

Oral Questions

explain to the House why his budget ignored the contribution of Canada's voluntary sector to his projected recovery of the Canadian economy? More specifically, would the Minister indicate why he has rejected the representations of his colleague, the Secretary of State, and the face to face recommendations of the national voluntary organizations, by specifically ignoring the "give and take" tax proposals, the charitable activity definition, and the cost effectiveness which has been shown in job creation in the voluntary sector?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, the Canadian Government has a great deal of confidence in the voluntary sector and recognizes and acknowledges its major role in our society.

Like hundreds of organizations, the voluntary sector made a number of representations and recommendations. There were two major recommendations made by the voluntary sector. One was to do away with the \$100 automatic exemption without receipts; the other was the one to which the Hon. Member refers. I have accepted the first recommendation made by the voluntary organizations. That is a .500 batting average which I would submit, is pretty good and compares very favourably with the recommendations made by any other sector.

When I met with representatives from the voluntary sector, I indicated to them that there would be difficulty in implementing all their recommendations. They said, "We will accept a first step if we cannot get everything." They are very happy about the steps that I have taken, very happy indeed.

Mr. McLean: Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance is not speaking to the same representatives from the voluntary agencies of Canada with whom I speak—they feel very let down. Their proposals to the Minister included only one side. Their proposals specifically indicated that only if there was an incentive would they agree to the deduction.

INQUIRY RESPECTING TASK FORCE

Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Secretary of State. Would the Secretary of State in this National Volunteer Week tell the voluntary sector of Canada, over three million Canadians, why his long-planned and awaited task force on the fiscal and legal situation of Canada's voluntary sector has not been included in the budget? We had all expected that it would be. Will he tell the House if he did recommend to the Minister of Finance that the removal of the \$100 deduction should be done without the "give-and-take" tax credit proposal?

[Translation]

Hon. Serge Joyal (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, I heard the Finance Minister's reply to the question and I should point out to the Hon. Member's attention that his proposal has not met as much objection as is suggested. Indeed one of the campaign officials of one of the most important organizations

in the sector, that is the United Way, stated yesterday and I quote:

[English]

Next year, without the automatic deduction, maybe they will be giving the hundred bucks to charity to get the deduction that way.

[Translation]

There is no doubt that national organizations will have every opportunity to conduct their regular canvassing to increase their share of income from that source. Our surveys show that 43 per cent of charitable or voluntary organizations' funds come from Canadian taxpayers' moneys and that approximately 22 per cent are provided for by the Government. Consequently, in the assessment of additional sources of financing, we wish to take into consideration the impact of the positive statement made this week by the Minister of Finance in his budget speech and I think that it is a step in the right direction with a view to reevaluating how we may contribute additional funds to the financing of the voluntary sector in Canada.

* * *

[English]

RAILWAYS

CROWNEST PASS RATE—VARIABLE RATES ISSUE

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Many Members attended a luncheon today sponsored by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. The delegates are upset with the Minister of Transport's draft Bill to end the Crow rate but they are almost as greatly upset with his stated intention to use closure to ram the Bill through the House. Will the Minister take seriously the overwhelming representations against changing the Crow freight rate, and will he particularly consider eliminating the clause which permits railways to discriminate against certain farmers because of where they live? In other words, will he consider making sure that variable rates are not possible?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I also met with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and other representatives from Saskatchewan this morning. I can assure you that any worry they may have about the second statement, about using closure, is totally unjustified and totally unfounded.

With respect to the other issues, we had a discussion and I asked them a number of questions, but there is nothing in particular on which to report. By the way, it was a private meeting and I do not think I should be asked to report on what took place in a private meeting.

VOLUME LIMITATION

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Madam Speaker, this Government and this Minister have the power to end many things. We just saw the end of the Western Development Fund