on day care, which was "jeopardizing members of the working community."<sup>76</sup> The Premier defended his government by referring to costs. He said that he was "nervous and apprehensive" about more day care, partly because of "spiralling education costs" which could "put a damper on expansion of day care programmes."<sup>77</sup> He also said that he had always had "a very strong personal feeling about day care," and that he wished "very much to do something tangible."<sup>78</sup>

Discussing some of the factors causing day-care costs to rise, the Premier claimed that "staffing becomes a very expensive part of the day care programs, with 'all kinds of PhDs, MAs, double MAs and so on.'"<sup>79</sup> Mr. Saul Miller, the Minister of Colleges and Universities Affairs (who later became Minister of Health and Social Development during the succeeding controversies and government delays on day care) reinforced the Premier's defense and "urged the Council women

to support the government in dealing with the 'problem of extreme professionalism' in the day care field."<sup>80</sup> He warned the women:

"There is no way to get the program you want, and we seem to want, without pricing ourselves out of the market." What is needed, he said, are day care programs that are "adequate, without being prohibitive (in cost)."<sup>81</sup>

Mr. Miller also confirmed the fact that the province had been working on developing standards for day care, and that cost-sharing negotiations with the federal government had been initiated. Clarification on these was expected in two or three months, he said.<sup>82</sup>

On the one hand, the Premier's worry over education costs could be construed as evidence of government confusion over how to implement a day-care policy, since day care was a responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Development, not the Department of Youth and Education. On the other hand, such comments could be viewed as a way to placate pressure groups and to hide the government's confusion or indecision. In this respect, then, the question of professionalism in day care was a red herring. The private sector reacted quickly to it.

The director of Day Nurser Centre was interviewed on the question of professionalism. Mrs. Brown said that it was not a problem in Manitoba. "How could it be," she asked, "when it doesn't even exist?"<sup>83</sup> She continued by saying that she didn't know of any day-care facility that was staffed by such highly qualified people as those the Premier had singled

out. In fact, Mrs. Brown said, most of Winnipeg's child-care workers had a grade eleven or twelve education, coupled with training through the early-childhood-education courses offered through Red River Community College.<sup>84</sup> To back up the notion that the question of professionalism was something of a red herring, Mrs. Brown queried the logic of requiring a teacher's certificate to look after six-year-olds in the school system, but expecting a person caring for four-year-olds merely "to 'be good with' or 'like' children."<sup>85</sup> At the time she was interviewed, Mrs. Brown said that she was pleased that the government was "reviewing the standards and regulations concerning nurseries and day care centres."<sup>86</sup> These were not made public, and a year later the government was accused of having "hidden" them.<sup>87</sup>

In May, Mr. Miller, the Minister of Colleges and Universities Affairs, announced some of the details of a day-care programme that had been submitted to the federal government for cost-sharing approval. He went on to say that the province was trying to move away from having day care as a cost-shared service for social-allowances recipients alone. Instead, he felt, day care "should be available . . . for women who wish to work . . . and for those who have to work."<sup>88</sup> The policy that the Minister outlined was basically the one developed in November, 1972, although he claimed that family day care was to be the "major thrust" of the policy.<sup>89</sup> Finally, he announced that this new day-care programme would begin in the fall of 1973.



A few days before the election, on June 21, 1973, the question of professionalism seems to have been resolved somewhat to the government's satisfaction. A spokesman for the government announced that staff in the centres under the proposed day-care programme would be a mixture of professionals and volunteers working under the supervision of a qualified person.<sup>90</sup> No estimate of the costs of such a plan were made public, and as far as the mysterious standards were concerned, they would be made public "shortly".<sup>91</sup> Since they would be supposedly flexible, they "could be revised according to suggestions from the community," the Minister of Health and Social Development said.<sup>92</sup>

Despite the optimistic forecasts mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the day-care programme did not appear that fall as predicted. By October, more details of the proposed policy were made public. From that time on and off until 1977, a heated debate has been waged over the per-diem rate and how it affects the quality of day care provided to the children.

Before presenting the controversy over the policy, it is important to bear certain points in mind in order to understand what follows. The government policy was a custodial one. It did not pretend to offer more. Nor did a per-diem rate of \$4.20 permit much more beyond this. But the government did not clarify its position. If it had, the controversy would probably have focused on the question of the value of educational and developmental day care as

opposed to custodial care.

The critics, composed mainly of professionals, attacked the government policy primarily on the basis of the per-diem rate. They argued that it was insufficient to permit hiring qualified staff, and that the quality of day care that could be provided would therefore suffer. They did not deal with the structure of the programme as it had been set out by the government, or with how to improve it. Instead, to reinforce their criticisms, they warned of the potential harm to children that came from low-quality care. Some did raise issues relating to the structure of the programme and how to improve it (the Community Welfare Planning Council in November, 1973, and June, 1974; M.L.A. Lloyd Axworthy in the Legislature in early 1974; and by the Status of Women Committee of the N. D. P. in June, 1974), but they never assumed the prominence given to the question of professionalism and salaries.

Let us now see what happened.

