Ethnic Pluralism under Siege: Popular and Partisan Opposition to Multiculturalism*

YASMEEN ABU-LABAN
Department of Political Science
Carleton University
and DAIVA STASIULIS
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University

Depuis le milieu des années '80s, diverses critiques de la politique fédérale de multiculturalisme sont provenues de différentes sources. Alors que les minorités ethniques ont dénoncé la politique pour son inefficacité à régler les problèmes de racisme et pour avoir 'ghettoisé' les préoccupations des minorités, le Parti de la Réforme, le Parti Conservateur et le Forum de Citoyens ont tous considéré le multiculturalisme comme une source de division dans le débat sur l'unité nationale. Cet article examine les critiques de la politique de multiculturalisme faites par les universitaires, la Commission Spicer, les partis fédéraux et les minorités ethniques. Les facteurs qui ont influencé les attaques à l'égard de la politique comprennent l'impasse constitutionnelle, le changement, quoiqu'avec certaines résistances, de la structure des pouvoirs chez les groupes ethniques ainsi que les craintes d'une immigration accrue et des pressions des réfugiés du Tiers-Monde dans le contexte d'une économie en déclin.

Since the mid-1980s, diverse criticisms of the federal multiculturalism policy have emerged from various sources. While ethnic minorities have faulted the policy for its inefficacy in redressing issues of racism, and for its ghettoizing of minority concerns, the Reform Party, the Conservative Party and the Citizens' Forum have all treated multiculturalism as a source of division in the national unity debate. This article examines the current critiques of multiculturalism policy by academics, the Spicer Commission, federal parties, and ethnic minorities. Factors accounting for attacks on the policy include the constitutional impasse, along with a shifting, though resistant ethnic power structure, and the fears linked to growing immigration and refugee pressures from Third World countries in a global context of economic decline.

Introduction

While immigration and ethnic diversity have been mainstays of Canadian life, these features have not always found widespread legitimacy among either ruling or popular groups. Indeed, it has only been in the last couple of decades that Canadian political discourse began to move away from what was at best a two founding nations framework, and what in practice often emphasized Canada's ties with Britain and Anglo-conformity. Both the shift in 1967 toward an officially non-discriminatory immigration policy allowing for greater immigration of 'non-Europeans,'[1] and the enactment of a federal policy of multiculturalism in 1971 were significant changes at the public level that gave a more inclusionary definition to Canadian citizenship and to the Canadian political community.

The 1960s form the historical backdrop to the federal policy of multiculturalism. Responding to the Quiet Revolution in Que-

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bec, and the assertion of a newly invigorated French-Canadian nationalism, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was formed in 1963 by the Liberal Pearson Government. In this context, the so-called 'third force' of non-British, non-French, and non-aboriginal Canadians objected to the model of a 'bilingual and bicultural' Canada symbolized by the Commission's mandate.[2] Leading the reaction were largely second and third generation Canadians, particularly Ukrainians, who pushed for an expanded conception of Canadian society. This pressure culminated in Book IV of the *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, entitled 'The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups' (Canada, 1970).

In 1971, the Trudeau Liberals tabled their response to the recommendations of Book IV, and introduced the policy of multiculturalism. As outlined by Prime Minister Trudeau, multiculturalism was to play a critical role in allowing for individual freedom, as well as national unity:

> For although there are two official languages, there is no official culture ...
>
> A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians. Such a policy should help to break down discriminatory attitudes and cultural jealousies. National unity if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense must be founded on confidence in one's own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others (Canada, House of Commons, 1971:8545).

While the policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework was first introduced by the federal Liberals, it has been supported since its inception both by the Progressive Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party. In addition, all provinces, except Newfoundland, have adopted some form of multiculturalism, and several municipal governments have also enacted their own versions of multiculturalism policies and programs.[3] In the mass media, the federal multiculturalism policy has traditionally been portrayed as an electoral ploy designed to capture the so-called 'ethnic vote'. This in itself was a kind of recognition that multiculturalism was a safe 'motherhood issue' for the federal parties to endorse, and that the policy was widely supported by the growing numbers of Canadians of neither British nor French origins. Indeed, an official consensus among the three main parties, and between these federal parties and minority ethnic groups seemed to be established and relatively secure.

However, since the mid-1980s, considerable debate and criticism have been levelled against the multicultural policy, and immigration policy. These two policies were linked in their evolution since a more open immigration policy fostered an ethnically heterogeneous population. This in turn led to demands for more inclusive policies and symbolic representation of an increasingly diverse population. In the contemporary context, this dissension translates into a profound questioning of how open the Canadian political community is, and how accessible full membership in the political community ought to be. This questioning is emerging from a number of different sources. Academics, government commissions of inquiry, the main political parties and even members of minority ethnic groups themselves have increasingly attacked the tenets of multiculturalism, and in the process have refocussed Canadian politics on the symbolic order. The attack on multiculturalism has not gone unnoticed by the federal administrators of the policy. Recently, the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship released a booklet entitled, *Multiculturalism: What is it Really About?* the intent of which is to assure Canadians of the benefits of the policy by responding to questions such as 'Why can't we all just be Canadian?' (Canada, Multiculturalism and Citizenship, 1991a: 23).

The purpose of this article is threefold. First, we examine the nature of current criticisms of multiculturalism (and to a lesser extent immigration) coming from different sources. Unless otherwise stated, we focus upon analyses and emergent critiques of these policies at the federal level. Second, we offer an explanation for why these critiques are emerging at this particular conjuncture. Finally, in contrast with the popular anti-multiculturalism position, we argue for the continued necessity of multiculturalism policy. Multiculturalism allows for a more inclusionary political discourse than either liberal individualist or two-nations models of Canadian society, providing legitimacy for both the presence and the articulation of concerns of ethnic minority collectivities.[4] As such, the policy is both relevant and necessary in the contemporary Canadian context and for the future.

Recent Criticisms of Multiculturalism

As a concept, multiculturalism conveys a number of meanings. It is used to refer not only to the federal government's policy, but also to the social reality of ethnic diversity in the Canadian population, as well as to the philosophical ideal of cultural pluralism (Kallen, 1982:51). Since its inception in 1971, multiculturalism as a policy has evolved and has emphasized different and sometimes contradictory components, adding further complexity to the term. During the early 1980s for example, the policy shifted from an emphasis on ethnocultural artistic expression to incorporate greater support for non-official (heritage) languages, and anti-racist strategies. There were even efforts made to appeal to the business community by promoting multiculturalism as a tool for enhancing Canada's image abroad and thereby enlarging foreign markets (Stasiulis, 1988). Given the multiplicity of meanings conveyed by the term multiculturalism, and by the policy itself, it is useful to 'unpack' the specific points of concern that emerge from the criticisms put forward within the academic community, the general public, political parties and minority ethnic groups.

Academic Writings

Analysing and/or criticizing multicultural policy has long been a pastime for academics. Some of the most vociferous criticisms have emanated from Quebec, where intellectuals (alongside politicians) viewed the policy as undermining, or at the least complicating, the claims to nationhood of the Quebecois and/or French Canadians. By severing culture from language, multiculturalism policy rejected the 'two nations' thesis about Canada's development, and reduced the status of French Canadians and/or the Quebecois from that of 'founding people' to the same rank as the 'other ethnic groups'. Echoing sentiments first expressed by Guy Rocher in 1973, writings on multiculturalism from Quebec have overwhelmingly viewed the policy and its impact on Quebec society in wholly negative terms (Rocher, 1973). Thus, sociologists such as Julien Harvey (1985), and Micheline Labelle (1991), have recently argued that multiculturalism has a detrimental impact upon collectivities, such as the Quebecois, which perceive themselves as nations that are minoritized. The assumption inherent in multiculturalism that 'we are all immigrants' has, Harvey argues, less resonance in Quebec where the emphasis is on the history of French settlement since the 17th century, and there exists a strong sense among the Quebecois of their own territory, controlled by their own government, and characterized by a separate language, culture and legal tradition (Harvey, 1985:4).

