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THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY AND BILINGUALISM 1967-1976

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INTRODUCTION

Federal bilingualism in Canada, as we know it today, is a recent phenomenon. It was one of the consequences of the changes which occurred in the economic, political and social structure of Quebec during the 1960s, the period known as the Quiet Revolution. During this time, "la belle province" underwent radical internal reform, provoked in part by the death of premier Maurice Duplessis in 1959 and the advent to power the following year of Jean Lesage and the Liberal Party. The all-encompassing power of the Catholic Church went into decline. The rural and land-based ideology associated with the "ancien régime" gave way to an unshakable faith in technology and industry. This revolution of sorts brought demands for changes in the status quo concerning the relationship between Quebec and the rest of the country. No longer willing to accept domination either by the Catholic Church or by outsiders, many French Canadians in Quebec were determined to have more input into the direction of their affairs. They wanted control not only of their vast mineral wealth, but also of their political destiny. The latter of these two would prove to

1 While bilingualism has existed in various degrees within the federal bureaucracy since the advent of Confederation, it was not until the 1960's that the issue became one of public debate.
be the lynchpin around which much of the debate about federal bilingualism would revolve.

The seeds of this debate were sown during the major intellectual struggle which took place in the province between those who felt that Quebec should become a separate or associated state within the Canadian federation, and those who sought to bring the province into greater contact with the rest of Canada, arguing that French Canada could survive "not by turning in on itself, but by reaching out to claim its full share of every aspect of Canadian life."  

Realizing the serious possibilities of such a debate, (the political separation of Quebec from the rest of Canada), the Liberals under Lester Pearson (1963-1968) initiated a policy of federal bilingualism aimed at undermining some of the major separatist and nationalist arguments which held that French Canadians were welcome in the federal government and the civil

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2 This is not to suggest that Quebec was the only group of French Canadians interested in the preservation of its language and the right to use it in communications with the federal government. There were obviously others, including Franco-Manitobans, Franco-Ontarians and the Maritime Acadians.  

service only if they spoke English, and that it was only in Quebec that French-speaking Canadians could be assured of being addressed in their own language. 4

The new program would be national in scope, backed and promoted by the central government. Among other things, it would guarantee French Canadians the right to address and receive communications to and from the federal government in their own language. In addition, it proposed to open up the traditionally English-speaking civil service to French-Canadian aspirants and to transform the national capital from an English city to a bilingual one.

As the official opposition, the Conservative Party had a difficult choice to make. If it supported the government's proposal for official bilingualism, it faced certain opposition in English Canada from which it drew its electoral strength. If it opposed the proposal, the government could then claim that the Conservatives were anti-French and reactionary, thus diminishing even further the party's chances of making any electoral gains in traditionally Liberal-voting Quebec.

Evidently the Liberals shared the same dilemma, for even though they were assured of Quebec's vote, they still needed the support of English Canada to govern effectively. Their situation was less precarious than that of the Conservatives for three reasons. First, because bilingualism was a positive proposal, not

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designed to take away English-Canadian rights, and appealing to people's sense of justice and fair play. Second, it was proposed as a response to the separatist threat brewing in Quebec. Trudeau's promise to deal with that threat had been one of his major political campaign planks. And third, their access to the immense government public relations apparatus, combined with the influence and persuasiveness of the Prime Minister's office, gave them a distinct advantage over the Conservatives in the shaping of public opinion. In comparison with the Liberals, the Conservatives as an opposition party openly divided over the question, were clearly in the weaker position. This division did not occur overnight. In fact, it's roots lay deep within the Diefenbaker prime ministership.

Conservative reaction to bilingualism, from the beginning of 'the bilingual era' had been ambiguous if not somewhat less than positive. As Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker had refused to create a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, claiming he was "already fully aware of the problem." 5 When it was eventually created, he responded by calling it "a forum for crackpots." 6 When the issue of bilingual federal cheques came


before the Cabinet, it was debated for many months. When it was finally decided to issue them, the decision was announced as a major change. 7

On a more positive note, in 1962 the Conservative Cabinet decided to introduce simultaneous translation facilities into the House of Commons, 8 thereby ending a long-held grievance of French Canadians that their speeches sometimes took days and even weeks to be translated. 9 In addition, Diefenbaker concurred with the 1962 Glassco Commission report on the civil service, noting that greater efforts should be made to attract more talented French Canadians and to create an environment in which they could work in their mother tongue. 10


10 J.E.Hodgetts, W.McClosky, R.Whitaker, V.Seymour Wilson, The Biography of an Institution (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972), p.328. Although not directly related to the bilingual question, the Conservatives were the first political party to appoint a French Canadian as Governor General.
Diefenbaker's relations with French Canada were never easy. His lack of competent advisors compounded the problem of his intrinsic non-understanding of the Quebec people, their history and their fears. He spoke French, or at least he attempted to, with an atrocious accent, but seemed to feel that as long as he was making the effort, that was all that counted. In an effort to explain the nature of Diefenbaker's relationship with this part of the country, the Vancouver Sun offered the opinion that like many westerners, Diefenbaker saw Canada in terms of pan-Canadianism. From this perspective, the 'French problem' was a minor aberration which would eventually disappear. In response to this 'problem' Diefenbaker proposed the concept of One Canada.

11 In Diefenbaker, Leadership Gained, Stursburg quotes show that this opinion was shared by Diefenbaker's contemporaries including Paul Martin (pp.191-2), Richard Bell (p.192) and T.C. Douglas (p.194).

12 Ibid., William Hamilton, p.153. Diefenbaker was not alone in this aspect. MacKenzie King, who 'understood' French Canada, did so while being unable to speak a word of the language. Lester Pearson's French was appalling.

13 "Prairie-bred Diefenbaker blind to what has been happening in Quebec", Vancouver Sun, October 1, 1965. PAC, (FAD, RC), RG 33 80, vol.134, "Federal political parties - Conservatives 1965". Pan-Canadianism, one supposes, was a point of view which held that Canada was a nation of many peoples who were all Canadians, regardless of their ethnic origin. This way of thinking evidently denied the validity of the notion of special status for a particular group.

14 As with most ideological catch phrases, interpretations of One Canada's origins vary. Author Patrick Nicholson attributes it to Sir Wilfred Laurier's wish that Canadian immigrants, who had come from many different parts of the world, should preserve their ethnic identities, at the same time maintaining "a greater pride" in their Canadian
The notion of One Canada was one of the basic tenets of Diefenbaker's political philosophy. It was an ideology born in western Canada and tailored to that region's particular demographic and cultural character. It sought to bridge the gap between the region's different ethnic groups by offering a higher ideal, that of Canada. Problems inevitably arose when this notion was applied to the rest of the country, especially Quebec, for the essential premise of this ideology was that Canada was an English country with one God (essentially Protestant), one monarch and one language.

Diefenbaker was not alone in both his attitude toward French Canada and his position on such matters as special status for Quebec. In fact much, but certainly not all, of the animosity and opposition generated within the party toward bilingualism and 'concessions' made to French Canada, came from fellow members of western prairie ridings. These men represented people whose nationality. In this vein, all people coming to Canada would be Canadians of, for example, Ukrainian descent, or French descent, rather than Ukrainian Canadians or French Canadians. Patrick Nicholson, Vision and Indecision (Don Mills: Longmans Canada Ltd., 1968), p.21. Thomas Van Dusen, on the other hand, felt that the idea was born on the prairie trails, in the railway section shacks and in the trenches of World War I. It was a Canadianism which respected differences, not erecting them into impassable barriers. Thomas Van Dusen, The Chief (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p.69.

15 Special Status-The idea that Quebec was not a province like all the others and that in consequence it should enjoy a different status. Inherent in this idea was Quebec control over such dossiers as immigration, as well as the right to opt-out of federal programs with which it did not agree.

16 Winn & McMenemy, Political Parties in Canada, p.197.
political priorities, cultural values and historical backgrounds differed greatly from those who lived in Southern Ontario, and whose views are often taken as representing those of the average Canadian. 17 Being far removed from Quebec and the Ottawa-Montreal-Toronto power triangle, they had little if any daily contact with French-Canadian people. Federal talk of bilingualism and of a better place for Quebec in Canada, therefore often fell on unreceptive ears.

It could perhaps be suggested that prairie Conservative MPs saw themselves as representatives of the millions of Canadians in western Canada of neither French nor English heritage. To become citizens, many of these people's forefathers had chosen to give up their ancestral languages and customs. With the advent of bilingualism, westerners became concerned that in order to become real Canadians, they would have to learn the language of a people most had never met, and who had played no part in the building of their western civilization. 18 Conservative members from the prairies became their voice, inviting Ottawa not to forget the substantial portion of the population which did not share

17 We use the term Southern Ontario in its broadest sense, referring to the home of the Loyalist, royalist, English Protestant ideology so prevalent in Canada. As a general statement it obviously does not hold true for every specific case, including the many ethnic districts in metropolitan Toronto.

18 Richard Gwyn, The Northern Magus (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980), p.279. This of course was quite erroneous, but perhaps accurately reflected the myth that 'the west' did not exist before the massive influx of European immigrants during the first decades of this century.
Southern Ontario's cultural background and preoccupations, but who nonetheless felt themselves just as Canadian as the most blue-blooded of Loyalists.

We might conclude then, that the influence of this 'prairie attitude' on the issues of bilingualism and biculturalism within the Conservative Party dates from the Diefenbaker era. Traces of it can clearly be seen during discussion preceding the 1961 census, when the Tory government attempted to introduce a third category under the heading 'ethnic origin': that of 'Canadian'. This choice was to be offered to those who for one reason or another did not wish details of their ethnic backgrounds to be registered. A petition signed by some 90,000 French-Canadians who saw the move as "la négation complète des intérêts de la collectivité canadienne-française," put an end to the idea. 19

The depth of Conservative indifference and/or opposition to French-Canadian unhappiness during this period, was partially revealed in a 1962 survey which revealed that almost 67% of Tory MPs were opposed even to the idea of 'cultural dualism'. 20 Another survey, published two years later, showed that only one half of Conservative MPs favoured installation of greater translation facilities in the committee rooms of the House of

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Commons. Had bilingualism not become a major issue, Conservative opposition would perhaps have passed unnoticed. French-Canadian discontent with the status quo, backed by a strongly Quebec supported federal government, decided otherwise.

By the time Stanfield took over the Conservative leadership in September 1967, the influence of Ontario-born but Saskatchewan raised John Diefenbaker was pervasive. The party, in many ways, had come to resemble the man. One of the most important consequences of this veritable revolution was the loss of Conservative support in the country's urban areas. The party had become an organization whose power base and ideological direction were rooted in the small towns and rural hinterlands of Canada.

21 Winn & McMenemy, Political Parties in Canada, p.197.

22 This discontent included the long-running dispute between Quebec and Ottawa over such questions as the federal government's prerogatives in direct taxation, the fear among many French Canadians over the inevitability of linguistic and cultural assimilation and the lack of French at the federal level, especially in the civil service.

23 As the table shows, members from the Prairies were a prominent force within the party throughout the years of Stanfield's leadership. Ontario was somewhat erratic while the Maritimes clearly declined in importance.

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<td>Prairies</td>
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<td>Maritimes</td>
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<td>Ontario</td>
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<td>B.C.</td>
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In effect, it was but a caricature of a national party, 24 its lack of urban representation 25 "completely unrepresentative of Canada" 26 as a nation.

Stanfield set out to change this, hoping to rid the party of some of its more arcane elements, and at the same time increase its representation in the country's urban areas. 27 As may be expected, his push to modernize the party met with resistance 28 both from those who had an emotional attachment to the past, and those who had an interest in the maintenance of the status quo. If he were to achieve his goals he would need the support of a good part of the party.

Stanfield emerged from the leadership convention as the 'ultimate choice' of only 54% of the delegates and the first

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25 By urban we mean large metropolitan areas such as Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver, etc. In fact, in 1968, the Conservatives could count only 4 such members, up from one the previous year, representing St. Hyacinthe, and Edmonton East, West and Centre. W.A. Wilson, The Trudeau Question (Montreal: The Montreal Star, 1972), pp. 88-93.

26 Filled with people from western rural areas, small town Ontario and the Maritimes, "who cherished values questioned in the cities." Interview-Spring 1986, the Honourable Robert L. Stanfield. (RLS-INT)

27 RLS-INT.

28 Stanfield noted that a leader can only go so far..."he can only go as far as the members are willing to go and perhaps a little further." RLS-INT.
choice of fewer than one quarter. Lacking a strong independent power base within the party, the number of his personal followers being relatively small in caucus, he was forced into a conciliatory role, giving positions and influence to those who had actively opposed him during the leadership process. In consequence, he became a party leader whose support, because few had any special commitment to him, was contingent on his effectiveness and leadership.

Born and raised in small town Nova Scotia and trained as a lawyer, Stanfield had been leader of the Nova Scotia Progressive Conservative Party for twenty years, eleven of which had been spent as premier of the province. In as far as 'the French question' was concerned, he was no ideologue. Rather, he had an open mind on the question, seeking wherever possible to better understand Quebec and its particular situation. In the years following his entry into federal politics, he took much time to make clear his position on French Canada and its place in Confederation.

Among other things, he recognized the reasonableness of the proposition that French Canadians outside Quebec ought to enjoy the same linguistic rights as those enjoyed by Quebec's English


30 Ibid., p. 124.

31 RLS-INT.
minority. He noted that at the time of Confederation English and French Canadians were equal, but that the French had since lost much ground. In granting special status to Quebec in specific areas, it was, therefore, not a question of creating new principles, but rather of bringing an established one up to date. In as far as official languages were concerned, he believed that English Canadians had no cause to fear the growth and strength of the French language. Bilingualism was not a luxury in Canadian life, he said, "C'est une simple reconnaissance de la réalité de notre pays." With bilingualism, Stanfield was obliged to take a stance which took into account not only the best interests of the party, but also the views of the general public as well as those of Conservative MPs. His eventual position on the question and


36 His situation underscores one of the basic political dilemmas. A backbencher's self-interest is satisfied by expressing aggressively the interests of his locality or region, whereas the party leadership must appeal to the
his stand on such controversial issues as the Two Nations Theory, 37 differed drastically from those of Diefenbaker and his supporters. The former was concerned with the future viability of the party, while the latter appeared to cling stubbornly to the past.

The debate provoked by the issue of bilingualism brought these differences of opinion and approach into stark contrast. The Conservative Party, in as far as the bilingual was concerned, became a divided camp, often pitting east versus west, rural versus urban and pro-bilingual versus anti-bilingual. Which one of the "visions du monde", or ways of seeing the world, would triumph? Would party members heed Diefenbaker's call for the maintenance of the status quo, embodied in the idea of One Canada, or would they follow Stanfield's course of change and accommodation, which promised to lead the party away from its recent past and its rural orientation, and toward possible electoral gains in Quebec and the coveted prize of power? The paths chosen by different Conservative members in relation to this last question, would indelibly mark the party and indeed the entire Stanfield era.


37 A theory which held that Canada was made up of two 'founding peoples' or nations, the English and the French. Stanfield's acceptance of this concept led to sharp debate within the party.
The interest for our study thus lies in illuminating one aspect of a particularly difficult period in Canada's recent history. The passage of the Official Languages Act in 1969 marked the beginning of a new era in French-English relations in Canada. Long-held Francophone demands for official recognition of their culture and linguistic equality for their language at last coincided with a government willing, indeed determined, to promote the idea to the rest of the country. As the official opposition, the Conservatives would be called upon to defend against a major shift in the status quo.

Such shifts as the one proposed by the Official Languages Act, especially when precipitated by people perceived to be in a minority position, meet inevitably with opposition from the majority. In Canada's case, opposition among 'Anglophones' (i.e. those of non-French origin) to the idea of "having French rammed down their throats," 38 was widespread. Many Canadians were not open to discussion and persuasion, resenting change and fearing its unknown implications.

The Conservative Party served as a conduit for many of these fears and prejudices. It was a task demanding strong leadership combined with unity of direction and purpose among the membership if the party was to avoid factional struggle. By force of fate and circumstance, however, the Conservatives in 1968 found themselves in a difficult situation caused ironically by their

38 A common expression at the time, seen in numerous articles and letters to the editor.
new leader's open endorsement of bilingualism. Had Stanfield been opposed to the idea, the party could have gone forth, come what may, united in its opposition. By refusing to do so, the new Tory chief opened up deep divisions within the party. Would he succeed in convincing members to support his position on bilingualism and biculturalism, or would old loyalties and political pragmatism prove the stronger of the two?

Essentially our paper is a descriptive account of the public (and wherever possible private) reactions of Conservative MPs to the major issues surrounding the bilingual question between 1967 and 1976. We hope to show that the Conservative Party during this period, officially in favour of bilingualism, fell victim to two distinct groups within the party. These groups, one from the west and the other from Southern Ontario, represented clearly defined interests for whom the idea of bilingualism and biculturalism was anathema.

Conservative defense of these interests, we shall argue, in addition to provoking sectarian disputes having a direct bearing on Stanfield's leadership, resulted in the reinforcement of the party's anti-French image at a time when the Tory leadership was attempting a breakthrough in Quebec. Between 1967 and 1976, the Conservative Party failed on three consecutive occasions to dislodge the Liberals from power. While we will make no attempt to link the Conservative position on bilingualism with their lack
of electoral success, it nonetheless would make an interesting point of departure for further research. 39

In our paper, we have in no way attempted an exhaustive descriptive interpretation of all Conservative criticisms offered. Instead, we have attempted to give an even-handed, descriptive, general interpretation of Conservative reactions. Our intention has been to give an overall view of the Conservative Party and the question of bilingualism between 1967 and 1976, without getting mired in either quantitative interpretation and analysis, or 'listing'.

Further, our research led us to conclude that the Conservatives lacked a specific battle plan on bilingualism. Apart from general 'cover all' themes such as opposition to the manner by which the civil service bilingual program was implemented, the sheer variety of Conservative criticism was monumental. It is for this reason that we chose to work by themes. We realize that this particular methodological approach, (themes and the division of the party into regions and wings), has its drawbacks in so far as it may leave some readers wondering if they are getting 'the full

39 One western newspaper, in a June 9, 1973 editorial, claimed that "The Conservatives have long been suspected of being somewhat less than sincere in their support of a functionally bilingual civil service. Such suspicions doubtless cost the Tories dearly in Quebec in the last two federal elections." "Conservative bilingualism", Calgary Albertan, 9 June, 1973. Treasury Board Press Clippings - 5 volumes held at CIRB (TBPC), vol.III. See also "Dief 'No' vote on language proposals hurts PC election hopes in Quebec", Toronto Daily Star, 9 June, 1973. (TBPC), vol.III.
picture'. To this query, we can but reply that 'the full picture' is a question of degree.

Our paper will be divided into five chapters. The first two, dealing with the Official Languages Act and the 1973 resolution on bilingualism in the civil service, are important for they provide an opportunity to observe in some detail the different emotional and regional perspectives offered by the various MPs in response to bilingualism. Also, it was during debate surrounding these two issues that the group we shall refer to as the Prairie Caucus publicly demonstrated its opposition to bilingualism and biculturalism.

The third chapter, dealing with bilingualism in the civil service, will permit a look at a second 'group' of Conservatives, representing Southern Ontario ridings. (The Loyalist Caucus) Throughout the entire period of Stanfield's leadership, members of this group would continually harass the government over the implementation of the bilingual program in the civil service. This chapter will look at why the MPs in question followed such a course of action, as well as some of the possible consequences and implications of their actions on the party.