In October, 1973, the Social Planning Council, responding to information it claimed to have obtained "through preliminary discussion with various individuals in the provincial government,"<sup>93</sup> drafted a position paper on day care. The Council felt that a breakthrough was near, since \$500,000 had been budgeted that year for day care, and cost-sharing arrangements were under negotiation. Since part of this sum had already been spent on maintaining twenty existing day-care programmes that were funded on an interim basis, the

Council questioned whether enough would be left over for developing new day-care programmes in areas where none had existed before.<sup>94</sup> It also urged that subsidized day care not become "another welfare programme," pointing out that "the 'welfare image' often serves to turn away families who otherwise could make use of services."<sup>95</sup> The fact that the programme made no provision for constructing day-care facilities or materials and rent also concerned the Council.<sup>96</sup>

But what concerned the Council most was the per-diem rate of \$4.20 which, it felt, would mean "low staff salaries and meagre resources."<sup>97</sup> Salaries were an important factor in attracting competent child-care workers, and the Council predicted that, since the provincial rate was below that currently used to operate many day-care centres, "provincial sponsorship may force a decline in the quality of services."<sup>98</sup> Moreover, the Council said that the proposed per-diem rate of \$4.20 compared unfavourably with that charged at Day Nursery Centre (\$8.00), Knox Day Nursery (\$5.75), and the Family Bureau's family-day-care programme (\$5.38 for preschoolers, and \$4.38 for school-age programmes).<sup>99</sup> The Council pointed out that the temporary nature of the forty or so P.E.P., L.I.P., and O.F.Y. day-care projects funded during the summer of 1973 had created insecurity for both staff and parents relying on them. Through this type of funding, fee schedules were flexible, because the grants covered the costs of staff salaries. The subsidized programmes relied solely on per-diem rates for all operating costs, and thus the parents

using them paid more than the parents using the temporary projects.

Three recommendations were presented for the government's consideration. First, out of a concern for equity, the Council recommended that the province institute a universal day-care programme to cover all day-care situations, and that the "fee schedule and administration of the program should not act as a disincentive to parents whose children could benefit from such a program."<sup>100</sup> As they stood at the time, individuals or families receiving student aid or supplementary social allowances were discouraged from placing their children in subsidized day-care programmes. The Council found it "incredible that the provincial government maintains a policy which excludes those people for whom it has assumed financial responsibility from services which it supports."<sup>101</sup> In an appendix to this working paper, the Council described a double-bind situation, where subsidies were provided to working parents, but only in a welfare context, and that those attempting to become financially independent were subjected to treatment similar to that of those who were financially dependent. In effect, the recipients of subsidies were stigmatized. This might encourage the parents to find other, less adequate care arrangements for their children.<sup>102</sup>

Second, the Council encouraged the province to "provide the resources for the implementation of lunch-and-after-school programs for all Winnipeg school children."<sup>103</sup> Earlier, it had termed the government's failure to provide

such services "most glaring."<sup>104</sup>

Third, as an interim measure, the Council suggested that the Department of Health and Social Development make an immediate commitment to continue funding day-care projects that were at that time funded as temporary employment projects.<sup>105</sup>

An appendix to this position paper showed the number and types of day-care services that existed at that time in the City of Winnipeg. There were twenty-five licensed day-care establishments, and one family-day-care programme (the one operated by the Family Bureau). Five day-care facilities were funded on a per-diem basis from Special Dependent Care regulations, while eleven were funded on a temporary basis through the Department of Health and Social Development. There were only six lunch-and-after-four programmes in the city, three of which were demonstration projects funded by Health and Social Development, and three through temporary grants.<sup>106</sup>

A month later, in November, the final version of the Council's position paper was made public. In answer to some of the above criticisms, Mrs. Elaine McLeod defended the \$4.20 per-diem rate by saying that it was higher than that paid in British Columbia.<sup>107</sup> Concerning the rate's adequacy, she said that it "depended on interpretations of the words 'good' and 'quality' when describing the goals for a day care system."<sup>108</sup> But quality, like most human concepts is a matter of value. What matters here in political terms, moreover, is

that the government's and Mrs. McLeod's view of what was adequate fell below those standards commonly accepted by many working in the field of day care. At the Canadian Conference on Day Care held in Ottawa in 1971, a per-diem rate of \$5.00 (\$1,200 per year) was considered to cover only custodial care, while acceptable care, that included "some developmental aspects," was estimated to cost fifty percent more, and good-quality care, over \$2,300 per year.<sup>109</sup> These figures were taken from those in the Office of Early Childhood Development in the United States and may not coincide exactly with Canadian rates. But they do indicate that, comparatively, \$4.20 was quite low, and also that the government intended to provide custodial care only.

At the end of November, the government announced another delay in implementing a day-care programme. The Minister of Health and Social Development claimed that the federal government had not yet signed the provincial proposal, and that he expected a wait of a further three or four months.<sup>110</sup> On the other hand, though, Mr. Howard Clifford, day-care consultant to the Department of National Health and Welfare, attributed the postponement to "a delay in receiving Manitoba's revised proposals," and said that while "both governments are committed to quality care . . . Manitoba hasn't submitted its latest proposal that would be agreeable to both sides."<sup>111</sup>

The newspaper article describing this apparent contradiction pointed out that the Minister refused to take a stand

on the issue of the \$4.20 per-diem rate. All he would say was that the figure was under review. Moreover, the Minister said that a \$5.00 per-diem rate was too high, despite Mr. Clifford's comment that Edmonton's cost-shared programme provided a per-diem rate of \$5.60.<sup>112</sup> While no reasoning was given for the Minister's statement, it would seem to indicate that the "socialist" N. D. P. government favoured a lower per-diem rate than that accepted elsewhere by more conservative governments, yet this was at a time when the government was boasting that Manitoba's economy was booming.

