

**MULTICULTURALISM LEGISLATION
FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

AUGUST 1996 REPORT

Submitted to the Honourable Carol Teichrob, Minister, Saskatchewan Municipal
Government, August 1996.

**MULTICULTURALISM LEGISLATION
FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
1995 - 1996**

Sonia Morris	Chair, 1992 Minister's Advisory Committee
Adrian Boyko	Member, 1992 Minister's Advisory Committee
Marge Nainaar	Member, 1992 Minister's Advisory Committee
Margaret Morrissette	Chair, Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee, Saskatchewan Municipal Government

August 22, 1996

Honourable Carol Teichrob
Room 307
Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

Dear Mrs. Teichrob:

On behalf of my committee, I am pleased to present a final report from the Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee. The purpose of the report is to provide you with results from public focus groups conducted in the spring of 1996 to determine support for a new multiculturalism act.

The Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee was established as a result of the Saskatchewan government's 1995 publication of RESPONDING TO THE COMMUNITY: Proposals for Cultural Development, and began meeting in September 1995, with a mandate to *prepare, through public consultation, for the drafting of legislation for a new Multiculturalism Act to replace the outdated 1974 legislation, broadening public understanding of multicultural issues and reinforcing the provincial motto: "From many peoples, strength"*.

Over the past year the committee, in consultation with the Arts, Cultural Industries and Multiculturalism Branch and the Communications Branch of Municipal Government, contracted a market research firm to test the reaction of different community segments to a draft framework of the proposed legislation. The committee herein endorses the work of Anderson/Fast Marketing Solutions, and is pleased to present you with the most significant findings inherent in the research, as well as the committee's observations and recommendations.

Mrs. Teichrob
Page 2
August 22, 1996

The committee has enjoyed taking many years of preparatory work through the public focus group phase and is hopeful that a new Multiculturalism Act may be enacted in the spring 1997 sitting of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. In our opinion the public research supports the progress of the proposed legislation developed in 1993 by the Minister's Advisory Committee.

Thank you for your support and leadership over the past year. We look forward to a meeting to discuss the progress of the committee and the recommendations of the report.

Sincerely,

Margaret Morrissette

Margaret Morrissette
Chair
Multiculturalism Legislation
Framework Consultation Committee

on behalf of:

Sonia Morris
Adrian Boyko
Marge Nainaar

Enclosed: Report

CONTENTS

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Mandate	1
Terms of Reference	1
Rationale	1
Background	2
Public Focus Group Process	5
General Focus Group Responses	6
Métis Focus Group Responses	7
First Nations Focus Group Responses	8
Francophone Focus Group Responses	9
Youth Focus Group Responses	10
Response Analysis	11
Recommendations	12
Conclusion	13
APPENDICES:	
I. Focus Group Timetable	14
II. Graphs to Market Research	15
III. Proposed Saskatchewan Multiculturalism Act	24
IV. Proposed Multiculturalism Secretariat not included in Act	26
V. Proposed Foundation for Multiculturalism not included in Act	29

MANDATE

The Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee (MLFCC) was appointed by the Minister of Municipal Government in 1995 to prepare, through public focus groups, for the drafting of legislation for a new Multiculturalism Act. It was the hope of the committee that a new act would replace the outdated 1974 legislation, broaden public understanding of multiculturalism issues and reinforce the provincial motto: "From many peoples, strength".

Specifically, the MLFCC prepared an interview guide and plan to seek public opinion on proposed new provincial legislation which had been drafted by the Minister's Advisory Committee on Multicultural Legislation (1993). Wording of the draft legislation was tested in a series of focus groups in different regions of the province. Response has been deemed supportive, hence the draft legislation is now endorsed by the MLFCC to continue progress through the legislative process.

Terms of Reference

The mandate for the MLFCC was outlined in the Department of Municipal Government's discussion paper Responding to the Community: Proposals for Cultural Development published in January, 1995. Two ministerially appointed committees, the Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee (MLFCC) and the Interim Multiculturalism Committee (IMC), were established as a result of this discussion paper. The purpose of the IMC was "to examine the potential for consolidating multiculturalism, including funding, within one agency or structure". It was determined that while it might consider funding issues, the MLFCC would prepare for the drafting of legislation meant to reinforce Saskatchewan's commitment to the principles inherent in multiculturalism, without inclusion of a distinct funding structure.