In fact, provincial policies regulating immigration, language and 'cultural communities,' of successive Quebec governments since the Quiet Revolution have reflected the primacy of protecting and bolstering the cultural and linguistic integrity of a francophone Quebec, located in

the context of anglophone political and linguistic hegemony within English Canada and North America at large. Thus the 'cultural convergence' policy of the Parti Québécois (1978–1981) sought to stem the perceived weakening of the French character of Quebec through measures discouraging ethnic enclaves and the linguistic assimilation of immigrants to English. Although 'interculturalism' and more recent policy initiatives towards minority ethnic groups enacted by the Liberal Bourassa Government have sought to develop 'a recognition of the pluralist reality' of Quebec,[5] the institutionalization of ethnic pluralism within Quebec is, according to Labelle, bound to be 'impregnated with political ambiguity' (1990:151, translated from French). Thus, a consistent theme in the writings of Quebec academics on multiculturalism has been that it denies the cultural integrity of Quebec society, and by relativizing culture, masks the 'national question' that has otherwise dominated federal politics.

Until recently, the academic writings on multicultural policy from outside of Quebec could be divided into three main categories: 1/ those that claim that multiculturalism serves assimilationist purposes; 2/ those that see multiculturalism as a tool for co-opting the real interests of Canada's minority ethnic groups; and 3/ those few analyses that see the policy as meeting some important legitimation needs of minority ethnic groups.

The first category is demonstrated in the argument that multiculturalism, contrary to appearances, actually serves assimilationist functions. For example, Freda Hawkins argues that multiculturalism in Canada is really a new name for the older state activity of helping immigrants adjust to Canadian life and promoting harmonious community relations (1982:76).

Similarly, Lance Roberts and Rodney Clifton suggest that multicultural policy does not support separate social structures for ethnic groups; for this reason they argue that it is misleading to view multiculturalism as nourishing cultural pluralism. Rather, they insist that through the sponsorship of ethnic conferences, festivals and presses, multiculturalism supports a kind of 'symbolic ethnicity':

> Under these conditions, individuals can voluntarily choose if, when, and how they will express an interest in one or more ethnic traditions. Ethnicity becomes one of many characteristics that individuals may use to anchor their identity and gain a measure of psychic satisfaction (Roberts and Clifton, 1982:91).[6]

Howard Brotz goes furthest in severing multicultural policy from cultural pluralism, and underlines what he sees as the homogeneous character of Canadian culture. He argues that a vague multicultural policy does nothing to mitigate the existing fundamental uniformity in values and lifestyles within the Canadian population. According to Brotz, 'Canadians of all ethnic groups, as in the United States, stand for exactly the same thing which is a bourgeois way of life' (1980:42).[7] Hence, multiculturalism as a policy has been noted for its assimilationist functions, and at the extreme for perpetuating a homogeneous culture.

A second category of critique views multiculturalism policy as overly focussed on culture to the detriment of more important issues, thereby mystifying and mitigating state representation of the real interests of minority groups. For example, Kogila Moodley suggests that the explicit focus of multiculturalism policy on culture masks glaring socio-economic inequalities among ethnic groups:

> The ideological aspect of multiculturalism is best illustrated by its focus on the non-controversial, expressive aspects of culture. As long as cultural persistence is confined to food, clothes, dance, and music, then cultural diversity provides colour to an otherwise mundane monotonous technological society. It even enhances tourism, if one considers how much Indians and 'ethnic' restaurants add to the magnificence of Canadian landscape. As such it proves to be no

threat, but on the contrary trivialises, neutralizes and absorbs social and economic inequalities (Moodley, 1983:326).

In like manner, Karl Peter argues that multicultural policy has worked to deny political and economic status to minority ethnic groups, thus serving to co-opt the interests of these groups:

> The myth of multiculturalism is based on high-sounding liberal ideas, not on the empirical reality of Canadian society. It recognizes ethnic groups as sources of individual identity and as cultural groups preserving quaint remnants of folklore and customs. It advocates societal mobility of the ethnic individual while retarding the advancement of ethnic groups by which such advancement is ultimately facilitated ... The real goal of this policy is the reiteration of the one hundred year old practice of articulating Canada's national goals in terms of the interests of the political and economic elite of Ontario and Quebec – renamed and modernized as bilingualism and biculturalism (Peter, 1981:65).

Writing from within Quebec, Bruno Ramirez and Sylvie Taschereau (1988:400) similarly suggest that multiculturalism has served the important function of defining class issues in ethnic terms, with detrimental consequences for immigrants experiencing class inequalities.

A third category of critique argues that multiculturalism neither completely homogenizes minority groups nor co-opts them, but rather has served some of their interests. For example, Raymond Breton has argued that while multicultural policy has not necessarily responded to the material/instrumental needs of groups (such as level of income), it has responded to the symbolic/cultural needs of groups and as such has met very real interests (Breton, 1984:123–44). In a complementary analysis, Daiva Stasiulis reasons that multiculturalism offers symbolic challenges to both the Anglo-conformity and 'founding nations' imagery of Canada, and as such should not be treated dismissively as mere co-optation or a device for assimilation (Stasiulis, 1988:81–111).

Recently, some new twists have emerged in the criticisms of multiculturalism. A novel focus in academic writings is the critique that multiculturalism is promoting too much diversity – that the ideal of pluralism is a mistaken one and that multiculturalism has had grave society-wide costs. Exemplifying such thinking is Reginald Bibby's 1990 work *Mosaic Madness*.

Bibby argues that too much pluralism (as enshrined in multiculturalism and, significantly, *bilingualism*) leads directly to the danger of relativism: 'the danger is that we give everything an "A". We blur bad with better, mediocrity with excellence. The net result is that we do not pursue the best, either as individuals or as a nation' (Bibby, 1990:176). Indeed, for Bibby, Canada has developed a politics focussed on the theme of co-existence to the detriment of pursuing a politics focussed on larger, more collective and more noble societal goals:

> When a country like Canada enshrines pluralism through policies such as multiculturalism and bilingualism and the guaranteeing of individual rights, the outcome is coexistence – no more, no less. It's a good start in building a society out of diverse peoples. But there's a danger. If there is no subsequent vision, no national goals, no explicit sense of coexisting for some purpose, pluralism becomes an uninspiring end in itself. Rather than coexistence being the foundation that enables a diverse nation to pursue the best kind of existence possible, coexistence degenerates into a national preoccupation. Pluralism ceases to have a cause. The result: mosaic madness (Bibby, 1990:103–4).

Bibby further argues that multiculturalism has led to divisions because it does not emphasize interaction between all groups in the interest of national unity: for this reason it should be overhauled or indeed abolished (Bibby, 1991a:A1;1991b:A20). But Bibby offers no alternative. He simultaneously rejects *both* liberal individualist and pluralist (including bilingual) models

as a foundation for Canadian society that must be replaced by some overarching, yet undefined national vision. Thus, his concept of national integration is stripped of all content, leaving the emperor without clothes.

