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The Honourable Rob Moore

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

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•(1110)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC)): We'll get started.

The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage is meeting today on our study of Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017. I'm very pleased to have a great panel of witnesses with us here today.

Welcome to all of our witnesses.

From the Canadian Museums Association, we have John McAvity, executive director; Kirstin Evenden, vice-president of the board and president and chief executive officer of the Glenbow Museum; and Benoît Légaré, board member and director.

From the Confederation Centre of the Arts, we have Jessie Inman, chief executive officer.

From the Société des musées québécois, we have Pierre Landry, president.

Again, welcome to all of you.

The way we proceed is that you'll all be given some time to make your opening presentation. Usually it's ten minutes, but we can be a little bit flexible today. Then we will have an opportunity for our members to ask some questions of you.

With that, I will turn it over to John McAvity from the Canadian Museums Association.

Mr. John McAvity (Executive Director, Canadian Museums Association): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

We are very happy to be here.

I am here with my colleague, Kirstin Evenden, president of the Glenbow Museum, and Benoît Légaré from Montréal. He was the director of the Montreal Science Centre and before that he was the secretary general of the Musées de Strasbourg.

[English]

The Canadian Museums Association is the national organization for museums. We represent approximately 2,000 museums, ranging from small community museums, often volunteer-run, to large metropolitan galleries.

It's very important to mention to you how popular these institutions are. They receive about 60 million visits per year. They're extraordinarily important, not just to our tourism industry

but also to the fabric of our community as educational centres, as meeting spots, as places of tolerance, and as places of respect for civilized society.

At the very beginning we'd like to point out how very pleased we were with the federal budget last week. I want to do that because the federal budget last week clearly showed the value and importance of museums that Canada and Canadians place in these institutions. We are thankful for this vote of confidence. In particular, we're very pleased to see a significant increase to the travelling exhibitions indemnification program.

We want to thank all members on both sides of this table. We've met with you. We've appreciated your support on this and we look forward to continuing that relationship.

There are, however, two specific recommendations from the federal budget that we would like to present very quickly to you.

First, we're pleased to see an increase in youth employment. In particular, we'd like to see a little bit of that money trickle down to our Young Canada Works program in museums. It's a very valuable program, which has been seriously oversubscribed. We have to turn down 50% of employers applying for jobs, and we have to turn down 90% of applicants seeking internships in museums and galleries in Canada.

Second, there was a recommendation that we've made before to the finance committee, and possibly to you, and that is an innovative way to get Canadians more involved in their heritage. This is by developing greater philanthropy and private support—a diversity of funding for our sector. We're proposing a matching donations program called “Canadians Supporting Their Heritage Fund”, which would help stabilize museum funding and encourage greater long-term self-reliance. We also believe this could be a very appropriate legacy project in the context of the study you're undertaking.

Now I'd like to invite Kirstin Evenden to speak more about 2017.

[Translation]

Ms. Kirstin Evenden (Vice-President of the Board, President and Chief Executive Officer, Glenbow Museum, Canadian Museums Association): Thank you, John.

Thank you very much.

Prior to this consultation about events celebrating Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, the CMA and its board of directors organized a series of consultations for members and museum directors across Canada. The process is ongoing, and some excellent ideas and suggestions have come out of the consultations. We want to share those ideas with you today.

Today, I would like to share three major recommendations drawn from all of the ideas our members have put forward. Then my colleague Benoît Légaré will present more detailed programming suggestions.

[English]

Firstly, in 1967 Canada celebrated its centennial year in a really comprehensive manner, from Expo '67 in Montreal to small community projects. Virtually every community participated in a way, and we saw the emergence of hundreds of new museums in our cities and small towns. Major new buildings were opened across the country, such as the Nova Scotia Museum, the Ontario Science Centre, the Manitoba Museum, and more. Small community museums were also built as legacy gifts.

The impact of what happened in 1967 should not be underestimated. It is still felt today by our children and by our grandchildren. So this is really an opportunity for us to consider the role of culture broadly in our way of life in Canada and what it can do for our country in the future.

For 2017 we do not recommend large-scale capital projects of the magnitude we saw in 1967. Given the economic climate, we believe it's just not appropriate to create new museums. However, many existing museum buildings built during that time and beyond require upgrades and expansions. Collections care is an ongoing issue from an infrastructure point of view. Some collections are housed in facilities inappropriate to properly caring for these national treasures for the future. Our facilities need upgrading so that we can welcome our visitors in a way they have become accustomed to being welcomed throughout the world at other museums.

These issues and areas of expansion and consideration are things we should look at, if any capital funds are available to these institutions.

Secondly, we recommend the establishment of a formal multi-year grants program to begin the development and implementation of the celebratory projects as soon as possible. Additional funding from the private sector should and will be sought. Some projects can be fully funded from private sources, while others require federal investments. A multi-year grant program will ensure that the tight timelines are met and will take into consideration the ancillary anniversaries leading up to the 150th anniversary of Canada.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage has already outlined a number of these special opportunities to you, in his appearance here on October 20, 2011.

Thirdly, we would like to propose that we ensure these celebrations are inclusive for all Canadians, with special recognition given to our Canadian diversity and our aboriginal roots as a country. Museums should, with a presentation of artifacts and of our intangible cultural heritage, celebrate the people, the stories, the songs, the traditions, the ideas that continue to shape this country.

These celebrations, these moments to come together, are about looking back, but they are about looking back so that we can move forward, continuing to innovate and to build Canada's cultural and heritage sector.

A legacy project like the matching donations program that John mentioned would help make that possible and would help bring buy-in to these activities across all sectors, private and public.

We would like to applaud you for this early start on the planning process at this level. We want to ensure that the results as a result of this planning process are significant and meaningful to all Canadians and all Canadians who follow us in the future.

Benoît.

•(1115)

Mr. Benoît Légaré (Board Member, Director of Museology, Mécénat conseil inc.; Canadian Museums Association): Thank you, Kirstin.

Good morning, everyone.

We have received a great number of programming concepts around the 150th anniversary from members and directors, some of which we would like to share with you today. These ideas can be grouped into overarching approaches: projects of national scope, which are implemented on a collective basis, and projects that each museum and gallery would undertake on their own in collaboration with others in their area.