The fourth chapter will discuss in much less detail some of the secondary issues of bilingualism: language legislation in Quebec (Bill 22); the use of the French language in air transport; the question of bilingualism in the armed forces; as well as some miscellaneous criticisms which do not easily fit into other categories. Through the bias of this chapter, the reader
will see that the bilingual question was not confined to major political debates, but was an issue which touched many aspects of Canadian life.

In our conclusion, we shall first offer a short summary of events discussed. Second, we will look at some of the reasons for Conservative reaction and criticism. And finally, there will be a brief look at some of the possible consequences of the bilingual issue on both the Conservative Party and on Robert Stanfield's leadership.

The reaction of Canadian political parties in general, and of the Conservative Party in particular, to the specific question of bilingualism in Canada has not yet been addressed in any detail. This absence of study is due in no small part to the relative newness of the subject, the lack of access to pertinent documentation, the fact that many of the actors are still alive, if not still in office, and a host of other questions related to contemporary history.

Preliminary research into our subject led us to a number of sources and studies dealing with the Conservative Party generally and the question of bilingualism specifically. For an historical understanding of the Conservative Party's relationship with French Canada, Marc LaTerreur's *Tribulations des conservateurs au Québec: de Bennett à Diefenbaker* was indispensable. Of more recent importance were the political sections of *The Canadian*.

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Annual Review, 41 George C. Perlin's study of leadership politics in the Conservative Party since the 1960s: The Tory Syndrome, 42 and Geoffrey Stevens' Stanfield. 43 Reference books such as the Reports of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, 44 William MacKay's Le bilinguisme canadien: bibliographie analytique et guide du chercheur, 45 and specialized studies including Janet O'Donnell Pampalon's master's thesis The Evolution of Anglo-Canadian Attitudes toward Bilingualism (1967-1976), 46 were also of notable help.

A major source of research material on the Conservative Party was the Conservative Party Papers and the Robert Stanfield Collection, both held at the National Archives in Ottawa. Those made available to us through the office of the national director of the Conservative party contained a wide variety of press clippings, especially from the pre-1970 era, as well as many


44 For a synthesis of the numerous reports submitted to the RCBB, see the six Reports of The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967-1970).


speeches made by various Conservative members from the 1950s onward. In view of the recent character of our research and the classified nature of much of the party material, we were unable to secure permission to review the private correspondence between Stanfield and the various members of the party, pertaining to the bilingual question.

While much of the material surveyed was of an obviously superficial nature, it was of use inasmuch as it reinforced facts previously recorded. In the case of the newspaper clippings from the pre-1967 era, they added to our knowledge of the Conservative Party in general, and of the bilingual issue in particular. Unfortunately, access to Liberal Party files of press clippings on the Conservative Party and bilingualism was denied us.

A third source was the Official Reports of the House of Commons Debates which enabled us to 'flesh out' much of what was said in the many newspaper articles reporting on Commons events. Contrary to many critics of the Debates who see them as little more than long-winded exercises in little-listened-to oratory, we found them to be of much use as a device enabling us to study the psychological atmosphere of the period.

By examining the arguments of the various MPs, both for and against bilingualism, including their descriptions of the social, economic and political difficulties occasioned by bilingualism in their ridings, we were able to construct a (albeit superficial) mental profile of the period. This in turn aided us in better
comprehending the different reasons, real and imagined, which incited the different MPs to take the positions they did.

As for the reactions of the various Conservative members to the bilingual question between 1967 and 1976, the series of microfilmed newspaper clippings, from all across Canada, held at Laval University's "Centre International de Recherche sur le Bilinguisme" (CIRB), was indispensable. Assembled under the direction of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, (OCOL) these reels contain a multitude of categories relating to the question of bilingualism in Canada between 1968 and the present. In addition, a much smaller collection of five volumes of press clippings put together by the Treasury Board of Canada (TBPC) and covering the period from 1 December, 1972 to 30 August, 1974, was also of significant help.

For the purpose of our thesis, we chose twenty categories from the OCOL series, all related to the national political scene, which we felt would give us a comprehensive overview of the Conservative Party's reactions to the bilingualism question. Of these twenty, we eventually chose seven which contained enough material for study, while at the same time remaining within our goal of topics related to national politics. These included the 1969 Official Languages Act, the 1973 parliamentary

47 As the collection is an ongoing one, the exact number of categories and reels naturally varies.

48 The majority of the other categories were of a more 'local' nature, such as the Acadian Federation of Nova Scotia, La Société Saint Jean-Baptiste in Montreal, etc..
resolution concerning bilingualism in the civil service, the question of the Civil Service's bilingual program between 1967-1976, Bill 22, the use of the French language in air traffic control in Canada and, finally, bilingualism in the armed forces.

Newspaper articles, written quickly in the heat of the event, often lack perspective. Working under the pressure of space restriction, daily deadlines and perhaps the psychological handicap of viewing history as simply a linear set of dates, events and personalities, journalists often fail to elucidate the basic structural changes which shaped the subjects of their articles, as well as those occasioned by the events and people to which they refer. Much of their work, in other words, is descriptive in nature, having and claiming no pretension other than to inform a mass audience.

Combined with this lack of perspective was the problem of ascertaining whether or not the clippings contained enough information to provide a competent description of each of the categories chosen. A complete re-reading of the newspapers for the years concerned aside, we feel confident that an accurate descriptive interpretation of the events, including many of the reactions provoked within the Conservative Party, was obtained from the clippings.

Finally, our interview with Robert Stanfield enabled us to touch on a number of subjects, including the former leader's position and feelings on the bilingual question, the reactions of the prairie members to the various issues, the two major debates
of 1969 and 1973 as well as some general questions related to the issue of the Conservative Party and bilingualism.

Our interview was of obvious interest and value in so far as Stanfield was one of the key actors in the events which constitute the subject of our paper. While not an in-depth discussion, it nonetheless enabled us to gain a better appreciation of 'the man' and of the difficulties he faced while party leader.

Interviews with political figures are often difficult due to the latter's reluctance to go into detail regarding the various people involved in the story the researcher is pursuing. Stanfield was no exception. In his defence, we recognize that many of the key figures during the period of our research are still alive and indeed, some are still in office.

Also, there was the question of time. Recalling exact details after ten and fifteen years is not always the easiest of tasks, as Stanfield was candid enough to admit. In retrospect, it was an interesting remark. One is led to wonder if the former Tory leader was simply admitting that time takes a toll on memory, or if perhaps in a very indirect way, he was saying that the events which occurred were, in the long run, of little significance. Perhaps he was right on both counts.
At the time of Confederation, French Canadians had long been accustomed to thinking of themselves as a nation and of Lower Canada as their country. The people wanted, as much as possible, to be separate from the other provinces; an autonomous French-Canadian nation controlled by French Canadians. 1

The ubiquitousness of this isolatist-type view came under increasing attack in the years following Confederation, as English-Canadian treatment of Francophone minorities in other parts of Canada began to intrude on the conscience of the Quebec populus. The New Brunswick School Question (1871) 2, the abolition of French language separate schools in Manitoba (1890) and the promulgation of Regulation 17 in Ontario, (1912) 3 served to


2 In 1871, the New Brunswick government passed a common schools act ending the 1858 practice of allowing local school boards to raise tax support for denominational schools. The law while a blow to Catholicism, a much more important issue at the time than language, did nothing to affect the position of the French language in the province's schools. Silver, The French Canadian Idea of Confederation, p.21.

3 In Ontario, unilingual French schools, tolerated since the early 19th century, were rendered bilingual in 1885. In the following years, religious and racial tensions associated with the Riel affair and the nationalist stance of the Mercier government mounted, culminating in the promulgation in 1912 of Regulation 17, making Ontario schools unilingually English. Silver, The French Canadian Idea of Confederation, p.23. See also Robert Choquette, Langue et Religion: histoire des conflits anglo-français en Ontario
focus Quebec's attention on the inequality, indeed the weakness, of its position vis-à-vis the rest of Canada.

Perhaps in reaction to these events, the 1890s saw the rise of the idea in Quebec, that Confederation had been meant to establish the "perfect equality of the two races before the law;" 4 an almost complete about face from the autonomist position of the 1860s. Ironically, bilingualism was coming to be interpreted as the sine qua non of Confederation. 5

In the first years of the twentieth century these new ideas were gathered together under the intellectual tutelage of Henri Bourassa. 6 To the English-Canadian nationalism of the time, Bourassa replied that

"it was possible for English and French Canadians to work together, but not on the basis of cultural unity. Confederation must be seen as an agreement between two nations...to live together on terms of equality." 7

The idea of bilingualism and biculturalism had been born. By the generation of nationalist historian Lionel Groulx, this idea had

(Ottawa: Editions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1977), 268 pages.


6 French-Canadian political leader, nationalist and founder of Le Devoir.

7 Silver, The French Canadian Idea of Confederation, p.193. While Bourassa was not the first to broach the subject, indeed, John A. Macdonald and Wilfred Laurier both brought it up on numerous occasions, he was none the less the first to make it a centrepiece of his political life.
become commonplace and it would remain so until the rise of modern separatism in the 1960s. 8

Thus the idea of the equality of the two cultures was well established in the minds of French Canadians by the time the Conservative government of John Diefenbaker came to power in 1957. Dominated by a combination of western and rural Canadian representation, both the party and its leader were little sympathetic to Quebec demands for official recognition of its language and culture. 9 As we saw, the Conservatives did make some concessions, initiating simultaneous translation in the House of Commons, issuing bilingual federal cheques and appointing the first French Canadian as Governor General. But these offerings were minor. Both sides stuck to their positions: the government, that French Canada was "asking too much" and Quebec that the government was "not offering anything of substance." The black man who is permitted to ride at the front of the bus is not content that the revolution stop there.

Diefenbaker's successor as Prime Minister, Lester Pearson, was more favourably disposed toward Quebec's concerns for


9 Diefenbaker's image was often one of anti-French and yet, according to the Vancouver Sun, a review of his entire record of public life until 1965 "provides no substantial evidence" that he was prejudiced against French Canadians. The article noted, however, that Diefenbaker had "accorded the approba­tion of silence to some of the torrid anti-Quebec hysteria fostered by certain of his backbench members from the prairies and the Yukon." "Prairie-bred Dief blind to what has been happening in Quebec", Vancouver Sun, 1 October, 1965, PAC, (FAD, RC), RG 33 80, vol.134, "Federal Politics and Political Parties-Conservatives 1965".
cultural and linguistic equality. An important manifestation of this openness was the setting up in 1963 of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (RCBB). The commission was directed by the government

"to investigate and report upon the existing state of bilingual and bicultural relations in Canada, and to bring forth recommendations to further develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between what was termed the two founding races; the English and the French."

Six years later the Official Languages Act became law.

We shall begin our discussion of the Conservative Party and the Official Languages Act (Bill C-120 as it was officially titled) with a brief look at the introduction and first reading. Following this we will examine Conservative criticism during second reading, by themes. These will include the timing of the legislation, the question of its constitutionality, the idea of coercion, C-120 and bilingualism in the civil service, the bilingual districts idea, and finally, the perceived effects of the Official Languages Act on national unity. We will conclude

10 Due in no small degree to the large Francophone representation within the Liberal party.

the chapter with a brief summary of the major ideas and criticisms raised by the Conservatives during the debate.

On October 17, 1968, Lester Pearson's Liberal successor as Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, rose in the House of Commons to introduce "an act respecting the status of the official languages in Canada." Drawn directly from the recommendations made by the RCBB, it consisted of three major parts. The first established English and French as the official languages in the federal civil service, all Crown agencies, and in all federal courts situated in the proposed bilingual districts. Second, the bilingual districts in question were to be set up by an appointed council in areas where a minority of either official language group constituted ten percent of the population. Third, to investigate infractions of the new legislation, a federal language commissioner, who would report directly to parliament, was to be appointed. 12

Symbolically, two Conservatives rose in reply to Trudeau's opening speech: Robert Stanfield (Halifax) speaking for the party as a whole, and Jack Horner (Crowfoot), speaking for its prairie wing. Concurring with the Prime Minister, Stanfield noted that C-120 would further the cause of national unity and for that reason the Conservative Party would support it. Looking ahead, he noted some of the possible difficulties the legislation might provoke within the federal bureaucracy. Inequality in the civil service must be avoided at all costs, he said. Unilingual people 12

must not be denied a career in the service of their country, nor
should their opportunities for promotion be impaired by their
lack of a second language. 13

Horner stood "to put western Canada's position on record."
Quoting figures showing that a mere five percent of the western
population had a working knowledge of French, 14 he asked what
was going to happen to western representation within the new
bilingual civil service. 15 Noting that two ministers from Quebec

13 Ibid., pp.1484-86. An interesting question which arises
at all such moments as this, is whether or not Stanfield was
including Francophones when he spoke of unilingual civil
servants, or if he was making the unconscious assumption
that such a thing did not exist.

14 Ibid., p.1491. In fact, the 1971 census showed the
figures to be closer to 7%, if one interprets those of
French origin as having a working knowledge of French. The
census indicated that in Manitoba, 42% of the people were
of British origin, 9% of French and 49% of a third element
including German, Polish and Ukrainian. In Saskatchewan, the
figures were 42%, 6% and 52% respectively, with neither
English nor French as the majority group. And finally, in
Alberta, the British and Third element were tied at 47%
each, with French far behind at 6%. [Canada Census 1971.
Cited in B.W.Hodgins, R.P.Bowles, J.L.Hanley and G.A.Rawlyk,
Canadians, Canadiens and Québécois (Scarborough: Prentice-

15 Until the 1960s, Francophones had been posing themselves
the same question with regard to the old unilingual civil
service. In 1919, 22% of civil servants were Francophones.
By 1946, this figure had dropped to 13%. (Hodgetts et al.,
The Biography of an Institution, p.473.) Seven years later
(1953), further studies revealed that a mere 13.4% of top
civil servants were Francophone. (Language & Society, No.10,
Summer 1893, p.12). The reasons for this varied. They
included the obvious language barrier, the huge increase in
Anglophone personnel occasioned by the two world wars and
finally, the fact that in the past, Francophone politicians
had accepted a system of "patronage and honorific positions"
(Hodgetts et al., The Biography of an Institution, p.481)
which had severely restricted Francophone influence within
the civil service.
were presently in charge of portfolios which were of prime concern to western Canada, he raised the spectre of the entire civil service (bilingual and thus implicitly controlled by either Quebeckers or bilingual Ontarians) directing the affairs of an area (western Canada) of which they had little practical knowledge. 16 The government, he concluded, before offering the resolution, should have assured that the whole country would be given the chance to acquire a working knowledge of French, so that no given region would be placed in a disadvantageous position in relation to the other regions of the country. 17

Having established from the beginning that there were at least two distinct currents of thought in the Conservative Party regarding bilingualism, 18 members had to wait eight months for the opportunity to express themselves on the subject. 19 On May 16th, 1969 debate on second reading opened. It soon became clear that the notion, promoted by the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party, that discussion of language rights was of primordial

16 Ibid., p.1491.


19 This was due to the large amount of legislation introduced by the Trudeau government, debate of which preceded that of C-120.
importance to the future of Canada, did not receive the unqualified approbation of the Conservative Party. The reasons for this were varied. In 1969 the Canadian economy was in recession. Regional disparity was continuing to cause unrest in the Maritimes, and in the west farmers were unable to sell their previous years' supply of grain, due to weak markets. In the midst of these less than favourable economic conditions, the Trudeau government chose to introduce its language legislation. The Conservatives, like Queen Victoria before them, were not amused.

Stanfield spoke of the widespread feeling that the economic problems of the country were being neglected by the government. 20 Jack McIntosh, (Swift Current-Maple Creek) somewhat more direct than his leader, called the bill "frivolous," and said that unemployment, inflation and the cost of living were all more important than language legislation. 21 The majority of his colleagues who spoke on the issue, agreed. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert) was perhaps the most acerbic of these, noting that in a time of great economic difficulty the government chose "to discuss homosexuality, abortion and language rights." 22 One can well imagine the Prime Minister becoming even more inscrutable than ever.

Two members of the Conservative Party were unexpectedly in favor of the bill and its timing: Francophones Roch LaSalle (Joliette) and Théogène Ricard (Saint-Hyacinthe). LaSalle, obviously closer to the Quebec scene and more implicated than his Anglophone colleagues, disagreed with his fellow Conservatives. He noted that it was indeed the time to discuss C-120. In fact, he said, it was "urgent, desirable and advisable to pass it." 23 Ricard concurred, declaring that "all those with at least a little common sense will admit that it is high time that we consider this measure." 24

The mostly negative reaction within the Conservative Party over the very fact of even debating the bill gives some indication of both the economic situation and the legislative priorities of the members and their constituents. Although it is unlikely that the Conservatives would have wholeheartedly supported the measure even had the economy been in excellent condition, the fact that it was not gave them one more reason to oppose the legislation.

Looking at the question in purely economic terms, the criticisms of the various MPs appear justified in that they reflected the very real preoccupations of their constituents. English Canada was seeking solutions to its economic difficulties. The people had little time for the more "frivolous" questions of language legislation. French Canadians, on the other

23 Ibid., p.9084.
hand, were seeking solutions to their linguistic and cultural problems. For them, there was nothing "inappropriate" or "almost criminal" about the introduction of the legislation at that particular time, it was simply a long delayed recognition of what they saw as their fundamental rights as Canadians. While there was no overt hostility between these two particular groups within the party, they both pointedly put their differences of opinion clearly on record.

Along with the economic issue, the question of the constitutionality of the proposed legislation was one which caused much controversy both inside and out of the House. Proponents of the bill argued that it in no way infringed on provincial authority, nor did it contravene the British North America Act (BNA Act), which expressly forbade the government from limiting or diminishing the rights guaranteed French Canadians by that particular section. Opponents, both Liberal and Conservative, argued the opposite, accusing the government of 'riding roughshod' over both the provisions of the constitution as well as the expressed reservations of various provincial premiers.

Conservative comment and criticism concerning this issue was varied. There were calls for the bill to be sent to the Supreme Court.


27 Specifically, Section 133.
Court for judgment before discussion in the House 28 and criticism over lack of prior agreement with the provinces, about the bill. 29 Martial Asselin, (Charlevoix) in contrast to many of his Anglophone colleagues, offered an alternative point of view which left little doubt where his feelings lay. "We hear objections," he said, "that I find very insignificant, to the effect that the bill is not constitutional." Dismissing these, he continued: "If Parliament were to take the time to consider all such objections, Canada would never achieve bilingualism and biculturalism."