While Bibby's work deals with more themes than multiculturalism, the considerable media attention accorded to this work has focussed on the question of multiculturalism, and Bibby has also written in the mainstream press on this topic. In tying multicultural policy in with such large and negative consequences (e.g., Bibby (1991a) writes that multiculturalism has led to a 'multi-everything society') the impression is conveyed that this meagrely-funded and relatively obscure policy area is causing considerable harm to Canada. Thus, while devoid of analytical rigour, such views add academic legitimacy to those newly emerging forces that are critiquing multiculturalism for reasons that have little to do with a benign scrutiny of pluralism.

Public Opinion

The attention which Bibby's book has received is illustrative of the extent to which multiculturalism has been raised as a key concern in the Canadian mass media. A variety of national public opinion polls have sought different views and different dimensions or aspects of multiculturalism and immigration,[8] and have indicated different findings.[9] For this reason, survey data have been used in different ways. For example, Bibby's *Report on Bilingualism and Multiculturalism*, released in 1991, indicates that whereas in 1985 a majority (56%) preferred the multicultural mosaic to other models, in 1990 this had dropped to 47 per cent, reflecting declining support for the 'mosaic' (Canada. Multiculturalism and Citizenship, 1991b:7; see also Valpy, 1991:A9). Contradicting these results, the Minister of Multiculturalism, Gerry Weiner, has quoted liberally from a July 1991 Angus Reid Survey wherein 77 per cent of Canadians agreed that multicultural policy enriches Canada's culture, and 63 per cent responded that multiculturalism will help unite the country (Weiner, 1991a:3; 1991b:A18; Canada. Multiculturalism and Citizenship, 1991a:1).[10] The findings of such surveys can be used in a variety of ways, to support a variety of political ends. This is particularly the case when the questions are formulated in an ambiguous and open-ended fashion as was recently the case in the Report of the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future.

At the end of June 1991, the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future (The Spicer Commission) released its findings and recommendations that were purportedly based on the views put forward by over 400,000 Canadian groups and individuals. In particular, their report suggests, amongst other things, that Canadians – including minority ethnic groups – value 'cultural diversity' (i.e. some semblance of ethnic diversity in the population). Nonetheless, the Spicer Report indicated that 'citizens spoke to us often of their desire to see a definition of being Canadian which can encompass many different origins of our citizens' (Canada. Citizens' Forum, 1991:128). In responding to this call, the Spicer Report argued for a re-focussing of official multicultural policy:

> We believe that federal government funding for multiculturalism activities other than those serving immigrant orientation, reduction of racial discrimination and promotion of equality should be eliminated, and the public funds saved be applied to these areas. *The key goal of multiculturalism should be to welcome all Canadians to an evolving mainstream – and thus encourage real respect for diversity* (1991:129) [emphasis added].

While it is not obvious what or who constitutes this 'mainstream,' it is clear that what is being favoured in this report is for multiculturalism to serve as a device for immigrant integration – i.e. as more of a homogenizing than a pluralizing force. Leaving aside the fact that some analysts have argued that multiculturalism has pursued

this goal all along, it is interesting to note the reversal in logic inherent in the Spicer Report's argument in comparison with Trudeau's statement of 1971. That is, while Trudeau averred that out of 'confidence in one's individual identity,' there 'can grow respect for others' (Canada. House of Commons, 1971:8545), the Spicer Report argues that it is only when individuals have *commonalities* that respect for diversity can be achieved. Clearly, the Spicer Report delegitimates state support for either cultural or institutional forms of pluralism.

It would also appear that a multiculturalism geared towards an 'evolving mainstream' is mindful of 'Canadian traditions' that are rooted in ties with Britain. For example, in the Spicer Report's discussion of Canadian identity, concern is raised over the participants' 'frequent and loud' dismay at the 'government's perceived weakening of national institutions and symbols' that run the gamut from VIA Rail and the CBC, *to the wearing of turbans in the RCMP* (1991:121–2).[11] In order to maintain the country as 'prosperous, peaceful, tolerant, quiet, pristine, and beautiful' (1991:121), the implications are that national symbols must not adapt to the ethnic diversity (and assorted cultural heritages) of the Canadian population. Rather, the ethnic hordes must grow to love and embrace the national symbols based primarily upon a history of British colonial domination and at best, an accommodation of the 'French fact' in North America! In the event that this message remains obscure, the Spicer Report points out, in the context of the discussion of Canadian identity, the spectre of 'illegal immigration' and millions of people desperately wanting to come to Canada in order to have access to the Canadian dream. As the report rhetorically points out 'surely these people can't all be mistaken' (1991: 121).

The Spicer Report recommends that the government review and co-ordinate its policies on national institutions, and symbols of either communicative or historic value, so as to avoid 'further destabilizing or weakening citizens' feelings of Canadian unity, especially among English-speaking Canadians' (1991:122). This recommendation conveys the impression of the need to retain national culture and symbols (at least outside of Quebec) as they are, rooted in British heritage and unsullied by non-British immigration. The manner in which this report deals with Quebec, and the fact that the contentious issue of bilingualism was treated, relatively speaking, with kid gloves, suggests that an evolving mainstream may well be a 'bi-cultural' mainstream.

Haroon Siddiqui has called into question the 'intellectual honesty' of the Spicer Commission's decision to focus on and criticize multiculturalism policy despite the fact that this policy was overall of less concern to participants than the questions of bilingualism and Quebec, the Prime Minister's credibility, and especially the economy (1991:D2). While the final report represents more than the voice of one or all of the Commissioners, its disdainful and dismissive attitude towards multiculturalism policy is nevertheless consistent with Chief Commissioner, Keith Spicer's personal views on multiculturalism. In an article in the *Montreal Gazette* written two years prior to the Citizens' Forum, Keith Spicer associates state-funded multiculturalism with a 'multicultural zoo' and the creation of 'not Canadians but professional ethnics' (Spicer, 1989). Spicer further describes multiculturalism in a manner inscribed with racial and ethnic biases as:

> ... an anthology of terrors: Balkanization, ethnic politicians siphoning off political protection money, ghetto mentalities, destabilization of Quebec leading to secession, reverse intolerance by immigrants for Canadian culture and institutions, devaluation of the very idea of a common nationality (1989:B3).[12]

The net effect of trashing multiculturalism policy is to resuscitate a 'two founding nations' framework. Indeed, this is also implicit in Spicer's own commentary in the

Citizens' Forum Report that 'Quebec is the heart of the matter' (1991:4). The Spicer Commission Report is not an isolated instance of turning away from multiculturalism. Calls to abolish multiculturalism have also emerged from old and new players in the arena of the political party system.

Political Parties

A critical role played by political parties in liberal democracies is to provide voters with what Janine Brodie and Jane Jenson (1988:11), call a 'definition of politics,' – i.e. parties help to 'shape the interpretation of which aspects of social relations should be considered political, how politics should be conducted, what the boundaries of political discussion most properly may be and which kinds of conflicts can be resolved through the political process'. Because of its specific right-wing focus on questions of immigration and ethnic diversity, the addition of the Reform Party to federal politics is significant. Given that the Reform Party has been attracting growing media coverage, popular support, and financial and political marketing resources (Cernetig, 1991b:A1), to what extent has the discourse on multiculturalism and immigration taken a rightward shift in the Progressive Conservative Party and the other two main parties?