RATIONALE

The Saskatchewan Multicultural Act, 1974 does not, in 1996, sufficiently address contemporary multiculturalism policy or initiatives. The now outdated legislation emphasizes cultural retention, intercultural understanding and heritage language aspects of multiculturalism, which were supported by government during the 1970's through grassroots workshop and skill development programs. Reference to English as a Second Language (ESL) training was included in federal legislation, but not in the provincial legislation of 1974.

On July 11, 1988, the Minister of Parks, Recreation and Culture announced the formation of a Task Force on Multiculturalism to conduct a review of multiculturalism in Saskatchewan, and to make recommendations to the Minister's Committee. The mandate given was to review all aspects of multiculturalism in Saskatchewan including legislation and government policies. There was a lobby of opinion building from the community that the Act should be revised, and that the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, passed in July 1988, be used as a guide.

In September, 1989 the Task Force on Multiculturalism presented a report to government: Multiculturalism in Saskatchewan. This consultative initiative evolved from the grassroots level of Saskatchewan's ethnocultural community. The Saskatchewan government, responded to the report with its Task Force Report: Building our Multicultural Future Together (1990).

A Minister's Advisory Committee on Multicultural Legislation was created in 1992 to provide expertise and advice, based upon contemporary experience, to government. The committee, chaired by Sonia Morris, held its first meeting in December 1992, and reviewed current multiculturalism legislation and policies throughout Canada. The committee consulted individuals with expertise in relevant legislation, and identified key issues to be addressed in the new provincial legislation. The recommendations of the Task Force Report, Multiculturalism in Saskatchewan, released in 1989, were also a frequent source of reference.

Committee members included Elizabeth Benson from the Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan, Guy Bouvier from the Métis Society of Saskatchewan, Adrian Boyko from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Linda Dirkson from the Moose Jaw Multicultural Council, Bruno Kossmann from the Saskatchewan German Council, Nancy Lee from the Summer Centre for International Languages, Denis Magnan from the Association Culturelle Franco-Canadienne de Saskatchewan, Marge Nainaar from the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan and Sonia Morris (Chair) from the Faculty of Education, University of Saskatchewan.

The committee organized broad consultations in 1993 with officials from the federal and provincial government, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and the Saskatchewan Council of Cultural Organizations. Included in the process was a mail-out requesting opinion on a working Draft Paper of the committee's recommendations for new Saskatchewan multiculturalism legislation and policy. The written survey was mailed in June 1993 to funded and non-funded members of the multicultural community, community organizations, educational institutions, all of the school divisions in the province, and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. Seventy-seven organizations/individuals responded to the survey. The Advisory Committee subsequently revised its recommendations and modified the wording of the proposed new legislation. A final draft was submitted to then Minister of Municipal Government, Carol Carson, in November, 1993.

PUBLIC FOCUS GROUP PROCESS

The first meeting of the Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee was in September 1995. By November the Committee established a strategic timetable and methodology for consultations with the public. The market research company, *Anderson/Fast Marketing Solutions*, was contracted to consult with Saskatchewan citizens in a series of focus groups.

With the guidance of the MLFCC, an interviewer's manual for the focus groups was designed consisting of text, discussion topics and a questionnaire. The text included a review of the "Vision", "Preamble", "Policy" and "government obligations" from the proposed legislation framework. A survey questionnaire for written responses was also developed so as to capture written opinions from all participants.

Nine focus groups were scheduled. Each had a similar format. A moderator led participants through a discussion format for two hours and encouraged frank interaction and the clarification of individual opinions. Most of the focus group time was used to review and gather opinion on the elements within the draft legislation framework. At the end of each session participants were given written survey forms to complete. The questionnaire was designed to facilitate some quantitative measurement of opinions regarding several of the multiculturalism issues being explored.

The focus group participants were recruited from representative regions of the province. Potential participants were randomly selected from telephone directories and enlisted with telephone interviews. Participants had no advance knowledge of the subject matter while being recruited, and only learned upon arrival at the focus group what issue was being discussed.