(b) 1974: The Legislation of a Day-Care Policy

In its 1974 budget address, the government indicated that for the third year in a row the growth in Manitoba's productivity had "exceeded the national rate," that the preceding year had been a "boom year," and that between 1972 and 1973 total personal income, personal income per capita, and after-tax income had all risen by fourteen percent.<sup>113</sup> Agricultural output value had risen nearly ninety percent, that of mineral resource output about thirty percent, and manufacturing shipments more than twenty percent.<sup>114</sup> The provincial unemployment rate of 3.9% was held to be the second lowest in Canada, and well below the national level of 5.6%.<sup>115</sup>

Despite the government's optimism, there were indications that the economic situation was not as strong as the government claimed. The high level of growth that the province

had witnessed over the past fiscal year may, to a certain extent, have been the result of sudden increases in prices and wages, as well as the outcome of government economic policy. Other programmes that were introduced as major developments may also have been attempts to deal with an unfavourable economic situation. Many saw them as window-dressing, not as signs of economic buoyancy. For example, assistance to municipalities was increased substantially, and northern development expanded. Major new employment and training programmes were to be established, along with accelerated capital projects, special municipal loans, and other work-activity projects.

Nevertheless, a "substantial revenue surplus"<sup>116</sup> was expected. From this came funds to finance a "major new Day Care Program" that the government announced in the legislature.<sup>117</sup> This followed quite closely the federal government's announcement that it was undertaking amendments to the Canada Assistance Plan to cover "full operating costs, including costs of equipment and supplies, and rent for depreciation on capital."<sup>118</sup> These modifications may relate more closely with the fact that it was an election year for the federal government than to any deep commitment to day care. But they seem to have acted as an inducement to the provinces, since most of them entered cost-sharing agreements with the federal government after this change was announced, particularly since, unlike other Canada Assistance Plan cost-sharing arrangements, "salaries and related staff costs"<sup>119</sup> could now



be cost-shared.

The "major new Day Care Program" had a target date now of September 1, 1974.<sup>120</sup> Rather than the pro-rated income scale used in the 1972 policy, the 1974 policy used an incomes-test approach to determine eligibility for the programme. Full subsidies would be paid to families whose incomes were "at or near the level of support provided under social allowances".<sup>121</sup> The following shows some of the differences between this plan and the 1972 one.

The earlier plan had a base of \$3,600, and a cut-off point of \$8,200. The new plan allowed a basic exemption of \$3,600 for the first adult in a family, and \$720 for each additional family member, whether child or adult. A single-parent family with two children (one of whom required care) received full subsidy at a net income of \$5,040, and paid the full costs of the day care if net income reached \$7,640.

The sliding scale in the 1972 plan was modified so that between the base line and the cut-off point the family's contribution to the cost of care was set at fifty percent. This was generally fifty percent of income in excess of what the family would have received as welfare payments. This formula could act as a disincentive to certain parents, since half of every dollar earned above the minimum income allowable would have to be paid towards the cost of care. Perhaps this figure reflects a certain conservatism among some government politicians and planners; that is, behind the figure lay the old attitude that mothers belonged at home

with their children, regardless of the hardship involved. In any event, the payback formula definitely removed some of the attractiveness attached to work for many parents requiring day care. Its effect was later documented by Ryant.<sup>122</sup>

The per-diem rate was raised to \$5.00, despite earlier claims that the government would not go that high.<sup>123</sup> In addition, the per-diem rates were to be assessed annually. While centres would not be required to submit budgets, they would be required to produce a yearly financial statement and meet "prescribed standards."<sup>124</sup>

The programme would be administered through an "office of children's day care services,"<sup>125</sup> which was established to provide consultative services to day-care providers. These services would include "assistance with equipment planning, staff requirements and development".<sup>126</sup>

The Premier admitted almost apologetically to the Legislature that his government had not moved "dramatically" on the day-care question, explaining that, while it might have wished otherwise, the government had delayed its decision on day care in order to analyze the problem in detail and to negotiate cost-sharing arrangements with the federal government.<sup>127</sup> The Minister of Health and Social Development also had some rather ambiguous comments to make. First, he said that "we have to move I should say slowly," and almost immediately afterward: "But I believe that we should launch a program as quickly as possible for the vast majority of people who need it rather than try to continue with a

program which meets the needs of some but doesn't really scratch the surface of need."<sup>128</sup> This supports the view that government indecision was one factor that delayed the implementation of the day-care programme.

There was considerable discussion in the Legislature on day care. Liberal M.L.A. Lloyd Axworthy presented a Resolution designed to complement the government's plan. He suggested a system of start-up and maintenance grants to cover equipment and staff costs, and advocated the establishment of a Child Care Institute to "co-ordinate information, resource sharing, and investigation and research in the special needs of children."<sup>129</sup> As far as the per-diem rate was concerned, Mr. Axworthy pointed out that British Columbia had already found its \$5.00 per-diem rate to be inadequate.<sup>130</sup> The proposed child-staff ratio was, he said, higher than that recommended by the Canadian Council on Social Development.<sup>131</sup> Mr. Axworthy suggested that the province "make up the difference between what the per diem rates will bring in and what is actually required to provide proper and decent services."<sup>132</sup> He later stated in a newspaper interview that "federal guidelines don't prohibit additional amounts being paid by the province."<sup>133</sup>

Reaction to the government's proposed policy was swift, and came from a group of 200 parents who assembled at a meeting organized by ten day-care agencies.<sup>134</sup> The group labelled the \$5.00 per-diem rate inadequate. To register their disagreement, the angry parents sent telegrams

to the leaders of the federal and provincial political parties, as well as to the Minister of Health and Social Development. In their telegrams to federal officials, the parents urged that government to reconsider its cost-sharing arrangements with the province.<sup>135</sup>

