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## **Standing Committee on Official Languages**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, December 1, 2011**

**Chair**

**The Honourable Michael Chong**



## Standing Committee on Official Languages

Thursday, December 1, 2011

• (0845)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)):** Welcome to the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages on this December 1, 2011.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108, our current study concerns the evaluation of the Roadmap with a view to improving programs and service delivery.

This morning we have three groups with us: first, Ms. Pilon and Ms. David, from the Commission nationale des parents francophones; second, Ms. Arsenault and Mr. Lévesque, from the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences; and third, Mr. McRoberts and Ms. Lalonde, from the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne.

First we will hear from the representatives of the Commission nationale des parents francophones.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon (President, Commission nationale des parents francophones):** Good morning, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Ghislaine Pilon, and I am president of the Commission nationale des parents francophones, the CNPF. I am here with our acting executive director, Adèle David.

First we want to thank you for granting us this hearing.

The CNPF works to improve the living conditions of minority francophone parents. Your committee occupies the front-row seats that enable you to change things. For that reason, we are pleased to have this opportunity to present CNPF's mandate to you. As a result of the role it plays, the CNPF is making its contribution and having a direct impact on our francophone communities, in addition to helping build our country's identity.

As the mouthpiece of francophone minority parents, CNPF shares a common interest, children's rights, with the World Health Organization, UNESCO, Health Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the Société Santé en français and Canadian Heritage, among others. As may be seen from its website, the policies and programs of Canadian Heritage "promote Canadian content; foster cultural participation, active citizenship and participation in Canada's civic life; and strengthen connections among Canadians."

From Yukon to Newfoundland and Labrador, passing through all the provinces and territories where francophones form the minority,

the CNPF represents 12 member organizations that defend the interests of francophone parents.

Let's not forget that parents are the first persons responsible for their children. They contribute to the full development of their children and families in their language, culture and community.

CNPF's mandate clearly illustrates that commitment. Its main objective is to develop French-language services of quality equal to that of the services enjoyed by the majority for francophone minority parents, who in some instances live in isolated conditions, and to ensure that they have access to those services. Those services include schools, health care, community media, cultural activities and other services in the minority language.

CNPF's two main activities are taking in and assisting parents and early childhood development. Those two components are closely linked because we are able to maximize the effect of our actions in the first years of children's lives, when people are experiencing their new situation as parents. CNPF operates on the basis of research that shows that healthy and harmonious development in early childhood is a determinant of health and well-being. Investments in early childhood increase public health and the economic vitality of the communities. Public investment in education generates a long-term return of \$3 for every dollar invested and \$8—I said \$8—when that dollar is invested during pregnancy.

That leads us to the positive impact on parents and their children. Through its intersectoral approach to early childhood development, CNPF has an influence in three areas at the national level: on language, since the choice of language spoken in the home, at school and in the community is made in the initial months following birth, or even earlier; on identity, since early childhood experiences in the family, in early childhood services and in the community prepare children for admission to French-language schools and to enter the francophone community; and on services, since it is essential to have access to health, education, recreation, justice and cultural services, to name only a few, which are integrated, ongoing and in French.

●(0850)

Now I will discuss the impact on francophone parents. The central position of parents throughout the strategic parent intake and assistance strategy is a guiding principle for the CNPF. The idea is to give parents a central position in the orientation, design, implementation, management and evaluation of programs and services intended for them. Parents support the approach and acknowledge the importance of their active participation. They have also made numerous suggestions to CNPF regarding aspects that should be considered in the next stages of the parent intake and assistance strategy.

Parents' participation in cultural and community life is possible only if they are comfortable with their cultural identity in relation to their social environment. In a minority setting, parents can feel isolated, hence the importance of associating with a network through assistance and support programs. Like other citizens, they can feel Canadian only if they identify with their country as a whole. Francophone minority parents cannot feel like full-fledged citizens if they cannot identify with the community to which they belong. Children, adults of tomorrow, are consequently affected by their parents' sense of belonging and identity, hence the importance of including children in the concept of the francophone minority parent, supported by integrated programs in French. Through the leadership that it exercises with its member organizations, CNPF is able to share the objectives of the various national and international bodies referred to earlier.

This mandate calls for investments that must provide the necessary support for the networks, organizations and institutions of the francophone minority communities, which are very important for parents.

How does CNPF act in concrete terms? Parent rights holders must make informed choices. They need to be taken in, to receive ongoing, informed assistance and to participate more fully in more programs and services in every province and territory. Like the late Dr. Mustard, we believe in broader services than babysitting services to assist francophone minority parents. We propose that there be service structures with multidimensional mandates capable of intervening starting at the pregnancy stage and enabling children to live in Canada's plural society.

To sum up, CNPF wishes to continue its partnership with the Government of Canada as part of its mandate to promote section 23 of Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Its initiatives, particularly in the area of parent intake and assistance, afford it the means to intervene with parents from the moment francophone minority children are born.

Through its actions in various areas, CNPF plays a major role in promoting the French language and culture in Canada. This has now enabled parents to participate in cultural and community life, as Canadian Heritage has stated on its website. The result will be reflected in a solid identity in the children of today. The community, province and territory, like the country as a whole will emerge as winners today and in future. If the Commission nationale des parents francophones did not exist, it would have to be created.

Thank you for listening. I will be pleased to answer your questions.

●(0855)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now we'll hear from the representatives of the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences.

**Ms. Colette Arsenault (President, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences):** Good morning, Mr. Chairman and committee members.

My name is Colette Arsenault and I am president of the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences, now known as RESDAC. I'm here with Normand Lévesque, who is the director general of that organization.

Thank you for inviting us to appear before the Standing Committee on Official Languages to present our views on the evaluation of the Roadmap with a view to improving programs and service delivery.

In the past 20 years, the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences, formerly known as the Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français, has rallied strategic partners for a social change designed to improve the literacy and skills of adult francophones in Canada. Francophones will then be able to participate fully in the civic, economic, social and cultural lives of their communities and thus contribute to their growth and vitality.

Generally speaking, most of us believe that the majority of Canadians can read and write. Over the past 10 years or more, however, research has shown that the reality is much more complicated. In Canada, two adults in five have difficulty understanding and using the information they read. It is clear those adults do not have the necessary skills to cope with life in Canadian society today. This means that 42% of Canada's population aged 16 to 65 have difficulty understanding and using the information contained in written material. That 42% figure has not changed since 1994.

What results will be achieved by the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, in which Canada is now a participant with 26 other countries, which are to be released in 2013. Most experts expect no significant change in results.

We know that people with low reading skill levels post lower employment rates; hold jobs that are at risk, with more difficult working conditions; participate less in training and development activities; have lower incomes; say their health is not as good; participate less in volunteer activities in the community; and are less able to assist their children in learning development.

What about francophone adults? In Canada, 55% of francophone adults from the age of 16 to 65 have reading skills that prevent them from functioning in modern society and from meeting the needs of the labour market.

A breakdown of the French-speaking population by province for levels 1 and 2 gives the following results: New Brunswick, 66%; Quebec, 55%; Ontario, 55%; and Manitoba, 53%. These data tell us that special attention should be paid to language groups in our efforts to change the situation. Francophone adults should acquire literacy in their own language.

In the context of the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013, more than nine projects are currently underway in six provinces, two territories and at the national level.

The innovative Canada-wide approach to implementation of the initiative makes it possible to develop areas of expertise specific to provinces and territories that can then be replicated elsewhere in Canada.

The strength of our network is its ability to ensure greater cohesion and relevance in these initiatives and especially to avoid funding duplications.

• (0900)

However, we are concerned. Some strategic choices leave us confused and lead us to question the long-term impact of those choices on development of the literacy and skills of francophone adults with low literacy levels in the coming years.

We believe that current federal funding arrangements do not enable francophone agencies to transition to the service delivery stage and that devolution to the provinces and territories threatens existing services, with respect to job assistance services, and prevents the development of programs and services designed for francophone adults.

The next Roadmap, and all federal government activities undertaken alone or in partnership with the provinces and territories, in literacy and essential skills development, employability, community, families and capabilities for adults will have to provide francophone adults with genuinely equal quality in French in order to improve their social and economic integration.

Thank you for your interest.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now we'll hear from the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts (President, Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne):** Good morning, Mr. Chairman, committee members and partners here present.

