



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

## **Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage**

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CHPC



NUMBER 009



1st SESSION



41st PARLIAMENT

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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, November 1, 2011**



**Chair**

**The Honourable Rob Moore**



## Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

Tuesday, November 1, 2011

•(0845)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC)):** Good morning, everybody.

We'll get started here.

Welcome to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

We're very pleased this morning to have here His Excellency Justin Hugh Brown, High Commissioner for Australia to Canada.

Thank you for joining us here today, Your Excellency.

He'll be appearing from 8:45 to 9:30. Then, at 9:30 to 10:30, we have other witnesses, and from 10:30 to 10:45, we have committee business.

As we know, Australia celebrated its centenary in 2001, so that is a bit of useful experience that we hopefully can get from our friends from Australia.

We welcome you here today, Your Excellency. The way this committee usually works is that if you have some opening remarks, you can deliver those, and then we'll go into some questions.

Thank you. The floor is yours.

**His Excellency Justin Hugh Brown (High Commissioner for Australia to Canada, Australian High Commission):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Translation]

It's my pleasure to be here with you today.

[English]

I'm going to make a few opening remarks. I'm happy to take questions afterwards. I've circulated a copy of my remarks.

It would be useful to start off by making the obvious observation that Australia and Canada are similar countries in many respects—relatively young countries, colonial background, multi-ethnic population, federal structure—and it does, I think, make sense to compare the way we've approached major historical celebrations.

As you said, Mr. Chairman, in 2001 Australia celebrated its centenary of federation. It was an inclusive year of commemorations.

A major objective of the process was to reach out to people across the country. The context for the centenary was, of course, the bicentennial celebrations of white settlement of Australia—those celebrations took place in 1988—and the Olympic Games in Sydney,

which occurred in 2000. Both of those were very Sydney-centric events. In contrast, the 2001 celebrations were designed to ripple out across every town in Australia. Also, they were equally focused, in celebrations over many days and many months, on what occurred in 1901.

Part of the focus of the year was on raising understanding of the democratic evolution and launch of the Commonwealth in 1901. The reason for this was that research showed that only about a quarter of Australians understood what federation actually was. Less than a fifth knew the name of our first prime minister. There was, in fact, a large public relations campaign around the time of the celebrations on that question—namely, what kind of country would forget the name of its first prime minister?

The celebrations were also aimed at generating debate about contemporary and future issues facing Australia. The process was launched by the appointment of a Centenary of Federation Advisory Committee, which in 1994 delivered a report recommending ways to celebrate the centenary.

A national council was subsequently established by the federal government, in partnership with the state and territory governments. The federal government provided funding of \$12 million for the council secretariat; \$22 million for the celebrations; \$9 million for education; and \$15 million for communications—media.

An Australian federation fund of one billion dollars was set up to provide a lasting legacy. That was divided into three main categories. The first was major projects, which comprised construction of a national museum and expansion of the national war memorial. A second category was cultural and heritage projects, and a third category was community-level projects.

As I said earlier, a feature of the celebrations was that they were very decentralized and dispersed across the year, with the aim of having a major impact across the country. In total, approximately 4,000 events were held during the year.

There was a three-pronged approach. The first was a program of nationally significant events, centrepiece events, as they were called, that involved every state and territory—Australian provinces—and each of those hosted at least one event.

A big feature of the process was to address the perception that Australia ended at the Hume Highway, which is the major highway connecting Sydney and Melbourne. In the northern part of Australia and in the outback, in rural and non-metropolitan Australia, many events were undertaken. I'll give you just a few highlights to illustrate what took place.

A so-called New Dawn ceremony was held in Alice Springs in central Australia on January 1.

There was the largest-ever gathering of indigenous people for the Yeperenye festival just outside Alice Springs. Australia has a long history of aboriginal settlement. In the 50,000 or 60,000 years of aboriginal settlement, there had never been a gathering of indigenous dancers and performers drawn from every corner of the country. It was very difficult for that to happen before 1788, so to make that happen at the time of our centenary was obviously a very special occasion.

In Townsville, in Queensland, which is Australia's northeastern state, a very large crowd assembled, one of the largest in the history of tropical Australia, for a north Queensland pageant. The pageant, a blend of national and regional pride, passed slowly along the foreshore.

● (0850)

Finally, there was a celebration of Parliament in its original home in Melbourne. Canberra is a city that was built around 1913-14. Before that, in the period between federation and the establishment of Canberra, Melbourne was the temporary home of the Australian Parliament.

Some of the most popular celebrations actually criss-crossed state boundaries, state and territory boundaries. For example, there was a Source to the Sea flotilla of boats, both old and new, which sailed along the Murray River. The Murray River links three of Australia's states.

Perth and Adelaide were linked by a train of 31 carriages commemorating the opening of the Trans-continental Railway. This railway had been one of the promises which persuaded western Australians to join the Commonwealth. It took us a hundred years to live up to that promise.

The Federation AirShow also took place in the outback region, where both Qantas and the Royal Australian Flying Doctor Service were established.

Second, there was an endorsement program that encouraged organizations and communities to develop their own activities. This ranged from festivals, parades, and sporting events to academic symposia. One was a federation father beard-growing contest. It perhaps goes more to the Australian sense of humour than to a serious historical project.

Third, there were some national projects aimed at leaving an enduring legacy of the year. For example, 1.8 million commemorative medallions were struck for schoolchildren. A website was set up to collect local histories from communities across the country, with a big focus on oral history, and a display of founding documents from federation took place at our National Archives.

The commemorations also had an overseas dimension. There was an Australia Week in London. There were arts festivals and travelling exhibitions throughout Asia—Australia's neighbourhood—and many of you may recall that there was also an Australian feature during the Winterlude festival here in Ottawa that year.

The year was primarily a celebration, of course, but it was also a time for reflection and, in some respects, even criticism. A few public lectures were held, which examined aspects of Australian history in a critical sense. With such celebrations, it is often difficult to find a sensible balance between praising and lamenting the past, but these were an attempt to look at Australia's history in a critical way and to learn from the past.

Overall, the centenary created some positive long-term legacies, from the concrete projects I've mentioned, including the railway linking Alice Springs and Darwin, to the more nebulous but nonetheless important improvement in public knowledge of Australia's history and civic pride.

I would be happy to take any questions, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

● (0855)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Your Excellency.

The first question is from Mr. Gill.

**Mr. Parm Gill (Brampton—Springdale, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank you, Your Excellency, for appearing in front of the committee, for providing us with this valuable information, and for sharing your experience with us so we can make this 150th birthday a wonderful event.

Here's my first question. You mentioned that obviously the federal government in Australia distributed funds or helped promote different events. Can you help us by describing how else the federal government was involved in promoting these centenary activities in Australia?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** As I mentioned, a national council was established, which was, if you like, the organizing committee for the different celebrations. It was established by the federal, state, and territory governments in partnership. There was joint involvement from both parts of government in running the council and in organizing the events.

In addition to the funding, the federal government was involved in the decision-making on how the funding would be spent, and in deciding on which particular projects were going to be supported by the council.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** I assume the state was also a partner in funding most of these projects.

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** The state...?

