

Supply

million Canadians who volunteered 373 million hours in 1979-80.

This large economic unit is offered no incentive, no encouragement to be part of an employment strategy, particularly when so many of them are youth-related. Canada's 40,000 charities approximately must be seen as a considerable economic force and as part of the response to the current unemployment crisis, particularly as it concerns the youth focus.

I suggest that the Government can address the key issues which have been put forward by the Coalition. The Government has suggested that it has studied these proposals, but then it removed the \$100 standard charitable deduction as if that were somehow an incentive to these agencies with all of their capacity to begin to use it for job creation and retraining.

While speaking of the capacity of this sector, let me elaborate on the pilot project of the YMCA. There are 45 associations which proposed 104 jobs for a total of \$1,187,377. Thirty-six associations received support for 48 jobs, for a total of just over \$500,000. Of the 48 jobs created, 36 of them are projected to be permanent. The success rate of permanent job creation is 75 per cent.

These categories of jobs include physical education and fitness, community development, pre-school children's programs, international development, rehabilitation services, education and program administration. Eighty-five per cent of those hired fall within one of the Government's affirmative action target groups. The estimated potential of new job creation at present is between 75 per cent and 80 per cent. I am trying to suggest to the House that given today's statistics of youth unemployment at double the national average and given the need to deal with the potential alienation of our young people, this Government ought to be censured and condemned for its failure to involve this sector in addressing this serious problem with all the implications for social unrest and alienation if young people are not considered.

I suggest that if the national voluntary agencies were offered an incentive through tax incentives, they could have their funding increased and be able to maintain their independence to do their own work. Instead, the Government chooses to tell these agencies that they will have grants available from time to time through existing programs if those agencies do what the Government says. If we are to maintain the vibrance and vitality of this sector, it is important that these agencies have a sense of making their own plans and are not beholden to anyone else or somehow forced to stay in line through the control of Government funding. Instead, there should be some trust in this sector.

One needs only to look at the list of agencies to understand the sense of involvement, the hours of voluntary activity and the skills of those volunteers. One can see their willingness to train others and in the process of helping our young people give them some sense of involvement in the community and eventually provide them with a skill which they can offer.

We are told that the unemployment rates will not decrease dramatically and that it will take time. It has been suggested that we must put some short-term operations in place while we wait. It is a proven fact that the voluntary sector of this

country can engage young people quickly and place them in jobs, provide training and involve them in the life of the community.

• (1750)

The Canadian Federation of Students, a national post-secondary student organization representing almost half a million students, has been expressing its concerns to me. The students were responding to a proposal put forward by a Member, a supporter of the Government, regarding the youth employment capacity of our Canadian Forces. The suggestion was that there would be a creation of some 20,000 jobs. We notice now the figure is 5,000 over a two-year period. What the Government says in response to that is that this country's economy and the unemployed youth in this country do not need band-aid solutions to the chronic unemployment and under-employment crisis. They go on to call for the implementation of the strategy outlined in the Employment Opportunities for the 80s Task Force, "Work for Tomorrow". Rather than short-term schemes, they ask the Government to support projects which will have an involvement in the life of the community and will give some life skills of lasting duration. This is the direction the national voluntary agencies could offer that the proposals the Government has put forward do not offer.

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, in closing this debate for the NDP, I am grateful for the opportunity to say a few words. I understand I am to share my time with a Member of the Government Party and I thank him for giving me a few comments to put some comments and suggestions on the record.

The debate today has indicated the seriousness of the situation that confronts young people in terms of their future, in terms of employment, in terms of asking themselves where they are going. As human beings they must be asking themselves, what should they do with their lives? It is not just a question of youth unemployment; it is a question of unemployment generally. But it is our young people who are on the edge of experiencing a problem which all of society will be experiencing.

When we look at young people and the dilemma they face, we see the terrible social costs already. For example, the suicide rate among young people between the ages of 15 and 24 has quadrupled since 1940. There is a lack of sense of future, of hope, of a sense of direction and a sense of purpose which creates not just economic difficulties but psychological and social difficulties for the young, and I would say for society as a whole.

Perhaps instead of going through all the terrible frustration, anxiety and lack of hope that young people face, can I in the few moments I have try to flip the coin and talk about some of the hope that could exist but does not? Surely in this day and age of tremendous technological innovation and progress occurring at a rate that we did not even dream about a few