

# Diversity Is Different

by J. E. G. Dixon (January 2016)

“What do you mean, Diversity is different? Of course it is. That is what the word means.”

“What I mean is that Diversity is a different way of looking at things. At some things.”

“Like what, for example?”

“Well, like politics, for example.”

“Please explain yourself.”

Diversity, to take the word itself to begin with, is, as is obvious, merely a fact of life. It is a fact of Nature. It is claimed that no two objects of the same type are identical, like snowflakes or grains of sand. Like the human face. There is nothing amazing or exceptional about this phenomenon called diversity. It has no value in itself. It is merely a physical quantity that can be measured in length, depth, height and angles. But now we come to the interesting part, which I liken to a feat of legerdemain, like a conjuring trick, or spell of illusion. In the world of Politics, diversity has been transformed, as by the wave of a wand or wishful thinking or, more probably, by constant repetition, into a Principle. A principle? Yes, a principle. A principle of what? Why, a principle defining the very nature of the State, of Canada, like the rule of law, freedom of expression, universal rights.

You will ask, What is this Diversity? How does it manifest itself?

We will begin by casting the light of history on the problem; and we discover that it has its origin in the policy called Bilingualism. Bilingualism is officially described thus in the *Canadian Encyclopedia*:

Bilingualism is the ability to speak or write fluently in 2 languages. In Canada the term has taken on a more particular meaning: the ability to communicate (or the practice of communicating) in both of Canada's official languages, English and French. It has been formalized in language policy in

an attempt by government to respond to a difficult social question: to what extent is it possible to make legal and practical accommodations that will allow the 2 official language communities to preserve their cultural distinctiveness and at the same time pursue common goals? "Institutional bilingualism" refers to the capacity of state institutions to operate in 2 languages and should not be confused with a requirement that everyone be bilingual.

Canadians who lived as adults in the 1960s and subsequently will recall that Bilingualism was followed very quickly by a movement called Multiculturalism. The same Encyclopedia gives us this definition of it:

Multiculturalism, as a term, first came into vogue in Canada in the 1960s to counter "biculturalism," popularized by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. It has to a considerable extent replaced the term "cultural pluralism," although that term is still used in Québec. In many ways a contested concept, multiculturalism is used in at least three senses: to refer to a society that is characterized by ethnic or cultural heterogeneity; to refer to an ideal of equality and mutual respect among a population's ethnic or cultural groups; and to refer to policies implemented by the federal government in 1971 and subsequently by a number of provinces.

The idea is seen as constitutive of Canadian identity at many levels. *The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, edited by Paul Robert Magocsi and released in 1999, asserts that individual ethnicity does not replace Canadian identity, rather it defines Canadians and their position in the world.

Canada and Canadians have been forced, no doubt by psychological forces which become translated into social, economic and political pressures and perceptions, to live in the shadow of the United States and hence to make constant comparisons and contrasts. They even found themselves striking out in opposite directions, if they had the power to do so. They saw the United States with its massive immigration from all quarters as what they themselves called, and strove to create, a melting pot. This simple term summed up neatly the social and demographic ideal of all newcomers immersing themselves as rapidly as possible into the United States and of becoming, and of being seen to become, American.

The Canadian experience has been not only different, but consciously different. Canadian politicians and their numerous commentators and interpreters went out of their way to come up with a term, an image, that graphically represented the Canada envisaged. Of the several put forward, the one that struck the most chords was the "Canadian mosaic." A mosaic is a pattern made up of very different designs, such as we see, for example, in a quilt or a tile floor. The different designs represent the separate and distinct races, creeds, cultures and historical experiences that constitute the peoples of Canada, whether aboriginal, native born, or immigrant.

Has there been integration, as in the United States? Yes, to an extent. But this extent shuddered to a halt in 1982. Up to that time, the immigrant peoples did in fact integrate into Canadian society as smoothly as possible, as we see with the Ukrainians, the Germans, the peoples of North-West Europe, the British Isles, among others.

What happened in 1982? The Constitution of Canada was amended so as to incorporate what is known as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Certain sections of this Charter have been controversial from the beginning. One of the most contentious articles has been section 15, which reads thus:

#### Equality Rights

Marginal note: Equality before and under law and equal protection and benefit of law

15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Marginal note: Affirmative action programs

(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

I urge the reader who is unfamiliar with the Constitution or, most notably, the active principle incorporated in this sub-section (2) to read it again very carefully, and to ask himself whether or not it incorporates the gravest source of injustice ever perpetrated against innocent Canadians? It may not have been the intent, but it is certainly the consequence of the idea lying behind it.