[Translation]

Partnerships and collaboration are key to the success of all major events. For the 150th anniversary, collaboration should go beyond museums to include partnerships with crown corporations, the private sector, and existing organizations and major events, such as the Canada Day celebrations here in Ottawa and in London, England.

With respect to projects of national scope, we would like to highlight the following five initiatives, which we recommend.

The first is to offer free admission to museums for a certain period, a gift to all Canadians. Many museums already offer free admission on July 1, but for 2017, we suggest extending that from National Aboriginal Day on June 21 to July 1, a period that includes Saint-Jean-Baptiste. Funding will be needed to offset the loss of revenue because that is a busy time for museums. It is the end of the school year and lots of school groups visit museums around that time.

The second idea is to create a Canadian heritage passport that would encourage people to visit the country's museums, galleries and historic sites, and have their passport stamped at each location. The passport program would include a national ad campaign and prizes for participation.

The third idea is a national marketing campaign to promote various museum activities across the country and to raise awareness of the importance and value of our history and culture. That being said, regardless of which 150th anniversary initiatives are undertaken, I think that a large-scale campaign will be needed to coordinate major initiatives.

The fourth idea is to create major exhibits. This could mean major exhibits in larger museums or travelling exhibits that criss-cross the country by train, like the centennial train in 1967. Obviously the virtual aspect is part of it and can be developed along with strategies that constitute a nod to the past. I think that we should really focus on virtual strategies to encourage people to participate. There could be a virtual exhibit with images, archives and key artifacts from each museum, all tied together as part of the 150th anniversary, or a multimedia exhibit in partnership with CBC/Radio-Canada for example and other national media outlets to broadcast a program about 150 artifacts and artworks that define Canada.

The fifth and final idea is a national recognition program. The first element would be the creation of a medal to honour 150 museum volunteers across the country together with our colleagues from provincial and territorial associations. The second element would be the creation of a national museum of the year, art gallery of the year or science centre of the year award that members of the public can vote on, like the VotemyFundy campaign to designate the Bay of Fundy as a wonder of nature.

At local and provincial levels, suggestions include encouraging and supporting museums seeking to develop and present special exhibits that celebrate the history of their communities, such as with 150 objects, as well as offering behind-the-scenes tours so that people can see how museums work, outreach activities where museums take exhibits and programs to places like hospitals, care homes, schools, airports, tourism offices and so on.

• (1120)

[English]

Finally, at a professional level, the 150th anniversary represents a good opportunity for the heritage sector to invest in its future. The idea of investing in research and development, in establishing special fellowships and professional exchanges, and in exploring innovations in cross-sector partnerships and national forums will all build the museum of tomorrow and ensure the long-term sustainability of our cultural institutions.

As you can see, many good ideas are coming forward to showcase our rich heritage and culture in 2017 and throughout the many events leading up to it. The CMA is prepared to take the lead in sponsoring and managing many of these, working in partnership with our colleagues from the heritage sector.

Thank you very much. We are ready to answer your questions.

The Chair: Thank you to the CMA. Thank you for your testimony.

Now we will move to the Confederation Centre of the Arts. Jessie Inman.

[Translation]

Ms. Jessie Inman (Chief Executive Officer, Confederation Centre of the Arts): Hello ladies and gentlemen. I am very happy to be here today.

[English]

I would like to thank this important committee for inviting me here today to talk about the 150th anniversary of our great country, and also to thank the committee for your proactive approach and

early consideration for what will undoubtedly be a celebration to excite all Canadians and astound the world.

As a living memorial to the Fathers of Confederation built at the birthplace of our great nation, the Confederation Centre of the Arts pays a lively tribute to Canada's founding and ongoing development as a nation. Our representation is reflective of the achievements that began with the Charlottetown Conference of 1864, and encompass the evolution of each and every Canadian province and territory.

The dream of an architecturally stunning national arts centre located in the highly sought out national and international tourist destination came to fruition in 1964. Located in Prince Edward Island, the Confederation Centre of the Arts is a multi-functional professional arts facility.

Recognized internationally for its contributions to Canada's performing arts, the centre offers four theatre facilities that can house up to 2,500 people. The centre is also home to the Confederation Centre art gallery, with 35,000 square feet of space and a permanent art collection of over 16,000 works of art.

As a whole, the centre offers countless programs for art education and training of children and youth, including a new school for the performing arts. Volunteerism through the Friends of the Confederation Centre of the Arts, and extended through the staff in our daily practice, is our way of life.

The centre also operates a gift shop and a restaurant and services large conventions and banquets. Annually 250,000 people of all ages participate in the centre's programming.

The centre is home to the Charlottetown Festival and Canada's longest running musical, *Anne of Green Gables—The Musical*, which has drawn millions of visitors from around the world to P.E.I. We have toured Anne extensively across Canada, the U.S.A., England, Germany, and Japan.

The festival, which opened in 1965, has produced over 70 original theatre productions and employs actors, dancers, musicians, and artistic creators and directors from across the country.

Today the centre is governed by a national board of directors representing almost every Canadian province and territory. It is committed, through heritage and the arts, to engage and empower the imagination of our youth and their unique ability to learn; to honour and build on the vision of the founders of Canada; to strengthen our national identity; and to increase the culture and economic wealth of all Canadians. All of this culminates in a vibrant facility serving Canadian and international communities, while stimulating minds and enriching lives.

The Confederation Centre of the Arts has been a cultural leader in many of the celebrations that have taken place in Canada and abroad over the past 48 years. The first was the opening of the centre itself in 1964, a grand affair drawing international attention and a royal delegation. With funds raised from the provinces and matched by Prime Minister Diefenbaker, the centre was opened in October by Her Royal Majesty, the Queen of England, Elizabeth II, with premiers and VIPs present from all provinces, and the Prime Minister of the day, Lester B. Pearson, who stated that:

[The Fathers of Confederation Memorial Building] is a tribute to those famous men who founded our Confederation. But it is also dedicated to the fostering of those things that enrich the mind and delight the heart, those intangible but precious things that give meaning to a society and help create from it a civilization and a culture.

In 2004 the centre celebrated its 40th anniversary as Canada's national memorial to the founding. The Charlottetown Festival was a major component of the 40th anniversary celebrations. One of the highlights in July of that year was a tribute to all of the stars who were on our stages and in our galleries, including the late Norman Campbell, one of the co-creators of *Anne of Green Gables—The Musical*.

