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(some sources are listed below – full notes/links available on request)

It's Time Social Justice Proponents Took a Closer Look at Child Care Policy:  
The Ideological Who and Why of All-Day Kindergarten and Daycare

Michael Ignatieff is resuscitating daycare dreams, and in the Tyee Murray Dobbin claims daycare is essential for women's equality. The all-day kindergarten steering committee at UBC's Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) run by World Bank consultant Clyde Hertzman is promising "investment returns" from imagined "reductions in crime" and improved health worth \$3.1 trillion.

Those who see themselves as social-justice proponents on the left need to take a closer look at this policy agenda: who is pushing reducing the time parents and children spend together? Who wants to take control of child-rearing away from parents? Who exactly benefits from increasing the labour supply and preferentially subsidizing non-parental child care combined with McJob for mums workfare programs?

Hint: it's not parents or kids.

I am one of the second-class mother-citizens Dobbin wants to help. All of us who do the care work for our loved ones ourselves are second-class citizens, discriminated against by laws and policies like those which punish parents for caring for our own children. And no, I am not "privileged" as is typically retorted without any basis in fact. I am a low-income single mother. I am eligible for the maximum amount of child care subsidies. I do paid work. We have lived far below the so-called poverty line for 15 years. Why? Because I prioritize doing the child care work myself, exercising well-informed choice, and because this choice is treated as if it were a big mistake, almost a crime.

Our false economy exploits millions of mothers and other family care-workers. We provide a massive subsidy to society because our love is leveraged against us: we do the work with almost no financial support because we know that is what is best for our loved ones. You probably know what is best for yours. Many others might choose to do it but, not having real choice, don't because of the high cost. Pay equity would be welcome, but the GDP-growth cult on the left and right refuses to even acknowledge that this work is work.

Let us undergo an airing of the rather kinky ideological underwear covering this asinine policy agenda. At bottom the goal is: cutting time children spend with their parents. Spin-doctorates robe wolves in sheep's clothing with rhetoric intended to distract us from this fact: 'early learning', 'vulnerability', 'eliminating poverty', 'gender equity', 'work-life balance', 'social cohesion', 'children's rights'. Call it daycare, preschool, all-day

kindergarten, institutionalization, neo-colonialism, or what you will; this ideology is anti-child, anti-woman, anti-parent, anti-evidence, anti-choice, and anti-democracy.

The ideology is called “post-maternalism” or “post-familialism.” It opposes the “ideology of the family” according to insider papers published by Canada’s daycare lobby head, Martha Friendly and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), including "[An Integrated Approach to Early Childhood Education and Care: A Preliminary Study](#)" and "[The OECD and the reconciliation agenda: Competing blueprints](#)".

Post-familialism is apparently the guiding “philosophy” which Friendly’s website mentions. The First Wave ‘maternalist’ feminists fought for the vote largely in order to oppose the long hours and exploitative wages that forced families to put mothers and children into jobs. But Simone de Beauvoir, leader to Second Wave feminism of the 1960s, held them in disdain. In *The Second Sex* she wrote, ***“No woman should be authorized to stay at home to raise her children. ... Women should not have that choice precisely because, if there is such a choice, too many women will make that one.”***

In a remarkable incidence of ideological convergence, the right’s corporate-welfare crowd and the left’s family-bashers got in bed together. Together they have been eroding the ‘familialist’ policies that supported parental determination of child care and replacing them with non-parental care, welfare cuts, workfare, falling wages, swollen labour supplies, and increased consumption. This mating was frankly mentioned in the Toronto Star: in the late 1990s ***“the largely female child-care movement was bolstered by ‘the boys’ or ‘the suits’ — men such as scientist Fraser Mustard.... Royal Bank Vice-President Charles Coffey....the World Bank and the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development”***.