The series of focus group sessions were held during February and March 1996 in La Ronge, Prince Albert, North Battleford, Saskatoon, Regina, Swift Current and Moose Jaw to test reaction and acceptability for the vision, preamble and policy proposed for the legislation framework on multiculturalism. Four separate and additional focus groups were held with representatives of Saskatchewan's First Nations peoples, Métis peoples, Youth and Francophone communities ensuring representation from a broad cross section of public opinion in this province.

Typically, each of the nine focus groups contained about ten respondents representative of the community and/or particular target segments. A list of the focus groups, locations and number of participants are included in Appendix 1. The focus group sessions were discreetly observed, when possible, by members of the committee.

At least one half of the participants in any given focus group and a majority in the subsequent First Nations and Métis, agreed that Saskatchewan would be well served by the proposed multiculturalism legislation, and that promoting multiculturalism would encourage less racist attitudes in the province.

Concerns:

All participants agreed with the principles in the preamble but some suggested that *The Act* may be redundant if the same rights are covered by *The Canadian Charter of Human Rights*. Some participants expressed concern that more powerful cultural groups could gain advantages from proposed multiculturalism legislation by their ability to lobby for funds to support their cultural uniqueness at the expense of smaller, lesser organized cultural organizations.

Although participants clearly supported enhancement of multiculturalism understanding in principle, they were generally reluctant to support the government's involvement in actively promoting multiculturalism particularly if this initiative generates additional costs to taxpayers. Many focus group participants were concerned that multiculturalism policies may promote and support inequitable hiring and unequal opportunity.

Many people were also sceptical that the government could institutionalize an anti-racist attitude in Saskatchewan residents. Some did not think that promoting multiculturalism necessarily promotes anti-racism. Many focus group respondents, particularly in the Métis community, did not agree that the prosperity of Saskatchewan is enhanced by cultural awareness and the linguistic capabilities of its citizens.

The responses to the four special/non-geographic focus groups are listed in the following order: Métis, First Nations, Francophone, and Youth.

MÉTIS FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

The Métis group discussion was held in North Battleford with members of the Métis community. The Métis focus group expressed strong opinions on the relationship of being poor and feeling prejudice in society. The majority of participants believed that many of the racism issues they faced are closely related to discrimination based on their lower economic status, and that this racism and discrimination is experienced at an early age.

Some of the participants discussed how their children are discriminated against at school, by peers and teachers, as much because they are poor as because they are Métis. For many of them, economic inequity was the biggest barrier preventing them from fully participating in their community. Many of the participants felt they are prevented from participating in their community, and suggested that this leads to a defeatist attitude and low self-esteem among members of the Métis community.

FRANCOPHONE FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

The Francophone focus group discussion was conducted in French by a Francophone moderator with members of the Francophone community in Saskatoon. The group strongly agreed that Saskatchewan is a multicultural society, but that Canadian identity was more important than a specific ethnocultural identity. They mentioned that this sense of national identity was evolving and would continue to change. Participants strongly believed that First Nations and Métis peoples are included in this cultural mosaic. Participants agreed that Saskatchewan and all of Canada are recognized as a multicultural society in the Canadian Constitution. They believed that cultural awareness should come from the people and not be imposed by government.

The participants strongly agreed that multiculturalism is good, and should be nurtured, encouraged and developed within the community, but expressed concern that it be publicly funded. The majority of Francophone participants suggested multiculturalism is an attitude rather than something that can be legislated. Some members of the focus group were concerned that the "equality of opportunity" section of the proposed Act may allow some cultural sectors disproportionately high access to public funding.

There was a general consensus among the Francophone group that everything included in the proposed Multiculturalism Act is included in the *Charte canadienne des droits et libertes* (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms). Although most felt that the Act is a noble idea, they questioned the need and reason for it in light of existing constitutional guarantees.

The Francophone participants did not think multiculturalism is something that can be legislated. They expressed concern that if publicly driven it would evolve positively, but if government driven, it may lead to problems.

There was concern among members of the group that Francophone cultural, and particularly linguistic abilities, are quickly being lost.

Many participants felt governments already attempt to do too much to help immigrants integrate into Saskatchewan society. They felt immigrants will integrate more successfully if they are encouraged to use their own resources. Most also thought that there is little if anything the provincial government can do to actively counter racism and other forms of discrimination.