The same year, the centre initiated an exciting new heritage program, the Symons Medal and Lecture Series. This annual lecture features prominent Canadians focusing on national issues such as politics, business, arts and culture, and heritage.

The National Vision Committee seeks to expand Canadians' understanding of the centre's national purpose and significance and to strengthen its capacity to contribute further to the Canadian community and Canadian unity.

In 2007 our youth chorus performed in front of thousands of war veterans, dignitaries, and international media in France at the official dedication of the restored Canadian national memorial at Vimy Ridge. They have been invited to participate again in the 100th anniversary ceremonies of the battle of Vimy Ridge in 2017.

In 2008 we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the publishing of the novel *Anne of Green Gables*, by Lucy Maud Montgomery. Everyone went behind the scenes of the beloved musical, to meet with the cast and crew and to hear a free orchestra presentation of the musical score of *Anne*.

• (1125)

In 2010 the Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver showcased Canadian heritage, Canadian achievements, Canadian belonging, and Canadian pride, and we were thrilled to have the opportunity to be a part of that amazing event. As the secretariat for what the media called the “gold medal cultural pavilion”, the centre helped to lead the events management, marketing and communications, staffing and programming that helped to present Canada to the world. Hundreds of Canadian artists and artisans were featured. The centre presented on an international stage, participating in a cultural Olympiad, which was broadcast live to 30 million viewers worldwide.

In 2011, as part of the Cultural Capitals of Canada partnership, our Confederation Centre Young Company was thrilled to present the first ever all-first-nations cast at the Charlottetown Festival, *The Talking Stick*, written by first nations playwright Cathy Elliott.

The success of these past celebrations has some common themes; that is, the compulsion of community engagement at the grassroots level, recognition and celebration of our founders and their bold imaginations, and thinking beyond our borders, whether those borders be provincial or national or simply beyond the borders of our imagination.

The path to 2017: Contributing to the branding of Canada as an arts nation, both on the national and international scene, is interwoven through everything we seek to achieve for this very important celebration. This is our opportunity to give substantially to each other things that enrich the mind and delight the heart, those intangible but precious things that give meaning to a society and help create from it a civilization and a culture. Our vision for 2017 is a grassroots movement that inspires every Canadian by honouring our past, celebrating the present, and planning for the bold future of Canada's artistic and cultural offerings.

In 2014 the centre will be celebrating its own 50th anniversary and the 150th anniversary of the first meeting of the Fathers of Confederation at the Charlottetown Conference. Plans are under way to mark these momentous occasions and encompass all of Canada in the celebrations. Such plans are precursors to Canada's 150th birthday in 2017, and I expect they will include a new theatre pavilion, meeting national building and safety codes; the creation and production and tour of the next great Canadian musical; a national commemorative sculpture erected on the centre's plaza; enhanced presentation of *CANADA ROCKS!*, the hit musical revue featuring well-known Canadian performers; the expansion of the Symons Medal and Lecture Series to involve multiple Canadian leaders; a book and a television documentary highlighting the many outstanding activities carried out by the centre; and the presentation of the Confederation Players, a group of students who portray the Fathers of Confederation present during the 1864 conference. Several of these projects will come to fruition in 2014, with the objective of living on through to 2017. Others will just gain momentum in 2014, with plans to launch them during the sesquicentennial.

The 150th birthday of Canada needs to focus not only on the history of one of the world's most celebrated and beloved countries and the contributions of iconic Canadians, but also the future of the country as a nation the world looks to as a model. A theme might be “from there to here, moving forward to a bold new future”. The wonderful imaginative logo created by the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation, as shown to us by Doug Knight at the Arts Summit in Banff this past weekend, should be made available as soon as possible to all Canadians so they can use it everywhere in their daily lives.

In a country that was built by the railroad, galvanized by the national highway, and now instantly linked by the information highway, the Canada of the future looks forward to new trails and inroads blazed by collaborative innovations in arts, culture, and science. For me, this logo represents all of that and more.

The possibilities and approaches to engage Canadians are vast and almost endless. Campaigns and outreach initiatives should be multi-tiered and should take place at the grassroots level and at regional, provincial, and federal levels. When history is expressed through artistic interpretation, learning becomes a pleasure. At the centre we express ourselves through the visual and performing arts. We are considering a number of theatre projects, which we are convinced all Canadians and visitors will enjoy. Among the projects being considered for 2017 are *1864: The Musical*, an inventive take on the founding of Canada populated by characters like Sir John A. Macdonald and D'Arcy McGee; *Remember to Keep Dancing*, a tribute to innovative Canadian choreographer, director, and theatre pioneer Alan Lund; and *We Are Canadian!*, an extension of the series of plays written for the Confederation Centre Young Company, which celebrates the lives and cultures of all Canadians.

• (1130)

The Confederation Centre has undertaken a legacy project that will not only will celebrate the 150th anniversary of Canada, but will distinguish Canada as a world leader in art, music, and technology. Our project is "The Next Great Canadian Musical", a theatrical event that promises to redefine live performance in our country and around the world. It will challenge our citizens to cooperate for a productive, healthy, socially and culturally integrated future, and will honour the abundance of our natural resources. We are partnering with established playwrights, poets, musicians, technicians, choreographers, and designers to construct an original theatrical context.

We are also in the early stages of developing a major visual arts exhibition concerning architectural projects that were prepared as part of Canada's program of centennial celebrations during the 1960s. As you are all aware, projects commemorating the 1967 centennial of Confederation were sponsored by all levels of government. Despite their role as markers, these projects were not nostalgic, but rather expressed Canada's desire to be understood as a modern, progressive, forward-looking nation entering its second century. As such, they constitute an important documentary record of the national identity, values, and aspirations of the day.

Since the Confederation Centre of the Arts was the first federal centennial project to be completed, in 1964, this exhibit would help celebrate our 50th in 2014, tour nationally between 2014 and 2017, and finally culminate in an exhibition at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, which was the final federal centennial project to be completed, in 1969.

In addition to plans in place at the Confederation Centre of the Arts, there are many initiatives that can take place on a national level.

A live concert simulcast could take place from five major Canadian cities, from the steps of Parliament in Ottawa to the steps of the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlottetown, and every capital city in the country. We should include Canadian embassies around the globe; there are 2.8 million Canadians living outside of Canada. The concert could showcase the best in Canadian talent, telling the story of Canada to date as well as visions of the Canada of tomorrow.

