

Company of Young Canadians Act

is to say that we have reacted too quickly to the misfortunes which befell the Company of Young Canadians, misfortunes which, besides, would justify in his view that it be killed.

He then continued by disproving arguments already put forward before the parliamentary committee. I would like here to simply repeat in its most elementary form, in case the remarks of the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants blurred it a little, the line of thought behind the amendments moved in connection with this legislation and which are under consideration at the moment.

We said at the committee—and I should like to repeat it this afternoon—that the volunteers, should they be appointed or elected to the Council of the Company, would be placed in a situation that would inevitably create a conflict of interests for them on two levels.

When the member for Halifax-East Hants says that at the time when the original bill setting up the Company of Young Canadians was being studied no one objected to the appointment and even the election of volunteers to the council, he speaks the truth.

There are many things, Mr. Speaker, to which no one objected at that time. The member for Halifax-East Hants himself recognized, at least implicitly, that it might have been better to object to it at the start, when the original bill was introduced in the House; this might have spared the Company of Young Canadians unpleasant adventures with which the parliamentary committee became acquainted before the Christmas recess.

As I was saying, the election or the presence of volunteers on the Council of the Company of Young Canadians creates a conflict of interests on two levels: first of all, on the personal level, because they are called upon to participate in decisions that affect them personally and determine their fate, that determine the allowances paid to them, for instance, and even determine the policy that will guide the authority that governs them, that is the executive director of the Company.

There is also a collective conflict of interests, so to speak, because, as members of the executive or the council, they are called upon to decide upon the various CYC projects, including those in which they will participate themselves.

They are called upon to reach decisions, for instance, on the allotment of funds to the various projects, those in which they are par-

[Mr. Pelletier.]

ticipating, as well as those to which the other volunteers devote themselves. Obviously, they have a hidden interest to promote the apportionment of greater funds to the projects on which they are working. I am not saying they will all do that but I say that we are placing them where they will be tempted to prefer their personal interest or the collective interest of their small project to the general interest of the company, to the superior interests of the organization as a whole.

Those are not myths, Mr. Speaker, those are not speculations, but facts. At the time volunteers were a part of the company's council, we witnessed stand-up fights as well as schemes whereby individual interests instead of the superior interests of the company prevailed in the end. That is why upon learning that, the parliamentary committee recommended to change the method of appointing the council of the company.

When the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants says he is not much impressed by the objection concerning the executive director, he still does not convince me, for the executive director is also placed in an impossible position if volunteers are appointed to the council. I wonder what could impress the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants. In such a case, the executive director is being placed in the position of having the same people as superiors and as subordinates.

[English]

Mr. McCleave: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I think the minister's argument at this time is directed to something my hon. friend said and not to what I said. I think the record ought to be put straight in this regard.

● (4:40 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Pelletier: Mr. Speaker, I apologize and I want to correct my mistake right away. In fact, the argument put forth by the hon. member for Fraser Valley West (Mr. Rose).

In order to end the matter, let me say again that if we are to have volunteers in the council, the executive director will have the same people acting as his superiors on the one hand and as his subordinates on the other. The people defining the policy under which he operates will be the very same to whom he will have to apply it. This would create a very difficult situation.

There are, moreover, other ways of ensuring the direct participation of the young. Indeed, under clause 16(2), the volunteers can set up an advisory committee and I daresay