**Mr. Parm Gill:** You said the federal government and the state government...?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** Yes.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** So I assume that they were both partners in funding?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** That's right. Yes. They both provided funding and were involved in staffing the national council.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** Would you be able to share with us, from your experience, what was most effective? Also, where did the government see the need for improvement for future celebrations?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** As I said in my statement, I think one of the issues the commemoration sought to tackle was the large level of ignorance about Australian history. Indicative of that was the competition on who our first prime minister was. That was one objective.

The second objective was to make the celebration about more than Sydney. Sydney, of course, is the birthplace of Australia, white Australia. The commemorations were deliberately fanned out across the country so that everybody and every community felt part of the process. That sense of nationhood and the sense of looking to the past with a view to the future were the two principal objectives.

The third was really what you'd call the nation-building projects. I've mentioned the railway between Darwin and Adelaide and some of the other big projects, which were designed to improve the sense of Australia as a nation. Australia, like Canada, has strong regional identities. People in different states have their own sense of what it means to be a Western Australian or a Queenslander. Drawing the country together through some of these projects and the different commemorations was a recurring thing throughout the year.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** I assume that there was a process put in place with input from the grassroots level and citizens. Could you explain to us what sort of time period you guys allowed in terms of preparation for these celebrations, and was that sufficient, at the end of the day?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** As I said, the process was launched in 1994 with an advisory committee, which delivered a report recommending different ways to celebrate the centenary. That advisory committee took input from the community and from governments at all levels. We started seven years in advance of the centenary. Whether that was enough time or not, I'm not sure.

• (0900)

**Mr. Parm Gill:** That's good.

Can you just describe the legacy or impact of those celebrations on Australian society?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** The impact in a concrete sense was, as I mentioned, the railways and some of the concrete projects that were built during the centenary or constructed at the time of the centenary. They were, if you like, tangible results from the year.

I'll leave it to others to make the case as to whether some of the intangibles have helped knit our national fabric together more tightly. There was certainly a great sense of pride in Australia at the time of the centenary. Australia being the country it is, some of that has of course evaporated in the time since, but I think people did take from the year a great sense of national pride and an improved understanding of our history as a country.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** Do you have any personal advice for us as Canadians that you would like to offer in terms of our preparation leading up to the 150th anniversary?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I don't think I would even bother to venture a personal opinion on how you should run your centenary.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Parm Gill:** I appreciate that. Thank you.

I'll pass the rest of my time to Mr. Calandra.

**Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC):** Thank you very much, Your Excellency. I appreciate your being here.

I'm wondering if there was a signature event during the celebrations that was the focus of the celebrations.

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I mentioned the New Dawn ceremony that took place in Alice Springs. I think that was probably the keynote signature event, if you like. It was a deliberate attempt to not have a signature event in Sydney. That was because there was a concern that with the Olympics and with the bicentennial three years earlier, there was a risk of the thing becoming too Sydney focused. The place of indigenous people in Australian life was obviously a prominent thing in the celebrations. The New Dawn ceremony in Alice Springs was probably the most high-profile event held during the year.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Focusing on the aboriginal communities, how were you able to tie them into the celebrations in such a fashion that...? This is not a commentary on Australian history, but maybe more on Canadian history. How were you able to tie them in so that they felt a part of the celebrations and not...I don't want to say a victim of what happened, because that would be a bad choice of words, but how did you make them part of the celebrations so that they felt part of what you had accomplished in the hundred years?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** We worked hard with the different aboriginal communities across the country, from the initial advisory committee report, which made engagement with the aboriginal community a very prominent part of its work, all the way through to the work of the national council.

There was direct and frequent interaction with the aboriginal community, which in Australia is not a monolithic single body, I should mention. There are many different aboriginal groups spread across the country, from urban Aborigines to those in remote communities. A big feature of the year was to try to involve all of the aboriginal communities and to put our political differences, if you like, to one side and celebrate what we've achieved as a country. To depoliticize the process was a prominent thing.

Now, I wouldn't pretend that every aboriginal member of the community was ecstatic about every aspect of the centenary, but there was extremely good involvement from many aboriginal groups, particularly in the New Dawn ceremony, so overall, I think it was a success.

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

We will move on to Ms. Boutin-Sweet.

[Translation]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Thank you.

You spoke of public lectures in which history was looked at with a critical eye so as to learn from the past. I'm intrigued. I'd like you to give us more details on that matter.

• (0905)

[English]

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** *Merci.*

There were a number of events, some officially part of the centenary, and others that were what I might describe as unofficial events at the time of the centenary. Many universities, for example, hosted conferences, conventions, and symposia looking at Australian history.

A sidebar comment here is that Australia is a country that doesn't talk as a country about its history very much at all. It was quite a new approach for our community to actually reflect on our history as a country.

There are quite sharp divisions between parts of the community on the events of the past, particularly in relation to the indigenous community. At the time, we had a Conservative government that felt very strongly that there was too much focus on the problems of the past, the shortcomings of previous Australian governments and so on. There was a very robust debate, as you would expect in Australia, with both sides putting their views, and there were many articles written in various publications, for example, airing different views about Australia's history.

I don't think any of these reached a particular climax, if you like, but it was part of the effort to improve the way that we as a nation thought of ourselves and to improve the level of understanding, particularly in the general community and among schoolchildren, of some of the basic facts of our history. I don't think it was anything more sophisticated than that.

But as I said, in the context of a country that really hasn't spoken at length about its history and doesn't really reflect on its past very much, it was quite a new and radical approach.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** You also mentioned community projects. Could you give us a few examples?

[*English*]

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I don't have any right now. The only one I've been given information on was the event in Townsville, which is in northern Queensland.

Northern Queensland has a particular cultural environment, if I could put it that way. The idea of the gathering there was to celebrate, if you like, what it means to be from northern Queensland. There was a large pageant, a kind of parade, along the waterfront in Townsville. That was designed and implemented with input from and driven by the local community. That was one of the non-metropolitan events that were funded by the federal and state governments, but with community control and ownership of the project.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** So, if I understood correctly, these events were developed and planned by the communities? Is that right?

[*English*]

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** In many cases, yes, but not in every case. In some of the individual projects at the community level, the communities were free to put forward proposals for funding from the national council. In many cases they were approved, provided they came within the guidelines and the criteria established by the

council. It was a bottom-up process or a community-level process, as well as a top-down process.

● (0910)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** Thank you. I'll pass along the remaining time to Mr. Cash.

[*English*]

**Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP):** Thank you, Marjolaine.

Thank you for being here, Your Excellency.

I wanted to ask you about the governance of the centenary, the national council. This was a non-partisan, independent body. Why did the Australian government go in that direction to organize this celebration?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I think all governments are sensitive about charges of being guilty of using national commemorations for party political purposes.

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** I've never heard of that before—

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** It's very rare, I know—

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** —but even in my country it has been known to happen occasionally.

In this case, I think the issue was really to get away from a celebration that could have been interpreted as giving undue weight to the particular views of a particular political party or a particular element of the community.

As I said earlier, the objective was very clear: not Sydney-centric; very strong emphasis on community-level, bottom-up processes; and nationwide. Also, to take the politics out of it was a key objective.

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** In terms of organizing voices from the regions and from the federal government, politics is always in play, of course, when you're trying to organize a non-partisan body. What was the process you went through to put this council together?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** As in Canada, our federal government very rarely has the same political complexion as our state and territory governments. We have a mixture of parties representing us. So any federal-state cooperative project has to be, by definition, a political compromise. Once that compromise is reached by federation-wide partisan consensus, it does ripple down throughout the process.

