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**Thursday, November 5, 2009**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Steven Blaney**



## Standing Committee on Official Languages

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• (0905)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC)):** Good morning one and all, and welcome to this 39th meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), today we are continuing our study of broadcasting and services in French at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games.

[English]

We are very pleased this morning to have again at our committee members of the organizing committee for the 2010 Olympic Games, VANOC.

We have with us this morning the chair of the official languages advisory committee, Mr. Jacques Gauthier.

Welcome to our committee again, Mr. Gauthier.

Mr. Gauthier is accompanied by Ms. Francine Bolduc, who is the director of official languages. Ms. Bolduc also came earlier to this committee.

We also have the pleasure to have for the first time at our committee Ms. Donna Wilson. She's the executive vice-president, workforce and sustainability.

Welcome to our committee, Ms. Wilson.

I believe, Mr. Gauthier, that you want to address us with opening remarks.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier (Chair, Official Languages Advisory Committee, Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC)):** Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

Honourable members of the Committee, I am very pleased to once again be appearing before you, with Ms. Wilson, as you pointed out, as well as Ms. Bolduc, to give you a brief overview of the work VANOC has been doing in recent months to ensure that Canada's official languages play a prominent role at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. Thank you for inviting us today. We are particularly pleased to be here today as we have information to provide on new and concrete steps that we have taken.

Right from the outset, we recognized that we have a considerable responsibility in terms of not only organizing and delivering

Olympic Games that meet the highest possible international standards, but also ensuring that the Games reflect Canadian values, linguistic duality being one of those fundamental values.

These Games are for all Canadians. This is an incredible opportunity for Canada at many different levels. We are organizing and will be delivering bilingual Games, because VANOC has always believed in this. It goes beyond the Multiparty Agreement. Providing bilingual services is part of our values, as are our respect for and promotion of Canada's official language communities.

In September, the Commissioner tabled a follow-up report on preparation of the Games with respect to the official languages. I want to emphasize that a huge amount of progress has been made in that regard. As you may recall, his first report, issued in December of 2008, contained 18 recommendations, while the follow-up report contained only 11, five of which related to VANOC. So, we went from 18 to five recommendations. Once again, we are very proud of the progress that has been made.

You may also recall that I stated at the time that the report issued by the Commissioner of Official Languages would be a working document for us, enabling us to identify all the issues that need to be dealt with and resolved. As I now see that his follow-up report in September contains only five recommendations, that clearly means that a satisfactory solution has been found for the other issues. I will briefly address the five recommendations.

We paid particular attention to three of those recommendations, dealing with translation, volunteers and signage. I would also like to make you aware of those issues that have been resolved over the last two years, and particularly since our last appearance before the Committee in the spring. You no doubt recall that one of the major issues then was television coverage of the Games in French all across Canada. You now know that more than 250 Francophone journalists and professionals will be providing coverage all across the country—coverage that will be unique in the history of the Games, as twice as many hours of television coverage will be provided this time compared to what was available in Turin, which were Francophone Games as had never been presented before.

There is also a partnership agreement with the Gesca group, which includes all the newspapers connected with *La Presse*, thereby enabling us to promote the Games in French-language newspapers. We are making full use of that opportunity. Gesca, which is one of our partners, is investing \$3 million to help us promote the Games. This is obviously a very important issue for us.

The last time we were here, I also talked about the creation of VANOC's Advisory Committee on Official Languages. In fact, that Committee has been extremely useful in terms of, not only making the Board of Directors aware of our issues, but also gaining access to parliamentarians, federal agencies—in other words, people in a position to change things. That has been, and continues to be, extremely helpful. I am very proud of that initiative, which was a direct result of the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

We also signed a partnership agreement with the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie to promote the 2010 Olympic Games in French across the globe. In Canada, we have been hearing a great deal about the Olympic Games, more so in the west than in the east, and particularly in Francophone Europe. But not enough information was getting through to the OIF.

● (0910)

So, they approached us, and we signed a partnership agreement with them. They are providing invaluable assistance with our international promotion efforts. I should also point out that, in December, we will be organizing tours with the help of the OIF—again, to promote bilingual Olympic Games where services are provided in French and in English. This will be a means of raising awareness of all the progress that has occurred.

As you know, we also entered into an agreement with Canada's Translation Bureau to help us with all the content requiring translation. The federal government recently invested an additional \$7.7 million to help us fulfill our obligations with respect to translation. This is also an extremely important issue.

Finally, the equality of Canada's two languages in signage at competition venues is also an area where there has been considerable progress. Once again, the Commissioner had recommended that we ensure that signage would be identical in French and English—in terms of its size, for example. As the word suggests, it must be equal. So, that is another area where there has been a great deal of progress and which is a source of satisfaction.

I could point to others as well. However, as I mentioned a little earlier, the Commissioner's recommendations in his last follow-up report related to five issues, three of which have already been resolved.

VANOC continues to cooperate with its Francophone and government partners in order to maximize the positive spinoffs of these Games with respect to official languages. As I was saying earlier, we were thrilled that the federal government announced substantial funding to ensure the presence of both official languages at the 2010 Olympic Games.

With 99 days remaining until the Games begin, we are working closely with all government agencies and the government to ensure that all the funding made available to us is used appropriately and for identified needs. We are close to the finish line—that's a euphemism—and close to the starting line as well. Although there are still a couple of details to finalize, it is my hope that we will successfully fulfill our mandate in terms of organizing Games that promote our two official languages.

I am now available to take your questions. I believe the question period will follow Ms. Wilson's presentation, and I would like to turn it over to her now.

**The Chair:** Ms. Wilson, please proceed.

**Ms. Donna Wilson (Executive Vice-President, Workforce and Sustainability, Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC)):** Thank you, Jacques.

I am extremely delighted to be here today. I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and all the members of this Committee for inviting me to discuss our progress with respect to official languages.

[*English*]

As Jacques has mentioned, we've made significant progress since our last appearance. The commissioner's report and the Senate report informed us and provided us guidance with their recommendations. They helped us to determine where to focus our efforts in the final months as we move towards the games. We are now faced with having 99 days left.

We are currently working with the federal government's Translation Bureau to partner in the delivery of an outstanding games, most particularly in the area of translation. The translation that we will be partnering with them on takes us right through both the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We've seen the numbers of our bilingual volunteers increase. We're quite excited by that. We're seeing young people join us in the volunteers who are also young francophones. Our signage, as Jacques has said, also reflects the equality of the two languages, French and English.

These are significant developments that have improved since the last time we were in front of you. It's important that VANOC deliver games that are distinctly Canadian, games that reflect who we are as Canadians. That we will accomplish this, I have no doubt.

● (0915)

[*Translation*]

And what will this bilingual experience be like?

[*English*]

It means that all Canadians will be able to hear, see, touch and feel our linguistic duality throughout the games. It means that people who are coming to Vancouver during the games will have the choice to be served in French or in English.

Just imagine yourself, for a moment, as a spectator arriving in Vancouver. You will be greeted by our enthusiastic volunteers at the airport. You will get directions to your venue in French or English. Your ticket, your spectator guide, and your printed games materials will all be bilingual.

When you attend an official event with us, whether it's a sport competition or a medal ceremony, you will hear commentaries in French and then English. You will also find your way throughout the venues—to the information booths, to the food concessions, and to the toilets—in French or in English. In the evening you will see live shows in French and you will see ceremonies in both English and French. Your overall experience can and will be bilingual.

In western Canada, Vancouver in particular is a multicultural city. As a multicultural city with major influences from our Asian neighbours across the Pacific Ocean, we celebrate that multiculturalism. But in the midst of that multiculturalism, the backdrop we will ensure is that all relevant touch points in the games theatre will have sufficient bilingual volunteers to provide service both in French and in English. This is our promise to Canada.

We have set a higher bar for future Olympics with several firsts, including signing a collaborative protocol back in 2006 with the francophone communities across Canada. We also ensured that we had a senior director, Francine Bolduc, heading a separate function related to official languages, which was never before done in the Olympic Games. We created a board advisory committee on official languages under the guidance and advice of the Commissioner of Official Languages. As Jacques described to you, that has been a very effective decision.

Most recently, in August we signed a convention with the international francophone community. Jacques has described for you some of the international influence that will have and some of the legacy that we will benefit from with that agreement. But one of the firsts of that agreement is that we have a commitment that the *Grand Témoin* will not only witness French and the activation of French in the Olympic Games but also in the Paralympic Games for the first time.