Agreeing with federal Justice Minister John Turner, he declared that C-120 was nothing more than "a political instrument for the development of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada." 30

The major Conservative offensive over the constitutionality of C-120 was launched by Jack McIntosh. In a carefully worded presentation, he offered the most lucid of the Conservative attacks on this question. He cited Section 133 of the BNA Act which guaranteed that either the English or French languages could be used in Commons debates, in the Legislature of Quebec, and in all federal and Quebec courts. 31 Nowhere, he said, was there any reference to the two languages in question being the official languages of Canada, which was in direct opposition to


the declaratory clause of C-120 which stated that "the English and French languages are the official languages of Canada for all purposes of the Parliament and the government of Canada..." 32 What then is the government up to?, he asked. 33 "I suggest that the government intends to ignore the constitution." 34

This last remark is interesting for it was more than a simple jibe at the Prime Minister or the government. The style of government characteristic of Trudeau's first years in power was didactic; it sought to teach the people, to lead them toward acceptance of government programs in a logical and intellectual manner. In the case of bilingualism, the opposite was true. Debate stopped. Where before there had been evolution and discussion, suddenly it was 'my way or no way'. This angered people who feared the government would force them to learn a second language. 35

This idea of compulsion, of the imposition of the French language on the rest of Canada, was one of the great myths of the official language era, propagated through ignorance, 36 fear,

32 Ibid.
34 Ibid. p.8834.
35 RLS-INT.
36 In October 1976, seven years after the introduction of the Official Languages Act, a St. Pierre, Manitoba shopkeeper said that his understanding of bilingualism was that "a French guy can come into my general store and demand to be served in French. If I can't do it, I'm breaking the law." Toronto Star, 9 October, 1976, cited in Robert M.Laxer, Bilingual Tensions in Canada (Toronto: The Ontario
political exploitation and governmental maladroitness. 37 In the
eye of the storm created by this issue were the Prime Minister
and his French-Canadian ministers, who stood accused of plotting
to force all Canadians to learn French. Trudeau's dominating
intellect, his command of both official languages, and his
determination to improve the position of the French-Canadian
people and their language in Canada, came up against English-
Canadian resistance and anger.

Debate on C-120 provided the perfect forum for the venting
of some of this emotion. For refusing either to consult with the
provinces before introducing C-120, or to consider their argu­
ments about the constitutionality of the bill, Trudeau was
accused of "using the back door approach" to achieve equality for
the French language in Canada, 38 and of "attempting to force
(his) views on western Canada in an underhanded manner." 39

Conservative opinion on this issue was divided. Stanfield
noted that the purpose of the bill, as he saw it, was not to

Institute for Studies in Education, 1979), Curriculum Series
41, p. 18. As US humorist Josh Billings once said, "The
trouble ain't that people are ignorant, it's that they know
so much that ain't so."

37 For an excellent example of the apogee of this type of
thinking, see J.V.Andrew, Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow
(Richmond Hill: BMG Publishing, 1977), in which the author
theorizes on the plans of Pierre Trudeau and Gérard
Pelletier to turn Canada into a French-speaking country by
way of colonization from Quebec.

VIII, p.8923.

compel English Canadians to learn French, nor vice versa. If this had been the case, he said, "I would oppose it." Martial Asselin echoed his leader's words, remarking that the bill in no way meant that English and French had to be spoken all over the country. "Those who explain the bill this way do so in bad faith, and are extremists." Melvin McQuaid (Cardigan) stated that according to his interpretation of C-120, it in no way required that every person in Canada learn a second language. The bill simply assured that all Canadians could communicate with the government in the language of their choice.

Walter Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris) was of the opposite opinion, noting that in western Canada the nub of the matter of resentment towards C-120 rested in the fact that it represented compulsion to many. Schumacher (Palliser) spoke of the government seemingly wanting "to force these provisions (of C-120) on people whether they want them or not." And Coates (Colchester-Cumberland) noted simply that he was against the idea of compulsion in the area of language rights; against the idea that people

42 Ibid., p.8875.
43 Ibid., p.8865.
should be forced to have a working knowledge of a second lan-
guage. 45

This reaction against the perceived threat of coercion was
no more evident than in Conservative comment on the implementa-
tion of bilingualism in the civil service. Backed by powerful
unions, and forming in itself an integral part of the parliamen-
tary community, the federal bureaucracy was on the front line of
all changes in the government's bilingual policy. This was
especially so in the Ottawa region where volunteers to man the
ramparts of the status quo were in great supply. The battle
pitted, on one side, the middle and higher echelon English-
speaking civil servants, and on the other, bilingual and often
unilingual young French Canadians. The former had tradition and
English Canadian public opinion on their side, the latter, the
government and its public relations machine.

The core of the question centered around the ideas of
institutional versus individual bilingualism. Should the civil
service as an institution be able to serve the public in both
languages in those areas where numbers demanded, or should each
civil servant be obliged to learn a second language? The govern-
ment argued that institutional bilingualism was its primary goal,
with individual bilingualism to come at a later date. Opposition
forces, playing on the career ambitions and innate prejudice of

45 Debates, 23 May, 1969, vol.VIII, p.9005. One suspects that Coates was referring to Anglophones.
the majority, countered with images of mass schooling, coercion and full-scale firings of unilingual employees. 46

Ever cautious, Stanfield noted that bilingualism would cause hardship on unilinguals in the civil service. He suggested that emphasis should be put on providing bilingual government services to the extent that it was practical, rather than obliging all public servants to become bilingual. 47 The Conservative leader noted that many people felt that there was no future for unilingual people in the civil service, that they should therefore no longer bother to apply.

He recognized moreover that the government had taken these fears into consideration when it had announced that 'willingness to learn' would be a criterion in the selection of future civil service candidates. "We must remember," he said, "that a substantial proportion of Canadians are of origins other than English and French. Care must be taken not to create injustice." 48

Playing his trump card, he then called for the incorporation into

46 The government based its argument on Section 9 (1) of C-120 which states quite clearly that "every department and agency of the government of Canada...within the National Capital Region, at the place of its head or central office in Canada...and at each of its principle offices in a federal bilingual district...(has the duty to insure that) members of the public can obtain available services from and can communicate with it in both official languages." Statutes of Canada, 1968-69, 17-18, Elizabeth II, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969), p.1217.


48 Ibid., pp.8791-2.
the act, of assurances that the jobs of unilingual employees would be protected. 49

Opinion among other Conservative members was again divided. Some prairie MPs expressed fears that the civil service would soon oblige all members to speak both official languages, rather than putting the emphasis on the bilingual character of the institution itself, leaving the workers the choice to learn a second language if they wished. 50 Somewhat less dogmatic, Asselin argued that civil service bilingualism meant no more than equal opportunity for both English and French Canadians within the service, as well as the opportunity for both groups to be attended to in the language of their choice. 51

Heath MacQuarrie, (Hillsborough) in a more insightful approach than those of many of his colleagues, noted that the long period of inequality made it seem as if present day advances were arriving too rapidly. 52 He warned however, that "we must not overprize linguistic ability at the expense of general merit in selection of civil service candidates." 53

49 Ibid., p.8791.

50 Their arguments were typified by Walter Dinsdale, who raised the spectre of a "split-entity Canada", with an English business community and a French civil service. Debates, 21 May, 1969, vol.VIII, p.8925; and Cliff Downey, (Battle River) who called bilingualism in the civil service "the unmentioned condition of employment and advancement." Debates, 21 May, 1969, vol.VIII, p.8918.


53 Ibid., p.9078.
MacQuarrie's comment on the rapidity of change must have seemed appropriate to those of his fellow Conservatives who took umbrage at the government's proposal for distinct linguistic enclaves for the protection of specific minorities who, until that time, had lived in harmony within their respective communities. Called bilingual districts, they were to be set up by a committee appointed by the government. They would be situated in areas where English and French were in a minority position, but where they made up at least ten percent of the population of that given area. Within their boundaries, all government services would be available in both official languages.

Expressed Conservative reaction to the proposal was highly negative. Nine of the ten Tories who mentioned them, not surprisingly came from Prairie ridings. McIntosh called them "language ghettos...refuges for specifically designated Canadians." Dinsdale compared them to Indian reservations and Downey spoke of the utilization of the districts for "political gerrymandering" in the future redistribution of electoral seats. This reaction is best understood when one remembers that the basis for the whole idea of bilingual districts was the

54 A vague term including census and school districts, as well as federal or provincial electoral regions.

55 The idea never got off the ground due to difficulties in defining the boundaries.


57 Ibid., p.8870.

notion of special status for the French Canadian, an idea
repugnant to many from the west. French-Canadian Conservatives
predictably had nothing to say on the subject, for included in
the proposal was the suggestion that the whole of Quebec become a
bilingual district.

Finally, we come to the issue of national unity. An ever
present notion in Canadian political discussion, the very vague­
ness of the term lends to its being applied to almost any
situation. The debate on the Official Languages Act was no
exception, with seventeen of the Conservative members who rose to
speak during second reading mentioning the possible and/or
probable effects of C-120 on national unity.

The tenor of their remarks was decidedly negative, ranging
from divisive, 59 and discriminatory, 60 to the idea that the
legislation would impose stress, 61 and create opposition to
French language rights, 62 both, where none had existed before­
hand. Once again, French-Canadian members surprisingly shed no
light on their views apart from Asselin's point that if C-120
were to be a means of national unity, it would have to be clearly
explained, so that English Canada did not fear the loss of any of
its established rights. 63 The general consensus, among English­

60 Ibid., p.8871.
Canadian Conservatives at least, seemed to favour the preservation of the status quo.

On the May 27th, 1969, what Stanfield had feared would happen, but had been assured would not, did. When the Speaker called for a voice vote to confirm the House's acceptance of the principle of the legislation, before sending it on to committee for clause by clause discussion preceding third reading, there was a commotion in the House. Five Conservatives including Skoreyko, McIntosh, Downey, Harry Moore (Wetaskiwin) and Horner, all from the Prairies, had risen obliging the Speaker to call for a formal vote. The bells in the House of Commons rang, summoning members to stand and be counted. The vote revealed seventeen Conservatives, sixteen from the Prairies, including Diefenbaker, and one from Nova Scotia (Coates), who felt strongly enough about the measure to go against the wishes of their party leader, and to risk incurring the wrath of their fellow members who had voted for the measure, many against the wishes of their constituents.

Debate on C-120 thus revealed serious differences of opinion within the Conservative Party. Concerning the six issues

64 Although caucus secrecy prevents us from knowing what the reactions of the members were to the vote, Stanfield dismissed the idea of disciplining the seventeen, saying that the party relied on discussion and persuasion rather than coercion. "Stanfield puts down French bill rebels", Globe and Mail, (Toronto) 29 May, 1969, p.1. In a later interview, he admitted that different members "were mad as hell" because they had voted for C-120 against the wishes of their constituents, but he mentioned nothing about retribution. RLS-INT.
surveyed, those members of the Prairie Caucus who spoke were almost completely and consistently negative in their reactions. Three major currents of this reaction included the maintenance of the status quo, rejection of the idea of special 'official' status for the French language and culture and finally, the idea that almost a third of all Canadians who were of neither British nor French heritage, risked the marginalization of their existence and contribution, as a result of the government's insistence on the idea of bilingualism and biculturalism.

The preponderant 'negativeness' of the Prairie Caucus's reactions was counterbalanced to a certain degree by the more neutral or positive positions taken by some of the Maritime and Ontario members. We say 'to a certain degree', for the speeches of the MPs from these areas were often innocuous, offering little more than bland general support and low-key criticism. Having no personal (cultural, religious or linguistic) stake in the question, these men had obviously little cause to roll out their emotional and rhetorical heavy artillery. As a result, the press took little note of them. French-Canadian members took expected stances, but saw the impact of their speeches limited by their very paucity and perhaps by self-restraint shown in respect to Stanfield's position on the issue.

The damage, however, was done. The party had been openly

split along both regional and linguistic lines. 66 While certainly not the first time that the Conservatives had divided over contentious legislation, the cleavage occasioned by the vote on C-120 nonetheless occurred at a particularly inopportune time for Stanfield. As the first piece of potentially divisive legislation to be debated under his leadership, the new Tory chief was under considerable scrutiny as to how he would handle opposition, which had been openly manifested within the party long before the vote took place.

Stanfield realized that a very substantial majority of Conservative members would have preferred to vote against C-120. 67 It was his opinion, however, that if the Tories opposed the bill as a party, they ran "a grave risk of being reduced to just a regional group." 68 In consequence, he argued that the caucus should support the legislation on the grounds that it was

66 The split was a matter of some interest to the press. Claude Ryan concluded that the vote had revealed more than a simple divergence of opinion within the Conservative ranks. The party, he said, was "profondément divisé" over the issue. "Divergence ou diversion chez les conservateurs", Le Devoir, 30 May, 1969, pp.1,2. Pierre-C O'Neil saw the split as being due to two major factors: personal antipathy toward Stanfield and the different perception of an MPs role, held by prairie members. Rather than try and persuade their constituents "de l'à-propos d'une législation nouvelle et difficile," they saw their job as simply to "traduire en Chambre l'opinion majoritaire de leurs commettants." "En disant non au bill des langues les tories dissident voulaient d'abord obéir à leurs commettants", Le Devoir, 31 May, 1969, pp.1,2. The Calgary Herald called the split "the last stand of the Diefenbaker cowboys." "Tories split debated", The Gazette, (Montreal) 5 June, 1969, p.7.

67 RLS-INT.

68 Stevens, Stanfield, p.234.
essential to the maintenance of French-Canadian confidence in Confederation. 69 As head of an opposition party, Stanfield was not in a position to impose his will in the same way as a government leader, whose repertoire of disciplinary aides ranges from refusing public appearances to withholding financial aid to recalcitrant members' constituencies. 70 Instead, he had to rely more on his powers of goodwill and persuasion. 71 His ultimate inability to impose his leadership on dissident members reflected not only the power of the Diefenbaker-led Prairie Caucus, but also the difficulties he faced as a political leader lacking in what many perceived as charisma and 'positive image appeal.' 72


70 The importance of this is underlined by author Richard Gwyn when, speaking of Trudeau's Quebec lieutenant, Marc Lalonde's role of keeping Quebec Liberal backbenchers in line, he noted that in 1979, with Trudeau temporarily out of office, Quebec MPs "...freed from his discipline by being in opposition...rebelled and asserted their independence." Gwyn, The Northern Magus, p.80. See also "Le bilinguisme n'a pas obtenu ses lettres de créance à l'ouest d'Ottawa", La Presse, 9 June, 1973, p.A8, wherein Liberal discipline during the 1973 'bilingualism in the civil service debate' is remarked upon.

71 Could Stanfield have done more? Claude Ryan felt not, noting that any discipline imposed would only be superficial, lasting only until the next debate involving a fundamental issue and opposing viewpoints. "Divergence ou division chez les conservateurs", Le Devoir, 30 May, 1969, p.4. Jack Horner noted in his book that "...there was no way he (Stanfield) was going to get a unanimous vote." Jack Horner, My Own Brand (Edmonton: Hurtig Press, 1980), p.98.

72 The issue of Stanfield's image plagued him throughout his entire leadership. Lacking Trudeau's flare, he was often portrayed as the nice guy who would inevitably finish last. Gwyn saw Stanfield as lacking the "toughness" so essential
As the government heated up its public relations campaign in favor of bilingualism, Stanfield would be faced with some hard decisions. Would he continue to allow opposition to his views from among those members opposed to bilingualism, or would he find a solution which would allow the party to close ranks and at the same time enable those who had defied him to save face? To exclude from the caucus or otherwise discipline those who opposed him risked setting the stage for an open confrontation between Diefenbaker and himself. This the Tory leader could not allow to happen and as a conciliator would avoid at all costs, even if it left him open to charges of poor leadership. 73

In the final analysis the debate over C-120 revealed that only one section of the party was opposed to the idea of bilingualism and biculturalism to a degree where it was willing to break party discipline to make its point. 74 Hopes within the

73 Horner writes that Stanfield was "an impossible leader," (p.85) and that he would be a poor Prime Minister "for he couldn't make decisions." (p.92) Horner, My Own Brand.

74 Somewhat surprisingly, during the entire debate only three of Ontario's seventeen MPs, Rynard (Simcoe North), Nesbitt (Pembina) and Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka), made
Conservative leadership that the issue would end there proved to be in vain. As we shall see, Tory opposition to bilingualism continued throughout the period of Stanfield's leadership. It would be another four years, however, before the party as a whole, at the request of the Prime Minister, would be invited to express its views once again. This time the theme would ostensibly be that of bilingualism in the civil service.

75 At the end of a Conservative policy conference four months later, (October 1969) Stanfield stated that the questions of bilingualism and biculturalism were "a settled matter." Canadian Annual Review for 1969, (CAR) pp. 16-17.
CHAPTER II

DEBATE ON THE DECLARATION OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES
RESPECTING EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA (1973)

In the previous chapter, we saw that arguments surrounding the Official Languages Act exposed some of the passion, anger and resentment which seem to simmer just below the surface of all issues having race, religion or language as their central theme. In the case of C-120, debate revealed three major Conservative Party difficulties.

The first of these was Robert Stanfield's struggle with former party leader John Diefenbaker. Stanfield had come to the leadership of the party following a bitter internal factional dispute which saw former Prime Minister Diefenbaker lose the leadership of the party. His loss had been attributed to the machinations of party president Dalton Camp, 1 who had in turn supported Stanfield's candidacy as party leader. Since that time, Diefenbaker had either failed to support Stanfield, or had come out publicly against his positions, as in the case of the Official Languages Act. 2 As Diefenbaker was the de facto leader

1 Strongly identified with Toronto power and influence. For opposing views on both the man and the process which led to Diefenbaker's fall, see Stevens, Stanfield, pp.157-195 and John Diefenbaker, One Canada The Tumultuous Years 1962-1967 (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977), pp.272-286.

2 This would remain the case throughout Stanfield's tenure. In a 1975 interview he said that Diefenbaker "certainly hasn't made it any easier for me..." PAC, Robert Stanfield Collection, (RSC) MG 32 C-21, vol.19, "Speech-Question Period 18705/75", p.8.
of the party's prairie caucus, his opposition to bilingualism and his refusal to come to terms with Stanfield's stand on the issue, were of serious concern.

The second problem was the continuing susceptibility of the party to accusations of anti-French and anti-bilingual tendencies. To these charges, the party could offer little defense. The speeches of the various MPs spoke for themselves. The virulence of some of the prairie members' remarks during debate on C-120 had left little doubt as to their feelings on the subject. Any flicker of hope that French Canadians might have had as to the general acceptance of the idea of 'Canada's two founding peoples' had been effectively doused.

Finally, there was the seeming ease with which certain Conservative members allowed themselves to express opinions on bilingualism which could only harm the party. How could so many MPs have refused to follow the directives of their leader? These people knew Stanfield's position on the question and yet they insisted on opposing him. Were they 'party men'?

Stanfield supporters might argue that while they may indeed have been party men, the seventeen MPs, in voting against the Official Languages Act, did not have the best interests of the party at heart. Forsaking its higher interests, they thought only of embarrassing Stanfield by showing him that his stance on bilingualism was unacceptable to western Canadians. Or, perhaps they took their positions to spite Stanfield and what they saw as his eastern backers, who had manoeuvred their beloved Diefenbaker
out of power. These same men would contend, on the other hand, that they, and not Stanfield, had the better interests of the Conservative Party at heart. This, by showing their leader that his stance on bilingualism was highly unacceptable to a great many Canadians, people who were solid supporters of the Conservative Party. 3

In summary then, three issues: Diefenbaker's opposition to Stanfield, the continuing anti-French image of the Conservative Party, and the refusal of Prairie MPs to adhere to the party's position on official languages, were all intimately linked to the issue of Conservative reaction to bilingualism. The 1973 resolution on civil service bilingualism, with its same inherent proposition in favor of two official languages and cultures, would cause each of these problems to re-surface.

As with the debate on the Official Languages Act, our discussion of the question of the 1973 resolution will be by themes. We shall look first at Conservative reaction to the Drury Guidelines, followed by reaction to the resolution's introduction, the question of the timing of the debate, criticisms of...

