

As for the relationships between our different language groups and the likelihood of their expanding to all regions of the country, we do not yet know. I would not be honest if I told you that the census and other statistics gave cause for optimism. However, I must emphasize that there is among our minorities a vitality and a determination to preserve their rights and their language that I have seen myself and that transcends mere facts and figures.

In terms of national unity, It would be presumptuous on my part to claim that language reform has saved the Canadian federation. However, I think I know where Canada would be today if we had not decided to try to redress the serious imbalances between anglophones and francophones.

Of course, there is still tension between regions, and the language tensions have not disappeared. How could it be otherwise in a country like ours? Only time will tell whether we can create a new and healthier unity based on respect for our two national languages. For the time being, I can only state that these rights must be recognized across Canada if we are to survive as a nation. Canada's newly-elected government is fully aware of this, and to me this is an element of continuity which, as I said at the outset, is very reassuring and encouraging.