But what is of even greater importance to us than this experience that I've described for you are the legacies, some of which Jacques has spoken about. The success of these games will truly be measured for years to come.

This was a major consideration throughout our planning, including the planning for official languages. Over the last several years, working with our francophone partners, the Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue and the FFCB in British Columbia, we have helped facilitate a dialogue across this country amongst the francophone communities. We've made connections. We've brought people together. That is what the Olympic spirit is all about. I am proud of the accomplishments.

We have listened to your advice and to the advice of the commissioner and Senate members. We have listened, we have made changes, and we've made great steps and strides, particularly in the last year.

Our connections remain strong. Our relationship with the federal government remains strong. This relationship has been extremely helpful to us and will continue to be helpful in these final 99 days.

Along with the opportunity of these games to present a great experience to Canadians comes great responsibility.

• (0920)

[Translation]

We will deliver Games that reflect Canada's two official languages. Canadians will be proud.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Thank you, Ms. Wilson.

I would also like to thank our witnesses.

We are going to begin the first round of questioning. It will be interesting to talk about the opening and closing ceremonies, and to see how our linguistic and cultural duality will be reflected there.

Mr. Rodriguez.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning and welcome to you all.

Mr. Gauthier, I couldn't help but smile on hearing your first comment. You said that it is a real pleasure to be here with us this time. Does that mean it was less of a pleasure the last time?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** It is always a pleasure, but to differing degrees.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** With respect to the Torch relay, I am wondering if you have any say—for example, in terms of ensuring that it stops in Francophone communities.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I will ask Francine and Donna to answer that question.

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc (Director, Official Languages, Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC)):** Right from the beginning, we made certain that we called upon our Francophone collaborators for assistance, and particularly the Canadian Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue. We wanted to determine which French-speaking towns and cities would reflect the Francophonie. They provided us with a list, and it is thanks to their input that these towns and cities were selected and included in the Torch relay.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** The information about ridings that are on the route for the torch relay is quite interesting. It shows that 18 Bloc Québécois ridings, 29 NDP ridings, 21 Liberal ridings and 126 Conservative ridings are part of the route. I cannot help but think that partisan considerations entered into the selection.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Our CEO mentioned that yesterday, and I want to repeat today that this process was carried out independently, with no political input.

[English]

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** *Oui*, Ms. Wilson.

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** I was involved in the early days of planning this torch relay. John Furlong spoke passionately to all of us at the executive committee. What we wanted was for this torch, this flame, to be accessible to all Canadians and within an hour's travel of most villages and cities in this country. That is how we chose our path. We wanted this to be available for all to go to. I can tell you that the planning started two and a half years ago.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** That may be so, but you must admit that it seems a little strange.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to mention one other detail. I am happy to be able to say that the route initially submitted to the Board of Directors included 10 days in the province of Quebec. However, we were able to increase that to 13 days. I think that represents a significant gain.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Mr. Chairman, the Olympic Flame will be going through your riding, will it not? Are you going to run with the torch?

On another topic, one has the sense that people working at the Vancouver Airport are somewhat recalcitrant. There are problems in airports across the country, but there are very definite ones in Vancouver. And yet, that will be the first point of contact for people arriving in Canada and it is where they will form their first impressions in terms of bilingualism.

Do you have any influence over the airport authorities? Are you working cooperatively with them?

• (0925)

[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** Yes, we are working with the airports, most particularly with Vancouver. In terms of what power we have, we have the power of persuasion and the power of partnership. We are paying close attention to the experience from the moment you get off the plane to walking through security and then into the domain that has shops and things available.

VANOC will be adding its own layer of volunteers at the airport who will be bilingual and able to provide direction. We also have accreditation staff who will be there greeting the international groups—

[Translation]

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** I do not doubt your sincerity; however, what we have been hearing is pretty disastrous. In fact, they will be appearing before the Committee. I am not saying that you are responsible, but I would like to know to what extent you or someone else can force the airport authorities to do more. It looks as though they don't want to, and that is offensive.

I have attended international summits. When we would arrive somewhere, our first impression was that we could not receive service in French. And, that impression remained, despite efforts made subsequently. Can someone tell the Vancouver Airport that enough is enough and that it will have to fulfill its obligations?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** We implemented a specific program with a view to pressuring the airports in both Vancouver and Toronto to provide bilingual service. Our approach in that regard has evolved somewhat. We are now in a position to provide them with tools that will enable them to offer as much service in French as possible, as opposed to simply asking them to do it. There have been meetings in recent months, and I can assure you there will be more such meetings. I will personally ensure that they use those tools.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Rodriguez.

I am very pleased to inform you that the Olympic Torch will be in Lévis on December 3.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** I can't wait to see you with your tuque!

**The Chair:** Olympic champion, Kalina Roberge, will carry the torch. The evening event will be in three parts, with a performance by Marie-Josée Lord, an internationally renowned artist from Lévis, who will sing the national anthem. Four choirs from Lévis will also take part in the show, as well as the *l'Accroche Notes* music school and the group *La relève prend l'air*. The *Élédanse* school will also be performing against a back-drop representing the Northern lights.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** For heavens' sake, stop; it's overwhelming!

**The Chair:** There will also be a projection of the work of Gilles Boutin, a photographer from Lévis who has a fascination with this natural phenomenon. You are all invited to come to Lévis to greet the Torch.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Are we invited to your place?

**The Chair:** On December 3.

That being said, we will now move on to Mr. Nadeau.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Mr. Chairman, I will be there.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Are we also allowed to have mittens?

**Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, ladies and gentleman.

I was in Vancouver during the week of October 14 to meet with one of your major partners in order to follow up, in light of the September report issued by the Commissioner of Official Languages, Mr. Fraser. My questions to you are intended to reassure us that we will not discover, once the Games are all over, that there were gaps here and there.

You said that you have taken certain steps. That is good news; it had to be done. Yours is an important and monumental task; these are global Games. The fact remains that we had seven years advance notice of the fact that the Games would be held in Vancouver.

One of my concerns is the Cultural Olympiad. We were told, as of October 14, 2009, that not many Francophone vocal artists had been invited to participate. It's great to have visual artists and dancers involved, but there also have to be artists there who can sing in French or perform recitations, depending on their art form. There should be as many Francophones from British Columbia and Alberta as Acadians or Quebeckers.

Could you forward the list of artists to us as quickly as possible? Also, I would like to know which French-speaking artists will be taking part in the activities referred to earlier by Ms. Wilson.

• (0930)

[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** *Monsieur*, what I certainly can say about the cultural Olympiad 2010 is that 25% of the Olympiad is francophone artists of various types.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Ms. Wilson, I only have five minutes for both my questions and the answers. Do you have the list with you today of the Franco-British or Franco-Albertan artists who will be participating?

[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** I don't have the list with me today. It's on our website. But we can certainly get you that list of artists. It's on our website, though.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Fine, thank you. My understanding is that an effort has been made to ensure there will be a Francophone presence from Western Canada, the Pacific region.

One other thing worries me. Richmond is one of the Olympic cities. And yet, on October 14 at 11:45 p.m., I found out that the Richmond City Council had yet to decide whether there would be signage in French in that city. You say you have the power of persuasion, but to be perfectly frank, I am not terribly impressed with that power. During the Olympic Games, will signage be in both French and English in Richmond, British Columbia?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** First of all, your colleague pointed to the power of our conviction, but we are not saying we have unlimited powers. It is important to understand what VANOC's role is.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** I want to know whether there will be signage in French in Richmond.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** At the present time, there are ongoing discussions between the Municipality of Richmond, the federal government and VANOC in order for bilingual signage to be available as soon as possible; however, I should add—

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Correct me if I am wrong, but even though you are making an effort, the City of Richmond does not appear to be on side.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I should add, however—

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** I am sorry, Mr. Gauthier, but there are other points I would like to address and I only have five minutes.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I simply want to add that signage will be bilingual during the Games. Rest assured that that will be the case.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Sorry, but I only have five minutes.

I would also like to talk about the 3,500 bilingual volunteers. It is commendable that you have made an effort in that regard. I know that 60,000 people applied, that you preselected 25,000 and that only 3,500 made the final cut.