The following discussion provides an overview of developments within the Reform Party and the three main federal parties which allows us to examine the extent to which questions of multiculturalism and immigration have emerged, and to show the partisan differences in the responses to these questions. Here it is suggested that despite the differences among the parties, the combined effect of partisan debates on issues of multiculturalism and immigration has been to challenge the state/political elite consensus on the merits of pluralism that has existed over the past two decades. At best, what is left is a discourse emphasizing individual as opposed to group rights through the subsumption of the pluralist notion of multiculturalism under the individualist notion of citizenship. At worst, the doors have been opened for greater partisan representation and articulation of racist sentiment.

The Reform Party

Formed in 1987, the Western-based Reform Party under Preston Manning is populist in orientation, endorsing the free-enterprise system, a limited role for the state particularly in social policies, and fiscal restraint. Both the party's leader and ideology draw inspiration from American republicanism (Cernetig, 1991a:D4). Since its inception, the Reform Party has explicitly raised and critiqued both Canada's immigration policy, and Canada's official policy of bilingualism; in the process this party seems to have nudged along a challenge to the consensus that previously existed within federal party politics on these issues.

With respect to immigration, since 1987/88 the Reform Party has emphasized the following:

1) That immigration be 'economic in nature' i.e. that immigrants have the required human capital to adjust to Canadian labour market conditions. In this context sponsorship is restricted to 'immediate' family only (spouse, children and dependent parents).

2) That 'genuine refugees' are welcome, but that 'bogus refugees' should be immediately deported, and that the notwithstanding clause should be used to get around Supreme Court decisions granting some civil rights to non-citizens.[13]

3) That immigration not be used to solve the 'welfare state crisis'. In particular, the Reform Party opposes the use of a 'forced growth population policy' to offset an aging Canadian population.

4) That all changes in immigration policy (including for example sponsorship criteria) be put to referendum (Reform Party of Canada, 1989:23–24;1990:22–23;1991:33–35).

Interestingly, in their original policy

positions and in the 1988 election platform, the Reform Party did not address multiculturalism. Instead, the party focussed solely on immigration and the so-called 'political and immigration establishment' arguing that immigration 'should not be based on race or creed, as it was in the past; nor should it be explicitly designed to radically or suddenly alter the ethnic makeup of Canada, as it increasingly seems to be' (Reform Party of Canada, 1989:23). In this context, a peoples' referendum is viewed as a desirable alternative to the 'immigration establishment'.

> Career politicians and immigration advocates have dominated discussion of immigration policy. These groups benefit from abuse of the system and improper selection of immigrants. Ghettoized minorities are a favourite pawn of both groups. Recent directions of P.C. [Progressive Conservative] immigration policy indicate a clear desire to use immigration to build political support to groups. This amounts to the local nomination busing phenomenon on a national scale (Reform Party of Canada, 1989:24).[14]

It was only in late 1989 that the party added multiculturalism to its policy platform calling for: 1/ the end of funding for the multicultural program; 2/ the preservation of cultural background as a matter of personal choice; and 3/ upholding the responsibility of the state to promote and preserve national culture and to 'encourage ethnic cultures to integrate into the national culture' (Reform Party of Canada, 1990: 23). It was also at this time that the Reform Party added a statement calling for 'the preservation of the distinctive heritage and tradition of the RCMP by retaining the uniformity of dress code' (Reform Party of Canada, 1990:24). This is a clear response to the issue of opening up the RCMP to orthodox Sikh recruits.

At the Reform Party's April 1991 convention, there was an effort to silence what Manning has called the 'extremist' elements of the party, with the party elite instructing that candidates and policies must be 'electable' (Gessall, 1991:A1). Indeed, of some 19 proposed immigration resolutions, 16 did not make it to the convention (Lord, 1991:A5) including one aimed at abolishing charter rights for new immigrants (Cernetig, 1991a:D4). In their 1991 statement of principles, it is interesting to note that in the discussion of immigration policy, the phrase that immigration should not be 'explicitly designed to radically or suddenly alter the ethnic makeup of Canada,' has been removed, and that the discussion of preserving the stature of the RCMP makes no overt reference to dress codes. In the section that addresses multiculturalism, the Reform Party now calls for the abolition of the Multiculturalism Department, stating that 'the Reform Party stands for the acceptance and integration of immigrants to Canada into the mainstream of Canadian life' (Reform Party of Canada, 1991:35).[15]

In addition to dampening the expressions of anti-Third World immigrant sentiment in their official policy statements, Reform Party elites deny that the party is racist. For example, the party's policy officer claims that because the party does not have an 'ethnic base'[16] it is the only party that is not being influenced by ethnic groups who want a 'race oriented' immigration policy (*The Ottawa Citizen*, June 24, 1991:A3). There is also a concerted effort on the part of the Reform Party's leadership to deflect attention away from a major focus on questions of immigration.[17] For example, Preston Manning has emphasized constitutional, parliamentary and fiscal reforms, rather than immigration policy, as the major concerns of the Reform Party. He further claims that the party's position on immigration should actually be attractive to non-British/non-French immigrants because the party is opposed to the use of both racial and linguistic criteria in immigration (Oziewicz, 1991:A6).[18]

Gains in popular support by the Reform Party often come at the expense of support to the ruling Conservative Party. The latter's perceived pro-Quebec bias, the decision to allow turbans to be worn by Sikhs

in the RCMP, and other policies are seen to be out of touch with the values of Western and other Canadians (Wallace, 1990:38). In this respect, it is noteworthy that at the Conservative policy convention held in early August 1991, several resolutions dealing with multiculturalism and immigration were introduced, many of which bear strong resemblance to those of the Reform Party.

The Progressive Conservatives

At the Progressive Conservative convention in August 1991, some 14 resolutions on immigration were introduced – mostly from the West and Ontario – of which eight were passed. Those passed included resolutions calling for the rigorous application of the current sponsorship system; for immigration to be increased with priority to those who are educated/skilled/have investments funds; and for criminal or medically ineligible people to be effectively screened and rapidly removed (Progressive Conservative Party, 1991:51–52). While not following the wording of the Reform Party, these resolutions share some similar sentiments.

The affluent Toronto constituency of Rosedale introduced six resolutions, none of which were passed, including one calling for a five year restriction on where immigrants can live so that 'they do not end up only in the largest major population centres in Canada,' and one calling for the forced return of refugees when times have improved in their homeland. A resolution proposing stetsons as the sole choice of headgear in the RCMP was also defeated (Progressive Conservative Party, 1991:44). Notably, however, a number of resolutions relating to multiculturalism were passed. These included a resolution that 'the PC Party of Canada abandon the policy of multiculturalism and instead try to foster a common national identity for one people living together in harmony as equal citizens, loyal to the Canadian ideal,' and one calling for abolishing the Department of Multiculturalism (Progressive Conservative Party, 1991:54). Again, both of these resemble the Reform Party's current policy platform on multiculturalism.

