

Government Orders

I truly believe the intention was noble enough when the multiculturalism legislation was passed by the Trudeau government. However it was an experimental program that has failed its goals. The program does little to unify and seemingly everything to separate. The government must stop the waste.

Multiculturalism is creating an entire generation of hyphenated Canadians by focusing on differences, not on similarities. The majority of Canadians believe there is nothing wrong with multiculturalism. Yet they believe it should not be funded by the government but by multicultural organizations. This is the position of the Reform Party we have been defending since the late 1980s. According to Neil Bissoondath, author of *Selling Illusions—The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*:

Anyone critical of the multicultural policy—is immediately branded a racist.

• (1535)

Moreover it is my perception that this type of attitude is present today and is carried by the media, as anyone who speaks critically of funding for multiculturalism programs are labelled meanspirited or ignorant and intolerant. This is not an answer to the problem we are encountering today in Canada. I can unequivocally say that the Reform Party is not racist nor is it intolerant. However it is fiscally responsible.

Multiculturalism programs cost Canadians over \$30 million annually. This funding could be better spent on health or education. I am sure everyone knows that education and not cash is the true way to break down barriers between cultures and individuals. Therefore I think it would be wise for the government to rethink its multicultural policy.

Next, overlap and duplication is a theme in which this Parliament will hopefully be remembered for decreasing, although for this to happen the Liberals must re-evaluate Bill C-53 as it is riddled with inconsistencies and duplications between departments, such as overlap and duplication between the Department of Canadian Heritage and the departments of industry, environment and transportation. Yet the Liberals seem quite content to allow the overlap to continue, which will only lead to confusion of responsibility and mismanagement.

To illustrate the point I will use national parks. They were in environment but have since moved to heritage. I am still wondering why. Recently one witness, David Day, managing director of the Association for Mountain Parks Protection and Enjoyment, was before the standing committee discussing this issue. It is important to illustrate what he said because he made a great deal of sense.

He spoke of the difficulty governments face in administering and managing our national parks because of the diversity of expectations. I could not agree more.

What is it that we as a society would like to see from our national parks? Specifically talking about national parks, Mr. Day said:

Many Canadians have questioned why the government moved Parks Canada from the Department of the Environment to a new and seemingly unfocused Department of Heritage. Over the previous 14 years Parks Canada has established a firm position within the Department of the Environment as a leader and innovator in matters affecting the environment.

With the increase in tourism in Canada national parks are more closely linked to industry and environment than they are to heritage. The question remains: Why are parks in heritage? Streamlining government activities not only makes financial sense but also creates accountability. Government should be held accountable for department mismanagement and project failures.

Bill C-53 simply reinforces the perception of the process of government that needs reform as well as Reformers more so now than at any time before. Perhaps one of the most important changes or reforms the House needs is true free votes, free from party discipline. The Reform Party suggests changes to parliamentary rules to allow for more free votes and to ensure that the defeat of a government does not automatically mean the government must resign.

Bill C-53 is a prime example of a bill that should be defeated because it is fundamentally flawed. However its passage is a foregone conclusion as we will see later this afternoon. What we are doing here is nothing more than an illusion. We have been constructively criticizing and proposing positive changes, yet our suggestions fall on deaf ears.

• (1540)

What the Liberals have to understand is that less government will ultimately mean more freedom and more prosperity, not just for a certain few or a certain region but all Canadians. We as parliamentarians have an obligation not only to our constituents but to Canadians as a whole. We must start to make decisions that will enable the country to lower our deficit and ultimately our debt. Since the beginning of my speech Canada's national debt has increased \$1,443 per second which equates to approximately \$1,776,000.

An hon. member: Then you had better sit down.

Mr. Hanrahan: Whether I am standing or not does not matter; they are still wasting the money.

It is for these reasons I am opposed to Bill C-53. It does nothing to reduce government spending or waste, government mismanagement or incompetence, government overlap or duplication. Bill C-53 does not set an example for other ministries. Nor does it have the direction needed to lead the country out of the financial crisis we are presently facing.