

below the poverty line. That, Sir, is one out of every six of us in this land of plenty and this land of opportunity.

Today we heard in the House a question directed to the Government expressing concern about another group of disadvantaged Canadians, the approximately one million Canadians in the country who have less than a seventh grade education and for whom the employment incentive and job-creation programs of the Government are of little or no benefit. According to the present policy of the Government, these people are the responsibility of the Provinces.

On Friday of this week, unemployment statistics for the month of September will be released. I do not think it would be going out on a limb to predict that there will be virtually no change in the level of unemployment in the country. Indeed, there may even be a slight increase. We know that the labour force figures which will be released in a few days' time will show that there are approximately a million and a half Canadians who are unemployed. If we count the hidden unemployed, we can bring that figure up to almost two million unemployed Canadians.

We know that included in that million and a half officially unemployed Canadians are approximately one-half million young people between the ages of 15 and 25 and approximately 600,000 women. These are the two groups that have been hardest hit by the recession. Indeed, these are the groups that are preoccupying us as we express our concerns in the House. The Bill introduced by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Waterloo (Mr. McLean), goes a long way toward addressing the concerns of the poor and those who have been hardest hit by the unemployment situation in the country.

I congratulate my colleague, the Hon. Member for Waterloo, not only for bringing in this Bill, which will enable the voluntary sector to play an even more important role in addressing the problems of the unemployed, but for the job that he has done in the House by articulating so eloquently the problems facing the voluntary sector of the country which has traditionally played an important role by looking after the needs of the less fortunate among us.

I do not mean to be critical in a partisan way, but I suppose almost inadvertently we have undermined the role of the voluntary sector through our desire to address in a dramatic and expeditious way the business of job creation. Our make-work programs have had the effect in many instances of undermining the work of voluntary organizations in the country. We should gear our employment programs toward complementing and assisting the work of the voluntary sector.

This Bill will assist the voluntary sector through the implementation of the National Voluntary Organizations Committee which would be provided certain tax breaks. In essence, the give and take proposal would enable charitable agencies to avail themselves of the same tax position as political parties with respect to donations so that the voluntary sector as a whole will finally have the necessary funding channelled to it to realize its proven potential for job creation.

Registered Charities

What is the potential of the voluntary sector in terms of job creation? We have heard evidence, Mr. Speaker, presented to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration from members of organizations such as the Canadian Council on Social Development. We have heard from officials of the national voluntary organizations, such as the YMCA, the YWCA and the National Anti-Poverty Organization. These officials told the committee that the voluntary sector would be capable of producing three to four times as many jobs as the Government through its make-work programs if the money was channelled in some way through the voluntary sector. This is one way for us to assist the voluntary sector to achieve that potential. We should give it the same income tax breaks as are given to the political parties of the nation. Surely that is not too much to ask.

We should assist the voluntary sector. We should provide it with encouragement because it is in a position to help the less fortunate of our nation. It is in the best position to help the poorest of the poor and to help the most uneducated among us who really have little or no opportunity to enter the trade colleges of the country because of the low grade of their primary education. It is the sector that is best capable of providing that kind of assistance and I believe the Government would be well served by allowing this Bill to go to a committee of the House.

I would therefore move, Mr. Speaker:

That the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after the word "that" and substituting the following therefor:

"Bill C-233, An Act to encourage the role of the voluntary sector in Canadian society, be not now read a second time but that the order be discharged, the Bill withdrawn and the subject matter thereof referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

That amendment is seconded by the Hon. Member for Waterloo (Mr. McLean).

• (1710)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): I should inform the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) that the Hon. Member for Waterloo cannot move the motion being proposed since he is already the mover of the main motion.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, perhaps you would permit me to gauge the mood of the House. There may be a Member of the Government who might be disposed to second my motion.

Mr. Fisher: I will.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Mr. Douglas Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to talk this motion out. However, I should like to get a few thoughts on the record and I think some of my colleagues across the way want to add their thoughts. We have until six o'clock before the motion would expire and if we are careful and do not go past the deadline, we can all get our thoughts on the record and then pass the subject matter to the Finance Committee.