

*Oral Questions*

The Reform Party should take a lesson from the over 150,000 Canadians who were at the Canada rally in Montreal on October 27 and get on side with nation building. Unless the Reform Party changes its tune it will be up Beaver Creek without a paddle.

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[Translation]

**FRENCH IN AMERICA**

**Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond—Guiral (Laval—Centre, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister had the nerve to say that the French language survived in America thanks to Canada. Yet, the rate of assimilation of French speaking British Columbians exceeds 75 per cent, while that of French speaking Ontarians is close to 40 per cent. French speaking Canadians outside Quebec must constantly fight to keep control of their institutions. Their rights are still violated in several parts of the country.

How, in all decency, can anyone claim that the survival of French in America is due to anything other than the strong will of our ancestors to perpetuate their culture? French survived in America thanks to our parents, who fought so that their society could thrive in French, despite the many injustices condoned by Canada regarding the French language.

If I can address this House in French today, it is because of the vitality of Quebec, which is the cradle of our language, our culture and our identity.

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**SOCIAL PROGRAMS**

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Quebec Minister of Finance made an excellent suggestion regarding social programs. She asked that the federal government transfer tax points to the provinces, instead of money, and give them greater autonomy regarding the management of these programs.

The minister would like to change a system whereby Ottawa can withdraw its financial assistance, while continuing to impose federal standards. That proposal is already included in the 20 point decentralization plan of the Reform Party, and several provinces support such changes.

• (1415)

The federal government should contemplate such a reform, instead of wasting its time on symbolic measures such as recognition of the distinct society. The irresponsible refusal of the federal Minister of Finance does not mean that federalism cannot be reformed and that Quebecers must separate. On the contrary, Quebecers have allies all over the country, as regards this issue. It is the Liberals that cannot be reformed.

**NATIONAL UNITY**

**Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us take advantage of the momentum we have gained to present Canadians with a rapid overview of the greatly changed Canada of tomorrow. Let us do so in conjunction with all of the social, economic and political strata of society, focussing on only one goal: the public interest. The government has already shown its colours in relation to recognition of Quebecers, and that is one important step taken.

Members representing all parts of this country have just given recognition to Quebec as a distinct society. Let us continue to focus constructive efforts on entrenching that recognition in the Constitution of our country when the time is right. It is more important than ever for us to pool all of our talents, all of our minds, but most importantly, all of our hearts to make our country, Canada, a country fashioned in the image of its peoples, into a united yet diversified country, a country characterized by generosity and equality of opportunity. Such a near-paradise is close at hand.

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**MOUVEMENT DE LIBÉRATION NATIONALE DU QUÉBEC**

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Parti Québécois has decided not to bar membership to the president and founder of the Mouvement de libération nationale du Québec. The PQ leaders' lack of firmness in this respect points to a profound malaise within the Quebec separatist movement.

How can there be any hope that the PQ, which is currently involved in exorcising its own racism, will take any energetic measures to distance itself from the racist and pro-violence views of the MLNQ? The weak protestations of the PQ and the Bloc are insufficient, to say the least, and do nothing to help reassure the public about the intentions of Mr. Villeneuve and his group of radicals. How could it be otherwise, when we know that some of those who are sovereignist members of Parliament today were signatories in the past of a petition for the release of the ex-FLQ member in question?

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[Translation]

**SOCIAL PROGRAMS FINANCING**

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in a speech he made in Verdun at the very end of the referendum campaign, the Prime Minister made a formal commitment to decentralize the federal system, in response to Quebec's demands. Yesterday, his finance minister indicated this commitment was doomed when he refused to so much as discuss a proposal from his Quebec counterpart for replacing