At the same time, given that the Conservatives form a majority in the House of Commons, the Conservative policies on multiculturalism and immigration are also defined by their actions in government. In this context, Weiner has been on the defensive against his own party and has hastened to argue that the resolutions against multiculturalism were 'not representative of the vast majority of Conservatives,' particularly as there were few racial minority delegates at the convention (Russo, 1991:A4). It is also the case that Weiner has been on the defensive against the wider backlash against multiculturalism. In the first annual report covering a full year of operation of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, he argues for the necessity of multiculturalism itself:

> Far from being the 'masochistic celebration of Canadian nothingness' as some may see it, multiculturalism is a vital, indispensable ingredient in the emergence and development of a Canadian identity in which, for the first time, all our citizens can truly share. And far from being a divisive factor at a time when Canadians are seeking to understand where and in what their unity lies, multiculturalism is one of the most powerful forces for that unity our country has ever known (Canada. Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, 1991c:ix).[19]

Since taking power in 1984, the Tories have pursued policies that have legislatively and administratively bolstered multiculturalism (Stasiulis, 1988; 1991). Given the awkwardness that would arise if the same government that created a separate department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship now proposed to abolish multiculturalism altogether, it is more likely that the Conservatives will let the policy, and its administrative supports, languish. This can be seen in current efforts to defuse fears regarding the divisive consequences of multiculturalism through harnessing multiculturalism to citizenship and em-

phasizing 'a greater appreciation of citizenship as the symbol that binds Canadians together' (Gerry Weiner in Canada. House of Commons 1992:5; see also Canada. Multiculturalism and Citizenship, 1992).

The New Democratic Party

During its policy convention, held in June 1991, the New Democratic Party (NDP) neither forwarded nor endorsed the Reform and Conservative-style resolutions addressing multiculturalism and immigration. In fact, to the extent that the NDP is picking up on the theme of multiculturalism, this is being done with an eye toward enhancing party support within minority ethnic communities through coalition building and 'ethnocultural outreach,' in a manner pursued by the Liberal Party several years earlier. As stated in a Multiculturalism Report brought to the 1991 convention 'we must avoid making assumptions about the political affiliations of different groups. We must remember that perhaps the other parties have done what we have failed to do and that conversions are still possible if we are open to this' (New Democratic Party, 1991:2–5). While this use of multiculturalism leaves it open to the long-standing critique that multiculturalism is a 'vote-getting device,' it is noteworthy that current NDP affirmative action guidelines are also approaching ethnocultural minorities with an eye towards furthering their statistical representation within riding associations and other levels of the party structure, including as electoral candidates (Stasiulis and Abu-Laban, 1991).

In this regard, a variety of organizational steps for both the provincial and federal levels of the party are suggested in order to increase the ethnic and racial diversity of the party. These include forming Ethnocultural Advisory Councils with minority ethnic representation at all provincial levels; such Councils would oversee the development of affirmative measures for delegate and candidate selection developed at the federal level of the party. Also proposed is the use of provincial and federal caucuses and their multicultural critics to provide resources and outreach, and establishing a 'multicultural liaison' position within each riding association (New Democratic Party, 1991:2–5). While these moves towards achieving greater representation within NDP ranks are laudable, and while this party is implicitly maintaining its traditional support of multiculturalism, the NDP has not explicitly developed a policy position that overtly counters the emerging criticisms of multiculturalism and immigration.[20]

The Liberal Party

Ironically, the Liberal Party has also been taciturn on these questions. As the party in government for 17 of the past 25 years, the Liberals are strongly associated not only with the development of a (formally) nondiscriminatory immigration policy but also with the origins and development of an official policy of multiculturalism. Given this identification of the policy with the Liberals, it is particularly surprising that ethnic minority Liberal MPs have been openly critical of the policy of multiculturalism. Many of these MPs were first elected in 1988, and were involved – often bitterly – in contested nomination battles that at times even overturned incumbent (Anglo) MPs (Stasiulis and Abu-Laban, 1990).

Liberal attacks on the policy first emerged during the parliamentary debates and discussions in 1989 over the creation of a separate department of multiculturalism. While the Liberals joined the Conservatives and the NDP in supporting Bill C-18, to create the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship, there were several Liberal MPs – of ethnic minority backgrounds and representing Toronto-area ridings – who were critical not only of a separate department, but also of the ghettoizing nature of multiculturalism as a whole.[21]

John Nunziata appears as the most outspoken critic of multiculturalism in the Liberal Party.[22] As a contender in the 1990 Liberal Party leadership race, Nunziata is also

the critic with the highest profile. Expressing sentiments shared with several other ethnic minority MPs in the party, Nunziata argues that while the policy of multiculturalism may have been valid in the past, and may even have served some immigrant Canadians and Canada as a whole, generally it no longer plays a constructive role:

> I believe very strongly that the policy is no longer valid or appropriate today. In effect, the present policy of multiculturalism is divisive. It divides Canadians. It is unfair in that it treats Canadians in a different fashion. It is regressive and at times discriminatory ...
>
> ... [It] is discriminatory because there is almost a suggestion that because one is part of the multicultural community, somehow one is inferior, is of a different class, is of inferior quality to Canadians who have origins that are French or English ...
>
> I think it is time we stopped segregating and ghettoizing Canadians of origins other than French or English and that we all start talking about and promoting what we all have in common and that is the fact that we are Canadian (Canada, House of Commons, 1989b:3992).

As an instance of the ghettoization of ethnic minority concerns, Nunziata points to the fact that responsibility over the redress issue for Japanese-Canadians was given to the Minister of Multiculturalism. The confiscation of private property and the suspension of civil rights during the Second World War, he argues, were justice rather than ethnic issues and accordingly should have been handled by the Department of Justice. Similarly, Nunziata advocates the replacement of the Department of Multiculturalism with a separate Ministry of Culture and Communications (Canada. House of Commons, 1989b:3995). Presumably, such measures would also serve to alleviate the cynical electoral uses to which multiculturalism has been put – a feature that has been highlighted by several minority Liberal MPs, and by the Liberal Party's multiculturalism critic Shirley Maheu (1991).

Nonetheless, despite arguments by Nunziata and other Liberal MPs, the Liberal Party continues to officially support multiculturalism. At its last policy convention, in February 1992, the Liberal Party adopted a resolution that reaffirmed 'its commitment to a multiculturalism policy that promotes and enhances cultural and societal contributions to a diverse population such as Canada's brings' (Liberal Party of Canada, 1992:38). Following in the steps of the Tory Government's recent shift in emphasis in the multicultural policy, the Liberal Party's resolution was linked to the promotion of Canadian citizenship (Liberal Party of Canada, 1992:38).

The current version of Liberal policy on multiculturalism incorporates some of the criticisms of Liberal MPs who have argued that the consequences of the policy have been 'ghettoizing' for ethnocultural minorities. The Liberals suggest that rather than having two cultural policies (one mainstream, and one for ethnic minorities) there should only be one cultural policy. This implies that the funding of 'ethnic' cultures would be integrated into such agencies as Canada Council and the Department of Communications. This would leave the multiculturalism bureaucracy with two major tasks: leadership in the area of racism, and promotion of Canadian citizenship (Maheu, 1991:1). Whether or not multiculturalism policy retains support within the badly divided party will likely hinge on the influence of the right wing, whose agenda has been to promote market-driven strategies and put a lid on social programs (Winsor, 1991a;1991b;1991c).

The reasons why criticisms have emerged from some Liberal minority MPs are, however, worthwhile addressing in the context of a discussion of the position of ethnic minority groups toward multiculturalism.

Ethnic Minority Groups

It has been a long-standing observation that the policy of multiculturalism has had little appeal for the Quebecois and First Na-

tions. These collectivities either perceive it as weakening their specific collective claims to special status and state resources, or as irrelevant to their concerns. However, over the past several months, media accounts have portrayed the backlash against multiculturalism policy as also emanating from members of ethnic minority groups, i.e. from the constituency which the policy is popularly perceived to represent.[23] The Spicer Report's criticisms of multiculturalism and recommendations for narrowing the policy's scope were reinforced by suggestions that minority and immigrant groups were also critical of the policy. This phenomenon is difficult to assess because it is not always clear which groups or individuals are making these arguments against multiculturalism, and how representative they are. It seems relatively confined to successful politicians, writers and professionals and second-generation minority Canadians seeking upward mobility but finding ethnicity a handicap or stigma. In short, it is by no means clear that all minority ethnic groups and/or their leaders are suddenly against multiculturalism.

