

*National Unity*

clearly last evening. It was difficult for many members, but who was it who tried to induce as many members as possible to vote against the Official Languages Act? Who was it who arranged by stealth to have the necessary number of members call for a recorded vote in order to put the greatest possible constituency pressure on members? Who was it? It was the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner).

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Stanfield:** And that is only part of the story. To find Canadians whose conception of Canada differs more from the Prime Minister's than that of the hon. member for Crowfoot you would have to look pretty hard.

Yesterday the Prime Minister emphasized the need for accommodations. A few weeks before his government launched its charter on language rights, about which the minister will probably be speaking in a few minutes, the Prime Minister made a deal with the hon. member for Crowfoot. Is this what the Prime Minister means by accommodation? The Prime Minister has betrayed those who supported him at no small cost to themselves in putting in place and trying to gain acceptance for the central theme of his conception of Canada.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Stanfield:** I do not know of any act of comparable cynicism committed by any prime minister of this country. Machiavelli would be proud of him. What hypocrisy! But the cynicism and the hypocrisy of the Prime Minister do not weaken in any way my support, nor the support of my leader, which is more important, for language equality in Canada. Bilingualism is generous in spirit and essentially necessary to our country.

**Miss Bégin:** That is not what Joe said yesterday.

**Mr. Stanfield:** That is exactly what Joe said yesterday.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Grafftey:** And you know it, Monique.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Stanfield:** Do not get too excited over there; there is more to come. Be patient.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please. The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Stanfield) has the floor. Will he please address the Chair?

**Mr. Stanfield:** I say that a policy of bilingualism is essential to the country.

A policy of quasi-unilingualism—English across the country with French permitted in Quebec and perhaps around the national capital—would not work, quite apart from any concept of justice in the country. It would be resented, of course, by the Francophones. Needless to say, unilingual French in any part of the country would be resented by the Anglophones.

[Mr. Stanfield.]

Having said that, one must recognize and state—as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) did yesterday and we would be wise to recognize it—that bilingualism does have its divisive aspects. For the English speaking minority in Quebec and for the French speaking minority in other provinces, bilingualism has a very strong positive appeal if it carries conviction—I do not know how much conviction the government's appeal carries today. It is their best assurance of something like equality of language.

**An hon. Member:** You sound bitter.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I am bitter because of the mess in which I find my country to be.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Grafftey:** He sacked you; aren't you bitter?

**Mr. Stanfield:** I only have a few minutes left.

I believe that institutional bilingualism is necessary in Canada, and I think that should be reasonably clear by now. But it is folly to believe that bilingualism by itself or in itself will unify this country. I believe that millions of Canadians, including a good many in Quebec, accept it grudgingly at best. It would be of no service to Canada to pretend otherwise. I believe that Canadians should be encouraged to learn both French and English. I believe we should make that far easier than we have in the past.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Stanfield:** I would like to see both English speaking and French speaking minorities in Canada able to go to school, to be taught, in their own language.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Stanfield:** Minority language rights are a worthy goal for Canada and for Canadians, but language rights—and it is equally important to be realistic—if we can achieve them, and I hope we can, will not unite us. Language differences will continue to cause tension.

I hope that we in Canada can overcome the feelings of intolerance and insecurity that are so often associated with language differences, but if we are wise we will not try to build national unity on language differences. I think that this is a fundamental error of the Prime Minister. Language differences are a cause of stress and strain, not cohesion. Certainly they are too a source of enrichment, but why pretend they are a source of unity? Certainly the language of English and French speaking minorities should be respected, both in terms of decency and for the future of our country, but we will have a far better chance of achieving unity if we recognize the stress and strain and look elsewhere for our national cohesion.

● (1740)

I disagree with those who oppose bilingualism, and I will continue as long as I live to fight people who oppose bilingual-