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ensure. It appointed an Official Languages Commissioner, a permanent, strict and uncompromising guardian, to report to Parliament on violations to the spirit and the letter of the legislation. Just last week, in the middle of the referendum campaign, the Commissioner publicly and harshly criticized in his annual report the obstinate way in which the application of the Act has been and still is being delayed, neglected and resisted, ten years after the legislation was passed.

Can one really say that the policy has failed? Before answering that question, one has to carefully define what the policy was designed to accomplish. An apparently undying myth, and I say undying because it is still being propagated by responsible journalists, has it that Mr. Trudeau dreamed of transforming 23 million Canadians into perfectly bilingual citizens. If that were really the case, his policy could only have ended in absolute failure. However, there was never any question of undertaking such a project. The objective of the Act and the policy is ambitious, admittedly, but it is also realistic. The goal is to ensure that every Canadian citizen is able to communicate with the central Government and receive services from that Government in the official language of his choice; to make possible the free use of French and English in the public service and all government agencies. In point of fact, the goal is to gain acceptance for the French language and give it equal status in the enormous state machine which had largely ostracized it for more than a century. It goes without saying that, after ten years, this goal has not yet been realized.

However, must we speak of failure and preach surrender when enormous progress has been made? The extension of French radio and television from the Atlantic to the Pacific does not constitute a failure. The simultaneous publishing in French and English of all legislation and of thousands of publications, reports and studies of various kinds is now a reality. The possibility for tens of thousands of Francophone public servants to work in their own language, where they once had to adopt English as their language of work is not an illusion. Nor is the promotion of thousands of Francophones to positions to which, until now, they had no access. A crushing failure? As the saying goes, "give a dog an ill name and hang him". If politics has taught me anything, it is that in that art, all success is relative.

These, then, are a few reasons why many Quebecers have serious doubts about the advisability of saying 'yes' to sovereignty-association. And these are not the only reasons. I must mention the one that impresses me personally more than all the others — the danger of breaking the Canadian union, in face of the attraction of such a powerful neighbour. Would a politically isolated Quebec have any chance of resisting eventual assimilation by the United States, even if it remained within the Canadian economic entity? I am not the only one to believe that the secession of Quebec would bring a breaking up of Canada, not into two but into three or four pieces each of which would sooner or later find itself in the American union. This is of course not the worst thing that could happen to a people. But in my opinion, our French-speaking community would lose every chance, not only of developing but of surviving culturally, in such an adventure.

However, let us return to the referendum. It is already well known, because they are not embarrassed to admit it, that many federalists who are opposed to any total or

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