3 The issue of the best interests of the party leads one to question whether federal MPs, who represent constituencies and regions, too often fail to take a longer view of issues. One might argue that only federal leaders, who are responsible to the whole of the electorate, can afford to choose between politics and statesmanship. Just before the opening of debate, Le Devoir noted that Prairie MPs were "coincés (...) entre l'intérêt supérieur du pays, l'intérêt à long terme de leur parti, le sentiment et les préjugés d'une bonne partie de leur électorat, sans parler de leur conscience." "La résolution sur le bilingualism provoque des tiraillements chez les conservateurs", Le Devoir, 31 May, 1973, p.6.
bilingualism in the civil service and, finally, the attitude of
the government towards opposition to bilingualism. As with the
previous chapters, we shall conclude with a short summary and
analysis.

The federal election of November 1972, the closest in
Canadian history, saw the government fall from 147 seats to 109,
and the Conservatives rise from 72 to 107. The Liberals' near
fall from power was the subject of much discussion. Minister of
Regional and Economic Expansion, Jean Marchand, claimed that the
election results indicated the unhappiness of Ontario about the
amount of French representation in the federal government. In
response to theories concerning an English-Canadian backlash
against the government's bilingual policies, Communications
Minister Gérard Pelletier said he felt that bilingualism had not
been an important election issue except in several Ottawa area
civil service ridings. His colleague, Manpower and Immigration
Minister Bryce Mackasey, was of the opinion that economics, and
not culture, had been the Liberal's major stumbling block.

4 "Un début d'autocritique", Le Devoir, 1 November, 1972,
p.1.

5 Ibid., p.10. Pelletier's opinion was shared by at least
one newspaper, which noted that the Conservatives had won at
least six seats in the Ottawa area "apparently mainly on the
issue of bilingualism in the civil service." "Bilingualism
backfires on PM", Winnipeg Tribune, 9 April, 1973. (TBPC),
vol.II.

6 "Battus par le chômage et Lewis", Le Devoir, 2 November,
1972, p.6. Interestingly, of the Seventeen Conservatives
who voted against the principle of the Official Languages
Act only seven, Cadieu, (Meadow Lake), Downey, Gundlock,
(Lethbédidge), McIntosh, Moore, Simpson, (Churchill) and
_Le Devoir_, summing up the different interpretations and explanations, concluded that while there were any number of reasons for the Liberals' near defeat, ranging from Trudeau's personality, to poor government management, to the wish among English Canadians that the Liberals stop talking about Quebec, in the final analysis the vote was more anti-Trudeau than anti-Quebec. 7

A similar article published three days later, concluded that the election had caused a polarization of opinion. It noted that the Conservative Party and a portion of the country's press interpreted the results as a reaction against the government and its economic policies, while the Francophone press saw it as a racial vote and a backlash against the increased French presence in Ottawa. 8

However one chose to construe the results, the election raised the ire of a great many Francophones, including the Prime Minister, who judged some of the Conservative campaign tactics unacceptable. More specifically, the Liberals were upset that some Tory MPs had used anti-bilingual rhetoric as a tactic for

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7 "Un vote anti-Québec ou anti-Trudeau?", _Le Devoir_, 3 November, 1972, p.4.

garnering votes. Quite expectedly, Stanfield dismissed these claims as "not a major factor" in the election.

Trudeau, however, was not to be assuaged. During the Speech from the Throne in January 1973, he accused unnamed Conservative members of having taken positions injurious to national unity during the previous election campaign. Even Stanfield was not spared, as the Prime Minister reproached him for calling Regional and Economic Expansion Minister Marchand a Father Christmas, for his alleged largesse in distributing funds in Quebec. Trudeau concluded his speech by announcing that during the upcoming session, Parliament would be asked to confirm the basic principles of the government's program for bilingualism in the civil

9 At least two candidates in the ridings of Port Arthur and Crowfoot, had run newspaper adds which could have been interpreted and obviously were by some, as being anti-French. Stanfield had quickly ordered them withdrawn. PAC, (RSC), MG 32 C-21, vol.15. "CTV Question Period, 11/11/72", p.6. On another front, Peter Reilly (Ottawa West) was seen to have "unabashedly exploited the issue (of bilingualism) to defeat the Liberal incumbent." CAR, 1972, p.123.

10 RLS-INT. These charges, he later said, were designed to create the impression in Quebec that the Conservatives had fought the election on the basis of being against Quebec and bilingualism. PAC, (RSC), MG 32 C-21, vol.16, "Speeches - Question Period, (CTV), 21 January, 1973, Ottawa", p.5.

11 Debates, 8 January, 1973, vol.1, p.60. To which Stanfield replied that if the Leader of the Opposition was prevented from criticizing a (French-Canadian) minister for what he saw as wasting money, on the grounds that by doing so he was anti-Quebec, "then we have reached pretty sorry state." Ibid., p.58.
service. "It will be an excellent occasion," he said, "for individual members opposite...to stand up and be counted...." 12

The implementation of the bilingual program in the civil service as called for under the terms of the Official Languages Act, had been a source of strife and disharmony from the beginning. There had been complaints that the government was going too quickly, that it was ignoring the established rights of English civil servants, and that it was arbitrarily increasing the number of bilingual positions in an ill-conceived rush to enlarge the place of Francophones in the federal bureaucracy. 13 Anglophone civil servants had been quick to recruit both the media and the Opposition to assist them in their battle to slow down the massive changes taking place in the federal bureaucracy.

In December 1972, in response to continued criticism, the Liberals introduced what came to be called the Drury Guidelines. Named after then Treasury Board President Charles Drury, the government proposal contained nine basic clauses pertaining to


13 Francophones were not entirely absent from the debate, only less visible. A Chronicle-Herald (Halifax) article noted that a survey of MPs' mail indicated that Francophone letter writers were just as an insistent that the government hire more French Canadians, as Anglophones were that the process be slowed down. "Bilingual debate unifying?", Chronicle-Herald, 17 May, 1973. (TBPC), vol.II. Another newspaper claimed that French-Canadian Liberals were particularly unhappy with the situation in the civil service. "Trudeau in trouble—with own party", The Citizen, 9 April, 1973. (TBPC), vol.II. See also "La fin d'une stratégie", Le Devoir, 16 December, 1972, p.4.
the civil service's bilingual program. Six months later, it incorporated the Guidelines into a parliamentary resolution, calling on all members to reaffirm their commitment to the basic principles of bilingualism in the federal public service. Once again Stanfield began his diplomatic efforts, this time in the hope of preventing a second débâcle. 14

Debate on the promised resolution opened four months later, on May 31st, 1973. During his opening speech the Prime Minister stated that members were not debating the Official Languages Act, but rather the Public Service's official languages program. He noted that the government had no intention of forcing a second language on anyone. On the contrary, the idea was to enable people to remain unilingual if they so wished, the ultimate goal being a functionally bilingual civil service in which the members were free to work in the language of their choice. But, he continued, a certain infrastructure had to be bilingual, including supervisors, library staff and all who would ultimately deal with the public in areas where the two official languages were spoken. He estimated that ten percent of the 250,000 member public service would eventually have to be bilingual. 15

14 It was reported that Stanfield "...a rencontré personnellement un bon nombre des députés susceptibles de dénoncer la résolution Trudeau...." "Les Communes s'engagent à vider pour de bon la question du bilinguisme", La Presse, (Montreal), 31 May, 1973, p.A7. Another newspaper spoke of "intense negotiations." "Tories hoping for solidarity on bilingual resolution", Ottawa Journal, 4 June, 1973. (TBPC), vol.III.

15 Ibid., pp.4302-06.
The government's resolution proposed that this House
... do hereby recognize and approve the following
Principles:

(1) that positions which are seen, under present circumstan-
ces, as requiring the knowledge and use of both official
languages will be first identified, and then designated, as
bilingual in the course of the period ending December 31,
1978;
(2) that positions will also be identified where
English is an essential requirement of the job, where
French is essential, or where either English or French
may be used;
(3) that the knowledge of English and French is one of
the elements of merit in the selection of candidates
for bilingual positions;
(4) that competitions for bilingual positions will be
open to both bilingual candidates and unilingual
candidates who have formally indicated their willing-
ness to become bilingual;
(5) that competitions for unilingual positions will
continue to be open to unilingual or bilingual candi-
dates who meet the language requirements of the job;
(6) that unilingual incumbents of bilingual positions
may elect to become bilingual and undertake language
training, or transfer to another job having the same
salary maximum, or, if they were to decline such a
transfer, to remain in their positions even though the
posts have been designated as bilingual;
(7) that employees who, as of April 6, 1966, had at
least ten years of continuous service and who, since
that date, have been employed continuously in the
federal Public Service, will be entitled to apply for
any job that has been identified for future designation
as bilingual without having to indicate their willing-
ness to become bilingual;
(8) that unilingual French-speaking and English-
speaking persons from outside the Public Service who
are willing to become bilingual may apply for bilingual
positions open to public competition;
(9) that language training, at public expense, will be
provided to unilingual public servants as well as to
persons appointed by the Public Service to bilingual
positions;
...
(ii) do further approve the taking of measures, after
consultation with employee representatives, designed to
produce a greater use of the French language at all
levels in the Public Service, through increasing, where
practical, the number of French Language Units, through
further recruitment efforts by the Public Service
Commission, through training programs offered in the
French language and by developing proposals, in conjunction with the Governments of the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, to enhance the bilingual character of the National Capital region, thus helping to realize the objective of achieving, within the merit principle, full participation in the Public Service by members of both the anglophone and the francophone communities. 16

The thrust of Conservative reaction to the Guidelines was an effort to convince the government to incorporate them into the Official Languages Act and the Public Service Employment Act. 17 As Gordon Ritchie argued, the Guidelines were little more than "a moral directive" which left the government under no legal obligation to comply with the resolution. 18 If the Liberals were sincere in their wish to ameliorate the situation in the civil service, they would have no hesitation in transforming the Guidelines into law. 19 The Conservative position was a good one for they could thus point out that, far from being reactionaries and defenders of the status quo, they were in fact in the avant garde, attempting to protect the 250,000 civil servants, both English and French, from government caprice.

The resolution's introduction meant that the Conservatives were once again 'between a rock and a hard place.' In effect they were being asked to do three things. First, they were being called upon to stand and publicly state their position on the

issue of bilingualism in Canada. Second, they were being asked to enter into a certain complicity with the government. In agreeing to vote for the resolution, they would be saying to the world that, while mistakes had been made, they agreed with the Liberals that things should be better in the future, now that the Guidelines clearly stated the government's position. Thirdly, by doing the first two, they were implicitly limiting their right to criticize the government's future handling of bilingualism in the civil service.

At a caucus reunion held before commencement of debate on the resolution, arriving members found John Diefenbaker sitting in a chair waiting for proceedings to begin. Since his defeat, he had not made a habit of attending the meetings. Not bothering to wait for an invitation, he rose to address the gathering. He said that the Prime Minister was "suckering" the Conservatives with his resolution, inviting them to endorse what he saw as Trudeau's "abdication" of his initial commitment to the language question. The government was soliciting their support, he said, for a "watered-down" version of the bilingual question, deliberately diluted to hold Liberal seats in Quebec and regain constituencies lost in the last election. He asked members to reject the resolution which, he reasoned, gave no legal guarantees that unilingual English job rights in the public service would be protected. 20

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20 The exact date of Diefenbaker's speech is unknown at present. The newspaper article referred to the former leader's showing up "a week before the vote." The vote was
Stanfield's reaction and reply to Diefenbaker's outburst are not known. It was eminently clear however that the Conservative Party, even before the opening of debate, was again faced with the question of loyalty. Would the members heed Diefenbaker's call to reject the resolution? Or would they follow Stanfield, closing ranks around the party leader in an effort to show the country, and notably Quebec, that while the party had its differences over the bilingual question, it on the whole endorsed the proposition? As in 1969, Stanfield could do little more than explain to the party why it was in its best interest to support the resolution, and work to convince hesitating members to support his stand. Conservative resentment to the resolution would make his task no easier.

Much of this resentment was linked to the reasons, both real and perceived, for the government's introduction of the resolution. Convinced that the Liberals were attempting to destroy their credibility both in Quebec and throughout the rest of the country, the Tories were quick to accuse them of introducing the resolution held on June 6th, so it would seem safe to assume that he spoke before members went into the House on the May 31st for the first day's debate. "Dief's defiance of Stanfield on language baffles some MPs", Ottawa Journal, 9 June, 1973, p.4. CIRB, Collection of microfilmed press clippings related to bilingualism, assembled by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL), Roll 5, "Commons Resolution 1973". Diefenbaker had made his opinions clear two months previously when he had declared that it would be "a transparent and spurious trick on Parliament if the government brought in a resolution to approve the mishandling of the Official Languages Act." "National unity. Fresh thinking from the west", The Saturday Citizen, (Ottawa) 9 June, 1973. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 5, "Commons Resolution-1973".
resolution for political reasons. What were the intentions of the
government? they asked. Why raise the issue of official languages
once again? What was the government hoping to prove?

The answer to these questions lies in the very game of
politics itself. When a party finds itself in opposition, it
spends much of its time exploring ways to embarrass the govern­
ment, be it by exploiting political gaffes, corruption, or lack
of Cabinet solidarity on an important issue. But this game is not
played on a one-way street. The government also is continually
attempts to show the public that the opposition is unfit to
govern the country, be it due to its lack of experience, its
parliamentary behaviour, or its stands on important issues which,
the government argues, go against good sense or the common good.

In the case of the Official Languages Act in 1969, the
Liberals were aware that there existed within the Tory camp a
strong current of opposition to the idea of official languages,
bilingual districts and the whole idea of bilingualism and
biculturalism. They did not exploit this knowledge, fearing
perhaps that the possible gains would be far outweighed by the
hostility and animosity which such a move could generate within
the Tory ranks, not to mention the possible public perception of
such a manoeuvre. 22

21 At least not openly in the House of Commons. Outside of
the House, and especially in Quebec, one might be fairly
certain that they in fact did so fairly directly.

22 "The Rebel Tories Force A Vote", The Gazette, 1 June,
With the latest federal election results (1972) still clearly in mind, tinged as they were with Liberal accusations of Tory anti-bilingual campaigns, the question arises as to whether the party leadership decided that the time had come to play a little hardball with the Tories. Some Conservatives seemed to think so. In fact, Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre) saw in the Prime Minister's Throne Speech reference to Conservatives being given the chance to stand up and be counted, the 'proof' that the resolution's real goal was not to affirm the principle of bilingualism in the civil service, but rather to embarrass the Conservative Party once again. 23

The government's desire, in other words, was to divide and rule. 24 The more damage the Conservative Party could be damaged internally by raising the bilingual question, the less likely it was to present an effective opposition in Parliament, or an attractive alternative to the Liberals at election time. In reaction, the Conservatives called the resolution "politically motivated." The government was looking for votes in Quebec, they said, and to be able to say to the rest of Canada, "We are just doing our bit for national unity." 25 The Prime Minister, according to Diefenbaker, was seeking to reinforce his political base in Quebec, and he was using outright partisan methods to do it.


24 Paul Dick, (Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton) Ibid., p.4466.

Diefenbaker's logic is somewhat odd, for was not the Prime Minister already strong in Quebec? Should he not instead have been looking for an issue which would have endeared him to western voters?

The Conservatives were clearly less than enthusiastic about the prospect of the resolution. In fact, 13 years after the vote, Stanfield still seemed somewhat piqued. When asked the reason for the resolution, he replied that it had been proposed to embarrass the Conservatives. "Go and ask Trudeau why he did it," he said. After having come so close to attaining power, the party was risking once again being cast in the mould of a racist and anti-progressive party. The Conservatives were feeling manipulated by the government and, in response, they lashed out at the Liberals, accusing them of using the resolution not only in an effort to divide their party, but also to strengthen their position in Quebec.

This questioning of Liberal motives was combined with concern among some Tories over the timing of the resolution's introduction. The Canadian economy during the spring of 1973 was continuing through the crisis period occasioned by the dramatic rise in the price of oil. In response, the government had

26 RLS-INT.


promised during its Speech from the Throne that in the coming session economic matters would take precedence. The introduction of the resolution seemed to some a case of misplaced priorities.

Ron Atkey (St. Paul's) voiced the opinion that the government's problem was that it saw the protection of language rights as the sole solution to Canada's difficulties. This approach, he said, ignored the fundamental claims to economic and social equality which could only be achieved through effective policies in pricing, regional disparity, social services and the like. 29 Others, including Paul Dick and Joe Clark, wondered aloud what the government's intentions were, and why it was still seemingly so preoccupied with the languages issue during a period of clear economic difficulty. 30

This type of criticism was not new. Many of the same arguments had been presented during debate over C-120. 31 In times of economic stress, MPs are quick to receive complaints from their constituents. During such periods, complaints are even louder when the concerns of the majority are seen as taking a

29 Ibid., pp.4454-56.

30 Joe Clark, Ibid., p.4456.
Paul Dick, Ibid., p.4466.

31 And would continue to be used throughout the 1967-76 period. See, for example, O. Jelinek, Debates, 11 October, 1974, p.354 wherein he claims it to be "incomprehensible that the Prime Minister should consider this (bilingualism) a crucial question at a time like this...Does anyone, the Prime Minister apart, feel that bilingualism is more important than inflation and unemployment?"
back seat to the demands of a minority; the former being usually somewhat more prepared to be munificent in times of plenty.

One area particularly sensitive to the question of minority demands taking precedence over the protests of the majority, was the federal bureaucracy. The implementation of a comprehensive program of 'bilingualization' in the civil service had caused much apprehension 32 among the service's unilingual Anglophone employees, who made up the largest proportion of the civil servant population. What had at first seemed a relatively simple and straightforward process of naming bilingual personnel to supervisory and public-related positions, became increasingly complex as bilingual posts, in true civil service fashion, seemed to 'pyramid' themselves. 33 Bilingualism seemed to be coming the rule instead of the exception, especially for senior positions in the National Capital Region (NCR). 34


34 Commenting on a statement by Trudeau that less than ten percent of the civil service's 370,000 positions were classified bilingual, Horner lamented that "the sad point today is that they are all at the top." Debates, 1 June, 1973, vol.IV, p.4363. Was this true? While statistics appear
In the rush to implement the program, errors had been made. Moreover, the government's quasi-silence on the subject did little to clear the air. 35 In true Trudeau fashion the Liberals refused to concede that there were major difficulties in its civil service bilingual program. Questions raised in the House were often left unanswered, or addressed in a summary or incomplete manner. Unsure of the government's intentions, unilingual employees feared for their jobs, their careers and their pensions.

The Tories, as the Official Opposition, took up the cause of the unilingual Anglophone employee. 36 Examination of Conservative comment and criticism reveals that members were not so much, if in many cases at all, against the idea or the principle of bilingualism in the civil service, 37 as they were concerned about faults and overzealousness in its implementation to be sadly lacking, one report indicated that "Participation of French-speaking Canadians seems to be weakest at the middle and upper levels of the public service..." Commissioner of Official Languages, Third Annual Report (1972-73), (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), p.35.

35 During his introductory speech on the resolution Trudeau mentioned the uneasiness on the part of public servants, concluding that it was due to the way in which the bilingual program "was applied or allegedly applied." Debates, 31 May, 1973, vol.IV, p.4304.

