

*Canadian Multiculturalism Act*

role for the federal Departments tied to the very clear multiculturalism policy as articulated under subsection (1).

Motion No. 15 attempts again to expand on the principle and general scope of that particular clause on page 4, line 40. As it reads now, one of the roles of the federal institutions is to "promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the ability of individuals and communities of all origins to contribute to continuing evolution of Canada". I would also add the words "and that removed discriminatory barriers to their full and equal participation in Canadian society". This is an attempt to try to eradicate the specific problem that many Canadians all too often face in terms of discrimination in the workplace, in terms of vertical mobility and in terms of hiring practices.

The intent, as it now stands, generally addresses that concept. What I would like to do, and what many organizations would like us to do as a Parliament, is to make specific reference to the type of systematic barrier problems that Canadians face. Therefore, the intention of Motion No. 15 is to tie down explicitly the concept and make it very practical and specific, ensuring that one of our goals as a Parliament and as a Government is not only to talk about equality of opportunity but to do something about it and to come closer to ensuring that political, social and economical equality in our House and in our Constitution is predicated upon.

With respect to Motion No. 17, what I would like to replace is a reference under our federal institutions and our federal Departments, as the Canadian Ethnocultural Council's youth wing had advocated before the Standing Committee of Multiculturalism and before the legislative committee studying Bill C-93, to a specific reference and commitment to enhancing the policies, goals and objectives of multiculturalism specifically and target them to the youth of Canada. I think it is incumbent upon a Parliament and a Government to try to address the challenge that is inherent in different generations. That is to say that my parents may affix a certain definition and have a certain expectation of what the multiculturalism policy of the country ought to be doing. As a second generation Canadian I perhaps have a different expectation from a third or fourth generation Canadian. In addition to cultural retention perhaps, a third or fourth generation Canadian would also affix a political, economic and social expectation on the policy of the country.

● (1640)

I am not suggesting that one definition is wrong as compared to the other. What I am pointing to is that both definitions are valuable and relevant. Yet a different attitudinal approach is needed to provide a bridge between the various generations to ensure that the first generation and the second and third generations view the multiculturalism policy as a relevant instrument upon which to build a bigger, better and stronger Canada.

Therefore, I believe that the recommendation from the Youth Committee of the Canadian Ethnocultural Council is a

very wise one. I ask the Minister and government Members to consider supporting Motion No. 17, a motion which tries specifically to have federal institutions carve out a specific and effective program to address multiculturalism among the younger elements of our society.

The last amendment in my name is Motion No. 18. It would add subparagraph (g) to Clause 3. It suggests that federal Departments develop annual plans for the implementation of the multiculturalism policy and report on such plans in their annual reports.

The objective of this amendment is to try to commit federal Departments in a very specific way. If there is a role to play for our federal Departments, and clearly there is, in terms of enhancing and exercising all our policies and programs, then multiculturalism should not be an exception to the rule. We should not leave it there generally. We should try to apply it in a very specific way so that our federal Departments constructively and explicitly try to project a vision, an action plan, a series of priorities they would like to accomplish in any given year *vis-à-vis* multiculturalism.

It is not good enough to have a Department, a Minister, a departmental head or a Deputy Minister say: "We adhere to the general policy". Instead, they should be saying: "What can we be doing? What should we be doing as one Department to fulfil the goals and aspirations embodied in a multicultural policy in a multicultural Canada? How can we advance it one step further?"

The Government has chosen not to accept the concept of having an official multiculturalism commissioner, as there is with respect to official languages. There is a piece of legislation in place which was debated only last week which empowers an official commissioner who is able to monitor in order to try to ensure that the Civil Service and Crown corporations are adhering to the official bilingualism policy. The Government rejected the same type of approach with respect to multiculturalism. I regret that very much. I will be alluding to it in much greater detail in my speech on third reading.

Because the Government has not accepted that, I believe that the specific requirement for all Departments to have a yearly plan which would be submitted to Parliament and to the Minister is quite important. It would not carry out the function that would have been carried out by a commissioner such as the Official Languages Commissioner who is independent and who must report to Parliament. Notwithstanding that deficiency I believe it is incumbent upon us to say to the Departments: "If there is going to be a role, then let us tie it down. Let us ensure it is part of a coherent strategy plan within the Departments so that we as parliamentarians can address the various Departments to see where those annual reports are and therefore evaluate whether we are doing a job that is justified or whether we are doing a job that could be improved upon".

I am pleased that Parliament was able to agree with respect to the whole question of the fundamental characteristic which I addressed briefly only moments ago since I thought we were