

*Adjournment Debate*

for evaluating the social and financial impact of the voluntary sector.

• (1830)

[Translation]

**Mr. Charles Hamelin (Charlevoix):** Mr. Speaker, following the remarks made by my colleague on the motion moved by the Hon. Member for Argenteuil-Papineau, I must emphasize the great benefits which Canadian men and women get from volunteers . . . As recently as last week, I had the opportunity to meet with a group of volunteers, and I should like to indicate to the House that like various other organizations, in this case it was the junior Chamber of Commerce of Saint-Urbain which organized for all volunteers a special evening to emphasize the enormous contribution of volunteer men and women working with various groups and they expressed to these people the gratitude of the community.

The reason my colleague moved this motion clearly stems from the fact that she wants to develop the volunteer sector, to encourage individuals to get involved in the volunteer sector which is one of the outstanding strengths of both Quebec and Canada. I think that no level of Government would be in a position to satisfy all the needs. It is a well-known fact that Canada is a large economic entity with limited resources which must try to satisfy boundless needs. Without volunteers in many areas of activities, including culture, health services and sports, our communities could not provide youths with the necessary training in all areas.

I think therefore that our colleague's proposals stems from the fact that she would like to move volunteers to do again something for their community and to obtain, if possible, a certain compensation. Well, volunteer means "he who does something out of his own free will." The volunteer gets a lot of satisfaction by feeling that he is doing something that will benefit the community and that he is doing it without pay and according to his own way of doing things. I think that today, Canadian wives and mothers who have children out of their own free will—today that is possible, in years gone by it was less so—could perhaps obtain a fair compensation for bringing Canadian men and women into this world. But do we collectively have the financial means to do it and how could we determine how much is worth the contribution of all Canadian women who are bearing children for this country? I think that those who are devoting themselves to the welfare of their community get tremendous benefits. I think that, as my colleague was saying, if we try to bureaucratize or institutionalize this generosity which is so essential to Canadian men and women, we would be taking a very dangerous step. However, I think that the purpose of our colleague's motion is essentially to encourage volunteer work within our community in the best interests of Canadian men and women throughout Canada.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hour provided for the consideration of Private Members, Business has now expired.

• (1835)

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[Translation]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 46 deemed to have been moved.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST (A) REQUEST FOR DETAILS CONCERNING FORMATION OF CERTAIN PRIVATE COMPANIES (B) COMPANY SHAREHOLDINGS

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday I asked a question in the House about the staff in the Prime Minister's Office and a rather extraordinary procedure according to which certain employees, including three senior advisors, received preferential treatment by being allowed to arrange personal service contracts and set up companies acting on their behalf. I wanted to ask the Prime Minister whether he or the Minister responsible for Treasury Board had in fact approved this contract procedure, and at the time, as Hon. Members will recall, the Deputy Prime Minister answered that he saw nothing irregular in it.

Mr. Speaker, it is not up to me to criticize, but all I know is that according to the Estimates, 120 person-years were approved for the Prime Minister's Office, and now we hear that three people, Messrs. Van Dusen, McMilland and MacAdam, would be hired by contract, and thus surplus to the person-years approved in the Estimates.

What I wanted to know was whether these people, who had established private companies in Ontario, so-called numbered companies, whether these people had complied with the conflict of interest guidelines or, to use the official term, the conflict of interest/post-employment code for public office holders, one of the documents tabled last week by the Prime Minister.

No reply was forthcoming, and that is why I asked for an adjournment debate.

There are two or three reasons why such contracts are set up. First, a private company obviously enjoys tax benefits. In Ontario, a private, incorporated company pays far less income tax than the individual taxpayer. It would be an advantage for someone in a situation like the three gentlemen in the Prime Minister's Office to be able to receive his salary, deposit it in the company and thus avoid taxes. It is legal, and I do not think there is much that can be done about it.

What I wanted to know is whether these contracts and companies were examined by Treasury Board and by the Prime Minister and whether they are in order.

Mr. McMillan of the Prime Minister's Office, one of the officials who earns a rather respectable salary, admitted he had personal reasons for establishing that service contract