For the left, the insider papers reveal social reconstructionist fantasies: spawning the ***“new child”***: ***“the public child”***, free from the “private sphere of the family”. The daycare sector at the OECD seeks a ***“new order”*** of ***“shared responsibility”*** for child-rearing between the state and parents, and “professionalization of care”. Lenira Haddad, apparently the philosopher queen of this social-maga project blandly labeled “the ***“integrated approach”***” writes: ***“The challenge is to attain greater state participation, including provision for all child development stages from birth to entry into formal schooling, to avoid the tendency to revive the idea of family primacy over early childhood.”***

Daycare staff are the “vanguard” says a widely used ECE textbook, *Empowering Children*. And then there are the labour unions seeking to expand membership by representing care workers – other than parents.

For the corporate right, state funded non-parental care is about - no surprise here - money. The papers point out that daycare acts as a ***“low wage subsidy”***: McJobs for mums. Daycare keeps wage increases at bay by swelling the labour supply with mothers who being women, according to *The Economist* magazine, ***“usually cost less to employ than men, are more prepared to be flexible and less inclined to kick up a fuss if working conditions are poor. Far fewer of them are members of trade unions”***. And it

increases sales of goods and services like fast food as time- and cash-stressed parents outsource home production.

RBC's above-mentioned Charles Coffey makes it clear who should drive family policy, cynically quoting John Kenneth Galbraith to the World Bankers: ***"The views of one articulate and affluent banker, businessman, lawyer, or acolyte economist are the equal of several thousand welfare mothers in the corridors of political power."***

Both sides argue that children – the ***"future stock of human capital"*** – and child-rearing – ***"human capital formation"*** – are 'needed' by the economy as GDP fodder. State-funded care ramps up the rat race. Labour force attachment trumps parent-child attachment.

Take daycare economist Michael Krashinsky of the University of Toronto, reportedly an NDP supporter. In the 1990s, he supported workfare - ***"it's not slave labour"*** he told the Toronto Star - but preferred simply cutting welfare to single mothers. He graphically defended massive manufacturing job losses resulting from globalization: ***"Capitalism is and always has been brutal. Whenever there has been change, people have been ground up. People like stability, so to get them to leave a dying industry or whatever, you have to burn them...by way of analogy, [farmers]...had to be hammered before they'd get off the land, had to really be hurt."*** He converted from critic of to leading apologist for daycare, and was embraced by its left and right factions.

With Gordon Cleveland, he invented the \$1 spent = \$2 (or even \$17) saved hypothesis, arguing that, with daycare, the more you spend the more you save. The calculation was based on many dubious assumptions, including assigning a \$0 value to the "developmental benefits" of parental care, while daycare was assumed to produce \$3600 over mothers' care and \$6500 over dads' "informal" care. Mothers looking after their own children are called ***"a loss"***. (Are we feeling equal yet?) In 1998 Friendly published this never-peer-reviewed misogynistic trash, ever since re-cited by the daycare 'evidence' echo-chamber, including Charles Pascal's for the Ontario government report on kindergarten expansion, politicians – including then-PM Paul Martin, and media.

That paper's 'evidence' states, ***"The old labour-intensive way of caring for children ... is no longer viable."*** It seems now parents and kids have to 'be hammered' before we get off each other. This hammering began with post-familialist welfare reform. The federal government's website tells how the way was paved with the Self Sufficiency Project, a "social experiment" conducted on over five thousand mothers and children. The purpose was to see if ***"children suffer because increased employment reduces the time they spend with their parents and increases their parents' stress"***. Selected mothers were offered a "generous" incentive to take jobs.

The teenagers got into shoplifting and using acid, but welfare reform was a shoe-in, backed by the NDP, Liberals and PCs alike amid hysteria over 'welfare queens' defrauding the citizenry. Before, single parents remained eligible for welfare until children were in their late teens. But with what Statistics Canada bloodlessly calls

“administrative changes”, welfare **eligibility** is now eliminated on the youngest child’s first birthday for most Canadians. Cuts to the amounts paid by welfare have been much discussed, but this elimination of eligibility is virtually unknown. Even the federal government’s pro-daycare National Council of Welfare cannot provide this information.