First I will introduce myself. My name is Kenneth McRoberts, and I am principal of Glendon College in Toronto, but I am here today as chair of the board of the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne.

It is a pleasure to be here with Jocelyne Lalonde, who has just taken up her duties as the association's director general. Some of you will recognize her as Ms. Lalonde has for a number of years directed brilliantly, and I believe I could also say very successfully, the Consortium national de formation en santé and will continue to do so while managing the secretariat of the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne.

On behalf of the association's board of directors and myself, I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk to you today about the achievements of the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne in the context of the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013. With your permission, I will take this opportunity to briefly introduce the association and its contribution to the influence of the Canadian francophonie. I will also share with you the association's programming and major projects that will give it momentum at the dawn of the next Roadmap.

Like Canada, the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne is characterized by its diversity. It comprises 13 francophone or bilingual universities of all sizes, from east to west, although all are outside Quebec. Whether it be the University of Ottawa or the University of Hearst, all our members are the economic development, social and cultural drivers of their francophone minority communities. They make a major contribution to the influence of the French language in Canada and to the advancement of linguistic duality. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the unique character of our members. Established in regions where English predominates, they offer young talents from here and there a wonderful opportunity to pursue university studies in French, plus the chance to develop their English.

Although they are, first of all, key intellectual centres of postsecondary teaching in French outside Quebec, our universities also play a prominent role in the advancement of linguistic duality in Canada. It is this twofold role, this dichotomy, that distinguishes us from Quebec's francophone universities and makes us a unique brand. Moreover, your committee acknowledged this in its 2009 report on the role of postsecondary institutions in promoting Canada's linguistic duality. I will quote a passage from that report: [...] the vitality of French in Canada depends

on the vitality of francophone communities, and francophone postsecondary institutions in a minority situation play a crucial supporting role in this regard. Their mission of serving minority francophone communities is strengthened by their ability to offer quality instruction in French to Anglophones, especially immersion program graduates.

Now I'll move on to today's topic, the evaluation of the Roadmap 2008-2013. I can only observe that the objectives of the current Roadmap and those of the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne are similar, since they concern the participation of all Canadians in linguistic duality and support for official language minority communities. The current Roadmap's financial contribution to the influence of the association and its members has been modest, but I cannot say enough about the positive effect it has had.

● (0905)

The association received Roadmap funding for a project in 2009-2010 which enabled it to grant support bursaries for field research on minority francophones in Canada. Worth \$7,500 each, the bursaries funded by Canadian Heritage have enabled eight students whose master's or doctoral theses concerned francophone minority communities to conduct research directly in those communities. The bursary recipients came from the Université de Moncton, the University of Ottawa and the Campus Saint-Jean of the University of Alberta, and their projects were in varied disciplines ranging from education to political science, sociology, history and literature. The association was pleased at the time with the high rate of participation in the competition and the diversity of applications received, which revealed a genuine interest by its member institutions not only in research on minority francophones, but also in research in general.

You will allow me to believe, as a good political scientist, that you are looking at the past in order to better prepare for the future. I would like to talk about the association's new momentum. The Roadmap has gone beyond the mid-term stage and the time has come to think about its future. Consequently, with your permission, I will speak to you briefly about the programming of the large projects that the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne is considering at the dawn of the next Roadmap. Believe me, these new orientations have not been selected at random. The association and its members want to ensure they have every chance of achieving more success under the next Roadmap. Nothing will stop this new momentum. The association has contributed too much to the influence of the Canadian francophonie and to the promotion of linguistic duality to watch the game from the sidelines.

The association's programming is largely funded by Canadian Heritage outside the current Roadmap, that is to say under the Minority Language Education component of the Official Language Communities Development Program. Over the years, the association has also been able to rely on ad hoc funding by Canadian Heritage, for example for a research coordinator position from 2006 to 2009, the annual conferences of the Réseau de la recherche sur la francophonie canadienne, as part of the conferences of the Association francophone pour le savoir, the ACFAS, and the 2011 competition for young researchers on the Canadian francophonie.

In the coming months, the association's new management will attempt to step up its members' collaboration and commitment by revitalizing its programming. One of the central factors in this new programming will be promoting the association to raise its profile among Canadian and international students, francophone minority communities, government bodies and other outside stakeholders. The other major programming components will make it possible to establish partnerships conducive to increased distance training and synergies among researchers at the association's universities.

In view of your committee's mandate, I will now tell you about the association's three major projects, which concern respectively national student mobility, recruitment of the top secondary immersion school graduates and international education. These projects are still in their early design phase but have progressed in recent months to the point where they can be considered highly promising.

The first project, on national student mobility, will consist of student exchanges between association member universities and francophone universities in Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick. Its main objective will be to promote Canadian identity and unity, but it will also promote second-language learning by Quebec students, the discovery of a new socio-cultural context and greater understanding of the francophone minority communities among all participants.

● (0910)

We have already submitted a funding application to the Quebec government's Canadian intergovernmental affairs secretariat to continue the conceptual phase of this project. It is therefore too early to discuss its parameters, but let's say that, at the outset, we are considering exchanges of one or two semesters for students in undergraduate, master's and doctoral programs.

The association's second innovative project involves offering awards for excellence to secondary immersion school graduates. It would be a Canada-wide program because there are immersion graduates all across Canada. It would be a modest, one-year project, granting only 50 \$5,000 awards, but it would have a positive effect on linguistic duality in Canada.

In his 2009 report, *Two Languages, a World of Opportunities: Second-Language Learning in Canada's Universities*, the Commissioner of Official Languages clearly stated that the French-language or bilingual postsecondary institutions outside Quebec had great potential for offering young Canadians intensive second-language learning opportunities and that that potential should be exploited.

It goes without saying that the association's project would promote second-language learning and French immersion. Its purpose would be to promote secondary immersion schools, the anglophone communities where they are located and the francophone minority host communities. The result would be closer ties between those communities and greater recognition of linguistic duality by all Canadians. We have just submitted a funding application to Canadian Heritage to implement our immersion project starting in April 2012.

The third project is international in character and based on the essential role that the association and its members must play in the recruitment of international students and their intake and integration in the francophone minority communities. Given the demographic decline of the francophone community in Canada, it is Canada's francophone universities that will ensure the continued existence of those communities by welcoming students and researchers from around the world. In the wake of this project, the promotion of the Canadian francophonie and linguistic duality on the international stage will make Canada a preferred destination for studying, conducting research and taking up residence for educational purposes.

With regard to recruitment, we propose to add a "Canadian francophone universities" component to the current scholarship program of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in order to attract and support 100 international students and researchers for the duration of their studies. Annual funding of \$15,000 per student would come in equal parts from the Government of Canada, the province concerned and the participating university.

While it is true that the activities of the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne have been limited under the current Roadmap, they nevertheless suggest that there will be greater participation under the next Roadmap. The association is now gathering new momentum that will enable it to carry out major projects in the areas of national student mobility, immersion and international education. These projects are ambitious but essential to the impact of the Canadian francophone community, the vitality of the francophone minority communities and the strengthening of linguistic duality in Canada. They constitute the contribution of the association and its members to the promotion of a national identity that is the pride of Canadians and the object of admiration by the entire world.

Thank you for inviting us here today. We would be pleased to answer your questions.

●(0915)

**The Chair:** Thank you for your presentations.

Now we'll go on to the period of questions and comments.

Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I would like to welcome our witnesses.

Before asking my questions, Mr. Chairman, I would like to note that, on February 7, 2011, we went to Yukon and to Whitehorse. However, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon No 23, whose representatives appeared before this committee, has sent us a list to which we must respond.

That letter states that the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon asks that the report on the work done as part of that study be made public and that diligent efforts be made to table the report in the House of Commons as soon as possible. This is of major importance to those communities.

Has the committee scheduled a date to answer that letter?

**The Chair:** We will answer it in the next two weeks. We are currently working on a letter to respond to the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Do we intend to discuss the letter in committee and to determine whether we will move forward with the report? Since we held a meeting, it would be insulting to the francophones there who came to meet with us not to submit a report to Parliament.