RESPONSE ANALYSIS

Members of the Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee examined the *Anderson/Fast Marketing Solutions* results and later met with the consultant, Doug Fast, for further review of the focus group sessions, on June 19, 1996. Mr. Fast described the climate, nuances and accordingly, the proceedings particular to each session, and shared his general observations concerning the public response as elicited by the focus group process.

All of the focus group participants showed support for the proposed new legislation. Of all of the focus groups, the research results from the Youth, First Nations and Métis participants show the strongest support for the proposed new legislation, and for government leadership in the area of respect for diversity and multiculturalism.

Responses show that opinions on multiculturalism vary a great deal in this province. A complexity of sentiment and beliefs exist in all sectors of Saskatchewan. Discussions on immigration illustrated a variety of views, but generally participants felt positively toward the proposed multiculturalism legislation.

The variety of opinion might be exemplified by the topic of immigration. While discussing the preamble of the proposed act, a diversity of opinion was expressed during the discussion of the enhancement of quality of life through multiculturalism and immigration. A review of all of the focus group sessions enables us to distinguish three primary views on immigration. Some people believe it benefits and enhances the Saskatchewan community. Others, like many of the First Nations respondents, are concerned that immigration translates into competition for limited economic opportunities. A third school of thought supports immigration, provided newcomers are not visible minorities.

Many Saskatchewan people who participated in the focus groups exhibited concern with use of the term 'support' with respect to multiculturalism policy. The term is often equated with the expenditure of money or economic support, and the assumption that multiculturalism will be costly for taxpayers. The current public research shows that some Saskatchewan citizens are currently misinformed on the amount of monies presently invested in present funding for multiculturalism. Focus group research indicates that this public segment believes that there is a greater governmental infrastructure and resource base of public funding committed to multiculturalism than actually exists. There is some confusion from some members of the public as to who qualifies for multiculturalism funding, many erroneously believing the Aboriginal community is a large recipient.

There would appear to be a communication lag between some positive government and provincial cultural organizational initiatives in the realm of multiculturalism and perceptions of the public. For example, implicit in the research within the First Nations and Métis communities, and perhaps within all focus groups, is non-awareness of the new multiculturalism policy adopted in 1991 by the Department of Education. The

The members of the MLFCC believe, as they did when they served on the Minister's Advisory Committee, that the proposed new legislation should include provision for a Foundation and a Secretariat. However due to the divergent responses from the multiculturalism community, during the 1993 and 1996 consultation processes regarding portions of the draft legislation framework describing a proposed Foundation, the MLFCC agree that the funding mechanism needs to undergo a separate review. The Interim Multiculturalism Committee will address these issues during their work over the next year.

Given the importance of the proposed Secretariat and the reality of fiscal restraint, the MLFCC further recommends that the function of the Secretariat as described in the legislation proposed by the Minister's Advisory Committee in 1993 be retained and ascribed, with independent authority, to a branch of government.

The MLFCC believes that the proposed Act can be drafted and enacted as a statement of Saskatchewan government principle, and can satisfy the major concerns expressed in the youth, Métis, First Nations and multicultural communities about legislation which would support Human Rights Legislation in the fight against racism in Saskatchewan society.

CONCLUSION

Saskatchewan's Human Rights Commission is presently advocating a renewed approach in this province to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality. *Renewing the Vision: Human Rights in Saskatchewan*, a Report of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission following a two year review of The Human Rights Code, has just been released. That Report makes an argument for sharing responsibility for human rights among groups, agencies and service providers as well as to harmonize efforts and proceedings.

We, in the MLFCC, believe that an inclusive partnership approach across government expands responsibility for human rights, and ultimately works toward removal of barriers to equality, prevention of discrimination, provision of redress to individuals, and celebration of diversity. There should be a broad societal and cross-governmental responsibility for human rights protection, which involves a joint venture and not an adversarial process.