A little more than three weeks later, the Social Planning Council stated in the press that the plan was unfair to "lower middle class families and inadequate in its funding."<sup>136</sup> The parental contribution to the cost of the day care was seen as a disincentive to such families, and the Council supported this claim by examples showing that the larger the family, the higher the percentage of income paid towards day care.<sup>137</sup> To support this contention, the Council referred back to the Rutman report, which had stated that children from families with net yearly incomes of between \$5,000 and \$9,000 were under-represented in day-care facilities.<sup>138</sup> The Council concluded that those parents qualifying for partial government support were in effect subsidizing the wealthier parents, who could afford to pay more but got the advantage of low child-care rates. This reinforces the notion of class disparities that Tsalikis<sup>139</sup> had discussed as well as Ryant's findings that "only one-third of the child spaces were filled by children whose parents are receiving the service on a subsidized basis."<sup>140</sup>

A few days following the Council's statement, the Manitoba Child Care Association announced that it was submitting a brief to the government about the proposed policy.

It planned to urge the government to give additional money to facilities based on their needs; to cover such things as "rent, repair and maintenance;"<sup>141</sup> to adopt province-wide standards and a child-staff ratio of five-to-one; and to base staff salaries on experience, qualifications, and responsibilities. Unless these contingencies were met, the Association felt, the children would receive inadequate care.<sup>142</sup>

Eleven days later, the Status of Women Committee of the N. D. P. announced that it had sent a letter to the Premier, stating its concerns over the proposed day-care policy. While supporting most of the recommendations of those groups mentioned above, the Committee suggested that the break-even point be extended to allow lower-middle-income families to benefit from the plan. The Committee also favoured lunch-and-after-four programmes, and programmes that provided care to children whose parents worked evenings, weekends, or whose families were experiencing crises or emergencies, such as "illness or family breakdown."<sup>143</sup> The handicapped child was seen as requiring special care. Finally, the Committee urged the government to supplement the per-diem rate according to each facility's need, for the same reasons as those of the Manitoba Child Care Association.<sup>144</sup>

To summarize the controversy up to this point, the per-diem rate was attacked from all quarters as being inadequate, since it influenced staff salaries and subsequently the quality of care provided. The arguments on this point

did not become more specific. The parental contribution to the cost of care was seen as inequitable and a disincentive to parents wishing to work or to place their children in government-sponsored day care. The lack of provisions for lunch-and-after-four care was considered serious. Some criticized the child-staff ratio, claiming it was too high. The financial grants to the day-care facilities were labelled inadequate, as groups urged the government to ensure that costs of rent, repairs, and maintenance be covered. But these issues assumed less prominence than the controversy over the per-diem rate.

In what appears to have been a response to the public pressures and criticisms, on June 26, 1974, the Minister of Health and Social Development sent a submission to the Health, Education and Social Policy Subcommittee of Cabinet (H.E.S.P.), about the day-care policy. It is a very interesting document, for the following reasons.

First, in a discussion of the background to the plan, this Submission notes that the basic intent of the programme "is to facilitate the availability and accessibility of good quality day care services for preschoolers throughout the Province," and that in support of this objective "a number of principles have been developed over a period of years and approved at Health, Education and Social Policy Subcommittee of Cabinet on December 31, 1971 Minute 5/71 and February 19, 1973 Minute 23/73."<sup>145</sup> These principles are as follows:

Day Care services enhance the well-being and the development of children.

Government not be directly involved in the operation of day care services.

Day care services be controlled and operated by the consumer. The board of each day care centre be broadly representative of the consumers of the service.

Day care services take different forms, such as group day care and family day care.

Government subsidy for day care services be based on the "ability to pay" principle.

Government subsidy cover food, staff, and operating costs. Capital costs to be the responsibility of the consumer boards.

Public health and program standards be developed by the Province. Licensing and inspection of day care facilities in accordance with these standards be done by the Department of Health and Social Development.<sup>146</sup>

In addition to confirming that as early as 1971 the government had been involved in planning a day-care policy, this Submission also confirms that a set of standards had been developed, and describes them:

Standards pertaining to the personal health of the children, the personal health of the staff, nutrition, and environmental sanitation and safety have been developed to ensure the physical well-being of the children. Other standards have also been developed pertaining to staff (qualification and ratios), program content (active play periods, opportunity for group interaction, etc.), and materials and equipment. . . . The Department of Health and Social Development will be responsible for the inspection of facilities, the licensing and the monitoring of standards.<sup>147</sup>

Third, the Submission recommends that the programme be administered through the regional offices of the Department of Health and Social Development, and requests approval for the hiring of additional professional staff in each regional office to provide the programme support and

consultation that would be required to implement the programme.<sup>148</sup> In fact, the Submission notes that the principles discussed above had already been approved by H.E.S.P., and requests approval of a system of start-up and maintenance grants, along with an eighteen-month phasing-in period to allow facilities operating at rates over \$5.00 per day to adjust to the new rates.<sup>149</sup>

To justify this request, the Submission notes that there was a "public commitment to establish a day care program . . . by September 1."<sup>150</sup> The system of start-up and maintenance grants was proposed as a way to add more flexibility to the programme, so that support staff, which the \$5.00 per-diem rate did not permit, could be hired. The maintenance grant would supposedly add "a 'universal' component to the day care program and does not interfere with cost sharing of the basic subsidy."<sup>151</sup> The start-up and maintenance grant for group day care would each be \$100 per child, while for family day care they were \$50 per child. Start-up grants would be lump-sum payments, but maintenance grants would be ongoing.<sup>152</sup>