For instance, the Canadian Ethnocultural Council (CEC), a national coalition of 37 ethnic organizations, and traditionally a supportive watchdog and beneficiary of the policy, has rejected these new criticisms, without however, providing a spirited or convincing defence. The Council's defence of the policy through the use of wooden, impassive rhetoric (e.g., 'diversity is our only commonality') is unlikely to persuade the detractors or to win new initiates, such as youth, to the cause of multiculturalism (*Saskatchewan Multicultural Magazine*, 1991:6). Andrew Cardozo, former Executive Director of the CEC, has merely suggested that multiculturalism supporters 'have to decide whether to give it [the policy] a major shot in the arm, to let things continue as is, or to bury it' (Cardozo, 1990:19).

Current criticisms from minority groups resonate with the sense of exclusion articulated by Ukrainians and others, over 20 years ago at the time of the Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission. There are two identifiable strands to the criticisms being made by ethnic minorities.

The first highlights the fact that the existence of a policy of multiculturalism has not alleviated racism or discrimination. For example, one writer of Japanese ancestry discusses the reality of racism in her lived experience as a child and adult in Canada that is belied by the rhetoric of multiculturalism:

> Multiculturalism, a term everyone loves to use in defining Canada, is admirable in theory but it does not work in practice.
>
> Multiculturalism is the name given to the ethnic and cultural diversity of our country. It implies an attitude of tolerance and acceptance, of equality among all, regardless of ethnic background. This idea does not stand the test of personal experience.
>
> And the experience of individuals provides real insight into what defines our country. Though official policy would have it otherwise, it is hard to be different in this country. For me this is an irony that underlies the very fact of being Canadian (Takasaki, 1991:A15).

Still others have gone farther to argue that through strengthening the associations between being 'ethnic' and being of inferior status, multiculturalism actually promotes or causes racism. For example, Meghji writes:

> In contemporary Canadian usage, when one speaks of 'ethnic Canadians' one is speaking of Canadians whose origins are neither French nor British. Further, the tendency to perceive someone as 'ethnic' increases with how different that person is from the social, cultural and racial norms of the dominant groups (1990:A23).[24]

Similarly, novelist Neil Bissoondath writes that 'In stressing the differences between groups, in failing to emphasize that this is a country with its own ideals and attitudes which demand adherence, the policy has instead aided in a hardening of hatreds' (Bis-

soondath, 1992:16).

While the criticisms of the policy made by minority groups draw attention to experiences of injustice and racial/ethnic inequality, it is by no means a given that the removal of multiculturalism would change this lived reality, and the likelihood is that it would make it worse. This is especially the case because many critics of the policy are implicitly expressing hostility to ethnic and racial minorities themselves.

Explaining the Assault on Multiculturalism

As suggested earlier, multiculturalism as a term can take on many meanings that go beyond policy questions, to reflect the ethnic/racial diversity within the Canadian population – itself a result of post-war immigration – as well as the ideals of 'tolerance' for ethnic and racial diversity through pluralism. Given this multiplicity of meanings associated with multiculturalism, it is hardly surprising that several factors need to be addressed simultaneously in accounting for the current criticisms against multiculturalism. Within Canada, the constitutional impasse, along with a shifting, though resistant ethnic power structure, forms the backdrop for the current siege against multiculturalism, and this policy's perceived, mostly negative, consequences.

Since the 1980s, Canadian politics have been characterized by a plethora of ethnic and other (e.g., feminist) groups 'in competition with each other and with governments [struggling] to have their interpretations prevail in times of constitutional uncertainty' (Cairns, 1989:17). In particular, the fallout and debate surrounding the failed Meech Lake Accord has underscored the potential of Quebec's separation, and has raised the issue of 'national unity' to greater than usual importance in Canadian political discourse. In this context, the feeling that there is 'too much diversity' in Canada has been exacerbated, not only by the demands of ethnic minority groups, but also by the prolonged debate over Quebec as a 'distinct society,' the related questioning of the worth of bilingualism, as well as the complex questions raised by aboriginal rights.[25]

It may well be the case that the diversity associated with multiculturalism is relatively easier to 'blame' for disunity, in part because there are fewer overt repercussions. The level of resistance shown by Mohawks at Oka in the summer of 1990, or by separatists in Quebec, is unlikely to be mobilized in support of multiculturalism. The geographical dispersion and heterogeneity of non-British, non-French, non-aboriginal groups makes them far less cohesive in their demands upon the state, and hence easier to ignore. Indeed, there is little doubt that these groups continue to rank low on the 'pecking order of minority rights' (Kallen, 1988:S107–S120), as exemplified by the September 1991 Mulroney Government's proposals for constitutional amendment (Canada, 1991). While issues relating to the rights of the French majority in Quebec, the distinctiveness of Quebec, and to a far lesser extent aboriginal self-government, were explicitly dealt with, there was no specific discussion of multiculturalism in any of the proposals. Particularly striking was the absence of the word 'multiculturalism' in the section dealing with entrenching a Canada Clause (i.e. a statement of who we are and what we value as a people). This was a significant omission given that the Charter of Rights does mention multiculturalism, and given that it was the Mulroney Government that passed a *Multiculturalism Act* in 1988, which, for the first time, provided multiculturalism with legislative status.

Using these proposals as a basis for discussion, the Special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate (the Beaudoin-Dobbie Committee) toured the country, and participated in the five national conferences on constitutional reform held between January and February 1992. In the final report issued at the end of February 1992, multiculturalism was

provided with greater visibility than in the initial proposals of the Mulroney Government; in the Beaudoin-Dobbie version of the Canada Clause there is 'recognition of the irreplaceable value of our multicultural heritage' (Canada. Senate/House of Commons, 1992:24). In spite of its explicit mention, multiculturalism remains low in status.[26] The wording on multiculturalism in the Beaudoin-Dobbie Canada Clause is glaringly weak and static when compared to the 'special responsibility of Quebec to preserve and promote its distinct society,' the 'right and responsibility of aboriginal peoples to protect and develop their unique cultures, languages and traditions,' or the 'profound commitment to the vitality and development of official language minority communities' (Canada. Senate/House of Commons, 1992:24). Moreover, the passive wording accorded to multiculturalism also contrasts with Section 27 of the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms which speaks of interpreting the Charter 'in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians' (Canada. Department of Justice, 1989:65).

The proposed Canada Clause was given a more expansive role in the August 1992 Charlottetown Accord. The Accord had won the assent of the First Ministers and Aboriginal and Territorial leaders, yet was rejected by the majority of Canadians who voted in the October 26 national referendum. In the Accord, the Canada Clause's status was elevated to that of an interpretive clause for the entire Constitution, including the Charter. Given its heightened standing, it is significant that any reference to Multiculturalism was once again deleted from the Clause.[27] Over the past year, the word 'multiculturalism' has made a jack-in-the-box appearance and disappearance, while no effort has been made to strengthen Section 27 of the Charter. Based on this trend, it can be anticipated that future constitutional discussions will continue to either downplay multiculturalism or ignore it altogether.