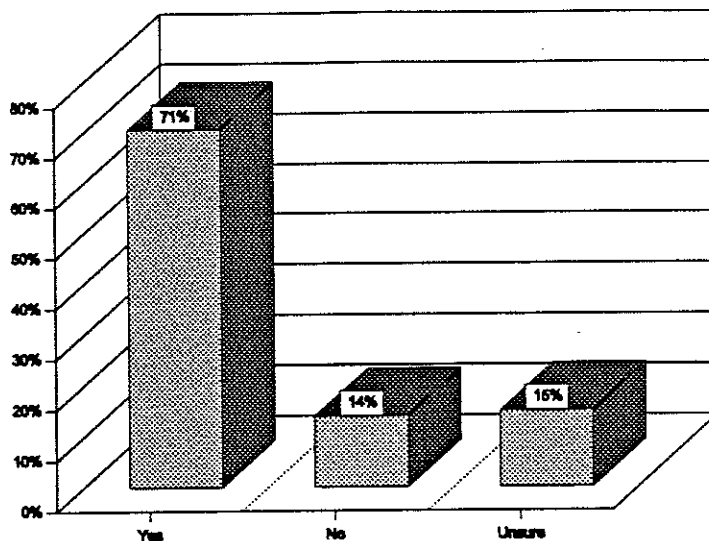
One step toward creating a joint venture in protecting human rights and celebrating cultural diversity is to update Saskatchewan's multiculturalism legislation and policy. This would be a positive step toward the creation of a harmonious and diverse province, where the value of human rights is encouraged and protected. A new multiculturalism act reinforces the need to promote equality of opportunity, access and treatment for all residents and moreover, to implement policies that ensure those ideals.

APPENDIX I: Public Focus Groups

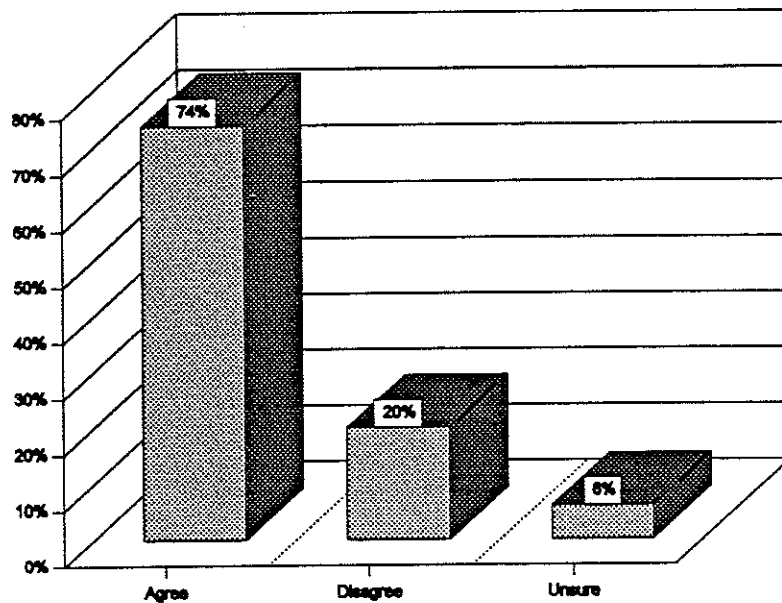
<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u># of Participants</u>
Saskatoon	Thursday, February 15, 1996	7:00pm - 9:00pm	9
Regina	Thursday, February 22, 1996	6:45pm - 8:45pm	10
Prince Albert	Thursday, February 15, 1996	6:30pm - 8:30pm	10
La Ronge	Wednesday, March 6, 1996	6:30pm - 8:30pm	8
Swift Current	Thursday, February 22, 1996	6:30pm - 8:30pm	10
North Battleford	Wednesday, February 28, 1996	6:30pm - 8:30pm	8
Moose Jaw	Wednesday, February 28, 1996	6:30pm - 8:30pm	10
Métis Youth	Monday, March 4, 1996	7:00pm - 9:00pm	9
Francophone Saskatchewan	Monday, March 18, 1996	6:30pm - 8:30pm	10
First Nations Saskatchewan			<u>84</u>