In terms of bilingualism, will it amount to more than “bonjour” or are we really talking about bilingualism? Will I be able to have a conversation with someone working at the Games if I am a spectator or am in one of the Olympic cities?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** When we selected the 3,500 bilingual volunteers, we made sure they would at the very least be able to carry on a conversation in French, and hopefully have an even higher level of proficiency. So, these individuals will be able to say much more than just “bonjour, voici la direction pour tel site”. That is absolutely clear.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Another aspect was—

**The Chair:** Mr. Nadeau, your time is up.

We move now to Mr. Godin.

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

Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Wilson and Ms. Bolduc, thank you for meeting with us once again. Welcome to the Committee.

To hear you tell it, there has been a great deal of progress. But although there has been progress, there is still more that needs to be made. This is what I would like to know: what progress has been made with respect to television broadcasting of the Games in both official languages all across the country where Canadians live?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** As you know, the President of RDS appeared before your Committee. Separate agreements have been signed with cable companies across Canada with a view to providing television coverage in French which is different from CTV's English-language feed.

As I mentioned a little earlier, we are talking about more than 850 hours of live television programming in French during the Games on a variety of channels, but always using the RDS platform, since RDS will be producing the French-language coverage. That is a highly satisfactory solution, since all of Canada will be covered.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I would like to quickly tell you a little story. Last weekend, I was in Prince George, British Columbia. I was in my hotel room and wanted to watch the arrival of the Olympic torch on television. It was on every channel, but I was only able to watch it in English. The only French-language television station available was Radio-Canada. There was absolutely nothing being broadcast with respect to the arrival of the Olympic Flame. So, I had no choice but to watch it on the English channels. I took the time to call my office, back in Ottawa, to find out what was on RDI. There were only the speeches, and you could still see the plane before the door opened. So, thanks a lot for service in French here in Canada.

● (0935)

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** As I mentioned, we are talking about the Games; we are not talking about the Torch Relay. The agreements we referred to were signed for television coverage of the Games.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I guess that means that Francophones were not important enough to be shown the arrival of the Olympic Flame.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** No, we have to be careful there.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Oh! We have to be careful, do we?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Let's not confuse the Games with the Torch Relay. You are talking about RDI and Radio-Canada—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I am talking about the Olympics.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** No, but—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** We are talking about the Olympic Flame! Francophones all across the country were not given an opportunity to see the arrival of the Olympic Flame when everyone else did. And you are defending that!

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Could I say something?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** As I already stated, agreements on television coverage of the Games have been reached with CTV and RDS for French-language coverage. There you were referring to Radio-Canada, which is not part of the agreement.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Is Radio-Canada being boycotted? CBC carried it, but there was nothing available for Francophones across Canada. That is an absolute disgrace. It's scandalous.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I invite you to pass on your complaints to CTV and Radio-Canada.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I am passing them on to you right now. Don't worry: Radio-Canada has also heard from me.

Do you not find that scandalous?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I have no opinion in that regard. I am talking about coverage of the Games, during the Games, through the agreements we signed to ensure that everything would be available in French and English.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** You remember what happened with the artists a year ago? We don't want a repetition of that.

We are having the same problem now with the Torch Relay.  
[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** The torch relay program is in two languages. We have made sure that all of our protocol, everything we're doing in every city, is in both languages. The decision for broadcasters at this stage on the torch relay is their decision at this point. I think Mr. Gauthier has addressed where you need to take that question.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Who is looking after preparations for the arrival of the Olympic Flame in the different regions? Who is responsible for choosing the guests who will be there to greet the Olympic Flame?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** There is a VANOC team looking after the Torch Relay.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** And does the government have a say in that respect?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** In actual fact, there are three sponsors who are supporting the organization of the relay.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** And is the government one of them?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Coke, RBC and the federal government are all supporting the organization of the Torch Relay.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** That is an insult. For example, when the flame arrived in Nanaimo, the member of Parliament for that riding was invited to go on stage, and then, five seconds later, she was invited to leave the stage.

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

We will move on now to Ms. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover (Saint Boniface, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to all our witnesses.

I would like to talk a little bit about the three recommendations made by the Commissioner of Official Languages. You referred to the fact that three of the five recommendations had been acted on. I believe two of them, in particular, were implemented thanks to support provided by our federal government.

On September 15, our government announced an additional \$7.7 million in funding for the provision, among other things, of translation and interpretation services at the Games, since VANOC was having such trouble meeting the requirements set out in the Multiparty Agreement. You were provided with a specific amount of

funding in the wake of intense negotiations with your organization, is that correct?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** For one thing, there is a very close relationship between VANOC and the Government of Canada with respect to official languages. It is also important for you to know that, over the last two years, the demand for translation increased significantly, compared to what was expected. The Turin Games were the most recent example of what was required in terms of translation.

When it comes to translating the biographies of the athletes and all the other documentation, we are talking about a huge amount of work which added to the demand and expectations with respect to translation. So, all those additional requests required increased access to translation services, and the federal government was aware of that. Together we developed a cost estimate for the translation services that are required.

• (0940)

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** So, would you say you initially underestimated the costs of translation and signage?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** There are two points to be made in that regard. The cost was certainly not overestimated. On the other hand, I do not think it was underestimated either; it is just that the demand for translation, and the resulting cost estimate, rose considerably. As a consequence, the workload increased significantly, which meant that we simply did not have the resources.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** So, the federal government was really instrumental in your success when it comes to two of the three recommendations, is that correct?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Yes, the federal government is a prominent partner with respect to official languages. I must say I have rarely seen as much enthusiasm, at all levels, for ensuring that there is full bilingualism at these Games. I feel it at the ministerial level and at the agency level.

I might add that, of the \$7.7 million in funding, an amount is earmarked for assistance with permanent signage at certain problematic buildings we discussed briefly a little earlier. There is additional money as well for improvements at medal ceremonies, which will be taking place every evening.

So, we really developed the cost estimate together and defined the precise amount of money that would be necessary in order to achieve better results.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Are you satisfied with the funding?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Yes, we are very satisfied.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** That's great. So, you will not be needing additional funding?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** We are still 99 days away from the opening of the Games. One should never say "never", but the fact remains that we are very satisfied at this time.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Do I have any time left? I would like to ask one question about the Grand Témoin.

**The Chair:** You have one minute left, Ms. Glover.



**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** You made reference to the Grand Témoin, Mr. Couchepin, and I'd like to know what his involvement will be in the work of the Advisory Committee.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** As soon as he was appointed, he came to meet with us in Vancouver. He offered to cooperate in areas where we believed he could be helpful. We will be seeing him again in two weeks time, if I am not mistaken. He will be attending a three-day working session with us.

There is synergy in the relationship, the whole idea being to work together to make bilingualism work. It is a very close relationship.

As I already stated, it is the OIF that appoints the Grand Témoin, and the OIF is one of VANOC's partners. Indeed, we signed a partnership agreement with that organization.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Glover.

Ms. Zarac, please.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac (LaSalle—Émard, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Like my colleague, Mr. Gauthier, I am very happy to hear that you are more comfortable this time. Let's not forget that we are all here for the same reason: we want the official languages to be respected. We realize that everyone will be watching us and that people from 34 Francophone countries will be coming here to visit. There is no doubt that expectations are high. And we want the people of Canada, both Francophones and Anglophones, to be involved in this wonderful Olympic experience. We simply want to ensure that, after the Games, we won't have any reason to find fault with what was done.

You mentioned that, of the 11 recommendations made by the Commissioner, there were only three that had not yet been acted on. Is that correct?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** In actual fact—

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** You talked about five recommendations, and then three.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I mentioned that there were five in the last interim report, issued in September. They related to translation, signage and volunteers. In the last case, the recommendation involved ensuring there would be adequate numbers of volunteers in important places the public will have access to. The other two recommendations dealt with VANOC's support for the province and the cities that are hosting the Games, particularly Whistler and Vancouver, with a view to helping them move forward with bilingual signage.

• (0945)

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** You mentioned that they were resolved.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** No, I mentioned that the matter of equal signage in French and English at Olympic sites had been resolved. In terms of signage in the province and the cities, the recommendation is that VANOC do more to raise awareness of the problem.