**The Chair:** I intend to implement the decision the committee reached two months ago. The committee decided not to submit that report to Parliament.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** When was that decision made?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I don't want to raise a point of order on the subject so that I don't waste my time. However, I believe we should seriously reconsider this, Mr. Chairman. In any case, that's what I am suggesting to the committee. I don't think this is right.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay, I'll set aside 15 minutes at the end of the next meeting to discuss a response to this letter, but I got my instructions from the committee as to what our course of action will be over the next four months. We've decided to study the roadmap, but if the committee wishes to change that decision, I will be the servant of the committee and follow that direction.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It's not that I wanted to waste your time. However, I wouldn't want you to waste your time by coming here without the report then being tabled. It's not very interesting for witnesses who come before the committee. If we're going to conduct a study, we might as well report to Parliament. In that way, the government can respond to that study. Taxpayers' money is worth more than that.

With regard to early childhood, we conducted a national tour, from Newfoundland and Labrador to British Columbia. I was really impressed by the fact that the money invested in child care centres and schools led parents to send their very young children to child care centres attached to francophone schools. Wherever we went, people said it was working very well.

Don't you think the government should invest more in that, rather than hand out \$100 per child, an amount it has decided to allocate? Don't you think that that \$100 amount would be more useful if invested in the communities, to provide people with tools?

I view the child care centres virtually as tools in that those children should be sent to francophone rather than anglophone centres. Otherwise, we see that those children later become anglophones and go to anglophone schools. This would give them a chance to get closer to the francophone schools.

●(0920)

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** Thank you, Mr. Godin. That's definitely a good question.

In the past, money has been invested in child care services. We are aware that, when we offer the option of French-language child care services, parents who are exogamous or francophone will turn to those services.

Based on the research, we know that language is defined from a child's birth. The parents decide whether they will live with the child in French or in English. That is why we advocate offering more child care services. We advocate French-language services for parents and children. We know that, if families have access to those services, children will study at French-language schools and continue their postsecondary studies in French.

What we've seen happen in the past is incredible. It's still happening, but it nevertheless costs money.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I'd also like to talk about literacy. Did I hear you say that 66% of francophones in New Brunswick are illiterate?

**Ms. Colette Arsenault:** They have a very low level of literacy. That means they have difficulty reading and understanding the information given to them.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** A number of them must not have completed grade 12.

**Ms. Colette Arsenault:** Yes. Levels have been established, from 1 to 5. To achieve level 3, you have to have a level of knowledge corresponding to grade 12, which then enables you to pursue postsecondary studies. People at levels 1 and 2 have difficulty understanding information given to them, whether it be health information or any kind of document.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Valcourt, the minister of state responsible for ACOA, thinks that, if we withdraw the right to employment insurance benefits from people who have not completed grade 12, everyone will necessarily complete grade 12. Do you think that would be the result?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque (Director General, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences):** It's like in the movies. Now we're not working in the same way. We're no longer talking about illiterates; we're rating the skills of adults on a continuum, over a longer period. Including all languages, 42% of Canadians are ranked at levels 1 and 2. I'm not very good at mathematics, but 42% of Canadian adults 16 to 65 years of age represents 10 million persons. Among francophones, that means 56% of adults are ranked at levels 1 and 2.

Access to support is one of the problems. We need clear policies on support for adults with low literacy levels so they have access to support programs and are trained. For example, in your province, New Brunswick, withdrawing support from those adults adds another barrier to their training. Services are already tight. If we take that away, we're adding another barrier to training.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Thank you.

Will the Roadmap probably be extended beyond 2013. Do you want it renewed?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** It's clear to us that the Roadmap is having an impact. In the past 10 years, there has been a specific investment in family literacy, which however came from a modest \$7-million budget over five years. If there is a new Roadmap, or any framework of investment for the francophone communities—there clearly needs to be one—we have to work differently to develop literacy and skills in a much broader perspective.

• (0925)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to the witnesses for being with us.

I'll continue in the same vein as my colleague Mr. Godin, who nearly took the questions out of my mouth.

I want to understand this clearly. Is the percentage you referred to, the percentage of minority francophones, worse than the percentage

in the general population, comparing francophones to anglophones? If so, why is that the case?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** It's worse. Note that the overall result of 42% breaks down as follows: it is 56% among francophones and 39% among anglophones. I repeat that this is not just in the minority environment, because Quebec is included. Some 55% of adult Quebecers 16 to 65 years of age are classified as level 1 and 2. This is not a phenomenon purely characteristic of the minority community or that affects only francophones. Consequently, it is important to take that fact into account.

There are a number of reasons for this. Researchers have identified three. First, reading habits are much less developed among adult francophones in the francophone community in general. Second, access to the education system in the past was very difficult. Third, researchers have determined that social realities call for changes in adult skill levels. Earlier I talked about a continuum and the fact that we no longer talk about illiterates. In social and economic terms, what an adult is now being asked to do to achieve good performance has nothing to do with what was required 20 years ago. Literacy levels are therefore not static; it is important to understand that. Moreover, the reports published since 1993-1994 prove that. Nothing is static. The social and economic changes also have an effect on these literacy levels.

The other difficulty, access to high-quality services in French for adults with low literacy levels, is obviously a serious problem. The Roadmap funds only a portion, funds one project. I would remind you that, under the federal government's Roadmap, we cannot deliver services. That is one of our performance indicators. The federation does not deliver services, but rather develops expertise. It is funded by the federal government. Education and training are provincial jurisdictions; we recognize that. How is federal funding structured to offer services in the provinces and territories? That's one of the keys of the current Roadmap or the next one. It's currently posing serious problems for service delivery and access to services.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Let's take the case of an individual from a francophone minority community who, at the outset, has problems with his own language and has to work in an anglophone environment. If he doesn't have good French skills, he won't have good English skills either. So if he loses his job, his employment prospects will be very limited in the short, medium and long terms. I'm talking about workers 55 and over who have just lost their jobs and who still have to work for 10 years before they can retire. They'll have problems.

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** You'd think you'd just read our website!

Skills development is indeed a serious problem for adult francophones living in an anglophone setting, as you said. Generally speaking, to find a job in Canada, you at least have to be proficient in English. To do that, you have to have skills in your own language. That's one of the issues.



The second issue for francophone communities, as you know, is their development. This goes beyond the ordinary adult who is facing problems; it covers the development of the community.

And what you are saying is true. In general, adults with low literacy skills, whether anglophone or francophone, are the ones who have the most trouble keeping their jobs or finding a job. There is a series of problems, in health, for example. And they say literacy is one of the health indicators. Consequently, it's a very complex problem to which we cannot provide a simple response.

That's why it's important to develop a Roadmap that is clear. The federal government's role is also important, particularly with regard to the development and offer of services for the adult francophone clientele with low literacy levels. The response can't come just from the government. It has to be developed jointly with the provinces, which is not currently the case. We do not receive funding from the provinces, which is a serious problem.

The next Roadmap, or the next funding framework, as you mentioned, will absolutely have to take this issue into account. In any case, the federal government has a fiduciary responsibility. Beyond that, however, there has to be a framework to promote adult skills development. But there is currently no such framework at the federal government level. There is no leadership, there is no comprehensive approach to the development of continuing education. There is none in the federal government. None of the departments has that responsibility. We have a very specific approach to economic development and the labour market, which poses a problem for the development of the francophone communities. That is clear in our view.

I could talk to you about that until tomorrow morning, so you're better off stopping me.

• (0930)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** In view of all that, today we know that, on the whole, our workers need more academic skills. Just think of information technology and all that. Imagine what happens to workers who have trouble just writing and who have to work with a keyboard. For some, merely being unable to work at a keyboard can cause a psychological block.

Should we continue putting in place small specific programs that would enable workers at least to acquire basic skills?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** Small programs don't work, sir. This isn't the time for small programs. This is the time for massive skill development action.

The federal government has identified nine major competencies, called essential competencies. One of those competencies is the one you mentioned, information technologies.

This is no longer the time for small programs. It is now time to develop an approach that makes sense for these adults. I repeat: all languages included, we're talking about 42% of the population. A study is currently being conducted as part of the International Study of Adults, jointly with the other 25 countries, and we will know the results in 2013. We expect to see the same type of results.

What is the federal government's role in this area? What is the federal government's role in development of the francophone

communities and of competencies in adult francophones? These adults will not disappear tomorrow morning. They represent 66% in New Brunswick, 55% in Manitoba, 55% in Ontario, and 55% in Quebec: 800,000 level 1 adults. What are we talking about? It's no longer the time for small programs. This is the time for major investments in a Canada-wide strategy. The federal government cannot decide to do this or that in Ontario, for example. That's not how it works, and we are aware of that.