When the national council was formed, the criteria were set, and the key guidelines were developed, that was all a joint partnership of the federal, state, and territory governments of all political complexions. I think that at the time the federal government was Conservative, but historically, Australian state governments have been social democratic Labour Party governments.

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** So that billion-dollar fund—

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

We'll move on to Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-sor, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

As you mentioned, it seems as if there was a concerted effort to stay away from the Sydney-centric type of appeal of these celebrations, as community-based as it was. It seems that two things are at play here. A particular state may have a certain existence and historical context that they want to celebrate that may be different from the rest of the country. I say that because, me being from Newfoundland, we have a kinship with the people of Tasmania, for reasons that are obvious.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Well, we do. They're just like us, for goodness' sake. The thing about it is that here are certain heritage points there that are obviously very central to that particular area. Is this something that was looked at as part of the grander scheme?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** Yes. I mean, without boring you with Australian history, in many ways Sydney is the focal point. It was the place where white settlement began, and the rest of the country was settled from Sydney, effectively.

That's a historical fact, but in any major celebration, we have to balance honouring the fact of white settlement in Sydney with the fact that Australia, a hundred years later, is a country that, like Canada, is made up of many different communities, very specific geographical regions, and community identities. Honouring those was part of the challenge of this event.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** When you did that, though, when there was a particular group—I'm fishing for an example, and I don't know if you have one—did the federal government provide them with cash, which they then decided how they were going to use, or was it in conjunction with national standards under which all the celebrations took place?

I'm just trying to get a flavour for how the local celebrations were done.

• (0915)

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** The answer to your question is yes. The national council set basic criteria and guidelines for projects that would be funded, projects that were consistent with the overall themes and approach of the centenary.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** So it wasn't just a straight payment for that....

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I don't think any government would accept a situation in which money was simply given over to community groups without some sort of accountability or transparency. I think it's fair to say that there was a very wide-ranging set of criteria that weren't that difficult to meet, and community-level groups were invited to present submissions for funding.

I've mentioned the example of Townsville in northern Queensland. I'm pretty sure there were similar parades and pageants in Tasmania.

Tasmania was a convict colony in Australia, of course, not like Newfoundland.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** It depends on how you look at it.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** Well, Tasmania's history in the early years revolved very much around that theme, of being an offshore convict colony—

**Mr. Scott Simms:** It gets much better as we go along, doesn't it?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** —so honouring that particular part of the country's history was something driven by these funds.

Every small community had its own project. I'm not too sure whether I can give you any other examples, but it was a bottom-up process. The criteria and the guidelines were quite open-ended provided a project wasn't obviously self-serving or inappropriate for the dignity of the event. I think there was a pretty generous approach taken to funding community-level proposals.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** The other aspect you mentioned was that there were celebrations and events that took place outside of Australia. You mentioned Canada being one location, as well as London.

What kind of a theme did they strike? Did some arts groups in Australia say they'd like to go to London? Or did the central government say that "this is what we're going to do in London" and ask who wanted to be involved?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** There was a little bit of both.

In London, for example, I mentioned that there was an Australia week. That was organized by the national council. They funded different performing groups, artistic events, and other events that took place in London at that time. That was centralized and organized by of the council.

Otherwise, it was very similar to the community-level projects I've mentioned. Particular artistic or other performers made bids for funding from the council if they wanted to perform somewhere that had a historical connection to Australia, London being the most obvious example.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Okay. So they could have taken their own initiative to go outside the...?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** Of course, but if they wanted to have the centenary brand, then funding from the national council was one way of supporting their events.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** How much time do I have?

**The Chair:** You have a minute and a half.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** How much of the overall budget do you think was devoted to that sort of external exercise?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I'd have to take that on notice, I think.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I'm trying to gauge how much it would be, because I think this is one element of our celebrations I'd like to get into. I never really pictured how we could bring the 150th celebrations outside of our own country. I don't know where.... Australia would be a place to go, but I'm just trying to think of how much was devoted to this, to external relations. Don't get me wrong; I think it's a great idea. I think it's good for our country and for tourism and the like.

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I don't have a number. I'd be happy to try to dig one up for you. My impression is that it was a small proportion of the overall spending. There was an Australia week. We had some travelling art festivals and exhibitions in Asia.

The Australian feature during Winterlude was essentially some ice sculptors who put up some Australian-themed sculptures during Winterlude.

Compared with the Australian events, it was a pretty small proportion. That's my impression.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Okay.

The final point I want to ask about is that one of the greatest legacies was the education factor, and I think that's obviously going to be a big one, along with the first nations aspect of it. Can you comment on what was put out there under your celebrations for schoolchildren, especially the young ones, and the legacy it left for the education on Australia and its history?

• (0920)

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** As I said, \$9 million was allocated for education-focused activities during the year. There was a website set up that collected local histories, and that was specifically targeted at school students. There was also a variety of other web-based projects established, aimed at improving knowledge of our history for students. I don't have any further information than that, but—

**Mr. Scott Simms:** But your impression was that it was a great success?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** As I said earlier, Australia is a country where reflecting on our past isn't part of our national character, so that was seen as a failure, and the inability of most school students to name our first prime minister was quite an alarming revelation for me.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Yes. I think a lot of our kids think that our first prime minister started the McDonald's restaurants.

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

Mr. Young.

**Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you so much for being here, sir.

We have a lot of time. We're ahead of the curve here. We have a lot of time to plan for this. We want it to be big and to engage as many Canadians as possible. Did you have any programs that led up to the centenary year, that people got involved with prior to it, that built up to events or celebrations?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** No, not that I'm aware of. As I mentioned, there was an advisory committee established in 1993-94, which delivered a report to governments on how to celebrate the centenary. There was opportunity for input from the community to that process.

But we had the bicentenary in 1998 and the Sydney Olympics in 2000, so I don't think there were any specific centenary-badged events in the interim period.

**Mr. Terence Young:** Were the arts communities involved in communicating Australia's history and celebrations, such as, for example, musicians, dance, film, and playwrights telling stories to engage citizens?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I don't have specific information on that. I'm sure that was the case.

**Mr. Terence Young:** You said that you brought together the aboriginal peoples. Were there any lasting benefits from that for the aboriginal peoples?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I don't think anyone has done an evaluation of the benefits. I think that in a psychological sense it was certainly an historic event. To bring together the many indigenous groups from across the country for the first time ever did have a huge impact on the aboriginal community at the time. So there was a certain impact on the morale and level of identity of the aboriginal groups, but as I said, I don't think there's been any....

I don't know how you'd evaluate the longer-term benefits or the short-term benefits of such an event. It was seen primarily as a celebration.

**Mr. Terence Young:** Were there any celebrations around accomplishments in industry, inventions, and technology?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I'll have to take that on notice.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** There are a lot of similarities, obviously, between Canada and Australia. One of the things we like to talk about—or at least I do—is how we can actually get people moving around the country to celebrate the 150th. Was there any program created to help people move around Australia so they could participate in events in other parts of the country?

Did the states, to your knowledge.... I know we're asking things that are sometimes difficult for you to answer, but is there any evidence that people were moving around Australia to participate in events outside of their own home communities? Was there an effort made to just get people moving around and seeing other parts of the country?

• (0925)

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** I'm not sure. I don't have that kind of information.

