

The Disabled

In recent years a number of activities designed to improve such services has been sponsored by the Department. I will have to refer to my notes to get the exact dates. As early as 1976 the Department commissioned research which was carried out between 1976 and 1978 by St. Paul University in Ottawa and which aimed at identifying the basic telecommunication needs of the disabled and the handicapped. Following this research at St. Paul's, a separate study was sponsored in 1979 at Queen's University to determine the telecommunication needs of the hearing impaired. Just this year the Department published the report of a study undertaken by Dr. Elaine Pressman of the University of Ottawa and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario on the communication and telecommunication needs of the speech impaired. The Department, moreover, recently awarded a university research contract to Memorial University of Newfoundland to study the telecommunication needs of the cerebral palsied. I mention these past research studies that have been taken by the Department in order further to emphasize the fact that the Department has not been standing idly by, ignoring this very pressing need.

One of the problems that I have with this motion is that it does not recognize the fact that the Minister and the Department of Communications have indeed taken some very positive steps to try and alleviate this current concern.

There are numerous other examples which I could mention of initiatives on the part of the Department of Communications and the Minister that have been directed at improving the accessibility of the disabled to telecommunication services. I can speak personally on this because I was part of the first meeting. One of the recommendations in the "Obstacles" report referred to the setting up of a special advisory committee to advise the Minister of Communications on behalf of the disabled community, not just the hearing impaired but all handicapped, so that the Department would be able to provide better services for all handicapped people.

The first such meeting of this advisory committee which the Minister set up was held last June. I was privy to being part of that meeting. At that meeting were not only representatives of the hearing impaired but those with other physical handicaps; in other words, all areas. I would like to report that this advisory committee is presently at work with the Department of Communications in providing some stimulus and advice as to how the Department can further initiate improvements that will help handicapped people of all natures to have more access to telecommunication needs.

It is not just a matter of dealing with the hearing impaired; I must reiterate that the Department has looked at the entire question. We all know that there has been much concern regarding the hearing impaired when it comes to watching and listening to television. As a result of that, we have the close captioned hearing organization set up. That is well under way. Many of the broadcasting services at work in Canada have made use of the captioning services for the hearing impaired. It is certainly the intention of this Member, the Minister of Communications and the Department to see that further

expanded. This not only involves the public network, the CBC, but I must also congratulate CTV, Global Telecommunications of Ontario and some of the private broadcasting outlets for at least establishing the foundation upon which this can be further developed.

● (1700)

There is much under way at present that will help the hearing impaired and others in the handicapped community. The year 1983 is World Communication Year and is a year, Mr. Speaker, of sharing technology with underserved nations. This is something of which we can be proud as far as communications in Canada is concerned because the Canadian communications industry is certainly leading the way in this area. As a matter of fact, there are some very important conferences on an international level still to come up before the year is out at which the Department of Communications will play a very important role not only in further developing hearing devices and hearing aids to help the hearing impaired in Canada but also throughout the world.

While the Hon. Member for Beaches is certainly honourable in his intent in presenting Motion No. 91, as I said earlier, it does not take into account much of the work and research and progress that has already been accomplished in this very important area. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I feel that we cannot—

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order. Pursuant to Standing Order 24(2), it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings.

Shall all orders listed under Private Members' Public Bills preceding order No. 33 be allowed to stand by unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

REGISTERED CHARITIES ACT

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH

The House resumed from June 5, 1981, consideration of the motion of Mr. McLean that Bill C-233, to encourage the role of the voluntary sector in Canadian society, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence.

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, on October 1 of this year the National Anti-Poverty Association released figures indicating that by definition, using an acceptable measurement, four million people in Canada were living