Educational programs could be built into school curricula to give an innovative, fresh perspective on the history of Canada, and to

reinforce learning and critical thinking as part of our culture. Students of all ages could participate in an essay contest on why it's great to be a Canadian. The contest could be run across the country, with the winner reciting their essay on the steps of Province House in P.E.I. during a national broadcast.

Totem poles could be commissioned in each province, telling the history of their region. Time-lapse videos could be produced and broadcast. A possible partner might be Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

New Canadians, part of our proud multicultural society, could be celebrated across the country with a synchronized swearing-in ceremony. This might be a live webcast or TV broadcast. We would be happy to host it on our plaza.

Canada Day celebrations might include a national drum circle, with artists representing Canadian cultures on our plaza, each representing a different Canadian culture, whether that be Celtic, aboriginal, classic, or ethnic.

Vignettes could be produced with children telling stories that have been passed through their families dating back to the generations from the time of Confederation. The videos could be made available for all Canadians.

Volunteers from local communities will participate, as will not-for-profits and the public and private sectors across the country.

The Confederation Centre of the Arts is a national institution and is ideally suited to host activities for the 150th. Situated in the cradle of Confederation, it is not only Canada's only national memorial to the founding of the nation, it is a well-oiled machine teeming with talent and ability. We are ready to be a major participant in the 2017 celebrations. We have the experience. As host to millions of visitors for the past 48 years, we know how to host a party, whether it be in Charlottetown, another place in Canada, or any place in the world.

I sincerely thank each and every one of you for providing me with this opportunity to join you in this dialogue about how we might celebrate Canada's 150th birthday; how all Canadians can give Canada many gifts; how birthday parties in communities across the nation will take place and set us on a path that unites us, celebrates our unique heritage and culture, and our prominent position on the world stage; and how blessed we are, as we enter our next 150 years, to create a future that is innovative, transformative, stimulating, and above all, one that is Canadian.

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

Thank you very much.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you for your presentation.

Now, finally, we'll go to Pierre Landry, from the Société des musées québécois.

Mr. Pierre Landry (President, Société des musées québécois): I first want to thank the committee for hosting us.

I'm Pierre Landry, president of the Société des musées québécois. I'm also general director of the Musée du Bas-Saint-Laurent à Rivière-du-Loup, a small institution. So my way of seeing things comes from both being president of the SMQ, and from being the head of a small museum in Rivière-du-loup, Quebec. I'd like to say that the positions of the SMQ are quite consistent with those of the CMA, as we work in the same area.

[Translation]

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to begin by sincerely thanking the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage for inviting me here today as president of the SMQ to participate in the committee's study of Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017.

The Société des musées québécois is made up of 300 museums from all over Quebec. It goes without saying that the representative of this huge network is an important stakeholder in matters concerning the many facets of our culture and heritage.

Celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Confederation in 1967 involved major infrastructure investments in Quebec and Canada, including in the cultural sector. Countless cultural centres, libraries, theatres, museums and concert halls were built to mark the centennial in a lasting and meaningful way.

However, because this is a 150th anniversary, not a centennial, and given the precarious state of public finances, I feel that the celebrations we are discussing today should be more modest. That being said, we still believe that the event should be celebrated with flair and that we should come together to express our attachment to our values and history. We think that it would be wise to ensure that a significant portion of the moneys allocated to this celebration have a lasting and significant impact on our institutions, as was the case in 1967.

Canada as a whole and Quebec in particular have hundreds and hundreds of museums whose mission is to promote culture and heritage. Whether these institutions enjoy significant funding and professional management or whether they survive thanks to the hard work of volunteers, passion and diligence are both key to their success. These museums, interpretive centres, historic sites and heritage sites are the foundation of our collective memory. They protect and promote it. People who work in these institutions protect the most precious and delicate parts of our culture while sharing knowledge and information. With deep roots in our communities, these institutions play a major role in creating a sense of belonging and promoting social integration. Moreover, each of these institutions boasts impressive expertise in heritage interpretation, exhibit creation and activities that combine play and learning.

Yet many of these institutions are having a hard time making ends meet. Either funding from various levels of government has not risen with inflation over the past few years—it was not necessarily decreased—or a number of programs have been changed or eliminated, or the private sector is not involved enough. Museums in Quebec and Canada are desperately short of funds. As a result, people are being laid off, and those who still have jobs are working longer, tougher hours. Collections and heritage buildings are

deteriorating, exciting programs will never see the light of day, museum professionals are getting discouraged, and there are no new professionals coming on stream.

Canada's 150th anniversary could provide a unique opportunity to change that. Commemorative events could be combined with major investments to strengthen Canada's museum network, the flagship of our culture and heritage and guardian of our memories and communities. Combined with a sense of celebration, new funding could support research, provide financial support for exhibits or special activities related to various elements of Canada's history and culture, or pay for renovations and updates. Moneys allocated to museums would benefit the network and strengthen it. As was the case following Canada's centennial celebrations, the 150th anniversary celebrations could give people a better sense of our country, put them in a festive mood and place an entire segment of the knowledge, research and conservation industry on firmer footing so that it can contemplate a better future.

● (1140)

We also have to keep in mind the fact that there are many perspectives on Canada's history, which is what makes it so rich. First nations people interpret our history in a much different way than newcomers, explorers and adventurers told it. Acadians, Quebecers and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador did not experience history in the same way as the Loyalists who populated Ontario or the Metis in Canada's West.

To reflect certain elements of that history, we think it is important to emphasize that the content should be up to the institutions that are authorized to submit proposals should there be a call for proposals and that funds should be awarded based on merit as determined by peer committees without political interference. We think that this is essential to ensuring the integrity of our institutions, the plurality of voices, free will and a critical eye, which are all values that we believe underpin any democracy.

Mr. Minister, ladies and gentlemen of the House of Commons, thank you once again for giving the Société des musées québécois an opportunity to speak here today.

Thank you.

● (1145)

[English]

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Landry.

Thank you all for your presentations. There were some very specific recommendations in there, and those will give our committee plenty to consider as we work towards our recommendations in this regard.

Now we'll begin our question and answer time. First up is Mr. Young.

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

Welcome, everyone. Thank you very much for coming today. We've had some really excellent and very interesting presentations.