Australia is a country where the population is relatively mobile. My impression is that people would often go back to their home city or their home state for particular celebrations. If they were originally from North Queensland and currently lived in Melbourne or Sydney, a lot of people did go back for those particular celebrations, and the reverse was the case as well.

I don't think there was specific funding for particular government or national council messaging to encourage that. It was an organic process. People felt that marking their centenary was a natural manifestation of their pride in their home state or home city.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** You also mentioned that part of the billion dollars went to the creation of a national museum. What was the emphasis of the museum?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** It's in Canberra, our capital. It was completed several years ago. It's a museum that has artifacts and exhibitions from all the different aspects of Australia's history. There's a section on our manufacturing industry and industry, particularly the agricultural sector, in Australia. There's a section on indigenous issues. There are sections on different key milestones in Australia's history.

In a sense, it's a reflection of what took place during the centenary, in the form of a museum.



**Mr. Paul Calandra:** When people think back about the celebrations, what most comes to their minds? Is there an overriding event or something that comes to their minds when they talk about the celebrations?

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** Obviously, I can only answer that question for me. With it being a very strong community-level celebration, I think different communities would have their own perspective on the event and on what was memorable.

From a national perspective, I think the two I would mention would be the New Dawn performance in central Australia and, second, the establishment of a rail link between Darwin and Adelaide, which had been a dream for most of Australia's history. I think that was a major visual from the centenary that most people would remember.

My suggestion would be that if you want to have a big impact on the country's consciousness, these big, highly visual events can certainly have a catalytic event across the country and can really increase the sense of nationhood. That was a big objective for us.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Your Excellency. We do appreciate your taking the time to be with us today.

There were a lot of different questions because we're at the very genesis of our study on our 150th anniversary and we wanted to get the perspective and experience of our good friend, Australia.

I think your comments and answers to some of our questions will be very useful as we endeavour to learn from the experience of our friends while we craft our policy and programs for the celebration we intend to have.

Thank you very much for appearing with us today. All the best to you.

**Mr. Justin Hugh Brown:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** We'll suspend while we switch to our new witnesses.

• (0925) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (0935)

**The Chair:** We'll get started again.

I welcome our witnesses to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, our study of our upcoming 150th anniversary of Canada. It's taking place in 2017, of course, but as you may have heard from the previous witnesses, it's not too early to start thinking about our celebrations.

We have with us today André Picard, vice-president, public and corporate affairs, the Just For Laughs Group, and Louise Pothier, director of exhibitions and technologies at Pointe-à-Callière, the Montréal Museum of Archaeology and History.

Welcome to both of you.

The format we'll follow until 10:30 is that we'll have each of you make your opening remarks, if you have any, and then an opportunity for our members to ask some questions will follow.

I will turn it over to you, Mr. Picard, for some opening comments.

**Mr. André Picard (Vice-President, Public and Corporate Affairs, Just For Laughs Group):** Good morning,

[*Translation*]

honourable members of Parliament.

My name is André Picard. I am Vice-President of Public and Corporate Affairs for the Just For Laughs Group.

I would like to thank Mr. Paul Calandra, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, and Mr. James Moore, who suggested that I be invited to witness here today. I met him last week with my colleagues from FAME Canada.

[*English*]

FAME Canada—Festivals and Major Events Canada— is a national organization that regroups festivals across the country, among them Luminato, the Toronto International Film Festival, the Stratford Festival,

[*Translation*]

the Québec Winter Carnival, the Festival d'été de Québec,

[*English*]

Ottawa's Bluesfest, and many more.

[*Translation*]

FAME's mission is to play a leading role in the economic and social promotion of the international-scale Canadian festival and events sector to the government, the media, and the public.

[*English*]

My presentation may not be exactly what I wished it be. It was the Hallowe'en weekend—we got called on Thursday afternoon and I appreciate the privilege—and maybe it's because I'm in the event management business, but my 18-year-old daughter asked me to organize her Hallowe'en party. It was almost a 12-hour event.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. André Picard:** The major festivals and events that are members of FAME contribute to Canada being recognized worldwide as a cultural, vibrant nation.

[*Translation*]

I applaud you for holding these hearings. For me, it's never too early to talk about an initiative as far-reaching as the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Allow me to begin with a very personal story. In 1967, the year of Canada's Centennial Anniversary, I was 12 years old. I was almost done elementary school and was about to enter secondary school, grade 8, in the fall.

Canada's Centennial Anniversary coincided with Expo 67 in Montreal, a formative—or should I say transformative—experience for me, my friends, their older brothers and sisters, and their families; in fact, for our whole society. Quebec was emerging from a dark period and was in the midst of the Quiet Revolution. For people of my generation, and for myself as well, there isn't really any point of comparison. We were leaving childhood behind, and Expo 67 was a defining experience for us. I discovered Canada, my country, its provinces, and the world by visiting each of those pavilions. I visited various pavilions more than once, during the day and at night. I literally lived on that site all summer. I was often the first in line at the Île Sainte-Hélène ticket booth, my belly pressed against the barriers waiting for the exhibition to open so I could explore the site. I discovered the people, images, music, and food from all countries and cultures. My passport—do you remember the passports we had?—was full of stamps from the first to the last page. I still have it.

I think that if it were held today, I would have the Centennial Anniversary and Expo 67 logos tattooed on both my shoulders.

• (0940)

[English]

The scale and scope of holding the world's fair and celebrating our centennial awakened Canadians to the limitlessness of our capabilities and the opportunities of success in Canada and abroad. It inspired a generation of entrepreneurs, especially in the arts. It was, in a sense, a Canadian renaissance. Its legacy of cultural centres, plazas, and community infrastructure has shaped the Canadian consciousness and our lives since that date.

[Translation]

It was also the era of Perspectives Jeunesse, a program that gave a sense of direction and future to a generation and developed a spirit of initiative, entrepreneurship, and social responsibility.

[English]

I spoke recently to Normand Legault. Normand Legault was the owner and promoter of the Canadian Grand Prix in Montreal for over 20 years. Today, he is the chairman of the board of Parc Jean-Drapeau and of Montréal International.

I asked him what inspired a generation of cultural and sports entrepreneurs like him: Gilbert Rozon, the founder of Just For Laughs; Alain Simard, the founder of the Montreal International Jazz Festival, the FrancoFolies, and Montréal en Lumière; and Guy Laliberté, the founder of Cirque du Soleil. What gave them the courage to start their events? What gave them the confidence to pursue their vision and their dream? His answer was "Expo 67". Anything was possible.

To me, those events, the centennial and Expo 67, set off a chain reaction.

One of you asked a question about technologies. I'll get back to that right now. In the early nineties, I had the privilege of working in Toronto for IMAX Corporation, a Canadian company that was actually started from an Australian patent for the rolling loop projector. It was a unique and exceptional professional and personal experience. Today, the IMAX brand and motion picture experience is recognized worldwide.

The founders came together and created the company in the wake of Expo 67. If we remember, the most popular pavilions were cinematic pavilions, interactive multi-screen cinemas with stages and screens that would whirl around. Three of these people were involved in the production of two films: one was for a theme pavilion on the north and the other was for the Labyrinth, one of the most popular pavilions, and was produced by the National Film Board of Canada.

Their dream for their company was to build an Expo pavilion in every city in the world and base the film experience on the best motion picture quality experience that was available at that time—and still is today.

