

The Heritage Languages Program is one of the recent calamities of this government. I submit that heritage language is a crucial factor in the maintenance of multiculturalism in Canada. Without such education, the rich multicultural fabric of our country is bound to fade into insignificance within a few generations.

What is more disturbing is that the notice to discontinue support for this program arrived at a school in my constituency on March 16, 1990, advising that support to the school would stop on April 1, a couple of weeks thereafter, making it very difficult for the school to search for alternative sources of funding.

The Liberal party has the excellent tradition of having started multiculturalism and continues to support it in heart and mind. In contrast, this government, instead of reacting to the turban issue with dispatch, waited almost two years and thereby negative reactions were generated across the country, instead of solving the issue promptly.

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No wonder that in February of this year an Angus Reid poll indicated that the majority of Canadians believed intolerance is increasing. This state of affairs goes against the very fabric of our multicultural society.

I support this Canadian Race Relations Foundation based on the preamble that we will support and reaffirm our support for the international convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination; that we will henceforth reaffirm our belief and support in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; that the Canadian Multiculturalism Act would assume greater and greater meaning.

I applaud the minister. I applaud the government for initiating this bill. But I would also like to challenge the government that to give teeth to this bill it must provide the funding necessary for the very problem that this foundation hopes to address.

Regardless of one's race, ethnic or cultural background, to participate fully and equally in all aspects of Canadian society economically, socially, culturally and politically is a natural aspiration of every Canadian.

Canada is one of the luckiest nations in the world. If we recall and imagine the African populations struggling to survive, of the Latin American and Asian countries threatened by civil wars, we in Canada as a nation are really lucky. But we must not forget that there continues to be concern. Recently we have seen the racist themes,

the desecration of Jewish tombstones. All these are symbols or manifestations that show that we still have a lot of work to do.

Racism, as a sociologist defines it, "is the manifestation of one group's effort in a society to free itself from a feeling of inadequacy by casting another in an inferior light".

How does this happen? By prejudice, by having a set of negative attitudes in which another group is held unwanted, despite the absence of legitimate bases. Of course, racism by way of discrimination can also happen in a very overt way. It can also happen through institutions. When we examine some of our textbooks, for example, and they depict that non-whites are primitive, cruel and savage, we know that the result will be racism and discrimination.

Why do we need to develop racial harmony in Canada? UNESCO in 1967 stated: "It divides nations within themselves, aggravates international conflict and threatens world peace. Racism stultifies the development of those who suffer from it and perverts those who apply it".

We have to continue to remember that multiculturalism is not about allowing separation, but to be sensitive to the needs of others. It is not about the recent arrivals or even of those descendants of generations past. It is not about the shedding of symbols of our heritage, but freedom to exercise our heritage and still be able to participate fully in Canadian society. It is not about inferiority, but to affirm our commitment to excellence and merit. It is not about merely a condominium of cultures but a consensus and sentiment of national purpose.

Indeed, the focus and the challenge by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation truly would be in the hearts and on the minds of Canadians. Mayor George Ferguson, president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, in a keynote address at "The Challenge of Municipal Race Relations" conference in November, 1989 stated:

Social harmony cannot be created by posters, proclamations or literary contests or even by co-operation between business and government, or direct government action. The real challenge is in the hearts and minds of each of us as individuals.

In conclusion, I would like to remind my colleagues that the forces of discrimination and racism are by nature centrifugal in direction and, therefore, pull Canadians away from each other. But the forces of a national