36 Again it is important to note that when the different members, especially those from western Canada, referred to 'unilingual' employees, they were almost certainly making reference to those people of their region who had little if any knowledge of French, nor much hope of acquiring any.

and the exclusion of certain regions from any meaningful role within the public service. 38

By far the largest part of Conservative criticism of bilingualism in the civil service came from members of the Prairie Caucus. As in 1969, the bulk of their remarks centered around the lack of second language training facilities in the west, the 'lost generation' theme of present civil servants whose careers would be hampered by bilingualism, and concomitant with these, the further exclusion of the west from the halls of power. 39

Other Conservatives, especially those representing civil service ridings, urged the government not to forget the human aspect of bilingualism in the civil service. Implementation of the bilingual program was not simply a case of facts and figures, it was intimately concerned with people and their lives and careers. 40 People's attitudes as well as the functional make-up of the civil service could not be changed overnight. The government was warned against what Cossitt called "the stupidity of instant bilingualism;" 41 the idea that the entire character of


41 Ibid., p.4416.
the civil service could be radically altered in a short time without grave injustices being done.

Attempting to portray themselves as the sole or at least the most competent defenders of national unity and linguistic equality, the Liberals were often quick to label all such opposition to civil service bilingualism as bigotry. This in turn vexed the Conservatives who, in their quest for power and voter favour, resented being saddled with the sobriquet of racist, bigot and anti-French each time they chose to criticize a given aspect of the bilingual program.

In response to Liberal tactics, Tom Cossitt (Leeds) reproached the government for its "proach of confrontation." 42 He objected, he said, to the fact that the Conservatives were being called advocates of disunity for the simple reason that they objected to what he called "gross government errors" in the implementation of bilingualism. 43 Paul Dick concurred, declaring that the government and the Liberal Party seemed "to have cornered the market on calling people bigots." 44 For his part, Stan Korchinski (McKenzie) noted that, in the House of Commons, it was possible to criticize English Canadians but not French, and that "you can say anything you like against ethnic groups." 45

43 Ibid., p.4416.
44 Ibid., p.4466.
Inherent in these comments was reaction against the government's steely determination to have its own way, to impose its own "vision du monde". The crucial actor in this scenario was the Prime Minister. It was he who set the tone which "aroused fears" and "created resentments" among the people. 46 It was Trudeau, in other words, with his Aristotelian logic, who inspired so much animosity among members of the opposition who saw nothing but arrogance. The idea of confrontation 47 inherent in this type of thinking is of some interest in explaining the government's actions and, more importantly, the resulting reactions by Conservative members.

Trudeau's position on many issues was deliberately firm, avoiding all compromise. In the case of Quebec's position in Confederation, for example, he asked the people of the province to keep faith in Canada, telling them that

"...things can be changed. We will implement the B(ilingualism) and B(iculturalism) report, and bring in the Official Languages Act, and we will get the civil service to revise its recruitment and personnel policies." 48

He refused categorically to discuss the possibility of greater provincial autonomy or separatism as viable alternatives.

46 "Bilingual policy scares west MPs", Ottawa Journal, 6 June, 1973. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 6, "Commons Resolution-1973".

47 What Marcel Lambert, (Edmonton West) during a Throne Speech debate called "a philosophy of the government that says that you are either on this side or the other side." Debates, 24 February, 1972, vol.I, p.255.

In dealing with the bilingual program in the civil service, and with bilingualism in general in Canada, he was just as intransigent, regarding the achievement of a functionally bilingual civil service not "as a vague and distant desideratum...but as a very concrete matter." 49 His determination to change the face of the Canadian government, as well as the way Canadians themselves perceived their country, met with the obvious opposition not only from unilingual Anglophone civil servants, but also from a great number of ordinary Canadians who were comfortable with the image that they had of their country and had no wish to change. Agreeing, extremely reluctantly, to compromise, (for after all, the Drury Guidelines were a compromise to Anglophone pressure) Trudeau and the Liberal Party nonetheless continually fustigated Conservative opposition to bilingualism, characterizing it as being inspired by partisanship, ignorance and reactionary tendencies.

The relevance of this particular detour is found in the following question. Could it perhaps be surmised that the reactions of the Conservative members to the different facets of the bilingual question which arose during the period under study, could in some way have been influenced by the Prime Minister's attitude? The importance of a positive conclusion would lie in the fact that we would then be led to ask ourselves how much of the posturing, of the harsh words, and of the criticisms were in fact directed at the bilingual program, and how much at the Prime

49 Ibid., p.4305.
Minister himself. In other words, were the members angrier at the thought of bilingualism, or at the fact that the Prime Minister had said that this was the way it was going to be, whether they, or the country, liked it or not? Stanfield appeared to agree with the latter supposition, referring to Trudeau's arrogance and noting that "people took this into account" in their feelings on the bill. 50

On Thursday May 31, 1973, Stanfield introduced his promised amendment, calling for the incorporation of the Drury Guidelines into the Official Languages Act and the Public Service Employment Act. 51 Debate continued the following day, before the Conservatives retired into caucus for forty-eight hours to discuss and revise their strategy for the upcoming vote. 52

A pallor was cast over the weekend's proceedings as Diefenbaker, appearing on national television that same evening, announced that he and possibly fifteen other Conservatives would vote against the resolution when it came up for a vote the following week. 53 All was not lost, however, for sometime before the vote the caucus reached an understanding that if the government was prepared to incorporate the Guidelines into law, so that individuals could resort to the courts if necessary to

50 RLS-INT. Was he making allusion to some of his own MPs?
52 "Dief fait encore des siennes", Le Devoir, 4 June, 1973, p.1
53 Ibid.
achieve protection, the party would support the resolution unanimously. 54

On Monday, June 4, Stanfield's amendment was defeated by a vote of 143 to 96. On the Conservative side, Diefenbaker and Skoreyko abstained. Eleven other members were absent from the House. 55 In a caucus meeting held a mere three hours before the vote on the resolution, no hint was given of what was about to happen. No one spoke up against it. In fact, Stanfield was greeted with a standing ovation. Coates and Dinsdale, both of whom had voted against the Official Languages Act, announced that they would support the motion. Peter Reilly (Ottawa West) made a strong pro-resolution pitch and Claude Wagner, (Saint-Hyacinthe) while avoiding a direct plea, praised Stanfield and asked members to support the motion. 56 But what of those who said nothing? As the vote approached, the Conservatives leadership could do little but hold its collective breath.

It did not have to wait long. When the final count was made,
sixteen Conservatives, 57 all but two from Diefenbaker country, representing what The Gazette called "the widespread dissatisfaction with the Trudeau government and the bilingual question," 58 broke ranks with their colleagues, defied their party leader and once again implicitly if not concretely raised the question of Stanfield's leadership. 59 If it was of any consolation to the Conservative leader, the 'rebel ratio' was lower this time around (16/107) than it had been in 1969 (17/72).

While not nearly as loquacious as in 1969, the Conservatives were clearly still a divided party over the issue of bilingualism in Canada. Anger at the introduction of the language question during a time of economic uncertainty; suspicion, if not certainty that the debate had been motivated by partisan, political reasons; the refusal of the government to consider incorporation

57 Alkenbrack, Cossitt, Diefenbaker, Hollands (Pembina), J. Horner, N. Horner (Battleford-Kindersley), Korchinski, Masniuk (Portage), McKenzie, Neil (Moose Jaw), Oberle (Prince George-Peace River), Ritchie, Schumacher, Skoreyko, Stewart (Marquette), Taylor (Churchill).


59 Debates, 6 June, 1973, vol.IV, p.4517. There were twelve Conservative absentees, including five members of the 'shadow cabinet.' (Paul Hellyer, (Trinity), Alvin Hamilton, (Qu'Appelle Moose Mountain), John Fraser, (Vancouver South), Eldon Woolliams and Erik Neilson). Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley) said that he had a previous commitment, "but I would most probably have abstained anyway." Fellow absentee Duncan Beattie (Hamilton) "refused to lend dignity to the resolution." He called it "a farce or worse," its sole purpose being to manoeuvre the opposition into a position of being called bigots. "Vote on language issue leaves stab-in-the-back feeling among Tories", Globe and Mail, 8 June, 1973, p.8. (TBPC), vol.III.
of the Drury Guidelines into law, thereby showing its concern for the protection of unilingual Canadians in the civil service, and the everpresent theme of government arrogance, of 'forcing French down our throats,' all combined once again to divide the party publicly over a question of 'national importance.' 60

As with the Official Languages Act, the bulk of Conservative criticism during the resolution came once again from members of the party's prairie wing. Of the seventeen who voted against C-120 in 1969, ten were still in office in 1973 and of these, seven voted against the resolution. Four years had passed since the first debate, but the arguments of prairie MPs had changed little, built around cultural differences, economic exploitation and fears that the region's unilingualism would exclude it from the corridors of power.

Diefenbaker and Horner provided the rallying point and leadership for this disenchantment. When Stanfield insisted that the party support the resolution, these two men urged their fellow members to oppose it. Diefenbaker took a particularly active role, personally trying to pressure a number of western

60 Reading the members' speeches, one is led to use this phrase and yet a look at Quebec newspaper reaction during the debate reveals that it was treated as an issue of only medium importance. As a nationalist issue it ranked far behind many others including the right to use French in Quebec. See "Dief 'No' vote on language proposals hurts PC election hopes in Quebec", Toronto Daily Star, 9 June, 1973. (TBPC), vol.III.
members into backing him, by calling in debts for past campaign support or threatening to withhold same in the future. 61

Moreover, the former Prime Minister's speech to caucus before the opening of debate had been an insult to Stanfield. The man who had preached that loyalty to the party, and especially to the party leader, was the sine qua non of political life, proposed that members forget this dictum and follow him in revolt against the elected leadership. 62 He invited party members, in other words, to choose between two views of the world, his and Stanfield's.

While much could perhaps be made of yet another manifestation of what was often seen as 'the back stabbing syndrome' within the Conservative Party, it must be remembered that the 1973 vote was but one among many. Although related to a question many felt to be of extreme importance to the party, the Prairie Caucus's stand on the issue had hardly come as a surprise.

Stanfield's four year quest to convince the party's recalcitrant members of the wisdom of his position on bilingualism had proved a failure. How was this failure interpreted among the public? While any number of answers might be proposed, might it

61 Perlin, The Tory Syndrome, p.120.

62 Diefenbaker's actions so angered Peter Reilly that during debate on capital punishment a few weeks later, he openly booed the former Prime Minister as he was speaking. Later, he said that he did it to protest Diefenbaker's vote during the resolution and he called for the ouster of the dissidents from the party. "Secret power grag led by Diefenbaker, backbencher charges", Globe and Mail, 27 June, 1973, p.4. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 5, "Résolution sur les langues officielles-1973".
not be suggested that with the ever rising popularity of the Parti Québécois, the Canadian voter perhaps decided that Stanfield was not the man and the Conservatives not the party, to the threat posed the country by Quebec nationalism?

What of the effects on the party of the continuing rift caused by the bilingual question? Stanfield's efforts to modernize the party, to infuse it with urban representation more receptive to bilingualism (and less tied to Diefenbaker), were ongoing. Might this not have had an effect on the comportment and reactions of those members of the party identified with Diefenbaker and rural Canada? Was there animosity between those who voted in favour of bilingualism, against the wishes of their constituents yet in the interests of the party and the country, and those who refused bilingualism? Did it hinder the effectiveness of the party in any way? Whatever the answer to these questions, the choice the majority of the Conservative MPs eventually made in relation to the 1973 vote revealed two things. First, that Stanfield was still the preferred leader of the party, the man duly elected to attempt to bring the Conservative Party to power. Second, it showed that by 1973, while still very powerful within the Conservative Party, the influence of Diefenbaker and of his ideology was beginning to wane. 63

The 1973 debate was the last time the Conservatives would be called upon to express their feelings 'en masse' on the issue of bilingualism. It was, however, not the last time that various members would express their views on the different aspects of the question. One such aspect, which held members' attention throughout the entire 1968-1976 period, was that of the bilingualism program in the federal civil service.

This issue became a continuing thorn in the side of the government. A whole way of life, a way of perceiving not only the civil service but the country as a whole, was at stake. Would the Liberals succeed in imposing this massive change within the civil service, or would the opposition forces carry the day, forcing the government either to abandon the program, or at least to modify it to a point where it became no threat to the status quo? Would prairie Conservatives continue their war against bilingualism? or would other members of the party take up the cause, giving the lie to the myth that opposition to bilingualism in Canada existed only in the west?
CHAPTER III
CONSERVATIVE REACTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
BILINGUALISM IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

Over the course of the past two chapters, we have seen that
the major part of Conservative Party criticism of bilingualism
emanated from its Prairie Caucus. A conclusion which could logi­
cally have been drawn at that particular point would have
suggested that the major source for the party's negative reaction
lay in its large contingent of prairie-based MPs. This group
represented the interests of a large number of people who were
unhappy with the idea of bilingualism and its distinction between
founding races and 'others', preferring perhaps that the distinc­
tion be made between English-speaking and others.

But, did the Prairie Caucus the Conservative Party make?
Were these people the only members of the party who were con­
cerned enough about the bilingualism question to take the
government to task? The answer to this question is quite clearly
no. For, as we shall see, there was another 'group' 1 within the
Conservative Party, representing a different region of the
country, which could be and was just as vocal and acrimonious as
its western counterpart.

The 'group' in question consisted essentially of three men:
Tom Cossitt, Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton) and Doug

1 We use the term 'group' extremely loosely and for the sole
use of our paper. To our knowledge, there was no question of
the MPs in question entering into any type of alliance.
Alkenbrack (Frontenac-Lennox-Addington), 'assisted' by Ottawa West's Peter Reilly and Cumberland-Colchester's Robert Coates. These men were responsible for by far the vast majority of Conservative criticism of bilingualism in the civil service during the 1967-76 period. In hindsight, it does not perhaps seem odd that they should have had so much to say. This, because they represented the two other major anti-bilingual currents prevalent at the time: unilingual English-speaking civil servants, and the 100% English, Loyalist, Empire-grieving populations found everywhere in Canada, especially in rural Ontario and the Maritimes. It is for this reason, therefore, that we shall refer to them as the Loyalist Caucus.

A preliminary examination of this caucus's reaction to bilingualism in the civil service reveals a major difference of approach in comparison with that taken by their prairie confrères. It shows that most of its criticism was aimed at the implementation of the bilingual program, and not the fact that it was being implemented in the first place, as was so often alleged. This point, repeated again and again by Conservative MPs both inside and out of the House of Commons, was often overlooked by the government which, as we have seen, denounced criticism to bilingualism as coming from those who were against the very idea of it.

2 Or so little, depending on whether one studies the civil service bilingual question by itself, or in comparison with the oceans of ink expended during the debates over C-120 and the 1973 civil service vote.
A second point which arises concerns the nature of the various MPs interventions. While the members in question often raised what they no doubt considered valid issues, this approach and the language they often employed (excessive parliamentary hyperbole and rhetoric) leads one to question the intent of their actions. Were they attempting to change situations they felt unjust? Were they trying to embarrass the government? Were they merely in search of headlines?

We were led to consider these questions by the too often superficial nature of Conservative criticisms. Rather then in-depth discussion, MPs relied more often on hit and run attacks on the government, questions asked, motions raised and jibes inserted into speeches on topics having no relation to the bilingual question. In fairness to the Conservatives, it must be pointed out that the very nature of parliamentary procedure often restricts members' liberty to discourse at will, thereby limiting the ways and occasions for in-depth discussions and criticisms of a given subject.

Much of the Loyalist Caucus's objuration of bilingualism in the civil service, in other words, was of a somewhat more practical nature. It included dozens of questions of an administrative genre relating to costs, numbers of people involved, as well as names, dates and places. This in turn led to a diminution of the emotional and ideological rhetoric which so characterized Prairie Caucus criticism. It would be incorrect, however, to
suggest that "the Loyalists" never had recourse to these devices.

In the following pages we shall look at the Conservative Party's response to the implementation of bilingualism in the federal civil service. Unlike previous chapters, this one will examine reactions over an extended period, in this case from 1967 to 1976. We shall continue with our use of themes including the merit system, pro-French bias in the civil service, the protection of unilingual civil servants, French Language Units and perceptions of government attitude. We will begin with a brief look at French Canadians in the civil service, and conclude with a brief summary and some reflections.

During the 1940s and 50s, the federal government became aware of increasing discontent in Quebec over the situation of the French Canadian in the civil service. It was not until the mid-1960s, however, that the question became a major issue. The election of Lester Pearson in 1963 brought the establishment of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, the offering of bonuses to certain categories of bilingual civil servants and the development of programs aimed at luring top Quebec graduates to work for the federal government in Ottawa. It was the beginning of a vastly changed attitude toward French Canadians, their participation in the civil service and their place in Canada. It was also the beginning of an uphill fight.

3 Hodgetts et al., Biography of an Institution, p.478.
against the accepted and prevailing orthodoxies linking unilingualism with efficiency. 4

In April 1966, Pearson announced new guidelines for bilingualism in the civil service. He said that the government hoped that in a reasonable period of time written and oral communication would be conducted in the language of the individual person's choice. Communication with the public would be in the language of the client's choice, and members of the civil service would be free to use whichever language they wished when working together. 5 In the same year, the Public Service Commission, which had furnished the recommendations to the Prime Minister, announced that skills in both English and French would henceforth be regarded as a desirable qualification for future appointments to the National Capital Region. Things were beginning to change.

With the election of Pierre Trudeau in 1968, the pace of this change picked up considerably. This in turn caused much short-term bitterness and discord. Trudeau, however, was not looking at the short term. His goal was to change the face of the civil service, to make it a place where French Canadians could experience full and satisfying careers. In order to accomplish this, it appeared he would have to by-pass, indeed trample on,


the most sacrosanct of public service institutions, the merit principle.

Designed originally to limit corruption and patronage, the merit principle was based on two major propositions. The first held that Canadian citizens should have "a reasonable opportunity" to be considered for appointment. The second suggested that selection should be based exclusively on the candidate’s "fitness for the job." The very vagueness of these terms, combined with at least three major cases where the system had been deliberately and officially subverted (war veterans, women and French Canadians), by the 1960s had put the integrity of the system in jeopardy. 6

It was the last of these cases which caused the most concern among Anglophone civil servants. Their faith in the merit system, with its built-in bias in favor of English speakers, had been dealt a nasty blow by the government’s bilingual program. The implementation of French Language Units, the parachuting of political friends into high civil service positions and the bonuses offered to certain classes of bilingual personnel 7 were all warnings of greater changes to come. By announcing its willingness to bypass the principle in an effort to enlarge the Francophone presence in the service, the government was setting

6 See Hodgetts et al., The Biography of an Institution, Ch.18, especially "Special problems in the administration of the merit system - French speaking Canadians", pp.473-482.

7 7% in 1967 compared with a $50.00 bonus in 1898. Hodgetts et al., Biography of an Institution, p.476.
itself up for harsh criticism from both those who had an interest in perpetuating the status quo, and those who represented their interests at the parliamentary level.

Conservative reaction on this issue varied. Doug Alkenbrack accused the government of destroying the merit principle in order "to accommodate French Canadians." 8 Stanfield said that bilingualism should play no part in the merit system of Civil Service appointments. 9 Walter Baker, for his part, noted that public servants wanted to be hired and promoted on their own merit. "They want a legal guarantee that the Pearson pledge will be honored." 10 Running for the Conservative leadership in 1976, Claude Wagner agreed, stating that language ability should not be a criterion of merit in the public service. 11 When Treasury Board Chairman Jean Chrétien announced in November 1974 that the number of bilingual positions within the civil service would be raised from 25,000 to 53,000, Tom Cossitt responded by declaring that

it would seem all too obvious that the merit principle has now become something to be bent and twisted, not only for the promotion of the Prime Minister's close


10 Debates, 12 January, 1973, vol.I, p.263. The Pearson pledge referred to the former Prime Minister's 1966 Commons speech on bilingualism in the civil service, wherein he promised that no one would lose his job or be denied promotion on the basis of their unilingualism.

friends to high places, but also to fit in with the government's discriminatory approach to bilingualism. 12

In essence, Cossitt was expressing the frustration of unilingual (Anglophone) civil servants who saw the government arbitrarily double the number of bilingual positions, without bothering to consult the very people who would be the most directly affected by the decision.