Also, I can mention worldwide pioneers in 3-D, which is now part of the motion picture experience.

It may be a little-known fact, but Normand Legault, who was quite an erudite man, did some research in our National Archives. Rightly so, the credit for Expo 67 is given to Jean Drapeau, the legendary mayor of Montreal; however, what made Expo 67 possible was the work of then Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and Sarto Fournier, who in 1962 was mayor of Montreal between two stints of Jean Drapeau, and who had actually supported Montreal being the host city after Moscow retired.

Another international success story was born at the time of a national celebration. In 1984, during Quebec's 450th anniversary celebration of Jacques Cartier's discovery of Canada, the province sought an event that would bring the festivities to all Quebecers. Guy Laliberté, the founder of the Cirque, convinced organizers that the answer was a provincial tour of Cirque du Soleil performers, who walked on stilts, juggled, danced, breathed fire, and played music.

That was founded by Gilles Ste-Croix in the small town of Baie-Saint-Paul on the St. Lawrence, and it hasn't stopped since. So I think you should measure the ripple effect that celebrations of a centennial can have.

I spoke to Daniel Gélinas, executive director of the Festival d'été de Québec. He had one message for me when I called him to say I would be meeting you today: build on the platforms that exist today, such as our festivals, big and small, that animate cities and towns across the country.

If I may say a few words about Just For Laughs, in *un peu d'autopromotion*, in 1982 Gilbert Rozon had a crazy idea. Creative at heart, he realized that all major performing arts had their festivals, except for comedy. The *Juste pour rire* festivals were started on July 14, 1983, with 16 francophone artists presenting some 35 shows in four venues across the city to an audience of approximately 5,000 people, with galas on television.

In 1985, we added Just For Laughs. In 1988, we added our outdoor activities. Today, the Just For Laughs Montreal festival, presented by Vidéotron with the support of Loto-Québec, is one of the biggest cultural events in the country, is the biggest comedy festival in the world, and attracts more than 1,250,000 people every summer in Montreal.

•(0945)

More recently, what characterized the 2010 Olympic Games, I believe, were the national involvement and engagement. The national pride it created was like a high-voltage electric current, a magnetic field across the country that brought a nation together to celebrate hosting the games and welcoming the world. Our unprecedented success in medals, with the culminating golden goal, was the crowning achievement.

The torch relay brought the Olympic spirit to every region of the country and allowed Canadians to take ownership of this exciting event. Through the Cultural Olympiad and the on-site provincial pavilions, the Olympics showcased the Canadian people in all our disparate charm and beauty. They created a pan-Canadian experience that won over visitors and lifted spirits of Canadians from coast to coast.

The 2010 games left a legacy of state-of-the-art training facilities, but the more important legacy is the shared sense of belonging and pride that brought our nation together, and the belief that anything is possible is still burning within us. Canada 150 must reignite that pilot light that continues to burn in Canadians and get them excited about our sesquicentennial—I had to say it once. Let's call it Canada 150. It is as much about celebrating our past accomplishments as it is about the limitless possibilities ahead of us.

Moses Znaimer, a celebrated media pioneer and innovator—some would say maverick—once suggested that the current concept for the Olympics is passé. Rather than the huge infrastructure projects that it creates in one city and the concentration of athletic events, he said, in this global era—and this is before the explosion of the Internet—why not have one major event in all major cities of the world? That would make a difference in terms of time zones, and each country could own a specific event. Maybe you could inspire yourself from that vision for how we would manage Canada 150.

Even in today's world of instant messaging and trending tweets, a national initiative needs time to grow and roots to spread. Vancouver 2010 is a great example of the proper buildup of awareness, the development of the event, and finally the celebration.

Internet 2.0 brought us the world of consumer-generated content. Our stages and screens have evolved since 1967. Today there are many more platforms that entertain, inform, and enrich us at work, at home, and just about everywhere we lay our eyes on and lend an ear to.

The planning and design of our 150th celebration requires the general input of all Canadians. It's important to leverage existing organizations and to bring brand and messaging continuity across all platforms. Let us not forget certain institutions like the CBC, the NFB, and the National Arts Centre that have participated in these events and have made a great contribution in the past.

Canada's major festivals and fairs are among the best in the world, with programming showcasing the best that Canada and the world has to offer. These events from across the country celebrate all aspects of Canadian culture, from fine arts and comedy to tragedy, from culture to agriculture—which have more in common that we would sometimes think—and sports. This network of world-class events should be engaged to develop programming to celebrate

Canada 150 and provide a pan-Canadian showcase of Canadian achievement and talent.

Thank you.

•(0950)

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

Ms. Pothier.

**Ms. Louise Pothier (Director, Exhibitions and Technologies, Pointe-à-Callière, Montréal Museum of Archaeology and History):** Thank you, Mr. Moore, for the invitation.

[*Translation*]

Honourable members of Parliament,

[*English*]

my presentation will be done in French. I will do a very short introduction in English. but I will switch to French for the rest of my presentation.

Last summer, Pointe-à-Callière, with the support of the City of Montreal and the Quebec government, conducted a major archaeological excavation in Old Montreal on the site of the Ste. Anne market, the Parliament of United Canada, 1832-1849. By doing these digs, not only did we excavate an important site and its physical remains, but we also brought to life a capital page in the history of Canada, a page that was—a little surprisingly—known by only a very few people, in Montreal of course, in Quebec, and in Canada.

Now our desire is to make sure that this site will not be forgotten again.

[*Translation*]

Pointe-à-Callière is an archaeology and history museum which opened in 1992 on the occasion of Montreal's 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is a commemorative museum built on the city's foundation site.

The museum forms a complex that regroups five historic sites recognized by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to be of national importance. It's Canada's only prominent archaeology museum.

Pointe-à-Callière welcomes between 350 000 and 400 000 visitors per year. It has a positive media image. It has won 80 awards of excellence, a dozen of which are international. Despite its relative newness, it already has public recognition.

The museum also has a fair bit of experience organizing commemorative events.

[*English*]

I will give you the example of the Great Peace of Montreal, which we celebrated in 2001. It was the 300th anniversary of the signature of a peace treaty between the French and their Indian allies. For that event, we had 2.5 million visitors that summer in Montreal. Among them, we also had the event of the young ambassadors. That included a twinning of Montreal schools with Cree schools up north. They were invited to Montreal for a weekend in the celebration. So we have had experience in commemorative organizations and events.

[Translation]

I am here to present to you a major project undertaken by Pointe-à-Callière in Old Montreal, namely the creation of the Cité de l'archéologie et de l'histoire, a vast complex that will bring together about ten historic and heritage sites.

The first phase of this project is already under construction with the development of the Maison-des-Marins, a location for new public spaces, exhibitions and educational spaces. It will be ready in 2012.

What interests us is the second phase, to be completed between now and 2017. It is rooted in Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation.

One of the major components of this project is the site of the Parliament of the United Province of Canada. It is a large archaeological site of national importance, where the foundations of a building over 100 metres long are still intact, and where bountiful occupation layers permit us to recreate the site's history.

The building was built in 1832 to house a market. It was converted into the Parliament in 1844, when Montreal became the capital of Canada, the Province of Canada, or the United Province of Canada. It became the first site of Canada's permanent Parliament. The building possessed the rather unique attribute of being built above a canalized rock-routed river, which was an integral part of the monument. All of that is still intact underneath the surface. The Parliament is located in Old Montreal, at Youville Square, in front of the Canada Border Services Agency. Some of you perhaps already know of this building, because it's where ministers stay when in Montreal.

