

The Politics

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The politics of language

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FOREWORD


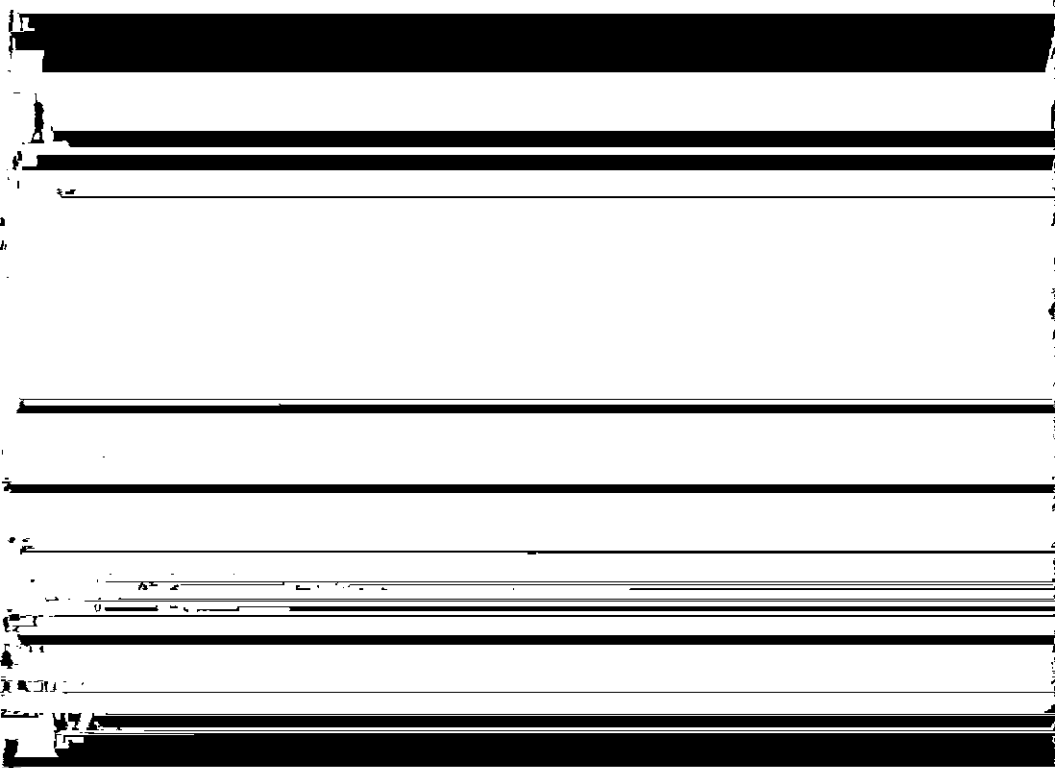
SOMMAIRE

Un consensus fut établi voilà vingt-cinq ans voulant qu'une politique fédérale ferme en matière de langue soit garante de l'unité nationale. Un certain nombre de mesures ont été appliquées depuis la fin des années '60 pour que soit renforcé

Le statut de la langue française en Canada. I

ABSTRACT

Twenty-five years ago there was consensus that a strong national policy on language was key to national unity. A number of measures have been put in



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province.”⁵ Yet, something has gone terribly wrong on the language front. Indeed, language may well be yet another of the “ties that no longer bind us.”⁶ A slight majority of Canadians may still believe in bilingualism “for all of Canada” but increasing numbers are uneasy about its application — in some

be sure, there have been and continue to be complaints on the level, promptness and quality of service and, occasionally, a breakdown in service is evident. Since these are documented by the commissioner of official languages who reports annually to Parliament, government departments are by and large