Last week, our Advisory Committee met in Vancouver. Representatives from the cities of Whistler and Vancouver told us about the steps they have taken with respect to bilingual signage. In Vancouver, there are already new signs up which welcome people in

French. In Whistler, it's very impressive. The mayor is perfectly bilingual. He is presenting himself as a champion—

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** At our last meeting with the Commissioner of Official Languages, he told us that these agreements were supposed to be implemented in cooperation with the municipalities. But I am worried. I worked at the municipal level previously, and I know how things work when it comes to budgets: expenditures are already planned for the year. Are negotiations still going on and what are they telling you? Do these people have the necessary funding for translation? If they do not, holding discussions with them will not make it happen.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** No, no; don't worry: the budgets are in place. The money is there. The signage is being produced. Last week, we received e-mails from people working for the City of Vancouver. They were proud to be able to show us what the signs look like all across the city.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** Under the agreements—

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** It's important to make the distinction between signage at Olympic sites, which is already completed, and bilingual signage in the cities, which is still underway.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** And do you think it will be enough? Will people be able to get around and know where they're going?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Yes, absolutely. It will be impressive.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** Like my colleague, I was in Vancouver during the summer, and there was not much bilingual signage, even in Whistler.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** It is being produced now.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** When will it be completed?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I cannot tell you exactly, but it will be ready for the Olympic Games.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** Perfect.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Within a matter of weeks.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** Mr. Chairman, do I have any time left?

**The Chair:** You have one minute left, Ms. Zarac.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** You will need a lot of staff. At our last meeting, we talked about the possibility of using translation staff here at the House of Commons, given that the House will not sit until the end of January. Is that something you would consider doing?

[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** Certainly if the staff were available for a secondment, we'd definitely be open to that. At this point, our conversations have been centred around the Translation Bureau, but if there are federal employees who could be seconded to us for that period of time, we'd certainly welcome them—absolutely.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Zarac.

We will move on now to Ms. Guay.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On September 15, we received a report from the Commissioner of Official Languages which contained 11 recommendations aimed at VANOC. This morning, you talked about five recommendations, but there were 11. A month and a half later, you are saying that pretty well everything has been resolved. Personally, I do not believe it. I see there are still serious problems.

In fact, with regard to translation, I was the one that asked the question at the last Committee meeting. Translators at the House of Commons will not be working for us during the month of January. Often they are laid off or used for other purposes, but the vast majority of them will not have any work. This represents a golden opportunity for you to negotiate with the government in order to access those translation services. Indeed, one of the recommendations made by the Commissioner of Official Languages referred to the fact that you are not providing translation services and that the problem is unresolved. You will need to make a considerable effort in that regard.

A solution must be found for Richmond. And don't tell me how great Whistler is, because that town has been bilingual for years now. Whistler is an international site where people go to ski. It's a little like Saint-Sauveur in my region; it's bilingual everywhere, and the same goes for Mont-Tremblant. I am not concerned about either Whistler or Vancouver, but I am concerned about surrounding cities that have not made enough effort and which will need prodding. This is extremely important, because otherwise, we will miss the mark once again.

The third issue I would like to address with you is the Olympic Torch Relay. I know the torch relay will be coming through my area on December 11, and I am very proud of that. I will be greeting the athlete who carries the torch through the city, but I do not want to be treated the way one of my fellow MPs was treated. She was allowed to go up on stage, but seven seconds later, she was asked to leave the stage and told she had no business being there. If the Olympic Flame comes to my area, I at least want to be treated properly. After all, these are Pan-Canadian Olympic Games.

• (0950)

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I will ensure that you are able to be up on stage.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** That is not the issue. Our fellow citizens come out for these events, and we certainly would not want there to be similar hiccups across the country.

I'm even more concerned about Toronto Airport than I am about Vancouver Airport. There will be a lot of staff on hand in Vancouver, and yet a lot of flights will be coming through Toronto, rather than Vancouver. I am not concerned about Montreal International Airport, because it is bilingual; services are available in both languages. But what efforts have been made in recent weeks to improve the situation in Toronto? One does not sense that there have been any improvements.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** There have been meetings with the management of both Vancouver and Toronto airports with a view to seeing what they are intending to do and providing them with our suggestions. Over the next few weeks, we will be continuing those discussions to try and help them improve things.

In Vancouver, VANOC staff will be on-site at information kiosks to identify people and receive them properly. We are currently considering something similar for Toronto.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** I see.

Do you think you have enough time to resolve all these issues?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Yes, of course. I am very confident it can be done.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** When it comes to Richmond, you may have to... if the government can help you, you will have to get it involved.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** As I tried to explain earlier, when it comes to Richmond, there is no need to worry about bilingual identification during the Games, because that is a given.

What I was trying to explain is that we are attempting to resolve the issue of permanent signage now, precisely because the federal government is giving us financial assistance to install that signage. The cost estimate has already been prepared. Engineers are working on it.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** But can you ignore the mayor? That's the problem.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Discussions are underway. There is no objection, on the part of either the Municipality of Richmond, the government or VANOC. On the contrary, there is unanimous agreement among us on this.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** I see.

On the other hand, I suppose that the municipality does not want to defray the cost.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** You're absolutely right.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** That is likely the real problem, I suppose.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** That is why I was saying that, of the \$7.7 million in funding, a portion of the budget has been allocated for special projects such as permanent signage on certain buildings.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Perfect. I hope it will be a great success.

As my colleague said, when the Olympic Flame arrived in Vancouver, he was not even able to watch the ceremony in French. This must not happen again. After all, it was the beginning of the Torch Relay. It is an important event, and yet we couldn't see it in both official languages. In my opinion, once again, we are not starting off on the right foot.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** It's not the same [*Inaudible—Editor*]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Guay.

We will move directly now to Mr. Chong.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We gave VANOC \$7.7 million to improve translation and interpretation services. So, that is the issue I would like to discuss.

[*English*]

I want to build on what Madam Guay was saying about services, not just at the Olympic grounds and the venues, but also at the airports.

In particular, I wonder if you could address two areas of concern. The first is whether or not VANOC officials, volunteers, and employees at Vancouver International Airport will be bilingual, or at the very least whether francophone employees and volunteers will be readily accessible when visitors arrive if they wish to ask for directions or talk about venues in French.

Second, maybe you could speak a little about whether you've had discussions with Vancouver International Airport on whether or not their staff will be alerted to the need to have both English and French services for arriving visitors. When people arrive in Vancouver, that's their first impression of Canada. It's important that VANOC employees and volunteers, but also YVR officials, are fully aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

I'm wondering if you could talk about whether some of the \$7.7 million is going to assist you in this regard and what other efforts you're making.

● (0955)

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** On your first question, the answer is yes: some people from VANOC will be present at the airport. They will be bilingual and able to speak with people in French. Don't worry—this is something very important to us to achieve.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Will there also be a positive offer when somebody...? When I go through Ottawa International Airport and go through security, there's a positive offer of French. People ask in both English and French.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I don't know if you've had a chance to go to Vancouver recently, but you have the same offer now at the security level. It is very impressive.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Will that positive offer be made on the part of VANOC employees as well?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Yes, absolutely.

[Translation]

With respect to the second part of your question regarding the Vancouver Airport, I can tell you that the discussions are going well. I am satisfied that airport employees will be in a position to provide bilingual service that is perfectly satisfactory. That goes back to what I was just saying.

In terms of security personnel, there is already an active offer of service in French for people who wish to take advantage of it.

[English]

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Those are really all the questions I had. I'll pass this along to Sylvie.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC):** Good morning.

Thank you for being here today. It's always nice to meet with you.

Mr. Gauthier, please give me this assurance: that there won't be any signs saying “Fumer les toilettes”. For a year, I would like to be spared from hearing Mr. D'Amours talk about that. I'm joking, but he does tell that story often.

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.):** It's been fixed, so I won't talk about it anymore.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I don't know what by-laws are in place in Vancouver. We do know that, in other cities, smoking is no longer allowed anywhere. So, please make sure that this will not appear on any sign. I don't want to hear anything more about it.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I painted all the signs myself.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Really?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** No, I'm joking.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** In Canada, there is a lot of discussion about the situation of Francophones outside Quebec, and I would like to know whether you think the Vancouver Olympic Games will be a good opportunity to involve Francophone communities across the country. Will the communities take advantage of this event to take the kind of action that would serve to unify the community, by inviting other Francophone communities across the globe to get involved?

We talked about artists earlier. Will we also ensure that artists from Quebec, and especially from outside Quebec, are all represented?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** It's interesting.

A few weeks ago, the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Conference on Canadian Francophonie was held in Vancouver, and of course, all the provinces were present. VANOC had an opportunity to hold a meeting. All three of us attended that meeting and invited the provinces to get on board with respect to official languages and work cooperatively with us between now and the opening of the Games.

