

Summary of Proceedings

Forum on

Multiculturalism in the City of Champions: Realities and Future Directions

Edmonton, Alberta

Friday, September 13, 2002

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	3
Executive Summary	4
Welcome Address	5
Andrew Hladyshevsky – Canadian Race Relations Foundation	
Greetings	5
His Worship, Mayor Bill Smith	
Panel Discussion	6
Lewis Cardinal – Native Student Services	
Charlene Hay – Centre for Race and Culture (formerly Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations)	
Robinson Koilpillai – Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation	
Karen Liebovici – Deputy Mayor, City of Edmonton	
Daniela Sanhueza – Youth Activist	
Towards an Equitable Society: The Calgary Experience	11
Alderman Joe Ceci – Chair of Calgary Cultural and Racial Diversity Strategy	
Meeting the Challenges – Role of Community, Institutions, Media and Government	12
I. Community	
Group Discussions	
Group Recommendations and Future Directions	
II. Institutions	
Group Discussions	
Group Recommendations and Future Directions	
III. Media	
Group Discussions	
Group Recommendations and Future Directions	
IV. Government	
Group Discussions	
Group Recommendations and Future Directions	
Concluding Remarks	16

Sponsoring Organization:

Centre for Race and Culture (CRC)
formerly Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations (NAARR)

The Centre for Race and Culture is a network of 70 agencies, community groups, schools and individuals from Edmonton and northern Alberta. CRC's activities include conducting research, hosting anti-racism workshops, raising awareness about racism and organizing public events. CRC appreciates the support of the Department of Canadian Heritage; the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship, and Multiculturalism Education Fund; and the City of Edmonton.

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Executive Summary

Multiculturalism in the City of Champions: Realities and the Future Directions was organized by the Centre for Race and Culture to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Policy*. The forum was designed to mark the anniversary with a focus on the current reality and future directions of multiculturalism in the City of Edmonton. A panel of speakers was assembled to speak about multiculturalism from the perspective of Aboriginal Canadians, race relations, multicultural education, the City of Edmonton and youth. The forum also addressed the gains made in regards to multiculturalism in other Canadian cities. A Calgary alderman presented a summary of a recent diversity initiative implemented in his city called the *Calgary Cultural and Racial Diversity Task Force*. Concurrently, community leaders from various ethnic and racial groups, including Aboriginal and mainstream representatives, were invited to engage in constructive dialogue and discussion to assess the challenges facing multiculturalism in Edmonton. Attendees were invited to attend one of four discussion groups – community, institutions, media, and government – to discuss each player's role in meeting the challenges of multiculturalism in Edmonton. They were then asked to devise recommendations on how best to meet these challenges.

As the forum progressed, it became clear that an underlying message linked all four of the discussion groups. Whether addressing the challenges to communities, institutions, media or government, all groups emphasized the strength of a culturally diverse society. Further, while recognizing the benefits of a multicultural society in terms of well-being and security, each group also pointed to the existence of barriers that impeded multicultural development. Barriers such as social exclusion, inequality, misinformation, unequal representation, discrimination and racism resonated throughout the forum discussion groups. In response, two broad recommendations were common to all four groups. Firstly, educational initiatives across all sectors and at all levels were identified as being an important strategy for addressing and possibly eliminating barriers to Edmonton's multicultural agenda. Secondly, in response to the strides the City of Calgary has made through the *Calgary Cultural and Racial Diversity Task Force*, a sustained emphasis was placed on developing a similar vision for Edmonton. All groups in one way or another, pointed towards the need for an inter-sectoral strategic initiative designed to address issues of exclusion, inequality and discrimination and bring change in the area of cultural and racial diversity.

Welcome Address

Andrew Hladyshevsky of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation initiated the day's proceedings by welcoming attendees in the audience and thanking the Centre for Race and Culture for organizing the event. Hladyshevsky moved on to remind the audience that the forum marked the 30th anniversary of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Policy*. He challenged the audience to explore multiculturalism in Canada by focusing on the city of Edmonton, its reality and future directions. In closing, he questioned where we are as a city in regards to multiculturalism, how far we have come and where we are going.

