

Multiculturalism

statement because, if I remember correctly, when the commission was launched it was a bilingual and bicultural commission. Then, over the years it was discovered that there was more to the question than just biculturalism, and so that approach was modified. As I say, the two are tied in with each other. Bilingualism is a recognition of the two languages and is highly welcomed in Canada today.

Of course, it is true that financial support is important, but more than that is needed. What is needed is vigour, vitality, and the will to retain one's culture, and to keep it up to date. It is a dynamic force. It is a way of life. It is language, of course. It is customs. It is art. It is folklore. It is a way of doing things. If these ingredients are there, then the funds will follow as a natural consequence, but let us not measure the funds first and then see what happens to multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is an option that is offered to the Canadian people, and its vitality has already been expressed in the first two years of the government's program. If that continues, the question of funds will be resolved. I am keeping my speech short because the thought has been expressed that there are others who want to speak in this debate. The main emphasis of my little speech is to ask that we treat some of these questions with care, in order that we approach the matter as objectively as we can.

The answers to these questions will be more readily found if we keep the subject out of so-called partisan politics, and whether we will be able to do that remains to be seen. Perhaps in these present days, Mr. Speaker, we are engaged in the process of shaping a rather unique society the like of which does not exist in other parts of the world. Perhaps we are travelling along a broad middle road, motivated by the liberal instinct of providing the broadest scope for expression to men and women of good will. Let us keep it that way, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, I see that the Minister of State (Mr. Haidasz) was consulting with the hon. member for Athabasca (Mr. Yewchuk), and I hope some solutions have been reached. I listened very attentively to the last speaker, and I assume that most of his questions will be answered in the future by the minister who, I may say, gave us a very good history of past prime ministers. I came to this chamber as a new member. I was very happy that the minister gave us that past history, but I am looking for some future policies. I hope, as the previous speaker just mentioned, that we can work together in developing a worthwhile type of multicultural society in Canada.

I am delighted to rise in support of the motion moved by my colleague from Athabasca, for to me the subject of multiculturalism and all it implies for our country is fundamental to our Canadian existence and prosperity. From the beginning in this country, we have wisely resisted the lure of an American style melting pot society in which all are assimilated. As a result of the decision of the British Crown to reject Lord Durham's recommendations and ensure the survival of the French language and culture, and the Roman Catholic religion, Canada has been a place where a multiplicity of identities has been encouraged, not as an end in itself but as a valid expres-

[Mr. Caccia.]

sion of the greatest unifying force we have in Canada, the common love of her varied peoples for Canada, and for each other.

My constituency mirrors the mosaic pattern of which we have heard so much. The elusive Canadian identity, which I think makes us stronger, not weaker; freer, not less free, shows up in my riding with a population which is 12 per cent German. I speiken zie Deutch, but I do not think our interpreters do here in the House. Some 7 per cent of the population is Ukrainian, and 10 per cent is other including Magyar, Gaelic and French. In the same way my own ancestry illustrates the rich background which has developed this land. My great grandfather left the plains of Prussia and settled in Alberta. His son's first language was German. His grandson, my father, had English as his first language but always remained fluent in German. And so today his great grandson rises to speak in the parliament of Canada, although I have lost all the German, in support and defence of that great tradition of diverse development. He rises as a man who is thoroughly Canadian and who only occasionally catches glimpses of his antecedents in the great dishes my mother prepares and in which I probably indulge too much.

But I rise as one who is convinced of the validity of my ancestry as part of the Canadian experience, an experience which, as I have said, has tremendously enriched this country and which can, if properly aided and maintained, continue to keep Canada Canadian, united and free. So a challenge presents itself to government today, and that challenge is a fundamental one. It is not an invitation to make funds available to sponsor pretty folk dances in quiet local communities, in town squares, as the Russians sometimes do for the slave states of the Ukraine and Georgia. It is a call to preserve a multicultural presence in a completely Canadian context, for we know that the various ethnic groups charged with this task are among the most fervent and patriotic in Canada today. Indeed, some of our self-appointed "relevant" trend setters, who have been here longer, could learn many lessons about Canadian citizenship from these people.

The motion before us refers to tokenism in the government's policies and attitudes towards multicultural development. Of course having a Minister of State charged with this is a very fine thing, but in itself it means nothing. One aspect of this tokenism is the appalling paucity of the budget for multiculturalism. A sum of \$10 million sounds like a lot, and is in fact two and a half times last year's budget, but after the minister's overpriced advertising propaganda campaign, of which I hope the opposition has completely informed him, and the salaries of the bureaucrats who seem to proliferate these days, how much will actually be left to do the job? How much will get down to the local level where it can be much more effective? A government content to spend over a billion dollars of revenue to administer the unemployment insurance scheme—which we have just read is consuming our tax dollars at a new and record level—and a paltry \$10 million for citizenship development, has got its priorities mixed up, and that is an understatement.

● (1710)

I should like to see much more assistance and funding available for the important experience of travel, to let