**“Single mothers had the most dramatic change,”** says Stats Can when total welfare expenditures decreased by nearly \$4 billion. The elite feminists who had the power to do something silently **“sat on their hands”**. No wonder: much of the cash was transferred to their pet project: daycare. Provinces’ daycare spending more than tripled to over \$2.6 billion by 2005. In Ontario, it was argued **“that single parents wouldn’t be disadvantaged because Harris would spend \$400 million extra for day care to offset the added demand on that service.”** But the US Census Bureau later reported that for single parent families, welfare reform caused more harm than good.

Quebec’s daycare system also illustrates post-familialism social injustice. It is the model for the rest of Canada, said to be high quality, universal, and supportive of ‘gender equity’. Reality check. 73 percent of daycare kids are in centres of “minimal” or lower quality reports system supporter Christine Japel. Inadequate regulations allow one staff to be responsible for **five to eight one-year-olds**. As for universality, Friendly herself says it’s not. Under 25 percent of children are in centers, thankfully. Kids and parents can thank the system for increased illness, behavioural, and parenting problems according to a Purvis Prize-winning report in the prestigious *Journal of Political Economy*.

But that system’s dirty big secret is that it was funded by de-funding low-income families. According to Jocelyn Tougas, former head of the Child Care Advocacy Association and a leader in the initiative, **“As for funding for the new regime, it has mainly come from...family allowances, benefits for young children, and the ‘baby bonus’ [up to \$8000], as well as the repatriation of Quebec’s share of the federal government’s Child Benefits Program”** - which helps low-income families. Far from being a cure for poverty, daycare robs the poor and causes poverty.

Thankfully BC does not “repatriate” my kids’ fed financing. Yet here as elsewhere, taxpayers absorb the real costs of up to over \$30,000/year per child for daycare. If we think women have brains, why not trust parents with the cash and let us make real, free, choices with equality?

The Quebec rip-off quickly led to a 7.7 percentage point increase in mothers’ Labour Force Participation rate, hailed as a triumph for ‘gender equity’ and in keeping with the vision of an OECD colloquium bluntly titled “Putting More Women to Work”. But, guess what? No one deigned to ask the lowly mums if they wanted Women’s McLib . ‘Arbeit macht frei’: work makes you free ma, get off your duff. What’s next? – rescinding our right to vote?

In Sweden after over 30 years of funding daycare and not parents, government reports rising rates of: domestic violence against women, youth suicide and youth violence. Academic scores for teens have plummeted and are far below Canada’s. Kids in daycare

centers are 6.78 times more likely to be sick. Income under CDN\$3000 is taxed – at 30 percent. This forces almost all parents into full time jobs – to pay the \$27,000 government spends on each daycare space.

With feminism like this, who needs patriarchy? With socialism like this, who needs capitalism?

Martha Friendly (also Mustard, Cleveland and Krashinsky) moonlights with the OECD, a supposedly objective unaccountable tax-funded transnational bureaucracy, which says its purpose is “enabling globalization” and “free market democracies”. She co-authored their “Background Report” on Canada. Yet her participation in the 2003 review was denied and covered up by both her and review head, John Bennett in letters to the National Post. Their “upstream policy recommendations” included using kindergarten as a “bridge” to build universal daycare.

As a quasi-academic married to a professor, Friendly is privileged. So are her backers like Mustard’s co-author, Margaret McCain, wife of frozen food empire billionaire. Yet Friendly claims it is we who oppose this agenda who *“tend to be very privileged people”*, unlike *“poor people and new immigrants who are not grand enough to be supported by their husband.”* Well, her data classify my family as living in ‘deep persistent poverty’. Furthermore, she vehemently opposes income redistribution – money for families not institutions. She envisions instead class solidarity between rich and poor: *“How do we see Canadian society? In my kids’ public schools, there were rich kids and poor kids. Isn’t that what we want?”*

The McCain empire stands to benefit from the policy it is advocating, through increased sales of convenience foods and an increased subsidized low-wage labour supply. Friendly routinely lobbies for - and gets - more funding for her work. But these apparent conflicts of interest go unmentioned.