The Conservatives took advantage of this frustration. Sensing political capital, they took on the job of representing the interests of the unilingual (Anglophone) civil servant, defending the integrity of the merit system against what they termed the dishonourable intentions of the federal government. But in so doing, was the party not once again projecting an image of intolerance and insensitivity to the interests of French Canadians? In many parts of English Canada, Conservative defense of civil servants' rights was no doubt looked upon favourably. In French Canada, did the same hold true?

The issue of pro-French bias, for example, or the sacrificing of equal opportunity hiring in the civil service for what Alkenbrack called "the promotion of a grossly unfair and loaded bilingual program," 13 was one open to differing interpretations. For Anglophones, it evoked images of government intolerance, of

12 "CS riddled with fear", Ottawa Journal, 23 November, 1974, p.5. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 13, "La fonction publique".

lost career opportunities, and of the imposition of bilingualism. For Francophones, on the other hand, far from being an issue of pro-French bias, it was simply a question of justice long overdue.

Conservatives remained unmoved. There were charges of the official languages program being corrupted by "outright French-Canadianism," of the civil service, the RCMP and the armed forces being "packed" with Francophones, and of people losing their jobs to make way for French Canadians. It was an emotional issue which would not go away, could not go away, as long as the government was determined to give French Canadians the chance to implant themselves within the federal bureaucracy.

Not all Conservatives were as critical and uncompromising as Alkenbrack. Walter Baker, for example, speaking on behalf of his civil service constituents during his maiden speech to the House of Commons, simply called on the government to insure that catching up by French Canadians did not put English Canadians at a disadvantage. Stanfield, for his part, recognized the necessity of attracting French-speaking Canadians to the federal Civil Service. The goal, he said, was to achieve a linguistic balance in the service which would reflect the Canadian


15 Alkenbrack, quoted in "Bilingual issue is inflating too", Telegraph Journal, (Saint John) 11 March, 1974, p.4. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 7, "Canada - politique et gouvernement".

reality. 17 This, in effect, was the position of the government, a position unacceptable to many from the west who believed that the government's insistence on English and French in the Civil Service failed to take account of the country's many other ethnic groups. Their dissatisfaction was brought to the government's attention during a House Committee meeting on the miscellaneous costs of the bilingual program in March 1971. When Gordon Ritchie, in reference to the government's position, asked about the status of the country's other ethnic groups, Public Service Commission Chairman John Carson replied that the Civil Service did not look at ethnic background, but only at language. Are French and English not ethnic? asked Ritchie. Not for the purposes of the Public Service Employment Act, replied Carson. 18

Actions by the government provoked reactions from the opposition. As the following two examples show, both sides could have made proper cases to support their arguments. The first example was the revelation in March 1971 that the government planned to hire 276 Francophone university graduates as ministerial aides, completely by-passing civil service hiring procedures. The government explained that it was looking to expand the Francophone presence in the civil service with people who could


work creatively in French. Stanfield replied for the opposition, saying that the notion was completely unacceptable if the unique goal of the move was simply to hire Francophones, without reference or relation to government policy in general. 19

The second example came in January 1976, when Tom Cossitt made public a plan to establish a special recruiting unit within the Department of Supply and Services to attract more Francophones and bilingual women. Priority would be given to French speakers for such jobs as auditors and cost planners. Cossitt called it an outright plan to oust senior Anglophones, and a "sneaky way of putting control of the department into Francophone hands." 20

While not earth-shaking in their importance, these examples bring us back once again to Anglophone civil servants' complaints of the minority having its way at the expense of the majority. 21 The civil service, for so long English in outlook and composition, was being force-fed a diet of bilingualism. It was being transformed to reflect the 'reality' of the French fact in


20 "Special French recruiting unit plan rapped", Moncton Times, 24 January, 1976, p.11. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 13, "La fonction publique".

21 Complaints which blithely forgot that throughout most of Canada's history, just the opposite had been the case. Ambrose Peddle (Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador) referred to the same phenomenon during the 1972 Throne Speech when he noted that "for the past number of years the tail has been wagging the dog in this country...". "Bilingual issue in Public Service: bitter Tory attack", Ottawa Citizen, 29 February 1972, p.1.
Canada. If we recall Melvin McQuaid's remark about the pace of change making the actual amount of change seem greater than it was, the shock engendered among Anglophone civil servants is perhaps better understood. It was as if the French Canadians were being given all the chances, while English Canadians had to content themselves with second class status within what they considered 'their own preserve.'

These concerns led to demands for the protection of the rights and the jobs of the unilingual English-Canadian civil servants. The general current of thought among Conservatives and bureaucrats alike seemed to be that unilingual civil servants should neither be punished nor held back because of their lack of French. Neither should they be displaced from their jobs by the large number of French Canadians who were being recruited into the civil service. 22

The uncertainty felt among these people was mirrored by Doug Alkenbrack when he spoke of fears among English Canadians that, in the near future, there would be no place for them in the service of their country; that without the magic key of bilingualism, their talents and services would no longer be

22 "qualified or not" according to Alkenbrack. Debates, 1 October, 1971, vol.VIII, p.8364.
desired. 23 As Stanfield synthesized so succinctly, "the unilin­
gual civil servant should have a place in the civil service." 24

This place, especially in the National Capital Region, became increasingly difficult to procure, as Walter Baker confirmed during debate following the tabling of a report on bilingualism in the civil service in November 1974. He cited figures which revealed that 92.7% of the executive positions, 36.6% of the administrative positions, 26.8% of the scientific and professional positions and 25% of the administrative and supply personnel positions within the civil service were designated as bilingual. In all, he said, 66.4% of all positions in the NCR were classified as bilingual. These figures, he concluded, made a mockery of the "so called protection" in the government's proposals for implementation of bilingualism in the civil service. 25

It became increasingly evident to Conservative critics and Anglophone civil servants alike, that despite government assurances to the contrary, unilingual civil servants who wished to climb to the upper levels of the federal bureaucracy had little chance of doing so if they chose to remain unilingual. For the first time, English-speaking civil servants were wearing a pair


24 PAC, (RSC), MG 32 C-21, Vol.16. "NOTES - Annual Brother­hood Dinner, Temple Emmanuel, Montreal, 14/02/73", p.7. Cynics would argue that this represents the classic bureau­cratic argument: don't cut jobs, or replace those who no longer qualify, simply create new jobs to satisfy the demand.

of the boots worn for so long by their French-Canadian colleagues. Decidedly, they did not like the fit.

Their unhappiness was compounded by the government's decision to implement a program of French Language Units (FLU). Developed in reaction to feelings expressed by the RCBB that complete bilingualism within the civil service was an impossibility, they were designed to allow Francophones (and bilingual Anglophones) to work together in the French language within a given section or department of the civil service. Within the unit, everything would function in French. In its communications with others, the language used would depend on the public being addressed.

The Conservatives voiced their opinion of FLUs on various occasions. During an Oral Question Period on the bilingualism issue in 1969, Stanfield pronounced himself against the idea. He said that the units represented "une atteinte sérieuse à l'idéal d'un bilinguisme effectif." In addition, he noted that they would go against the merit principle of advancement within the civil service. 26 Six months later, he reaffirmed his position, noting during debate surrounding the publication of the third volume of the reports by the RCBB, that French Language Units were "a backward step" and "an abandonment of the concept of bilingualism" which risked developing "new solitudes." 27


During the 1973 resolution debates, Doug Alkenbrack referred to the units, painting a picture of "a wall of silence" which would be created between the units and the rest of the service. Walter Baker raised the issue in reply to the then Treasury Board President Jean Chrétien's announcement that the units would be implemented, and their numbers progressively increased. The Victoria Daily Colonist quoted Baker as claiming that the government had admitted that the units would shut 9,000 Anglophones out of civil service jobs due to places being given over to the FLUs. The government, he accused, "was turning a language program in the civil service into a cultural and racial policy."  

The Conservatives, then, raised two major points: the idea of the linguistic ghetto, and that of the passing over of the merit principle. In addition, they charged the government with hypocrisy. They claimed that in the face of repeated calls for bilingualism, for understanding on the part of English Canadians, the government had suddenly decided to set up special administrative mechanisms whereby Francophones could work in their own language and which were designed and destined to remain unilingual. Members of these units would have no initiative to become bilingual, nor would they be under any pressure to do so. Ironi-

28 "Allowing some Francophone civil servants to remain unilingual is discrimination, Tory MP says", Globe and Mail, 1 June. 1973, p.4. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 13, "La fonction publique".

29 "French only", Daily Colonist, 17 September, 1975, p.4. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 13, "La fonction publique".
cally, this was in fact the case for the vast majority of positions outside of the national capital area, but this time, to the Anglophone's advantage.

Conservative remarks highlighted the effects of the party's paucity of Francophone representation. Lacking a strong French-Canadian contingent to help offset the powerful English bias within the party, Tory critics showed an almost complete absence of awareness of the French-Canadian point of view. In their criticisms of FLUs, for example, they were implicitly charging that Anglophones were being forced to learn French, while Francophones were being allowed to work in their own tongue. This argument conveniently forgot that for most of Canadian history and in most parts of Canada, the opposite was the case. The importance of the party's lack of French Canadian MPs cannot be underestimated. We suggest that it would seem inconceivable that the Conservatives would have taken the positions they did vis-à-vis bilingualism, had the Francophone presence been more important.

Finally, we come to the issue of government attitude, a question which invariably arose whenever the Trudeau government and bilingualism were mentioned in the same phrase. In so far as the civil service bilingualism question was concerned, Conservatives accused the government of everything from "harassment, intimidation and demotion of those who question bilingualism in the civil service;" 30 to "subverting the rights of civil ser-

vants" 31 and "sacrificing professional competence in favour of language competence." 32

Much of their anger stemmed from the apparently indiscriminate designation of bilingual positions. Robert Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys) charged that the government seemed determined to extend the program as quickly as possible, without reference to the people involved. 33 As Walter Baker noted during debate on a motion proposed by Creditiste leader René Matte that the government do something positive to protect the rights of English and French Canadians, the spirit of bilingualism was one of attitude and a "commitment to a certain perception of our society." The government, he said, was so preoccupied with the mechanics of bilingualism that it often forgot that the basis of the whole program was people. 34

Cossitt agreed, taking the government to task over the shifting of a section of the Department of Supply and Services from Ottawa to Matane, Quebec. He argued that there was no justification for such a move; that it would cost the taxpayer in the area of 10 million dollars, and that it would involve the uprooting of some 250 employees of which 60% were Anglophone. He called it "an attempt to force English-speaking Canadians to quit

the civil service, rather than face the alternative of being uprooted and persecuted." 35

Government reaction to such outbursts was often predictable. As Cossitt had once remarked, they (the Grits) "attempted to create an atmosphere in which all criticism of the bilingual program is considered sacrilege." 36 The Liberals said in effect that they had been elected to govern the country, and that while opposition to their ideas and programs was expected and accepted, continued outspoken opposition to the bilingual program was not. In reaction to this type of thinking Walter Baker, again in his maiden speech to the House, reminded the government that

...when a voice is raised against the thoughtlessness and heavy-handed methods of implementation, (it) ought not to be twisted in the minds of any member...into an implication that those who speak out are opposed to the principles of the Official Languages Act. 37

Plus ça change...

Conservative reaction to the civil service bilingual program over the 1967-1976 period was as consistent as it was sometimes petty. While the different criticisms offered by the Loyalist Caucus were of a less emotional nature than those of their prairie colleagues, they were nonetheless just as negative. Whether it be French Language Units, the merit system, or the parachuting of Francophones into high posts, those Conservatives

35 "Cossitt says Goyer gave top Mint post to hometown buddy" The Citizen, 25 September, 1975, p.1. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 13, "La fonction publique".


who spoke out contented themselves for the most part to do nothing more than criticize the government's handling of the program.

The most obvious result of their negative tactics was that, during six years, the Conservatives were seen as offering almost nothing positive to the debate surrounding the implementation of the bilingual program in the civil service. Concomitant with this was the continued image of a party interested in the maintenance of the status quo. Argument surrounding such issues as FLUs and the merit system permit us to see this more clearly. In the case of the former, for example, the Conservatives' position was clearly illogical in its failure to take the plight of the unilingual Francophone into account. In the latter case, their support of the merit system was a defense of the status quo, an upholding of a policy which was in many ways unjust.

It was unjust, because like minority Americans faced with IQ tests constructed for the white middle class, French Canadians had long been discriminated against in 'their' own civil service by rules structured and conceived for the benefit of the majority, in this case, English Canadians. On paper and ideologically everyone was free to apply. Reality, however, was different. In the case of the American IQ tests, the discrimination was educational and cultural. In that of the Canadian civil service, it was racial and linguistic.

Finally, French Canadians could not fail to have been struck by continued Conservative references to 'unilingual' federal
employees being pushed to learn French and become bilingual. It was as if the possibility that there could exist unilingual Francophones wishing to work in the civil service, had never occurred to the Conservative Party.

Were the Conservatives aware of the possible impact in French Canada of their criticisms of civil service bilingualism? If they were, and if they read the newspapers they were, why did they persist? One reason seems without a doubt to be the lack of Francophone representation within the party. A second reason might be that the various MPs perhaps saw it as their job to bring the worries and anger of their constituents to the attention of Parliament and press, regardless of the possible effects of such actions. In fact, they might very well have realized the possible negative effects of their actions, but reasoned that, in the end, they answered to their constituents and not to French Canada. Third, as we have already seen, many Conservative MPs came from areas having little if any Francophone representation. Lacking contact with French-speaking Canadians, the people of these areas, as well as their MPs, would in consequence be less attuned to the problems Francophones encountered in Canada, and more prone to dismiss them as being of little import.
CHAPTER IV
CONSERVATIVE REACTION TO BILINGUALISM IN AREAS OUTSIDE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

Conservative reaction to bilingualism, as we have seen to this point, was confined to certain outspoken members of the party. In the first two chapters we saw how in 1969, and again in 1973, a bloc of prairie Conservatives, led by Jack Horner and John Diefenbaker, defied their party leader, refusing to support what they perceived as the government's refusal to take the cultural reality of their part of the country into consideration. In the third chapter, the actions of a second 'group', equally as opposed to some aspects of the bilingual program as were their prairie colleagues, was examined.

We saw that, although less ideologically motivated, the criticisms of this 'group' were as consistent and partisan as those of their western associates. Representing the interests of the powerful civil service unions, as well as those of Loyalist sections of Southern Ontario and the Maritimes, the members of this 'group' offered criticisms of the government's handling of the bilingual question in the civil service, often, on an almost daily basis. ¹

¹ During an interview, Stanfield noted that Tom Cossitt would arrive "day after day" with questions for the government on the bilingual program. RLS-INT. An examination of the questions put to different ministers regarding bilingualism reveals that Robert Coates was often not far behind.
The issues and criticisms discussed in the first three chapters constitute the bulk, but not all, of Conservative reaction to the bilingual program during the Stanfield era. As we shall see, the Tories often criticized other aspects of bilingualism, outside the reference of the civil service. 2

In this chapter, therefore, we shall examine three different issues including the question of language legislation in Quebec, specifically Bill 22, French in air transport communications and bilingualism in the armed forces. The aim of this examination is twofold. First, we wish to confirm that Conservative criticism of bilingualism was broad ranging and not confined solely to specific debates, including that surrounding the bilingual program in the civil service. In so doing, we hope to gain a more complete picture of Conservative attitudes on the language question. Second, in discussing these issues, we hope to highlight further the Conservative's Potempkin-like façade, in which generally affirmative statements on bilingualism were rendered hypocritical by the reality of the responses and criticisms offered by the various members of the party. We will conclude the chapter with a miscellaneous look at some other reactions which

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2 This chapter is necessarily much shorter than the others for the most obvious reason of lack of information. The three 'major' issues we shall discuss elicited relatively little Conservative response in comparison with C-120 and the 1973 reaffirmation debate. But we felt it necessary to include them for the reasons stated above. While the miscellaneous section could have been much longer, we feared that in so doing, the chapter would have taken on an even stronger 'pot-pourri' look than it (alas) already has.
fall outside of the areas previously discussed, but which are of interest for the reasons enumerated above.

The first issue we shall look at involves the question of immigration, language and education in Quebec. Long a contentious issue in Quebec history, by the 1960s it had once again come to prominence. Quebec nationalists, in conjunction with many provincial politicians and intellectuals, claimed that the French language was in danger of disappearing in the face of an English cultural onslaught. In order to prevent this, and indeed to protect Francophone heritage and culture for future generations, there were increasingly urgent calls for the adoption of French as the province's sole official language.

One manifestation of these feelings came in the form of a decision in late 1968 by the St. Leonard Catholic School Commission of Montreal to close English elementary schools in its district, against the wishes of the primarily Italian population served by them. This decision was supported by the nationalist movement but strongly opposed by both the Anglophone and Italo­phone communities, who saw it as a threat to their right of access to an English education.

In December 1968, in reaction to events at St. Leonard, the Bertrand government introduced Bill 85 which dealt essentially with the very topic of the language of education of Quebec's immigrants. However, opposition from Anglophone interests as well
as that from within the governing Union Nationale party, finally forced the abandonment of the project. 3

In October 1969, Language Bill 63 "La loi pour promouvoir la langue française au Québec" was introduced, replacing Bill 85. In essence the bill gave parents the right to choose the language in which they wished their children to be educated, while still insisting that non-Francophone students acquire a proficiency in French by the end of their secondary education. As with Bill 85 there was enormous debate. 4 The provincial government found itself once again attempting to satisfy everyone at once. On the one side were the nationalist elements who wanted French as the province's official language, arguing that immigrants to Quebec, given the choice, would choose English schools for economic reasons, thereby further reducing the primacy of the French language in the province. Confronting them were the English and immigrant communities who sought protection for their linguistic rights. While the bill was eventually passed, the issue was far from settled. 5

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5 When discussing this issue, it is important to keep in mind the rapid rise of nationalist feeling in Quebec during the early 1970s, as confirmed by the electoral victories of the Parti Québécois in 1970 and 1973.
In an effort to find a way out of the impasse, Liberal premier Robert Bourassa announced in the spring of 1974 that new legislation would be introduced into the National Assembly. The Official Language Act (Bill 22) was much the same as its predecessors in that it was a continuing attempt to protect and promote the status of the French language within the province. One of the most effective ways of achieving this, so the thinking went, was through education. In Quebec's case, this meant putting a halt to the continued channeling of the immigrant population into the province's English language schools.

Bill 22 addressed this question directly. Its education clauses stipulated that children with English as their mother tongue had the right to an English education, while their French counterparts would be obliged to attend French language schools. Immigrants with neither English nor French as their mother tongue would be diverted automatically into the French school system. Reaction to the legislation was swift. Where Bill 63 had provoked strong opposition from French Canada, the opposite was true of Bill 22.

The Conservative's first official response to the bill came from Robert Stanfield, who called the timing of the bill "inopportune." While he sympathized with the Quebec government's

6 "Stanfield: attitude ferme sur le bill 22 mais pas sur le déménagement d'Air Canada", Le Droit, 24 May, 1974, p.3. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 22, "Bill 22". Did he feel that the political climate was not propitious to the introduction of such legislation? Was he angry at Bourassa's having waited until the day before the opening of the federal election to make his announcement? Or was he fearful that the issue would be
wish to assure and strengthen the French language, he felt that it would be a divisive bill which would damage the cause of bilingualism in Canada. Further, he said that the bill would be a non-issue in the upcoming federal election, and he repeatedly asked reporters not to raise the question during the campaign, fearing that it would obscure the more vital and politically important issues of inflation and the economy.