I wanted to ask Mr. McAvity—is that how you pronounce your name?

Mr. John McAvity: That's close, and I've been called worse, let me tell you. It's "Ma-ca-vit-y".

Mr. Terence Young: Thank you for coming.

As you may be aware, the government introduced certainly the thickest budget and probably the biggest and longest budget in decades just last week. There's so much in it that a lot of it gets missed in the media. I guess they will cover a lot of it in the coming weeks.

One of the things that has been missed generally is this indemnification program for museums and galleries, etc. It's the kind of thing that sounds pretty dry, but I understand it's very important to what you do in museums and galleries. I wonder if you wouldn't mind explaining to the committee what the program allows you to do, what it does, how it works, and also how much money it might save you if you in fact had to buy insurance for everything you did. What does it allow you to do with works and with having them travelling between institutions, etc.?

Mr. John McAvity: The program was established in 1999, I believe...or was it 1996? It has been a tremendous success. If anything, the problem it's had has been its own success.

Artworks have become more valuable. What it does is allow museums to get protection, not for the entire exhibition, but for most of the value of it.

Last week Mr. Flaherty raised that from \$400 million to \$600 million of coverage. The total that will be indemnified when all the regulations and amendments to the legislation have been put in place will be \$3 billion per year. That sounds like a lot of money, but in the world of big art, of works by Van Gogh and Picasso, it isn't really that much.

This is actually tremendous news for Canadians. Canadians will have the opportunity, because of this program and the increase in it, to see works of art that they would just not normally have the opportunity to see. So it's a great news opportunity.

So far this program has really cost the Government of Canada nothing more than two, I believe, or three person-years to administer it. There has never been a claim on the program. In part that's because of the high standards the museums are able to maintain. It's imperative that those high standards stay there, because we don't want to see a big claim.

The program has been a great success. It doesn't really save the museums operating money, because these major exhibitions are financed through corporate sponsorship, through higher ticket prices, and so on, but it will effectively allow them to do more exhibitions and to bring them in.

It also gives the seal of approval of the Government of Canada to these activities, so it makes it easier to get loans from international collectors or museums. These are all very positive things. We were very pleased with the improvement to the program announced last week.

Mr. Terence Young: Thank you very much.

Madam Inman, the first time I went to the Charlottetown Festival at the Confederation Centre of the Arts was 1971. My brother was 16 years old, playing the lead in the musical *Joey*. We drove down east to Charlottetown to see the show. It was an unforgettable experience. It's an island paradise.

I wanted to ask you about what you are going to be doing. Your presentation was fascinating. It was full of really good ideas. There were so many I'm going to have to reread it. Thank you for that.

Specifically, what are you going to do to attract Canadians to visit the island leading up to 2017? Is it any or all of what you are describing? With regard to young Canadians, there are two things they should do for sure. One is to visit the Rocky Mountains. The other is to visit P.E.I. and our other great cities.

Leading up to 2017, what are you planning to do to attract more Canadians to P.E.I. and the Confederation Centre of the Arts?

• (1150)

Ms. Jessie Inman: Thank you for the compliments to our beautiful province. I'm very glad that you have been there.

Leading up to 2014, we have plans under way to attract attention to the new musical we are going to develop about Canada's abundant natural resources. We're going to cooperate with playwrights, composers, orchestrators, and artistic people from right across the country. We plan to tour that nationally between 2014 and 2017. It will start in Charlottetown in 2014, and then tour nationally so that it's available to all Canadians, not just those who visit Prince Edward Island. That's one way we're going to engage them. There will also be an educational package. We're going to take it into the schools across the country. It will not just talk about the musical itself, but the heritage of our great country and what we want to do with it. That is the content of the musical too. That's one way we are going to attract people.

Our Symons Lecture Series will be broadcast nationally and internationally over the next few years. By 2017 it will be global. We're intending for that to be part of the celebrations in 2017. There is no reason why we can't do simulcast broadcasts around the world these days with the Internet. The possibilities are endless. We'll have other campaigns that we do ourselves or with the provincial tourism department or Canadian Heritage. Canadian Heritage has been extremely supportive of the Confederation Centre of the Arts over the years. We believe they will continue to be. That helps us to get our message out to all Canadians.

I feel we have lots of work to do. There are many Canadians who are not aware of the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlotte-town, and that it is the only national memorial to the founding of the nation. I have great plans for an educational program over the coming months and years.

Mr. Terence Young: The theatre at the Confederation Centre of the Arts, when I was there, was still fairly new. It's now, what, 44 years old?

Ms. Jessie Inman: It's 48 years old.

Mr. Terence Young: You have planned some fairly extensive renovations of the theatre. Could you talk a little about that and its importance?

Ms. Jessie Inman: The theatre will soon be 50 years old. It was opened in 1964. It has never been touched. It has the original seating. We have tried to maintain it to keep it safe, but it does not meet current national building and safety codes. We're looking to put in a new theatre pavilion inside the same four walls—not a new building but a new inside. We would like to have that open for the 2014 celebrations. We have an extensive plan for doing it, which includes funding from Canadian Heritage, ACOA, and the province. The province has already committed. ACOA has almost committed. Our application is being reviewed by Canadian Heritage. We feel quite positive about their views on it.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Young.

Madame Boutin-Sweet.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Your presence here today is very important.

We are studying Canada's 150th anniversary, but we will also devote several meetings to museums and their financial health. We will be hearing from museum representatives.

My first question is for Mr. McAvity, of the Canadian Museums Association.

Do you think that the federal government should adopt a national museums policy to ensure the health of our museums? If it does, what should it include?

• (1155)

[*English*]

Mr. John McAvity: Actually, there is a museum policy right now, but in our opinion it needs to be updated very significantly.

I'll give you just a little bit of history.

In 1972 the first national museum policy was brought in when the Honourable Gérard Pelletier was the Secretary of State, and then the Honourable Marcel Masse in the Mulroney government updated and renewed and expanded the policy. However, over the last few years there has been some erosion in funding and generally in the effectiveness of the policy.

I'm going to seize upon some of the words that Pierre Landry used. He talked about 2017 as an opportunity to "right the ship", and this would be one of the areas we believe need to be reviewed and investigated and one for which a more comprehensive policy needs to be developed.

