

*Company of Young Canadians Act*

time and the young people had a splendid time. These are the projects of which the young Canadian volunteers have made a great success. These volunteers are going among their fellow Canadians who have not had a chance for self-expression in their lives. They are not trying to re-organize the lives of these people or stirring them up to do all kinds of lawless acts. What they are doing is trying to help them stand on their own feet. These CYC workers use government agencies and community agencies to provide jobs and training for the people, and in many cases they create jobs which were previously non-existent to get these people off relief and into productive work. That is what these volunteers are doing.

• (9:20 p.m.)

I object very strongly to having these volunteers swept under the rug, called all kinds of names, and abandoned by a government which gave birth to the organization in the first place. I think that this government has let down the young people of this country very badly. They are pandering to public clamour and worry over some of these projects. I do not like public funds to be wasted, and undoubtedly this has been the case in some of the projects. I understand that about \$900,000 would be saved by the appointment of a comptroller of the company. I know this is a lot of money and the taxpayers do not want to see it wasted, but what about the \$27 million that will be spent without the flick of an eyelash on the construction of a Canadian pentagon which we need as badly as a cat needs two tails? Yet, we are prepared to do it instead of other urgent things which the country needs such as helping the old age pensioners who have to get along on bread and tea this Christmas because we do not have money to increase their pensions, or instead of easing the difficult situation of the retired civil servants. Why are we putting up a \$27 million pentagon? Surely, that is a waste of funds beside which the pécadilloes of the CYC are rather tame. These are the things about which we should be asking.

I cannot resist pointing out that in the department in which I am most interested, the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, there is a \$100,000 budget for a consumer advisory council which so far has not been able to provide much advice or help to consumers so far as one can see. About \$600,000 is being voted for a Prices and Incomes Commission which so far is tiptoeing around

[Mrs. MacInnis.]

urging people to please pull in their belts and not ask for higher wages or put higher prices on their goods at the present time. Surely, these things should be looked into when we are looking into the spending of government funds and possible places where some fat could be trimmed.

I could point to other examples. However, I do not urge that the CYC faults be overlooked or their misdeeds brushed aside, but simply that the whole problem be seen in perspective. We cannot say that we will wipe out the CYC because we cannot wipe out the young people of this country. Either we are going to use them in new social pioneering action along proper lines or we are going to drive them to frustration and into ways of acting which will be much more distasteful to us than even the present activities of some of the young volunteers.

I suggest that what the government should do at this stage is, first, even before this bill is passed, have the minister tell us what the government proposes to do to give the young people a chance to pioneer in the field of social work and to give them a wholesome outlet for their energy and initiative. In the second place, they should redraft the bill to establish control over the funds of the company so as to protect the taxpayers, while leaving the programs to the company.

The government should also realize that these young volunteers are not kindergarten kids who must be followed into every project, whose noses must be wiped and who must be led around by the hand. Young people will not work like that, but they will respond well if they are given decent leadership. It was because this government did not give them leadership that they got into the kind of trouble about which complaints have been made in Montreal, Toronto and elsewhere. This is what should be said at this time.

To fully appreciate what young people can do, let us take a look at CUSO which was set up satisfactorily and which expects responsible behaviour from the young people. As the hon. member for Simcoe North said, it had the proper framework and terms of reference. As a result, CUSO volunteers bring credit to Canada wherever they go. It is time that we dealt with the CYC in a manner that will enable it also to do creditable work within the country just as CUSO is a credit to us abroad.

I would like the government to propose an amendment which will make it possible for us to accept this bill, and I would like to know