

Canadian Multiculturalism Act as a reality within Canada.

I do not think it necessary at this time to go into detail in describing what multiculturalism is in Canada. That has been done in the bill. Indeed, I look forward to eventually getting to third reading so that I might properly speak to that issue and to the role of multiculturalism.

My point in rising at this time is to encourage all members of the House to recognize that we have a job to do here for Canadians. We have to prepare the structures of the Government of Canada to properly fulfil the terms, reference and intentions not only of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act but, indeed, the intent and implications of Section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Therefore, I will not speak at great length at this time. I look forward to coming back at third reading. I would encourage all members of the House to allow this legislation to proceed in order that we may get on in serving the interests of a diverse multicultural Canadian society that will benefit all Canadians and prepare this country for the 21st century.

**Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on this very important issue of multiculturalism, and to support the amendment of my colleague for Vancouver East. The amendment does clarify the definition of what constitutes multiculturalism and citizenship.

As the government members who have spoken have indicated, their party will not be supporting this motion. However, it is curious that during the previous speaker's condemnation of this side of the House, we were accused of impeding this bill. As my colleague, the hon. member for Kamloops indicated, when he led off this debate this afternoon, there was enthusiasm at the beginning of the debate for the general thrust of Bill C-18.

It seemed to be sort of a motherhood issue and it recognizes that Canada is a multicultural society. But at the committee stage there were very real concerns raised, and the enthusiasm at the second reading stage waned. At that stage we had the opportunity to consult with ethnocultural groups that work in the community and they put on the warning lights, the amber lights were definitely flashing.

### *Government Orders*

This motion does clarify the intent of the multiculturalism program, it defines what multiculturalism is and, if I can just read once again the language of the amendments of my colleague, the hon. member for Vancouver East:

"Multiculturalism" means the fundamental characteristic of Canadian society which recognizes the diversity and equality of all Canadians, as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion.

What we have seen over the past months really speaks of the requirement for clarification on definition of multiculturalism. What we are seeing now is an historic reality that has proceeded over time. I can remember, as a student of Canadian history, that racism always seems to go up when the economy goes down.

There are many academic studies that have confirmed that dynamic. It is called "nativism", and it is a sort of turning in on ourselves and blaming the most newly arrived for all problems has proceeded through time in Canadian history. I do not need to remind you, Mr. Speaker, of the kind of racist comments that met the Irish immigrants in the last century or, at the turn of the century, the Ukrainian immigrants who came to Canada and now, most recently, the Sikh and Hindu immigrants who have come to enrich our country. We need a definition of what constitutes multiculturalism and the recognition also of the importance of the words equality and diversity and of why we are what we are in this country.

I have had the opportunity of consulting those people who deal with the multicultural groups in my community, both the director of intercultural association in Victoria and also the immigrant and refugee centre. I think that what we have to look for in Bill C-18 is beyond the rhetoric. It is a nice bunch of words but we can see that the budget gives the real picture of this government's commitment to multiculturalism, and the budget has been cut. It has been confirmed by those people who are working in my community that those budget cuts will affect the work that they are able to do. Therefore, there is an increase in racism. If you marginalize these people, if you isolate them in their homes, if you reduce funds for language training, then these people do not have a voice. They have no ability to get out into the community, to be effective, to get the kinds of jobs, the kind of economic clout that they are striving for, and which this government gives lip service to supporting. It takes more than lip service, it takes dollars, it takes support. The