

In the time remaining to me I would like to talk about something which I think is very important to this debate. That is to say, I think it is this Government's responsibility to recognize that perhaps there are aspirations for a second phase, if you will, of multiculturalism. It can be said that the first decade and a half has focused largely on the cultural retention aspect as the foundation for our multiculturalism policy. I think that is fair; it had to go that way for the first decade or so, but I think Canadians, particularly younger Canadians, are saying that multiculturalism must also address the social, political and economic forces and realities at play in this country. They are saying that the colour of your skin or the pronunciation of your name does not matter when it comes to being a full-fledged Canadian. Multiculturalism certainly can advance these aspirations, but it should also tear down what John Porter described 20 years ago as the Canadian reality, namely the vertical mosaic.

I hope that with these words the Government can perhaps reflect on not only this motion but some of the other issues I have raised. I look forward very much this afternoon and in the new Standing Committee on Multiculturalism to pursuing this motion and other ideas which have been put forward.

**Mr. Andrew Witer (Parkdale-High Park):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with some interest to the remarks of my friends from Thunder Bay-Nipigon and York West. I noted that my friend from York West referred to the long road multiculturalism has travelled over the last 14 years. I also noted that he failed to elaborate on the specifics of that long road. He failed to advise us as to why in 14 years the previous Government had not set up a standing committee, a separate department, or why it had failed to bring Canadians from these very essential cultural groups into the mainstream of Canadian life. He also referred to the track record of this Government in the 12 months it has been in office. Therefore I think it is appropriate for me to refer to that record and in fact set it straight.

This Government has initiated a number of key accomplishments in the field of multiculturalism. One of the highlights of the Government's work in bringing us all on stream with the provinces was the convening last May 14 in Winnipeg of the first ever federal-provincial-territorial conference on multiculturalism. This was the first time we had all sat down together to discuss common goals. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the conference was an unqualified success. It marked an important step forward in sharing ideas and working together to strengthen the rich fabric of Canadian society.

What came out of the meeting was a willingness to work together and mesh federal and provincial programs. You have to remember that this country runs because we all talk together. As I said at the outset, this was the very first time both levels of Government had talked together on multiculturalism and the meeting was long overdue.

Another achievement of this Government was the setting up of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism. That was one of 80 recommendations made by *Equality Now!*, the report of a special all-Party House of Commons committee on "The Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society." The

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creation of this committee shows how important the Government viewed the changing patterns of Canadian society which have evolved greatly over the past 30 years.

Canada's ethnocultural population now stands at 7.8 million people, or 31 per cent of the Canadian population. Ethnic minorities are now the majority in several urban centres. As an example, close to half the populations of Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Edmonton are now members of ethnocultural groups. This gives you an idea of why the Government deemed it imperative that those groups be given a voice and help make them more a part of the democratic process.

Previously, questions dealing with multiculturalism had been dealt with by the Standing Committee on Broadcasting and Culture, so its members did not exactly have a handle on the subject matter at hand. It was one of many issues they had to contend with and therefore was not a satisfactory arrangement. Now that multiculturalism has its very own standing committee, the whole gamut of multiculturalism issues can be examined in depth. The committee's mandate will be to encourage and monitor the implementation of the principles of the federal Government's multiculturalism policy throughout the Government of Canada. This general mandate is subdivided into three specific target areas. The first is to ensure that the Departments and agencies of the federal Government reflect the multicultural-multiracial diversity of the nation. The second is to examine existing and new programs of federal Departments and agencies to encourage sensitivity to multicultural concerns and the multicultural-multiracial reality of our nation. The third is to select and initiate projects for investigation within the jurisdiction of the standing committee and prepare background papers, reports and research in this regard.

Another major step this Government saw fit to implement was to give a higher profile to the Multiculturalism Directorate by moving it from a directorate to that of a sector. One of the moves which came with this upgrading was the appointment earlier this year of an Assistant Undersecretary of State at the Department of the Secretary of State to head the new sector.

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Another accomplishment, Mr. Speaker, was the establishment last July of an interdepartmental working group to examine a framework and mandate for a national advisory committee on ethnic broadcasting. The establishment of such a national committee was one of the recommendations of a policy paper on ethnic broadcasting issued this summer by the CRTC. This new working group is an excellent beginning toward encouraging the Canadian broadcasting system to better reflect the cultural and racial diversity of Canada.

Only a few days ago Canada's Association of Police Chiefs representing 250 chiefs of police from across the nation held their eightieth annual meeting in Saint John, New Brunswick. It was an important meeting in that the theme was "Police in a Multicultural Society". As I mentioned a few minutes ago Canada's ethnocultural population is now at 7.8 million people