It is all very well to want to help people, whether as individuals or groups, in their attempt to better themselves and to get on in life; but to do so at the expense of people who have done so by their own efforts is a moral outrage that must be unique in the annals of Civilization.

One must now ask, How is this injustice put into effect in, say, the case of an individual?

The federal Government, and every provincial Government, has established what is called a Human Rights Tribunal. These tribunals then advertise their establishment, and invite individuals and groups to lay a formal complaint with them against another individual or group who, in their judgement, has done something, whether intentionally or not, which they deem to harm them by being disadvantaged in some manner.

I hear a suppressed gasp. Is that true what I hear? The various governments of this country of Canada are wilfully creating the conditions of setting citizens against each other and then issuing a legally binding judgement in favour of, that means also against, one or the other? Can you give me an example? Here is the latest decision to be issued by the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, dated December 2<sup>nd</sup> , 2015:

TORONTO, Dec. 2, 2015 /CNW/ – A settlement has been reached with the Ottawa Police in a case that alleged a female police officer was denied training, job placement and promotion opportunities because of her family status, sex and maternity leaves. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) intervened at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario to address systemic barriers to promotion and advancement that women can face.

As a result of the settlement, the Ottawa Police will conduct a systemic review of its workforce demographics, policies and procedures. The aim is to ensure that female police officers, particularly those who take

maternity leaves and have family care-giving responsibilities, have equal opportunity to be represented at all levels and ranks.

One's first reaction to this decision must necessarily be one of praise for a ruling that did not set back an officer's career by virtue of the three circumstances given. On the other hand—and there is another hand—it appears also from the ruling that the officer in question, and hence any other officer in the same situation, will suffer no disadvantage or setback to her career because of her long absence. It appears that her two-year absence will continue to count as service in her Force, and hence be taken into account for promotion and other similar purposes. It is here that we are forced to point out the grave injustice done to other officers, who are accumulating experience during that time, and who will find themselves obliged to 'carry' their fellow-officer on their daily tasks when she returns to duty, and perhaps even find her a handicap requiring support until such time as she 'catches up' to their level of experience. I am reminded of an incident in the early years of this policy, when a young woman was hired as a garbage collector in a northern town of British Columbia because she was a woman. On her first day she could not lift a garbage can. She could not even lift one side of it. While her experienced male co-workers did the work, the young woman had to content herself with holding the lids. This kind of perverse folly persists to this day throughout Canada in the name of feminism, racism, sexism, ageism and various forms of physical and mental handicaps.

I am not qualified to comment on the situation in the United States; the best I can do is to quote the current article to be found at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/affirmative\\_action\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/affirmative_action_in_the_United_States)

Affirmative action in the United States tends to focus on issues such as education and employment, specifically granting special consideration to racial minorities, Native Americans, and women who have been historically excluded groups in America. Reports have shown that minorities and women have faced discrimination in schools and businesses for many years and this discrimination produced unfair advantages for whites and males in education and employment. The impetus toward affirmative action is redressing the disadvantages associated with past and present discrimination. Further impetus is a desire to ensure public institutions, such as universities, hospitals, and police forces, are more representative of the populations they serve.

Affirmative action is a subject of controversy. Some policies adopted as affirmative action, such as racial quotas or gender quotas for collegiate admission, have been criticized as a form of reverse discrimination, and such implementation of affirmative action has been ruled unconstitutional by the majority opinion of *Gratz v. Bollinger*. Affirmative action as a practice was upheld by the Supreme Court's decision in *Grutter v. Bollinger* in 2003. Affirmative action policies were developed in order to correct decades of discrimination stemming from the Reconstruction Era by granting disadvantaged minorities opportunities. Many believe that the diversity of current American society suggests that affirmative action policies succeeded and are no longer required. Opponents of affirmative action argue that these policies are outdated and lead to reverse discrimination which entails favoring one group over another based upon racial preference rather than achievement.

