

Supply

the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) who is prepared to give grant money from her department to groups who support her personal view of problems in the Canadian health care system, but not to give grant money to groups who disagree, nor to give grant money to groups with an opposite point of view. That shades of totalitarian states, countries like Russia with one political party. Those who would like to destroy Canadian democracy, would have a state owning all the means of production and a small group of people would decide who got what. That is what a grant system is all about; a small group of people, whoever they are and however described, imposing their will on a community.

Mr. Evans: Including grants to municipalities?

Mr. Hawkes: That includes municipal grants, provincial grants, any granting system of any kind. Some small group of people make the decisions.

Then the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council stood in the House proposing that Imperial Oil should be allowed to lobby with 50-cent dollars and that charitable organizations should not. Now he sits in his place and heckles. He wants to make sure that his constituents understand his philosophy and perspective, that churches should not be allowed to lobby, YMCAs should not be allowed to lobby, boys' and girls' clubs should not be allowed to lobby, and environmental groups should not be allowed to lobby if they are going to use taxpayers' dollars, but major corporations shall be allowed to lobby.

Mr. Evans: I didn't say that.

Mr. Hawkes: Yes, the Hon. Member did. He said, "I did not say that." The Hon. Member might not have understood, as sometimes happens—

Mr. Evans: Don't put words in my mouth.

Mr. Hawkes: But that is what he said, Mr. Speaker. The fault lies with the tax system, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Evans: I don't disagree with that.

Mr. Hawkes: Some 25 years ago the Canadian tax system was revised and people were given a standard charitable donation deduction. They could claim they had made a donation to charity and thus reduce their taxable income without providing proof of such a donation. But what happened over a period of 25 years? Let us go back 25 years. Twenty-five per cent of Canadian taxpayers were forwarding receipts for charitable donations to the taxman. One-quarter of the people were making charitable donations. But in 1982, 25 years later, only 9 per cent of the people were making charitable donations. That is a drop from 25 per cent to 9 per cent. And what have we left in place? We have said to the richest Member of Parliament that if he or she wants to donate \$10 to a charity it will cost the person only \$5. Yet we have said to the poorest person that if he or she wants to donate \$10 it will cost that person \$10. If you are rich it will cost you \$5 to donate \$10,

but if you are poor it will cost you \$10 to donate \$10. That is the system we have in place. First, a system where you do not have to donate a dime but you can claim you had donated \$100. If you exceeded the \$100 donation amount and you chose to produce receipts, if you are rich it cost you 50 cents for every \$1 donation. But if you are poor the cost is \$1 for every \$1 donation.

I suggest to Members of this Chamber, from whatever political party, that that practice is obscene. Why should the poor be allowed only to donate dollar dollars and why should the rich be allowed to donate 50-cent dollars? Large companies in Canada which make charitable donations donate 50-cent dollars because of their 50 per cent tax rate. Small companies donate 79-cent dollars because they have a 21 per cent tax rate. That is the principle, Mr. Speaker. The rich shall be allowed to direct Canadian charities is really the consequence. It is not very democratic.

It is not very democratic when you have a principle in Canadian tax law that says the wealthiest group shall really be allowed to decide which charities shall survive and prosper. But what we on this side propose, and what the voluntary organizations themselves propose and have proposed year after year after year, what this Government agrees prior to elections and never implements after elections, is a democratic principle of allowing communities to decide equitably which organizations in their communities shall survive and prosper in a financial sense. What Members opposite seek to do is to continue a process where a small group of people decide.

Let me give you two or three examples from my own experience, Mr. Speaker. I have tried since the day I was first elected to bring to the attention of Minister after Minister the issue of chess. Chess is an activity engaged in by four to five million Canadians at least once a year. Chess is an activity in which a number of Canadians, young and some not so young, have established world-wide reputations. Chess players are not allowed by this Government to receive funding through charitable donations or any kind of tax break. They are told instead to apply for grants. Lo and behold they can apply to the Secretary of State (Mr. Joyal) and they can apply to the Minister of State for Sport (Mr. Olivier), but the reply every time is that chess does not fit the definition for granting activity. They can go to every department of Government and it will not fit somebody's definition.

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Look at highly commercialized activities. A not dissimilar activity like skiing is highly commercialized in Canadian society. Lo and behold, the best Canadian skiers fit the definition for grants. That is a highly commercialized area of activity not engaged in by nearly as many people as those engaged in an activity called chess. You have to wonder which is the more important activity in terms of the public good. Given the nature of the world of the future, is the activity called chess more beneficial to society in terms of the way it conditions the minds of young people, prepares them for a computer age and employment activity in the production of