

● (1520)

This is not the type of multiculturalism policy that we in Canada are interested in. However, I would like to urge that when the Minister considers policies here and discusses the whole question of race relations in Canada, he should not deal with this problem of multiculturalism at the expense of eliminating any kind of funding or work which has been done concerning cultural retention in relation to some of the more established groups which have had the requirement of seeing that their heritage has been preserved. I think that is important when dealing with the whole aspect.

At this time I would call upon the Minister to press for an institute of multiculturalism in Canada so that we might have a Canadian institute which would examine these issues. It is not something new. We do have the ethnic chairs, as the Minister well knows. We have certainly received more requests concerning this whole area. However, it is time that the Minister was cognizant of some of the requests which have been made by various scholars throughout Canada that there be such an institute whereby we could have an examination of questions such as race relations, and could also study some of the other aspects of Canadian history. I would point out to the Hon. Members that Australia, which has half the population of Canada, has twice as much funding for multiculturalism.

Madam Speaker, I see that you are giving me the high sign, but I did want to make those brief comments because it is important that we ensure a higher profile for multiculturalism. I thank the Minister for his statement this afternoon.

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): I would like to ask a brief question of the Minister, Madam Speaker. Would the Minister undertake to look into the following problem. In my constituency, people speak languages which were spoken thousands of years before English or French was spoken on this continent. What is happening is that federal Government offices in villages and settlements are not only putting up signs in English, which everyone speaks as a lingua franca, but they are also putting them up in French, though not in the local languages. This appears to be an exercise in insensitivity. People are asking: "Why did they put signs up in the French language, which no one understands, and not in the language which everyone speaks here?"

Would the Minister undertake to review this matter and see whether it is possible to put the signs up in the local languages as well?

Mr. Fleming: Madam Speaker, that question is interesting. I am sure it is of serious concern to the people of those communities, but it is quite far beyond any responsibility of mine. Concerning the question of heritage languages, outside the school system we do have a fund of moneys on a per capita basis to provide money for teachers. We do give assistance to the Inuit to some degree, starting in the last year and a half or so. However, with respect to signage, I suspect that that would relate to the municipalities or the regions—

Some Hon. Members: The federal Government.

Point of Order—Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich)

Mr. Fleming:—and relate through to the Minister responsible. Signage and languages of signage are not part of my responsibility.

Mr. Lewycky: Madam Speaker, I would like to address a short question to the Minister. As he knows, when dealing with race relations one of the big problems is attitude. In response, for example, to visible minorities in Canada and the United States, there have been slogans like "Black is beautiful". People such as the Inuit have rejected the label "Eskimo", which means "eaters of raw meat", in favour of "Inuit", which means "people" and so forth. There are many attitudinal changes which are necessary if we are to deal with race relations problems.

I am wondering if the Minister is currently handling any kind of studies dealing with these social and psychological aspects of self-image and identity which would assist Canadians, as a multicultural nation, to deal with problems relating to the elimination of race discrimination.

Mr. Fleming: Madam Speaker, in response to the Hon. Member, as I mentioned in my statement, we now have a race relations unit. As the Hon. Member knows, I believe about two years ago for the first time we granted moneys specifically to carry out research on race relations. The Hon. Member probably received a statement this morning that Cabinet has agreed to double my ongoing grants and contributions budget over the next 24 months. Part of that amount, about an additional \$2 million, will be used to study the various ways of overcoming racial tensions in the country. I cannot specifically tell him about that kind of research because I do not have the details, but I can point out and, in fact, list for him what projects are under way at the moment.

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POINT OF ORDER

MR. MUNRO—PERMANENT AND PROVISIONAL STANDING ORDERS—REQUEST FOR INDEX

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Two months ago today, on the first day we came back after the New Year, I rose on a point of order to ask when we were to have an index for the new Permanent and Provisional Standing Orders. I have risen once since, and I just hope that it will not be necessary, in the third month, to rise again to ask for the index. The Table of Contents is really not very helpful. I do hope that when the index is provided, it will provide a cross-reference with the old Standing Orders so that we will have a full reference under these Permanent and Provisional Standing Orders available to us and will be able to find our way through them with a great deal more ease.

Madam Speaker: I thank the Hon. Member for reminding me that he had not received the index. I was under the impression that he had. We will publish an index with the Standing Orders when they are published again after the changes have