

# Labour minister John Munro on the road, pushing Canada's multi-cultural mosaic

Canada's multiculturalism policy has been on the books for four years now, but don't blame it if it hasn't produced cultural tolerance. One doesn't change prejudices overnight, warns Munro, and the programme needs time to take affect

By DAVE FULLER

John Munro, minister responsible for multiculturalism was on campus at the invitation of York's Italian-Canadian Student Association, last Friday afternoon.

Munro, who is also the federal minister of labour gave a short address on a new study concerning the government's policies on multiculturalism and explained some of the new directions the program is taking.

The present policy on multiculturalism was unveiled in 1971 but since that time has not prompted much in the way of meaningful change in Canada's cultural mosaic.

Explaining that he was "in the midst of reassessing the government's role in promoting this concept," Munro began by saying that he was interested in feedback from the public on ways the programme could be implemented more effectively.

## CULTURAL EXCHANGE

The numerous grants which are given out to the various organizations have mostly been used to support inward looking activities instead of those involving cultural exchange.

Munro added that he is "asking the stronger, longer established groups whether they wouldn't rather be telling other Canadians about their culture rather than telling themselves."

To make these cultures more visible to other Canadians, Munro said he would like to see better use made of television and radio within the local communities. He suggested that the CRTC could require cable television companies to include more ethnic programming, and that the CBC should give more exposure to the different cultural activities than they do at present.

## ETHNIC PRESS

The "fragile" ethnic press could also benefit from improved government



Labour minister John Munro talks to 70 students on multiculturalism in Curtis, Friday. Sitting beside Munro is Nino Del Bel, president of the Italian-Canadian Students' Association.

assistance, according to Munro, although this would have to be done in such a way that it would not compromise the position of these important cultural sources.

Munro pointed out that there were already several projects under way which were designed to promote a better awareness of ethno-cultural contributions to Canadians society. The National Film Board has been asked to produce films emphasizing Canada's multicultural fact and numerous histories of ethnic cultures have been commissioned in an attempt to preserve a cultural heritage for second and third generation Canadians who are losing all knowledge of their past.

## CLIMATE OF AWARENESS

In this way Munro hopes to change societies' attitudes toward other ethnic cultures into becoming "more tolerant and compassionate". But, he stresses that his idea should not be confused with the

policies of the justice department. He says rather, that he is "talking about creating a climate of awareness which in itself (would) make prejudice less tolerated."

In fact, it is racism that he is talking about, and when asked specifically what effect this policy could have on growing racist attitudes in Canada, he replied that "making people aware of the ethnic contribution to society was a preventive measure against racism."

Peter Jarvis of Bethune college asked if the various ethnic clubs on campus would be able to receive assistance under the new multicultural programme. Munro replied "I haven't given it that much thought, but perhaps it would be a worthwhile thing to pursue."

## GOOD RECEPTION

On the whole, Munro's remarks were well received by the 70 people in the

audience, but there were the inevitable criticisms from those who doubted that the governments policies would change anything at all.

The majority's reaction to the government policies was "mildly positive".

## ABOLISH MONEY

Munro has been greeted with all too often. He warned that unless the policy becomes more widely understood "sooner or later there will be a call to save money by abolishing it."

Munro concluded his address by saying that the fledging policy was only four years old and that it could not be expected "to produce cultural understanding and tolerance overnight."

However, "if the ideal is too become firmly imbedded in Canada, then we must start reaching people as effectively as we can with the resources we have," he added.

## Letters To The Editor

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, c/o Excalibur, room 111 central Square. They must be double-spaced, typed and limited to 250 words. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for length and grammar. Name and address must be included for legal purposes but the name will be withheld upon request. Deadline: Mon. 5 p.m.

# Racism and fascism prospering at York

This letter is sent to assert our protest and concern in regard to the racist vandalism last week at Bethune College. We feel it important that the York community take a concerned approach to such affairs and not laughingly cast aside all thought.

Besides the painting of racist and fascist slogans that occurred last week, and attack on a Chinese student occurred which was only broken up by the quick intervention of another York student. It is important that York students realize that these attacks represent more than mindless violence.

They represent an ideology and consciousness that attempts to express itself in violent action against personal freedom. As shown in these attacks, this is not a dying phenomenon but an active, growing one that prospers only through our social tolerance. Such acts should be opposed through both our immediate opposition as well as through the creation of a

university community that will not tolerate such action.

Robert Kasher,  
Chairperson, ULC

## Hitlerian reminder

We as Jewish students at York University are shocked and outraged at the acts of vandalism and propaganda that occurred at Bethune College on the evening of Monday, January 26, 1976. The appearance of swastikas and pro-Nazi slogans and the malicious damage of the Norman Bethune statue are most upsetting in view of the fact that they are poignant reminders of the holocaust that destroyed European Jews only 30 years ago. Not only are they reminders of the destruction of European Jews, they are also a reminder of the war that killed tens of thousands of Russians and

Europeans. Our concern as Jews is not only what happens to Jews. Our concern must also be what happens to mankind.

The ideal of the university, as an open forum for the rational discussion of political and social issues must not be threatened by these unfortunate acts, which are neither rational nor trivial.

The small but highly active extreme right-wing group responsible for these acts must be made aware of the condemnation by the Jewish and gentile student body at York University. To us, it was particularly upsetting to witness the re-appearance of such anti-semitic slogans as "Communism is Jewish" which were used with fatal effectiveness by Hitler in his Judenrein campaign.

Any non-Jewish community belief that the Jews are once again airing their persecution complex should be balanced with the realization that the scourge of anti-

semitism is far from eradicated in our society.

Robert Brickman  
Monica Sherman  
Eleanor Cooper  
Fred Hauptman  
Shira Bernholtz  
Ronald Hart  
Fern Kirsch  
Eli Kipper  
Cheryl Horowitz  
Bernice Gopin  
Jeffrey Jacobs  
Ralph Rubenstein  
Sharon Yuditsky  
Mindy Gollom

Louis Garber, Director,  
Jewish Student Federation

## Cartoon critic

As a woman who is both a nurse and a Harbinger volunteer counsellor, I would like to comment on the Excalibur editorial cartoon of Jan. 19, 1976. I found this to be

sexist, chauvinistic and insulting to nurses and clients.

To my knowledge, no one, regardless of sexual or political orientation, has ever been refused care at Health Services. To imply this is an injustice to Health Services. The insinuation that Harbinger deals only with "rejects" is equally unfair.

I am disappointed that Excalibur finds it necessary to perpetuate such negative stereotypes as the "battle-axe nurse" and the "unkempt radical".

By using the nurse in the cartoon, Excalibur has taken the liberty of assuming that the nurses of Health Services and Dr. Wheler are one and the same. Perhaps credit could have been given where credit was due.

I am afraid that one effect of this cartoon may be to alienate two allied services of York. Is this necessary? Who would benefit?

Sheryl A. Pollock, R.N.