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Mr. Guy Lauzon

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• (0905)

[Translation]

The Chair (Mr. Guy Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC)) Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the official languages committee.

I would like to welcome our witnesses, Mr. Duncan Dee, Ms. Louise McEvoy, and Joseph Galimberti.

[English]

I believe, Mr. Dee, you have a short presentation of approximately ten minutes that you will give to the committee. Subsequent to that, we'll have questions regarding your presentation. You can begin any time you wish.

Mr. Duncan Dee (Senior Vice-President, Corporate Affairs, Air Canada): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Translation]

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today. Since our last appearance before this committee two years ago this week, our commitment to offering our customers services in the official language of their choice has not wavered and we have continued to invest considerable resources in those programs which enhance bilingual capacity across Air Canada and its affiliated companies.

When I last appeared before you, several members raised some issues which I'd like to update you on today.

First, Mr. Godin mentioned that signage requiring cup holders to be stored during takeoff and landing in the first row of a number of Air Canada Jazz Dash-8 aircraft were in English only. Immediately following the meeting, Air Canada Jazz conducted an audit of their fleet and identified a handful of aircraft which were formerly operated by Canadian Regional Airlines, which did indeed have unilingual signage. This matter was corrected within two weeks of the audit and the unilingual signs were replaced with bilingual ones.

Another issue was identified by Mr. Sauvageau—someone who, I must say, I will personally miss. Mr. Sauvageau took exception to the lack of comment cards aboard Air Canada flights which allowed customers to provide their feedback on official languages issues. In particular, he felt the cards should be available on the seat pocket of every seat so that any customer who wanted to raise an issue about Air Canada's official language services could do so.

Following the meeting, Air Canada and Jazz ensured that not only were comment cards provided in all seat pockets, both companies

also ensured that its in-flight magazine, *onRoute*, mention its official language services in two sections of the magazine.

I spoke to Mr. Sauvageau several months after the committee appearance when I ran into him in the Centre Bloc and was relieved to learn that he had, in fact, noticed the new cards as well as the *onRoute* and was pleased with the results. Of course, true to form, Mr. Sauvageau said he would continue to watch us closely.

[English]

These are just two very small examples of improvements we have made and continue to make with respect to our official languages obligations, but they show our responsiveness and our commitment.

We certainly listened, and I can assure members that we will continue to do so. We have, throughout our organization, continually respected the obligations imposed on us, and we intend, irrespective of any law, to continue to strive to provide our customers with service in the official language of their choice. We do it on a daily basis without any fanfare as we transport over 30 million customers a year through dozens of airports with very few complaints. No airline in this country, and probably very few others worldwide, provides bilingual service as consistently as Air Canada does.

As it specifically relates to the committee's report, let me simply say that we regret the committee did not provide Air Canada with an opportunity to share our views with you prior to the report being issued. Our perspective no doubt differed from those expressed by the witnesses who appeared. More specifically, contrary to the views expressed by the officials from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, we believe the corporation's restructuring under CCAA and the subsequent creation of ACE Aviation Holdings did not create a legislative void that needed to be filled. The fact is that Parliament had already contemplated the obligations that were to be imposed on any subsidiary of Air Canada, as well as any corporation that offered services on behalf of Air Canada when it passed amendments to the Air Canada Public Participation Act in 2000.

[Translation]

As it stands, section 10(2) of the Air Canada Public Participation Act already imposes official languages obligations in subsidiaries of Air Canada which provide air services, including Air Canada Jazz. Additionally, the combination of section 10(2) of the Air Canada Public Participation Act and section 25 of the Official Languages Act ensures that, and those subsidiaries and entities who provide 'incidental services', on behalf of Air Canada such as Air Canada Ground Handling Services are also obligated to provide service to customers in both official languages.

As such the Commissioner of Official Languages seeks to fill a void which does not exist and is, instead, seeking to expand the application of the Official Languages Act beyond Parliament's original intent. Regardless of this, however, Air Canada and its subsidiary companies including Jazz have always and will continue to offer services in both official languages because it simply makes good business sense.

• (0910)

[English]

That said, I am by no means here today to convince members that we are perfect. We are certainly aware that like all federal institutions subject to the Official Languages Act, including the Government of Canada, we are far from perfect and we can and must do better. We've always acknowledged this point. We've routinely asked the government for assistance in improving our linguistic capabilities, but unfortunately we have been denied. We only ask that parliamentarians compare us to our peers and not to perfection.

Here are some facts. Despite a unanimous recommendation by the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages from their report in February 2002, we did not receive any support from government as we integrated the 87% anglophone workforce of the former Canadian Airlines into our own at a cost of roughly \$140 million, which Air Canada absorbed exclusively.

In 2003, we were invited to and did apply for language training funds through a Treasury Board program called *Fond d'innovation pour le Bureau du commissariat aux langues officielles*. We were rejected in writing by Diane Monet of the Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canada because, although we had the same language obligations as other federal institutions or agencies, Treasury Board considered us not to be a federal institution. We have obligations of a federal institution, but not the funding opportunities.

In 2005, we were again invited to apply for funds from the program I just mentioned. We applied and were again informed in writing that we had been rejected. We were also advised that we should request that these invitations to file applications no longer be sent to us, given that our applications would never be accepted.

[Translation]

If it is indeed the desire of government to achieve a public policy objective by imposing additional official language obligations on a private corporation, in this instance Air Canada and its subsidiaries, then does it not make sense for Parliament to also ensure that a private corporation — Air Canada — has access to the same public

financial support to which other federal institutions which were subject to similar obligations have access?

We believe that the government must make a choice: it must either create a level playing field in which Air Canada is treated like all other federal institutions subject to the Official Languages Act, which means making Air Canada and its subsidiaries eligible to apply for federal assistance programs, or it must treat Air Canada like all other airlines which are not subject to the Official Languages Act.

We also believe that Parliament should be aware of the significant challenges language obligations imposed on our operations, specifically as it relates to hiring.

[English]

We have continually experienced difficulty identifying and hiring staff outside the province of Quebec, the national capital region, and Moncton. This is not a question of lack of will, but rather the fundamental reality of a lack of sufficient, qualified candidates outside these regions mentioned to fill vacancies. We have requested the assistance of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Treasury Board to help recruit qualified bilingual candidates, particularly in Toronto and western Canada. Unfortunately, these efforts have met with very limited, if any, real success.

