

RECOMMENDATION

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EVALUATE TEACHING AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

History: "Have you read your child's history book lately? What do they say about the First Nations? You will usually encounter them in the first chapter, after which they conveniently disappear from sight as a succession of white discoverers and explorers pass in parade. About us you will find quotations such as this, 'They fought more ferociously than any other Indians we encountered in our westward movement.' The fact we were fighting for our own land and survival was not mentioned." (Chief David Ahenakew of the First Nations)

Progress has been made in the area of textbook analysis since the publication of *Teaching Prejudice* in 1971. Most provinces have established textbook revision committees and have undertaken some form of textbook evaluation.

Ontario: One of the most impressive and comprehensive efforts is a publication entitled *Race, Religion and Culture in Ontario School Materials: Suggestions for Authors and Publishers* produced by the Ontario Ministry of Education. The booklet contains basic principles and suggestions for developing multicultural materials that can be used as guidelines for detecting cultural or racial bias in existing resources.

Committee: At the present time there are a number of textbook evaluation committees across the country. What is needed is an interprovincial co-ordinating committee to facilitate the evaluation of teaching and resource materials, to incorporate new criteria into material evaluation schemes, and to communicate evaluations as they are completed to the departments of education and through them to the school boards.

RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed Ministry of Multiculturalism should encourage the establishment of an interprovincial co-ordinating committee to evaluate the legitimacy of teaching and resource materials for the purpose of determining the possible existence of cultural or racial bias.

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