Greetings

His Worship, **Mayor Bill Smith**, began his greeting by emphasizing the leadership role Canada has played through our commitment to multiculturalism. Smith reiterated Canada's 1971 commitment to multiculturalism and further emphasized the crucial role Edmonton residents have played in the drafting of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Policy*. He reminded the audience that in the process of putting the Policy into practice, we have promoted greater understanding, tolerance and justice. Smith, however, warned that despite our strides to eliminate discrimination and racism through the promotion of diversity, we have to do more. He described multiculturalism as an on-going process; one that continually strives to promote inclusiveness and education in regards to cultural differences. Smith ended by accentuating that 'we can make a difference at the local level.'

Andrew Hladyshevsky began the panel discussion by briefly thanking and then introducing each panelist. Each panelist was then given approximately 15 minutes to discuss, from his or her perspective, the state of multiculturalism in Edmonton. A synopsis of each panelist's presentation follows.

Lewis Cardinal – Native Student Services, University of Alberta

Lewis Cardinal began his talk by summarizing the realities and future directions of Multiculturalism in Edmonton from an Aboriginal perspective. Cardinal described the Indigenous reality as lying somewhere between hope and despair. He proceeded to put the City of Edmonton and its Aboriginal population in context with projected demographic trends. Using recent projections from Stats Canada, he characterized the future reality of the Aboriginal population in Edmonton as one of growth and change. He pointed out that Edmonton alone, in terms of Aboriginal population, stands to become the most densely populated city in Canada by 2016 (in parallel, Alberta will have the largest Aboriginal population of all provinces). Cardinal characterized this reality as one exemplified by many more Aboriginal people coming to Edmonton looking for opportunity and security.

A second reality proposed by Cardinal revolved around the social experience of the Aboriginal population in terms of education, employment and health. In the context of the above demographic trends, he spoke of a young, less skilled, and less educated Aboriginal population when compared to other residents in Edmonton. He alluded to a drop out rate of 75 – 80 percent for Aboriginal high school students. He stated further that 56 percent of this young population (under the age of 24) currently makes up 70 percent of all youth in secured institutions. This reality also included a population in poor health. The life expectancy of Aboriginals still trails the national average and suicide is twice as likely to happen to Aboriginal youth than other Canadian youth.

Cardinal moved on to point out the illusion when these realities are understood as future projections and scenarios. He argued that regional population statistics may be as much as 70 percent off. The implication this brings, he argued, is that these realities *are already here*. He outlined the global perception of Canada as a place of opportunity, generosity, and friendliness. He qualified those perceptions by explaining that multicultural opportunity is not as real for Aboriginals as it may be for others. While inclusiveness may be an experience for some, Cardinal contended that in many ways, Aboriginals feel left out. Canada has not treated its Indigenous population well and the global awareness of this treatment is growing.

Cardinal went on to counter the despairing reality of Aboriginal experiences in Canada with a reality of hope. He stated that upon the horizon lies evidence pointing towards a great social recognition. Key to this recognition is the social acknowledgement that old solutions are not working along with a renewed emphasis upon 'discussion.' He related 3 examples of positive steps towards addressing the asymmetric experiences of Aboriginals in Edmonton. First, he acknowledged the Edmonton Urban Affairs Committee that acts as a community consultant to the

Mayor and council on behalf of the Edmonton Aboriginal community. He then acknowledged the Edmonton Public Schools' Amiskwacy Academy and the Aboriginal Education Center from the Edmonton Catholic School System as positive steps towards making education accessible, relevant and successful for Aboriginal youth. Although these alone are not enough, he felt they were going in the right direction.

Cardinal's posed a final two questions to the audience; have we as public servants done enough and what else needs to be done? In response, he offered a number of future directions including: 1) a city-wide Aboriginal policy that incorporates Aboriginal people and leadership into a process of policy and program development; 2) public awareness programs and strategies to inform and educate Edmonton residents to the value that Aboriginal people have given and can give to the prosperity of the city; and 3) the invitation and inclusion of Aboriginal business leaders at Edmonton business leadership tables. He summarized by saying, "if multiculturalism is to hold fast to the notion of inclusion, then we must reflect that back to the Aboriginal community and create the space and knowledge that we are included in the circle." He ended by alluding to the origin of our country's name, *Kanata*; meaning a clean and sacred place. Embodied within this name is the direction towards a hopeful and prosperous future.