To put this dilemma into perspective, in the past five years we have hired bilingual, primarily francophone, flight attendants in Montreal and have transferred them to operating centres like Toronto, Calgary, and Vancouver because of a lack of qualified bilingual candidates in those cities. In total, over 575 flight attendants have been transferred. This is despite concentrated recruitment efforts undertaken by Air Canada throughout major urban centres across Canada to find candidates with acceptable language capability.

The reality is not mitigated by the Official Languages Act, which imposes official language obligations only in regions where numbers warrant. Simply put, the obligations with which Air Canada is required to comply don't change the reality of our industry. A flight attendant on any given day can start their day on a flight where language obligations would not apply because of this provision and then spend the rest of the day working on routes that have demand for bilingual service. As a result, we have been forced to take the position that all of our routes, without exception, must have bilingual capabilities, regardless of the "where numbers warrant" provision. This actually serves to make our own application of the Official Languages Act more rigorous than other federal institutions.

•(0915)

[Translation]

In closing, allow me to restate our commitment as a corporation to meeting any language obligations Parliament chooses to impose. Although we are far from perfect, we do take our obligations seriously and correct inefficiencies whenever they are identified. We will continue serving, and improve our ability to serve, our customers in the official language of their choice regardless of the legislative obligations imposed upon us. For us, serving our customers in the official language of their choice is simply a good business decision.

Thank you for your time today, we are now willing to take any questions you might ask.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Dee.

Thank you for your kind words about Mr. Sauvageau, who is greatly missed both by this committee and by Parliament as a whole.

We will start the first round of questions with Mr. D'Amours.

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Dee, and thank you to your colleagues who are here with you this morning.

Mr. Dee, I would like to go back to some of your comments, as well as some of the comments that I made when Air Canada appeared before the Standing Committee on Official Languages during the 38th Parliament.

Firstly, I hear what you are saying about the comment cards. I assume that you followed up on our suggestions and asked your employees to ensure that comment cards were put in all seat pockets. However, while this might have been done in the period following your appearance before the Standing Committee on Official Languages, it does not appear to be practised today.

Over the past six months, I have taken a good number of Air Canada flights and, each time, I have checked to see if the comment cards were available. Each and every time, whether it was Air Canada Jazz or whether it was Air Canada, the card was nowhere to be found. I am bringing this up because I made sure that I checked each time. Perhaps you are going to try to tell me that this was just a coincidence, or that my assigned seat was reserved for the exclusive use of unilingual passengers. Regardless, I can assure you that this has happened each time that I have flown Air Canada or Air Canada Jazz over the past six months, around a dozen times in total.

I represent a riding in Northern New Brunswick. We will not get into services available in my region, because there are none. Let us take then, by way of example, a flight from Quebec City to Montreal. I would like to know why the flight attendants do not give their safety briefings, etc., in French first. I am talking about a flight from one city in Quebec to another. This is something that I have just witnessed once.

Does Air Canada have a policy on this matter? Do you have a policy stipulating that, in French-speaking cities, announcements

should be made first in French, and in English-speaking cities, they should be made first in English? I would ask that you address this later, when you have the opportunity to reply.

You argue that the government should make a choice and either subject everybody to the same rules or treat Air Canada like any other carrier.

If I remember correctly, Mr. Dee — and this is what I said during the 38th Parliament —, when Canadian International and Air Canada merged, one of the conditions was that Air Canada was to ensure that existing rules on the provision of services in both official languages continued to be respected. Those were the original terms of the acquisition agreement with Canadian International.

Today you are telling us that all carriers ought to be subject to the same rules, but the rules agreed upon in the Canadian International acquisition agreement stipulate that Air Canada must continue to provide bilingual service on board its aircraft. I am not saying that all carriers should be subject to the same requirements — that is another debate, and one that I am sure we will have in the near future. But, regardless, this was a clearly defined condition of the agreement that Air Canada signed. If it has been a condition in the past, why would it no longer be a condition today? Why is Air Canada asking for access to public monies when it has already made a commitment under the agreement?

•(0920)

Mr. Duncan Dee: I will start with your third question.

There was more than one condition involved at that time. The first was to provide service in both official languages, an obligation we have never disputed. Another condition, which we found contradictory, was that we had to keep all Canadian Airlines employees, almost 90 % of whom were unilingual anglophones.

The fact that the government of the day required that we provide our services in both official languages while also keeping Canadian Airlines unilingual anglophone staff was, to our mind, a contradiction. It was impossible for us to provide services in both official languages plus ensuring that no unilingual labour force lost their jobs.

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: I understand your point, Mr. Dee. You feel that the conditions are contradictory, and I respect your opinion, but I would like you to tell me, yes or no, whether Air Canada signed the agreement accepting the various conditions.

Mr. Duncan Dee: We had no choice but to accept the conditions. You may recall that at that time American Airlines and Air Canada were wrangling over the future of our company. The Minister of Transport of the day said that if we wanted to continue with Air Canada, rather than American Airlines...

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: Did the Minister of Transport force you to buy Canadian Airlines?

Mr. Duncan Dee: Yes.

The Chair: I am sorry, Mr. Dee, but the five minutes are up.

I am now going to give the floor to Ms. Barbot for the next question.

Mrs. Vivian Barbot (Papineau, BQ): Good morning, and thank you for having come to meet with the committee.

You said that you will respect the terms of the Official Languages Act for both languages. Clearly, however, when we speak about respecting an official language, we are always referring to French. There is no problem when it comes to respecting English.

French-speaking Canadians often have no choice but to fly Air Canada as it is the only carrier serving their region. Yet these passengers are not served in French, they do not understand the flight attendants, etc. You said that it is first and foremost a question of good business sense. I would imagine that it is a priority for you to be understood by your clients when you are serving them. However, I can assure you that each and everyone of us has recently had at least one experience of the Official Languages Act not being met, which was not being able to receive service in French. As a business, you ought to be committed to serving Francophones in their language, but this is unfortunately not the case.

