

came to coach us in the evening, and at the time, we did not play in arenas, but on outside rinks. He was our coach and he used to help us. During the weekends, there were practices. In addition to feeding and raising his own family, this man paid so that others could take part. This tradition continues today. The Government had a perfect opportunity to show its humanity and its concern by rewarding those people. They are not asking for a reward, but they would appreciate it.

Before I entered politics, when I was in charge of recreational activities and founded a community center and a senior citizens' club—I did many things in my community—I remember that every time our Member of Parliament came to a presentation or an assembly, it was an occasion to rejoice, to feel satisfied, a show of appreciation for the work carried out by thousands of volunteers.

And now that I am a Member of Parliament—I would never have dreamt that I would be on that side of the fence—I must admit that before, in my constituency, it was first the Conservative Member, then the Union Nationale, and now I am on the other side and I know too well how important it is for the elected representative to be there when there is an event, a community centre, a group of youngsters playing hockey.

But today, those thousands and thousands of viewers would have expected from the Government spokesman, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mrs. Bertrand) the person whose duty it is to be the most compassionate human being in Canada, a minimum of recognition, a minimum of appreciation, a minimum of attention.

Mr. Speaker, another Progressive Conservative Member will be speaking after me, and I have one minute left. It is my hope, because this is not a matter of political stripe, it is my hope that the next one will be more compassionate. He will find a way, and certainly my colleague for Thunder Bay—Nipigon (Mr. Epp), my colleague for Outremont (Mrs. Pépin) and I, we would accept that the Government or the next Member on behalf of the Government move an amendment to that proposal providing that a committee be struck with representatives from all sides of the House, in order to consult the thousands and thousands of volunteers in Canada, in order to know how the Government should express its appreciation and encourage other future volunteers, a new generation to follow in the footsteps of their parents.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Outremont made me think of all women's groups and associations. I think that any improvement in this country in the sexual equality field is due to the women who fought within these voluntary groups. They did it on their own time, Mr. Speaker. They did after they had finished cooking and feeding their children. They had to spend evenings in church basements, in parishes, in schools in order to fight and propose solutions.

Mr. Speaker, you have just signaled me that my speaking time is over. I hope all Members will give their consent so that the motion can be amended and that a committee is formed to

### *Canada Pension Plan*

consult the thousands of volunteers in Canada in order to know their concerns and their need for recognition.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Jepson (London East):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the motion of the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Nipigon (Mr. Epp) who suggested that the Government should consider paying Canada Pension Plan benefits to persons not making contributions to the plan, and that the payments be in proportion to the time such persons dedicate to voluntary efforts in community social services.

There is no doubt that voluntary activity confers very real and concrete benefits on Canadian society. The total economic contribution of registered charities and volunteer workers covered in two Statistics Canada surveys was \$4,476 million in 1980. In comparative terms, this was equal to 1.7 per cent of the Gross National Product.

Volunteer activity and output is a significant sector in Canada's economy. It is especially significant in the improvement of the health and social well-being of Canadians. As well, we know that there are social, psychological, philosophical, and cultural aspects of volunteer activity which enrich our society and cannot be measured economically.

If the intent of the motion of the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Nipigon is to recognize volunteer workers, I fully agree with it. I believe we can agree in general that volunteers work of their own free will in a discretionary activity, that is, in an activity of their choice without immediate anticipation of pay or expectation of benefits of an economic sort. Volunteer workers are committed to helping others by giving time, services, goods or materials without looking for their own gain or expecting remuneration. It is this altruistic principle which is the foundation of all voluntary activity in this country. If the intent of the Hon. Member's motion is to remunerate volunteer workers, I do not feel that the motion is entirely appropriate.

There is no doubt that volunteers do real work, valuable work and that they deserve recognition. I believe that this recognition should be in keeping with the volunteer spirit. Volunteers have energy, time, desire and motivation to help others freely in a discretionary activity. Recognition of volunteer workers should be in keeping with their independence and should support and foster their altruistic ideals.

I want to point out that the Government recognizes the work of volunteers in ways which are compatible with and support the spirit of voluntarism. For example, one of the ways the federal Government recognizes the contribution of health and social service volunteers is through the lifestyle award presented by the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp). This award is presented annually to individuals who have undertaken voluntary activities without remuneration to improve the well-being of their community.

We can seek two of various examples of notable volunteers receiving the Order of Canada from the Governor General. There are also various programs of recognition initiated by the provinces. National Volunteer Week, which is sponsored by