● (1000)

**The Chair:** Ms. Boucher.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I can't hear very well. That's all.

**The Chair:** I see.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I will try to speak louder.

**The Chair:** Please remember your answer, Mr. Gauthier. We have already gone beyond the allocated time. However, I do ask that members speak one at a time, in order to facilitate translation and so that we can all hear what the witnesses are saying.

We will complete this second round with Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Gauthier—

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Could I just complete my answer to Ms. Boucher?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Gauthier, the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages mentions that on the media intranet site, Info 2010, information becomes available in English first. Interviews with Francophone athletes are to be translated and put up on the site in English first. So, the English version will be translated into French for the French-language site. I have a trick question to ask: has that issue been resolved?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I would like to ask Ms. Bolduc to answer that question. She is the one that was dealing with it.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Pardon me for interrupting, but I would like to read the Commissioner's recommendation: “The Commissioner recommends that VANOC ensure that any statements made by athletes in French are posted on Info 2010 as originally made and at the same time as the English version”.

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes, we tackled that issue. We are currently in the process of finalizing it. Interviews will be conducted in what is known as the athletes' "mixed zone". Some media will primarily be interested in Francophone athletes, and they will be the ones recording their commentary.

However, as part of our team's work, we have taken steps to ensure that the comments that appear on the Info 2010 system will be the same as what the Francophone athlete said.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Will that be done simultaneously or through translation?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** No, it will be done at the same time.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** So the athlete's words will be reproduced simultaneously?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes, exactly. Supposing an athlete—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** So, you are acting on the Commissioner's recommendation?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Exactly. We are.

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

I would like to return now to our dear Torch Relay. You told Ms. Guay that you were going to be there and ensure that she can be up on stage. Will that policy apply all across Canada? Will members of Parliament in the regions be respected as a result of their position or will the government be deciding who is invited?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I cannot give you any assurance in that regard, but I have noted your comment and I will ensure that it gets to the right people, so that all members of Parliament are present and can take advantage of what is their right.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I want to come back to one more thing. We don't want the Olympic Games to be a partisan event. Do you agree with me on that?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I fully agree with you.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Let's talk, once again, about what happened to Ms. Jean Crowder, from Nanaimo—Cowichan. She was invited onto the stage and, seven seconds later, she was asked to leave the stage. That is the most humiliating thing that can happen to someone.

Dennis Bevington, who represents the riding of Western Arctic, was informed that the torch would be passing close to his area today. He was told he could be on site, but could not witness the ceremony from on stage, because someone from the government would be there. That is unacceptable.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I have noted that.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Thank you, I appreciate that.

**The Chair:** You still have a minute and a half left, Mr. Godin.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Well, you can give it to me!

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Earlier you were saying that the Torch Relay is taking place before the actual Olympic Games. But, when I was in Vancouver over the weekend, I went to the information kiosk and staff were only able to speak English. There was no bilingual staff member available.

The Vancouver Airport is beautiful; they've done an amazing job there.

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes, that's true.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** However, when you go to the information kiosk... We are 90 days from the opening of the Olympic Games, are we not?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** There are 99 days remaining until the opening of the Olympic Games.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes, and people are walking around looking at the different sites. This service should already be in place. We are not talking about someone standing next to the door of the airplane saying "Good afternoon and welcome to Canada". There aren't 10,000 people working at the information kiosk; there is only one person. I can assure you that there is no bilingual staff person at the information counter. In my opinion, these are things that you should also be looking at.

• (1005)

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Unfortunately, that is not within VANOC's purview. We have no power over what goes on at the airport, although I would say that our discussions with airport authorities are going very well, and I am hopeful that the appropriate service will be available.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It's important that these complaints be passed on to you, so that you are aware of the current situation.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Yes, we are working on that, as is the federal government, and I can assure you that considerable pressure is being brought to bear.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** My recommendation—

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Is my time up already?

**The Chair:** Yes, it is already up.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind the witnesses and our members that representatives of the Vancouver Airport will be appearing before us on December 1, and that witnesses from the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, or CATSA, will be appearing on November 19.

We are now going into our third round.

Mr. D'Amours, I believe you are intending to share your time with Mr. Rodriguez. Is that correct?

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:** I will be very brief, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to assure Ms. Boucher that I will stop talking about this the day it is resolved. She should not be concerned, and I will be delighted if she is prepared to help me resolve it. I promise that I will stop talking about it the day the problem is completely fixed.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** That's why I wanted to be sure—

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Yes. Thank you.

Health care is a subject we haven't been talking about very much, but it is extremely important. I am referring specifically to intervention in that area. In cases where there is an emergency or where someone is injured, is there a guarantee that individuals will be treated in both languages? If someone is injured or ill and incapable of explaining his or her problem, symptoms or injury, will that individual be able to be treated in French?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes, absolutely. We have medical teams that will be available at each site. There will be one bilingual person in every team at all times. If for some reason that person were to be busy doing something else, we would have access to interpretation services.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** So, you have one person, but if three people happen to be injured or involved in an accident at the same time, one will be able to make himself understood but not the other two. Is that correct?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** No, we also have language services available in order to facilitate discussion.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Is it the same thing with ambulance service? Is there a plan in place for a situation where someone would have to be taken to hospital?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** I don't know exactly what is provided for in the plan in that regard, but I can tell you that we have taken the necessary steps to ensure that athletes will be well served.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** What happens at the hospital?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** They will have access to language services.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** According to what I have been told by people from Northern Ontario, it's fine to speak French, but if someone wants to really explain his symptoms in French, he will have to wait several hours more in order to do that. If he wants to be seen immediately, he will have to explain them in English. Is that the way it's going to work?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** I cannot give you a precise answer to that question, but I know that athletes travel with their own technical and medical team, which accompanies them if they have to go to the hospital. We have agreed with the hospitals that bilingual services will be available, so that people can make themselves understood and receive the appropriate service.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Between now and the opening of the Games, will you be receiving reports on that?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** It's never important until it becomes important. All it takes is one accident occurring in a context where there are thousands of people visiting from all across the globe. Something can happen, and then it becomes extremely important.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** We will be reporting back to you on that.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Thank you.

In the course of your organizing, is French used on occasion? I helped to organize the Sommet de la Francophonie which was held in Vietnam in 1997, and I spent three months in that country. All the preparations for the summit took place in English. Is it the same for the Vancouver Games?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Are you talking about VANOC's work?

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** I'm talking about the organization—internally.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** No. Fifteen per cent of staff are Francophones and work in French.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** They can communicate.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Yes. I go there regularly and I rarely speak English.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** I see. So, both languages are used for the ongoing organization of the Games.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** There are a lot of Francophones. Actually, it's very nice because we often get together at the end of the day. Some departments work exclusively in French.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** And what do you do at the end of the day?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** You told me not to get carried away.

• (1010)

**Ms. Monique Guay:** He looks after the signs.

**Voices:** Ah! Ah!

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Conservative signs. There are quite a few of them, aren't there?

When it comes to business merchants, that is a challenge. I know you will say that it's very difficult to control. But the government and VANOC do have some control over what is directly or indirectly connected to organization. As part of their day-to-day activities, people will go to different stores here and there. Hotels may be a little bit more alive to the bilingualism issue, but would you say that, as a general rule, merchants are also anxious to serve their customers in both languages? Is there something you have been able to do or are doing in that regard?

[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** Right in the heart of Vancouver there will be the largest Olympic superstore you can imagine. We have direct control over that and there will absolutely be bilingual services. It is difficult, as you say, to deal with it when you get into the commercial world.

The way-finding signage that will direct you around the city will be in French and English as well. I think that's as far as we've worked on it at this point. We have many languages that are in our city right now and that will be coming; that is the commercial market.

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

Now we'll turn to Ms. Glover.

I think you want to share your time with Ms. Boucher.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Yes. I want to make a very quick comment. I was also concerned to hear about the members of Parliament who are very concerned about not being welcomed to the games.

I know that we as the government have notified the opposition members of Parliament who will have the torch passing through their ridings. We have invited them to take part actively, so I'm glad to hear you're going to make note of it and look into it because we welcome all members of Parliament to take part in these games. This is a celebration of Canada. It's pertinent to all members of Parliament. I would love to hear about it if you have any further problems with this, because I don't think that's acceptable either.