The Roadmap must serve as a political, not just an economic lever. We must adopt a comprehensive approach that stays the course for these adults. If three or four around the table had this problem, we would implement small programs. Currently, there are 10 million of them and they represent 42% of Canadian adults. We've been talking about francophones for a while now, but it is interesting to see that literacy problems aren't limited to one single language. Adult anglophones encounter this problem as well. It's a problem for them too.

The government can't limit itself to one single action. The federal government reminds of guys: a guy is incapable of doing two things at the same time. That's not true: the government can do more than one thing at a time. My girlfriend always tells me that, since I'm a guy, I can't do more than one thing at a time. The federal government makes me think of that. It's just investing in employment. It doesn't work like that; that's ridiculous.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Bélanger, you have the floor.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you, Mr. Lévesque. First, congratulations on your new position.

Mr. McRoberts, welcome, and I wish you success in your three submissions.

Mr. Lévesque, are those 800,000 level 1 individuals you referred to only in Quebec?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** That's just in Quebec.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Oh boy!

How many level 1 individuals are there in Canada? That is the lowest literacy level, isn't it?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** That's correct. We are having trouble determining that. I'd have to review the figures.

It is also difficult to get any national-level figures. For the francophone communities, we're oversampling in only four provinces: Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and Quebec.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** We can extrapolate. So a few million Canadians are apparently at level 1. Wow!

Let's talk about the continuum of those 16 to 65 years of age. First, do you measure the skills of people over 65?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** No, not us. That is done through Statistics Canada's international surveys.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** All right.

Are there any variations on the 16 to 65 continuum? Are the youth less illiterate or more educated?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** No. There are variations; you're right, but they aren't as broad as that.

As we said earlier, since the skill levels aren't static, economic and social changes cause differences.

The phenomenon is that—

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I'll stop you there. I don't have a lot of time because I only have one speaking round. We'll talk about that later. Is your office still located on Montreal Road? I'll go and see you. I'm a grandfather, so I'll arrive at your door.

Before that, I have two or three brief routine questions—you know me, Mr. Chairman. Out of courtesy for our guests this morning, I will explain the context.

According to the schedule, we will devote the second part of the meeting to committee business, including a notice of motion that I introduced. I don't know what is going on, but that is the third time one of your members has not come. He mounted the barricades when the government appointed a unilingual auditor general. He was not pleased with that. I introduced a notice of motion calling on the committee to bring in the headhunters who had conducted the process that resulted in that man's selection. I wanted to give the member in question the chance to vote on that motion, but he is not here. In that case, Mr. Chairman, I will not introduce it again this morning. I will wait for him to be here. I am telling you right away, if he comes, I will do it.

My other question is for you, Mr. Chairman. When a committee chair breaks in camera, what do we have to do?

• (0935)

[English]

**The Chair:** I don't know what the implication of that question is—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:**—but I won't read anything into it. I'll answer the question.

You can adopt a report on the part of the committee and have the chair report to the House that there seems to be a *prima facie* case of privilege. The House will halt its business, be seized with this issue, and debate this question of privilege.

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I don't intend to do that, but you said one thing this morning: "The committee has decided not to table this report in Parliament."

[English]

**The Chair:** The committee has not decided to make public a report by tabling it in the House. That's clear.

I don't think that's inconsistent with honouring the rules that business in camera not be revealed. Had the committee decided to make the report public, I would have had to table it in the House, and I clearly haven't done so. Therefore—

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Mr. Chairman, this isn't working.

On Tuesday, you told me we couldn't report negative decisions, only positive decisions made in camera. This morning, however, you revealed a decision that might have been made in camera. I can't talk about it, but you seem to be able to talk about it.

Anyway, so much for that.

[English]

**The Chair:** Let me be more precise.

The committee has not taken a decision to table a report concerning linguistic duality in the House. That's clear.

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** No, I was talking about the report—

[English]

**The Chair:** That is consistent with the rules of being in camera. If you wish to disagree with the chair, you can move a motion to overrule the chair. But I'm telling you that's consistent with the rules of in camera. What is not permissible, just to be clear, is for any members of the committee—

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** That's fine. You're using up my time, Mr. Chairman.

[English]

**The Chair:** You raised the issue, so I have the floor.

What is not permissible is for a member of the committee to indicate whether or not a motion was defeated in an in camera portion of a meeting. That is not permissible.

What is acceptable, and consistent with in camera rules, is for the chair to say that the committee has not taken a decision to table a report in the House. That's clear, otherwise I would have been obligated to—

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Yes, but that's not what you said. You said it had been decided not to do that. So we'll check the transcript.

Ms. Pilon, congratulations, you are your usual self.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** Thank you.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** There used to be federal-provincial agreements. Are there any now for early childhood?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** To my knowledge, there is no federal-provincial agreement on early childhood. In any case, it's a provincial jurisdiction. The government has decided to grant families \$100 a month per child.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Is that enough to meet needs?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** I don't know whether any of you have young children, but \$100 isn't even enough to buy diapers for one week.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** We've received presentations here from people from Yukon. There is a child care facility in Yukon that works very well but that can't meet the demand. We heard the same thing from representatives from Saskatchewan.

As a national organization, do you have a quantitative idea of the overall needs in the country in the area of early childhood for francophone minority communities?

• (0940)

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** To date, no. We are doing an environmental scan; it isn't complete. I'm going to ask the executive director to talk about it, with your permission, because it's a very technical matter. However, we have something underway to quantify needs.

**Ms. Adèle David (Director, Commission nationale des parents francophones):** We have a site forecast projection which enables us to check the waiting list figures, the number of integrated service models—that's broader than child care service—that are emerging in the schools right now. There is a movement toward integrating early childhood into the school environment, for administrative and other reasons. However, our real goal in the francophone minority community is to create a francophone space and to intervene as early as possible so that our children are ready to learn.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Perhaps we'll prepare a report on that one day. I hope so. So it would be good for us to have an actual assessment of early childhood needs. Personally, I believe that's where it starts. If young people have access to a good education, that will reduce the problem of adult illiteracy and facilitate access to universities. It will also revitalize our communities, and the rights holders will be served. So it's very important to have that. When do you think you'll have that.

**Ms. Adèle David:** In March 2012.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I don't think we'll have completed our report.

**Ms. Adèle David:** We'll come back.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** You will provide us with that information?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** Yes. We'll come back and talk to you about it, if you wish.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I would like that, but we don't decide much these days. That depends on my colleagues.

**Ms. Adèle David:** We can provide you with the figures that date back to 2010 right now.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Excellent.

Do I have any time left, Mr. Chairman?

**The Chair:** No, your time is up.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** Ms. Bateman, you have the floor.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your presentations.

I have a few questions for you because I'm new to this committee. Unless I'm mistaken, your source of funding increased with the Roadmap. Is that true? You have primary funding, funding from the Roadmap, but this project is a major additional project, isn't it?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** We received an amount for early childhood under the Roadmap which is expiring.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** That's an increase in your main funding.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** I'm finding it hard to understand your question.

We have funding from Canadian Heritage which keeps us alive from year to year. We have to file applications in order to get it. The funding that we have under the Roadmap has helped us move forward on francophone early childhood. I agree with you on that. However, that will end in December 2011, which means that everything will suddenly stop.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** What are your sources of funding? For the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne, for example, what are the main sources of your funding? Is it the Government of Canada?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** The main source of our funding is Canadian Heritage, which provides us with operating funding every year. There are also contributions from the member universities of our association.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Now I turn to the Commission nationale des parents francophones. What is your main source of funding?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** It's Canadian Heritage.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** All right.

Is that your only source of funding? Do you have any others?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** It's currently our only source.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** It's your only source.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** Our organizations' dues, which are \$200 a year, would not get us very far, since we only have 12 organizations. So it's our only source of funding to speak with francophone parents, to work with francophone parents, to ensure that the vitality of the francophone community continues. That's what we do, through our federations and parent associations. Every year we get funding from Canadian Heritage, after applying for it, obviously.

• (0945)

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you.

As a parent of two children, I very much appreciate your work with our universities. With regard to the two organizations here, I imagine your consultation process is the key to your success.