Right now, frankly, we're just pleased to hold on to what we have in terms of funding, and in fact to see some improvements that have come out of the federal budget. So I think we've actually done quite well in the federal budget, but as we look forward there are still many unanswered questions. There are the needs Ms. Evenden referred to in terms of collections, and the proper preservation and facilities that need to be built upon, and these do need serious attention.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: So if we were to consult you, you would have a number of suggestions for ways to improve the policy in specific areas.

[*English*]

Mr. John McAvity: Yes, we would be delighted to be consulted on that.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Thank you. I think it is really wonderful that your two groups are here. We aren't having many meetings about this, but you represent several museums, both large and small.

I was once a guide-interpreter at the Pointe-à-Callière museum, which is a medium-sized museum. Even though it's a good-sized museum, it always has a hard time finding funding. When I was there, guide-interpreter jobs were always being cut, which meant fewer services to the public. That was always the first thing to go.

You talked about stable funding for museums. The Canadian Museums Association suggested the creation of a fund-matching program.

Mr. Landry, if a new museums policy or a fund-matching program is created, what can we do to help museums of all sizes? How can we make sure that small museums survive too?

Mr. Pierre Landry: Canadian Heritage already has a variety of programs, which, I believe, are available and open to all museums, and are relatively well known across Canada.

Some programs have to do with the production and circulation of travelling exhibitions, while others are for the production of virtual exhibitions. Another program, which unfortunately has been eliminated, assisted with the circulation and transportation of works of art from province to province.

Thanks to the Museums Assistance Program, or MAP, exhibitions can often be produced in small museums and then go on to be presented in our institutions and circulate throughout Canada afterwards. The idea behind the program is to show correlations between the various cultures that exist within the broader Canadian culture. These programs are very important.

Unfortunately, less money is being invested in the programs themselves, so it is harder for us to put together major projects.

Some programs have also been changed in recent years. Until very recently, the Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program, or CAHSP, allowed museums to review some of their practices related to marketing, human resources and management. The program had some very interesting features that gave us tools—for all institutions, whether small, medium or large—to review our practices, to work with professional firms in order to really make progress in our management practices, marketing strategies, and so on.

Unfortunately, this program was changed recently. It was not eliminated, per se, but it now applies more to groups of various partners, whether in museology or not. This means that the program is no longer directly accessible to museums. I find this somewhat unfortunate, because at our organization—and I am speaking only for my firm—it really allowed us to review some of our practices, to professionalize our domain, and so on. Museums definitely need these resources and this funding.

Several museums in Quebec—but not all—receive recurrent funding from Quebec's ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine. This funding is rarely enough to meet the needs of museums. These needs often push us to work on the ground to seek other sources of funding and this support from the federal government is very important to us. We must also remember that this support is often linked to a specific project. In other words, this funding is meant for managing a specific project and does not really trickle down to the rest of the museum the same way that recurrent funding does.

So, that is more or less the current reality and it would be unfortunate, in that sense, if funding for museums were to diminish, which is what is happening now, and if programs were eliminated or scaled back.

In that sense, the celebrations planned for 2017 would provide an excellent opportunity for this wave of resources and funding to really allow all of Canada's museums to get back to being on an even keel. As Mr. McAvity was saying, perhaps we could go even further and review some of our practices, which would allow us continue to navigate more comfortably, once we are back on an even keel. Our numerous institutions are important and useful to our communities. We have large collections. In a way, we are almost like the soul of this country, and I think we need to recognize the value of that.

• (1200)

The Chair: Thank you.

[*English*]

You're 22 seconds over, so you're out of time. We'll move to the next person.

Just for the benefit of the witnesses here, our first round of questions is for seven minutes, and then we go into five-minute rounds. The chair has been pretty loose with the time today.

Ms. Murray. And welcome to the committee, by the way.

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Thanks very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for the information and the vision you're putting forward.

I'm interested in a few questions around the economic benefits, the possibilities of the 150th anniversary, and the museums' participation in that.

Do you see this as primarily something for Canadians? Will your marketing be to Canadians, or to what degree do you see this as being a possible way to improve our international tourist visit numbers? They have been declining over the years. We used to be number seven in international overnight stays, and we're now at number fifteen or something. Is your focus in Canada, or to what degree is it on the international community?

Museums are a huge part of the product the tourism industry depends on to generate tourism dollars and jobs. Somebody may have some thoughts on that. I'm wondering how the 20% cut to the Canadian Tourism Commission for marketing Canada might affect our ability to let people know about the 150th anniversary and all the amazing products you're envisioning presenting. Do you have any thoughts on that?

Mr. John McAvity: Let me jump in and then invite colleagues to respond.

Of all visitors who come to Canada, 60% visit museums. They really don't come here to visit our forests, the logging industry, or open-pit mines. They come to see the magic of what this country's all about. I think there's a tremendous opportunity for Canada in 2017 to use the Canadian experience and the Canadian story diplomatically on an international stage.

The Canadian Museums Association works with a couple of countries right now. Through foundations and non-governmental support we facilitate exchanges with China. We have a book program for rural communities, particularly in earthquake areas in China. So there are some really good things, and we've been able to tap philanthropists and donors to do this. I think there's a huge opportunity there. At one point culture was one of the three pillars of our foreign affairs policy, but it is not today. So we have an opportunity there.

I'll turn it over to my other colleagues. They may have more practical experience than I, because they actually work in museums and centres.

• (1205)

Ms. Jessie Inman: We have several initiatives for exploiting Canada to the world, which we need to do to increase our tourism numbers in all provinces and territories of the country. There is a new musical that we will develop. It will tour internationally. It will be of a calibre that other countries will want to see it and have it on their stages. The content will resonate with other countries, even though it will be about Canada. We believe that the new musical theatrical experience will entice other countries and visitors to Canada. That's one thing.

Just a few months ago, *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery was launched in China. I think they quickly sold out their first 30,000 copies, which are not very many for China. We will keep building that momentum, and that will increase Chinese tourism to Canada.

We also intend to possibly tour *Anne* in other countries, other than the ones I've already mentioned where it has been. It is so easy these days with simulcast broadcasting to get the message out to other parts of the world. Canadian embassies around the world are dying for content about Canada to show to Canadians in their constituencies, or to the members of societies in countries they are looking after.

I think there are huge opportunities, because of these celebrations, to reach out to international communities.

Thanks.