**APPENDIX II: WRITTEN RESPONSES TO THE
SURVEYS DISTRIBUTED AT FOCUS GROUPS**

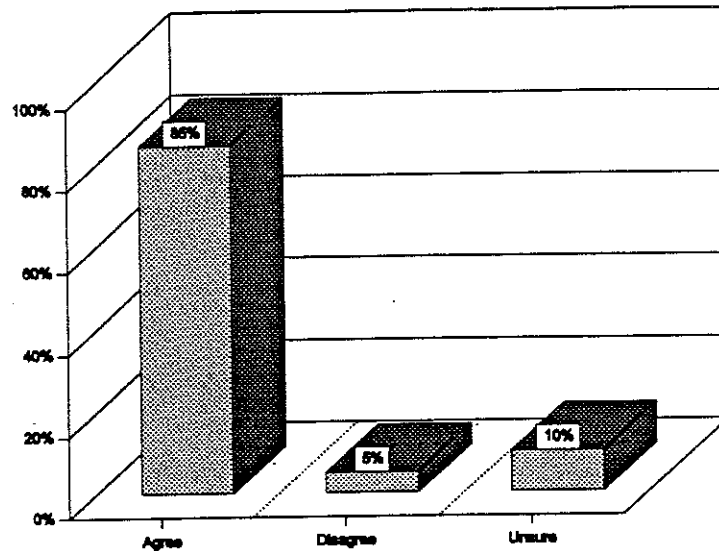
Question 3. Should our Saskatchewan Multicultural Act reflect the principles of law regarding the protection and rights of all Canadian citizens as outlined in the Constitution?



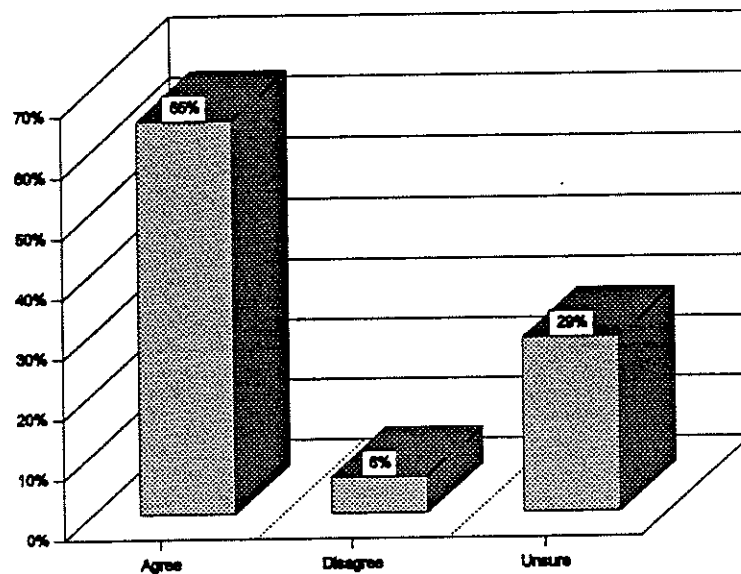
Question 4. Do you agree or disagree that as a result of the many First Nations who were here for hundreds of years, and the immigration, that Saskatchewan has always been a multicultural society since it was created in 1905?



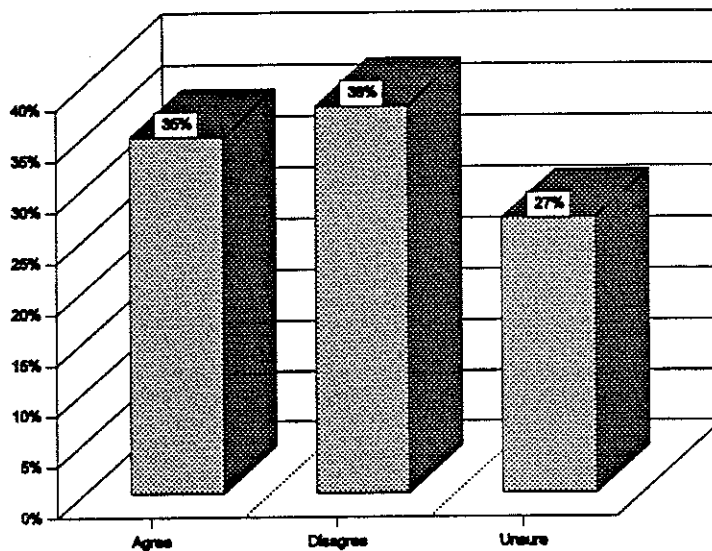
Question 7. Do you agree or disagree that the Government of Saskatchewan and its institutions should ensure that all people have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement?