Could you please explain your consultation process? Could you also tell me your key information source? I'm speaking to either of the two organizations; I'm interested in both.

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** To whom are you speaking?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** To you or me.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** It's as you wish. I hope to get an answer from both.

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** All right.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** All the organizations are very important to me.

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** Our main source of funding is Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. Our sources of information—

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** I was in fact talking about consultation.

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** We have a number of structures. Our organization has members in all provinces and territories which enable us to support ourselves. We sit on various structures, CMEC, for example and others, which enable us to support ourselves. At the national level, there is a structure that comprises all anglophone, francophone and aboriginal literacy organizations. That helps keep us up to date.

In the francophone community, there is what we call the Forum des leaders, which involves all the groups across the country. It's a primary institutional source, I would say. Adults who are learning on their own are another source. When they take part in various programs, they provide us with local and provincial information. Then that moves up to the national level. We are putting in place a Canada-wide monitoring and evaluation system that will provide food for thought, but that will also ensure monitoring and enable us to see whether progress is being made: if an adult starts at a given level, will he one day reach a higher level? There are various structures such as forums, AGMs, board of directors. You know all that; I won't list them for you. There is a series of structures which allows for consultation. There are, for example, websites, intranets and so on. You see what I'm talking about.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** What percentage of your funding for universities comes from immersion programs for Government of Canada employees, for example? Is it 5%?

Mr. McRoberts, you said you had a lot of full-time immersion programs for public servants and, I imagine, for other interested persons.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** First of all, I spoke about students from immersion school programs. Among our institutions, a large number of students have studied at immersion schools and are now at the university level. So these are francophile students. It's also true that some of our members—this is the case of Glendon University in particular—have contracts to teach federal government employees a second language.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** I believe you have—

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** That's an activity that is mainly coordinated by the Canada School of Public Service.

When I mentioned immersion, it was mainly to talk about the possibility for francophile students from immersion schools to pursue university studies in French at our institutions.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** That's only for Glendon, but there is the same program at the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface, in Manitoba.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** All our institutions are either francophone or bilingual. Either all programming is in French or it is in English and French. Most of our students are francophone, but that varies considerably from one institution to the next.

At an institution like the Université de Moncton, virtually all students are francophone. At an institution like the University of Ottawa, I know there is a large percentage of anglophone students and a minority of francophone students. That varies considerably from one institution to the next.

However, what we offer immersion school students is the opportunity to study in French in a bilingual or francophone

environment at the university level. Our institutions are the only ones that offer that opportunity outside Quebec.

● (0950)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Lauzon, you have the floor.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to all our witnesses.

Mr. McRoberts, I was very interested in your presentation, and I am very interested by what you're doing at your universities. I believe 13 universities belong to your organization. Am I right?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** Yes.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** What is the approximate total number of students registered at your universities?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde (Director General, Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne):** I could send you that information, if you're interested.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** Give me an approximate number. Are there 10,000, 20,000?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I've only been in my position for two weeks. So I don't yet know the exact number, but I can send you that information.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** All right, I would be interested in getting it.

Is there enough room for all the students who want to take courses at your universities?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Yes, absolutely.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** There's a shortage of students?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I believe that the purpose of our universities is always to increase the enrolment in all our university programs, and we have the capacity to do that in the francophone community. Our students come from all our francophone communities. We also have international students, immigrants and immersion program students.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** I believe you have those figures in the student book.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** We have approximately 23,000 francophone students at our 13 universities.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** What is the percentage of students from francophone and anglophone sources?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** That depends on what you mean by "francophone source" and "anglophone source". A lot of families are exogamous, that is to say that one of the parents is francophone and the other anglophone. It's difficult to answer your question.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** All right, I understand.

Mr. McRoberts, you mentioned the students registered in immersion courses. These are students who have taken immersion courses at the secondary level and who are continuing to do so at your universities. Is that correct?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** Yes.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** What approximate percentage do those students represent?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** That varies considerably from one institution to the next.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** All right, but what is the average per university? Is it 40%, 50%, 10%?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** In overall terms, I would say the figure is 15% to 20%.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** These are students who come from immersion. This is a phenomenon that is occurring across the province, that is to say that anglophones are doing their studies in French, in immersion, most of the time. There are starting to be quite a large number of anglophone students learning French, and not the reverse, at the universities in Canada.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** What do you mean by "the reverse"?

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** I mean that these aren't necessarily francophones who are attending an anglophone university.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I believe that's happening on both sides. It would be very difficult to get those figures. However, I believe a great deal of work has to be done with francophone universities to promote postsecondary studies in French. It's the federal government's responsibility to support us in that respect.

We have to continue raising the profile of our universities in order to attract all the francophones. We also have to increase access to francophone universities in the francophone minority communities. There are currently 13 universities, and they are not in all the regions. We have to work to improve access to postsecondary education in French.

It is false to say that francophones are not studying in English. In my opinion, that's something that is being done.

● (0955)

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** Mr. McRoberts, you mentioned bursaries.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** We're preparing a bursary project for immersion students so that they can study at our institutions. For them, that often means they have to travel to another city because we only have 13 members. So the bursaries will cover travel expenses and the expenses involved in living in another city.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** Have any bursaries been awarded to date?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** No, but this is a project we are currently submitting to Canadian Heritage.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** How many international students are at your universities?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** They represent approximately 7% of students at our institutions. That's not very high. We would like that number to be higher.

We have the capacity to accept more international students. In general, the classes at our institutions are not enormous. There is an opportunity to accept more students. For francophone communities outside Quebec facing very significant demographic challenges, it is crucial for us to bring in francophone international students to study at our institutions, but also to integrate into the francophone communities.

We are developing a strategy that will comprise a number of elements. Among other things, it includes a marketing plan and bursaries for international students. It also takes into account the existing structures at our institutions for receiving and supporting international students. The strategy will also focus on the issue of establishing ties with the francophone communities where our members are. That would enable international students to have internships and employment opportunities at francophone institutions, all with the idea that, once they have completed their education, they will stay in Canada and integrate into those communities.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Aubin has the floor.

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wanted to go back quickly to a committee request. Following the submission of a partial and incomprehensible electronic document from Canadian Heritage two weeks ago, we asked for a complete and comprehensible document. Following the meeting, could you tell us where that situation stands so that we can see whether there has been any progress?

Thank you and welcome to each of our guests. You represent everything necessary to prepare a francophone citizen to participate fully and completely in this society.

My first questions are for Mr. McRoberts and Ms. Lalonde.

If we are still to believe in linguistic duality in this country, it seems to me the leader should be the Parliament of Canada. We are having all kinds of problems these days, first with the many appointments of unilingual anglophones, which I won't go back over, but you are aware of them as well as I am.

I also have some serious questions about all the language programs there are for public servants in Ottawa who want to learn a second language in order to rise through the ranks in the course of their career. It seems to me, first of all, that the amounts invested are colossal. Second, it's too late. Furthermore, learning French in Ottawa, for example, in an environment where one can work in English, doesn't really give us an opportunity to practise it.

Unless I'm mistaken, you obtained a modest contribution under the Roadmap. Could we include in the next Roadmap a mandate to train the future workers of this Parliament so they are bilingual when they apply, and not subsequently? Could that kind of mandate be assigned to our universities?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** Indeed. We would like to take in more graduates from immersion school programs who could further develop their French. Once in Ottawa, they would be able to take on bilingual duties. I think it is distinctly more effective to make them bilingual before they enter the public service than to ask them to develop their second-language skills once they've joined the public service ranks.

● (1000)

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Would you also think it's easy to establish partnerships with the anglophone universities so that francophones from our communities can also develop their second language through English immersion university programs?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** I don't think it's necessary to establish those kinds of partnerships with anglophone universities. In general, our institutions offer English second-language programs for francophones. I believe we could develop that capability at our francophone institutions instead.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** In the long term, could the budgets necessary to put that kind of structure in place come from both the Roadmap and other related sources? In other words, the funding set aside for language training on the Hill could, to a certain degree, be allocated to your association through a transitional program that would make it possible to accept only those people who are aiming for positions for which bilingualism is not an asset, but rather a requirement.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** I think that's an interesting perspective.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** However, I believe there's no reason to do that, since the association can work and develop partnerships, if necessary, in all the provinces and environments where there are language training needs.

