

Athletic Contests and Events Pools Act

another illustration on the part of the Government and the Minister that there is no real perception of the importance of the voluntary sector of Canada and that it is a tool which the Minister can use. When the Minister piloting this legislation through the House was Secretary of State, he styled himself the Minister advocate for the voluntary sector. It is interesting to note that feedback from the voluntary sector indicated to its constituents across the country that the Minister had no awareness of its import to Canadian society. In this Bill, the Minister proposes a control mechanism of that sector rather than somehow allowing that sector to move in a way that his predecessor was prepared to do when calling together Consultation 81, which drew the national voluntary agencies together by saying: "We will entertain tax proposals that will give you freedom to do the things that you do best."

• (2250)

When we begin to look at the dimensions of this particular Bill, Madam Speaker, it would be wise for the Minister to leave the House, because at this particular point there is a constituency that looks at this and says: "There is nothing in this except more Government control of our initiative." Does that particular Government which wishes to cover the waterfront really believe that the 40,000 registered charities that took in \$5.6 billion, according to the Ross Report recently tabled by the Secretary of State (Mr. Joyal), are somehow of so little significance that they can be played off one against the other?

For a moment, Madam Speaker, let us have the Government and its supporters opposite tell the voluntary sector why it is that instead of putting in place a tax mechanism and reviewing the Department of Revenue control mechanism for that sector, they turn their backs on the Secretary of State's proposal for a task force on voluntarism. Why is it that they will not open this up for public discussion? Instead, they say: "Give us a mechanism that will make more money and then we will give out a series of grants by which we can control an entire sector."

My colleagues have already referred to the component of patronage within this whole area, but it is not just patronage that gives me concern. My concern has to do fundamentally with an attitude. Canadians are becoming aware not only in the private sector where we have seen through FIRA, the National Energy Program and a variety of other measures the whole control mechanism, that as well in the voluntary sector there is the same question of control or trust. Will we trust the private sector to generate wealth? Will the Government trust the voluntary sector to let fitness and amateur sport bloom on its own? Will it deal with the caring health voluntary agencies? Will it give them some incentive to do their own thing? Will it deal with the caring religious community and give it the same incentive as it does the political community? When there are worthy capital projects that come before the public, will it in some way give some incentive to that group?

Here we have legislation which colleagues on this side have been calling regressive. They have been calling it regressive legislation and regressive taxation. In a sense the budget that was brought down by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde)

was supposed to have put out a signal of incentive. We now have the Government turning around, with the former Minister who advocated the voluntary sector putting through the House legislation which provides the reverse of any incentive to the voluntary sector. This is yet another control mechanism. Canadians should be quite clear in knowing that we have a Government which says it will control that sector along with other sectors. It will not trust Canadians or put mechanisms in place that will allow them to do the things they want to do.

How many Canadians are we talking about? What about this sector which the Government, is by and large, prepared to ignore? The sector's wage benefit bill in 1980 was \$1.7 billion which would compensate approximately 173,000 workers, 23 per cent of those part-time. This represents 1.6 per cent of all employed workers in Canada. When looking at the sector which is being ignored and which the Government is, in a sense, prepared to penalize once again, we should note that there are three million Canadians who volunteer an estimated 373 million hours which, if compensated on an average wage for the service sector, would be worth more than \$2 billion. We are not dealing with some esoteric interest group that is on the fringe of Canadian society.

The Government, the Minister of Finance, the Secretary of State and the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Bussi eres) have had before them for nearly a decade proposals made by the national voluntary agencies which would have replaced the \$100 standard deduction for medical expenses and charitable donations with a 50 per cent tax credit such as political parties now receive. This sector, had it had some incentives, could have gone on to build on its proven cost-effectiveness in job creation.

The YMCA of Canada has completed a study which shows that there is a 3:1 ratio in skills training and retraining. Here we are at a time when there is a need for training in Canada, a time for economic renewal, and we have a sector which has proven its capacity to do this. What do we do? We have a Government which brings in legislation which is yet another disincentive. When the budget was to come in, the Secretary of State said that there would be a proposal for a task force to look at taxation and charitable revenue regulations, but the whole matter was ignored. What we have seen is the removal of the \$100 tax deduction, which is nothing more than a \$80 million tax grab. If we need \$80 million for the Calgary Olympics, why not take the \$80 million that has just been saved at the expense of the voluntary sector and use that for the Calgary Olympics instead of moving into this sector?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLean: Madam Speaker, I would like to say that the voluntary sector is under attack. Its revenue capacity is down 35 per cent, due to the inability of Canadians to support it because of unemployment and rising inflation. The Government refuses the give and take tax proposals, refuses to review charitable donations, refuses to set up an all-departmental mechanism to bring departments together, and then has the