

Reform language policy aims to be fair

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The story *Hidden Meanings In Equality Policy* (July 1) gives a seriously distorted account of Reform Party language policy.

While it is true that we propose to make language and culture provincial responsibilities, the provinces would have to exercise their jurisdiction within the Canadian Constitution, including the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Reform Party's Blue Book and other policy documents specifically mention freedom of expression as a constraint on any government's ability to legislate in the field

of language.

The Supreme Court of Canada, of course, has held that several aspects of Quebec's language legislation violate the Charter's guarantees of freedom of expression, and only Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa's invocation of the notwithstanding clause has kept Quebec's sign law in place.

It is incorrect to assert that "Mr. Manning's position specifically provides for Quebec's Bill 178." The Reform Party deplores such intrusive language legislation in Quebec, just as it has condemned proposals

for unilingual English legislation in other parts of Canada.

The right to use your own language in the private sector is an elementary human freedom that should never be abridged.

Our policy of territorial bilingualism is targetted at the question of what language(s) the federal government should use within its areas of public-sector responsibility.

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