Furthermore, you said that a bill, which intends to remedy certain issues, is being studied. Although it does not address all of the problems, it will allow passengers to receive more services. However, in your presentation, you said that section 10 of the current act already covers all of this.

Could you explain this to me?

• (0925)

Mr. Duncan Dee: The Air Canada Public Participation Act already imposes official languages obligations on Air Canada, all of its subsidiaries, and all entities that represent it publicly.

For example, Air Canada Jazz is an Air Canada subsidiary operating at the regional level. Section 10(2) of the Air Canada Public Participation Act already requires that Air Canada Jazz provide service in both official languages. As for Air Canada ground-handling services, which serves the public on behalf of Air Canada, it is subject to section 25 of the Official Languages Act. This means therefore that all Air Canada Jazz and Air Canada ground-handling services are already covered.

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: That is not what we have heard. At any rate, even if these companies are covered by existing legislative provisions on official languages, they do not adhere to them. I do not know what we can do about that. I am going to move on to another subject.

You are asking for government funding for the services you provide in French. However, everybody agrees that Air Canada is a private company. Nevertheless, you argue that:

If it is indeed the desire of the government to achieve a public policy objective by imposing additional official language obligations on a private corporation, Air Canada [...]

I am struggling to understand what you mean by that. Canada is officially a bilingual country. These obligations are not unique to Air Canada.

Mr. Duncan Dee: Yes, Canada is a bilingual country, but no other carrier is subject to the same obligations as Air Canada. These are obligations specific to Air Canada.

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: As we said earlier, Air Canada is considered to be a pan-Canadian carrier, and as such, has certain prerogatives. When Air Canada's status changed, it was understood that the company would have to obey those rules.

Mr. Duncan Dee: Our position is as follows: if we are considered to be a federal institution, why can we not be considered as a fully-fledged federal institution? It was the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages, not us, that came up with the idea. It recommended that we receive government support to help integrate Canadian Airlines employees.

If we are to be subject to obligations over and above rules to which other private carriers are subject, we have to be able to make funding requests in the same way that all other federal institutions subject to the Official Languages Act can.

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: As has already been said, these are conditions that you accepted when you signed the agreement. To my mind, it is unacceptable not to provide service in both official languages and to say that you will only respect the conditions of the agreement if you receive government funding.

Mr. Duncan Dee: I am not saying that we do not want to remedy problems, or that we are not going to do so. You brought to our attention situations where we failed to serve you in both official languages. That is the problem for us to rectify ourselves. We are not asking the government to do it.

• (0930)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Barbot.

Mr. Godin.

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

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Mr. Dee and his colleagues.

You said that Air Canada should be treated like a federal institution, and I fully agree. I would be in full support of the government buying back and nationalizing Air Canada. I have never supported privatization, and did not agree with the government decision to sell CN. You cannot even travel across Canada by train anymore. The rail tracks have all been dismantled.

When Air Canada was privatized, it accepted the conditions related to bilingualism. Yet now, all these years later, you come to tell us that you are struggling to get by and ought to be treated like the others. But the private sector accepted the fact that Air Canada had obligations. The Canadian government said that it would sell Air Canada provided that certain specific conditions were respected.

That being said, in light of what it costs to provide training, I agree with you that the government ought to provide assistance. Allow me to explain why — it does not specifically relate to Air Canada. Phase II of the Employment Insurance Act provides a special skills training program. This program has a \$50 billion dollar surplus. Training people does not only entail showing them how to use equipment and machinery. The fund can be used as readily for language training as for helping people to find jobs.

Allow me to give you an example. A few years ago, a company called Noranda received \$2 million through Phase II of the Employment Insurance Act to avoid layoffs.

You are right to say that this idea came from one of our reports. I was a member of the committee when that recommendation was made. If I am not mistaken, I was the one who suggested that the government provide assistance. In the case of Air Canada, the responsibility does not lie fully with the government, as the conditions of the agreement were clear. Nonetheless, I have a responsibility to set the record straight and recognize that the government can provide financial assistance to a private company for training and skills development. It is done through Phase II of the Employment Insurance Act.

However, I have my reservations when I hear, as was often said, that Air Canada was forced to keep its unilingual anglophone staff because of the collective agreement. That is incorrect. In my time as a union representative, I was never able to negotiate a collective agreement that conflicted with the law. Labour law always takes precedence over collective agreements.

I would like to know whether you are comfortable with the new bill or whether certain provisions are of concern to you.

Mr. Duncan Dee: Phase II of the Unemployment Insurance Act was the route we studied and decided upon when we were seeking public funding to help with our training costs. We had discussions with the Department on this matter. Unfortunately, at that time, we were told that training unilingual employees did not meet phase II criteria.

As for the current bill, it only imposes obligations to which we are already subject. It is not for Air Canada to tell Parliament what to do. It is up to Parliament to decide whether it wishes to adopt this bill. Our position does not conflict with the tenets of the Official Languages Act.

I would like to give an example of what Air Canada has done to improve its level of bilingualism. Ms. Barbot said earlier that we have not done all what is necessary to respect our obligations. Nevertheless, we have undertaken considerable efforts.

● (0935)

Mr. Yvon Godin: It is overwhelming to see that you are making an effort and trying to respect the conditions, etc., but at the end of the day, the Act is not being respected. A bilingual service is either provided or it is not.

When I fly from Montreal to Ottawa, I find it difficult to accept that I am not served in my language, even although a failure to do so contravene the Act. I also have difficulties in accepting that Air Canada, which is used to service the Atlantic region, has been replaced by Jazz, and that as a result, rules governing language of work, an equal participation of Francophones and Anglophones, community developments, and linguistic duality are not being respected. Air Canada no longer operates in the Atlantic region; Jazz is now our service provider.

You have essentially used the back door to do what you could have not done under the Air Canada banner. At least that is the way we see it.

Mr. Duncan Dee: You said that Air Canada has been replaced by Jazz in the Atlantic region. Yet 83 % of Jazz's fly attendants in Eastern Canada, from Ontario that is, are bilingual. They have been examined for...

The Chair: You are out of time.

It is Mr. Lemieux turn.

