

Canadian Multiculturalism Act

both Motions Nos. 6 and 32 as a group at this time, I think I should put them both to the House.

Mr. John Oostrom (for Mr. Witer) moved:

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-93 be amended in Clause 3 by striking out line 37 at page 3 and substituting the following therefor:

"mental characteristic of the Canadian heritage".

Motion No. 32

That Bill C-93 be amended in the Preamble by striking out line 35 at page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

"mental characteristic in the continuing evolution of".

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Resuming debate. The Hon. Member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow).

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Madam Speaker, I rise to support the amendment proposed by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Nipigon (Mr. Epp), and to welcome the support for at least one of the amendments that he has proposed by the Government.

No Member of Parliament who represents any city in Canada can help but be aware of the tremendous changes which have taken place in terms of the people living in the cities of Canada in recent years. The constituency which I represent has always been recognized as an ethnic constituency, a constituency populated almost completely by immigrants; first, of course, by the immigrants who came from Great Britain and, later, by immigrants from Germany, Russia, Poland and many of the eastern European countries.

In the last 10 or 12 years we have seen a tremendous change in my constituency, as in many others, because beside the groups which I referred to earlier we now see people from Portugal, Italy, the Philippines, all the Caribbean countries, Central America, Africa, and Asia. From Asia we see people from India, Sikhs, Vietnamese, Chinese people from Hong Kong and from mainland China, Laotians and I am sure there are others who I have missed.

We also see a tremendous movement into the City of Winnipeg by native Canadians, who are moving to Winnipeg as they are to a number of other cities, from the reserves which they find completely inadequate to provide them with a decent standard of living.

A situation has developed in the City of Toronto where a majority of the students attending the public schools are neither from Anglo-Saxon nor French origin. This type of movement has created tremendous problems for the cities and for the people who come to this country. The issue of multiculturalism was first raised by one of the members of the Bilingualism and Bicultural Commission appointed by the then Liberal Government, headed by Mr. Pearson. A resident of Winnipeg, Professor Rudnyckj, who, while accepting the main recommendations and findings made by the commission, which dealt with the relationships between the French and the English-speaking people of this country, pointed out that an

increasing number—now a third of the population of this country—come from countries which are neither English-speaking nor French-speaking.

Many of these people come from countries which do not have, or ever had our democratic institution, our democratic way of life, our trade unions or co-operatives or civil liberties organizations. Many of them come here without the ability to speak either English or French. While canvassing in the older parts of my constituency I still come across women in their sixties or seventies who still cannot speak more than a few words of English.

In this country until a few years ago we did very little to deal with this problem. We are happy and proud to see the people who have come to this country. We are happy and proud to see the progress that they have made, but they need a great deal of assistance in making that transition from the country from in which they came in making that transition to this country which is so different.

● (1540)

It is not enough simply to give them the opportunity to work. Many of them work in some of the hardest, poorest paid jobs available in this country. We have to give them the opportunity to learn the language. We have to give them the opportunity to fit into our society. For many of them, Madam Speaker, the way in which they do that is based around and with the people from the same countries from which they came. Many belong to the hundreds of thousands of voluntary organizations which these groups have formed.

The Government of Canada and the Parliament of Canada in the early 1970s recognized the importance of helping these new ethnic groups to adjust and integrate into this country. We adopted in principle the idea of fostering the multicultural fact in this country. We have established a part-time Minister and part-time Department. It sounds good. It looks good when one reads about it, but the reality is we really have done very little.

If we compare, for example, the resources allocated for multicultural activities in my province—I will use my province as an example in which as I have indicated a very substantial percentage of the population comes neither from the Anglo-Saxon nor the French background of Canada—we find that what is allocated to help foster the various ethnic communities in the Province in multicultural activities is a very small amount compared to the money, the services and the assistance given to the Franco-Manitobans who make up a very small percentage of the population of Manitoba.

I am not for a moment questioning the assistance given to the French-speaking people of Manitoba. I, like most Members of Parliament regardless of Party, recognize the necessity and the justness of helping the French-speaking people of Manitoba and of every other part of Canada to foster, maintain and strengthen their language and culture. But when I compare the assistance given to them to the assistance given