Within six months, we will have put in place, and made accessible, a pan-Canadian gateway containing all the information on language training offered at all our Canadian universities, including colleges. In that gateway, you could see everything that is offered in the various fields, including online training, which can be taken from home.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Thank you. I'll take note of the prospects for the future.

As we are also in the midst of a process of evaluating the current Roadmap, I will ask you whether you were consulted during the process to determine your successes and expectations regarding the next Roadmap.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Yes, we recently had a number of opportunities to express ourselves. On Tuesday, we had a meeting with the Canadian Heritage people at the round table on education. I also met with people from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. In my other position, I also had a meeting with the Health Canada people. The people from the departments with whom I have had to work have held consultations and are meeting with us to evaluate the Roadmap.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** So these are proper meetings, but they don't involve an actual evaluation tool, like a questionnaire.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** That depends. Each one has its own ways. They do use questionnaires as a tool or means. I have received some questionnaires to complete. There are other means, individual meetings, evaluation by each of the departments of the funding received under the Roadmap. We expect to do interviews in the coming weeks. Consequently, various means are being used.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Aren't we complicating the process with administrative measures? If 15 departments consult you in

15 different ways, you spend most of your time dealing with paper rather than moving your files forward.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** All I can tell you—

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Aubin.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Did you want me to answer?

I can only tell you that every department is responsible for the portion of funding it receives under the Roadmap and for evaluating that amount, and that Canadian Heritage is responsible for the evaluation of the Roadmap as a whole.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Trottier, you have the floor.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to our guests for coming to meet with us today. I'm very pleased with your speeches.

I'm going to continue with Mr. Aubin's questions. I would like to get a better idea of how to train public servants. Under the Roadmap, \$2.5 million was allocated to the School of Public Service. Mr. McRoberts and Ms. Lalonde, I would like to know whether your members received any of that \$2.5 million. What is the interaction between the School of Public Service and the members of your association?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** Every institution proceeds in its own way, individually. In the case of my institution, we have a whole series of contracts with the public service to prepare public servants, particularly in the Toronto region. I believe it's the same model that is used virtually across the country.

● (1005)

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I believe there are similar things at the Université Sainte-Anne, in Nova Scotia, at the Campus Saint-Jean of the University of Alberta, and definitely at the Université de Saint-Boniface, in Manitoba. The University of Ottawa definitely has those kinds of agreements as well. I can't tell you specifically about the content of each of those agreements, but most of our universities work together with the public service in this area.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** All right. So it's a widespread model in Canada. We don't have a national school of administration, and I don't believe we necessarily want to have one to train national school graduates who would represent a public service elite.

Do you or your members have any ideas about the way to deliver programs in the universities in order to prepare people for public service careers?

We often have this problem in an imperfect world: it's when you choose a career that you realize you need to know French.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** I agree.

In fact, I believe the best way to enter the public service truly bilingual is not to introduce French second-language courses for public servants who are already employed by the government, but rather to ensure that postsecondary institutions prepare bilingual graduates. That means that our institutions must be able to take in more students from immersion schools. That's why we wanted to establish a bursary program for those students. In our view, that would be a priority for the next Roadmap.

It must be acknowledged that we are the only institutions that really have considerable experience in second-language instruction. We have always had a number of francophile students at our institutions. They are even the majority at some of our institutions. So we are able to offer immersion school graduates an authentic experience. That enables them to spend time in a completely francophone or bilingual environment with university programming in French. Bursaries make it possible to take in more students from immersion schools; that is essential because it has to be acknowledged that the vast majority of immersion school graduates subsequently attend English-language universities and will not enrol at French-language or bilingual universities.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** All right.

I would like to ask another question. I'd like to talk about the national mobility program you mentioned. Could you give us an overview of that program's successes, because mobility, exchanges with other universities, are an important component of students' education.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** It's a new program that we are developing and we are planning exchange programs between the francophone universities in Quebec and the universities of our association in Ontario and New Brunswick. The basic concept involves students spending one or two semesters at another institution. That will enable both Quebeckers and non-Quebeckers to spend time in another part of Canadian society and to develop a greater understanding of an aspect of the francophonie. So it will strengthen solidarity within the francophonie in Canada.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** It's also a great national unity project.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** Yes, indeed.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** Thank you.

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** I'd like to go back to the idea of training public servants, as it concerns clear and effective communication. A few years ago, a lot of training was offered to federal public servants on how to communicate with citizens more simply and clearly. I believe this is another important component that has an impact on relations and on literacy. We know that people have trouble reading and writing. So the clearer and more effective the government's communications, the easier relations will be.

I'm going to engage in advertising, but I must say that part of your revenue comes from our clear and effective efforts. So if you had more contracts with the federal government, it would be even easier to move things forward.

Beyond advertising and jokes, I believe this is important. A lot of work has been done, but there has been a lot less of it in the past few years. The same is true of the provincial governments: the clearer and easier their communications are, the more readily citizens can

understand the government and its various policies. That's what I wanted to say when I said I wanted to go back to Mr. McRoberts' idea.

● (1010)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Lévesque.

Mr. Harris, you have the floor.

**Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to all of you for coming here today.

My questions will concern early childhood.

I am Franco-Ontarian. I was born and grew up in Toronto. I attended Le Petit Chaperon Rouge, a child care centre at a francophone school in Toronto, which really enriched my education at that same school. I attended it from kindergarten to grade 8.

Later on, I did my secondary studies in French and, after leaving school, started having trouble with French because the francophone community Toronto is not centralized. It was hard to live in French in Toronto.

What do you think is the most important thing for early childhood that would make it possible to improve the situation of all our children?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** As I said in my presentation, if we invest \$1 in early childhood right now, that is to say while the mother is pregnant, we will save \$8 in the long run. That would be a major investment because our children are the citizens of tomorrow.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** I'd like to get a minor clarification. Where would you like to invest that money, in what program or in what actual field?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** I'm going to preach for francophone parents. We are in favour of childhood and family centres that would be attached to our francophone schools or located nearby. We would like them to be multisectoral. We don't just want child care services; we want more than that. We would like our health services, literacy services for parents and maternity services, for example, to be attached to a francophone community that would be near the school, as you experienced. Your French is impeccable as a result of that. In fact, in your childhood, you attended a child care centre in French. You continued your studies in French, including your secondary education. However, when we get to university, we change tracks and lose our French a little.

The research shows that, if we want people to be perfectly bilingual, they have to progress in French for as long as possible. With regard to early childhood, you have to start with the parents because we know that 63% of our parents in Ontario belong to exogamous families. I imagine one of your parents was anglophone.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** My parents came from Sherbrooke.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** Was one of your parents francophone and the other anglophone?

**Mr. Dan Harris:** My father learned French so that he could teach it.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** That's fantastic; both your parents spoke French at home.

If there are services for a family expecting a baby, we know we'll go after the francophone parents and rights holders. In fact, if there are no services, we lose them because they turn to English-language services. They go to see a doctor in English, they go to see a nutritionist in English, and they take prenatal courses in English. We lose that family right off the bat. If we want the country to be really bilingual, we have to live linguistic duality at home.

When an anglophone parent and a francophone parent speak both languages to their children, the children become perfectly bilingual. However, you have to start in early childhood, and even during the mother's pregnancy. That's very important.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** So that has to be done right from the outset. It has an accumulative effect. That happens in early childhood, at the postsecondary level and subsequently in programs for adults.

We see what is happening with the budget cuts. We are afraid that some departments are not concerned about official language training. We are afraid the impact may harm the francophone minority community.

I must admit I didn't attend Glendon College because it didn't have a IT program in 1998-1999, but that campus is one of the most beautiful in the country. My best friend works there and he's lucky to be able to work in French. That gives him an opportunity to preserve his language.

We've already discussed this northern study which was started during the last Parliament. The government has already spent \$100,000 on the study. We went to Whitehorse and Yellowknife and we still have to go to Nunavut, where part of the population is francophone. In fact, four languages are spoken there.

My question is for each of you. Do you believe it would be useful for the committee to complete that report and for it to be tabled in Parliament so that it can be made public?