The City of Montreal invested close to 1.5 million dollars to complete the first phase of the archeological digs last summer. Right now, we're completing the closing of the site in preparation for the winter. The goal was to establish the importance and integrity of the site, and to better understand its potential and value. The results of this work have exceeded our expectations. Tens of thousands of artefacts have been excavated, and the building's foundations found intact and in a well-preserved state at a depth of about five metres.

These archaeological digs have aroused interest from thousands of visitors and have generated at least 250 very positive reports across Canada, namely in Radio-Canada's program *Découverte*.

In the folder that was handed out to you, you will find a sampling of the reports that were broadcast throughout the summer. I'll admit to you that we didn't have to put in too much effort. There was an extremely surprising amount of traffic from journalists all summer long, which we were obviously thrilled about. We were frankly surprised by the attention.

The project even raised interest on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, as it related to law archives preserved in the Senate. To make a long story short, to our knowledge, a single law, dated April 1849, escaped the fire that destroyed the building the evening of April 25, 1849. That document, that law, can presently be found in the Senate archives. I had the chance to go see it for myself.

Up until now, in layers of debris from the fire, archeologists have found a few pieces of paper documents in a state that is unfortunately

very fragmented. The underground vault that held the official documents has yet to be found and excavated, which gives us hope for the future. Thousands of other less-perishable objects have been collected; they document and evoke aspects of parliamentary life and Canadian society from that era. Some objects are quite touching, even.

I brought with me a bit of a scoop—an interesting artefact that was found on the site. We can perhaps examine it during question period. I'll nevertheless give you a sneak peek. These are eyeglasses which were found in the debris of the fire. When the fire broke out, ministers were still in parliament that night. There was a quick evacuation. How is it that these particular eyeglasses were found in the debris, and how did they manage to be found intact?

● (0955)

Being an archaeologist myself, I know that in our profession we like to tell stories. You can easily imagine these glasses belonged to an MP who had to leave the building during all the commotion. We could tell a bunch of other stories too. Yet some stories are true and documented.

As you know, we will celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation in 2017 as well as the 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Montreal. These are significant circumstances. Since the Pointe-à-Callière Museum opened on Montreal's 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we will also be celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. So, what does the 2017 project entail?

It is a part of a major archaeological and historic complex that comprises three distinct sites, including the parliamentary site and the stone canal of the little river, which is a genuine jewel of civil engineering. It dates from the first half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. You can physically enter the sewer main and walk through it. The stone vault is extraordinary. In all of North America, it's probably the oldest subterranean stone canal. Canadians can really be proud of this. Given that it's not open to the public, it isn't very well known; but our goal is to make it accessible to all. Finally, there will be a new exhibition hall underneath the building that houses the Canadian government's customs agency. We are already in talks with people from Public Works Canada regarding the use of the site.

What is the importance of the Montreal Parliament site? It's a major symbol in Canadian history. In 1848, it was there where the responsible government law was voted upon. Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine and Robert Baldwin were in power. That law was sanctioned by the Governor General of that era, Lord Elgin. Other important laws were also voted upon there. We should also mention that the Fathers of Confederation sat at the Montreal Parliament, namely John A. Macdonald, George-Étienne Cartier, and Alexander Galt.

The project intended for 2017 is one of togetherness. It has the capacity to touch all Canadians. It is also one of identity, because it addresses the sensitive issue that is the agreement between peoples. We have a lot to learn from that period of history. It also underlines, in a tangible way, a founding element of Canadian democracy. This project embodies Canadian values that are important to share and transmit to current and future generations. Those values are ones of democracy, respect, and freedom. We are convinced that because of its importance and renown, the site of the Montreal Parliament will also become a major tourist site.

In conclusion, we recommend that this project become Canada's heritage legacy on the occasion of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation. The fact that it coincides with the 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Montreal enables us to join two important commemorations. Very few cities have the privilege of knowing their founding site, of having preserved the physical traces of every era of their history, and, above all, of having the ability to render it accessible to the Canadian population.

We have the exceptional opportunity to access a strongly symbolic and unifying space that is still intact under the surface and that, though unknown until recently, has already inspired great interest from the media and public alike. We need your support to ensure that this site does not once again sink into oblivion. Given that we're discussing loss and memory, I'd like to tell you a little story.

Last year, when we announced the project for the archaeological dig of the Montreal Parliament site, a collector came to us and offered us an extraordinary object.

• (1000)

[English]

I'll do my best to explain the reality of this emotional moment. This object was the coat of arms of Great Britain, which supposedly came from the Parliament that was in Montreal in the 19th century. This collector bought the object in an antique fair in New York state about 15 or 20 years ago.

When he bought it, he thought the object was interesting. The seller told him that it came from the Parliament in Montreal. The man didn't believe this story, but he found the object interesting, so he bought it and put it in the living room of his apartment in New York. When he read the article in *The Globe and Mail* last year, he realized that maybe the story was true. He came to us with the object and offered the coat of arms to Pointe-à-Callière. He asked us to do the research to check if the story could be true.

As you will see in the documents that we gave you today, I was very surprised and amazed that this object was, in fact, in the room of assembly, which is the equivalent of today's *Chambre des communes*. It was above the seat of the president of the assembly. Nobody knew that this object had been removed from the Parliament. We thought that except for the 20,000 books that were burned in the fire, only the portrait of Queen Victoria—which is now at the Senate in the Parliament here in Ottawa—had survived the huge fire.

We now have new information that there is this object. You have a picture in the documents we have provided. It's quite a big object and needs to be restored. It suffered from the event of the 19th

century and the strange subterranean life that it had after it left the Parliament. Now it's brought back into the light again. The image of this project is that it's a very strong and emotional project for people.

I thank you for your attention.

• (1005)

**The Chair:** *Merci beaucoup* to both of you for your very interesting presentations. They are helpful in the context of our study on our 150th anniversary.

I will start with Mr. Young for questions and answers.

**Mr. Terence Young:** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you both for coming here today. They were both fascinating presentations.

I want to take the opportunity to say to some officially involved with Just for Laughs that I think *Gags* is the funniest show, bar none, in Canada and on Canadian TV. I laugh just thinking about that show. It's very witty and very clever.

I also attended Expo 67, by the way, so I know how old you are now, André. You are my age, I guess, or maybe a little younger. I felt the excitement, too, and that's why I'm excited about this project. We have time to plan ahead now, so creative ideas are extremely helpful.

It makes sense to build on existing platforms, to build on success, and to build on professionals who have expertise in branding, marketing, and managing events in Quebec and the other provinces.

I have a question and would like your ideas, Mr. Picard. How do you develop national involvement and engagement to find the new talent, the younger people who don't have success yet? How do we get them more involved in this? We have six years to plan for it, so we want to have events that lead up to it. How can we get them involved, from all over Canada, in celebrating Canada?

**Mr. André Picard:** From the Just for Laughs perspective, we have a number of ways we do that. We have a worldwide scouting network that includes Canada. We have representatives, most of them part-time, some people who are in the entertainment business, and some people who are in other businesses but have a particular interest, love, and passion for comedy. I think you could repeat that. Cirque du Soleil has the same thing for the circus, where they go to Outer Mongolia, to the mine shafts of Russia, where they found a lot of their talent. There's a formal international scouting network that is kind of reproducible in any field of the arts.

