

• (1240)

It is necessary to realize that, in spite of their constitutional commitments, a number of provinces put off developing their own French-speaking education System. In its last annual report, the Official Languages Commissioner said: "This apparent deafness (on the part of some provincial Governments) is becoming a major blot on Canada's concept of herself as a decent, forward-looking country that can give lessons to the world in ethnolinguistic tolerance and political self-respect. Self-respecting Canadians should tell their provincial leaders that they are letting us down."

Instead of improving this situation, the Meech Lake Accord has condoned the attitude of the most refractory provinces. With the Accord's blessings, they only have to preserve the *status quo*.

I want my Quebec fellow citizens to understand that the Accord will result in a lack of commitment on their part for national unity. I need only to remind the House of the statement made by Quebec Premier Bourassa when he went to Manitoba in July to meet the French-speaking community. He said that he could not interfere in the internal affairs of Manitoba, for fear the other provinces might interfere in Quebec's own affairs. I understand Mr. Bourassa's position quite well. He must defend the rights and privileges of his province. But does his position serve the interest of Canada as a whole? Is it in the interest of Quebecers when we leave our province? The future of our country is at stake, Mr. Speaker. The interests of French speaking Canadians outside Quebec are our own interests. And inasmuch as the rights of Francophones outside Quebec are lessened, our own rights are lessened.

Remember the heyday of the oil industry, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of Quebecers went west to Alberta, and many stayed there. Under normal circumstances, those former Quebecers would have liked their children not only to be educated in French, but to preserve their French culture. This means not only the schools but also television, radio, theatre, cultural centres, opportunities to speak French in their everyday life. What about the Quebecer who would be called upon to move because of his job responsibilities or economic needs? You will agree that one is not very mobile when one has to sacrifice his family, his language. I say it is unacceptable to put a Canadian before that phoney choice, forcing him to choose between his cultural values, his family and the need to provide for his family.

The Meech Lake Accord does nothing to improve that situation. The Meech Lake Accord, Mr. Speaker, is an anachronism that reflects the lack of vision and leadership of this Tory Government. Our vitality as Quebecers is self-evident. It is there to be seen in every area, be it economic, social, cultural or political. Whether it is the role played by the provincial Government or in the private sector, with the establishment of Quebec multinationals and the young Quebecers' craze for business. Let me remind you that no less

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than 10,000 students year in and year out attend the University of Montreal's *Institut des Hautes Études commerciales*. From that viewpoint, the Accord ignores those facts about Quebec and is trying to have us believe that we need additional protection.

Believe it or not, Mr. Speaker, at the very moment when Quebecers are assuming their rightful place in Canada, when Quebec companies are extending their activities throughout the world, the Government is proposing that we create a French ghetto in an English-speaking unilingual Canada. The Accord explicitly mentions French-speaking Canadians and English-speaking Canadians. There is no mention of the new generation of bilingual Canadians, nor of those whose speak many languages, nor of the native people who speak only the language of their ancestors. Moreover, there is nothing about those who consider themselves neither French nor English Canadians, but quite simply Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow's Canadian citizen will be a man or woman who speaks both languages well and who recognizes that he or she is part of a remarkable family, the family of all Canadians.

I have represented the Laurier constituency for eight years in this House. I have tried to show why I believe that this Accord represents a step backward as concerns linguistic duality. Other aspects should also be of concern to us, such as the option for provinces to withdraw from cost shared programs with full financial compensation.

My constituency, which is going through a complete transformation, includes a great many senior citizens, but as it is located near the *Université du Québec à Montréal* and McGill University, it also includes many students. The constituency has a large artistic population. We also have a large number of single parent families, twice the national average. Two thirds of the population are of French Canadian origins and the other third is made up to a large extent of Portuguese, Greek, Italian, Latin-American, Chinese and Vietnamese Canadians. It has been said that Laurier is a crossroads of ideas. I think it is an appropriate description because there are people from many different countries, from all walks of life.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, so many live in difficult circumstances, and they include artists, young people and mothers who are single parents. Often they do not have regular employment. They are given ten to twenty weeks employment in job creation programs. After that, they go on unemployment insurance and fifty weeks later on welfare, if they fail to get a new job under another government program.

I am convinced that the only solution is a thorough reform of our social programs, which would include, for instance, the creation of a universal income security plan, as recommended by the Macdonald Commission. These issues are very important to my constituents, but the only way to get any results, Mr. Speaker, is through a shared-cost program, and I am