• (1015)

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** I don't think we should forget that territory. One of the members of the Commission nationale des parents francophones represents the francophones of Nunavut at every one of our meetings. They happen; we have them. So we have to continue in that vein. Otherwise, if we forget them, we lose them. That's part of the north. Pardon me, but they are Canadians like the rest of the population.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I believe those meetings in the Northwest Territories were an excellent idea. I'm sure that gave you some very relevant information for your work. The important thing in my mind is knowing what recommendations will come out of that document and what will be done in response to them. As a citizen, I would like to know what is going on.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** What do you say about that, Mr. Lévesque?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** I agree with Jocelyne. I think it's important; otherwise, Canada would not be what it is. We can't say to ourselves that, since there are fewer people there, we won't go. I don't think that's logical. As Jocelyne just mentioned, it's important

for that report to be public. It's important to see how those recommendations are followed up. We consider that important.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I have a question that the analyst suggested to me. She wants to know whether the childhood and family centres are the same thing as the community school centres. Are they the same thing?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** No, but they're related, most of the time. You'll find an early childhood centre at a community centre because that's the heart of the francophone community. However, it's not always the distinguishing feature. Some people have opened their community school centre for the community but no longer have any space for the early childhood centres. So they're located elsewhere.

They're not the same thing.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Weston, you have the floor.

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to all our guests.

I studied at York University's Osgoode Hall law school and had the honour of being one of two students who sat on the university's board. I was very proud of Glendon College. I suppose there is still an association between that college and York University.

Ms. Pilon, I am originally from British Columbia, where the association is flourishing. There are programs like the one at Guiliam Lake, in northern B.C. That influence on the francophone world of British Columbia is really tremendous.

Mr. Lévesque, I was struck by your comments. I believe you put the emphasis on the need for a comprehensive or centralized strategy for all of Canada. If you were the prime minister, what would your strategy be for developing a program that would be less and less costly but that would be increasingly centralized? I would like a brief answer because I would like to hear Jocelyne's response.

• (1020)

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** I'll answer briefly and clearly.

First, I don't think it can be less and less costly because 42% of the population ranks at that level.

Second, provincial and territorial participation is fundamentally important. The key factors are there.

Third, the federal government has to play a leadership role and integrate into all its departments an approach focused on life-long development and education.

If I were the prime minister, I would not cut those programs. If I were prime minister and 42% of my fellow citizens were at levels 1 and 2, I would ask myself a few questions before cutting the budgets for those programs. The productivity and civic participation of a large number of Canadian adults are at stake. That's probably what I would do if I were prime minister.

**Mr. John Weston:** Thank you.

Ms. Pilon, what do you say?



**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** Now I'm prime minister. That's fantastic.

In my mind, little children are the citizens of tomorrow. If we want Canada to be bilingual, we have to take care of early childhood, establish early childhood or childhood centres. The idea, in a way, is to take care of future taxpayers. A country is rich through its children. Education leads us to evolve. We have to start from birth and then continue down that path.

**Mr. John Weston:** Mr. McRoberts, if you think of the constraints placed on us as the federal government, not the provincial one, can you respond?

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** If I were prime minister, I would nevertheless promote student mobility in Canada, the mobility of francophone students among the francophone communities of Quebec and the rest of Canada, and the mobility of immersion school graduates and francophile students. That would afford the opportunity to spend time in a francophone community. From a constitutional standpoint, we could imagine a federal government program that promotes the mobility of all kinds of students.

**Mr. John Weston:** Thank you.

And you, Ms. Lalonde?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** If I were prime minister, I would establish a partnership with the francophone universities so that bilingual public servants could be trained, so that there would be a pool of accessible individuals who could occupy positions in the public service. That should be done with the universities in the Canadian francophone community, as we are the only institutions in Canada who can do that job.

**Mr. John Weston:** Thank you.

And you, Ms. Arsenault?

**Ms. Colette Arsenault:** I come from the smallest province in Canada, Prince Edward Island. It's very important for me for the needs of every province and territory to be considered when strategies are developed. As it very often happens that only one course of action is preferred, our provinces and territories do not have an opportunity to make requests because that doesn't meet our criteria or needs. Even if they are comprehensive, strategies must also meet the needs of the provinces and territories. The needs of Prince Edward Island and those of other Atlantic provinces are different from those of Ontario, whose needs are different from those of the Northwest Territories, which are different from those of British Columbia.

In my mind, those strategies are very important, but it is essential to support life-long education. Twenty or 30 years ago, people had a career, and that was it. Now they often have a number of careers and need services on an ongoing basis; they have to go back to school or take training in order to adjust, in the short or long term.

**Mr. John Weston:** Thank you.

Now we'll hear from Ms. David, last but not least.

**Ms. Adèle David:** Thank you.

Ultimately, you have to intervene with parents as early as possible. They are the first persons responsible. They have to make informed decisions and lay out the path that their children will follow their entire lives. As for the integrated service model advanced by CNPF,

we have clearly come to a crucial implementation stage. We now have a common vision of what an integrated service model is in the greater francophone community. We have to be able to create this francophone zone and to provide parents with access to French-language services.

Here in the communities, the family is a microcosm of society and a reflection of the community. When people become parents, it has to be possible to offer them this francophone community and access to that community. However, we see that 50% of children are already assimilated by the age of four. As services have not been offered, they have not been able to use them. Choice is already a determinant. Only 50% of our francophones attend our schools.

●(1025)

**Mr. John Weston:** As a father of three children who are currently in French immersion, I thank you for your answers.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Pilon, it's your turn.

**Mr. François Pilon (Laval—Les Îles, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank all of you for coming today and telling us about your vision.

My question is for Ms. Pilon.

In your presentation, you talked about health care. However, in view of the current government's economic strategy, a lot of Quebec families whose English is rudimentary have wound up in the west. Are they able to get health care in French? We know this is important in that area: you have to be able to explain the problem you are suffering from.

Is the Roadmap useful to you in that regard?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** I can answer your question in part, Mr. Pilon, but the Société Santé en français could probably answer it better than I.

At our childhood and family service centres, we advocate offering health care services in French, of course. I can speak on my own behalf. I've lived in four provinces across Canada, and I've always found francophone doctors and dentists because I made an effort. However, not everyone makes that effort. That's why we're asking for centres where we can bring together all these francophones and make a small francophone cosmos so that our parents can go there. That's simpler. When you're sick, you're obviously more comfortable if you can be served in your mother tongue. The older we get, the worse it is, I'm told. I haven't gone that far yet, but I'm getting there.

Perhaps my director would like to add something. It's hard to talk about health when you work in early childhood.

**Ms. Adèle David:** In fact, we are talking more about overall health from the perspective of children's overall development.

As early childhood is a determinant of health, it's important to be in good health so that you can develop in a healthy way and to permit early intervention.

For early childhood, we operate from an overall health perspective, both emotional and physical. The emotional aspect may be related to identity building, which affects self-esteem in young children.

We have some data that indicate that children, and even certain families, are not comfortable, whereas they could have had access to certain services. That affects them emotionally. As for parents, we address the health issue from an overall health perspective.

**Mr. François Pilon:** Thank you.

Mr. Lévesque, do you have an overall literacy strategy?

Is federal government funding enabling you to carry out your strategy?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** No, not at this time. I believe there is an overall vision. Earlier it was said that development in this area has to start from the needs of the learners. It must also start from provincial and territorial realities. There is often a literacy and skills development policy framework in every province and territory. And since the provinces and territories are responsible for service delivery, we first have to ensure that our actions are consistent with provincial realities.

Second, no, federal funding is not sufficient in this area. Apart from funding, there is the need for the federal government to mobilize the provinces around a common issue in this area and more particularly around adult francophones. That's the core of the strategy.

In the past five years, \$7.5 million has been invested, but only in family literacy. That's not very much and it's often in a single field. Consequently, that has to be opened up.

It is important for the federal government to have an overall policy framework in collaboration with the provinces. The answers are there. We have to ensure we have an investment, a policy framework and community and institutional involvement in development as a whole. You currently need skills in order to find a job.

We obviously also have to have a more comprehensive approach to the communities and families, which we currently don't have. Let's hope the next funding framework will make that approach possible. The Roadmap shouldn't be perceived as an end, but rather as a lever that enables us to go elsewhere.

• (1030)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Pilon.

Mr. Bélanger has told me he does not want to introduce his two motions. So we have 15 minutes more at our disposal for questions and comments from committee members

We'll continue with Mr. Menegakis.

**Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here today. Thanks as well for your presentations, which I found very interesting and informative.

As you know, we are studying the Roadmap on Canada's Linguistic Duality. The Roadmap is very important to our government and represents an investment of more than \$1 billion.