I just want to make that reassurance and thank you, sir, because I am concerned as well and would like you to deal with that. You don't have to answer. I'm going to pass my time to Sylvie.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** There are a lot of Francophone artists in Quebec. Everyone thought Roch Voisine was from Montreal, but in actual fact, he is from New Brunswick. And then there is Daniel Lavoie, who is from Manitoba, although we don't know about the other artists. Will the artists participating be representative?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes, during the Games, 25% of the content of the Cultural Olympiad events will involve Francophones. Francophone artists from other provinces will also be at the Place de la Francophonie. We are working very closely with them. It will be a major site for Francophone festivities during the Games, where people will be able to get together and talk.

There will also be a festival in Maillardville where the Francophonie will be present. I am also aware of an event that will be taking place in Nanaimo. So, there will truly be a wide diversity of artists involved in the Francophone content of the programming.

Even in terms of the medal ceremonies, every night there will be a Francophone show or performance organized by provincial representatives whom we are working with to develop this activity. At the Maison du Québec, I know there will be performances every night. So, a lot of things will be available for Francophones, to allow them to come together, make contact and celebrate this extraordinary event.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Since you say this will be an opportunity for Francophones to come together, I hope media outlets will be sure to cover the highlights of the Francophone festivities, whether the performances are by Francophones from Quebec or from other provinces.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** That is our hope as well.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Do I have enough time for one more question?

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** Hope springs eternal.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I would like to answer the first part of your question about whether people from the provinces will be invited to celebrate at the Games, and whether we are making the effort to invite them. The answer is yes.

Several weeks ago, at a federal-provincial conference in Vancouver, we invited all the provincial representatives to present their ideas and let us know what they would like to do with us. We will be meeting with the ministers and provincial representatives again in the coming weeks to decide which activities we will be developing together. We have already done that for certain provinces, and will be continuing that exercise throughout the month of November.

We have had an excellent response from provincial representatives. They were all very enthusiastic about getting on board with us.

•(1015)

**The Chair:** I would like to follow up on Ms. Boucher's question with respect to the opening and closing ceremonies of the Games, which are really special moments—in fact, that may be the only part

of the Olympic Games that some people see. It is very important that there be a focus on Canada's linguistic and cultural duality.

We all know that some information regarding the show is being kept secret. However, are you able to tell us anything that would reassure us as to the Francophone cultural content of these events?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I am going to ask Ms. Bolduc to answer that question.

However, I do want to say that, two weeks ago, members of my committee asked to be given a presentation, by the person in charge of the committee organizing the opening and closing ceremonies, to ensure that we would all be completely satisfied with the Francophone content that is planned for these important ceremonies. Their presentation was impeccable, as well as extremely reassuring.

I will now turn it over to Ms. Bolduc to answer your question, if she is willing.

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** That was one of the questions we asked right from the outset because, as you say, this is a major event that everyone will be attending.

There is a Francophone on the committee, whose identity is being kept secret, and who really reassured us and told us what Francophones could expect to see and hear during these shows. Her words were extremely reassuring; she was very happy and satisfied with the content that is planned for the 2010 ceremonies.

**The Chair:** Great, we will be following that closely. Thank you.

We will move now to Mr. Nadeau.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On page 10 of the report entitled “Vancouver 2010, A Golden Opportunity”, it says: “[...] VANOC indicates that unanticipated communications will be consecutively broadcasted within a 12-hour period in the second language”—I repeat, a 12-hour period—and urgent communications, within a 6-hour period.”

First of all, that violates people's rights to be informed at all times, both Francophones and Anglophones. Furthermore, that is not consistent with the Multiparty Agreement that was signed.

Can you tell us what has been done in that regard?

[*English*]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** Our communications team has taken action to improve on that performance, and it looks like there will be, at maximum, a six-hour turnaround if that's required in an emergency situation.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** That is not right. The Commissioner of Official Languages says that this is inadequate, and I say it is unfair. I am sure you understand that French and English are equal. Information in one of the two should not be interpreted only 6 or 12 hours later, as VANOC sees fit. Imagine the outcry if the information were available in French and the plan was to have it interpreted into English 12 or 6 hours later, in the context of a potential emergency. You now say it will be within a 6-hour period.

Are you going to take steps to ensure that it will be available in both languages at the same time? You say that your team includes bilingual staff. As a matter of course or in emergencies, will they be in a position to provide information at the same time to all Canadian citizens, to Quebeckers who may be there, to the people of British Columbia and people across the globe, whatever their country of origin?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** You are referring to documents, communications and press releases. We are currently looking at this. At the present time, issuing the two versions simultaneously is not a problem. Of course, during the Games, there will be a lot more pressure, and that is the reason why it was developed that way. However, the communications team is currently reviewing the situation to ensure that some way can be found—and it is possible, because we have already developed it—to provide the two versions—

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** —simultaneously.

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes, simultaneously. That is the communications side of it.

At the venues, however, all announcements will be made in both languages simultaneously. They are already pre-recorded for emergency situations.

• (1020)

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Yes, I understand. There are some areas that I am less concerned about, but there are others I am more concerned about—particularly when I read that, for certain emergencies, the plan is to make the announcement in French of an abnormal event some six hours later. Right there, that is completely unacceptable.

The other aspect I would like to discuss relates to support for volunteers. We want to have bilingual volunteers because services have to be provided in French. We agree that the majority language in British Columbia is English. What kind of support will be available? Will we lose volunteers because there is not enough accommodation available? Will they be offered transportation between the place where they are staying and the Olympic facilities? Everybody will not necessarily bring a car for purposes of transportation. On October 14, I was told there was a serious problem in terms of finding accommodation for the 25,000 volunteers who will be going to British Columbia. Some are already there, but the vast majority are coming from somewhere else.

[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** Is your question about accommodations for volunteers?

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Yes, among other things, I am talking about support. That includes everything, and particularly accommodation and transportation.

[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** We've been working through the final stages of our transportation plan and our accommodations plan. We have accommodations available for those we need to create them for. We are still seeking volunteers in the Sea-to-Sky area close to Whistler to help us with accommodations there, but we've put in place

transportation in order to be able to move volunteers from Vancouver to Whistler if we need to.

We have a huge number of volunteers coming from the local area and those who are coming from across Canada do have accommodations.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Thank you very much, Ms. Wilson.

I would like to touch on another aspect—

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Nadeau.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** —tourism—

**The Chair:** Mr. Nadeau—

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** —particularly BC Tourism and Vancouver Tourism. What is the current situation in that regard?

**The Chair:** We will come back to this later, Mr. Nadeau. Your time is up.

We are now going to begin the fourth round with Ms. O'Neill-Gordon.

[English]

**Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon (Miramichi, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I offer a warm welcome to all of you for joining us this morning. We certainly realize that you have a big task. You have every reason to be proud of all the work you've done so far.

I'm also very happy to hear you say that our government has been very cooperative and helpful, because we certainly want to work together to make this a fantastic event in our country.

I'm wondering how you can make sure the motels will be broadcasting events in French as well.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** As I said previously, I'm more than confident that with the 850 hours just in French during the games—it's about 16 hours a day during all the games across Canada—that will be enough to promote the games and broadcast the games in French.

We received a few presentations by CTV and RDS. It's all done. The program is done. I'm very confident.

**Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon:** Will Canada's francophone communities be reflected in all their diversity in the cultural celebrations, taking part before, during, and after the games?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes. You're talking about the celebrations and all the cultural components? Absolutely.

**Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon:** Do you have a good relationship with the different federal institutions responsible for the realization of these Olympic Games in Vancouver?

• (1025)

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** Yes, we definitely have. We meet with them regularly and it's going to be very successful. The relationships are very helpful.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** To all of us, by the way.

**Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon:** Yes, I realize that.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** You still have two minutes.

**Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon:** That's okay.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. O'Neill-Gordon.

Mr. D'Amours, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Gauthier, a number of questions have been touched on, and Ms. Glover raised a point earlier. I would like you to provide some details, not about what happens when the Torch Relay comes through the municipalities and people are able to applaud all along the route, but rather about set, specific activities. Are the communities responsible for deciding who will be on stage?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Unfortunately, I am not aware enough of the details, in terms of how the activities are designed and programmed; however, I can tell you that we have a team specifically working on that. In fact, that is its only job. For the time being, as you probably guessed, it is travelling the country, given that the Torch Relay has already begun. I can assure you that there is no connection with what the government is doing.

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:** Fine, thank you.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** It is completely separate. The VANOC team is under Jim Richards.