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, CPC): Thank you for having come to meet the committee and for having made your presentation.

The government has responded in principle to the recommendations of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages. One of the differences relates to the desire to give the government greater flexibility so that we do not need to go through a lengthy legislative process every time Air Canada restructures. You spoke about the challenges Air Canada faces. I understand what you are trying to say, particularly regarding staffing.

Without necessarily providing us with confidential information on your future plans, could you explain the relationship between the various Air Canada subsidiaries? I would also like to hear your view on how we should decide whether they should be subject to the Official Languages Act.

Mr. Duncan Dee: We have just concluded another restructuring, which follows up on the restructuring that took place two years ago. Air Canada is now again responsible for Air Canada Ground Handling Services, which were previously the responsibility of another ACE Aviation subsidiary, that is, a company equivalent to that of Air Canada. We retrieved the ground-handling services, which are now once again a direct subsidiary of Air Canada. Ground-handling services are now once again the responsibility of Air Canada. We also retrieved the subsidiary responsible for Air Canada's air freight, Air Canada Cargo, and we gave it back to Air Canada.

Approximately one week ago, we separated the two companies that were Air Canada's affiliates, and not subsidiaries. The transaction will be completed this Friday. Air Canada Jazz was previously an Air Canada subsidiary, but it has been split off. As you may know, a year ago we launched a public share offering for Air Canada Jazz which is now a separate company from Air Canada.

That is how we reorganized Air Canada's various entities.

● (0940)

Mr. Pierre Lemieux: What strategy will you use to ensure that the new entities, such as Air Canada Technical Services and Air Canada Cargo comply with the Act?

Mr. Duncan Dee: Our position on that has always been the following: any Air Canada subsidiary, whether it be Air Canada Technical Services, Air Canada Ground Handling Services, Air Canada Cargo or Air Canada Jazz, all companies, or even the corporate levels of those companies, must comply with the Official Languages Act. Even if they are not officially subject to the Act, each company must continue to train and offer to train its employees in both official languages. For example, in this year alone we provided training to approximately 2,000 employees in the other official language, that is, French for the anglophones and English for the francophones.

Mr. Pierre Lemieux: Will you be facing the same challenge with your staff? Given that there is insufficient bilingual staff in key areas, what do you plan to do? You offer training, but do you also have other strategies for the new entities?

Mr. Duncan Dee: That is an excellent question. There are two ways that allow us to achieve higher levels of bilingualism. The first is training. As I've just mentioned, we trained almost 2,000 employees this year and we still have six weeks left to improve our performance.

The second strategy we resorted to, given the lack of qualified bilingual candidates outside Quebec, Moncton and the National Capital Region, is to transfer bilingual personnel from one province to another, for the purposes of achieving higher levels of bilingualism. This is very costly, however, that is what we have done. Over the past three to five years we have transferred 575 flight attendants, mainly from Montreal to Toronto and to Western Canada, to achieve higher levels of bilingualism in those cities where there is an insufficient number of bilingual candidates to meet our needs.

Mr. Pierre Lemieux: Is language training mandatory for your staff or do you use incentives in order to promote language training in a second official language?

Mr. Duncan Dee: We mainly use incentive schemes to increase our bilingual capacity. For example, we have information sessions in airports on the requirements of the Official Languages Act. In Toronto, we provide training in the classrooms but we have also taken steps to encourage the use of French in our client services. One thing we have learned over the past 10 years is that many of our employees went to immersion high schools. They're able to read and write French without difficulty, but they have a harder time keeping up a conversation because in school the focus was on writing and reading.

• (0945)

The Chair: I apologize, Mr. Dee, but the seven minutes allowed have been used up.

That completes our first round. We will start our second round with Mr. Murphy. You have five minutes.

Mr. Brian Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Dee.

I am the member for Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe. First, I would like to say that I got the impression, when I was listening to your comments and reading your brief, that you feel that your obligations under the Official Languages Act are difficult to meet. That is the impression I get when I read statements such as:

[English]

We have throughout our organization continually respected the obligations imposed on us and we intend, irrespective of any law, to continue to strive to provide.... No airline in this country and probably very few others worldwide, provides bilingual service as consistently as [we do].

There is talk of a "level playing field". The words "obligations imposed by law" are replete in your presentation.

[Translation]

I have the feeling that you think that those obligations are very difficult to meet. You perceive yourself as a victim at the international level, and you do not mention that the bilingual nature of your company constitutes a very rare and effective tool at the international level. Nothing in your brief points out that aspect, not a word.

I am somewhat concerned by that because, as I said, I come from a bilingual city and region. To be more specific, we only have access to Air Canada Jazz, and not to Air Canada per say. The fact that Air Canada Jazz is not bound by Part V of the Act, the part dealing with language of work, is a sensitive issue for employees from New Brunswick working for Air Canada Jazz across the country.

Do you think it is fair that Air Canada Jazz, which employs many bilingual people from New Brunswick, should not have to comply with Part V of the Official Languages Act, the part dealing with language of work? Do you think that is right? If you had many bilingual employees from New Brunswick, do you think it would be difficult to comply with Part V of the Official Languages Act?

[English]

Mr. Duncan Dee: In this statement we're saying that we feel it makes good commercial sense for us to be able to serve our customers in the language of their choice. We have never pretended that being able to serve our customers in the official language of their choice was not *un atout*. We have always felt that doing so was in our own best commercial interest, and that should dictate our service in various official languages.

I've already said in this statement that we go over and above the obligations imposed on us by the Official Languages Act, because the Official Languages Act says we are to provide service in both official languages where numbers warrant. We actually don't respect that part of the Official Languages Act because, from our perspective, we are to serve our customers in the official language of their choice anywhere we fly, regardless of where the numbers warrant. So if there is any example that our commercial interest encourages us to provide official language services wherever we fly, that is it.

On language of work, our employees are trained in and have the ability to access employee services in both official languages, regardless of where they are. And I think that is a reality of our employees today.

Complaints received regarding language of work are almost unheard of in many instances. In the last couple of years I think there have been under five per year, and in the last year there was one. In a few of these cases it was the result of a misunderstanding of the obligation on the part of either the employee or the manager responsible. But we try to train our employees and our managers on what those obligations are, and as Mr. Lemieux suggested earlier, we do it in a positive way, not just in a negative way.