Ms. Joyce Murray: I just came from a tour of some of the constituencies in the interior of British Columbia, and one place I was at was the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre, which is a museum and cultural centre that has a vineyard, a winery visitors centre, a conference centre, etc. It's a rising star in the aboriginal tourism world.

I'm very interested in understanding how the 150th and the museums' part in this can partner with aboriginal tourism and aboriginal peoples. We know that rural development and jobs in some of those remote communities is a huge priority for elevating the achievement of aboriginal communities. We have a big gap in aboriginal achievements. What are some thoughts about what might be needed, in terms of federal support, on the aboriginal side, but also on how you can help on the museum side?

Ms. Kirstin Evenden: I can speak to that. Our museum has a lot of relationships in aboriginal communities, specifically in the Canadian west.

What's different from Expo '67 is that aboriginal communities have made huge significant inroads in being able to maintain and promote their own cultures to their own communities, and then to the world through aboriginal tourism initiatives, as you've mentioned.

I think the aboriginal communities are in a different place from where they were when we last celebrated Canada's national birthday to this scale. Aboriginal museums also have a lot of relationships with other existing museums with significant aboriginal collections like our own.

We've made permanent sacred loans. We're at about 250 permanent sacred loans of our collections in the communities. There are a lot of threads between museums with aboriginal collections, relationships, with independent aboriginal museums.

That's not to say that Canadian museums, like my own in Calgary, know what is best for aboriginal museums. This would, moving forward, be very much a partnership opportunity, an opportunity for two entities to come together to bring their expertise mutually together to do something that we couldn't do on our own.

Partnering between aboriginal communities, aboriginal museums, and museums with aboriginal collections is an ongoing responsibility that we have. But it's also a really significant opportunity to do

something unique on the global radar, to get back to the question earlier of what we want to do globally.

This is a different conversation from what it was in 1967, in terms of our access to digital technology, our communication, and the fact that a lot of Canadians live in the world. There are over eight million out there. Connecting those two is the way to go.

• (1210)

Ms. Joyce Murray: Thanks.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Murray.

Ms. Joyce Murray: Do I have time still?

The Chair: No. You're one minute and 12 seconds over.

Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll just ask Ms. Inman and Monsieur Landry a question.

My riding has 228,000 people in it. My riding is obviously a lot bigger than Prince Edward Island, but there is a large rural component. It strikes me that P.E.I. is not the centre of corporate head offices. They probably have more head offices in my riding than there are in P.E.I.

How have you been successful in helping to raise money for your centre in the absence of what I'm assuming are large corporate donations? I know in my own community, in the rural parts of the community, we don't do a very good job of that. We can raise a lot of money for our local hospital very quickly, but we do a terrible job of explaining to people why they should support museums or theatres.

Monsieur Landry, you talked about representing a small rural museum, as well. What successes have you had?

In looking at this, I think that part of what we can do for the 150th is to bring all of the museums together in helping Canadians to better understand why they're important and why they should support museums as well as other institutions in the community.

Ms. Jessie Inman: Thank you very much.

Yes, we've been very successful with private sponsorship and private donors for the centre. We have a vast membership program that raises almost \$1 million a year for our operating budget. And we put on special events. For example, two weeks ago I hosted an event called "Behind the Red Velvet", which was an on-stage spectacular gala event. We had a live and silent auction and raised over \$40,000 for our children's arts education programs.

We do a lot of events and raise money through those events. We go out into the community. We seek corporate sponsorships. We seek individual donations and sponsors. We have different levels of membership, whether it's the director's circle or the different circles of members.

One of the things my predecessor did so well was make sure that the Confederation Centre was an open place for Islanders to come to. It's not my place because I'm the CEO there; it's everyone's place, and I want it to feel like that for all of Canada. We will reach out corporately across the country as well to raise those funds.

I'd be happy to actually send you the materials we use for these fundraising campaigns. I know that you have three theatres in your jurisdiction, Mr. Calandra. I would be happy to actually send our marketing and fundraising collateral to you.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Mr. Landry.

Mr. Pierre Landry: As you were saying, I'm from a very small community. There are 20,000 people living in Rivière-du-Loup, 35,000 in the MRC de Rivière-du-Loup, so it is very small.

We have to work very hard to raise money just to maintain our mission as such. I would say that we can gather maybe 10% of our annual budget through these means, maybe more, because we have an annual event. Maybe it is a bit more. Maybe it is 15% or such. But the sum of work needed to do such a job

[*Translation*]

creates a situation that means that our staff is often obligated to neglect the institution's mission and focus on fundraising, which takes up an enormous amount of time. Where I am—and I am really only talking about my museum—we have an auction every year. Last week, we raised \$32,000 in the community, but someone had to work on organizing the event for the equivalent of four or five months of full-time hours, and that does not include the other people from my team who work on the ground to find funding, a partner for an exhibition or other project, and so on. We are meeting this need, but it is often at the expense of our mission. Our needs are huge.

•(1215)

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra: Do I have time for one more question, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: You do.

Mr. Paul Calandra: I guess I would go back, then, to both Mr. Landry and Mr. McAvity.

I understand that some museums have a better ability to raise money than other museums and that it's difficult to do it because of the challenges small museums face. Is there a potential for the associations to coordinate fundraising efforts better and to use some of the larger institutions to help raise funds for the smaller institutions?

Mr. John McAvity: Yes, I think there is. I think we are witnessing right now a great increase in the museums' expertise in fundraising. Not long ago there was probably an attitude among museums that we should be 100% funded by the public. That attitude has gone through a remarkable change. Right now many of the big institutions have decreased their reliance on public sector funding from 80% or 90% down to often 30% to 40%. Ms. Evenden, from the Glenbow, can probably speak to that in a very direct way.

Frankly, I think the institutions are in a healthier spot. They have a diversity of sources of funds, so their eggs are not all in one basket. This is why we've been proposing as an incentive the matching

donations program. In the charitable sector, we face very stiff competition, to be blunt with you. There are hospitals. The children's hospitals are very appealing.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Do they kind of compete against each other? It would probably be a lot easier for the Canadian War Museum to raise funds. The Museum of Civilization, the Museum of Nature, and the national museums probably have a much greater ability to raise funds than the Markham Museum or the Stouffville Museum, or even Mr. Landry's museums.