The second thing is that, since we're in the entertainment business, as you underlined with the worldwide success of our *Gags*, we also have something in French called *En route vers mon premier gala*, which means "On the Road to My First Gala" or "On the Road to My First One-Man Show". We work specific events into our kind of television, media, and stage platform. They sometimes are done with a different broadcaster, an affiliated broadcaster—a smaller service—where we have on a year-round basis a vehicle to identify young people and engage them.

Also, people thought we were pretty crazy when we suggested the idea of creating a comedy school, but the same thing was said for television and radio 50 years ago. People said that you can't teach this, right? They said that either you're a genius or you have an inbred talent, that it instinctive, that you can't teach it. But you can teach comedy the same way you can teach sculpture or painting, etc., and it doesn't mean that some people aren't fantastic artists without going through that process.

I think there are formal pathways, some definitely media related, and the same thing exists today with user-generated media, which is a more informal, spontaneous, less organized or produced pathway. So I would say that in that frame, just in our business and a lot of related areas of the arts, there could be a number of projects that could go on.

Another example coming from Quebec is La Ligue Nationale d'Improvisation. This national improvisational league started as a bunch of comedians who wanted to improvise together on the basis of... I don't know if you know about this. It takes place in a small hockey rink, with a referee and different timed types of improvisation: one person, two-person duets, and team improvisation. Well, that went right into high school, CEGEPs, and universities and became a worldwide phenomenon, with a national championship.

So I think some ideas that seemed like just kernels of something that's a local happening that started on Le Plateau-Mont-Royal in Quebec became a phenomenon that went vertically and horizontally within the school system and society.

• (1010)

**Mr. Terence Young:** Thank you for such a fulsome answer. I know there's a lot more there too. I hope you're available for consultation over time.

Do you have any suggestions, just having thought about this since last Thursday, for themes for the celebration?

**Mr. André Picard:** No....

**Mr. Terence Young:** Okay.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Okay...?

We talked a little with the Australian High Commissioner about events outside of the country and how we could actually promote—or if there is an opportunity to promote—Canada's 150th outside of Canada. I was in Cyprus two years ago, I think, and *Just for Laughs* was actually on TV. It was one of the only things actually on TV in Cyprus; hopefully nobody gets offended, but it's a terrible place to watch TV. *Just for Laughs* was actually on and translated into Greek.

The only other place I've visited as a member of Parliament has been Taiwan, and of course *Just for Laughs* was also on Taiwan TV. I'm wondering if you know how many countries *Just for Laughs* is actually viewed in and if there is an opportunity for us to actually begin to promote Canada's 150th through *Just for Laughs*?

**Mr. André Picard:** We vary. For *Just for Laughs*, we've reached a peak of about 135 countries and about 98 airlines. The advantage of *Gags* is that gags are non-verbal. Non-verbal content is very powerful. The nature of airlines has evolved a bit with the back-of-seat screens.

We've had a similar program with Tourisme Québec for a number of years. We identify the locations of shootings that are emblematic or iconic Montreal locations, parks, etc.. We've redone the opening credits and the bumpers to identify Montreal and Quebec, as a tourism vehicle. We could easily do the same thing as one form of ambassadorship across the world. That's something that can be put in place rather early.

We've just launched *Just for Laughs Gags for Kids*, which is now looking like it's going to be a huge hit on the same scale.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Madame Boutin-Sweet.

[Translation]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think it won't be difficult to understand why I want to ask Ms. Pothier some questions. I know the museum very well. Unfortunately, you don't have that luck, so I would like for you to get to know it as well. I am aware that the archaeological sites that were discovered there are important not only to the history of the city of Montreal but also to that of the province and of Canada; I think Ms. Pothier communicated that well. There are things we know very little about in history. As an archaeologist myself, I didn't even know when I started working at the museum that the Canadian Parliament had been there. Facts that we know very little about, such as the fact that responsible government began there, etc., in my opinion demonstrate the importance of these sites.

When we met Minister Moore the other day, he suggested that prior to solidifying the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities, we should consult with various groups such as cities, provinces, etc. I would like to have an idea of the importance that the City of Montreal gives to the museum's projects, in particular the development project that is highlighting the Canadian Parliament.

• (1015)

**Ms. Louise Pothier:** They consider it extremely important. The very fact that they contributed up to 1.5 million dollars for the archaeological digs and for the project we completed this summer, the results of which will be seen at the beginning of 2012, demonstrate the City's interest. The digs were completed on a municipal site, a former parking lot that had been there for 80 years. I think the City wants to transform the space, and that alone is quite an important task, evidently. The City committed large sums of money in its three-year implementation plan over the next few years, in hopes that...actually, the goal for 2017, for the City of Montreal and for the government of Quebec, is an important one. Up until now, the City has shown interest in making a heritage legacy of the site for the its 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Already political will is onside, but it's a project that cannot be accomplished with the City alone. Obviously, if we combine the very nature of the site, which was the site of the Parliament, and the fact that we are celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation, I think that this alignment of the stars is a significant opportunity of which we must take advantage.

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** Thank you. You also spoke of projects that unite people, of activities that the museum has engaged in the past and that could be carried out, for example, with school children. Has the museum thought of specific things that could be done to bring together and unite different groups such as school children?

**Ms. Louise Pothier:** The museum already welcomes 100 000 children each year; we're talking about a loyal clientele. This includes school groups and groups of young people who come with their families.

For the past fifteen years, we've had a lot of on-site projects. These are educational projects, of course, but we've also had projects that use technology.

There are, for example, virtual exhibitions and online games. The museum has great expertise in this area, and it's something we want to explore.

We can often carry out uniting projects. When we say "uniting", in fact, we mean that they also reach people in places far from Montreal. We can make people come to Montreal, but we can also reach them where they are.

I'm thinking of social media such as Facebook, for example. We can, of course, launch various projects across Canada to reach kids. We can also create educational sites to communicate this piece of history which most Canadians know very little about.

It is a page of history of which I myself knew very little prior to working at the museum. I think we have a lot of work to do. I can guarantee you that there will be no lack of projects seeking to unite the population and interest them in this historic event.

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** What kind of cooperation do you envision from the federal government?

**Ms. Louise Pothier:** The federal government already worked with Pointe-à-Callière for the museum's creation in 1992. It's nothing new; it wouldn't be a first.

We already work with the Department of Canadian Heritage for various projects. We already work with Public Works and Government Services Canada as well as with the Canada Revenue Agency. To make a long story short, the museum's archaeological complex houses the first customs agency of Montreal, the Canadian customs office of Montreal. The Montreal customs office is still located within the Pointe-à-Callière perimeter.

It's collaborative work. We do certainly see it in the context of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I think it's a matter of continuing rather than initiating collaboration with the government. It's really a continuation. It's a well-established tradition with the Government of Canada.

I'm not sure if that answers your question.

• (1020)

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** Yes, that answers my question, thank you.

Do I still have time available to me?

[English]

**The Chair:** You have 20 seconds.

[Translation]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** Do you have any other partners for the project?

**Ms. Louise Pothier:** This project has a certain scope; we're talking about a project of around 70 million dollars. We'll be working with the City of Montreal and the Government of Quebec. We are undertaking a private financing campaign. One of the main issues is operations.