My first question will be for you, Mr. McRoberts.

[English]

I found your presentation very thorough and very informative. I wonder if you could elaborate a little on how the roadmap.... Because we're midstream now with the roadmap, we want to evaluate how we're doing so far and what we will need to do in the future. I wonder if you could elaborate on how the roadmap has facilitated your organization or the universities you represent, and perhaps elaborate a little more specifically on where you would like to see more emphasis in the new roadmap.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** Well, as I indicated, our role within the existing roadmap has been quite limited. The post-secondary section is relatively modest. There was one particular program that was important, for which we found support, but overall, the support for post-secondary, including the universities, has been quite limited.

In terms of a new roadmap, we in particular would be interested in support for a strategy for recruiting and integrating international students, francophone international students. We have the capacity to welcome a larger number of students into our midst. It's important to the francophone communities, the minority communities, that francophone immigrants arrive in Canada and become integrated with them. Currently among immigrants to Canada who are establishing themselves outside Quebec, less than 1% are francophone. So this represents a very serious challenge, along with others, for the demographic position of the francophone minorities.

We think we can play a role, a constructive role, by attracting francophone students from other countries, especially through bursaries, by supporting them within our institutions. Typically we have structures in place to support international students, but we need to strengthen them. We can also enable them to become integrated with their respective francophone communities, through employment or internships, or whatever, with francophone institutions or even francophone enterprises. That would be one focus where we think we could make a significant difference for Canada by reinforcing the position of the francophone minorities and attracting new Canadians who, obviously, are going to make an important contribution to the country.

The other area that we think would be important in a new roadmap would be support for graduates of immersion schools, francophile students, such that they will come to our institutions and continue their studies in French. The majority of graduates from immersion schools currently don't do their university studies in French; they do them in English. This means that a major investment, which the immersion schools represent, is in a sense being threatened. We're not really capitalizing on the millions of dollars that have gone into supporting immersion schools.

It's only if these students continue with their post-secondary studies in French that their capacity in French will be retained and improved. If they do their university studies in English, it's quite clear that their capacity in French is going to be significantly undermined. So we would hope that a program of bursaries would make it possible for them to come to our institutions.

• (1035)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Monsieur Godin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I'm going to ask a brief question, and then I'll give Mr. Harris part of my five minutes so that he can ask one in turn.

Earlier Mr. Lévesque talked about literacy and long-term programs. Your program is under the responsibility of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. We know that Human Resources and Skills Development Canada is also responsible for employment insurance. I'm coming back to that subject because manpower training programs now enable people to go to college and to receive two years of benefits as though they were employment insurance claimants. They are allowed to finish their two years of university and to receive employment insurance benefits.

Do you think it would be good for the government to consider including literacy in that? That's the base, the start. If 66 people have a literacy problem, they will definitely have trouble finding a job. So rather than deny them, we should enable workers who lose their jobs to take literacy courses and then to go to college. We initially deny them that opportunity. We tell them that, if they haven't completed grade 10, they can't take part. They're all disqualified. The only thing they can do is take evening courses, but that's too slow and they don't go right to the end.

Do you think it would be a good idea for Human Resources and Skills Development Canada to allow that, either under the Roadmap or in the context of its programs? In either case, it's still the same money: taxpayers' money. Do you think it would be preferable to offer that kind of program rather than have an individual claim employment insurance, especially seasonal workers who we know may not have work until the following spring.

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** You should be prime minister for a day, not me. I like your proposal.

Indeed, that kind of policy—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I assure you it would be more democratic if I were.

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** First, it would be possible to implement that kind of policy. Then there would be an enormous impact on access to training, what you call integrated training. As you said, adults don't have the time to spend three or four years in school. That makes no sense because they have to work. Under that type of policy and program, that would be ideal, in conjunction and in partnership with provincial and territorial realities.

What you're raising falls within the policies that should be considered during the next Roadmap. You're right.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Thank you.

I'm going to share my speaking time with Mr. Harris.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Thank you very much.

First, I would like to make a comment on immersion courses and schools. It's not surprising that most people do their studies in English. Most of those children have attended immersion schools because that was their parents' choice. The decision to go to university is one of the first choices that people can make on their own. They will more or less choose the easiest path, that is to say to study in their mother tongue. We must definitely take up that challenge and make an effort to change that.

My question is for Mr. Lévesque.

Earlier, you talked about bilingualism programs for public servants. You said those programs were not being used as they previously were. Do you believe that's because of the change in the government's priorities or as a result of budget cuts?

**Mr. Normand Lévesque:** I don't know the reason, but the result is the same, regardless of what happens. For us, it's not so much a question of bilingualism, but rather of training and the development of simple and effective communication skills.

Have there been cutbacks? I suppose so, but the result is the same: there's less training in this field. I believe it would be very interesting to see how we could increase bilingualism, but at the same time how we could increase public servants' skills in clear and effective communication.

However, that depends on how documents are written. The more skillful and competent public servants are, the simpler and easier to understand the types of documents prepared by the federal government will be. In addition, citizens will be able to participate to a greater degree.

The result is the same. There is less of that and there doesn't appear to be any improvement. A more in-depth study should be conducted.

I think it would be interesting to do some thinking about the Roadmap, regarding bilingualism and those more specific skills. You're right about that.

• (1040)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Bateman, it's your turn.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to my colleague Mr. Gourde, I have another opportunity to speak to Ms. Pilon and Ms. David.

We had a brief interruption, but I would ask you to continue discussing your consultation mechanism, please.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** CNPF has members that represent the provinces and the three territories. Every province or territory is a member. These are parents associations that conduct research in their province that come and tell us what's going on.

I believe Adèle could add something on that point. I can tell you the nature of our relationship. We chair the national francophone early childhood development issue table, which is intersectoral, that is to say that it represents all members, those in literacy and health, for example. All those operating in the various sectors of this field belong to the national issue table. We belong to the national education issue table and the Forum des leaders. We are members of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada. The leaders who meet are francophones from across the country.

We take the pulse of what is going on in the provinces and territories.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Do you have a relationship with Canadian Parents for French, an organization that I knew well?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** Yes, we have a relationship with Canadian Parents for French because—

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** It's the flip side of the coin.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** We nevertheless have something in common: we want our children to be bilingual citizens and to experience Canada's linguistic duality. We collaborate. We have made announcements together to define the difference between immersion schools and French-language schools and the idea of rights holders who go to French-language schools. We have a good collaborative relationship.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** In fact, you have the same goal.

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** The ultimate goal would be to have francophone children. We want them to live in a francophone community. That's not the goal of immersion programs; it's more to have French as a second language. That being said, we collaborate.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** And do you share your resources with Canadian Parents for French?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** No, unfortunately, that's not the same network.

Immersion is a program that was created by anglophones to learn a second language. For us, French is a right. Attending a French-language school is a right that we have. We have that identity. It belongs to us, which makes us rights holders. The immersion people make the choice to learn a second language.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** You share nothing with that organization?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** It's difficult to tell you what we share. The teachers there are francophones. We have things in common, but that depends on the provinces. There are public speaking competitions in which immersion students and francophones take part together across the province. Apart from that, I don't see anything.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Bateman and Ms. Pilon.

The last two minutes belong to Mr. Bélanger.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I want to raise a topic that concerns me to the highest degree.

An obvious attempt is being made to abolish funding for CBC/Radio-Canada. Some say the CBC is the only target. However we all know that Pierre Karl Péladeau is leading the attack and would like Radio-Canada to disappear.

Is CBC/Radio-Canada an important institution for the communities you represent?

**Ms. Ghislaine Pilon:** If there were no more Radio-Canada, some communities would never have francophone culture in their homes. It's very important for us to have access to French-language radio and television programs. It should not be cut because we know that, when funding is cut, it's francophones who suffer.

● (1045)

**Ms. Colette Arsenault:** We need all the French-language services in order to live in a francophone community. So the francophone media are very important to us, both Radio-Canada radio and television. People have to listen in their own language to what is going on in the world.

**Mr. Kenneth McRoberts:** Radio-Canada is obviously a very important institution for francophone minorities and communities across Canada. It's one way to bring them together, to provide them with information and cultural experiences that are available nowhere else.

**The Chair:** Thanks to our witnesses for all your presentations.

Thanks to committee members.

The meeting is adjourned.







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