With regard to family day care, the Submission states that in-service training for family-day-care mothers should be compulsory. This is clarified in an appendix to the Submission. The training would in effect be an "orientation session sponsored by personnel of the Department of Health and Social Development".<sup>153</sup> The homes would be inspected regularly so that standards, which included health, sanitation,



safety, and staff qualifications, could be maintained.<sup>154</sup>

There were three ways to administer the family-day-care component of the policy: (1) via the satellite method, in which a day-care centre and its board might administer one or more satellite family-day-care homes in a particular neighbourhood; (2) through a network of family-day-care homes administered by an incorporated, non-profit family-day-care agency; or (3) through the Department of Health and Social Development itself.<sup>155</sup>

Concerning group day care, one staff person in each group facility would be trained in early-childhood care or else "undertake to acquire such training, or have an equivalent degree of experience in this area."<sup>156</sup>

The Submission clarified the calculation of the \$5.00 per-diem rate. It had been based on the average actual costs of three day-care centres which were subsidized under Special Dependent Care funding: Knox Day Nursery; St. Joseph's Day Nursery; Day Nursery Centre.<sup>157</sup> The \$5.00 did not cover support staff or caseworkers, nor did it "allow for additional direct care staff which day care facilities might require".<sup>158</sup> The family-day-care per-diem rate was based on five children in care and a wage of \$2.50 per hour paid to the family-day-care provider.<sup>159</sup>

A seventy-five percent attendance rate was applied in the case of children who attended at a day-care facility for ten or more days per month. If a child attended seventy-five percent of the days in any one month, the facility

received the full subsidy. If a child attended less than seventy-five percent of the time, the facility received the subsidy based on the number of days' actual attendance.<sup>160</sup>

The administrative component to the plan was varied. As mentioned earlier, various departmental personnel in the regional offices of the Department of Health and Social Development would be used as consultants. Income-security personnel would be responsible for financial testing. Once this was completed and a child enrolled in day care, the day-care facility would submit monthly bills to regional offices of the Department for verification, after which they would be passed on to the Resources Division for issuance of a cheque to the facility.<sup>161</sup>

The over-all co-ordination of this programme would be the responsibility of a Child Day Care Office, whose main duty was to monitor and update standards established in the regulations, and to evaluate and modify the programme on an ongoing basis. In addition, this Office would be responsible for developing and integrating "new aspects of early childhood programs into provincial program, such as lunch and after school programs," and to establish "co-operative working relationships with agencies and other departments of government."<sup>162</sup>

The costs of the total 1974 programme were based on a five-percent utilization rate; that is, on approximately 5,220 children in day care. Estimated gross costs would range between \$4.4 and \$5.4 million which, under

federal-provincial cost-sharing would cost the province from \$2.4 to \$2.9 million.<sup>163</sup> The estimated extra cost of start-up grants was set at \$456,750.<sup>164</sup>

A few days following the H.E.S.P. Submission, a newspaper article referred to what it called a "cloak of government secrecy over the details of its plans" which had day-care professionals worried.<sup>165</sup> In the light of the above H.E.S.P. Submission, it is no wonder that there was a cloak of secrecy, since the plan was still being modified, despite having been announced in the Legislature in March, 1974. This newspaper article went on to wonder where the government's "licensing standards and regulations are hidden," and why day-care professionals had had "so little input into policy decision-making."<sup>166</sup> Since the H.E.S.P. Submission showed that the standards had been developed as early as 1971, they had indeed been hidden. The reasons why are not clear.

Some felt that the government had not consulted the private sector to any great extent in planning the policy. For example, Margaret Black of the West End Resources Centre said that there had been "a complete lack of communication between the government and the people involved," and noted that a day-care co-ordinator had not yet been appointed.<sup>167</sup> On the other hand, Mrs. Long of the Manitoba Child Care Association felt that the progress was "just beautiful."<sup>168</sup>

The government responded quickly to what it believed to be a rift developing between it and the private sector. In July, the Minister of Health and Social Development met

with five representatives of the Manitoba Child Care Association in an effort to bridge the rift. The purpose of the meeting was supposedly the presentation to the Minister of the Association's brief on the new day-care policy. As a result of this meeting, the Minister had "agreed to allow the association to form an advisory committee to bring problems in day care directly to the department."<sup>169</sup>

The group was assured that "new provincial regulations regarding staff ratios and qualifications, fire, health and sanitation standards will be implemented prior to program initiation."<sup>170</sup> Concerning the \$5.00 per-diem rate, the Minister disagreed with claims that it would "cause hardship on existing day care centres," but at the same time he admitted that "one or two centres may have to cut back on services provided but he suspected that these centres were providing more than day care."<sup>171</sup> The meaning of this comment was not clarified. Oddly enough, three weeks earlier in the H.E.S.P. Submission described above, the Minister had been seeking Cabinet approval for start-up and maintenance grants, along with an eighteen-month phasing-in period for those centres operating at higher per-diem rates, in order to avoid that "undue hardship"<sup>172</sup> whose existence he now denied.

