

*Oral Questions*

I answered this question yesterday and I invite my friend to read yesterday's *Hansard* very carefully, the answers are there, clear and unequivocal. If my friend can indeed show me a contradiction I would be pleased to comment further. Yesterday I spoke in the name of the federal Government. I stated a position which all Cabinet Ministers endorse. This position is fully consistent with the objectives of our linguistic policy, be it under Bill C-72 or pursuant to the Meech Lake Accord whose main purpose is to do justice to our linguistic minorities wherever they happen to be in Canada.

• (1420)

[English]

REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER DISMISS SECRETARY OF STATE

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, I know the position of the Government. I heard the Prime Minister very clearly. My question was directed to the Secretary of State. Does he understand what his role is? Does he play a role of importance in this country? I say yes, but that gentleman does not understand his role, Mr. Prime Minister. He does not comply with the requirements of protecting and promoting minority rights across the land.

In answer to a question I put him on June 28, 1985, as reported in *Hansard* at page 6365, the Prime Minister stated:

... I can assure you that, both as concerns the English-speaking minority in Québec and the French-speaking minority in Manitoba and elsewhere, the federal Government is there as a friend, as a supporter, and all our resources and potential will be used to promote the cause of our French-speaking or English-speaking minorities wherever they may be.

Will the Prime Minister live up to his promise? Will he fire the Secretary of State and replace him with someone who cares, who understands, and who will stand up for minorities wherever they are in this country?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, for a Government that had Serge Joyal in as Secretary of State it takes a lot of nerve to talk about promoting fairness.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Show your courage, Mulroney; show your courage.

**Mr. Mulroney:** Let me just read for my hon. friend what has taken place since the Secretary of State was sworn in.

[Translation]

June 7: Renewal and enhancement of the Secretary of State's official languages programs. The Government will earmark more than \$1.4 billion for these official languages programs over the next five years.

June 15: Signature of one general and three subsidiary agreements with Saskatchewan: \$63 million over 10 years. On June 15, again with Mr. Bouchard, signature of an agreement between Saskatchewan Francophones and the federal Government involving \$17 million over five years.

June 27: Signature of a general agreement with Prince Edward Island concerning services in French: \$4.5 million over five years.

Premier Ghiz congratulated the Secretary of State. On August 26: Signature of a draft agreement with Nova Scotia, the Collège de l'Acadie: \$5 million over five years.

November 28: Signature of a draft agreement with Prince Edward Island, the Community School Centre in Charlottetown: \$5.3 million.

As I speak, the Secretary of State, Mr. Bouchard, is busy negotiating agreements in favour of Québec's Anglophone minority. Such are the valid reactions of the Secretary of State!

[English]

RETENTION OF MINISTER IN CABINET

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, we have listened to the Prime Minister avoid a question that relates right to the heart of parliamentary democracy, namely, cabinet solidarity. We have attempted to put questions to the Secretary of State but he has performed the greatest disappearing act this week since Houdini. We cannot reach him.

**Mr. Della Noce:** He was here last night. Where were you?

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Yesterday, in response to a question I put to him, as reported at page 522 of *Hansard* the Prime Minister stated:

I was and remain opposed to having a notwithstanding clause in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Those were the words of the Prime Minister. The Secretary of State is quoted, as early as October 18, 1988, and as recently as December 21, as saying that the notwithstanding clause is "essential for the survival of certain fundamental Québec values".