Table 1

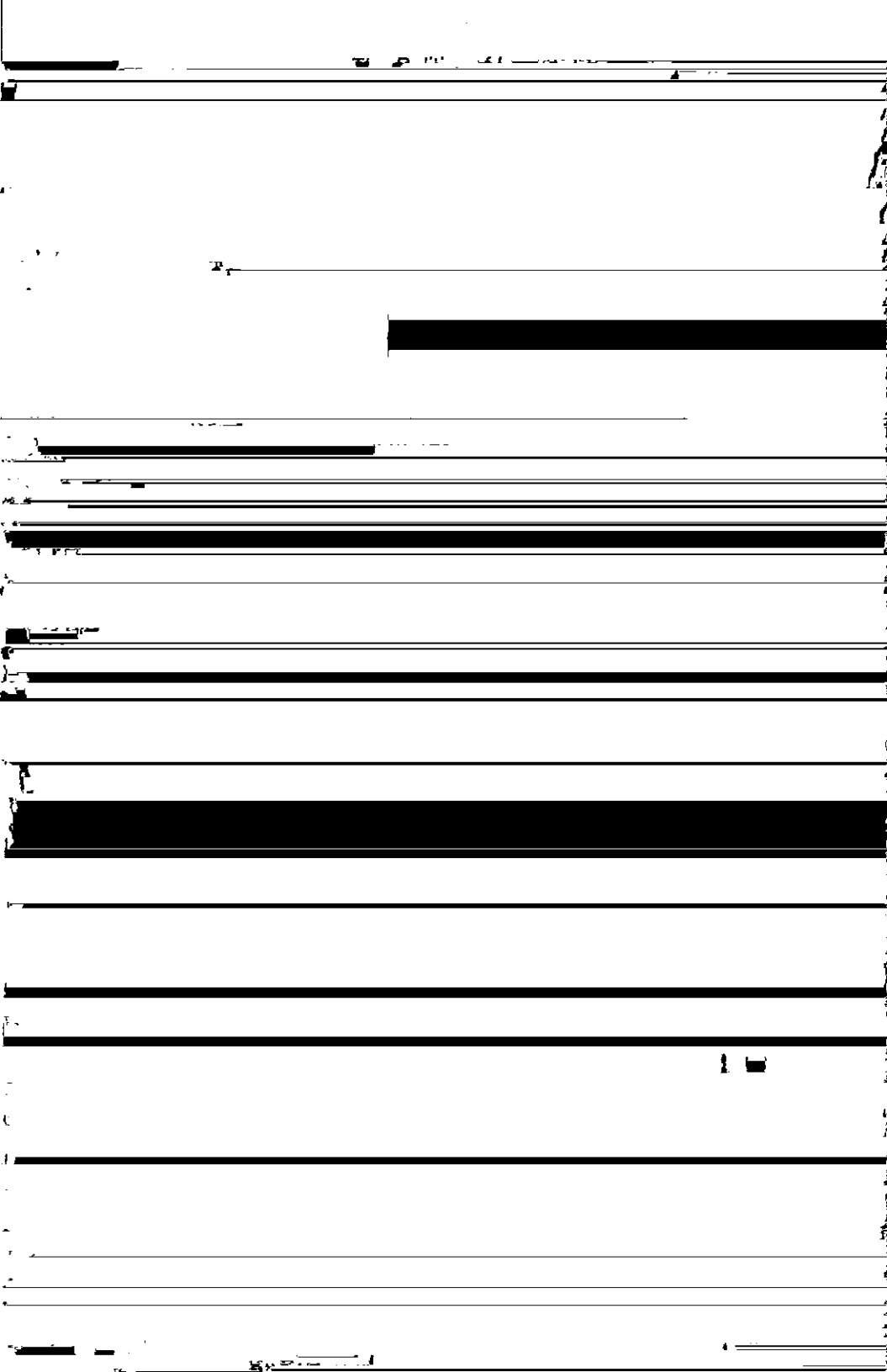
<i>Positions</i>	1974	1978	1982	1986	1989
1981	22,164	40,000	50,000	60,000	70,000

Table 2

TABLE 2. THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Year	Major Political Parties	Government	Key Events
1994	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	First democratic elections
1995	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
1996	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
1997	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
1998	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
1999	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2000	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2001	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2002	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2003	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2004	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2005	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2006	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2007	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2008	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2009	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2010	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2011	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2012	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2013	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2014	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2015	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2016	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2017	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2018	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2019	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2020	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2021	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2022	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2023	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations
2024	ANC, NP, IFP, etc.	ANC	Continuation of negotiations