• (0950)

The Chair: Sorry to interrupt again, Mr. Dee, but five minutes have gone by.

We will now ask Mr. Petit to ask a question for five minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Daniel Petit (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Mr. Dee, Mr. Galimberti and Ms. McEvoy. I would like to make a few comments and then ask you a specific question. Mr. Dee, I believe you can answer my question.

We understand that Air Canada is a company that is being restructured. Everyone is aware of this. I was not part of the government at the time of its restructuring; the Liberals were in office. Out of an interest in protecting your employees, you ended up with more unilingual than bilingual employees. It is to your credit that you put your employees' interests first.

I would also like to point out that if Air Canada or Air Canada Jazz were not present in some regions of Quebec, there would be no air connections, there would be no service at all. I am proud you are there and that you have taken responsibility for serving those regions.

One thing, however, puzzles me. Your company is called Air Canada. That's a mythical name, an important one. You have a mandate of linguistic duality. However, there are also other important companies serving the Canadian territory, such as WestJet and Air Transat, that are not associated with your company and do not appear to have the same obligations. You came to an agreement with the Liberal government of the time, in order to comply with certain language obligations.

I would like to know what you think about this. You seem to be saying that you are capable of fulfilling those obligations but you also appear to be questioning the fact that the obligations imposed on your company are not imposed on other companies. There seem to be two markets: an Air Canada market, subject to linguistic duality; and another market, made up of companies that are in some cases just as big as your own but are not bound by the same obligations.

Mr. Duncan Dee: Air Canada sees this as an issue of equality. Transport companies such as WestJet, Air Transat and others are not bound by the same obligations as Air Canada. Regardless of our legal obligations, we will meet our obligation to provide service to our clients in both official languages because that is what we must do to retain their loyalty: it makes business sense. If we cannot continue to provide services to our clients in the official language of their choice, then we will lose them. From a commercial viewpoint, we take this to heart.

WestJet, for example, decided against serving Quebec City because it could not recruit enough bilingual employees to serve that market. That company publicly stated that it would not serve Quebec City before it could achieve an adequate level of bilingualism. Quebec City is the Capital of Quebec and a government and business centre.

As Mr. Murphy pointed out, bilingualism is an asset for us because we have no problem in serving the Quebec market in both official languages. Yes, there are some cases in which we have not provided services in both official languages but I dare say that is the exception and not the rule.

Before Air Canada restructured and saved jobs, the level of bilingualism was 65%. After the restructuring, which ended up saving jobs, that level fell to less than 40%, due to the influx of unilingual anglophone employees into Air Canada's staff.

Unfortunately, because most of those employees had the most seniority, they obtained the best working hours and conditions. I do not blame those employees for that. However, at the time, the Senate and House of Commons Joint Standing Committee on Official Languages had recommended that Air Canada be assisted in integrating those employees, and that did not happen.

• (0955)

The Chair: I apologize, Mr. Dee, but I must interrupt you.

Ms. Brunelle, you may ask the next question.

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Good morning, gentlemen. Good morning, madam.

I will continue along the same lines. When a company restructures it has profitability in mind. I would like to know if Air Canada is profitable. Is bilingualism a competitive disadvantage? You're saying that it is perhaps an advantage.

Last summer I took an Air Canada plane to Paris, France. Air Canada announced its services in French, English, Spanish and even Dutch. Being able to speak to clients in their own language constitutes a significant competitive advantage.

Should all companies, therefore, be bound by the Official Languages Act or would that be an impossible mission to accomplish?

What you require ultimately is a little more time to integrate all your employees, is that not so?

Mr. Duncan Dee: That is an excellent question. Does Air Canada feel that all other transport companies should be subject to the Official Languages Act? We don't think that's a bad idea but it is ultimately up to members of Parliament to make that decision.

Why have there been so many problems with official languages since the year 2000? Because that's the year the real problem started. I note that Mr. Godin does not agree, but if I may say, prior to that year 64% or 65% of our staff was bilingual and there were less problems. The problem started with the integration of Canadian Airlines because the level of our staff's bilingualism dropped from 65% to less than 40%, approximately 38%, and that had a rather significant impact on Air Canada's activities.

We were able nevertheless to take several steps in order to mitigate those inconveniences. For example, under Air Canada's policy, for two or three years now, only bilingual candidates have been hired. When we cannot find qualified bilingual candidates in one region, then we attempt to find those people elsewhere and transfer them to that region. For example, we have flight attendant staff based in Vancouver. Unfortunately, that region did not have enough bilingual candidates. We therefore transferred flight attendants from Quebec to Vancouver in order to achieve a higher level of bilingualism. We have done that on a regular basis to improve our level of bilingualism.

Are we asking for government assistance to achieve this? No, however the fact remains that a large number of our employees are still unilingual anglophones. We do not want to fire them, we want to train them. However, as you may have noted yourselves within the federal government, training 38 to 42-year-old individuals in a language they have never learned is not only difficult but very costly because daily immersion in a language is necessary in order to learn it. From our perspective, we absolutely agree that other airlines should be encouraged to become bilingual or obliged to offer services in both official languages, but that is a decision for Parliament to make.

● (1000)

The Chair: Unfortunately, Ms. Brunelle...

I would now call on Mr. Godin to ask his question.

Mr. Yvon Godin: You stated that Air Canada chooses to serve its clients in both official languages because otherwise you would lose them. However, in those regions that are only served by Air Canada or Air Canada Jazz it is impossible to lose clients. People aren't birds: they can't fly. You have to pay to get onto one of those big birds.

I share the opinion that the government is responsible, not because this is Air Canada but because it helps many sectors in providing training. It would be unfortunate if we did not help people capable of learning another language. I myself was fortunate in that regard: I am a francophone Acadian, I had the opportunity of learning another language and I appreciate that. Supporting people in that manner in their area of work is just as important as getting them the opportunity to learn how to use other tools. I'm convinced of that.

A former joint parliamentary committee recommended this. It recommended that training be provided to people. The recommendation was unanimous: they said yes, there is money for this. To be perfectly honest with you, Air Canada was no more the focus than any other company. The consideration was for employees who would be able to keep their jobs, it was an issue of humanity. They had the right, like everybody else, to work.