Charlene Hay – Centre for Race and Culture (CRC) (formerly Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations)

Charlene Hay began by relaying the reality and future directions of multiculturalism from the perspective of race relations. She began by raising the question: Do Aboriginal people and people of color receive equal respect, and do they have equal opportunity in Edmonton society? Hay proceeded to answer her question by recounting the stories told by Edmonton citizens during two separate research projects. She began with a research project completed in the spring of 2001 involving 350 young people between the ages of 13 and 28. Out of this consultation emerged the overwhelming consensus that racism continues to be a major problem in Edmonton. She conveyed the experiences of several participants through the retelling of a handful of their stories. The overriding message was that despite our multicultural policies, racism is experienced often and anywhere, including within the media, in families, schools, sports and institutions such as the government. The experiences of racism she recounted were often subtle and incurred feelings of sadness, inferiority, depression, fear and anger amongst victims. As she explained, many respondents pointed towards fear and ignorance as the primary cause of racism. These fueled stereotypes that functioned as a means to gain power over others who were different.

Hay then presented suggestions for solutions offered by participants. As she explained, many felt that with support they themselves could help educate others. Some were critical of media and the narrow perspectives and misrepresentation that limit the voices of victims. Some wanted equity within schools, especially within the educational curriculum. Finally, as she explained, many felt that business owners and employment agencies must extend fairness and equality to all employees and clients.

Hay followed by sharing the results of a second community consultation that occurred shortly after September 11 of 2001. She pointed to evidence that suggested a change in the quality as opposed to the quantity of racism that had occurred. After imparting two stories personifying the subtleties of racism in

Edmonton, she moved on to emphasize how much it impacts the lives of Edmonton residents. She contended the hardest racism to deal with is often discrimination imbedded in institutions, school curriculums, employment practices, and income opportunities. She went on to explain that post-9/11, a shift occurred from hidden and subtle to overt, blatant and ugly forms of racism. This was manifest in the form of verbal and physical harassment and religious discrimination. After sharing a handful of examples of the overt and blatant racism, she moved on to address the unbalanced portrayal of Muslims across all forms of media.

Finally, Hay concluded that the intensity of the blatant racism and discrimination may have subsided but it has deposited a pronounced degree of fear amongst Arabic and Muslim people. Despite the negative tone of her talk, she added a positive note regarding the steps that have been taken to reach out to marginalized groups in the community. Despite these positive steps, she added, we must look up the staircase and make a concerted effort to climb to the top.

Robinson Koilpillai – Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation

Robinson Koilpillai began by relaying a personal story centering on his families choice to immigrate to Canada. To choose Canada from the myriad opportunities elsewhere re-affirmed the character of Canada and the city of Edmonton as a welcoming and open society. Koilpillai followed by outlining how his talk would address multiculturalism in Edmonton in the context of 3 ground level realities: (i) the identity of people of color in Canada, (ii) images of people of color in Canada, and (iii) the city imperatives to make Edmonton multicultural.

Koilpillai addressed the first reality by imparting a personal story centering upon the stereotypes about Canadian immigrants. His point turned on the irony of xenophobia in Canada; historically speaking, a country of immigrants. He emphasized that every Canadian shares this identity and it is this identity that can unify a country as diverse as Canada. He stressed the importance of identity in terms of the comfort and strength of the city. He pointed out that the realization of identities brings a great resource to the city of Edmonton.

Koilpillai then moved on to address the many images of people of colour in Canada. He emphasized the role of media in molding and shaping public perception and opinion. He used examples to illustrate the misinformation a simple newspaper headline can convey to an audience already challenged by underlying forces of discrimination and racism. He conceded that the overt racism of the past may be on the decline but stressed that racism has not disappeared. The media representation of events often turns into cases of fear-mongering and stereotypes.