Diefenbaker, for his part, was less circumspect. During a speech some three weeks after the bill's introduction, he called the legislation "unconstitutional" and noted that, while the rest of the country was moving toward bilingualism, Quebec had decided to go in the opposite direction. Later he termed it "a denial of minority rights," and called on the federal government to use its special disallowance powers to strike the bill down.

Bill 22 became law at the end of July 1974. In reaction, Walter Baker called on the Prime Minister to contest the legisla-

blown out of proportion, both by members of his own party and by the press?


9 "Diefenbaker urges Ottawa to disallow the language bill", Chronicle-Herald, 3 August, 1974, p.1. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 21, "Bill 22". Coates concurred, calling the bill "one more on a growing list of rewards English Canadians are receiving for their tremendous commitments in the area of federal bilingualism." "Ottawa's bilingual policy wrong", Chronicle Herald, 6 September, 1974, p.8. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 21, "Bill 22".
tion before the Supreme Court. Roch LaSalle disagreed with his colleague, arguing that while the law was not perfect, "il est clair que le Québec détient des droits en matière linguistique." 10

The re-opening of parliament in October 1974 brought forth fresh criticism of the bill. Stanfield noted that the legislation was contrary to the federal government's policy on official languages. 11 Don Mazankowski (Vegreville) called the restrictions placed on English "a deliberate step toward the destruction of the English culture in Quebec." 12 Walter Baker once again entered the fray, berating Trudeau for justifying his refusal to interfere in the situation on the grounds that Quebec had treated the English minority better than the other provinces had traditionally treated theirs. 13 Claude Wagner, for his part, during a meeting with CEGEP students in Ottawa, noted simply that the bill was "mal rédigé." 14

Conservative criticism of Bill 22 was limited almost exclusively to its Anglophone members. Their opposition to the

10 "LaSalle n'apprécie pas la position de Baker", Le Droit, August, 1974, p.3. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 21, "Bill 22".

11 "Parliamentary voices heard on Bill 22", The Gazette, 7 October, 1974, p.8. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 21, "Bill 22".

12 "Quotes from Hansard", The Citizen, 16 October, 1974, p.7. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 21, "Bill 22".

13 Ibid.

14 "Loi 22: Wagner dit avoir hâte de connaître le verdict des tribunaux", Le Droit, 14 November, 1974, p.3. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 21, "Bill 22".
legislation fell into three categories, with the bill being seen as unconstitutional, a denial of minority rights and a rejection of the notion of bilingualism. It could conceivably have become a major issue had not the Conservatives been so preoccupied in their third attempt in six years to wrest power from the Liberals. In addition, the question revealed the continued fragmentation of the party over the language issue, with Stanfield taking one position, LaSalle another and Diefenbaker a third; three men representing three different currents of thought, different 'visions du monde' within the party. Important members held views which, while not contradicting their leader's, failed to support the latter's moderate stance.

A second issue in which the Conservatives became deeply embroiled was that of bilingualism in air-to-ground communications. Having long passed virtually unnoticed, this issue came to prominence in the early 1970s due, among other things, to the changing political climate in Quebec alluded to earlier. This change saw many Quebeckers take an increasingly firmer position.

on linguistic and cultural issues, of which the right to speak French in Quebec territory was one of the most important. 16

The situation began (for our purposes) in June 1974 when federal Transport Minister Jean Marchand made use of the French language legal under Visual Flight Rules at 5 small Quebec airports. Soon after, "Les Gens de l'Air" (Quebec pilots and air traffic controllers) demanded that the same rules apply at all Quebec airports. In December 1975, the succeeding Transport Minister, Otto Lang, acquiesced to these demands. In June 1976 the issue came to a head when the English-speaking pilots and air traffic controllers went on strike to protest the use of French in Quebec airspace.

The issue of the French language in air transport was raised by different Conservative MPs at various times between June 1974 and February 1976 as the Conservative Party became increasingly implicated in the affair. As the June 1976 strike approached, so did the relations between the Conservatives and the CALPA (Canadian Airline Pilots Association) and the CATCA (Canadian Air Traffic Controllers Association) become closer. 17 Indeed, 16

16 The issue did not reach a crisis point until June 1976, four months after the retirement of Robert Stanfield as party leader. Unfortunately, much of Conservative comment on this issue lies outside our frame of reference. We feel, however, that within the parameters imposed by our paper enough material is available both to justify our choice of topic and more importantly, to give a reasonable idea of Conservative attitudes and opinions on the question.

relations were so close that the CALPA was making its incident reports available to the Conservative Research Office, which in turn packaged them for use in the House Question Periods and in members' speeches. 18

Conservative criticism concerning this question can be divided into three main categories, including resistance to changes in the status quo, English-Canadian close-mindedness, and racial slurs, real or intended. Erik Neilson (Yukon) reflected the first of these when he remarked, during a Supply debate in May 1975, that the use of English and French "can only lead to a safety standard reduction. English is the international language of aviation," he said, "and it should remain that way." 19

Lloyd Crouse (South Shore) reflected the second category when he called on the Minister of Transport to abide by a CATC Association report recommending English only in the air, and "either (to) place (geographic) restrictions on unilingual pilots or provide them with English language training." 20

In the third category are the comments of Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock) and Dan Mckenzie. The former remarked that he understood that 120 words were needed to fly properly. "I should like to think" he said, "it is not too great a burden to impose." 21 McKenzie, commenting on the crash of a DC-3 in May

18 Ibid., p.84.
1973 in which it was revealed that the flight manuals were in French and that the pilot "was not conversant with that language," noted that "I am sure that this aircraft did not come from the Douglas Aircraft Company with technical documents in the French language." 22

With the bilingualism in air transportation question, the Conservatives found themselves manoeuvred into a difficult, if not 'no-win' situation. As the Official Opposition they were obliged to voice what was clearly a strongly-felt opinion among many Canadians that bilingualism in the air was permissible elsewhere, but not in Canada. 23 In so doing, however, they again gave the unmistakable impression that they were doing all in their power to protect the status quo.

Also, their comments, in addition to being negative, were also often 'blurred' in their intent. Reading them, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between anti-bilingual and anti-Quebec commentary, as with Coates's statement regarding the "utter stupidity" of bilingual air-ground communications, 24 and Benno Friesen's remark to the effect that "the lives of hundreds

22 Debates, 8 April, 1975, vol.V. p.4632.

23 This paradox was clearly highlighted by the airline pilots who, although many of them flew regularly into such two language airports as Paris, Rome, Lisbon, Madrid and Athens, felt that bilingualism was a system that would be unworkable in Canada. See Laxer, Bilingual Tensions in Canada, p.32.

24 "Ottawa's bilingual policy wrong", Chronicle-Herald, 6 September, 1975, p.8. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 11, "Communication aérienne".
of people are more important than the right to use a particular language." 25

The fundamental problem for the Conservatives lay in the different interpretations given the issue by the different sides involved: in this case, the English and the French. English Canadians saw the issue as one of air safety. Stirred by images of disasters caused by language mix-ups, they felt that French should not be used in directing air traffic over Quebec. French Canadians, on the other hand, did not feel that the safety was a valid argument. Instead, they saw the issue as one of the right as Canadians to work in their mother tongue, especially in Quebec. 26

The Conservatives, as a national party, had to attempt to reconcile these two opposing views. But, by aligning themselves with the CATCA and the CALPA, they once again sacrificed long-term party interests for short-term political gain. In addition, they left themselves open to the age-old charge that not only did they not represent the interests of French Canada, they were indeed actively opposed.

In addition, the dichotomy created by the obligatorily favourable public position on bilingualism held by the Conservative party leadership and those negative positions expressed by some of the Tory backbenchers, is of some interest. As negative positions are more likely to rest in the public conscience than


26 Laxer, Bilingual Tensions in Canada, p.31.
are positive ones, especially if that same public is, from the outset, less than favourably disposed to a given issue, the question arises as to the possible effects on the party's image and credibility in the eyes of that same public.

In so far as our third issue is concerned, that of bilingualism in the armed forces, the Conservatives were under no constraint to take a positive stance. Surprisingly, in an area with which Tories traditionally strongly identify, there was very little open criticism. Moreover, the majority of the interventions came during oral question periods in the Commons when questions are short and government answers often shorter.

The types of question asked by the different Conservatives, varied. On one occasion, Eldon Woolliams (Calgary North), referring to the implementation of bilingualism in the armed forces, asked the government whether the aim of the armed services was to protect the national security of the nation, or to become a cultural pool for Canadians. 27 On another occasion, Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond) referred to the implementation of a French-only scheme within one regiment of the army and one ship of the navy as "segregation." 28 And on a third occasion, Tom Cossitt demanded to know why, when only ten percent of the students at the Royal Military Academy in Kingston,


Ontario were Francophone, the government had decided that the whole institution should be bilingual. 29

Finally, in December 1975, Patrick Nowlan (Annapolis Valley) spoke up against the installation of a French Language Unit at an Air Force base situated in his riding in the heart of rural Nova Scotia. Calling it "an artificial creation of linguistic ghettos," he wrote to the Minister of Defence claiming that the implementation of such a plan would place service personnel and their families in a difficult position, "and exacerbate unnecessarily, social tensions and feeling in the community affected." 30

Conservative criticism of bilingualism in the armed services was thus relatively mild and somewhat superficial. We found no evidence of rhetoric about the forces being corrupted or degraded by bilingualism and few open displays of prejudice regarding the possibilities inherent in a Francophone controlled army, air force or navy. 31 Nevertheless, we may surmise that their remarks on the issue, as with those regarding Bill 22 and air transport only added more mortar to the wall which the party had built

29 "Gone too far", The Citizen, 25 March, 1975, p.3. In any case, he said, "English is the international language used wherever our troops are sent."

30 "Nos politiciens n'ont pas été élus pour leur beauté." Le Petit Courrier, (West Pubnico, N.S.) 18 December, 1975, p.4. CIRB, OCOL, Roll 4, "Canada, Ministère - Défense Nationale".

31 One such example was Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka), who, during an interview said "I want the military under Anglophone control." "Bilingual paranoia creeping into Parliament corridors?", North Bay Nugget, 1 October, 1975, p.1.
between itself and French Canada and the one it continued to build between the image and the reality of the Conservative position on bilingualism.

The existence of this dichotomy was evident throughout the Stanfield era as various Conservative MPs, despite Stanfield's efforts to stop unwarranted criticism of bilingualism, seemed deliberately unwilling to restrain themselves. In this vein, Gerald Baldwin (Peace River) during debate on the financing of bilingual programs in November 1969, compared the government's proposal to aid in the funding of second language education programs to what he called the "foisting" of Medicare on the provinces. In that particular situation, he said, the government, because of financial restraints, began to limit federal contributions. He raised the spectre of the same thing happening with respect to the language programs.

During a Throne Speech debate in February 1972, Erik Neilson noted that the CBC board of directors contained eighteen members of whom eight were Francophones. This meant, he said, that these people (the eight) need the support of only one other member to make decisions which affect the uninhibited flow of capital into Quebec, or any other province. Why is there this imbalance? he asked.

32 Stanfield, realizing the divisive nature of the issue, wished to avoid the subject at all costs. RLS-INT.
34 "Question B policies and you're labelled a bigot-MP", The Citizen, 1 March, 1972, p.15.
In November of the same year, Le Devoir reported that during a television program the previous month, Edmonton Center MP Steve Paproski had commented, in reaction to bilingual signs in Jasper National Park, that it was "...honteux d'avoir à se soumettre à cette espèce de folie... . We should have left things the way they were," he said, "everyone was happy." In an aside, the article reported that Paproski had claimed that the bilingual packaging program was "une cause majeure" of higher food prices. 35

On still another front, the race for the Conservative leadership in late 1975 and early 1976 obliged the contenders to state publicly their positions on bilingualism and show how they would deal with the question once elected to the party leadership. As Ian Urquhart of Macleans magazine reported, "le sentiment des délégués hors Québec est décidément anti-francophone." 36

In a major editorial on the issue, the ultra-conservative Moncton Times reported that the Conservatives "seemed more than ever in the mood to turn their backs on the total commitment to bilingualism made by Robert Stanfield." 37 To a man, the article stated, the candidates publicly supported a continued commitment

35 "Le vrai visage de certains conservateurs", Le Devoir, 10 November, 1972, p.4.


37 "Backlash to bilingualism grows in English Canada", Moncton Times, 31 January, 1976, p.5.
to the idea of bilingualism, but they wanted the process slowed down. 38 Most of the candidates agreed that Trudeau had gone further than the Official Languages Act they supported in 1969, ever really intended. 39

Patrick Nowlan was quoted as noting that "we are more divided between Anglophone and Francophone than we've ever been." Flora McDonald (Kingston-The Islands) called for "passive bilingualism" that would, in effect, recognize that Canada could never be an effectively bilingual country. Tom Cossitt said he desired a cut back in bilingualism, and a halt to the "force-feeding" of it to millions of Canadians. 40

Thus on the eve of Robert Stanfield's retirement and six years after the historic debate on official languages, the Conservatives had apparently not changed their colours. The Tory leader's eight year struggle with the party over the question had apparently impressed few, especially those running to succeed him. Perhaps the Conservatives' thirst for power had convinced them, as it had others who had preceded them, that their only chance for victory lay in English Canada.

38 A poll published by the "Centre de Recherches sur l'Opinion Publique" (CROP) in May 1976, revealed that 73% of Anglophones felt that the government was putting too much emphasis on bilingualism. 50% of Francophones felt that there was not enough. Bériault, Anti Quebec-Les réactions du Canada-anglais face au French Power, p.132.

39 Ibid. One must assume that the journalist in question did not interview Jack Horner.

40 Ibid. In assessing the remarks of the leadership candidates, it must be kept in mind that 1976 was the year the separatist Parti Québécois came to power in Quebec.
CONCLUSION

When Robert Stanfield came to the Conservative leadership he faced enormous difficulties. Two of the most important of these were the factionalization of the party into three broad groups including moderates, small-c conservatives and prairie radicals 1 and the huge amounts of resentment generated by his victory among those members of the party who had a political and emotional attachment to former leader John Diefenbaker.

The first major test of Stanfield's ability to bring these disparate forces together under a strong central leadership came during debate over the Official Languages Act in 1969. Stanfield realized long before the vote took place the potential difficulties the bill might cause the Conservatives. 2 Aware that the party was not ready to take a constructive position over bilingualism and biculturalism, he spent much time attempting to convince reluctant members of the necessity of supporting the government's bill. 3 This task was made no easier by Jack Horner who, in the months preceding opening of the debate, openly


2 Stevens, Stanfield, p.230. A 1969 Gallup Poll indicated that only 56% of Canadians supported even the principle of official languages. In western Canada, 70% opposed the idea. Ibid.

3 RLS-INT.
organized opposition to the proposed legislation. Clearly the debate would be an important test of Stanfield's ability to rally his troops. On the other hand, it would also be a golden opportunity for those who opposed not only his leadership, but more specifically his ideas on bilingualism and biculturalism, to voice their opposition.

In 1973 the same issues of bilingualism and Stanfield's position as party leader were once again in play. The vote on the bilingualism in the civil service resolution revealed that while the damage was less important than in 1969, (16/107 vs 17/72) it was nonetheless substantial. It showed not only that the party contained a certain body of opinion insensitive to and hostile toward the hopes and aspirations of French Canadians, but also that Stanfield had failed to impose his complete authority, by obliging members to vote in the resolution's favor.

In so far as the Tory response to the bilingualism in the civil service issue was concerned, we saw the emergence of a second 'group' of Conservatives, the Loyalist Caucus. The members of this 'group' took it upon themselves to defend the rights of the unilingual English civil servant. While much less ideological than their prairie counterparts, they nonetheless provided a

4 Stevens, Stanfield, p.230.

5 Robert Coates, who had voted against C-120, announced in caucus that he would support the resolution "precisely because the main question for the Conservative Party was the question of loyalty to the leader". Perlin, The Tory Syndrome, p.120.
constant barrage of criticism aimed at the government's handling and implementation of the civil service bilingual program.

Finally, we looked at the issues of language legislation in Quebec (Bill 22), the French language in air-to-ground communication, and bilingualism in the armed forces. As with the two debates and the question of bilingualism in the civil service, Conservative response to these questions was essentially negative. This was indicative, perhaps, of their lack of understanding of the deep-seated emotions involved (Bill 22), of their cultural chauvinism (French in air-to-ground communications), or simply of the fact that they were in opposition, and thus felt themselves to be fulfilling their role. In addition, this chapter permitted us to see that the bilingual question was a wide-ranging one which had implications in many facets of Canadian life outside of the strictly political.

The majority of Conservative interventions concerning bilingualism thus came from two 'groups' within the party: one representing the Prairie regions, and the other, the career aspirations of Anglophone civil servants and the Loyalist sentiments of many southeastern Ontario and Maritime residents. Both of these 'groups' had different reasons for their opposition, as well as distinctive ways of voicing it.

The reactions of the Prairie Caucus can clearly be divided into three categories: fundamental opposition to bilingualism and biculturalism, opposition to Robert Stanfield personally and finally what George Perlin calls the notion of 'social cleavage'.
the idea that Prairie MPs reacted negatively out of feelings of social inferiority.

Members of the Prairie Caucus represented both the western viewpoint of Canada and of Confederation and the rural mentality prevalent in many parts of their home provinces. This idea of rural mentality is a general observation which was obviously inapplicable to MPs representing metropolitan areas of Edmonton and Calgary. The people of this region were multicultural in origin, their identity based on "the assimilation of ethnic minorities into a composite Canadian nationality." 6 Despite or perhaps because of the ethnic mosaic of prairie settlement, western Canadians' image and feelings about their part of the country were "close in spirit to the melting-pot nationalism of the United States." 7 Within this ideological framework, there was little room for the notion of special status.

To many westerners, such demands (for special status) seemed to be 'part and parcel' of the government's preoccupation with cultural affairs 8 and its insistence on discussing bilingualism

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7 Ibid., p.177.

8 It is important to remember that opposition to bilingualism from these people was NOT directed at the idea or the principle of bilingualism, but at the implicit downgrading of 'non-official' cultures, inherent in the notion of bilingualism and biculturalism.
at a time of economic hardship in the west. In addition, many
Prairie members concluded that the abrupt appearance of bilin-
gualism as a civil service prerequisite guaranteed that for the
next number of years, at least until the west could educate
enough people in French to enable them to take their places in
high civil service jobs, the west would be 'left out in the
cold', its affairs directed by people who knew little if anything
about the region or its people.

Inherent in these arguments was the ever present idea of
coezcion in the application of bilingualism, the idea that the
government would ultimately force the people to learn a second
language. This fear, refuted time and again not only by the
government but by many Conservatives as well, was one of the
mainstays of Tory opposition. Attempts to reassure the people of
the absurdity of such notions were often torpedoed by the Prime
Minister's intransigence, arrogance, and 'you will do as I say'
attitude.

