

Adjournment Debate

Parliament and Senators from Toronto who suggested that the programs of immigration and multiculturalism should be manipulated to the advantage and political benefit of the Conservative Party of Canada. The report reads:

It was stressed that there should be nothing arbitrary about funding cuts or increases; Liberal funding patterns could be disposed of—

—as if they exist—

—and a politically-intelligent PC pattern take their place. This may be accomplished by a gradual process of funding cuts and reallocations.

In very basic English, the Conservative Members and Senators from Toronto are saying that if the organization is Conservative, it will receive funding, but if it does not happen to share the philosophical bent of the Conservative Party of Canada, it will not receive funding. That is a shame. It is immoral, not only to think that, but to document it and to send it to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) of the country.

The second report to which I refer was written by one Peter McCreath, the Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Multiculturalism Advisory Council, a body consisting of 60 men and women appointed to advise the Government on multiculturalism policies which is funded to the extent of \$350,000. Of the Council and its members, Mr. McCreath said:

They are all committed supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, the Government of the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, and the Minister of State for Multiculturalism—

He goes on to say:

Furthermore, our voluntary commitment to the Government, and our wish to see it survive beyond the next general election, together, give us the luxury of being able to assess the situation and present our recommendation solely in the context of what we truly believe is in the best interests of—the Government of the day.

He continues:

Whatever weakness may be inherent in any recommendations to Government from the CMC, they at least reflect informed advice and opinion from a selection of the Government's principal supporters from across Canada.

I suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that both reports are repugnant. Both reports are trying to manipulate immigration and multiculturalism structures which are in place to serve the ethnocultural community, which is a special interest group in this society, as are the farmers, fishermen, businessmen, labour unions, students and young people. These programs have a specific use and are not to be used as part of a Tory chess game in which the pawns are moved around like chattels.

The Prime Minister refused to get up in his place and defend the very essence of multiculturalism. He and his wife go across the country making great speeches and grand pronouncements about how rich Canada is with respect to its multicultural plurality. However, when it comes down to a request for him to stand up and defend the integrity of multiculturalism, the integrity of the role of a Canadian multiculturalism council, and to protect the integrity of ministerial permits rather than be abused for political gain, he refuses to do so.

• (1825)

The Secretary of State responsible for multiculturalism, treats it as a joke and says that he has not seen nor read the report. I suggest that it is high time that the Minister responsible for multiculturalism, who is a decent man and very well respected as a politician and former Mayor of Toronto, come clean and begin to defend the interests of his Department and his national constituency which he represents as the Minister responsible for multiculturalism, rather than defending and hiding behind the interests of members of the Conservative Party, be they elected or appointed.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism (Mr. Della Noce), with his Italian background, I believe shares some of the sensitivity of some of these groups in a very real and profound way. I look forward to him rising in his place because I asked his boss, the Minister responsible for multiculturalism, to refute the Tory report, to distance himself from it and say very categorically that it does not reflect the programs of the Government. He has failed to do that.

As far as the McCreath Report is concerned, I asked two specific questions. First, will he ask for the resignation of Mr. McCreath immediately because he can no longer serve in a non-partisan, effective way? Second, will he conduct a full review into the affairs and budget of this council so that the motives that have been impugned by Mr. McCreath will be eliminated and its integrity and credibility restored so it may do the honourable job for which it was designed? I look forward to answers to these questions from the Parliamentary Secretary or we will have to go to the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism to ask for a full investigation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Vincent Della Noce (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State and Minister responsible for Multiculturalism): Madam Speaker, this being the first time I have the pleasure of taking the floor while you occupy the Chair, I also want to congratulate you on your appointment.

Madam Speaker, I should like to respond to my colleague from York West (Mr. Marchi). I know he is dedicated to multiculturalism since we both share similar views, but I must tell you that our colleague the Hon. Member for York West is usually long on rhetoric and that oftentimes he has a tendency to blur the facts, especially with respect to the Toronto region. It is unfortunate that my colleague does not try to see things from a positive angle. He usually takes a rather negative approach. And I do not agree at all with what he said. During the little time I am allowed, not being as lucky as the Hon. Member who is allowed twice as much, I would like to start with the grants issue where I think the Hon. Member is not quite correct when he says that multicultural grants are strictly the preserve of Conservative Party members. Well, Madam Speaker, I can inform my hon. friend that the exact opposite happened when the Liberal Party was in power. And I