Let us take a closer look at Dr Mustard’s ideology. Pascal calls him “godfather”. He claims, *“Only about one-third of the population are actually highly competent parents...17 per cent are godawful.”* But his expertise is in blood, not godawfulness. He told the Senate: *“When you achieve fame for something you were never trained in, it is amazing what your contacts are. I have been working for the World Bank and the bank for Latin America.”* ‘Evidence’ found in his *Early Years Study* includes urging adoption of the World Bank’s agenda, and quotes from its disgraced former head, technocrat and ultra neo-con, Paul Wolfowitz.

The Bank’s agenda is spelled out in a speech by Mustard colleague, Charles Coffey former RBC VP: parents are valued as *“employees and consumers”*. There is a *“business imperative”* in the *“early child development industry”* with *“potential to spawn new approaches to data collection,... government policy, and advocacy.”*

Data mining mixed with policy and advocacy produces high-end ‘knowledge economy’ jobs for a complacent academia, and toxic tailings corroding democracy, informed consent, privacy, and parent-child attachment.

Long time World Bank staff, Clyde Hertzman, acts as Big Brother for his Banker colleagues, Coffey and Godfather Mustard. The BC government funds Hertzman and his Human Early Learning Partnership’s (HELP) goal of electronically ‘linking’ the private records (medical, school, tax, pharmaceutical, census, etc) of all BC children and their families **“from pre-conception to young adulthood”**. They seek to link personal income tax data too. In a huge conflict of interest, HELP also writes, advises on, evaluates, promotes and collects data for child policy, including kindergarten/daycare expansion.

Hertzman co-authored a recent widely publicized paper for the Business Council of BC claiming that over \$400 billion would be saved by funding more non-parental care like all-day kindergarten. In it Hertzman – like Mustard and company – repeatedly imply Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman supports their policy proposals. This is false. Heckman says, ***“None of this evidence supports universal preschool programs.”*** He observes, ***“Advocates and supporters of universal preschool often use existing research for purely political purposes, ”and “people are very worried about the central government inculcating values in their children that they don’t agree with.”*** He favours vouchers for marginalized families to use in privately-run religious and community bodies. He hopes ***“that early childhood provision doesn’t come to resemble a government bureaucracy”*** which is exactly what the “integrated approach” of state-educare pushed by HELP is.

But for those seeking to cut parents’ time with children, politics is not about democratic debate and winning citizens’ votes for post-familialism, which is totally unmarketable. They work from on high, through bureaucracies, manipulating policy by screening out information and expertise that counters the spin they claim as “evidence”. They specialize in “editing” reports, in strategy, in packaging, in “strategically positioning” their pet policies so the real costs are hidden in fuzzy numbers and words.

Lefties: it is time to stop pursuing the red herring bare-foot-in-the-kitchen lobby on the child care issue. Let us remove this parasitical entourage of neo-con technocrats and regressive, anti-choice ‘state feminists’ from the public trough. It’s time for real and equal choice in child care, full equality for women, and an end to the misogyny sold as gender equity.

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*“Build bridges between child care and kindergarten education”*,

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“170. One means of providing a universal service – and one which seems to have the favour of Canadian parents (Johnson and Mathien, 1998) – would be to develop the present school based, kindergarten service. This offer could be expanded to full-day kindergarten (as is already the case in some places in Canada), with the addition of full-day pre-kindergarten whenever possible.... The aim would be to provide a free morning education service for all children from the age of 4 years, followed by a subsidised recreational and early learning session in the afternoon. ... A parallel increase in out-of-school provision for school age children could also be envisaged ...

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"Strong Start" programs for ages 0-5 in "underutilized" schools get the "integration" agenda started

[http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/documents/2007/strongstart\\_2007-09-30.pdf](http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/documents/2007/strongstart_2007-09-30.pdf) page 2

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