

economic, for these groups to be able to maintain their linguistic ability.

It is advantageous that people from Poland, for example, maintain the Polish language. In future years, as trade with the rest of the world develops, we will have people who are able to speak the language as a natural part of their personal expression.

The same could be said of any other group. At the present time, the most obvious example would be the maintenance of Pacific Rim languages as our relations with the Pacific Rim become much broader. I do not mean necessarily to point out those groups for economic reasons. I think it is absolutely essential that, as part of their humanity and their living in Canada, they ought to be able to maintain their languages.

The Saskatchewan Multicultural Council has written to me expressing a great deal of dismay at the cutting of funds to the heritage languages program which is so valuable. Unfortunately, that these cuts were announced during National Volunteer Week makes it particularly sad for two reasons. The first is that the cuts were made. The second is that these programs survived primarily on the basis of volunteers. Even though the government does put some money into them, it certainly does not go all the way toward being able to pay the costs of them.

I also have a letter from the Ukrainian Canadian Committee in Saskatoon.

One letter points out that, when the cuts were made to multiculturalism, they were only to the tune of 5 per cent. The letter states that in view of the deficit and so on it was essential to make these cuts and that everybody has to pay their fair share. That 5 per cent cut to multiculturalism was one thing, but the heritage language program was cut by 100 per cent. This means that in all probability it will not survive.

I even received a letter from as far away as Edmonton from the Edmonton Centre of Chinese Heritage and Second Language.

I also received a letter from the president of the Saskatoon Cambodian Society.

I refer to these letters just to give you, Madam Speaker, some idea of the variety of people who have expressed concern about this matter and the variety of people who have taken up Canadian citizenship.

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I have two letters here from the Jewish community in Saskatoon who express as well their concern about the withdrawal of funds from the heritage language program. In the context of racism, the Jewish Centre in Saskatoon, of which the synagogue is a part, was desecrated recently. This demonstrates the depth of the problems that we are experiencing in Canada and the kinds of things which have to be worked on and alleviated.

I have referred to the cutting of funding to the heritage language program. In spite of listening to the minister making his statement on the introduction of the legislation, I can not help but feel that he believed everything he said. He made as impassioned an expression of humanity as any other speaker in the House has. My problem is that, when it comes to being a matter of translation into action, the government has not lived up to its promise, and I refer specifically to the heritage language program cuts. The government has not lived up to the promise and the commitment which I think the minister did feel when he was making his statement. I only wish that that were not the case, that the government would live up to the sincere expression that the minister made at the time.

• (1750)

The problem is that wherever we look within the government service the matter of employment equity has not been fully addressed. The member for Windsor—Lake St. Clair said he went into the prisons within his constituency and found a disproportionate number of our Canadian native people in those prisons in relation to the rest of the population. In addition to that, there was an absence of native people charged with the custody of those prisoners. That not only sends a very negative message to those people, but also indicates that there is a tremendous problem insofar as equity within the community *vis-à-vis* the native people.

One of the greatest travesties of Canadian society which illustrates again the government's lack of concern—I hesitate to use that phrase, but I do not know how else to express it—is the delay of the decision to allow members of the Sikh community to wear their turbans when they are in the RCMP. That was a horrific example of how justice delayed is justice denied. More damage was done by the government's indecision on that