

DEVISE METHODS FOR COMBATTING RACIAL HARASSMENT

11 Cities: Reports funded by the Multiculturalism Directorate documented evidence of racism in 11 Canadian communities. In virtually all of the reports concern was expressed about verbal and physical racial harassment. Racially motivated incidents occur in school as well as the community. The harassment takes the form of name-calling, graffiti, vandalism and physical assault.

Profile: The 1977 report, *Now Is Not Too Late* by Walter Pitman, provides a profile of the people who perpetrated physical assaults against South Asians in Toronto. The assailants were males in their twenties. A typical assailant seldom reads anything but watches junk television and listens to Rock radio. He has no plans to settle down and works sporadically. When he does work he will do almost anything, but does not seek anything other than manual labour because he does not think he could do it, and most of his employers agree. He is the first to be fired or laid off. He has no father at home and has no affection for him. He has a great deal of affection for his mother. He is "Canadian" which is something he rather doubts the French could ever be. "Pakis" never have been and never will be Canadians. Pakistani people are taking over this country and taking over his job. He knows very little about them and resents them for it, but he will not do anything about it. He considers himself more physically than intellectually inclined. He sees himself as a free spirit and happy-go-lucky. He likes to drink beer and smoke pot and generally had been drinking just before the assault. He does not spend much time thinking about why he perpetrated the assault. However, motives seem to range from simply an excess of amoral exuberance to a fear and jealousy of perceived superior economic status and family cohesion.

Influence: Solutions to this type of problem seem elusive. Answers need to be sought at the level of the individual as well as society. Individuals are influenced by the manner in which they see others being treated.

Uncertainty: In the schools, teachers and administrators are unsure about how to respond to racial incidents no matter where they occur.

Response: The Committee advocates the use of a number of responses:

- Upon hearing a racial slur, action should be swift and decisive. The offender should be told in no uncertain terms that such behaviour is inappropriate.
- The response should be the same as it would be in any case of antisocial behaviour, namely, that it is unacceptable and does not reflect the attitudes of the rest of the school.

British Columbia: At the University of British Columbia an approach has been pioneered by John Allan and Judith Nairn:

- Teachers work with the whole class.
- Discussion centers around the differences among class members.
- The purpose is to strengthen self-esteem by valuing each child's unique ethnic identity before discussing differences.

RECOMMENDATION

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