Interviewed after the meeting, the Association's chairman outlined some of the group's aims. The Association intended to work towards expanding existing day-care programmes, to promote lunch-and-after-four programmes, and to

keep the public informed about developments and problems in the day-care field. Professionalization of day-care workers was a major concern of the group. The Association hoped to encourage better salaries for them and turn them into a professional group. Summing up the Association's position on the value of day care, the chairman said: "Children are the community's most important resource. . . . it will save money later when it won't have to build big youth centres (reformatories)."<sup>173</sup>

The Association's potential as a pressure group was neutralized by the government. In the first place, the setting-up of the advisory committee with direct access to the Department in one sense meant that any complaints the Association had would not be aired publicly. In the second place, several members of the Association were hired by the government as consultants in administering the new day-care programme. The Association has since become quite subdued as a pressure group, although this had been one of its original purposes.

On August 26, 1974, the provincial day-care policy was legislated and filed as a Regulation under the Social Services Administration Act (Manitoba Regulation 213/74), Child Day Care Services. In August, too, a co-ordinator for the programme was officially appointed: Mrs. Roxy Freedman. The programme commenced in September, 1974.

Certain aspects of the legislated day-care policy should be examined before concluding this chapter. This

examination should help to clear up some of the issues raised by various groups and, at the same time, give a clearer idea what the government's intent was and whether or not that intention was realized.

No statement of goals or objectives accompanied the new day-care policy. Such a statement would have shown what the policy was supposed to achieve and what values and philosophy lay behind its legislation.

The federal money that cost-shares day-care services comes from the Canada Assistance Plan. This Plan was set up to contribute towards the development of programmes that provided assistance and welfare services to persons in need. With regard to day-care services, the Plan provided funds for programmes that would combat and alleviate the effects of poverty and child neglect.

Manitoba's earlier (1972) policy met these requirements more closely than the 1974 policy did. The break-even point was higher than the 1974 policy, the parental contribution less onerous, and a set of standards to guide the programme had been devised. What was legislated instead was a custodial service benefitting children of the middle classes more than those of the lower classes. Through provincially-sponsored day-care programmes these children would receive a head start in the educational and social systems. Thus the government would reinforce class disparities, using money provided by a federal policy designed for the contrary purpose; that is, to assist the lower

classes. Federal money was made available to develop services that were related to the employment or future employment of low-income parents. In this respect, day care in Manitoba became a liberating device for the middle classes rather than part of a solution to the social and economic problems of the disadvantaged.

The requirement that the parent pay fifty percent of income above a certain minimum towards the cost of child care acted as a disincentive to many low-income parents. Ryant's study substantiated this view. The day-care services developed were being used primarily by parents in the higher income groups. A smaller group of day-care users qualified for full provincial subsidy. Those in the middle--the ones who would have to pay fifty cents of every dollar earned--were under-represented. Yet in many respects this was the target population that the Canada Assistance Plan funds were provided to assist.

The low per-diem rate of the Manitoba policy limits the service to being a custodial one. Cost effectiveness seems to have been a more important consideration to the government than social effectiveness here, contrary to what the provincial government claimed was its general social and economic policy. But when it announced details of its day-care policy, the government did not specify that it was willing to provide funds for custodial care and not an educational or developmental service. If it had, then the ensuing public debate would most probably have centered on

the value of custodial as opposed to educational and developmental care. Instead, it focussed on salaries and professionalism. More important issues--such as standards, lunch-and-after-four programmes, special needs, licensing, the financial criteria--were pushed to the background.

The majority of those attacking the policy represented the middle-class interests. These were the groups that later benefitted most from the government policy. They argued for child care similar in quality to what they themselves would give their own children in their own homes.

Other aspects of the policy reinforce the impression that it served the interests of the middle classes. Making the parent responsible for finding his or her own day-care services is a requirement that the more advantaged can meet. The less advantaged do not have the time, the energy, the knowledge or the sophistication required for organizing. The 1972 policy was accompanied by a set of standards that guaranteed a certain level of care and protection to the children. These standards were never made public. It is easy to conclude that a programme meeting the child-care needs of the lower classes would certainly require a set of standards rather than leave it up to the parents themselves to formulate one. It is equally easy to assume that a programme meeting the child-care needs of the middle classes would not necessarily require such standards. The middle classes are quite capable of determining their own. Finally, the licensing procedure is fragmented and time-consuming.



The red tape involved deters all but the most motivated parent.

All of the above, when viewed in the light of what happened, reinforces the view that the provincial government legislated a day-care programme that benefitted the middle classes. Yet the money for it came from a source favouring programmes for the lower classes. Ironically, the government was providing custodial care to the children of the middle classes. This unclarified paradox led to the long and "hot" debate between the government and the professional groups.

### 3. Summary

The preceding discussion of the development of the 1974 day-care policy has clarified the question of the government's action on day care. Most of the evidence indicates that the government was hesitant to introduce a large-scale service, and that the policy that was finally legislated was another of its efforts to appease the more advantaged groups and thus gain wider popular support among those groups which mistrusted the "socialists."

On the one hand, certain factors support the view that there was a definite government interest in developing a day-care policy. This interest is reflected in the commissioning of the Rutman and Tsalikis reports. It can be seen as early as 1971, when the Health, Education and Social Policy Subcommittee of Cabinet endorsed certain principles

of day care. The Monarch Wear project, whatever its motivation, also shows that there was government interest in day care. The appointment of Mrs. McLeod indicates further government progress towards developing a day-care policy, and through her efforts one had been developed by November, 1972.