The spiritual leader and mentor of many of the people of
this region, and concomitantly their Members of Parliament, was
John Diefenbaker. Raised in Saskatchewan, and branded by the

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9 Former Federal Liberal Agriculture Minister B.A. Olsen
noted that he felt that there was a direct link between the
farmer's economic situation and the overall opposition to
bilingualism in the west. Canada 70 Team of the Toronto
Telegram, The Prairies: Alienation and Anger (Toronto:
McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1970), p.20. Like most people,
westerners have short memories. In complaining about
Ottawa's preoccupation with Quebec, they conveniently forgot
that for the first three decades of the twentieth century,
the Prairies were the scene of massive federal investment
programs aimed at opening and developing the area.
iron of prairie populism, Diefenbaker represented much of what these people held important. He was for the common man, and against the eastern 'interests' which had for so long used the west to enrich themselves. When he spoke of One Canada, he envisioned a country of unhyphenated Canadians where all people were equal, regardless of their cultural heritage. Stanfield's support of the bilingual idea was a seeming rejection of this concept, an acceptance of the central Canadian view of Canada as a bilingual and bicultural entity. While confrontation between the two sides was inevitable, it would be interesting to know whether or not the various western Conservatives continued to feel as much hostility to the bilingual program, after the government officially abandoned the biculturalism idea for that of multiculturalism in 1972.

In fact, it leads us to the issue of anti-Stanfield feeling among the members of the Prairie Caucus as an ingredient in explaining their hostile reaction to bilingualism. Stanfield's victory over Diefenbaker in 1967 had been ill-received by many in the party, especially those of the Prairie Caucus who retained a fierce loyalty to their former leader. Stanfield's push to open the party to more urban elements, his endorsement of the Two Nations theory, his agreement with the idea of a Quebec lieutenant, and his relentless support of bilingualism, had made

10 On the condition that they spoke English and respected the majesty and authority of the British Crown.

11 A person within the party charged with overseeing Quebec MPs and affairs.
him few friends among these people. To compound his difficulties, Diefenbaker took an openly hostile position on the issue, offering an unofficial but very real alternate leadership. 12

The differences between the two men, both in temperament and style, were a source of much difficulty for Stanfield. Diefenbaker was a fiercely partisan politician, captivating the House with his boundless rhetoric and terrorizing his opponents with his vast knowledge of federal parliamentary procedure and precedent and equally impressive grasp of Canadian history. Stanfield, on the other hand, was a novice in federal politics. He abhorred displays of political terrorism, and he had none of the panache for which the media was so hungry and which it found in both John Diefenbaker and Pierre Trudeau.

On the contrary, Stanfield was a consensus politician. He saw his role as essentially that of a persuader. 13 He was not a forceful charismatic leader. He was quiet and self-effacing. Many western MPs, brought up in the populist tradition of John Diefenbaker, were unsympathetic to this style of leadership. For

12 Stanfield characterized Diefenbaker as progressive but rigid. He said that he could have done much for bilingualism, but that he refused to do anything, calling the idea a mistake and divisive. RLS-INT. Gerald Baldwin, House Leader under Stanfield, recalled that Diefenbaker was a vindictive man who admired his supporters and hated those who opposed him. PAC, Stursberg Collection, MG 31 D78, vol.14, "Interview of G. Baldwin by Peter Stursberg, 7 November 1973", pp.45-9.

them, a national political leader had to be a gigantic figure, god-like, driven and determined. He had to be a man's man, someone they could respect and look up to. The importance of this is clear. Being consistently and poorly compared to both Diefenbaker and Trudeau, Robert Stanfield's image as a competent party leader would have suffered accordingly. The image held of him by members of the Prairie Caucus was perhaps a not unimportant factor in their decision to defy him.

Finally, there is what George Perlin refers to as the notion of 'social cleavage'. Perlin notes that tensions within the party were aggravated by key figures in the party apparatus (Eastern Canada urban-based) who "adopted a patronizing and arrogant attitude toward 'the yahoos' and 'Diefenbaker's cowboys' in the caucus." He argues that the Prairie Caucus members, because they came from hinterland provinces, from rural areas and minor professional backgrounds, "felt excluded from the centers of power and influence in the country." He hypothesizes that for many or most of the Prairie Caucus members, "dissident behaviour


16 Following the 1973 resolution debate, a Toronto newspaper characterized those who voted against it as being relatively young, not well known outside of their ridings and not Cabinet material. "Vote on language issue leaves stab-in-the-back feeling among Tories", Globe and Mail, 8 June, 1973, p.8.

17 Ibid.
was an emotional expression of resentment at their status as outsiders." 18

One object of their hostility was that group within the party associated with the dominant social interests in Canada, of which Stanfield was the obvious symbol. A second target was French Canadians. Their hostility toward this group may be explained, Perlin says,

"by the widely observed tendency of socially pressured groups to seek ascriptively defined scapegoats on which to displace their feelings of insecurity. French Canadians were (an) obvious target, given...the fact that they appeared to be looking for and to be receiving privileged treatment." 19

If we accept Perlin's hypothesis, we might then surmise that the psychological factor, so important in political relations, weighed in on the negative side. Hence, even before arguments were mounted within the party to convince recalcitrant members of the justness and political perspicacity of Stanfield's position, the battle was half lost, due to the members in question being already ill-disposed toward both the leader and the idea in question.

The second 'group' of Conservative MPs to criticize openly the bilingual program was composed essentially of three members from Southern Ontario: Tom Cossitt, Douglas Alkenbrack and Walter Baker, the so-called Loyalist Caucus. Representing the United Empire pro-English sentiments of many of the people of this

19 Ibid., pp.128-9.
region and the Maritimes, these men offered a more concrete and less emotional opposition than their western counterparts. Interestingly, our research failed to turn up any reference to them as being rednecks, reactionaries or any other of the many labels applied to the Prairie Caucus. Was this due to the innate prejudice of the eastern-oriented national media? or to the fact that the bulk of their criticism was aimed, not at the concept of bilingualism, but at the follies and injustices occasioned by its implementation? The answer is likely a mixture of both, with national political correspondents, and newspaper editors much more attuned to outraged cries of "cocktail bilingualism," 20 than those of central Canadian domination, prejudice and incomprehension of western Canada.

The bulk of the Loyalist Caucus’s arguments centered around facts and figures, 21 emphasizing whenever possible the personal angle. Thus there were numerous charges of people being displaced or losing their jobs, of civil service families getting full-year paid vacations to learn French, 22 and of federal government

20 This refers to Cossitt's criticism of the wives of high salaried government officials who took French language courses at the taxpayer's expense, so that they "could get along in French at cocktail parties." Cossitt called this 'cocktail circuit bilingualism'. "Cocktail Bilingualism", Ottawa Journal, 6 March, 1974. (TBPC), vol.V. See also Debates, 12 March, 1975, vol.IV, pp.4024-6.

21 Cossitt and Coates were particularly active in this area. See, for example, Cossitt, Debates, vol.VI, 8 May, 1975, p.5591, 9 May, 1975, pp.5643-4, 14 May, 1975, p.5793, 20 May, 1975, p.5917.

departments transferring to Quebec locations, leaving the English Canadians concerned the choice of moving or possible unemployment. They attracted much media attention as they were issues that people could understand and more importantly, to which they could relate.

In the case of the Prairie Caucus, on the other hand, predictions of western alienation, and arguments of the importance of the multi-ethnic culture in the west, while interesting and important in themselves, lacked any hard news content. Did continued emotional references to such issues being, as they were, a blatant refusal to accept the government's definition of Canadian society, cause writers and editors to label the Prairie Caucus members radicals and bigots? 23

The criticisms of the Loyalist Caucus related for the most part to the implementation of the bilingual program, especially in the civil service. This issue was one of the cornerstones of 'official' Conservative policy. 24 While in favour of the principles of bilingualism, Conservatives were quick to point out what they felt were the abuses and injustices which occurred as the bilingual program was translated into a reality.

Unfortunately this does not explain why these men took the decision 'to go to bat' for the civil service. A look ex post

23 For a standard work on the question of national media reflecting the status quo, and in so doing reinforcing the 'accepted' image of a given society, see Wallace Clement, The Canadian Corporate Elite (Ottawa: Carleton, 1975).

24 Official party policy was based on what Stanfield, as party leader, decided.
facto at some of their remarks on bilingualism appears to reveal that it was not so much a question of coming to the aid of those in distress within the civil service (in Cossitt's and Alkenbrack's case at least), as it was a decision based on personal opinion, with the civil service serving as a convenient conduit.

Tom Cossitt was a former Liberal who had quit the party in 1972 in disagreement over Trudeau's bilingual policies. Representing what one review referred to as a heavily British, United Empire Loyalist anti-Catholic constituency (Leeds), Cossitt consistently criticized the government for what he called its obsession with "instant bilingualism." Among other things, he disagreed with the government's condoning of hyphenated Canadianism (implicit in the idea of bilingualism and biculturalism), and with the huge costs incurred through the implementation of the bilingual program. In addition, he disliked the fact that when French Canadians called for the preservation of their culture and traditions, the government called it standing up for their rights, and yet, when English Canadians did the same thing, they were called bigots. His endless queries, questions and charges dealing with the implementation of bilingualism were a common occurrence in the House.

Stanfield referred to Cossitt as a sort of a rebel, "not really a party man," and "an embarrassing character not to be taken seriously," 28 who had his own ideas on bilingualism and refused to be deterred.

Doug Alkenbrack represented a riding (Frontenac-Lennox-Addington) of overwhelmingly British make-up. His views on bilingualism, especially as it pertained to the civil service, were very much straight to the point. He accused the government of subverting the rights of Anglophone civil servants, 29 and of destroying the merit system to accommodate French Canadians. 30 Charging that appeals against this process led to lack of promotion, 31 he concluded that bilingualism in the civil service was little more than "outright favouritism" based in many cases on race and language. 32 He gained a certain notoriety for opening what he called the Alkenbrack File, in which he claimed to keep the innumerable letters received from civil servants who had been done injustices through the implementation of the bilingual program.

Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton) represented one of

28 RLS-INT.
31 Ibid.
Ottawa's biggest civil service ridings, in itself an explanation of the majority of his numerous interventions in Parliament. Basically a vehicle for the publicizing of the many fears and frustrations of unilingual Anglophone civil servants, he differed from Cossitt and Alkenbrack in that he concentrated his energies on the civil service alone, leaving rhetorical outbursts of opinion to others.

A final reason for the negative Conservative reaction to bilingualism, from within both caucuses, lies in what might be termed 'the French element'. In the case of the Prairie Caucus, we have seen that for westerners, French Canadians had made little contribution to the building and character of that part of the country, a region whose ideology and history gave little space to events before the massive arrival of European immigrants in the first decades of the twentieth century. They were seen as simply another group among the many who made up the prairie population. Demands by Quebec, in the name of all French Canadians, for cultural and linguistic special status, were in direct opposition to the multi-ethnic unhyphenated Canadianism, so important to members of the Prairie Caucus. Special status meant the elevation of one culture above others and the 'officializing' of that elevation. Quebec pressure in this direction,

33 83% Anglophone and 25% employed by the government. Le Magazine MacLean, vol.12, No.8, août, 1972, p.20.

34 Diefenbaker was clear on this point, rejecting the ideas of 'opting out', two flags, two pension plans, two nations, associated states and "all of the other baggage of political dualism." Van Dusen, The Chief, p.79.
together with its insistence on the extension and the protection of French language rights throughout the entire country, was seen by many westerners as nothing but an expensive concession to a minority, and one that would lead to further national disunity. 35

Turning to the issue of French Canadian representation (or lack of it) in the Conservative Party, one might speculate that had French Canadians been more numerous within the party, they might have had some effect on the reactions of different members to the bilingual question. This might have been achieved through the very force of their presence. Their speeches could have served as a counterbalance to the more negative ones of some of their colleagues. In addition, their presence would have served as a reminder of the existence of the many millions of Francophones who, far from wanting to impose their language and culture, wanted simply the official recognition of their status as pioneers and the right to communicate with the federal government in their own language. Unfortunately for the Conservative Party, between 1967 and 1976 it contained very few French Canadian MPs, who in turn apparently had little if any impact on the party. When asked if French-Canadian members had exercised an influence on their fellow members' positions or thinking on bilingualism, Stanfield replied simply that he thought not,

referring to the men in question as "not strong people" and "not leaders of men." 36

Tory opposition to bilingualism, while important when discussing the Conservative Party during the 1960-1980 era, was in fact only a small part of the huge jig-saw which was 'the Conservative Party, 1967-1976'. Was it an important part? Did the Conservatives fail to win federal elections because of their position on bilingualism? Did the Diefenbaker-Stanfield struggle have implications on areas outside the immediate bilingual sphere?

Whatever the answer to these questions, it is our feeling that the consequences of Conservative reaction to the bilingual question during the period 1967-1976, for both the party and Robert Stanfield's leadership, were few, and in the case of the party, of a short-term nature. The first part of our conclusion is based on the theory that by the 1970s federal politics had become a short-term game. This was due in major part to the dramatic changes in media and communication technology which had taken place in North America since the end of World War II. As a result of these changes, people were led to be more interested in personality than in content. 37 Thus while the positions of some Conservatives on bilingualism arguably provoked negative conse-

36 RLS-INT.

quences for the party during the period of Stanfield's leadership and, perhaps, for a certain period following, we do not feel that they engendered any long-term repercussions. Having become increasingly individualistic, obsessed about today and less inquisitive about yesterday, Canadians appear as little interested in the political battles of the 1960s as the post-1945 generation is with the war stories of its parents.

In so far as the question of the effects of the bilingual issue on Stanfield's leadership are concerned, we feel the effects to have been minimal. On one hand it must be recognized that his handling of the question could have been interpreted as weak leadership, his failure to enforce party discipline in 1969 and 1973, a sign that he was not in full control. On the other hand it could also have been seen as good leadership in the sense that he allowed free expression of opinion, that he realized there were fundamental differences of opinion within the party and that it was his job to allow them to appear.

The effects of the opposition of Diefenbaker and the Prairie Caucus were undeniable. The former leader proposed himself on a number of occasions as an alternative to Stanfield, clearly defying his own code of political conduct. The importance of this split diminished as Stanfield's mandate wore on, as different members from the Prairies failed to be re-elected and as new members hitched their fortunes to other people within the party, leaving Diefenbaker and his followers increasingly isolated.
As contentious a topic as it was, the bilingualism question was nonetheless but one issue among many. Moreover, examination of the party's parliamentary voting record during the period of Stanfield's tenure reveals that apart from the votes of 1969 and 1973 (and a third, related to capital punishment, in which the party whip was not imposed), Conservative MPs never again openly defied their leader's wishes. 38 It would thus appear, on the surface at least, that the bilingual issue did little to undermine Stanfield's authority and leadership of the party.

Following this train of thought, we have concluded that the most important consequence of the Conservatives' opposition to bilingualism, was simply the reinforcement of the party's image of being opposed to the aspirations of French Canada to secure an official place for its culture and language. 39 This image was continually and publicly emphasized over the almost nine years of

38 See H.D.Clarke et al., Political Choice in Canada (Abridged Edition), Ch.7, "Images of Political Leaders".

39 Following the 1969 Official Languages debate, Granatstein noted that the anti-Quebec faction, filled with reactionaries, was running the parliamentary wing of the party. A credible case could be made, he said, that the Tories were "anti-Catholic, intolerant and hate Quebec". It was not true, he said, but the case could still be made. Granatstein, "The problem of the Conservatives", p.76. Even Stanfield was moved to admit on at least one occasion that "there are those in our party who...give the clear impression of being anti-French and anti-Quebec". PAC, (RSC), MG 32 C-21 vol.18. "NOTES-The PC Youth Federation Fund Raising Dinner, 'Directions for the future'", Toronto, 4 October, 1974, p.5.
Stanfield's tenure. During this period, various members of the party, either continuously or on specific occasions, openly contradicted the official policy of their party, refusing to give their approbation and support to the notion of bilingualism and in many cases openly opposing it. Whether it was opposition to the Official Languages Act, the 1973 resolution on bilingualism in the civil service, or disagreement over the implementation of bilingualism in the federal bureaucracy, Conservative members throughout this era were seen as offering little but negative criticism.

The possible implications of the negative image thus acquired are threefold. First, there is the possibility that the party, with its clearly definable body of anti-bilingual feeling, became a target for English-Canadian mistrust. The 1960s and 70s were an era of great turmoil in Canadian politics as Quebec sought 'a better deal'. The question obviously arises as to whether the party's image had any bearing on the way people voted during the 1972 and 1974 federal elections. Did people decide, in light of Tory reactions to bilingualism, that the Conservatives were perhaps not the ideal party to deal with the threat to national unity posed by French-Canadian concern for cultural survival? 41

40 While anti-French tendencies certainly existed in the party during Diefenbaker's time, they were never expressed in as public a fashion as between 1967-1976.

Second, if this were indeed the case, we might then presume that this led to pecuniary difficulties for the party, as people decided to withhold financial contributions until such time as the party was perceived to be a viable contender for power. Concomitant with this would be a possible lack of credible candidates for elections, people holding back out of distaste for the party's anti-bilingual image, or out of fear of losing their election outright to representatives of parties considered more capable of dealing with the "Quebec situation."

Third, the consequences of this negative image likely had the same type of effect in Quebec, where the Tories were trying desperately to make a breakthrough. In effect, it was a Catch-22 situation for as long as the Conservatives continued to be seen as unwelcoming to French Canadians, they would attract few votes in Quebec. Failing to do this, their hopes of winning federal elections would be thus reduced, thereby minimizing their chances of recruiting suitable candidates.

A further consequence of the bilingual question for the Conservatives, we suggest, was its effect on the internal harmony of the party as factionalization became rife. Diefenbaker's decision to oppose Stanfield over the issue and the ramifications of this decision, were two of the most important aspects of the entire Stanfield period. As leader, Stanfield had the exclusive right to make party policy. This meant, in turn, that any disagreement within the party over a particular policy was likely to be interpreted as a direct personal challenge to
his authority. Diefenbaker's refusal to support Stanfield's position on bilingualism, indeed his open opposition to the question, thus put the Conservative leader in a delicate position. If he attempted to discipline the former leader either in private or especially in public, he risked splitting the party in two. If he chose to do nothing, the party could end up paying the price in lost votes and continued exclusion from Quebec.

Stanfield chose not to confront Diefenbaker directly. Instead he attempted to convince members to refrain from speaking disparagingly about bilingualism in public, unless provoked. This was the middle course so characteristic of him. But in so choosing, would not his image of indecisiveness be reinforced, leading people to question his competence both as party leader and possible prime minister?

Thus we might conclude that the most important consequences of the bilingualism question upon the Conservative Party were twofold: the reinforcement of the party's anti-French image, and the enormous strain put on both the party and Stanfield by Diefenbaker's opposition. It is our opinion that the effects of these two issues were minimal. The first reason for this was the lack of public interest mentioned earlier; also, that political images and perceptions can be changed. Thus the party's negative image during the 1967-1976 era could be neutralized by succeeding generations through the skilled use of the media and public
relations. In the case of Robert Stanfield, Diefenbaker's antagonism, while a cause of real concern, had, we feel, few long-term effects on his leadership.

For nine years, members of the party's anti-bilingual caucuses waged a long battle against a very specific question. On a larger scale, the party during that period lost three successive federal elections, its leader finally forced to retire amidst the unpitying stares unsuccessful politicians everywhere know so well. Conservative opposition to bilingualism became one of the trademarks of the Stanfield era. As elements within the party fought the fast changing tides of the status quo, Stanfield, in a manner unique to himself, sat quietly on Canute's throne. Knowing that inevitably the tide would rise, he invited his followers to join him. Some did and some refused. The tide came in anyway.

Unless one believes in the theory of long-term collective memory, in which case a given set of events are registered and then either held to confirm certain ideas or prejudices, or rejected as being of no consequence.
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