

within Canadian society. We have been dealing with this matter for some time and have been pressing the Government to take action on it. If the Government will take action, the health of our society will be stimulated. If anything, along with so many other areas of government, there are too many policies. The question is not one of policies but is one of trust or confidence in the Government.

Let me say to the Parliamentary Secretary that no sector of society does not recognize that there exists the question of trusting the Government to be an equal partner. Will the Government trust those people to get on with their cultural work, caring work and international assistance which they know how to do so well? The Parliamentary Secretary would like to make another comment.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Speaker, I somehow seem to set the Hon. Member off into these attacks he has been making but I do not mean my line of questioning to be hostile toward him at all. I would like him to understand that.

I take it, therefore, that he says that if the voluntary sector absorbs tax expenditure in the form of tax credits, then the pressure on the Government to make direct expenditures in the form of grants will ease. He says that this process will therefore not only balance out but the higher value of the tax credit will leave us with a richer voluntary sector in the end. He said something about \$2 for every \$1.

I wonder if he could give us some more information. Again, I do not ask this question in a hostile manner but would simply appreciate some enlightenment on the problem of universality and the problem of selecting the appropriate charities or voluntary groups. Can the Hon. Member give us some idea of how universal access, the ensuring of which I think is the responsibility of government, can be guaranteed? Second, what general standards would we be using to select groups that would qualify for such tax credits and incentives?

Mr. McLean: Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Secretary has raised two questions. He first raised the question of the easing of government expenditure. Given the deficits that are now part of our parliamentary situation, the reality is that the funds are not available. The question to be asked is: If we are to maintain the quality of life we have now, how are we to most effectively deliver these programs? If we are also to maintain a sense of involvement and quality of life, we must take into account two factors. These two factors are cost effectiveness and the building of the quality of life through involvement, the sharing of values and the whole question of the shape and style of our society.

The Parliamentary Secretary then moved to the second area of concern to the voluntary agencies, which is the whole question of allowable political activity. Because of the time that is available to me today, Mr. Speaker, and since we are dealing with the Income Tax Act, I have spoken particularly about the Income Tax Act as it affects the voluntary sector. I could easily have taken this time to speak about the screw-up in the Department of National Revenue as it relates to unfair treatment. I see that the Minister of National Revenue (Mr.

Bussières) is present and I am almost tempted to begin to discuss that subject.

However, the question in that regard is that there has also been a whole series of proposals for changing the guidelines put before the Minister and his officials. These proposals would answer the question raised by the Parliamentary Secretary of who should be legitimate. There is a recognition that there must be responsibility on the part of government and that there must be some peer entry so that people concerned and knowledgeable have a point of appeal. Earlier in the week I asked the Minister about the bullying tactics of his Department and the refusal to re-register or to deal with the matter.

● (1440)

The Government proposals that the Parliamentary Secretary raised are outlined in the paper submitted to the Macdonald Commission. It suggests that there are criteria which are open to debate, with three clear exceptions: activities that are criminal in nature; support or opposition, financial or otherwise, to any political Party or candidate for elected office at any level of government; and any activity which would benefit a member of the charity in his capacity as a member. The brief suggests that there is need for an open and fair mechanism for reviewing the entire area.

When one examines the matter of advocacy or allowable charitable activity, one finds that the opinion expressed by the umbrella Coalition of National Voluntary Organizations is that Revenue Canada has been harassing them, has not been trying to sort the matter out, and that after many years, only now is it proposed to form a parliamentary committee to define all this.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Speaker, I have a final comment and I will keep it brief so that the Hon. Member may reply. I am still not clear. If the give and take proposal or some variation of it is introduced, it would put lots of money in the hands of volunteer agencies. Does that mean that his Party would support a reduction of grants to some agencies, or would yet another layer of funding be added to those agencies?

Also, how does the Hon. Member propose to deal with the problems of universal access by all Canadians to problems which are easily solved through government but not so easily solved through volunteer agencies?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the wish of the House to grant unanimous consent for the extension of the ten-minute question and answer period?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. McLean: Mr. Speaker, the question was about the extra demand on the Treasury. I felt I had begun to address that in my last comments. As was the case with the political tax credit which took two or three years before political Parties began to understand what was needed, so in the present case there would be no instant quick-fix. I thought I had made that point. This proposal would strengthen the viability of that sector of our society and maintain its health and vitality. Government,