

### *Canadian Culture*

That this House recognizes the contribution made to the Canadian mosaic and culture by the people of Chinese background.

The motion is long overdue. I congratulate the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) for moving it today.

● (1720)

When we think of the contributions made to the development of Canada by people of Chinese background, we are tempted to dwell on their involvement with the railways. It is not often mentioned that parallel to the development of the railways were the lumber and mining industries, which also opened up the west, and that they employed many people of Chinese background.

In view of the hard work done by these people and their obvious desire to contribute to the development of Canada, it is unfortunate that the Liberal government of the day saw fit to pass such discriminatory laws as the Chinese exclusion act. It was not until the 1940s that such laws were repealed and people of Chinese background were able to receive full citizenship.

Undaunted by the many obstacles they faced in their adopted country, these people concentrated on the education of their families to the point that today they have achieved the distinction of being one of the most highly educated of the ethnocultural groups in Canada, having among their numbers many lawyers, doctors and scientists. Their contributions in the fields of science and medicine are outstanding. Who has not heard of Normie Kwong, Canada's outstanding athlete, who was raised in Calgary and became famous in Edmonton?

**Mr. Knowles:** Were you team-mates?

**Mr. Paproski:** The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) asks if I was a team-mate of the "China Clipper". I was, and I must say that I contributed to his success. After all, there had to be somebody to block for him!

**Mr. Knowles:** They don't come any better.

**Mr. Paproski:** Mr. Kwong is president of the new National Hockey League football club, the Calgary Flames. It was the Progressive Conservative Party under its present leader that appointed Mr. Kwong president of the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism, which is not only a recognition of the man but of the community. He is a great man and an outstanding Canadian. Their achievements have put the people of Chinese background in the category of one of the most rapidly developing groups of Canadian citizens.

As hon. members know, Mr. Speaker, we of Canadian Polish or Ukrainian background like our cabbage rolls but during the last war we could not get the rice for them. We had many Chinese friends in our neighbourhood, however, who received a weekly ration of rice and they were good enough to pass it along to the Polish and Ukrainian communities so that they could have their cabbage rolls. In return, we gave them all the butter and anything else they wanted. So it was a form of barter.

I do not intend to take up any more time of the House, Mr. Speaker, as I know other hon. members wish to speak on this resolution. I trust that it will be passed as soon as the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Stollery) has spoken.

**Mr. Peter Stollery (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State and Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, as the representative of the riding with one of the largest Chinese communities in the western hemisphere, I regard it as an honour to support the motion before the House, and I congratulate the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) for bringing it forward. My remarks will be brief so that the motion may be put and passed.

After listening to the hon. member describe the history of the Chinese community in Vancouver, I should like to bring to his attention the fact that the Chinese community in eastern Canada has quite a different history. The Chinese in Toronto came from the eastern United States before the CPR was finished. They were artisans who did the kind of handwork that was not too readily available in the Canada of that time. In fact, the earliest Chinese as far as we can discover was a goldsmith in Toronto who specialized in making particular kinds of religious articles.

The Chinese community which had settled around York Street in Toronto in the 1870s and 1880s went through a bad period brought about by the Chinese exclusion act mentioned by the hon. member and the extraordinary persecution of people with oriental backgrounds. They were subjected to this persecution not only in North America but in the rest of the occidental world, I believe, until World War II. The United States had passed laws similar to ours against people of Chinese and Japanese backgrounds.

Most of the Orientals who originally came to Canada were males who worked hard and sent money back to China and Japan. As there were very few females, there were consequently very few children. The laws which prevented more Chinese coming to Canada were a gross form of discrimination and an expression of an attitude that wanted the Chinese community to disappear.

A couple of years ago I wrote an article about the history of Toronto's Chinatown for the magazine *Toronto Life*, which I would recommend to the hon. member. I am sure many hon. members know that it is not too long ago that the single men from Chinatown used to stand around street corners because they had nothing else to do, the government having forbidden the entry of their families to this country. This was a dreadful and unprecedented example of discrimination that we have a hard time understanding today.

Hon. members might like to consult the debates that took place in this House on the subject many years ago. I believe it was an hon. member from Saint John in New Brunswick who around 1910 said things about people of Chinese background that today we would find it hard to believe could be said by a normal individual about others who live in this country. That kind of thing that went on for so long and with which we are familiar is the reason why a motion such as this is particularly