On the other hand, certain factors indicate deliberate delays in implementing the policy. A newspaper article that appeared in November, 1974 quoted the Minister of Health and Social Development as saying "quite bluntly that he would never even have gotten a program started at all unless the federal government had agreed to cost-share on a 50-50 basis."<sup>174</sup> The government went ahead quickly with other policies instead of day care--Pharmacare, Autopac, the Cost-of-Living Tax Credit Plan and the Manitoba Property Tax Credit Plan. The Premier claimed that his government had delayed action on day care (one of the principal social problems that motivated his involvement in provincial politics) in order to analyze the problem in detail as well as to negotiate cost-sharing. But the day-care "problem" had been well analyzed by 1972. And although the government had termed day-care services a priority as early as 1970, it took four years for a policy to appear.<sup>175</sup>

Political and economic factors also played a role in delaying the policy. There seem to have been disagreements or factions within the Department of Health and Social Development that contributed to delays in implementing the

day-care policy. Some in the Department wanted to follow British Columbia's example and start a day-care programme without a cost-sharing guarantee from the federal government. Others wanted to wait until the federal position had been clarified. The matter seems to have been settled by ministerial caution and concern for economics.

What the government legislated was a form of custodial care directed for the most part to meeting the child-care needs of the middle classes. Yet the federal contribution had been intended for welfare services. The day-care policy became a social rather than an economic policy, and served as a device to liberate middle-class mothers. The government did not clarify its position, and the paradoxical nature of its policy led to confusion and controversy. But the controversy that erupted focussed on the per-diem rates, which permitted custodial care and little more. Other issues--such as standards, lunch-and-after-four programmes, licensing, capital costs, special needs, and the parental contribution to the cost of care--were raised, but were ignored in the larger fight over salaries. The government's solution to the debate was to co-opt some members of the most vocal pressure group, the Manitoba Child Care Association, by hiring them as consultants to the new day-care programme.

Arguments can be raised to support the government's good faith. Arguments can also be raised to support the opposite view. This may have contributed to an impression

of vacillating or taking sides when presenting the evidence. The answer to this problem seems to lie in which side one wishes to take--that custodial care alone is sufficient and all that is required, or that day care should be an educational and developmental service as well. The deeper one looks into the development of the day-care policy, the more one realizes that questions of blame are not as important as understanding what happened and why, a question to be clarified in the following pages.

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130. Ibid., p. 2682.                      131. Ibid., pp. 2675-2676.







## CONCLUSION

As the preceding chapters have shown, the day nursery in North America developed as a charitable resource to care for the preschool children of working mothers who were forced by circumstances to work and were unable to make other adequate child-care arrangements. No social policies existed to meet these needs, so philanthropists assumed the responsibility for organizing such services. They were concerned not only for the children's safety, but also for their health, moral character, and ability to become productive citizens. Guided by a traditional liberalistic mythology attributing poverty and other ills to character or the culture of disadvantaged groups, the day nursery was an agent of social conditioning, particularly since in Canada the effects of urbanization, industrialization and immigration were creating many social problems that society at the time was not prepared to handle. The social-control aspect became evident when attempts by social reformers to increase the working mother's independence aroused strong opposition from these philanthropically-minded women, even though they had initially considered the day nursery as a temporary expedient which would no longer be needed once economic and social conditions improved.

The day nursery developed also in response to the

threat of social disequilibrium. Questions of public health and safety stimulated the development of early health policies, for example. Governments later on became involved in providing day-care services during the Second World War, when the external threat of international conflict and the requirements of wartime production saw large numbers of women take jobs to replace men who had gone to war. When the war ended, so did government interest in day care. As Canada assumed a more active role in post-war international affairs, the greater social awareness and concern of other industrial countries influenced the Canadian government to upgrade its social policies. This was a slow process, however, and is still going on. Coupled with this went a change in the structure of the economy, which supported changes in the composition of the labour force. Post-war Canada saw the rise of the white-collar and service sectors of the economy and, with these, the dramatic increase in the number of women who worked. The number of mothers in the labour force after the Second World War grew perhaps most dramatically of all groups.

During the 1950s and 1960s, numerous studies of working mothers and wives were undertaken. Many of them, however, generally ignored the question of how much the economy benefitted from their continued productivity. Nor did such studies bring out with any clarity how day nurseries could benefit the children of working mothers, especially those of the working classes; that is, how they could help

to reduce the costs of other social-welfare policies. Most of these studies documented instead the extent of the need for day-care services, not how they could detect health, medical and social problems in their early stages and take steps to remedy them. Day care, rather, tended to develop quite separately from other child-welfare social policies.

Historically, day care has been a class-bound issue. The first day nurseries were organized by members of the more advantaged classes out of a concern for the children of the lower classes. They were custodial services that operated in relative obscurity until the professionals began playing a more active role in the delivery of the service. Day care then became an educational and developmental as well as a custodial service. The first demands for any major expansion in the number of day nurseries available to the public came from the universities in the 1960s. In this regard, day care was seen as a liberating device to free middle-class mothers for study and work.

The history of day care in Manitoba shows that it was a class-bound issue as well. The renewed interest in day care came from a middle-class and professional concern for the children of the lower classes who were roaming the streets of Winnipeg unsupervised. Later on, when the provincial government was introducing its day-care policy, the middle-class interests were the most critical of the government plan. The most critical groups argued for a type of care closely resembling the type that they would give to

their own children in their own homes. Later developments confirmed this impression: the day-care policy served the middle-class interests more than those of the working poor, for whose benefit federal money had been provided.