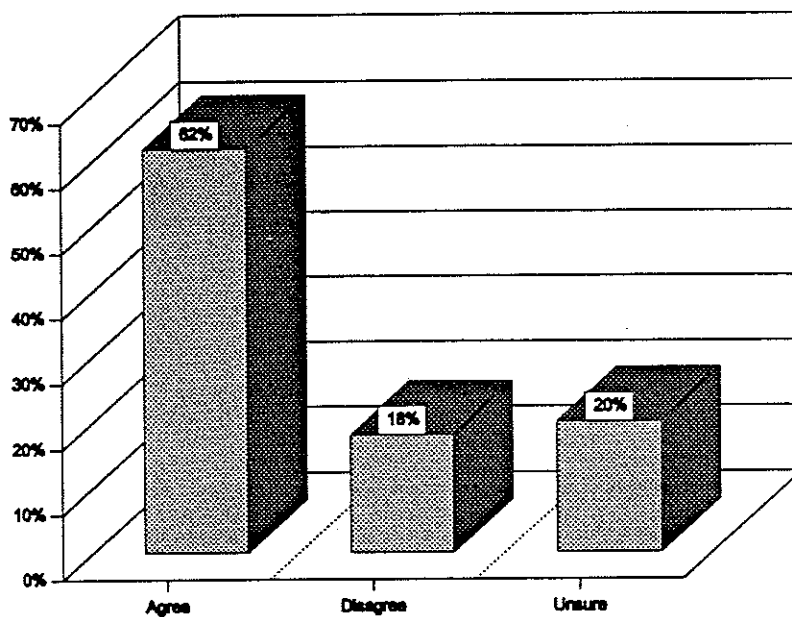
Question 8. Do you agree or disagree that the Government of Saskatchewan and its institutions should remove all systematic barriers and discriminatory practices which inhibit access to services and full participation?



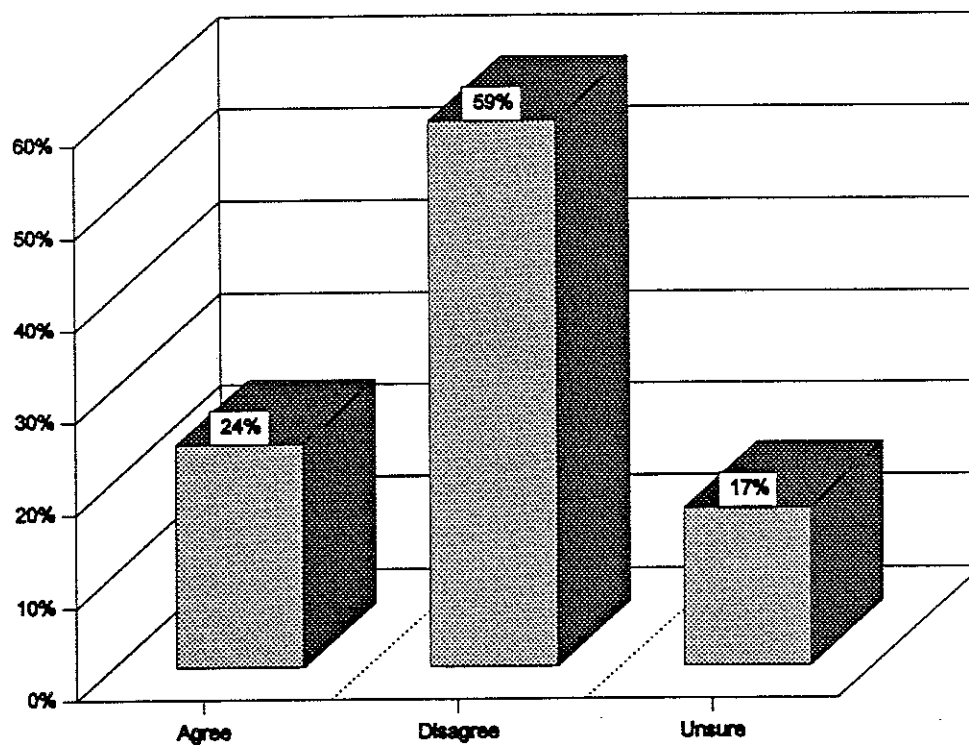
Question 11. Do you agree or disagree that the Government of Saskatchewan and its institutions should develop, promote and use the language skills and cultural understanding of individuals and groups of all origins?



Question 12. Do you agree or disagree that the Government of Saskatchewan and its institutions should act in partnership with community groups and organizations to enhance and encourage co-operation and intercultural understanding?



