

*Government Orders*

As we look toward this foundation I recall what has happened over the course of the last several days in my own city of Toronto. I look again with regret that we need such a foundation in order to break down the walls of fear, the walls of ignorance, the walls of suspicion, and the walls of insecurity.

It is unfortunate that when we speak of multiculturalism the focus turns out to be one of racism. I say that knowing full well that the recent incident in Toronto that appeared to be racially motivated has now generated a series of very hostile reactions and very counterproductive comments by the press, officials and spokespersons from the various communities.

As my colleague from Montreal who spoke before me has indicated, what we need is a new direction that is positive in its promotion, in its engendering of those new symbols that hold Canada up as a land of tolerance, as a land of equality where we no longer simply pay lip service to these ideals but we live them out. We can only live them out if those symbols have the substance which many of us hold dearly and promote. If this bill is a small first step in that direction, it should be lauded.

I have some concerns that I hope the minister and his government will address. I am very concerned that this foundation not displace the rest of the advances that we are beginning to make in the whole concept of establishing multiculturalism as the ethos of this nation. In that light, I was disappointed some weeks ago when the federal government established a Heritage Languages Institute with a budget of a mere \$6 million, but at the same time having a Department of Communications continue with a budget of approximately \$300 million for the promotion of two official languages in areas outside of provincial jurisdiction. In the context of the figures that I gave a few moments ago, if we are to give substance to the principles which we espouse in bills such as this one, then what we need to do is put our money as well behind those symbols, behind those institutions.

It is very valid for this government or for any government of Canada to promote the two official languages. It is even more valid for that government to expend funds so that its citizens develop a sense of pride, a sense of belonging to a country that is of their making and theirs to hand to their descendants.

Last week we saw the establishment of a multicultural department mandated to promote "all" ethnic communities and yet retaining a minimal budget, just as it had when it was another department of the Secretary of State.

If we are going to give substance to those principles which we say identify Canada and its values, then surely we must put behind that the substance of dollars to indicate that we are serious.

Do not get me wrong, Madam Speaker, there is no one in the ethnocultural communities who is out there on bended knee, cap in hand, begging for money from the federal trough. That is not the case. My colleague, the critic for multiculturalism, has spoken eloquently on that. Rather, they are looking for substantive indications that there is an element of seriousness about where the government is going its policies, its programs and in the debates that affect the nation.

• (1250)

Today we are talking about establishing a foundation. Half the budget is going to redress the wrongs that the government on behalf of Canada has recognized were committed in World War II against its Canadians of Japanese origin. It is perhaps a first step, a very small first step to recognizing that, as a country, we have a great way to go to redress some of the errors that we as a society have perpetrated upon ourselves and people of other origins. I noticed that the previous speaker mentioned those of Ukrainian, Germanic, Chinese and Italian origins. Those are black marks on our history. We cannot rewrite history, but certainly we can make an admission of the errors that we no longer want to repeat.

In the whole context of establishing this new error free Canada, if you will, establishing a paragon of social organization, the one thing that is forgotten is the vision of Canada that people from ethnocultural communities present. Perhaps, as an aside, this debate gives us an opportunity to reflect on the fact that while the country is being torn by petty rivalries among the provinces and egos of politicians with respect to the Constitution, 40 per cent of the population in Canada have no part in rendering those kinds of decisions, those kinds of games and gamesmanship that is part and parcel of the Constitutional debate. Almost regrettably, a true vision of a united Canada, where all provinces and all peoples are treated with the kind of equality and deference that we