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independent from public authorities, otherwise they might be well advised to become direct adjuncts of certain Departments. I think that an information campaign ought to be directed at people who participate actively in so-called non-profit organizations so that they will do their work and make sure that the public at large is kept informed and makes generous donations.

How can those people be encouraged to contribute financially so that an organization will have enough money to operate? I think that all kinds of formulas are available. The give-and-take formula was mentioned a moment ago. It may be a good formula, but it needs to be put to the test. As to the tax credit, Mr. Speaker, we would want to know just how much credit. I imagine that anyone who gives money to an organization does not expect a full tax credit for that amount. The underlying principle has to be that a donor must not wonder whether he will get something in return. So it becomes a question of evaluation and proportion.

Mr. Speaker, if Canadians are told that 40,000 organizations are registered as being charitable or non-profitable, it is imperative that they be classified so that people will have a much better idea of the value of those organizations and of the limits on tax deductible donations. For instance, I know that some churches in my riding—and the Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp) spoke clearly to that issue earlier today—have received assistance through various job creation programs. Indeed, we have helped many religious congregations and parish communities to modernize or at least repair and improve rectories and churches. Invariably, some people bring up the question of separation between the powers of the State and those of the Church. Still, we have helped them with public funds. Under normal circumstances, Mr. Speaker, it would be up to the parish to make sure that the parishioners or the community members pay for materials or services. For all sorts of economic or historic reasons or because of factors which must be taken into consideration, the State occasionally steps in to help them. How else could we help those communities if we did not give them grants? Is the deduction now allowed for charitable donations too low? Should it be higher? If it were higher, would the communities find it easier to get organized, Mr. Speaker? In the light of current events, we have to admit that the social and economic reality has undergone a drastic change over the past ten years. Allow me another example. In larger cities, people move so often nowadays that many of them no longer feel responsible for their parish or community or even for the organizations working in their own neighbourhood.

Those are new sociological phenomena which we must face. We would be deluding ourselves, Mr. Speaker, if we believed that a debate such as this one could provide any answer to these problems. In my opinion, the best way to come to a realistic solution, especially one which may be applicable in the long run, would be to let individuals and organizations involved in voluntary work, charitable or research activities to

come to us and explain their own position. Indeed, when we confer with officials from various Departments or even with people in charge of organizations, we find it very difficult to find any common ground because many aspects are hard to assess at the present time as we do not have all the components of the problem in hand.

I am happy to see that, basically, everyone taking part in this debate today is aware of the importance of non-profit organizations and of the need for voluntary work and that both sides of the House agree that concrete action must be taken in the short term to guarantee that we will help those who are involved in voluntary work and who take care of other people.

I gave the historical background a while ago. In the early days, non-profit or charitable organizations were dealing directly with individuals. They were not necessarily doing any research work; they were taking care of people because governments were not doing it. However, many services are now provided by the governments. We would have to determine whether there is any duplication of efforts. Perhaps we should also look at whether existing organizations still have an efficient and positive role to play. I believe that these are important questions which should be asked from the people working within these organizations.

● (1620)

Another question which must be asked when dealing with these organizations is this, Mr. Speaker: Is the word "charitable" still acceptable where all these committees or groups are concerned? I believe that the word should be changed because it is now hard to identify all the organizations using this term. Instead, I believe that we should refer to voluntary action. The expression "voluntary action" is much more accurate and appropriate, and if we were to use it, it would be much easier to come to a consensus as to the various provisions that should apply so that we would be sure of actually helping those organizations.

The Hon. Member for Provencher raised a major point when he noted the importance of not over-regulating the voluntary sector. If we really want to review this whole issue of non-profit organizations effectively, we should set up a joint committee of both Houses capable of doing its work speedily. I believe that the time has come to look for a consensus among the various non-profit organizations. I think that a six-month period could be set for a joint committee to listen expeditiously to the comments or wishes of the various organizations, after which the committee could very rapidly, at the government level, find extremely simple methods to meet the needs of these organizations.

Someone was saying earlier that the difficulty is that we do not want to recognize all the organizations and that we are removing one additional motivation for those who do voluntary work. Mr. Speaker, I think that for those who really believe in what they are doing and who truly want support for agencies