Koilpillai followed by exploring the final reality by posing a question; what are the imperatives we need to achieve a better level of comfort? He answered by stating that we need a new narrative to change and challenge the stereotypes and establish constructive imperatives. He stressed that this new narrative must be reflective of the street level population and must echo throughout educational curriculums.

Koilpillai finished by accentuating the need for a new spirit of exuberance enacted at the street level. He argued that this new spirit could transform the outdated hierarchies that underlie many of our debilitating stereotypes. This, he contended,

could lead to a spontaneous new accord for healthy social cohesion, true peace and security.

Karen Liebovici – Deputy Mayor, City of Edmonton

Karen Liebovici began by thanking the audience members for attending and congratulating CRC for commemorating the 30th anniversary of Canada's Multiculturalism Policy. Liebovici stated her role was to provide information about the City of Edmonton's current realities and future directions in regards to multiculturalism. She reminded the audience that Edmonton is a member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), which has undertaken several initiatives to address multiculturalism across Canada. She moved on to provide a demographic overview of Edmonton. She highlighted the period of growth and change Edmonton appears to be entering in regards to immigrant population and the economy. With this growth, she stated, comes both challenges and opportunities. She stressed the current reality involving a significant number of immigrants and individuals in visible minorities who are disadvantaged. To illustrate, she relayed statistics showing that a majority of immigrants living in Edmonton have no knowledge of English or French and of the 26% of Edmonton residents falling into low income categories, 40% were recent immigrants.

Liebovici followed by summarizing the initiatives that the FCM has implemented to address the importance of social inclusion within a multicultural society. These initiatives included the Steering Committee on Race Relations whose work plan includes the promotion of racial harmony as a means to enhance the social cohesion and economic capacity of communities, the promotion of municipal policies and programs that advance acceptance of cultural diversity, and finally, to aid the understanding of the relationship between immigration and municipal governments in terms of responding to newcomer's needs. She pointed to preliminary results that have emerged out of FCM research initiatives including issues attached to affordable housing, health care, education and settlement services.

Liebovici went on to address the importance of social inclusion and social cohesion in building a prosperous future. She offered examples relating to the close coordination of government and non-governmental organizations in the delivery of settlement services, language training and cultural resources. She defined inclusion as involving the quest for self-affirming relationships and active appreciation for differences. She stressed the importance of inclusion when promoting equality and well-being. She reiterated the City of Edmonton's commitment to inclusion as one way to ensure the sustainable future of a diverse community living together in harmony and dignity. Additionally, she stressed the important role civic governments play in promoting social cohesion and inclusion.

Liebovici followed by sharing the City of Edmonton's vision regarding multiculturalism. She described a vision of social well-being and high quality of life. She described the city as a place where individuals, families, and communities can work together to build a caring, safe and clean community: a community that encourages respect, understanding and collaboration.

Liebovici moved on to describe precisely what the community is doing to make this vision a reality. She pointed to the Diversity Leadership Team which will work to make city programs and facilities accessible to the disadvantaged with special needs

and Aboriginal and ethnic communities. She also pointed to funding given by the city for multicultural events and organizations. Additionally, she described the community partnership model currently being undertaken by the Edmonton Police Service in an effort to curb hate crimes.

Finally, Liebovici concluded by sharing the City of Edmonton's vision for the future. It included: (i) individuals, families and communities in every part of the city are healthy, responsible and successful; (ii) citizens and groups have the tools and skills to grow and develop so they may care for themselves and others; (iii) a shared responsibility to ensure every child receives the care and experience necessary for life long well-being; and (iv) every person has access to the resources and opportunities required to live in dignity and participate in building Edmonton.

Daniela Sanhueza – Youth Activist

After thanking the other panelists and audience, Daniela Sanhueza began sharing the perspective of Canadian youth in regards to multiculturalism. To begin, she posed a question to the audience: Do Edmonton youth believe in the multiculturalism ideal of respect and harmony? Sanhueza then went on to share a story epitomizing the manner in which racism obliterates hope of equity, harmony and security. She followed by asserting that not enough youth are taking multiculturalism seriously. She said that some youth believe multiculturalism is a solution to prevent inequity but also described how other youth remain pessimistic about equality of opportunities.