You stated that WestJet could not find enough bilingual employees to serve Quebec City. I don't know if this observation also applies to Air Canada, but I never saw any ads in the Acadian Peninsula for recruiting employees on behalf of WestJet. We have a 20% unemployment level; we can send you candidates. If you give me your coordinates later, I'll give you names.

Mr. Duncan Dee: I apologize for interrupting you. With respect to the Acadian Peninsula and—

Mr. Yvon Godin: Perhaps I don't speak French well enough, I don't know.

Mr. Duncan Dee: No, my wife comes from that area of New Brunswick. I would never comment negatively on her way of speaking both official languages.

We do undertake recruitment. Take Air Canada Jazz, for example: 54% of its employees, that is, 100% of its new employees, are bilingual.

● (1005)

Mr. Yvon Godin: That's all very well, but we are here to consider this bill. Is there a problem with both official languages being the languages of work of Air Canada Jazz or do employees use the language of their choice.

Mr. Duncan Dee: The language of work for Air Canada Jazz is already their language of choice. Any communiqué published by Air Canada Jazz for its staff or for the public... This is already how things work.

Mr. Yvon Godin: If that is the case, do you object to this being set down in the Act? We are here to discuss the bill. You're saying that that measure is already in place. We're recommending to Parliament that it be set down in the Act. You yourself are very nice, but there may be other witnesses who would not be quite as nice. The Act is there for those who will follow. We live in a changing world and people change.

If I have understood you correctly, you do not object to this.

Mr. Duncan Dee: No, we have no objections. I am 36 years old and I do not intend on retiring any time soon. You'll still be seeing me for a while.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Mr. Dee, that does not mean that you will not change jobs. You are only 36 years old and you may not stay in your current position.

Mr. Duncan Dee: I hope not.

Mr. Yvon Godin: A vice-president can become a president.

Mr. Duncan Dee: That would be a good thing.

Let us go back to your earlier comments on training.

Mr. Yvon Godin: We agree on training. What I want now is for the bill to be passed.

Mr. Duncan Dee: In terms of the legislation, we have always said that any Air Canada subsidiary will comply with the spirit of the Official Languages Act.

In terms of the wording of the Act, to be perfectly honest, today we were asked to give you feedback on the committee's report, not the bill. We have not prepared any amendments nor have we prepared any specific feedback.

The Chair: Mr. Dee, your time is up.

We will now move on to Mr. Simard.

Hon. Raymond Simard (Saint Boniface, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to our guests.

Mr. Dee, did you take immersion classes?

Mr. Duncan Dee: No, my French may not be very good. I grew up in Vancouver at a time when there were no French immersion classes. My parents therefore decided to send me to France for eight months so that I could learn French and become a little more Canadian.

Hon. Raymond Simard: Thank you.

I would like to talk about WestJet. I was quite impressed. I don't travel very frequently with WestJet but when I did, I was very impressed with the service in both official languages. I'm rather surprised because this is a company that mainly serves Western Canada. They have understood the importance and commercial benefits of using both official languages.

I would like to talk about the issue of insufficient qualified labour in Western Canada. I don't think that's a good excuse. I come from Winnipeg, which has one of Air Canada's biggest bilingual call centres. You found qualified individuals in that region for that centre. At the same time, Air Canada has laid off staff over the past two or three years. Very competent bilingual francophones have been let go. Perhaps those were people with insufficient seniority but they were very competent. I'm surprised that you can let people go and yet, at the same time, you can't find other candidates.

Could you explain that to me? If you need qualified bilingual employees in Winnipeg, just contact me and I'll give a list tomorrow morning. You're not looking in the right places. There are highly qualified people in our region. I am sure that the same is true of Saskatchewan.

• (1010)

Mr. Duncan Dee: We need to move forward, seriously. We consulted with Treasury Board as well as with the Official Languages Commission and we asked them to provide us with assistance in recruitment. Perhaps they don't have access to the same networks that you do, as a member of Parliament. Perhaps a real process for consultation with members should be established, in the event that we need to hire in your part of the country. For example, Air Canada Jazz undertook recruitment in the Acadian Peninsula, as well as in Bathurst and francophone regions in New Brunswick, and they succeeded in hiring several qualified candidates, but the candidate had to be transferred to Toronto. You are no doubt aware that many of those people do not want to live outside their region. Employees do not pay for their tickets.

Hon. Raymond Simard: Mr. Dee, a few years ago we heard witnesses who gave us the percentages of Air Canada's clients who were francophones and anglophones. Do you have those numbers?

I believe two-fifths of the clients were francophones. Is that correct?

Mr. Duncan Dee: It hasn't changed. Our market is made of 25% francophones and 75% anglophones, as is Canada's population. I do not have the most recent numbers with me but I could have them sent to the clerk later. However, I would say that the market has not changed.

Hon. Raymond Simard: Do Air Canada flight attendants who leave Winnipeg, for example, have to be bilingual?

Mr. Duncan Dee: Are you referring to new or old employees?

Hon. Raymond Simard: Either. Does a flight attendant on a flight from Winnipeg to Ottawa or Montreal have to be bilingual?

Mr. Duncan Dee: There has to be at least one bilingual flight attendant on any Air Canada flight. In fact, as I was saying in my opening statement, under the Official Languages Act, they should be able to begin their flying day between two unilingual cities and end it between two bilingual cities. That is better for us.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Simard.

Ms. Barbot has the next question.

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: You said that you are taking all necessary measures and that you have adequate staff, etc. I tend to believe you. However, in reality, we do not get the impression that Air Canada is interesting in serving the francophone population in French. Perhaps that is simply a perception, but all of us could give you specific examples of what is not working. Perhaps we have to approach this differently.

For example, you said that there was always a flight attendant on board who can speak French. I recently travelled on a plane and I was spoken to in English. I therefore made an effort, as the client, and continued to speak in French. Someone was brought to me who could speak French, but throughout the rest of the flight, it was the anglophone employee who dealt with me. In other words, the staff made no extra effort to serve me in French. After they have realized that a client wishes to be served in French, they forget. Perhaps that's where some adjustments need to be made.