Government interest in day care stemmed from the American anti-poverty fever that spread quickly from that country to this one in the early 1960s. This war was based on the mythology that the Great Depression had already questioned: that poverty is not due to lack of opportunity, which has traditionally been thought to exist for all in North America; but due to the cultural inability of some groups to avail themselves of the unlimited opportunities that society provides. The Canada Assistance Plan, which is the policy providing the funds to subsidize day-care services, was developed as an anti-poverty measure in response to the demands of provincial governments, which had become alarmed by their rapidly-rising social-welfare costs and had pressured the federal government to assist them. Because the Canada Assistance Plan is residual in nature, it has tended to brand day care as a residual resource--or as a work-incentive programme or alternative to welfare. In this sense, day care failed to live up to the expectations of many who had hoped it would become a service to be used by all who needed it, without stigma.

This thesis came about as a result of an attempt to answer certain questions relating to the enactment in August, 1974, of a government-sponsored day-care programme in

Manitoba. A newspaper article appearing several months after the policy was legislated raised the first question. The reporter noted that day care had been "a first priority for the NDP after its first election in 1969,"<sup>1</sup> but that the policy had taken a long time to appear. Chapter III looks at this question to see if day care was indeed a priority of the N. D. P. government. It indicates that day care was not identified publicly as a priority before the election, nor had it formed any part of the Party's election platforms in either the 1969 or the 1973 elections. Larger, more expensive but politically popular policies that developed a broader base of electoral support received more attention and appeared more rapidly than day care policies. Yet at the same time, as Chapter III shows, the policy that was legislated can be seen as one more effort by the government to appease the economically more advantaged segments of society.

The next question raised concerns the type of commitment that the provincial government made to day care. The Monarch Wear project and its failure did not deter the government, for it went ahead and funded several experimental day-care projects. The Rutman and Tsalikis reports of 1970-1971 showed that the government was at least studying the problem. The appointment in 1971 of a person to work at developing a day-care policy indicates further government interest in day care. The Health, Education and Social Policy Subcommittee of Cabinet gave support to certain

principles of day care as early as 1971, and by November, 1972, a policy and a set of standards were ready for implementation. But there was a time lag, which seems to have been due mainly to cost-sharing problems with the federal government, from ministerial caution, from economic concerns, and from conservatism on the part of a supposedly socialist government (which, incidentally, expected a surplus income the year that the day-care policy was enacted).

When the 1974 policy came into being, it showed that the provincial government provided for custodial care only. The per-diem rate was not high enough to permit much more than this. This was not clarified during the controversy over the policy that erupted once the government announced the basic provisions the policy contained. Instead, for the most part the public reaction centered around professionalism and salaries. Other issues more pertinent to the development of a policy--such as standards, custodial versus educational and developmental services, lunch-and-after-four programmes, special needs programmes, and the financial and administrative structure of the plan, for example--were relegated to minor importance. At no time did the debate get down to the fundamental issue of what kind of service should be provided. If the professional groups were correct and the service should have been educational and developmental, then the government had the wrong conception of what was required. If the important issue were to keep children off the streets and to provide basic custodial care, then the government had provided



what was necessary.

The redistributive effect of the 1974 policy is another question. Federal money set aside for one purpose was put to another use by the province. Later developments showed that those children from the more affluent classes benefitted more from day care than children from families qualifying for some provincial subsidy.<sup>2</sup> These children would receive a better preparation for later competitive life than others. In this respect, the policy is not in harmony with the general social objectives of the N. D. P. government. Instead, it reinforces social disparities and opposes upward social mobility.

With regard to the role of the professional in the development of day nurseries, Chapters I and II trace this role prior to 1969. Evidence indicates that once the professional entered the day nursery, the day nursery ceased opening its doors uncritically to all, and became a residual service to which access was more controlled than before. The nursery-school professional succeeded in banishing infants from the day nurseries, while the social worker defined the clientele as pathological or problematical. The broader social and economic issues that lay behind maternal employment were ignored.

Chapter III traces the role of the professional in the development of Manitoba's day-care policy. The first version of the policy was developed by an early-childhood-education specialist, and reflected that bias clearly.

Intra-departmental conflicts seem to have resulted in a policy that was less oriented towards the educational and developmental needs of children. It also resulted in the replacement of the specialist by a government administrator. At the same time, the policy that was legislated reflected middle-class interests more clearly than it reflected the needs of the working poor. Day care became a liberating device for middle-class mothers, rather than the welfare service the federal government intended it to be.

In the controversy between the government and the private sector, the professionals seem to have been more concerned about the salaries that the policy's per-diem rate would afford than they were about the standards of care for the children. It is not possible to determine the role that their opposition played in the transformation of the policy from 1972 (when a policy more in harmony with federal funding guidelines had been developed) to 1974, when a policy reflecting middle-class needs appeared. Presumably, public backlash contributed to the revisions.

The fears of some that day care, like preschool education, would aggravate existing social disparities seems justified. The fact that such a thing as the Manitoba day-care policy could be the product of a so-called socialist government shows both the strength of liberal mythology in North America and the dilemma of political movements, which believe that they can "gradually change the system" by balancing conflicting interests. A bi-modal distribution

resulted, where the majority of those families benefitting from the government programme are those who pay the full costs of the day care, while a minority receive the full subsidy. Those families falling in between these two extremes--the ones that must contribute fifty cents of every dollar earned towards the cost of day care--are drastically under-represented in statistics outlining the use made of the programme. Rather than become an investment in the future, as some over forty years ago had hoped, day care has become an instrument of advantage and privilege, distributed unequally among the population. Instead of making the poor more productive and equal, the government-sponsored day-care programme encourages the more competitive and mobile members of society to improve their standard of living, leaving the poor generally as unproductive and neglected as they were before.

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