The current siege against multiculturalism, however, must be accounted for with reference to more than the 'formal-legal' realm of constitutional discussions. Given that multiculturalism is associated with diversity within the Canadian population, some of the criticisms of multiculturalism reflect a perception that this policy has conceded too much power to ethnic minority groups. This issue can be seen as having three dimensions.

Firstly, the racial/ethnic and class hierarchical structure described by John Porter (1965) has been challenged as a result of an immigration policy that since the late 1960s, has given preference to immigrants with professional skills, and, more recently, to immigrants with capital. The negative reaction to this is clear, for example, in the belligerent response to the purported 'buying up' of real estate and other property in British Columbia by wealthy Hong Kong immigrants.

Secondly, fears exist that multiculturalism taken to its logical extreme could justify institutional pluralism in the form of an 'ungovernable' set of parallel institutions and legal traditions. This fear seems heightened when Judeo-Christian values are interpreted to be at risk. For example, reported proposals by one Islamic organization (the Muslim World League) that Canadian Muslims govern themselves on family issues (such as marriage and divorce) have caused considerable furor (Sweet, 1991:A1,A7).

Thirdly, multiculturalism is associated with changes in the symbolic/cultural order. In the Canadian context, where there are few symbols that are seen to be 'national,' such issues as wearing turbans in the RCMP evoke heated and emotional debates over the divisive consequences of symbolic recognition of ethnic diversity. At this point, underlying almost any proposals for institutional or cultural pluralism within Quebec for ethnic minority groups is the 'national question' (Labelle, 1991:39). Given this, changes in the symbolic order would also be met with controversy and op-

position in Quebec.

Ironically, at the heart of many of the recent criticisms of the policy made by ethnic minorities is the perception that multiculturalism *disempowers* rather than concedes too much power to ethnic minority groups. Because multiculturalism policy makes use of high-sounding ideals that are seldom achieved, it was inevitable that a backlash against the policy from members of minority groups would develop. A large array of evidence underscores the limitations in the realization of the multicultural ideal. These include: the patronizing and platitudinous speeches of politicians to ethnic minority groups, followed by the election-time media coverage of ethnic minorities that often degrades their political participation (e.g., 'instant Liberal' has increasingly become a term of derision reserved for minority activists in party politics);[28] the fact that *despite* a policy of multiculturalism, racism, intolerance and bigotry still exist, as seen in the frequent police shootings of blacks; and the fact that so-called visible minorities with roots in Canada extending back several generations can still be asked 'where do you come from?'

While the contemporary emphasis on multiculturalism, and the newly-fledged criticisms of this policy can partially be accounted for by reference to internal (Canadian) developments, they cannot be fully comprehended in isolation from larger trends evident across Western industrialized countries. Indeed, in many ways the increasingly politicized debate over multiculturalism may be seen as the Canadian version of the backlash against pluralism, ethnic and racial diversity and immigration that is besetting most advanced capitalist countries in the late 20th century. In the broad context of economic decline since the early 1970s, growing immigration and refugee pressures from Third World countries, and increased attention given to policing borders, concerns and issues surrounding the Canadian multiculturalism debate find striking parallels.

For example, in the United States the popular press has picked up on the theme of how 'everything in society' will alter with the 'browning of America,' (i.e. when, as a result of immigration, it is projected that whites will become a numerical minority by the 21st century) (Henry III, 1990:38–41).[29] As well, language policy emerged in the 1980s as an important and controversial issue in many American states, and at the national level, initiated by the demands of immigrants from Latin America and Asia that government should provide education, emergency services, street signs, election ballots and other information in languages other than English (Citrin, 1989:1–3). The November 1991 race for governor in Louisiana featured Republican David Duke, a former activist in the Ku Klux Klan. While losing the election to incumbent Democrat Edwin Edwards, Duke's racist campaign discourse promises to work its way into future state electoral contests (Greenaway, 1991:A5).

In Western Europe, where migrants from the Third World holding limited citizenship rights are becoming a permanent feature of many countries, similar issues are confronted. Challenges to national 'traditions' launched by minority groups in the name of religious freedom, have sparked heated controversy in France and other countries.[30] Continued immigration pressures from the Third World and now from Eastern Europe suggest that the proliferation since the 1970s of anti-immigrant xenophobic groups, movements and political parties in such countries as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and France will continue (Messina, 1990:35–37). Indeed, recent evidence suggests that there is an acceleration. Immigration is fast emerging as a top priority item amongst national governments and members of the European Community, particularly in the face of increased violence by police, and racist groups towards foreigners (LaFranchi, 1991:9). In France, Le Pen's National Front has become even more hardline in its policies towards cutting back immigration and curtailing the rights of

immigrants in an effort to win back territory from the political mainstream, which has increasingly articulated similar sentiments (Sole, 1991:17). Significant electoral victories of neo-fascist parties marked the November 1991 national election in Belgium, a country that has not, heretofore, been characterized by the electoral strength of the far right which has prevailed in France (Palmer, 1991:6).

Conclusion

In the Canadian context, a variety of forces have coalesced to make multiculturalism an area of concern and debate at the present time. While the criticisms of the federal policy stem from diverse and often ideologically opposed sources, are varied, and suggest divergent and opposite forms of redress, the overall effect has been to question the viability and desirability of multiculturalism policy. As such, a policy area that has had relatively meagre financial and support structures has been vilified as the root cause of such varied problems as Canadian unity and racism. The speed with which a consensus on the orthodoxy of multiculturalism within the political mainstream has been transformed into a rough-and-tumble free-for-all is breathtaking.

With respect to ethnic minority groups, it is interesting to note the extent to which current criticisms of multiculturalism parallel the minority criticisms of the Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission out of which this policy grew. Our position is that official multiculturalism has indeed been limited in its capacity to respond to historical and contemporary discrimination, as well as class and gender-based inequities experienced by immigrants and racial minorities (Stasiulis, 1991). In this sense, criticisms made by minorities have considerable foundation, and are compelling. Nonetheless, it must be recalled that many of the current criticisms of multiculturalism policy are expressing hostility and fear over the presence of growing numbers of non-British, non-French minorities, and particularly of people of colour. In other words, the attack on the policy is frequently a thinly-veiled attack on the legitimacy of demands for full membership in the Canadian political community by groups which diverge from white British (or in Quebec, French) standards of physical or cultural acceptability.

In the final analysis, regardless of how persuasive and eloquent are some of the current criticisms, the implied alternative models for national integration are regressive insofar as they implicitly seek to replace multiculturalism with either an exclusionary two-nation framework, or an unrealistic framework of liberal individualism. For this reason, and notwithstanding its inefficacy in redressing collective inequities and racism, we argue for the continuation of official multiculturalism. A policy of multiculturalism allows for some ideological space to pursue demands for affirmative action, and for more representative and responsive institutions within areas such as education, health care, and policing. Further, it also allows for a more inclusionary definition or discourse about membership in the Canadian political community that grows in importance as Canada becomes more ethnically and racially diverse as a result of immigration through the 21st century.

Notes

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1 According to the 1986 Canadian Census, more than 60% of immigrants living in Canada in 1986 were born in Europe. However, more than 70% of immigrants who arrived between 1981 and 1986 were born in countries outside of Europe. See Labelle (1990:145).

2 There is considerable debate over the terminology most appropriate to designate non-British, non-

French, non-aboriginal Canadians. For the purposes of this article we refer to this collectivity as ethnic or ethnocultural minorities, ethnic minority groups or minorities.