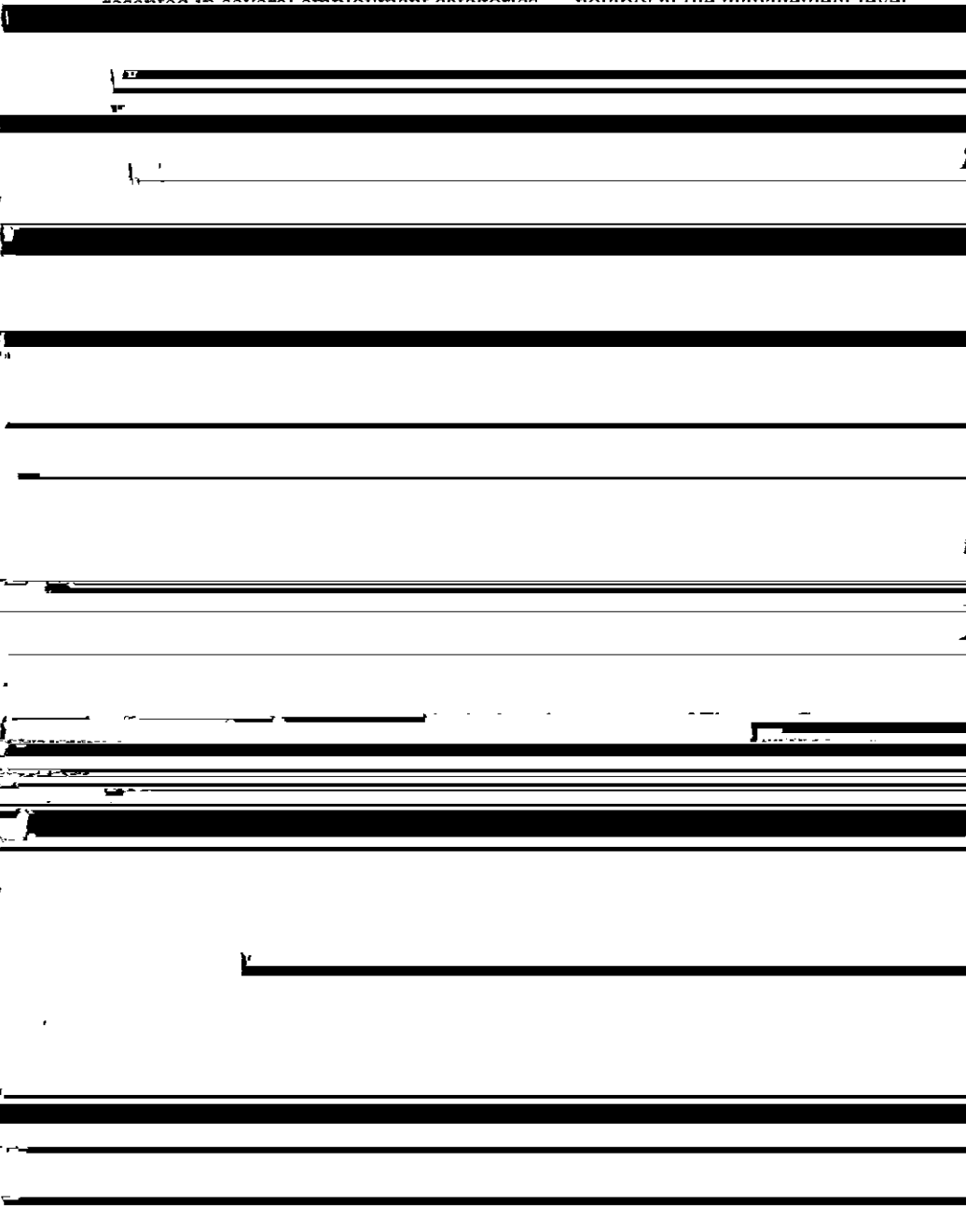
All of this is important, particularly for francophones outside Quebec. It will be recalled that at the time the British North America Act was drafted, the emphasis was on protecting educational rights on a denominational basis rather



\$1.1 million agreement with the federal government to strengthen health and social services to its English-speaking minority.²⁷ All in all, there are 79



able to secure a good number of positions in the New Brunswick public service. Their participation — 32.7 percent — is now roughly equal to their percentage of the population — 33.5 percent. Still, francophones are seriously under-represented in several employment categories — notably at the management level



Ontario's efforts in promoting French-language services, however, do not extend to the municipal level. In contrast, Quebec, through Bill 101 (section

first-language French or French-immersion schools in Manitoba, attended by about 4,000 students.

NOVA SCOTIA

There are no legal provisions in Nova Scotia to ensure that both English and

requirements of section 23 of the Charter. There are now two francophone schools on the Island and they provide all their courses in French, except second-language English courses.³⁴

NEWFOUNDLAND

The French language is recognized as an official language in Newfoundland and Labrador.

government asked for an independent assessment of the situation. Former Public Service Commission Chairman Edgar Gallant submitted his report in August 1989. It contained recommendations designed to meet the requirements of minority language rights in education under the Charter. The report makes a number of recommendations, including the right of management in education

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

understand the position of French Canada as a tiny island of people who speak French in a vast North American sea of people who speak English, and an island upon which the sea beats incessantly and thunderously. We should try to imagine what it would be like if *we* were the island and *they* were the sea. Might we not be asking for wider rights and guarantees?"⁴⁰ Looking back, 25 years

only tells part of the story. English Canadians in Quebec have a long and rich history and have been able to build solid institutions, especially in education and in the media. It is only since the 1960s that francophones outside Quebec have been able to secure the most basic of language and education rights.

