

reducing the deficit, there are other ways of doing it rather than attacking the poor, those least able to afford it. Regardless of the protestations of the Liberal Party today, it could have reverted to the marginal tax rates of 1980. At that time we argued that the Liberal Government had no business revising marginal tax rates for high income earners. If the Government were to do the proper thing and revert to the marginal tax rates of 1980, in our estimation it could raise something in the order of \$1.7 billion. It would ensure that the people who could afford to pay would pay to make the country run economically. I see that my time is up.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member will have four minutes remaining the next time this matter is before the House.

It being 5.35 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS— MOTIONS

[Translation]

THE VOLUNTEER SECTOR

AUTHORIZATION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, WELFARE AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS TO STUDY AND REPORT

Mrs. Lise Bourgault (Argenteuil-Papineau) moved that the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs be empowered to study and report on the volunteer sector in order to evaluate its social and financial impact and to recommend appropriate ways of offering fiscal or other compensations to volunteers and volunteer organizations.

She said: Mr. Speaker, in my speech I intend to cover three aspects of volunteer work in our society. According to Statistics Canada, this kind of work represents, in Canada, the equivalent of \$3 billion per year in salaries alone. Volunteer work continues to be a very important asset which the Government should encourage and support through measures adapted to the needs of volunteer workers.

Mr. Speaker, volunteer work has changed a great deal in the last 25 years, and that is why I would like to define, first of all, the concept of volunteer work, and then describe the typical volunteer worker. In concluding, I intend to elaborate on the role of volunteer work in our society, its limitations and its problems, and I will stress the vital role of government in this area and ways of giving tangible recognition to volunteer work and its practitioners.

Basically, we can distinguish three kinds of social volunteer action: factual action, spontaneous action and volunteer action. Since we are concerned at this point with volunteer action or

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volunteer work, I shall briefly describe what is generally understood by the two other types of actions.

Factual action, although the conception may be somewhat vague and ambiguous, and although there are several types of factual action, refers to the kind of action resulting from membership in established groups or institutions that exist for the purpose of achieving certain objectives or in order to perpetuate customs or tradition. Although the individual's participation in such action is not compulsory, the kind of factual action will depend on certain natural criteria such as age or sex and belonging to a given professional or occupational group. Factual action is always the result of a society's natural and institutional structures.

Spontaneous action, which by definition refers to freely chosen and voluntary participation by its members, takes place within the framework of small, unstructured groups that have no clear-cut social function, except at certain specific moments. Although the importance of spontaneous action and its contribution to society cannot be denied, it is primarily aimed at satisfying the individual needs of the participants themselves. Taking part in spontaneous action is a way of accomplishing individual aims which are not seen as being part of a community effort.

● (1740)

As to voluntary action, it is more commonly referred to as the volunteer sector.

Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of making an exhaustive retrospective of the various definitions of the volunteer sector. I would rather try to give a clear and practical definition of voluntary action so as to make the significance of my motion more readily understandable. As early as in 1948, Lord Beveridge defined voluntary action as private action, in the sense that it does not come under the State. While following in the footsteps of Beveridge, let us say that it is necessary to identify the five aspects of voluntary action: voluntary action that implies non mandatory participation; voluntary action through participation in a group project; in voluntary action, consideration of profit is non existent; the voluntary action done within existing institutions in a society at a given moment in its history; voluntary action focused on the achievement of societal objectives.

Indeed the Social Affairs Department has already classified volunteer actions as follows: social or service volunteer action; sports or recreational volunteer action; artistic, moral support, leisure volunteer action, and so on. And so it is that voluntary action is done through constant exchange between an individual and society. Such is the thrust of my motion, Mr. Speaker, because, since then, the impact of the voluntary sector on the evolution of society has been growing and the difficulties inherent in this mass movement keep making headlines.

I propose to use statistics to draw the classical profile of a volunteer and show that the Standing Committee on Health,