Mr. Duncan Dee: You are completely right, Ms. Barbot. If you are spoken to in the official language that is not your first official language, procedural rules stipulate somebody else must be found in order to serve you in your language for the rest of the flight. I can overlook a small mistake, but during a four-hour flight, if you are being addressed in a language other than your own, this is not only unacceptable, and furthermore it is a breach of our own rules.

The problem is this: since Air Canada acquired Canadian International, the airline has aimed at having 100% of its employees bilingual, which has been the case for the last five years. So long as a certain number of our flight attendants remain unilingual anglophones, incidents such as those will occur. There are people who come from all over the country, and to my mind, this is a matter of respect, and that is why I myself have learned French. Unfortunately, some people do not think that way. For some, if they speak to you in English and if you are too kind to ask them to speak to you in French, that is fine. I can assure you that according to our rules, if a client wishes to be served in the language of his or her choice, and the flight attendant is unable to speak that language, the flight attendant must ask to be replaced by a colleague who is able to communicate fully with the client. The client is of the greatest importance.

• (1015)

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: Employees do not really comply with that order. It really has to be re-enforced, because clients are exasperated. I stopped asking after having to make too many requests. I let it slide because otherwise, we would have to spend the entire trip complaining, which would be awful. In fact, a trip is awful when one is dissatisfied.

In fact, I am concerned when you say that the proposed legislation does not carry obligations that you are currently fulfilling. To our mind, the bill should improve things. It is a pity that the bill per se is not being discussed. That comment really struck me, and I wondered what was going to happen.

For example, what do you think of the fact that Aeroplan does not provide its services in French, or is not legally bound to provide services in both languages? It's almost as though the client is left to fend for himself and work things out.

Mr. Duncan Dee: I believe that Aeroplan provides a choice in the language of service. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the number of bilingual employees working at Aeroplan is much higher because their call centres are in Montreal and Vancouver; but it is the Montreal call centre which is expanding and not the Vancouver one.

As for related services provided, section 25 of the Official Languages Act stipulates that services delivered to the public by a third party must be made available in both official languages. This is currently the case.

The Chair: Mr. Dee, I must interrupt you.

I will ask Ms. Boucher to ask the next questions.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Thank you for coming. As you know, our government's, and our minister's commitment to official languages is unwavering—allow me to insist that it is unwavering. Bill C-29 is a clear illustration of this.

I've been listening to what has been said for some time, and it appears to me that there are concerns over the ability to provide services in both official languages, particularly in French.

My question is for Ms. Louise McEvoy, who is the Manager of Linguistic Services.

Can you describe to us in detail the initiatives and policies that have been implemented by the company to ensure quality of service in both official languages.

• (1020)

Mrs. Louise McEvoy (Manager, Linguistic Services, Air Canada): At the outset, we provide training and language courses in eight Canadian cities: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax and Saint John, New Brunswick. Language courses in these eight cities are provided on a regular basis. There are just as many language courses for beginners as there are for intermediate speakers. Our goal is to eventually have only intermediate courses where students work to maintain what they have acquired. As it stands, there are many beginner courses. In 2005, we gave courses to more than 1,500 employees and we have surpassed this figure this year. Employees take French or English courses on a regular basis.

As Mr. Dee was saying, we also provide awareness workshops. In Toronto, the workshop is called *French Café*. Employees meet with teachers in a room. Employees from my section talk to them about the Act, and educate the employee about their obligations. The teachers tell them how to address a client, for example. An employee very well may end up saying "Sorry, I don't speak French", this is a reality, but it must not be said. We try to educate employees on that issue as well.

In addition to training, employees also take tests. Every two years, we test employees on their second official language even if they have passed a test already. If they do not meet the required level, we send them to another language course.

We offer tests, provide language courses and awareness workshops.

Mr. Duncan Dee: If I may, I would like to add a comment. Recently, we have noticed that many people are applying for jobs and indicating that they are graduates of immersion programs. Unfortunately, they are unable to pass the tests that we give them. I believe that we need to look very closely at what Canadian schools are doing to train bilingual graduates. We have had problems mostly in Toronto and in Western Canada, where people went to immersion schools. If they are given an exam, they do not pass. The issue is discussed internally. How are we going to encourage young people to learn both official languages? This is a real problem, not only now, but for the future.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Do you have more difficulty finding bilingual anglophones than bilingual francophones?

Mr. Duncan Dee: Without wanting to criticize the educational system in the different provinces, I must say that it is much easier to find bilingual candidates in Quebec and New Brunswick, even if there happens to be a significant number of francophones living in Winnipeg, for example. Perhaps this is a matter of the quality of education, I don't know, but we have a much easier time finding bilingual candidates in Quebec and New Brunswick.

The Chair: We will now ask Mr. Godin to put a question.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First and foremost, I wish to raise a point of order which I would not want to be part of my allotted time.

I would like to know why we have called representatives from Air Canada before the committee. According to the rules, priority is given to consideration of proposed legislation. We are in the process of studying a bill. I have trouble believing that the bill, pardon the expression, has simply slipped through our fingers. We have called these people here as part of the study of the minister's report. But we were in the process of studying a bill, and we were going to call people in to comment on the bill so that it can then be sent back to the House of Commons. I find it unfortunate that people from Air Canada were not informed of this.

Looking at the agenda, I see that the notice of meeting does not make any mention of the bill. We've asked them questions pertaining to the bill, yet they were not asked to appear for that purpose. Therefore, I can understand that they are not prepared to discuss the bill.

I would like for us to backtrack; which why I am raising a point of order. I would like to know why we have called people from Air Canada to talk about consideration of the report, in addition to talking about the bill. It makes no sense to call on people from Air Canada to study a report and to not invite them to consider a bill that concerns them directly. I believe that we failed in our duties and I want us to check on what has occurred.

That being said, I would like to ask my questions.

