



RUBY SAHOTA

Member of Parliament – Brampton North

Députée - Brampton Nord

News Release

For Immediate Release

My Traditional Clothing is NOT a Costume

24/03/2018 – Ottawa, Ontario – Ms. Ruby Sahota, Member of Parliament for Brampton North, took her seat in the Canadian House of Commons on March 22nd 2018 to participate in the debate and discussion on the Opposition Motion of the day. MP Sahota sat and listened as one Conservative MP after another referred to her cultural and traditional clothing as a costume.

It was only after the sixth use of the word “costume” that MP Sahota knew she could no longer remain silent. During questions and comments, MP Sahota rose to express her outrage; stating (full text of her remarks)

“Mr. Speaker, I am incredibly offended by the speech given by my colleague across the aisle just now. I implore them to stick to the facts and what they are trying to achieve. This reference I have been hearing from debate to debate about costumes is incredibly offensive.

I would like to share a little story about a girl growing up here in Canada, which was me, a child of immigrant parents, who struggled constantly to try to be proud of my culture and my heritage. I just could not help just wanting to fit in, and wonder why my parents could not just wear western clothing to my parent-teacher interview. Maybe I would fit in a little better, maybe the kids would not make fun of the clothing we traditionally wear. This reference continually made by the opposition to our clothing being costumes is outrageous.

I wonder if my colleague is offended I am wearing his costume right now. Would he call a business suit a costume? Should I ask people from around the world what they think about me wearing a white man's costume? Are you offended, because I am incredibly offended that again and again I hear reference to our clothing as costumes. It is not a costume; it is clothing we wear every day, day in and day out. Indians wear that clothing, and it is nothing compared to a uniform of a police officer.

The Prime Minister respected our culture and our traditions, and took part and engaged in the clothing we value so dearly. I am so happy that my child, my son, can see a Prime Minister today who respects his culture, his tradition, and where he comes from.”

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For media inquiries, please contact: Karen Gill at 613-995-4843 or Ruby.Sahota@parl.gc.ca.