

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**MULTICULTURALISM**PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSIONER FOR  
MULTICULTURALISM POSITION

**Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Multiculturalism. It concerns the Government's proposals for a multiculturalism Act.

As the Minister knows, many important provisions that should have been embodied in such an Act have been sorely ignored by the Government. One of these elements is the office of Commissioner for Multiculturalism.

● (1450)

Given that the creation of a Multiculturalism Commissioner was unanimously proposed by all three political Parties, and was unanimously endorsed by every witness and organization before a standing committee, will the Government now see fit to introduce and support establishment of an office for an official Multiculturalism Commissioner as an enforcement mechanism, and allow that to achieve for multiculturalism what the Official Languages Commissioner achieved successfully for our policy of official bilingualism?

**Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)):** Mr. Speaker, I had hoped the Member was rising to compliment this Government for bringing forward \$62 million of new funding over the next five years for multiculturalism. I thought he was going to applaud the directions we were taking in race relations and cross-cultural understanding, in community support and participation, in heritage, cultures and languages—

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Some Hon. Members:** More!

**Mr. Marchi:** After its four beleaguered and meagre budgets, I am not interested in a Government that is desperate enough to buy votes. I am interested in the facts and in the workings and actual provisions of the Government's legislation.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Why don't you admit new members to your association? You are pretty exclusive in your association.

**Mr. Marchi:** You have enough problems with free trade, John. Take it easy.

**Mr. Crosbie:** They are moving on Marchi.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member will put his question, please.

**Some Hon. Members:** If he has one.

## RECOGNITION OF MULTICULTURALISM

**Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West):** Mr. Speaker, I again address my question to the Minister of State for Multiculturalism. It again concerns the proposed multiculturalism Act. Many groups, including the Ethnocultural Council, believe that the reference to multiculturalism in Bill C-93, as first a basic element and then a fundamental element of Canadian society, is a weak and undistinguished recognition.

Since the Government fondly promotes Canada as a bilingual and multicultural society, and since the Meech Lake Accord already recognizes the English-French linguistic duality as a fundamental characteristic, why is the Government unwilling also and equally to recognize our multicultural reality as a fundamental characteristic of this country? Why the double standard?

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Because we have.

**Mr. Marchi:** You have not. Don't mislead the House. You have not.

**Mr. Crosbie:** "We're coming, Mr. Marchi, and we're 3,000 strong".

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Minister.

**Hon. Gerry Weiner (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)):** Mr. Speaker, the Member is a member of a Party that in 1971 announced a multicultural policy and did nothing for it practically for 15 years.

**Mr. Gauthier:** We want the real Minister, not you.

**Mr. Weiner:** This Government began to intensify our commitment to creating a more equal opportunity society, to ensure there is greater access for all members of this society—

**Mr. Axworthy:** Tell us about your refugee Bill.

**Mr. Weiner:**—so that we become a better and more productive society as a result of everyone's contribution. We do so by continuing to bring forward an Act, the multiculturalism Act, after considerable consultation. It is now before Parliament. Perhaps if that Member had attended the legislative committee hearings, his thoughts might have been on the table as well. But they are now in the amendment.

\* \* \*

**AGRICULTURE**

## FARM SUBSIDIES—PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

**Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. During his meetings in Europe to prepare for the Economic Summit, the