

we are debating today immigration certainly has to be one of the aspects of it.

I was wondering if the hon. member, in light of his experience in the field, could expand on some of the things he feels this government and this nation should be doing in the realm of immigration to ameliorate some of the problems we have as far as racial tension and inequality is concerned.

Mr. Heap: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. Since my time is short, I want to mention briefly a couple of things. At present, our immigration department has the responsibility for determining whether an applicant for landed status in Canada is acceptable under the rules. One of the rules is that if a Canadian is married to a non-Canadian the spouse has a right to be sponsored by the Canadian spouse. That is qualified by the question of whether the marriage is a bona fide marriage or a marriage of convenience for immigration purposes only.

I have been distressed to find that this rule has been misused in many cases, for whatever reason, by the immigration officials concerned in order to delay, delay and delay the entry of the non-Canadian spouse into Canada. I have heard of it happening to spouses from countries of Asia and the West Indies. I have never heard of it happening from Britain, France or from western Europe. I have heard of it happening from South America but not from white countries.

So I have to believe that while there are cultural differences in marriage customs and in expectations of permanency of marriage that in those cases racial prejudice overrode the obligation of our officials. This is something that has to be examined within our department.

The other matter is the single biggest injustice that Canada has committed toward non-white peoples by the denial of land claims of the aboriginal peoples of Canada. I do not see how we can honestly look in the eyes of peoples from other non-white races when we are refusing legitimate justice to our own Canadian aboriginal peoples. That lapel pin about which we spoke reflects a guilty fear that our sense of superiority is based on the fact that we had guns and those people did not, or we had more guns than those people did and, therefore, we are better than they are. We are afraid that some day

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they might turn the tables and, therefore, this fear of people of a different skin colour reflects our guilty recollection of our own military conquest of them. That has to be acknowledged before we can have a clear policy either toward our own aboriginal peoples or toward non-white immigrants.

Mrs. Pauline Browes (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate today and I will be sharing my time with one of my colleagues.

Each of us knows there is a gulf between the aspirations and reality out there. That gulf is widened by prejudice and discrimination. In the form of racism they shatter the lives of individuals and destroy nations.

Racism is an uncomfortable word for us. It is an uncomfortable topic. But it is a reality that we have come grudgingly to acknowledge here in Canada and one that we must face up to.

What does racism do to us? UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, put it in a nutshell in its 1967 statement: "Racism stultifies the development of those who suffer from it, perverts those who apply it, divides nations within themselves, aggravates international conflict and threatens world peace". What does racism cost a society such as ours? It costs us young people who turn to the illusory opportunity of drugs and crime because they cannot see or find other opportunities or expectations for their future. We pay the cost of alcoholism, in lost productivity, in family violence, in the trivialization of relationships and the devaluation of human life, others and our own, born of the endless and ultimate overwhelming frustration of alienation, of never belonging.

The cost is in increased welfare and social services, in increased health care and mental health care, in the resources which must be spent on law enforcement and incarceration instead of universities, libraries and literacy programs. But, most of all, the cost of racism is in people who no longer know how to talk to one another or even begin to work with one another to solve problems that they share in common. It becomes the destruction of that trust and respect for one another which, in the final analysis, is what binds and holds us all together as a community.