

say that there has been no general policy before now to help *francophone* minorities to survive and develop.

If that was not always obvious, it was probably due to the fact that, because of its intricacy, it went far beyond the framework of one particular department and did not always deal only with the programs which directly affected the *francophone* and *anglophone* communities.

I would like to take only one example: the bilingualism policy in the federal administration, which was directed in large measure to providing equivalent services in French. I shall quote to that effect the statement made by Keith Spicer in his last report as Commissioner for Official Languages:

In officially recognizing and financially encouraging their provincial associations, by passing the Official Languages Act to extend their rights, and by broadening their self-awareness through socio-cultural animation, it made their rebirth possible. All of this has contributed to making the French speaking minority less of a "minority within a minority", in fact it has confirmed them as one of the two national "majorities".

As a result of that, each department must be more specific from now on and must take into account the needs of the minority communities when drawing up its annual program for the improvement of the quality of services delivered in both languages.

In another field, namely broadcasting, the main action of the Federal Govern-

ment has been to approve the Accelerated Coverage Plan of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, so that each official language community can be served in its own language.

Education

So far as education is concerned, I would like to mention the federal-provincial agreement entered into in 1970 with a view to encouraging the ten provinces to maintain and develop their educational system to serve the official language minority in their own language.

I have already touched on my department's socio-cultural activities which are clearly and directly geared to the development of the minority communities.

I could add to this list and refer for instance to the labelling policy, to the program for assistance to the provinces in the language training of their civil servants and in the translation of their statutes, to the program for assistance to the private sector and to voluntary associations, and to the activities of the federal cultural agencies.

We must also recognize however that a number of means that could help minorities fall within the jurisdiction of the provinces. It was that fact that led the Prime Minister to suggest to the provinces last September, that the linguistic rights of the minorities should be enshrined in the Canadian Constitution. Such an entrenchment would be a keystone in the

protection of minority language rights. It is the Federal Government's hope that the provinces will respond positively to this suggestion.

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...It is my pleasure to reaffirm today the policy positions of the Federal Government with respect more specifically to the official language minorities and to announce that a *mécanisme d'accueil* will be set up and that the social-action program of the Department of the Secretary of State will be considerably enlarged during the next five years. The principles governing our approach are quite definite but the ways and means of implementing them remain to be settled.

The principles

Language policy is a vital element of Canada's identity, and recognizes that:

- English and French are the official languages of Canada, providing a source of individual and collective enrichment for Canadians;
- the disappearance of official language minorities would jeopardize Canada's unity by reducing the country to two linguistic communities isolated within their own territorial limits;
- the continuing development of official language minorities in all provinces contributes to the openness of Canada's society to a variety of values and cultures.

In order to maintain and develop Canada as a society where citizens of the two official language communities can live, work and communicate on a basis of equality and respect, recognition of the principles of language equality should become part of the fabric of Canadian society:

- each Canadian should be able to choose either official language as a means of personal expression, development, and participation in Canadian society;
- belonging to either official language community should involve neither advantage nor disadvantage to citizens as to services they receive from their governments;
- governments should act to promote linguistic equality, and should not act in a way which restricts it.

The full realization of the above principles throughout Canada requires ongoing efforts by all orders of government and by individual Canadians, to achieve as fully as possible:

- the equality of the English and French languages in the legislatures, the courts, and in legislation;
- access to all levels of education in either official language;
- availability in both official languages of services provided to citizens by the various orders of government;
- availability in both official languages of information from various levels of government;

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Standing ovation for dedication to Canadian unity

Addressing the Canadian Club of Toronto recently on Canada's economic prospects, Finance Minister Jean Chrétien put aside his prepared text to make an impassioned promise to fight for Canadian unity.

Mr. Chrétien, once a lawyer in Trois Rivières, Quebec, said he once had "argued the other side of the problem" but, one day, another lawyer had suggested he see the rest of the country. When he did he came to realize what Canada had to offer. "Millions of people the world around would give their shirts to have the privilege of being Canadian citizens," he declared.

The Minister, calling for the removal of barriers that divide Canadians, said that one of his proudest moments was when he was Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and he had seen one of the first books printed in Inuit (Eskimo). "The Inuit are living proof that it is possible to be culturally and linguistically different while participating in Canadian life," said Mr. Chrétien.

He asked those in his audience who spoke French to speak to Quebecers and make sure they felt "comfortable" in Canada, as he speaks to English-speaking Canadians. "I know my English isn't perfect - but it's better than your French!"

Mr. Chrétien said that as a Roman Catholic, he had been "warned" about going into other churches but when, as part of his ministerial responsibilities, he had found himself in Anglican churches, he discovered that they were "more Catholic than the Catholic churches".

After 11 years as a federal Cabinet Minister "I've changed my views about Canada," said Mr. Chrétien, whose speech received a standing ovation.