Having worked with municipal representatives, particularly in Montreal, I can tell you that all the communities were asked to take part in organizing the activities. At every stop, the activities are being organized by the communities, in cooperation with the Torch Relay team.

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:** So, you are in a position to guarantee that the government is not involved in the decisions?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Yes, absolutely. There is no involvement.

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:** At the same time, I think it is important to come back to the point raised by Ms. Glover. This week, the Minister of State (Sport) sent us a letter in French to say that he wanted to assure us that our role in this historic event would be acknowledged and that we would be actively involved.

I hope the Minister's word will be borne out, because I would be truly insulted if I were not able to participate in events around the Torch Relay in my hometown.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Do not be concerned, the whole purpose is to involve the communities in these events. We all have that common goal. That is at the very heart of this 100-day celebration.

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:** Otherwise, there will be some explaining to do, and possibly more.

**The Chair:** You have a minute and a half left, Mr. D'Amours.

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:** I have that much time left? I usually don't have any left at all.

Mr. Gauthier, you were saying that the airports and security there are not within your purview. There is a problem there, however, and VANOC is the organizing committee. There are only a few weeks left before the Games begin. You say that signage will be in place

between now and then, but time is marching on, and before we know it, the Games will have begun.

What can you do to ensure there won't be problems at the airports, in terms of services? It is easy to say that someone else is at fault, instead of asking oneself what can be done. We know people who have a real talent for that.

How can you guarantee that these services will be available, so that we will not realize, once the Games are all over, that things did not really unfold as planned?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** To begin with, we began discussions on this several months ago; there is no surprise there. We want the Toronto and Vancouver airports to be in a position to provide adequate bilingual services, and there is no reluctance on their part either. So we are reassured by that spirit of cooperation and the commitments made thus far are reassuring.

To be honest, what we must do now is remain vigilant and ensure that in the months of December and January, in particular, the appropriate identification is put in place, as required. At this time, I have no reason to doubt the good faith of the federal agencies involved.

● (1030)

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. D'Amours.

We move now to Mr. Gravelle.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP):** Thank you.

I have a question about the Paralympic Games. Will athletes and tourists attending the Paralympic Games have access to the same bilingual services?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** The answer is yes.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** Earlier, you were talking about RDS and RDI—

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** RDS.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** RDS will be broadcasting the Olympics. I can assure you, though, that the RDS network in Northern Ontario is not very extensive. Will Francophones in Northern Ontario be able to receive the Olympic coverage on another French-language channel?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** When Mr. Frappier appeared before this Committee, he assured you that agreements had been reached with the different Canadian cable operators, including in Ontario, to provide access to the French feed. I cannot give you details in that regard. I am sure you will agree that I am not the right person to answer that particular question. However, I was personally guaranteed that services would be available everywhere.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** The Commissioner's sixth recommendation says: "The Commissioner recommends that VANOC revise its communication practices as quickly as possible so that they comply with the requirements of Annex A of the Multiparty Agreement; this refers in particular to unforeseen situations and emergencies, all information made available to journalists on Info 2010, and all athlete biographies and updates".

Has that been done?



**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** That is part of what we are currently defining, particularly the requirements Mr. Gauthier referred to—requirements that have not necessarily been clearly identified. That has been established and it is what we are currently working on, in order to put in place the appropriate translation services with the government team.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** Do you have all the bilingual volunteers you need? Are you still missing some?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** At this point, we are satisfied with the number of bilingual volunteers, because we have looked at just about all the offers and we know exactly how many we need. So, we are satisfied with the number. Of course, if people were to withdraw for various reasons, we would replace them with other bilingual people.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Gravelle.

Ms. Guay.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Thank you very much.

I have several questions. I will try to go through them quickly.

I would like to begin on a humorous note, Mr. Gauthier. It's very nice of you to paint the signs, but they also have to be installed. If you need assistance in that area, do let us know.

In terms of services in both languages, one situation in particular concerns me. At peak periods, services may be available, but what happens when flights are coming into Toronto at 2, 3, 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, for example? I'm worried: I'm still concerned that, both in Toronto and Vancouver, services may not be available in both languages, as well as at the actual venues, and that there won't be enough staff to provide services outside of peak hours. Perhaps you could give your answers at the end.

I have another question about health care. We know that the H1N1 flu virus is hitting people across the globe. Have specific or special steps been taken to handle a potential crisis?

Ms. Glover, I want to thank you for your comments. However, I would like to receive my invitation before December 11. That is important, because no one has received one so far, and the torch relay will be coming through our area on the 11th. It is important to ensure that the invitation arrives, not the day before, but well in advance, so that we can add it to our schedule and participate in events at the times they are to take place.

Indeed, on page 8 of his report, the Commissioner of Official Languages says: "Unfortunately, there has been no change in the low bilingual capacity at senior levels from the time when information was collected for the initial study. None of the [...]"—

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Excuse me, but could you speak a little louder? You are reading recommendation—

**Ms. Monique Guay:** I'm sorry.

I'll start again: "Unfortunately, there has been no change in the low bilingual capacity at senior levels from the time when information was collected for the initial study. None of the ten members of the VANOC Executive Committee is fluent in French, although some of them are taking classes. There are only a few bilingual member on VANOC's Board of Directors."

That, too, is a concern. Perhaps you could answer this: has there been any improvement in that respect? I will give you a chance to answer.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** First of all, you referred to service outside of peak hours. I can assure you that we took that into account in our planning.

• (1035)

**Ms. Monique Guay:** That is important.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** We are well aware of the fact that there will be flights coming in at all hours of the day and night. Rest assured that we considered that reality.

If I can repeat what I said earlier, we have no reason to doubt that federal authorities at the Vancouver and Toronto airports will cooperate, as they have said they will, and that the appropriate services will be in place.

We must remain vigilant. We still have time ahead of us to monitor the implementation process. I can assure you that this is on our own list of concerns.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** And what about H1N1?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I will let Donna take that question, as I am not really aware of what is being done in that area.

[English]

**Ms. Donna Wilson:** We definitely have a plan around H1N1. We had already started executing that plan for our torch team that is travelling across this country and going into small communities, particularly northern communities. We made the vaccine available to them before they entered those communities, and we will be moving forward with that plan for the rest of the staff.

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Guay:** I have one final question. You said earlier that you have enough volunteers, and so forth. But what kind of accommodation is available for them? That worries me, because there are not a lot of hotels there. Available space is reserved for the athletes and the people travelling with them. What accommodation do you have in place for them?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** The majority of the volunteers we have recruited already have accommodation and have confirmed that. They are staying in the area with friends, acquaintances, etc. There are a lot of people in British Columbia who move around quite a bit. As a result, they know people all over the place.

Also, there are volunteers who are a little more specialized. In Whistler, for example, we offered a program whereby families billet people, and residents in the area have opened their doors to provide accommodation for these bilingual volunteers.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** So, you have enough room for everyone.

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes, absolutely.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** That's great.

In closing, I just want to say that I am very proud that my niece will be carrying the Olympic Torch. She will actually be doing that in the region represented by my friends Ms. Boucher and Mr. Petit.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** What's her name?

**Ms. Monique Guay:** My niece's name is Nancy Leclerc.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** What community will she be in?

**Ms. Monique Guay:** She will be in the Quebec City area.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** In Quebec City.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** I don't remember in exactly which community, but she will be carrying the Olympic Torch.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez:** They won't let her in.

**The Chair:** He is going to go.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Do you know on which date?

**Ms. Monique Guay:** In the month of December.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** It must be either December 4 or 5.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** It was supposed to be in November, but the date was changed.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** It must be in Christiane Gagnon's riding.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** No, it's not in Christiane's riding.

**The Chair:** The Torch Relay will be going through Lévis before it arrives in Quebec City, but there is—

Now that we are through with the gossip, I think Mr. Petit may want to put a question to our witnesses.

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

Thank you, Mr. Gauthier. There was discussion earlier about the City of Richmond. As you know, we have been asking questions for some time, because that is where the Olympic Oval is. If you read the “blues”, you probably recall that we had some trouble securing assurances that even Francophone athletes, or athletes whose second language is French, will be able to find their way. The same applies to visitors.

The City of Richmond has a population of 115,000, and 65% of the population is of Chinese or Asian origin, so that their mother tongue is neither English nor French. You stated—and I would like to receive confirmation of this—that you have a good relationship with the mayor or council. We are no longer talking about Anglophones and Francophones; we're talking about a completely different group. Since we live in a country that promotes multiculturalism, we have to reach out in order to be sure there is a good understanding of the Canadian reality.

