

Immigration

Mr. Alexander: Next, the Prime Minister appointed a young man from St. Boniface—

Mr. Epp: Who?

Mr. Alexander: A young man from St. Boniface. He had nothing to do. Suddenly the government thought he could give leadership to parts of the western provinces. It wanted those provinces to elect some Liberal members. It had to give the hon. member something to do. Consequently, the government appointed the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) as Minister of State (Multiculturalism). In other words, the government has been hypocritical, which disturbs me. Having accepted the principle of multiculturalism by appointing a full-time minister, the government, as shown by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Cullen), has flip-flopped again. The minister has said in so many words, "We do not have a multicultural society."

Mr. MacFarlane: He has not said that.

Mr. Alexander: Despite anything the government whip may say, I suggest, since the government has recognized the fact of multiculturalism by appointing a full-time minister, it should accept the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Greenwood, which would incorporate the objectives of multiculturalism in the language of the bill. If it did this the government would be consistent. Since on the one hand we have a minister responsible for multiculturalism and since, on the other hand, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration says in so many words "No, I am not interested," or "this is not the policy," there is something wrong with the government's position. If the minister has any heart, if he has compassion for those who are other than Anglophone or Francophone—and sometimes I think we talk only about those two groups and forget all the other people who built up this country—the minister will accept the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Greenwood. But apparently the minister does not recognize the contribution other groups have made to this country's development.

Mr. Paproski: He does not care.

Mr. Alexander: That minister does not care.

Mrs. Holt: Don't say that.

Mr. Alexander: Don't tell me not to say it, Simma. I said it and I will say it again.

Mr. MacFarlane: Then wash your mouth out with soap.

Mr. Alexander: If the minister cares, let him accept the hon. member's amendment, and thus show that he supports the policy of multiculturalism. I am ashamed at the minister's attitude, and shocked. We are debating this provision at length, to give the minister time for sober, second thought. Let him reflect on our position. He has nothing to lose by adopting it, and much to gain. If the minister refuses to accept the amendment he will put himself in the position of being accused

[Mr. Fairweather.]

as an opponent of multiculturalism. Or, at best, the government will be accused of hypocrisy, and we would not want that to happen, would we? Therefore I hope the minister will stand in his place and say that, having considered the matter, he will accept the reasonable and needed amendment the hon. member for Greenwood proposed.

Mr. Gus MacFarlane (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who spoke just now and others have tried to leave the impression that somehow the Minister of State for Multiculturalism (Mr. Guay) is not suitable for his job. I want to correct that impression. Considering his Métis background, his own background and his family, I think he is eminently suited for his position, and I want to correct the erroneous impression some have tried to create.

We should not forget that other government policies have to do with discrimination. At present we are debating a bill to do with immigration. We are debating a long-standing policy. It has always been this country's policy to satisfy, by way of immigration, the requirements of its two founding races. That is why the bilingual situation is mentioned. Personally I think that if you went further to deal with the multicultural area, you might get into some kind of quota system. I would be very concerned about that. I am not saying that is what is intended in the amendment. However, just as the hon. member seems to have some concern about other provisions in the bill and is moving this amendment, his amendment causes me concern. I would rather have the bill as it is. Therefore I speak against the amendment.

● (2030)

I do not think multicultural people in my area, whether they be Scottish, Italian, Hungarian, West Indian or East Indian, find any offence in the present policy. I certainly have not run into it. I just want to put that on record. Personally I do not support any tampering with the policy as it stands and, therefore, I do not support the amendment.

Mr. Bob Kaplan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, like my colleague, the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. MacFarlane), I will be very brief. I have to put on record how astonished I am to hear the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) seriously insisting that this amendment be adopted. It is nothing more than pure tokenism. There is not one single thing in it to increase the rights of immigrants or prospective immigrants. It is absolutely pure, unadulterated tokenism. It is nothing but hypocrisy for him to stand up and argue that the implementation of nine words, which do not do anything for immigrants or prospective immigrants, will make as much difference as he insists they will. I normally have great respect for that hon. member, but tonight I am ashamed of him.

Mr. Art Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General): I enter this debate very briefly, Mr. Speaker. I am rather surprised at the comments made by my colleague, the hon. member for York Centre (Mr. Kaplan). I do not feel this amendment is hypocrisy. Indeed, it is an honour to rise and