

Canadian Culture

to the pursuit of health, liberty and security. In order to do that again I say we must protect the institutions which support the individual. I believe no one will be able to deny that the institutions which have served us well need to be maintained and strengthened. No one can deny that we must have and continue to have a respect for the basic laws of our country which protect the rights of the individual. Sometimes those laws are used against the individual, nowadays very often in ways against which the individual cannot protect himself. One of the most dangerous things facing society and family life today is the insidious habit of some of our social institutions—and I am thinking particularly of hospitals—to grant to those people who wish it a system which in fact amounts to abortion on demand. Here again we are showing a disrespect for life and its great potential that we are not permitting to develop. When the Ministry of State for Social Development comes into being, I hope it will take priority—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker)—Public service—Rehiring of laid-off personnel; the hon. member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby)—Air transport—Status of transport commission decision on Halifax-Toronto route; the hon. member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy)—Industry—Assistance to Inco plant.

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely, notices of motions.

● (1700)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

[English]

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

CONTRIBUTION MADE BY CHINESE CANADIANS

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway) moved:

That this House recognizes the contribution made to the Canadian mosaic and culture by the people of Chinese background.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to introduce into this Canadian House of Commons, the centre of our Canadian

democracy, the above resolution. I do so because this recognition is long overdue. In my speech here in this House this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I will not only outline in a brief way the history of the Chinese in Canada, but will try as best as I am able to touch on the current problems and successes in the Canadian Chinese community today.

I am aware that the Canadian Chinese community is made up of Chinese Canadians from many diverse backgrounds. There are Chinese Canadians whose families have been in Canada for four generations—four generations, a fact that many other Canadians sometimes forget—and there are Chinese Canadians who came in the recent past from such places as China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and other countries.

Although the Chinese have contributed a great deal to the history and economic development of Canada, and in particular to my own province of British Columbia, it sometimes appears that the only thing most Canadians know about the Chinese is Chinatown and exotic Chinese food.

There are reasons for that, Mr. Speaker. One is that the Canadian government has effectively sealed away the history of the Chinese people in Canada, depriving them of history or "roots". In history courses in B.C. schools, for example, there is no mention of the Chinese. I find it unsatisfactory that children can go through our educational system and not know how Canada treated Chinese immigrants. That history, if properly presented, would show much hardship, discrimination and racism, but we could use it to our advantage. Only by showing that some of our ancestors were intolerant and bigoted and that their intolerance was based on ignorance can we start to deal with the problems of racism. That history will also show us an incredible struggle for equality.

Let me briefly summarize for this House of Commons some of that history. Between 1858 and 1923 there were two major influxes of Chinese people into Canada. In 1858 about 15,000 Chinese labourers came to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. Later another 20,000 came in the "gold rush" days. These early Chinese led a hard and miserable life and were regarded as strange people from a far-away land who willingly came to toil for long hours at extremely low wages and to provide abundant muscle power. But they were not allowed to have any involvement or influence in the country.

When some of the Chinese remained in the country and attempted to live a more reasonable life, the fear of the "yellow peril" became an issue. John Robson said in Vancouver in 1871, "Let this new empire be for our own race". In 1881 when a Chinese potato farmer was prevented by an inspector and five Caucasian workers from bringing a truck-load of potatoes into the city of Vancouver, a scuffle ensued. The *British Colonist*, a newspaper, described the event: "John Chinaman is putting on airs". An 1887 poster on a Vancouver street announced: "The Chinese have come; mass meeting in the city hall tonight." Eventually these feelings led to the Chinatown riot in September, 1907, and the passage of a provincial act banning Chinese from employment. Already there was a "head tax" on every Chinese person; \$50 in 1885 and \$500 in 1903.