

many of the other groups which provide rescue service within the community. The volunteer firemen are one of the best examples of dedication to public service. On the west coast of Canada there are people who have acted in a number of capacities, such as coastguard rescue agents, for which they receive no pay whatsoever. Some have also provided a great deal of personal equipment. I should like to give a couple of examples of individuals who have provided equipment and incurred expenses on the west coast in order to provide the same kind of service as that provided by volunteer firemen.

● (1720)

On Pender Island there is a rescue agent who has provided approximately \$80,000 of equipment over a number of years. There is a vessel and some specialized rescue equipment which has been used in over 300 marine incidents. He has not received a penny for this. Operating expenses are covered but his outlay for specialized rescue equipment has been substantial.

Another example is a rescue agent in Campbell River who also works closely with the volunteer fire department. He has spent something in the order of \$12,000 to provide VHF and HF radios. He monitors emergencies frequently and responds to them. He has donated a \$10,000 boat for rescue service. It was mentioned in this House not too long ago that this particular individual was involved in a rescue in which a seine vessel overturned in one of the most dangerous pieces of water in western Canada, Seymour Narrows. Two members of the armed forces rescued people from inside the vessel. These divers were presented with medals for bravery but the private citizen I mentioned had to replace his torn wet suit and wrecked scuba diving gear at his own expense.

I believe there is an element of justice in the proposed motion, Mr. Speaker. I should like to congratulate the hon. member for bringing it forward and would ask the government to take it under advisement. People who provide similar services at their own expense and quite willingly should be recognized. I should like to lend my voice to supporting the motion, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to say that I, too, support this motion. This is an initiative that has been supported by everybody for a long time. I would just like to point out to the House that many hon. members on our side also support this motion. I thank and congratulate the sponsors of the motion and I hope it will be referred to committee.

[*English*]

**Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough):** Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak on this motion but I was so moved by the eloquence of other members, particularly the mover of the motion, that I felt compelled to be identified with the sentiments expressed in their speeches and to lend what support I can, as a private member, to the motion.

### *Volunteer Firemen*

My riding of Hillsborough essentially covers the greater Charlottetown area of Prince Edward Island. It is made up of several communities apart from Charlottetown—Sherwood, Parkdale and East and West Royalty. While it is a small community, it contains a number of very successful, well-developed, well-equipped and technologically sophisticated fire departments. More important than the technology, and even more important than the equipment and the endowment of those departments in terms of budgets, is the resourcefulness, the dedication and community spirit of the firemen.

I should like to congratulate the members who have spoken on the motion before me, Mr. Speaker. If I may be allowed, I should like to congratulate in particular the mover, the hon. member for Abitibi (Mr. Caouette), and the seconder, the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier). Their speeches were not only a credit to themselves and to their ridings but to the firemen across the country on whose behalf they were speaking. Their remarks also reflect an awareness of the special role of firemen in the country and an awareness of the role of volunteerism in Canada and elsewhere.

It is true that more and more Canadians expect government to do almost everything for them. As government becomes more expansive and encroaches more and more on the private sector, it is a threat to volunteerism. I am sure that that threat is one of the reasons this government has seen fit to appoint a special body to examine the role and opportunities of different kinds of voluntary organizations.

Nowhere is volunteerism more important than in the sphere of fire fighting, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned my riding of Hillsborough and referred to the fact that it consists mostly of the city of Charlottetown and includes Sherwood, Parkdale and East and West Royalty. I should like to cite a few facts regarding fire fighting in my riding which I am sure will be equally true of other communities across the dominion.

In Hillsborough there are three fire departments, Charlottetown, Sherwood and Parkdale. The Charlottetown fire department comprises 57 members, 52 of whom are volunteers and five of whom are full-time. The department depends very significantly upon the contribution, dedication and community service of the voluntary sector. The volunteers receive \$2,300 per year. That is not a remuneration although it covers some, but not all, of the expenses they incur in the fulfilment of their role. I am told that the Charlottetown fire department answers something like 350 calls per year and that every fireman, without exception, is required to turn out for each and every call.

Some of the volunteers lose pay from their jobs for the time spent at fires. That is very significant, Mr. Speaker. In effect, they are paying for the right to fulfil their role as fire fighters. The fire chief in Charlottetown has informed me that, in his judgment and in the judgment of his colleagues across the country, the motion we are discussing today is welcome and that he supports it 100 per cent.

I have mentioned the city of Charlottetown, which is my own city and which lies within the riding of Hillsborough. Another community that I should like to mention, to illustrate