

to repeat that. The hon. member deems it necessary to have in this bill, Bill C-18, a definition of multiculturalism but does not deem it necessary to define Canadian citizenship.

For these reasons I would urge hon. members to reject this motion presented by the hon. member for Vancouver East and introduced by the hon. member for Kamloops.

I would urge hon. members today to rapidly conclude our deliberations on Bill C-18 and proceed to third reading.

I would also urge members of the other place to do likewise, because, as I said, this is strictly an administrative procedure to allow the government to formalize the formation of the department of multiculturalism and citizenship.

I speak on behalf of hundreds of thousands of Canadians who want to see the formalization of the department of multiculturalism and citizenship. I hope that this afternoon we will conclude our deliberations and move this bill forward in the spirit of co-operation and pride in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity you provided for me to make my observations.

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in support of Motion No. 1. I find the rationale just offered to the House by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State somewhat convoluted.

I think it is very clear that any piece of legislation that is tabled in the House of Commons becomes a policy exercise. I do not think you can divorce yourself from what should be policy and what should not be policy. There should not be legislation that would have members simply talking on its technicalities without there being definitions and clarity.

The fact that a new department is being created lends itself to a greater rationale for defining the department, its spirit, values and goals that it will embody. Clearly, we have a Canadian Multiculturalism Act which has gone to some lengths to define "multiculturalism" in terms of a fundamental characteristic. Therefore it should not be a problem for the government to extend that logic, one would think, to the creation of a new department. For the sake of consistency and clarification the term "multi-

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culturalism", which has been abstract from time to time, should be defined. I do not see why this should be a the problem for the government.

If we were to take the time to better define the term "multiculturalism", then the parliamentary secretary would find that it would define what it means to be a citizen of this country. I think the key words in the definition proposed in the amendment are: "a fundamental characteristic of Canada".

I think it is very significant that we are debating this motion this afternoon while at the same time we are debating the Meech Lake constitutional amendments, together with the Frank McKenna proposals which are currently before a committee of the House of Commons. It was the Liberal party in the last Parliament that suggested in this House a key amendment to that Meech Lake document that should be adopted by this House and this government should be the recognition of those Canadians who are neither English nor French in the Constitution. They, too, should be able to see themselves in that constitutional document. They, too, should be able to hold it up and say: "My aspirations and my dreams as a Canadian are right there on page 1 of my Constitution".

Something that I think is missing from the Meech Lake document—and one hopes that we can redress that situation together—concerns the definition of Canada and Canadians in the opening paragraph. So far there is a very inaccurate and incomplete definition by virtue of the fact that it only talks about two of what I believe to be four fundamental characteristics of this country and its citizenship, namely, the French fact, the English fact, the aboriginal fact and the fact that there are eight or nine million Canadians who are not of English, French or aboriginal extraction.

When the opening lines of Meech Lake suggest that the fundamental characteristics are only composed of two of those four facts, namely, the English and the French, then there is an incomplete definition. Therefore, it is the aspiration of millions of Canadians whenever the opportunity arises, whether it is in the Meech Lake document or in a document to establish a department of multiculturalism, to have their trials, contributions and fierce loyalties to this soil called Canada reflected in the major document that this House is to