3 In Newfoundland, however, there is a multicultural education policy. The territories, wherein Native issues are paramount, do not have multicultural policies (Margaret Dunsmore, Policy and Research, Multiculturalism, Personal Communication, December 13, 1991). For a specific discussion of Quebec's policies toward ethnic groups, see Ramirez and Taschereau (1988) and Gay (1985).

4 More recently, in the context of constitutional discussions, proposals to accommodate the claims for self-government by aboriginal peoples have suggested the emergence of a 'three nations' framework. In the unlikely event that a three nations framework is constitutionally entrenched, this would not alter the basic lines of our argument which address the historical and contemporary exclusion of ethnocultural minorities.

5 See Québec. Ministère des communautés culturelles et de l'immigration (1990;1991) and McAndrew (1991).

6 For further comments by these authors see Clifton and Roberts (1982) and the response in Brotz (1982). For an updated version of the argument see Roberts and Clifton (1990).

7 Here Brotz's use of the term 'bourgeois' is not meant to convey the understanding of the term implied by Marx, but rather to indicate the 'democratic bourgeois man' [sic] as a person who is primarily interested in improving his standard of living for himself and his family.

8 On the specific question of immigration, a Gallup Report released July 18, 1991 reveals that 45% of Canadians believe the government should decrease the number of immigrants entering the country, the highest level ever revealed in the eight surveys conducted on this question since 1975. Interestingly, just one year previously in 1990, only 32% of Canadians responded this way. See Bozinoff and MacIntosh (1991:1–2).

9 For an overview of surveys on multiculturalism spanning 1989–1991, see Canada, Multiculturalism and Citizenship (1991b).

10 It is notable that the results of the full survey were not publicly released by the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship until January 1992. See Canada, Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada (1991d).

11 In March 1990, Solicitor General Pierre Cadieux announced a decision in the House of Commons to allow turbans in place of the traditional headgear of the RCMP. This dress code change accommodated the religious precepts of male orthodox Sikhs, who are required to wear turbans and refrain from cutting their hair. The process of reaching this decision, which took two years, unleashed a flood of protest, much of it racist (Stasiulis, 1991:250–2).

12 Spicer (1989:B3) also argues against public funding for multiculturalism, asserting that 'there is one thing we should soon agree on: that multiculturalism as a state policy with grants to pay people for having roots, should only be transitional'.

13 This is reminiscent of the Tories' handling of refugee issues in 1986/87, when the issue of 'real' versus 'economic' or 'bogus' refugees became politicized.

14 In referring to a national 'busing' problem, the Reform Party is comparing the direction taken within the Canadian government's immigration policy to the perceived manipulation of 'ethnic' voters that dominated the mass media coverage of ethnic minority involvement in political parties preceding and during the federal elections of 1984, and particularly 1988. The discourse takes on clear racist overtones. For a discussion see Stasiulis and Abu-Laban (1990; 1991).

15 Interestingly the Reform Party's notion of integration into the 'mainstream' bears resemblance to the recommendations of the Spicer Commission.

16 As judged by representation in the 1991 convention, the Reform party remains very much Western-based and the percentage of older delegates and those of British origin higher than conventions of the other parties. See Simpson (1991:A16). The denial by the Reform Party of an 'ethnic base' resuscitates the ethnocentric notion that Canadians of British origins are 'non-ethnic'.

17 Sheila Copps has suggested that despite its denials, the Reform Party is racist stating: 'But I say, if it looks like a duck, walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it's probably a duck' (Bryden, 1991:3).

18 Manning further argued that refugee determination should be speedy, but that the notwithstanding clause should be used to override the 1985 Supreme Court (Singh) decision that extends liberty and security to non-citizens residing in Canada, stating 'we should err more on that side [of immediately sending someone back who arrives in Canada with false documents] than the side the Singh decision takes you ... We should err on the side of a shorter process ... There must be due process, but there must be something short of allowing a Charter defence to drag out for seven years' (Oziewicz, 1991:A6).

19 The phrase a 'masochistic celebration of Canadian nothingness' comes from a comment made by Gad Horowitz in 1972; Reginald Bibby makes use of this argument in his work *Mosaic Madness*, and it would appear that the Minister's statement is directed at Bibby. For a discussion see Bibby (1990:92).

20 According to a staff member at the national NDP office, the multiculturalism committee met seldom. It was suggested that this was because multiculturalism was of lower priority for the party than other issues, such as the economy and aboriginal rights.

21 Maurizio Bevilacqua, Liberal MP for York North argued that multiculturalism policy and a Multicultural Department should eventually be superceded by a ministry of culture that serves all Canadians, adding 'In my past experiences I have noted that the multiculturalism policy was embracing all Canadians with the exception of the English, French and native components of our nation ... The present direction of the policy has resulted in a form of societal differentiation creating the community concept of English, French, natives and others; others being 'multicultural' (Canada. House of Commons, 1989a:3560). Similarly, Albina Guarniari argued that 'multiculturalism is used to pigeon-hole immigrants or those with foreign sounding names' (Canada. House of Commons 1989c:4221). Joseph Volpe argued that 'ethnocultural communities do not need a special department to represent them' (Canada. House of Commons 1989c:4242). In contrast, Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North) supported the bill (Canada. House of Commons, 1989b:4000).

22 See Nunziata (1989:A23); for the sympathetic response given by a Portuguese-Canadian journalist see Trigueriro (1990:A4).

23 The recent publication of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship *Multiculturalism: What is it Really About?* attempts to respond to the perception that multiculturalism applies only to 'ethnics' or 'new Canadians,' and that it contradicts the special status of aboriginal peoples by asserting that 'multiculturalism policy is for *all* Canadians; the programs *benefit* all Canadians,' and that 'the multiculturalism policy is for all Canadians, including Aboriginal peoples' (Canada. Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, 1991a:17–18). While this publication does not address the perceived negative impact on Quebec's special status, it does also speak to the compatibility of multiculturalism with official languages (19).

24 For a similar discussion see Sugunasiri (1990: A21). See also the discussion of delegates at an Indo-Canadian Conference who also claimed that multiculturalism fosters racism in Paul (1990:1,4).

25 Moreover, the perception of multiculturalism as fostering an 'excess of pluralism' is occurring during an economic downturn, and while the Tories are giving prominence to the need to reduce federal spending on social policies.

26 In speaking of the need for and challenge of 'inclusion,' the Beaudoin-Dobbie Committee makes reference to Quebec, aboriginal peoples, Western and Atlantic Canada, and women, but omits any mention of multiculturalism or ethnocultural minorities (Canada. Senate/House of Commons, 1992:17–18).

27 In the Charlottetown Accord, section (e) of the Canada Clause states that: 'Canadians are committed to racial and ethnic equality in a society that includes citizens from many lands who have contributed, and continue to contribute, to the building of a strong Canada that reflects its cultural and racial diversity' (Charlottetown Accord, 1992:1). This clause reiterates the ethnic and racial components of Section 15 of the Charter, rather than making reference to or reinforcing multiculturalism policy.

28 For a discussion see Stasiulis and Abu-Laban, (1991).

29 Indeed, the *cover* of this edition of *Time* portrays a picture of the American flag with brown and yellow and other colours replacing the traditional red, white and blue and a caption that reads 'What will the U.S. be like when whites are no longer the majority?'

30 For example, the practice of Muslim girls covering their heads in public schools has triggered a huge debate over religious freedom in France (Miller, 1991:49).

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