Would you say that you have good relations with Richmond City Council, such that English and French will ultimately be equal, so that everyone is able to get to where they are going?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** The answer is yes. Your colleague put it quite succinctly earlier, when she said that the City of Richmond wants there to be permanent signage in English and French, but does not want to pay for it. However, the federal government has already announced a contribution of \$7.7 million, which is going to help us find a solution and ensure that the work gets done.

I am not a party to those discussions. So, I am not in a position to make any firm commitment, but I can tell you that I have been told by people at the appropriate level that relations are excellent and that the work will get done.

● (1040)

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** VANOC has entered into an agreement with the Gesca group in Quebec, which includes *La Presse*, *Le Soleil*, *Le Droit*, *La Tribune*, *La Voie de l'Est* and other publications. However, Gesca does not distribute newspapers outside of Quebec. Have you any plans to enter into an agreement with other newspapers that are not part of the Gesca group outside of Quebec? I imagine the answer is yes, and I would like to know which ones are involved.

Employees with the Gesca group are threatening to strike. So, even though you may have signed an agreement with them, the newspapers will not be distributed. You are the ones who will be criticized. If there is a strike, nothing will happen; and this is a press group of considerable size. Do you have a plan B?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** You are right that most of the newspapers published by the Gesca group are in Quebec and in the regions, because that is where we wanted to focus our promotional efforts initially in terms of preparation for the Games, the Games themselves and ticket sales. The idea was not just to publish material while the Games are ongoing. We wanted to promote the Games and all the associated activities that are taking place before the actual Games in French-language newspapers across the province.

I should add that *Le Droit*, which is published in Ottawa and covers part of Ontario, is also part of the Gesca group. For the time being, we have no plan B, nor have we reached an agreement with other newspapers outside the province. Two years ago, we could not have guessed that employees of *La Presse* might go on strike. We will be looking at that in the coming weeks.

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Petit.

Ms. Bolduc, would you like to add something?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes. Yesterday, we launched our official languages awareness campaign. That is why we distributed a brochure this morning. We have also developed a media information kit that we will be sending out to the Association de la presse francophone, which covers all the French-language newspapers in minority communities. We want to provide complete information to these newspapers, so that they can write articles aimed at Francophone groups outside Quebec. This awareness campaign will really assist us in getting information out to Francophones across the country.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Nadeau, do you wish to add something?

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Yes. At the end of the previous round, we were talking about Vancouver Tourism and BC Tourism information kiosks.

Will an individual, either from British Columbia, Quebec or somewhere else, who goes to a BC Tourism or Vancouver Tourism kiosk be able to receive service in French?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** We are currently working closely with the tourism industry to develop a publication that will provide comprehensive tourism information for British Columbia. It will be produced in both languages and distributed—

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Yes, I am aware of the documentation that is being produced, but will people be able to receive service in French?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** During the Games, VANOC will have an information kiosk at every one of the venues, and information will be available in French and in English, both through our staff and [*Inaudible—Editor*].

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** So, there is no guarantee that it will be available orally.

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** We can guarantee that everyone providing information at Olympic venues during the Games will be bilingual.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Will it be the same at Vancouver Tourism and BC Tourism information kiosks?

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** No, only at Olympic venues.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Thank you. That answers my question.

The Commissioner has some concerns about translation. It is said that there are 7.5 million words to be translated. What is the status of that work? I am not asking you to give me an exact count, but the Games are not far off.

•(1045)

**Mrs. Francine Bolduc:** Yes, I realize that. All the translation that was to be completed is up-to-date. What still has to be translated are the biographies. We will not receive them before mid-December, and only then will it be possible to start getting them translated. All the biographical information is constantly being updated, even as we speak, while athletes are training. Everything has been planned.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Since my time is running out, I want to address my final point, which is the legacy. What will that legacy be? Following the Games, will there be a legacy for Franco-British Columbians in terms of the French language in Western Canada and the Pacific region? Will something remain in terms of signage?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Our legacy will, first and foremost, be bilingual Games on a scale that no previous Olympic Games has been able to achieve. Particularly through the work of our Advisory Committee on Official Languages, we hope to pass on to other Games organizing committees, such as those preparing the London and Sochi Games, an approach and a process in terms of bilingualism.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Yes, but I am talking about signage. Will it remain in place? Will services in French developed for residents remain in place?

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I have no idea.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** You have no idea? Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

I believe Ms. Glover would also like to—

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Thank you.

I would like to come back to what Mr. D'Amours and Ms. Guay were talking about earlier.

Mr. D'Amours, thank you for your comment, because it reminded me that letters were placed on the desks yesterday. Ms. Guay, your invitation was delivered to you yesterday. A package that looks like this was placed on each desk. I am wondering whether your whip... In any case, I can give you my copy, because I want to—

**Ms. Monique Guay:** We need a specific invitation to—

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** But that is your invitation, Ms. Guay.

**The Chair:** We all received the same thing.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** In addition, there is a name—

**Ms. Monique Guay:** There is no time indicated—nothing.

**Ms. Shelly Glover:** Could I say something?

**Ms. Monique Guay:** There is no time indicated, nothing.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Then speak to your whip. Yesterday, the Minister of State provided the packages. We all received them at our desks. There is a complete package and it includes the name of the person to contact if you are available and would like to participate.

Once again, it is important to understand that the government would like all members of Parliament to have an opportunity to participate.

Mr. D'Amours, thank you very much for saying that if things do not go as planned and there are complications, questions will be asked. I, personally, will want to have answers.

Mr. Gauthier, you talked about a small organization that is looking after that. I would like to receive a letter from that organization stating that all members of Parliament here in this room are invited to take part.

Furthermore, I have just received information about Ms. Crowder: she did not participate; she did not attend.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** She was there.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** The Minister was there. I don't know why, but we will be following up on this. Anyway, we have just been told that she was supposed to be there but, at the last minute, realized she had something else to do. I would like to know why she was unable to attend. There are different stories circulating, but if she was there, why was she asked to leave? If she was there and that is what happened, someone from VANOC will have some explaining to do, because that is unacceptable.

Thank you.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** I'll make a note to see what in fact has happened with that. I will also check with the committee to make sure that we will be able to confirm that all deputies and members of Parliament are invited to be present.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

The brochure that you distributed shows bilingual signage. Would it be possible to check whether that signage will remain in place following the Games? I believe that was the point of the question. In any case, I would like to hear the answer and share it with members of the Committee. I would like to receive confirmation of that from you.

Here it shows the *Whistler Sliding Center*, among other venues. I believe this signage will remain in place permanently, once the Games—

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** That was one of the goals.

**The Chair:** Pardon me?

• (1050)

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** One of the Government of Canada's goals was to ensure that it would remain in place.

**The Chair:** It has to do with the legacy. These are significant investments.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle:** I just want to assure Ms. Glover that Ms. Crowder was there. She was there on stage for seven seconds, at which time she was asked to leave.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Yes, I hear that.

**The Chair:** That was already stated.

Mr. Chong.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to make a couple of comments to our witnesses.

I believe this is the last time they will be appearing before our Committee in advance of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. For that reason, I think it is very important to say that we have two official languages in this country and that the International Olympic Committee is an organization that also has two official languages,

namely French and English. Therefore, it is extremely important that the Olympic and Paralympic Games be bilingual.

[*English*]

Canada is a country with two official languages. The International Olympic Committee and the Olympic Games are games with two official languages, and I think it's very important to say, as your last time in front of our committee, that the games must be bilingual.

The success of the games will in large part depend, for the 25% of Canadians who are francophones, on whether or not these games are truly bilingual. The success of the games will also depend on whether or not, in the eyes of the international community, Canada is living up to not only its Olympic commitments, but to its own domestic commitments to have these two official languages enforced at the games.

I wish you all the best. I thank you for your many appearances in front of committee. I'm sure I reflect the wishes of all the members of this committee.

**Mr. Jacques Gauthier:** Thank you very much.

We totally agree with your comments, by the way.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you once again. Mr. Chong had the last word.

We are all starting to have Olympic fever.

Thank you very much.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Let's hear it for Olympic fever!

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Could we be given a new agenda for our Committee work?

**The Chair:** We will send it out to you.

**Mr. Richard Nadeau:** Thank you.

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