Sanhueza followed by proposing a second question: Do youth have a clear understanding of multiculturalism and does it matter? She stated that the way people understand multiculturalism is a strong determinant of how much they value the ideal. She went on to raise 2 issues: (i) youth struggles involving identity, and (ii) youth struggles involving civic participation. She described how identity for youth is a contested terrain. In high school environments, individuality is not always encouraged and most often, peer pressure demands conformity, sometimes around hurtful stereotypes and hierarchies. Similarly, youth feel left out of the political processes that have the power to enact change. She explained that by excluding youth from the multicultural scene, as they grow older they remain unaware of the challenges and issues facing a diverse society like Canada.

Sanhueza concluded by emphasizing the importance of involving youth in initiatives designed to promote multiculturalism. She stressed the relationship between involvement and understanding, primarily in terms of how involvement can further understanding and open up opportunities for meaningful contributions by Canadian youth. In closing, she described the need for creative measures that could draw youth into atmospheres that foster understanding and counter the ignorance and stereotypes that challenge the unity of communities across the country.

Towards an Equitable Society: The Calgary Experience

City of Calgary **Alderman Joe Ceci** began by thanking the organizers of the event for inviting him and for commemorating the 30-year anniversary of the federal Multicultural Policy. Ceci acknowledged this policy and others such as the Heritage Language Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms helped Canada to be perceived positively by the rest of the world. Ceci went on to describe the *Diversity Calgary Task Force* initiative, how it was started, its perceived benefits, and what it consisted of. He first defined *Diversity Calgary* as an initiative that brings together individuals from the public, private, not-for-profit and community sectors to facilitate social change in the area of cultural and racial diversity. He described its vision as working towards a city where all people are valued and respected; a city built on respect and equity for all.

Ceci followed by describing how *Diversity Calgary* began. He outlined how, in 1999, the Committee on Race Relations & Cross-Cultural Understanding approached one of Calgary's Council members and requested that the City of Calgary mobilize the community to address the issues and barriers facing visible minorities. The committee provided evidence as to the varied experiences of racism and discrimination that had become a part of the everyday life of many Calgary residents. Calgary recognized the problem and assembled an inter-sectoral *Task Force* to develop a strategy to address these experiences and barriers to change. The *Task Force* consisted of 21 individuals representing four sectors.

Ceci moved on to describe the benefits the *Task Force* articulated when assessing the benefits of valuing diversity. These included among many - political, social, economic, moral/ethical, and legal benefits. Ceci described how the *Task Force* would focus solely upon cultural and racial diversity as to avoid duplicating what other civic initiatives had already undertaken. The *Task Force* was to adopt a strategy that encompassed all issues affecting visible minorities by mobilizing all sectors.

Ceci then outlined the three distinct phases of the *Task Force*. These included a research phase comprised of a literature review of research conducted in Calgary on issues surrounding visible minorities. This review revealed several issues including, systemic discrimination, under-representation/over-representation of racial minorities in staffing, lack of recognition of foreign credentials, lack of information and access to equitable services, lack of accountability, and resistance to change. The second phase consisted of a community consultation process whose goal was to find solutions to issues and barriers. Some of the solutions identified were eliminating procedures and practices that disadvantage minorities and designing guidelines and procedures to help minorities have their foreign credentials fairly and accurately assessed. The third face of the *Task Force* was the creation of an implementation structure. To implement the strategies suggested during consultation the *Task force* commissioned the *Diversity Calgary Leadership Council* (DCLC). Ceci explained that the DCLC is composed of leaders and influential individuals from across the original four sectors. He went on to explain how twelve multi-sectoral

teams were assembled and tasked with one of the strategies articulated during the consultation phase.

Ceci concluded by stressing the importance of involving as many citizens and different stakeholders as possible in initiatives to promote cultural and racial diversity. He cautioned against isolationistic practices that prevent partnerships between various communities. A forum where all sectors can meet and work towards a common goal was suggested. Diversity is everyone's business and every sector will benefit when cultural diversity is embraced.

