

only to have my words reported to others for whom voluntary action is a new or unfamiliar concept. In doing so, I hope at the same time to indicate the importance of the role which the Government of Canada sees for voluntary action and voluntary groups in our society. Voluntary action by individuals and the work of voluntary associations combine to form that part of our socio-economic life referred to as the voluntary sector. The scope and impact of the voluntary sector in Canada is highlighted when one considers that it includes the efforts of millions of individuals and thousands of groups and organizations. The spirit of voluntary action provides the impetus for creativity and interventions in all aspects of our social, cultural, political and economic life.

As I have noted elsewhere, in 1979 about 2.7 million Canadian volunteers donated the equivalent of approximately 200,000 person years of work, which is more than all the forest industries in Canada provide on an annual basis. In 1980, the revenues of voluntary organizations, which were registered under the Income Tax Act as charities, equal 11 per cent of federal government revenues. Approximately 175,000 jobs were generated directly. These and many other interesting perspectives can be found in the 1983 report by Mr. David Ross, which was published by my Department and released in January, 1983. The impact of voluntary action goes beyond what mere numbers can convey. Volunteers also play a critical role in identifying needs, advising on plans, and interpreting and evaluating programs and services of both the public and the private sectors.

Voluntary associations advocate for and present the views of minorities, communities and public interest in the legislative and regulatory and policy-making processes. Voluntary associations serve as a buffer against the impact of unemployment and social dislocation. They enhance the individual self-worth and improve citizens' capacity for self-reliance. Voluntary groups mobilize community resources to provide facilities and services not generally available from Government programs. They provide meaningful and satisfying work for both paid staff and unpaid volunteers. Voluntary organizations play a significant role in improving Canada's international relations through the provisions of international aid and technical assistance to developing countries. Through structures, such as community development, corporate groups in communities undertake innovative activities which enhance their socio-economic life without heavy dependence on Government funding.

In recognition of the intrinsic value of voluntary action to Canadian society, I and my colleagues have decided to reaffirm our commitment to encourage, facilitate and promote such action. To this end, I have put forward a set of guiding principles that have now been adopted by Cabinet. I would like these principles to be well noted, Mr. Speaker, as they will form the basis of Government policies of encouragement to voluntary action and will guide its actions in this area.

These four principles are as follows: First, respect for the autonomy and independence of voluntary action. Voluntary action is characterized by freedom of action and self-manage-

ment. Its activities and priorities should be self-determined and freely undertaken.

Second, encouragement for self-reliant development and self-sustaining growth of individual—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** Order, please. The Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Shields) is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Shields:** Mr. Speaker, you have made a point a number of times during debates that Members were not allowed to read prepared texts but were to speak in the debates as debates are supposed to be spoken to. I have waited with a great deal of patience, but it would appear that the Secretary of State (Mr. Joyal) is reading from a text. Perhaps instead of reading from a text he should pass the speech around and we can all read it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Tousignant:** Mr. Speaker, it irks me to see how the Member opposite is behaving. There have been several occurrences where, as soon as a Member on the Government side reads from a prepared text, Members opposite rise to express their indignation and ask the Chair to put a stop to this practice. On the opposite side of the House, there have been a number of times when we saw Hon. Members reading their speeches. We could intervene as well. Mr. Speaker, we shall have to decide once and for all what attitude should be taken in this House. We on this side of the House have had the courtesy to let Members opposite read their speeches, and I saw this happen several times. Mr. Speaker, I fail to understand how Hon. Members opposite have the nerve to rise so often in the House to apply the Standing Order in question to Members on this side, when we at least have the courtesy to refrain from doing likewise.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** The decision is not very hard for the Chair to make. If Hon. Members would refer to Citation 310 in *Beauchesne*, they would see that it clearly indicates that a Minister of the Crown who is making a statement of policy is allowed to read from a text.

**Mr. Joyal:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for the interpretation. I was essentially reading a policy statement containing four principles which the Cabinet has adopted following a recommendation that I made in recent months. I can understand the point made by the Hon. Member, but there is no doubt that my colleague, the Hon. Member for Waterloo read from notes. I listened to him very carefully, even though I was in another room because I had to deal with an urgent matter. But with the indulgence of the Chair, I will read the second, third, and fourth principles, and then speak extemporaneously because I know the subject and I can quote at length. However, I thought it was in the public interest for people to know the principles of the Government. If they agree, they could go ahead and continue with their good work.