

Adjournment Debate

been in this position only a few months, he would have informed the House and Canadians from coast to coast that the budget had been increased. I will give my hon. friend from the Government side an opportunity this evening to expand on that.

If in fact the budget for Multiculturalism was increased, I would certainly like to know by how much it was increased and for which particular programs. Under the reduction announced by the Government there were cut-backs in projects aimed at helping immigrants, in the support for multi-ethnic organizations, heritage language programs, support for projects and organizations devoted to the preservation and development of cross-cultural understanding, funding for publications and on and on. If in fact the budget was increased, I would like to know when the budget was increased.

One of the serious problem I face when dealing with the leaders of various ethnocultural communities and organizations is that there is never enough money from the directorate to do the types of things they wish to do. I think it is certainly a responsibility on the part of the Government, if in fact it has seen fit to increase this budget, to announce to the Canadian public where, how and when the budget was increased. People still believe that this Government reduced the budget through the Budgetary Estimates that were brought forward in April.

Finally, if the budget for the Multiculturalism Directorate was not increased, then I think the Minister of State for Multiculturalism owes the House and the country an apology for misleading this House. I do not say that he did so intentionally, but certainly if this budget as of today has not been increased there is a problem, because the record speaks for itself. I look forward to hearing the Parliamentary Secretary to the House Leader respond to these very crucial and important questions.

Mr. Paul Dick (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, of course the Hon. Member smuggled in considerably more material than he had in the question he put this afternoon. I do want to point out to him that, unlike the previous Liberal Government, we did not close down the Ministry of Multiculturalism right after the election and then set it up again a year before the next election, as the Liberal Government had a habit of doing. In fact, the Hon. Member could ask the former Hon. Member for Parkdale-High Park, Senator Haidasz, how he got ousted immediately following an election. We have a Ministry of Multiculturalism which will continue to be in existence throughout the term of this Government, rather than only for election purposes.

• (1855)

It is with considerable pleasure that I rise to respond to the Hon. Member's question. I wish to emphasize at the beginning

that there has been no slackening of the Government's commitment to multiculturalism. In fact, our commitment is much greater than ever existed under any Government. We have a Ministry; we have a Deputy Minister and an Assistant Deputy Minister for the first time, and we have established a Standing Committee on Multiculturalism to deal with issues of multiculturalism. Previous Liberal administrations never took such action.

The present Government will provide an additional \$4.9 million over this fiscal year and next to strengthen the multiculturalism sector's capacity in the areas of race relations, cross-cultural development, assistance to community groups and public education.

The Hon. Member has noted a 9 per cent cut in the 1985-86 Estimates which were tabled in the House in March of this year. That came about as part of the Government's review of expenditures. This reduction is more than compensated for by the \$2.5 million additional for 1985-86, as part of the \$4.9 million which I previously mentioned.

These actions make it clear that even when programs in several areas are being reviewed for rationalization and expenditure control, this Government has maintained and, in fact, has increased its financial commitment to multiculturalism. These increased funds have been allocated after ongoing consultations with the provinces and with communities. They underline the Government's continuing commitment to follow up on the extremely worth-while recommendations made in *Equality Now*.

Furthermore, the Government is increasing the complement of the multiculturalism sector by 15 person-years and has raised the profile and status of the multiculturalism program within Government by appointing for the first time an official at the Assistant Deputy Minister level.

As has already been noted, a Standing Committee on Multiculturalism has been created for the first time. It will have the opportunity to consider the details of these and other governmental initiatives relating to multiculturalism.

Our support for multiculturalism and equal opportunity for all Canadians is strong and will be a fundamental tenet of all Government initiatives in the future. Our ongoing concern for Canadians of all backgrounds is manifest and our intentions are being translated into action. We intend to make sure that the skills, talent and expertise of all Canadians are used to the fullest extent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 o'clock a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 3(1).

The House adjourned at 6.58 p.m.