Meeting the Challenges – Role of Community, Institutions, Media and Government

I. Community

Group Discussions

The group discussion was facilitated by Malinda Smith and revolved around questions concerning the 'community' and its relationship to multiculturalism. The primary question for discussion centered on the challenges facing communities in a multicultural society. Out of the discussion emerged several inter-related themes that served to problematize straightforward conceptions of community and added to a nuanced discussion of how communities may help or hinder multiculturalism.

- The first of these themes involved the differentiation between communities that are more or less 'found' (ie. neighborhoods, families, nations) and those that are formed out of choice through social interaction and connections. Group members asked, who was the community and spoke to the contemporary reality of communities as being not only one's neighbors, but also the individuals a person 'connects' with.
- A second theme emerging out of the discussion was the central importance of acknowledging the dual realities of community; that being communities are both changing and characterized by inequality.
- A third, closely linked theme was the need to give perspective to this change and inequality by setting it in context with the linkages between global and local scales. Some group members stressed that the world has become smaller and as community advocates

we must recognize the relationships between local contexts and processes on larger scales.

- A final theme emerging from the discussion concerned the barriers to multiculturalism that communities can create. These included various processes of social exclusion and associated psycho-social effects at the personal level.

Recommendations and Future Directions

Part 2 of the group discussion involved synthesizing the previous discussion into a series of group recommendations that would address the challenges facing communities in a multicultural society. Group members ended by emphasizing the fact that we do not need permission to fight for social justice. The group recommendations included:

- Developing a new and meaningful way to recognize the accomplishments of citizenry working to promote multiculturalism;
- Developing educational curriculums, at all levels, that are inclusive and reflect the diversity of experiences at the street level;
- Adding to and expanding the current level of educational programs addressing Multiculturalism in Canada;
- Extending the sphere of concern to the home when designing multicultural intervention programs;
- Implementing mandatory policies designed to ensure the cross-cultural training and education of individuals across all sectors;
- Supplementary to mandatory policies, creating incentives to encourage voluntary multicultural initiatives;
- Developing and implementing joint cross-cultural initiatives to advocate and promote multiculturalism at the institutional, civic and community level;
- Forging partnerships and networks between community organizations working to promote inclusion and community cohesion; and
- Developing programs designed to encourage civic and public involvement in community initiatives to promote multiculturalism.

II. Institutions

Group Discussions

The group discussion was facilitated by Andrew Hladyskesky and centered on the role of institutions in enhancing multiculturalism in Canadian society. The discussion focused on (i) what has been achieved with respect to promoting an awareness of diversity and (ii) what needed

to be done in the future. The discussion began by identifying institutions and making observations regarding their role in meeting the challenges of multiculturalism. These institutions included schools, hospitals, libraries, formal religious structures, police, non-governmental organizations, professional organizations, political organizations, ethno-cultural groups, and the family. It was recognized that it was unproblematic to pursue and promote multiculturalism in some institutions, but in others, initiatives and interventions were met with systemic resistance. Discussion revolved around underlying barriers to achieving unity through diversity and addressed the need for institutions to make a concerted effort in the areas of education, representation and inclusiveness.

Recommendations and Future Directions

Part 2 of the group discussion involved synthesizing the previous discussion into a series of group recommendations that would address the challenges facing institutions in a multicultural society. The group recommendations included:

- In regards to schools, (i) developing curriculums that reflect the diverse cultural and historical experiences of people, (ii) sensitizing teachers to issues relating to cultural diversity, (iii) developing strategies to encourage and facilitate active participation and involvement of parents, (iv) promoting positive role modeling by hiring teachers of diverse backgrounds, (v) striving for diversity in terms of representation within management, (vi) renewing the multicultural curriculum at the post-secondary level;
- Educating and incorporating institutions in the immigration process;
- Hiring a 'Diversity Coordinator' and equipping him or her with the necessary support and resources to enact internal institutional change;
- Developing and implementing a diversity task force in Edmonton to (i) identify factors which become obstacles to the multicultural agenda, (ii) identify the political, economic, moral and social benefits of diversity, and (iii) engage local actors at the provincial, federal, civic and community level in the multicultural agenda in Edmonton.