The planned private funding is estimated at around 10 million dollars for this project. So, there are partners at every level.

[English]

**The Chair:** *Merci.*

Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I thought we were going back the other way again.

**The Chair:** Well, we started a new—

**An hon. member:** A new round after—

**The Chair:** —round, so it was seven.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I think the last time we started a new round, it didn't.... Anyway, I just go by direction—

**The Chair:** You have six and a half minutes.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Good Lord. That sounds like my ex-wife.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I'm sorry. I said that out loud, didn't I?

**An hon. member:** Do tell.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** For the record....

One of the concepts you talked about was that the fact that here you have this one city that has this theme, but yet is host to a cross-section of cities and communities across the country. It's akin to what you talked about with the Olympics thing; I think it was Moses' idea.

**Mr. André Picard:** Yes.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** That caught my attention. I think it would be a pretty good idea. Let's celebrate the fact that we have one of the greatest places in the world for entertainers, and certainly on a per capita basis, I'd say the greatest in the world, given the amount of talent that's out there in the world, talent being subjective in nature, but you get the idea—very famous, certainly.

Perhaps Montreal could be a place to celebrate the entertainers of yesterday, today, and tomorrow in a place like that. If you had another type of theme, such as governance, it might be in some other city. I like this idea.

In the case of Expo 67, there was a certain sense—and I apologize, because you were there, and Mr. Young was there too—of Canadian identity that came out of it. Can you tell me, as someone who was not there, how that was the case? I look at all the pavilions celebrating great cultures of the world. How did we find our footing as Canadians?

**Mr. André Picard:** To me, and as they say on television, to the best of my recollection, first of all, the passport was fantastic. Because it was a Canadian passport; you had that in your hand. Sometimes there are devices or symbols, and we have such an artifact there: that passport has become a modern-day artifact.

Second, I'd say that the Canadian pavilion was very distinctive in its shape and form. Architecture shapes the space we live in. Architecture now is not only in the spaces we live in, but there's a form of architecture on the web.

You have to think physically and virtually, and at the same time, I think, as we were mentioning, because that's part of what's called in English "outreach programs". But in this case, you have to think of outreach from day one. Historically, we often think of outreach after we've done our project, but now, visionary organizations start thinking about outreach as they manage the program. I'd think of that as well.

On the site, each province, if I remember, had a pavilion. The logo was also a very expressive logo. All those details count.

The Ontario pavilion was the hottest place in town, if you can believe that in Montreal. They had rock shows and performances every night that were the talk of the place. I was a little bit too young for that, but the bigger brothers, as the first-born.... The older brothers and sisters were there all the time, and the experiences within the Canadian pavilions were fantastic.

•(1025)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Yes, I like the idea of the general themes, of a provincial pavilion and that sort of thing, and of people from across the country being able to experience what it's like to live in the Yukon. Being from the other side of the country, I think that would be very interesting to me.

It seemed to me that at Expo 67 and then onwards to the mid-1970s, being Canadian became more tangible. I think we actually felt it was something we could talk about without being ambiguous about what it was to be a Canadian. Perhaps this can reinvigorate that.

**Mr. André Picard:** Yes, and the bilingual nature of the country was well reflected there in the hiring and training policies.

One of the films done by Graeme Ferguson and produced by Robert Kerr—they were two of the three founders of IMAX—was maybe the first bilingual film in history. It had a simultaneous French- and English-language track in a theme pavilion about the great north that featured the aboriginal people of Canada. It's a case of giving lot of attention to detail and having creative people interpret what are sometimes abstract cultural and social objectives.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Madame, I really like the idea of having a legacy based on what has been discovered recently. That's a fantastic idea, for the record; I'm really interested in this. I read about it briefly, and now that I have the material, I think it's a great discovery. It's probably going to be a lasting legacy to what we were about to become, more so than to what we were at the time. A lot of it was realized.

When it comes to the establishment of a model parliament per se, what kind of funding is necessary now to get it up to the level you outline in your diagrams?

**Ms. Louise Pothier:** The broad portrait is \$70 million. Your question is about the cost, right?

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Basically, yes.

**Ms. Louise Pothier:** If we think only about the parliament side, I would estimate that it's between \$25 million and \$30 million.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** That's for the parliamentary chambers, you mean?

**Ms. Louise Pothier:** Yes. It's an underground site. It is just below the surface of the parking lot that was there. It was a very large building, 100 metres long. What we will do with it depends on the budget we have, and to what extent we will do the *mise en valeur* or make it available to the public depends on the budget we will have.

It can be extensive or... But what we are dealing with is not to occupy the complete space of the site; we want to reserve probably the north half of the site for future generations, so we will leave it intact, to make sure that it is relevant enough and significant enough to understand and visualize what it was at that time. It is to be able to show an important part of the site.

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

Mr. Hillyer, you will have the last couple of minutes.

**Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC):** Thank you.

Mr. Picard, how can we use Canada 150 to inspire Canadians not just about Canada is, but about what Canada can become? You talked about the Cirque du Soleil, the Formula 1 races in Montreal, IMAX, etc., and about being inspired by the centennial celebrations. I think that if we're too prescriptive in what Canada can become—or had people been too prescriptive in 1967—people really wouldn't be inspired to come up with new ideas.

How can we do this? We have to say "here is what Canada can become" without being too prescriptive. Do you have any thoughts on that?

•(1030)

**Mr. André Picard:** It's a tough question to answer simply. I was asked about specific themes, and that's really an even deeper question, but to answer this one leads a little bit to what you're saying.

To me, it's about hope and dreaming. Obviously there's the issue of budgets, as you saw in the case of this project. I have read about it a little bit in the papers, but there is a whole scale as to how far you can go and what you can make possible. Obviously the confluence of Expo 67 and the centennial in an economic boom time is not reproducible, certainly on that scale. It's to set broad social, cultural, and possibly even economic goals, and then trust artists, interpreters, museum creators to interpret them.



Some institutions were saying when we met before that they have a bit of a challenge planning on a year-to-year basis. Obviously that's not possible for a museum; they have projects that can go on a 25- to 30-year scale. But there are many projects across Canada that are in phase one, phase two, or phase three. Let's not ignore those either and just try to do the "new" new thing, which is very popular these days. Let's also give some scope to things that haven't been thought of before; give budgets and find a focal point for them. That's the advantage of an international and national exhibition or the Olympics: it's a focal point.

It's a combination: finding what in our business and marketing you call tent poles, to use an image from the circus—you have to spread it out but have a few key tent poles with institutions, locations, and events—but letting artists and interpreters come back to you with their interpretation of what you're suggesting, as you've started to do here, and as I think historically in Canada we have done. Whatever age they are, I think you'll be surprised.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Picard and Ms. Pothier.

We really appreciate both of you being here today. They were very interesting presentations. We're just starting our study on

Canada 150 and your input is very valuable. We'll look to it again in the future.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet:** Before we close the session, I'd like to present a modification to the agenda, please. After having discussed it with Mr. Calandra—as you know we like to work together—we would like to collaborate on changes to my motion. I agree with him; it's fine with me. I would like to postpone the debate on my motion to the Committee's next session, please.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

So is it the committee's will that we continue on—

**A voice:** [*Inaudible—Editor*]

**The Chair:** —or is there still some committee business? Okay?

We'll move in camera now for committee business.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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