

Government Orders

—who were among our earliest settlers were ghettoized and continue to be ghettoized. They suffer discrimination to this day.

Redress for Japanese Canadians who suffered during World War II will not erase the hurt. But the greatest tragedy in Canada has been the treatment of aboriginal people who shared their land with us. They continue to suffer from institutionalized racism in every facet of their lives.

Over the past year we have witnessed racial discrimination in our justice system in the case of Donald Marshall and Helen Betty Osborne. We heard Philippe Rushton's racist theories. There were frequent complaints about stereotyping in the media. There were ongoing protests against turbans in the RCMP and racist pins circulated from Alberta. And skinheads continued to recruit young people to facism.

Only this month we were deeply saddened and sickened at the desecration of Jewish graves and all that this symbolizes.

Fortunately, most Canadians abhor such racist acts that are, of course, perpetuated by a very small minority. We may abhor inside ourselves and within our circles of friends and family, but not enough Canadians express this abhorrence publicly.

I would like to come back to Bill C-63, which is to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. As I said earlier, part of the funding, the \$24 million endowment which is to be given to establish this foundation, was as a result of the Japanese Canadian community. I understand now that it is \$12 million on behalf of the Japanese Canadian community and \$12 million additional.

In his press release some time ago the minister stated that one of the purposes of tabling this legislation is that it underlines and strengthens the commitment to equality for all Canadians expressed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act.

I would like to comment particularly on that point. I think it is very important, and I am sure representatives of many ethnocultural organizations across the country will agree, that this foundation, in conjunction with the government and all of us, must really work to strengthen our Charter of Rights and Freedoms to adequately protect minority rights. There is increasing concern about this across Canada. The Canadian Ethnocultural Council has presented this, as has a group called Coali-

tion 33 which is working specifically on this. It is located in Vancouver.

There are concerns that minority rights are not adequately protected under the Charter. Some wanted Section 15, the equality section of our Charter, to be entrenched in Section 16 of the McKenna accord, which would reaffirm equality.

The Canadian Ethnocultural Council asked for entrenchment of multiculturalism in the body of the Constitution in the same way that the languages of the original two founding nations and the aboriginal peoples should be entrenched. They also call for reaffirmation of the Charter to be added to the McKenna accord and removal of Section 33, the notwithstanding clause.

Coalition 33 has said that Section 33 of our constitutional Charter permits the federal or provincial governments to ignore our basic rights and freedoms by using the notwithstanding clause. This is a very serious situation and I think they are doing an excellent job of beginning to document why they feel this way and why it is important to have some changes to protect minority rights. We cannot take this for granted.

I hope the foundation will research these questions and will recommend solutions, if we have not found solutions by the time the foundation is established, and that the federal government and First Ministers will ensure the protection of minority rights.

The minister also mentioned the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. I, quite frankly, do not see that this is a primary responsibility of the new foundation. As we have said repeatedly in this House, in committee and elsewhere, it is the responsibility of this government to adequately monitor and implement the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. It is particularly the responsibility of the Minister of Multiculturalism, who should be the lead minister in this regard.

I will not belabour the point, but that is why we felt it was so important to have this spelled out in amendments to Bill C-18, in the new Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship, particularly in the role of the minister. Unfortunately, this was refused. As I say, I will not dwell on that again, but this kind of abrogation of responsibility really creates cynicism in people. I hope very much that none of the disappointment will be repeated in this foundation as we move toward its implementation.