III. Media

Group Discussion

The group discussion was facilitated by Lan Chan Marples and revolved around two related questions: (i) What has media done to enhance multiculturalism in Edmonton, and (ii) What does media need to do to enhance multiculturalism in Edmonton? Initially, the discussion focused on the multiple ways the media has impeded the development of multiculturalism. The group discussed and gave examples of how

unbalanced media coverage can become a negative, countervailing force working against multicultural development. Group members raised concerns regarding the Edmonton media's preoccupation with violence and controversy. Additionally, group members expressed concern over the conglomeration of media outlets and the tendency for these conglomerations to become subservient to the political interests of their owners. The discussion recognized that the media and its representations of diversity have improved but future reporting and coverage must not go unchallenged. The youth emerged as an important segment of society whose perspectives may have significant influence the way media operates in the future. Group members reiterated the importance of education in preparing youth for careers in the media industry.

Recommendations and Future Directions

Part 2 of the group discussion involved synthesizing the previous discussion into a series of group recommendations that would address the challenges facing the media in a multicultural society. The group posed the following question: What does the media need to do to enhance multiculturalism in Edmonton in the future? Group members contended that what it all comes down to is "POWER" – if we have the money we have the power to shape what is being published or aired. The group recommendations included:

- The immediate cessation of stereotyping and negative portrayals of any and all ethnic groups;
- Encouraging the positive reporting of diversity stories in Edmonton;
- Clearly defining, and holding media accountable to, understandings of objectivity and civic accountability as it relates to media operations;
- Infusing informed reporting with cultural sensitivity;
- Developing and implementing a citizen representative system to monitor accountability of the media and to ensure views are accurate and balanced;
- Developing and implementing a balanced mixture of programming which reflects the diversity of Edmonton and Canada;
- Encouraging a free press by disaggregating media monopolies;
- Encouraging the consumption of alternative media sources;
- Channeling disenchantment with media coverage to publisher as opposed to editors.

IV. Government

Group Discussion

The group discussion was facilitated by Nicholas Ameyaw and focused on what 'multiculturalism' and 'diversity' mean to government. To begin, the group reviewed existing multicultural policies at the federal, provincial, and municipal level. The group then discussed what factors were important when trying to understand multiculturalism in Edmonton. Discussion moved from the city structure of governance and policy-

making to social and community services. The group was unaware of any diversity initiatives currently in effect within the municipal government. The importance of identifying challenges to multicultural initiatives, incorporating effective pathways for their evaluation and assessment was also stressed. Additionally, members addressed the importance of establishing inter-sectoral linkages and encouraging mandatory cross-cultural training of government employees.

Recommendations and Future Directions

Part 2 of the group discussion involved synthesizing the previous discussion into a series of group recommendations that would address the challenges facing government in a multicultural society. The group recommendations included:

- Building effective evaluation of current multicultural policies through community and stakeholder consultation, incorporating third party evaluation, and establishing clear and concise quantitative and qualitative measurement tools;
- Developing inclusive diversity teams that forge strategic partnerships between government, businesses and communities throughout all levels and sectors;
- Developing inclusive diversity teams that are representative of community demographics;
- Identifying challenges of implementing diversity and multicultural initiatives and finding solutions to those challenges;
- Linking diversity and multicultural initiatives to existing and future business plans;
- Prioritizing and promoting mandatory diversity and multicultural training for employees of government (Federal, Provincial, Municipal) and of citizens sitting on boards and councils;
- Ensuring the fair representation of ethno-cultural members on public committees;
- Adopting a systemic approach to identify the underlying factors that contribute to the success or hindrance of multicultural policy;
- Ensuring that multicultural programs are aligned towards community needs and funding is sustainable.

Concluding Remark

The forum concluded with a brief closing in which the Chairperson of CRC's Board of Directors, Celia Smyth thanked attendees for their participation and for moving Canadian society towards a more harmonious state with their efforts. Smyth thanked the master of ceremonies, Andrew Hladyshevsky, the panel speakers, discussion

group leaders, Charlene Hay and the CRC staff who aided in organizing the forum. Smyth lastly thanked Canadian Heritage for funding the event.