As a former university teacher I am willing to display my bias if I state that it is preferable in both the long run and the short to raise the standards of the minorities than to 'dumb down' in an effort to accommodate the disadvantaged. I will refer to the history of the British socialist movement toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when its pioneers realized that to effect the gains they envisaged they would of necessity have to acquire the same level of education—which included public speaking and debate— as the ruling classes of the Conservative and Liberal Parties of the time. And they did so.

Diversity has become such a sacred mantra within the ranks of the Canadian liberal and left that the recently elected Liberal prime minister of Canada, in a speech in Britain to a distinguished company of captains of industry and banking, members of the House of Lords and others familiar with the history of different peoples living in harmony together for several hundred years, had the effrontery to wrap all his government themes under the single banner of diversity: "Economic disaster manifests itself in many ways (he said). Fear and mistrust of others who are different is one of the most common and dangerous expressions." Whatever that is supposed to mean.

It means, among other things, that in a society where diversity is championed and fostered as the highest political and social goal, groups of like-minded people, especially of immigrants, will be encouraged and helped to promote their separateness, even at the expense of other groups and most notably at the expense of the majority of citizens. This separateness is fostered, for example, by the complaint of a single woman in St. John's, Newfoundland, who demanded that a Cross painted on the exterior of St. Matthew's School be removed because it offended her. How? By encouraging other faiths to occupy the ground abandoned by one. Will the name of St. Matthew be next? Worse was the story of the Syrian refugees narrated on CBC television late night news on December 8, 2015, showing the preparations for their reception at Montreal airport. Among them was the provision of several rooms to allow the refugee men (men only) to pray, courtesy of the federal government—with the intent of “making them feel at home.” *Feel at home?* That is the last thing we want for them. The very next day we read this news from the same city: “Mayor Denis Coderre defended Tuesday the hiring of an \$1,800-a-day consultant to co-ordinate the integration of Syrian refugees to Montreal, saying the large numbers of applicants expected, the complexity of the integration in French Quebec ... justified the expense.” (My emphasis.)

In the closing weeks of the recent federal election the case of a Muslim immigrant versus the Government of Canada stirred up passions—and a range of diverse opinions—among the people of Canada. In a nutshell, she refused to remove her *niqab* and reveal her face during the citizenship ceremony. Zunera Ishaq has been a permanent resident of Canada since 2008. As the then Prime Minister said, “it is offensive that someone would hide their identity at the very moment where they are committing to join the Canadian family. We are opposed to anything that hides someone's face when reciting the Oath of Citizenship. We believe the oath should be taken freely, openly and proudly for everyone to hear.” She has put her citizenship ceremony on hold since last year, in order to ask the Federal Court to judge the legality of the 2012 Conservative policy requiring her to remove her *niqab* for that purpose. The Federal Court found that the policy was illegal and ordered that it be struck down. The applicant has made a long statement about her reasons and motives. They can, I believe, be summed up in the following statement:

“My desire to live on my own terms is also why I have chosen to challenge the government's decision to deny me citizenship unless I take off my *niqab* at my

oath ceremony.” She was prevailed upon to remove her *niqab* in private and insisted it be done in the sole company of a woman. The authority present, whoever he or she was, agreed. So once again the immigrant cocked a snook at the Government of Canada and the Canadian people for a purely private reason having nothing to do with principles. The newly elected Government has decided not to appeal the case to a higher court..

The success of this young woman, in putting her private whims ahead of the law of the land, demonstrates that she has no intention of becoming a Canadian citizen, except in name only. She has no intention of integrating into Canadian society. This case is yet one further illustration of the consequences of Diversity. Diversity is not strength. Diversity is division, dissent, schism, and conflict.

Moreover, is it necessary to remind the Authorities, especially the political ones, that the religious organizations in this country are private societies and associations, and that all their assemblies held for worship and prayer are equally private? All that freedom of religion means is their right to worship and pray in private according to the dictates and customs of their faith. Obversely, the faithful, no matter what their faith, have no business trying to influence, let alone dictate, secular laws and customs established by the State, which apply equally to all.

For almost four hundred years, settlers, immigrants and refugees entering Canada did their utmost to assimilate and to integrate and to become Canadians, and to embrace Canadian laws and customs as quickly as they could. Today the Government is encouraging them to retain their own customs and dress, and to remain as they are. The combination of Diversity and Human Rights, which allows and encourages them to do so, is nothing other than a monstrous betrayal of the History and Founding Principles of this country.

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