

*Government Orders*

It goes far beyond Canada, but let us at least start here, that, unfortunately, the golden rule as it applies to each of those units is viewed by each of those units as only applying to themselves.

Without getting into any specifics we can make the comparison to Swift. We have the example of the big Indians and the little Indians. It is okay for the big Indians to apply the Golden Rule to the little Indians but, by God, it is open season on the big Indians.

We have to expand what is commonly known as the Golden Rule to all of us and in all cases. That certainly applies in Canada where we perceive these differences rather than have them because at the basis of it all we are all human beings. That is precisely what the issue ought to be, not the colour of our skin, not the language we speak or what part of the country we live in or anything else.

I cannot help but go back to something I referred to when we were talking about the creation of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship. That is the very emotional experience I always feel when I go to Citizenship Court as a member of Parliament. I consider it to be one of the major privileges of being a member of Parliament, and I am sure I will as long as I am a member of Parliament. There are several reasons for that, not the least of which is I can remember, as I am sure other members can, when there was a time when it was not possible to call oneself Canadian. That is slightly irrelevant, but I will get to the relevant parts of it a little later on. There was no such thing as Canadian citizenship.

From my point of view, remembering that and viewing Canadian citizenship now for all that it includes, it gives me a feeling of empathy and unity with everyone else who is in the country, those who came over before, because we related as nationalistic groups prior to that, and certainly those who have come since that time because they are Canadian citizens.

• (1740)

I have a rather personal stake in this whole idea of multiculturalism since my wife is not a Canadian. She is a naturalized Canadian of German birth.

I must say that I have benefited enormously by my association with my wife, someone from another nation, someone who spoke a different language and very, very little English when I met her. I have to admit that her

cultural background has given an enormous amount of richness to what I now consider to be part of my whole cultural background, of my being a Canadian, whatever that means in total. It also includes part of my wife's German culture.

That brings me down to something more specific. I do not know if all Citizenship Courts are the same, but the clerk of the Citizenship Court to which I go emphasizes at every proceeding the number of different countries represented by those who are becoming Canadian citizens. It is very gratifying at times when we may have as many as 50 or 60 people taking up Canadian citizenship for the clerk to point out that those people represent as many as 20 or 21 different countries. It gives me a tremendous feeling of joy when I think of all these different people coming into this country who have chosen this country of which I am by birth a member.

There is an enormous amount of goodwill on the part of those people when they become Canadian citizens. If I feel joy at them becoming Canadian citizens, it is obvious. I am sure those who attend Citizenship Court would agree that it is an extremely gratifying experience, not to mention the joy experienced by the people who become citizens.

I am reminded as well by Judge MacPhail of the Citizenship Court as she makes her presentation that Canada does not have any linguistic unity, cultural unity or any geographic unity. In fact it may be that it is not possible to identify a unity which can be described as Canada. In light of what we are talking about, I think that may be precisely the case. That may be precisely what makes Canada the wonderful mosaic, the wonderful rainbow of a country that it is.

If I find that quotation, and if I ever get a chance to speak in the House on this subject again, and I may possibly do so, I am going to make sure that I get the quote verbatim because it is an extremely moving quotation.

As I say, there is the joy expressed by these different groups coming into Canada. They express a lot of that joy by a desire to maintain their heritage language. Canada has done up to now an admirable job of aiding those people to be able to maintain their heritage languages.

I am not sure that this was not implemented out of partially selfish reasons. It is an advantage for our country in many, many ways, not the least of which are