Question 14. Some people have suggested to us that the government fund multiculturalism through an arm's length agency or council called a Foundation, with an appointed Board of Directors. Such a Foundation would develop policy and programs related to what was to be funded, and generally work to support and promote intercultural understanding and multiculturalism throughout Saskatchewan. Do you agree or disagree that a Foundation should be created to develop multicultural policies and programs?



APPENDIX III: PROPOSED SASKATCHEWAN MULTICULTURALISM ACT

Given the framework developed by the Minister's Advisory Committee on Multicultural Legislation in 1993, the multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee recommends proceeding to enact in legislation the Vision, Preamble, Policy, and government obligations clauses.

to preserve, strengthen and promote all other cultures and to acknowledge the role of ethnic communities in building the Province and shaping its future;

to promote the understanding and creativity that arise from the interaction between individuals and communities of diverse origins;

to foster the awareness, appreciation and acceptance of all aspects of Saskatchewan's evolving culture;

to promote the official languages of Canada, and the rights and privileges acquired or enjoyed with respect to any other languages;

to support and promote the learning of languages;

to promote intercultural understanding through learning about languages and cultures;

to promote awareness and understanding of the social, cultural and economic benefits of continuing immigration to the province;

to facilitate the settlement and adaptation of immigrants and their integration into Saskatchewan society; and

to actively counter racism and all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

It is further declared to be the policy of the Government of Saskatchewan that all provincial institutions shall:

ensure that all people have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement;

remove all systemic barriers and discriminatory practices which inhibit access to services and full participation;

promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the understanding of and respect for the diversity of the people of Saskatchewan;

promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the ability of all individuals and communities to contribute to the continuing evolution of Saskatchewan;

develop, promote and use the language skills and cultural understanding of individuals and groups of all origins; and

act in partnership with community groups and organizations to enhance and encourage co-operation and intercultural understanding.

APPENDIX IV: PROPOSED SECRETARIAT

"The members of the Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee believe, as they did when they served on the Minister's Advisory Committee that the proposed new legislation should include provision for a Foundation and a Secretariat...

Given the importance of the proposed Secretariat and the reality of fiscal restraint, the MLFCC further recommends that the function of the Secretariat as described in the legislation proposed by the Minister's Advisory Committee in 1993 be retained and ascribed, with independent authority, to a branch of government."

Source: Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee: August 1996 Report, page 13

APPENDIX V: PROPOSED FOUNDATION

"The members of the MLFCC believe, as they did when they served on the Minister's Advisory Committee, that the proposed new legislation should include provision for a Foundation and a Secretariat. However due to the divergent responses, from the multiculturalism community, during the 1993 and 1996 consultation processes regarding portions of the draft legislation framework describing a proposed Foundation, the MLFCC believe that the funding mechanism needs to undergo a separate review. The Interim Multiculturalism Committee will address this issue during their work over the next year."

Source: Multiculturalism Legislation Framework Consultation Committee: August 1996 Report, page 13

Term of Office:

The normal term of office will be 3 years.

After a 3 year absence, members may be appointed for 1 more term only.

Chair will be appointed by the Minister for a 1 year term and may be re-appointed up to 3 consecutive 1 year terms.

Vice-Chair will be elected by the Board of Directors for a 1 year term and may be re-elected up to 3 consecutive 1 year terms.

Meetings:

The Foundation Board of Directors shall meet at least 3 times a year.

A majority of the Board members shall form a quorum.

Appendix:**THE MINISTER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MULTICULTURAL LEGISLATION
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SASKATCHEWAN FOUNDATION FOR MULTICULTURALISM BOARD
OF DIRECTORS:**

1. The Advisory Committee on Multicultural Legislation recommends to the Minister that the Board of Directors of the Saskatchewan Foundation for Multiculturalism shall include representation from the multicultural/ethnocultural provincial cultural organizations.
2. The Advisory Committee on Multicultural Legislation recommends to the Minister that for the **first Foundation Board**, appointments be made in the following manner:
 - 1/3 of the members for a 1 year term.
(1 year appointees may be reappointed for a 3 year term.)
 - 1/3 of the members for a 2 year term.
 - 1/3 of the members for a 3 year term.