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From: Michael Bauer [fios@akerbeltz.org]
Sent: 08 January 2005 13:55
To: info
Subject: Submission[Scanned]

Dear Sirs,

I would like to make the following contributions to the consultation:

- * Realise that economic and cultural potential of immigrants by establishing measures (such as bilingual units) that foster and re-inforce the language acquisition of immigrant children. While second language learning is obviously desirable, it cannot be denied that native bilingualism is a more efficient method of raising children fluent in more than one language - ie a child who has native Chinese from home and acquires both English and Chinese (speaking, understanding, reading, writing) at school will be infinitely more competent as an adult bilingual than a non-native who has 2 hours of Chinese a week for 2 years.
- * Realise the integrational benefits of bilingual education (see also above). Immigrants (and I speak from personal experience here, being half Cantonese) have a deep-seated desire to maintain links to their cultural roots and are especially keen for their children to maintain their cultural roots. In the absence of "mainstream" opportunities to participate and engage in their cultural roots, many turn to more obvious and more radical ways of expressing their identity, especially if they are easily acquired. By offering the opportunity to such children to engage in their native culture and language through bilingual education (and by this I mean fully bilingual education, not just two weekly hours of lip-service) there is less of a chance that they might turn to more "unconventional" and radical ways of expressing themselves.
- * Make sure that the benefits of immersion and bilingual education are open to all. Since it has been proven all over this planet (including Scotland as regards Gaelic Medium Education) that childhood immersion, if done correctly, can lead to near native abilities for both native and non native speakers, the eternal headache of teaching foreign languages to anglophones could be solved thus.
- * Balance policies aimed at stamping out racism and discrimination with both rights and responsibilities. Being a minority does not make you "holy" and immune to the same errors that a majority can make. Thus policies aimed at religious freedom, protection from racism and persecution etc should also include a clear commitment to the responsibilities of both the minority and the majority. Racism of Europeans against Chinese people is as despicable as racism of Chinese people against Africans, as is violence against women/gays/etc from Christians, Muslims or whatever faith (this list is not exhaustive) and should be stamped out with the same force.
- * Re-enforce the currently debated Gaelic Language Bill by clearly establishing that Gaels have a right to services and education in Scotland as an "indigenous" people to refute the worn out arguments about Gaels demanding unreasonable and uneconomic measures to re-invigorate their language. To be able to live through the medium of Gaelic in Scotland is a right, not a favour to be granted and taken away at will. Due to the numbers issue, there must obviously be a staggered, planned approach to this issue but the long term goal should be the afore mentioned.
- * Make it a clear objective that Gaelic must have a strong presence in all aspects of Scottish life as a medium of communication and not simply as a objet d'art. As a first step, there should be

10/01/2005

stringent language requirements to ensure that money destined for "Gaelic" (eg through the Gaelic Arts Council) is allocated to projects which use the Gaelic language as a medium of both working and "broadcasting".

I trust you will consider these opinions

Regards

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10/01/2005