English, the language of weak, at least in the private sector (i.e. outside Quebec)

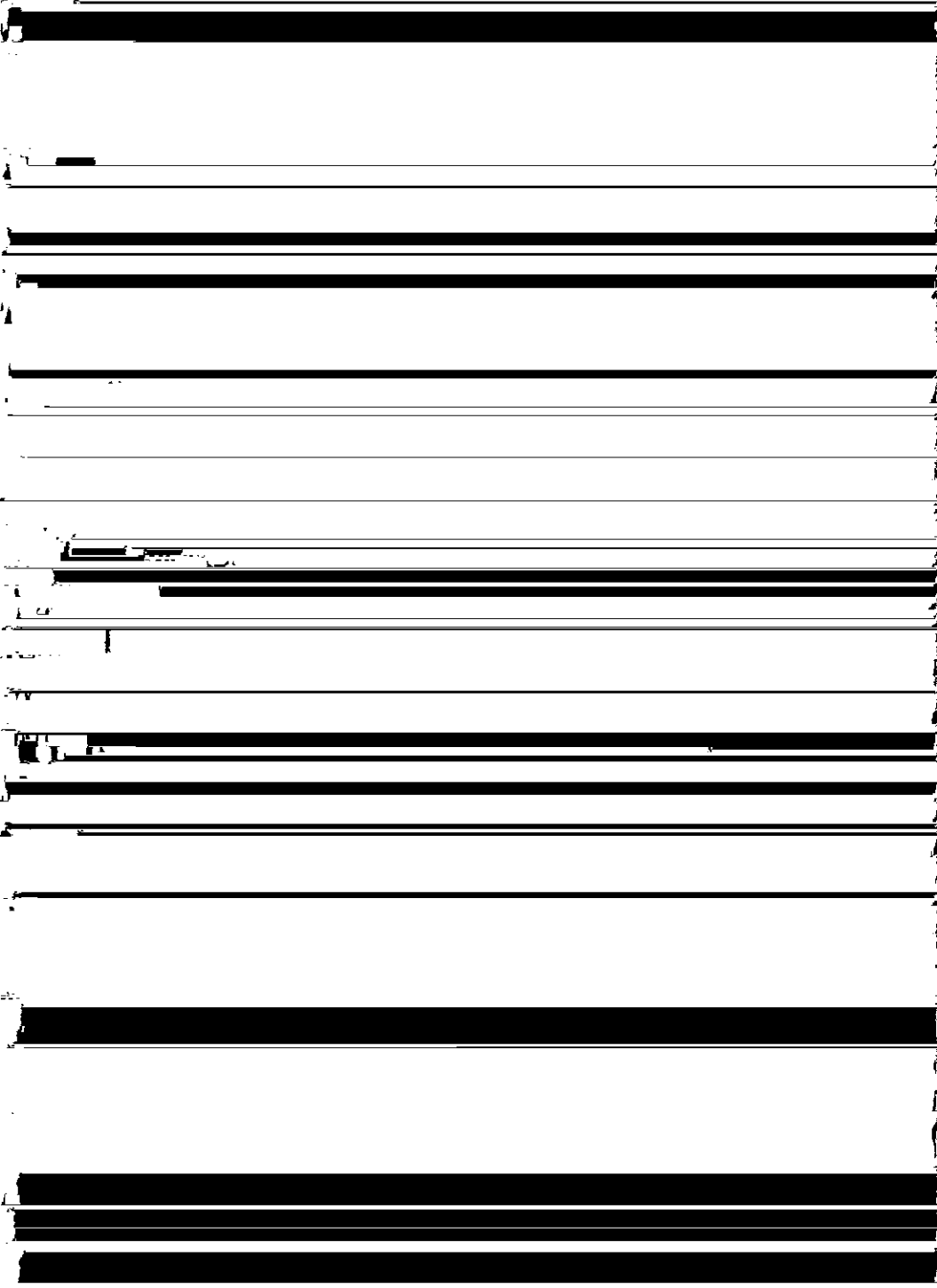
increasingly pronounced bilingualism and the...

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Those who would deny special status to Quebec as they did in the Meech Lake debate and who also argue that bilingualism has failed and has only served to shove French down the throats of English Canadians are surely putting Quebec

province's official languages policy over the next 20 years that says that the d... c



14. Commissioner of Official Languages, *Annual Report 1989* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1990), p. 52.
15. See *Alberta Report* (Edmonton), February 1988, (a special issue on bilingualism).
16. The "Globe and Mail-CBC News Poll," p. A5.
17. Government of Canada, *A Response to the Editor, Alberta Report*, 9 February 1988.

36. See "État des minorités linguistiques au Canada," *Annuaire de la recherche en linguistique* 10 (1977): 1-11.