

*Government Orders*

ciples of justice and fairness, of peace, order and good government at all levels of our society.

It is obvious that people see the structures we have in place and that is why they want to come here. As citizens we have adapted it, have adopted it and have allowed it to evolve because we do not all have in our hearts and our minds the goodwill we need to have to help ensure that the fundamentals are there and that we move forward with them.

It is very healthy that we have dialogue around the goals of multiculturalism. It is very healthy that we look at and analyse our society and recognize the ugly face of racism, recognize that those groups, Heritage Front, the Ku Klux Klan, are here, are out there, are spreading their poison and it has to stop. This is not a place where we allow them one seed from the maple tree to settle in the earth of this land.

• (1140)

Community groups, social, cultural and educational groups contribute their skill, knowledge, expertise and creativity to Canadian life. It is the responsibility of all Canadians in the public as well as the private sector to encourage the conditions that allow all of us, regardless of our origins, to expect these principles of fairness and justice flourish and grow and that we support those initiatives.

The government's multiculturalism programs are in place to assist us in reaching this goal. It is not an unreasonable goal and it is not an unattainable goal to expect that all Canadians be integrated into our society and become contributors to the country's progress.

I did not say assimilate. I did not say that one should lose one's identity, but one should learn to live in co-operation with respect and understanding in our neighbourhoods. Those are the choices we have in this society. This is nothing more than good common sense. It allows for peace. It allows for civil society. The multicultural programs are there because unfortunately there are still barriers that prevent some individuals and groups from realizing their full potential.

Canada was founded on a tradition of democracy, decency and civility, values of fairness and justice associated with this system that have guided and shaped our social structures, laws and institutions.

We have strayed. We have erred, but we have also grown and learned to cherish the fragile form of rule that we have in place here which calls for constant vigilance. It is in civility and respect, it is in an appreciation of our diversity that we live. Pluralism, diversity, multicultural and multiracial backgrounds are our reality. Together we shall weave a tapestry that forms the fundamentals that is Canada, as we look in the House and see

how different we are, how different are the geographic regions, the backgrounds, the lands and the languages.

There is no one in the House who can look back more than two or three generations, maybe four. There are some here who tell me they have been here for six generations, but that is not the lifetime of this nation. We are all different and learning to live together, respecting each other. We do not have to love each other, but we have to respect each other for our differences and yet for our Canadian appreciation of the values of life.

To live with this reality, to ensure social peace and cohesion will not happen by wishing. That only happens by working for it.

[Translation]

Multiculturalism is not incompatible with Canadian values. On the contrary, it is based on the principles of the rights and responsibilities set forth in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Official Languages Act, the Citizenship Act and I might even add the Employment Equity Act.

Canada's multiculturalism policy makes it possible to overcome obstacles more easily and to promote institutional change.

It recognizes the richness found in cultural diversity. It is modeled on the values which guide us, are essential to our way of life and underlie what we aspire to as Canadians.

• (1145)

When I visited numerous cultural communities across the country, I had the opportunity and the privilege to meet many men, women and young people who were all representative of today's Canadian society. Some are proud that their ancestors were among the first ones to step on Canadian soil. Others take pride in their dual citizenship, or in their newly acquired citizenship.

I met members of organizations and associations involved in many sectors, including business, health care, education, law enforcement, as well as municipal and provincial administrations, to name but a few.

[English]

The message is always the same. The Government of Canada must help Canadians of all backgrounds to build a society where we can live in our neighbourhood in peaceful respect, united in the common purpose of securing the well-being of our families. That is what they told me. They recognize prejudice, they recognize bigotry, and they recognize the need to ensure that we stamp it out.

I believe that the government's multiculturalism policy and the programs it supported can help to achieve this goal but only in participation with the private sector and community based groups that speak for all Canadians. Those multicultural councils are vital to our well-being.