

to the enrichment of Canadian culture and recommended the integration (and not assimilation) into Canadian society of non-founding ethnic groups, recognizing their rights and privileges as citizens and making them equal participants in Canada's institutions.

We should also remember that a new political party was founded in Quebec with the sovereignty of Quebec as its stated objective, and that in the election held the previous year, it obtained 22 per cent of the popular vote.

How ironic. Feeling the pressure from this new expression of Quebec's desire for independence, coming as it did shortly after the October crisis, the Trudeau team, including the present Prime Minister, decided to make some adjustments to the report's recommendation. As a result, the concept of integration that would recognize the rights of members of ethnic groups and their equal participation in society was abandoned in favour of the concept of promoting cultural differences. In so doing, the whole dialectic of two founding peoples with their own language and culture was submerged and diluted in this ocean of other languages and cultures.

It was a fine sleight of hand, and most Canadians did not notice, except, of course, Quebecers. Through then Premier Robert Bourassa, Quebecers resolutely dissociated themselves from this concept.

In an open letter to Mr. Trudeau, Mr. Bourassa first reminded his federal counterpart that his proposal was a betrayal of the work done by the commission, whose focus had been bilingualism and biculturalism, and thus the equal status of the two peoples. He regretted Mr. Trudeau's decision to dissociate culture and language. He went on to reject out of hand a policy whose objective would be to promote languages other than French in Quebec. Finally, he reminded the federal leader that in this case, the jurisdictions were purely provincial.

Quebec never changed its position, although leaders and political options changed regularly over the years. In fact, Quebec developed its own policy for integrating cultural communities, a policy similar to the one proposed by the Laurendeau-Dunton Royal Commission.

In Quebec, the emphasis is on integration. Not assimilation but integration. The official definition of integration is as follows: integration is long term multi-dimensional process of adaptation, distinct from assimilation. In this process, the knowledge and use of the common language of Quebec society is a fundamental driving force. The process is consolidated in a society, where participation by all Quebecers is guaranteed and where immigrants and members of cultural communities find their place and are recognized as full members of the communal, social and political life of a pluralistic francophone society.

• (1835)

This policy has received unanimous approval in Quebec; it is never an issue, unlike the Canadian policy.

Private Members' Business

We cannot help but notice that multiculturalism enjoys anything but unanimous approval. The Decima and Gallup polls published in 1993 showed that 75 per cent of Canadians rejected the policy of multiculturalism and favoured a style of integration similar to Quebec's.

Given the government's investment in multiculturalism, it is a sad thing to see it fail. For the year 1993-94 alone, the government invested \$38,846 million. The program has existed for 20 years. How many billions of dollars have been invested to date in a flawed policy which the country does not want?

The policy is not working and even its target public, members of ethnic communities, are criticizing it. I cite as an example the overwhelming support for Neil Bissoondath's first book. His supporters were unanimous in saying that the government should only concern itself with helping immigrants to integrate into our society and fighting racism—end of story. He noted that the federal government's policy tended to create ethnic ghettos, which in no way foster integration and full participation in political, economic and social life.

We also cannot leave unmentioned the absurdities made possible by the multiculturalism policy. Barely six months ago, a consultation paper from the Minister of Justice proposed that culture or religion be permitted as a defence against criminal charges. Because of the ensuing uproar, the minister had to recant and withdraw the proposal. That is one example of how far some people will go to promote different cultures.

In closing, I would like to stress that a sovereign Quebec would continue to favour integration and respect. The current Minister of International Affairs, Cultural Communities and Immigration, Bernard Landry, confirmed that position just a month ago.

Please allow me to quote him: "Quebec will not use the public purse to subsidize cultural differences. Our government is against multiculturalism. Although the Quebec government acknowledges the fact that Quebec is multi-ethnic, it favours a policy of cultural convergence in one common culture, fortified by foreign sources". That sums up well Quebec's position on multiculturalism and deals with the issue effectively.

[English]

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to address this House regarding Bill M-364, a motion advocating the transfer of responsibility for cultural preservation to individuals by discontinuing federal multicultural programs, proposed by the hon. member for Calgary Southeast. Today I would like to take the opportunity to address some of the arguments utilized by opponents of Canada's multicultural program.

Unfortunately, over the past few years the spread of misinformation regarding our federal multicultural policy has been prevalent. The popular misconception of multiculturalism is of