Mr. Dee, at the outset of your remarks, you said that signage had been changed in a small number of aircraft. I can tell you that changes have really occurred. Perhaps this has been turned into an obsession, but on several aircraft, signs have been entirely removed in order to solve the problem of bilingualism. I think if you were to check, you would see that in many planes, the stickers located on the pull-down tray, indicating the location of life jackets and other things, have been completely removed. They perhaps may not have been removed on all planes, but many have. So the problem has been resolved that way. From a security standpoint, I don't think this was the objective, but I have been in planes where stickers had disappeared, and are not to be found anywhere else.

Therefore, you should be the ones thanking us, when we talk about such good things.

Mr. Duncan Dee: Yes, thank you.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Don't mention it, Mr. Dee.

As for Aeroplan, it is a bilingual program. But for the love of God, when I am on the phone with Aeroplan, and press 1 to receive services in English, I get an answer immediately. When I press 2 to receive services in French, I have to wait a long time. That is a problem.

• (1025)

Mr. Duncan Dee: Sometimes, it is the opposite. We have received complaints from clients who say that when they press 2, they are served much more quickly as opposed to when they press 1. And that is not—

Mr. Yvon Godin: Therefore, there's a problem.

Mr. Duncan Dee: No, it's not only—

Mr. Yvon Godin: You receive complaints, very well. Therefore, I'm going to complain on behalf of all anglophones.

Mr. Duncan Dee: It's not only—

Mr. Yvon Godin: We are, sir, at the Standing Committee on Official Languages, so I'm going to complain on behalf of all anglophones.

Mr. Duncan Dee: It's not only for the 1 and the 2, but sometimes for the 2 and the 1. In fact, if you phone from a francophone region, the first choice is French.

Mr. Yvon Godin: I can tell you that three weeks ago, I had a bit of a personal problem while dealing with Aeroplan. I called Aeroplan from my office one morning and pressed 2 to receive services in French. I left the phone on the speaker phone while waiting a half hour and listening to Air Canada music. This is costly for Aeroplan. It is perhaps an isolated incident; I don't want to spend all our time on it.

I want to talk to you about something else. I would like to make a suggestion. You said that training is given in French and in English in a given area. You also talked about the *French Café* awareness workshop.

I would like to suggest something else. You should stop using prerecorded cassettes on your flights and allow your employees to speak. That would force them to practice. In the past, flight attendants would talk to us because they were supposed to be

bilingual. Today, they simply put in the audio cassette. We're not giving them the chance to practice.

I would suggest that they be given a chance to sit down, have a coffee and talk to us. That would be a good opportunity to practice the other language. We have taken away their chance to chat. Flight attendants stay quiet nowadays during flights. They put in an audio cassette and somebody else does the work for them. That's just a suggestion. In addition, that would prove to clients that your employees are able to speak both languages, not simply saying "*Bonjour, monsieur*" and play a cassette.

We don't even know if employees are able to speak French or not: they no longer speak to us. Those who dare ask for a bottle of 7UP find themselves before the Supreme Court.

Mr. Duncan Dee: I believe that you've raised a good point. We often complain about the lack of practice but do not allow our employees to practice their second language.

Mr. Yvon Godin: No, not at all. Quite frankly, you do not allow them to practice.

Mr. Duncan Dee: Therefore, that would perhaps be a good idea—

Mr. Yvon Godin: If I was able to learn the little English that I know, it is because I worked hard to learn it. The same goes for immersion schools. People can do what they wish, but if people are not given the chance to practice French, they will not be able to learn it. It is through speaking that one acquires a language. You should be very familiar with this, you yourself have learned French. It is by practising that one learns the language.

In fact, it is Air Canada which has taken away from these people the chance to practice their French. They don't do it anymore.

• (1030)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Godin.

Mr. D'Amours you have 30 seconds to ask one last question.

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: Only 30 seconds, Mr. Chairman? I can understand why my Conservative colleagues only want me to speak for 30 seconds, but...

Mr. Chairman, I believe that it is important to highlight the following situation. I hear comments from the government concerning its commitment to official languages and its desire to make sure that both official languages be respected. The reality is somewhat entirely different. Two weeks ago, we travelled to Eastern Canada and we heard the exact opposite during the entire trip.

That being said, I want to ask a question about Air Canada's Internet services. On the one hand, the government has reiterated its commitment to official languages, but on the other hand, Minister Cannon did not deem it important to mention in Bill C-11 that Air Canada's Internet services must be bilingual.

Mr. Dee, I'm sure you will agree with me on the following: a unilingual francophone will surely have difficulty making an on-line reservation if Air Canada's website is exclusively in English.

Therefore, I'm sure that you would agree with me if I were to say that if this obligation were built into the law, not much would change because Air Canada will continue to provide bilingual services for on-line reservations. I'm not mistaken by saying that Air Canada will continue to provide this service in the future, am I? I understand that the service already exists, but the minister does not believe that it is important enough to legislate bilingual service. Ultimately, if this were enshrined in to the act, it wouldn't be a problem for you.

Mr. Duncan Dee: Mr. D'Amours, I do not want to get involved in a partisan issue between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party, but I must say one thing. Since Minister Cannon's arrival, we have had many more discussions about the obligations pursuant to the Official Languages Act than we had under the former government. The new minister has spoken to us several times about these matters.

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: What I want to hear from you is that given the fact that you already extend a bilingual online reservation service—and you admit that the online reservation service is bilingual; we all agree about that: currently, it is bilingual —, you would not object to have this provision included in the legislation.

Mr. Duncan Dee: I do not understand what you mean. We must put—

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: I am speaking about the bill that the minister came to table before this committee some time ago. The

minister said that it was not necessary to include the online reservation service in the bill to guarantee that it is extended in both official languages.

You told me, as far as you are concerned, that the service is already bilingual. I agree with you. Given the fact that it is already bilingual, I want to know whether you would have a problem with including this provision in the legislation. Yes or no?

Mr. Duncan Dee: I would prefer to study the content of the bill before making a statement.

The Chair: Thank you. I think that it is unfair to ask you such a question.

Our meeting is over. I want to thank our guests.

Mr. Yvon Godin: I think that we should invite them back. Next time, they could discuss Bill C-11. If there is a bill whose content deals with official languages, we should be able to hear what Air Canada representatives have to say about it.

The Chair: We will take your suggestion under advisement.

I thank all the members and the guests. I wish you a good day. Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.

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