

appointed the Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals, the Deschesne Commission.

Hon. members will recall that our government passed the world's first legislation on multiculturalism—legislation that recognizes our rich cultural diversity as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society.

Furthermore, the government tabled a bill establishing the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship, whose mission will be to promote the equality of all Canadians.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the present government recently tabled another bill, Bill C-63, to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. These measures show how far this government is determined to go to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination in Canada. I am convinced that all Canadians will join us today, on March 21, to improve the state of race relations in Canada.

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• (1410)

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, like other members have already done, I wish to point out that today is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

A recent study by B'Nai Brith revealed that last year in Canada there was a 57 per cent increase in incidents of discrimination against racial minorities.

To fight prejudice, B'Nai Brith is selling pins showing four people of various origins holding hands. The following words appear on the pin: "Proud to be Canadian", and "Diversity and Unity".

I am wearing one of these pins today, and I would invite all Canadians to take similar action.

To quote B'Nai Brith, every individual, community group and level of government has a duty to fight racism.

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[English]

MULTICULTURALISM

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, racial discrimination continues to plague Canadian soci-

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ety in the widespread distribution of racist paraphernalia, increased anti-immigration sentiments, anti-Semitic incidents and the backlash against multiculturalism.

Visible minorities continue to be victimized by racial discrimination in the workplace, in schools, in the community, in the media, in the justice system and even in our own federal institutions.

Instead of expensive billboards on racism, the government must fund community projects that will tackle racism, including media monitoring, public education, TV programs and advocacy groups that speak for minorities.

Aboriginal people who experience discrimination in every facet of their lives must have Secretary of State funding restored to achieve their human rights. We must make employment equity mandatory to remove systemic discrimination, and past injustices must be redressed.

Canada is a multicultural, multiracial country, a country of colour, where all citizens must be equal in reality as well as in law.

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[Translation]

DISTINCT SOCIETY FOR QUEBEC

Mrs. Gabrielle Bertrand (Brome—Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, opponents of Meech Lake should read or reread certain pages of their country's history. I am not referring to the fanatics and bigots but to those people who say they are acting in good faith, former and present leaders of our society who seem unaware of the fact that Quebec was recognized *de facto* as a distinct society when the Quebec Act came into force on May 1, 1775. The full title of the Act is: "An Act for making more effectual provision for the Government of the Province of Quebec in North America."

Perhaps it would be useful to recall what was said by Lord Carnarvon when he tabled our draft constitution before his peers in London in 1867. He said that Lower Canada was jealous and proud, and rightly so, of its customs and ancestral traditions, and that it was attached to its own institutions and would only enter the Union under the clear understanding that it would keep those institutions.