Is there not a better way of using the names and the recognition of those museums to raise funds globally that can then be distributed, at least until everybody comes up with better plans to actually raise funds and help in offsetting? Are you not kind of competing against each other for very limited resources right now, because people don't look to museums first as something they would want to support?

Mr. John McAvity: The very fact that the Canadian War Museum or the Museum of Civilization would be doing it, the word "museum" will be getting out there. I think that will benefit the community as a whole.

The other thing we have done is we have established the Museums Foundation of Canada to be a collective fund, like United Way, as it were. Honestly, we have just not had the resources to implement that. It has quietly been kept alive, and when there was crown status for charitable donations, we tried to make our foundation a crown institution so that it could have the enhanced tax benefits. But that was all levelled in changes to the tax system.

The Chair: We are over time. We'll have to pick that up in another round.

Now we are moving to our five-minute round, starting with Mr. Cash.

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

That's an interesting idea that my colleague across the way is suggesting. It almost sounds like social democracy to me. So welcome to our side, sir.

I'd like to pick up on a few different things. This has been an excellent presentation. Thank you all. I'd like to know if you know how many theatres are in my riding. That was very impressive.

I share my colleague's concern for the smaller museums. We see, for example, that the increased indemnification is going to help the larger museums, because the smaller ones aren't trucking in things that are worth \$400,000 or \$500,000, or more. So that's great for museums that, albeit with a lot of struggle, are successful. But we do have some significant challenges.

I'm wondering, for example, with the matching program, how important that would be for the small museums. It strikes me again that the big museums are going to be able to suck up most of those resources. I'd just like to get a general response about that.

• (1220)

Ms. Jessie Inman: I'll mention a couple of things quickly about how to raise funds in a small jurisdiction. I'll talk about our art gallery for a second. A minute ago I talked about a gala dinner on our main stage, if it's a theatre. If it's an art gallery or a museum, one of the things we've learned at the centre is that we have large facilities and spaces, so we host weddings every Saturday and Sunday the whole summer long, and that creates revenues for us. We have learned that people love to have weddings in art galleries, and I'm sure they'd love to have them in museums as well. So I think we have to think of innovative ways to raise money, and to use our facilities for things other than just asking people to come in and look at what's in our museum or art gallery.

What better place to hold an event, even if it's a corporate reception, than a place where you can look at things on the walls, or on the shelves, or what have you? I think we have to be very innovative in how we use our institutions.

Mr. Andrew Cash: Point taken.

We are studying Canada's 150th birthday. You've come here with some general ideas. If we weren't engaged in this study, and in fact if the government hadn't decided to mark the 150th birthday of our country in some way, what would your associations have conjured up on your own? In other words, would you be doing something on 150 anyway? Generally what would that look like?

Mr. John McAvity: Just very quickly, we had been thinking about it before this committee started, and let me tell you, it's really exciting, because we get a chance to blue-sky it. It's not very often that we get the chance to do that. So we see there being a big opportunity, not just for museums, but for Canada and community organizations as a whole. We applaud you for that, and we hope you'll adopt all of our good ideas.

Mr. Andrew Cash: How's my time?

The Chair: You have a minute.

Mr. Andrew Cash: Great.

I have another question. We see this in Toronto and we see it all across the country. We have all of these beautiful churches, small churches, medium-sized churches, and they are struggling to maintain the integrity of their buildings. These are also cultural treasures in our country.

When we talk about a national museums strategy, I know there was one that was studied several years ago by this committee. I don't know whether they included issues of heritage buildings and churches. Is this on your radar, this issue of churches?

Mr. Pierre Landry: Well, it is, in some ways. For instance, in Rivière-du-Loup there are three churches, and the question is on the table right now, what to do with these three churches. We have a project.

[*Translation*]

It is a question of expanding the museum. Our space is too limited, considering our collections.

[*English*]

We were looking if it was possible to maybe do something with one of the churches.

[*Translation*]

It's difficult, because the functions are not necessarily the same.

[*English*]

We can't think of having 150 church museums in Canada. It's a huge problem, but probably it could be addressed by the means we are talking about now. It could be, yes, and in certain communities, maybe.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Benoît Légaré: Last spring, the Société des musées québécois held a general assembly to reflect on the current situation for museums in Quebec, in other words, where they stand and what direction they want to take over the next five years. I personally chaired one of the committees, which addressed outreach, that is, cultural exhibitions that are educational in nature. What we learned is that religious heritage is a major preoccupation. This means that we share the same preoccupation. The recommendations made by the Société des musées québécois included religious heritage, as well as performing arts heritage. In fact, the latter is also likely to disappear. What I mean are the sets and costumes and so on, basically everything surrounding the performing arts. At present, very few people are taking care of this. So, here we have two new areas of museology that are likely to grow in the years to come.

• (1225)

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Cash.

Back to Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Paul Calandra: I would like to go on a bit of a different vein.

I guess all of you can maybe answer, but Mr. McAvity, you talked about the Young Canada Works program. Could you just explain a bit more about that program? What does it do, how many people participate, and in the context of looking ahead, how might we consider augmenting or providing some greater assistance for 2017?

Mr. John McAvity: The Young Canada Works program in heritage has been an extremely successful program. I believe its total budget is about \$10 million, more like \$8 million or \$9 million. We at the Canadian Museums Association administer one of the components. The Heritage Canada Foundation administers a component, the Canadian Library Association represents a component, but the museums tend to be the biggest one because of the nature of our business and being open in the summer.

It's one of the programs that really benefits small museums. It's meaningful that they get one or two jobs for summertime. I visited some of the museums where the program has been in effect—for example, the little museum in St. Martins, New Brunswick—and seen its value. They work side by side with volunteers from the community and really develop effective skills.

This is not a program for young people to go out and mow the lawns, as it were, in museums. They are skill-developing programs. It's evaluated professionally on a national level, and it's come out at ratings that would be the envy of every political party as well. It has 99% approval, so it has been a very good program, success all around. Incidentally, the institutions do contribute 20% of the money, so it is a cost-shared program.

We're just simply overrun with applications. We cannot keep up with them. We are turning down 50% of the employers. You can imagine how many young people are applying to the employers. So in turn there's an opportunity here that we would really like to take advantage of. A couple of million dollars would go a long way.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Landry: With regard to this program, I would like to add that, unfortunately, students who go and work at an institution for a year cannot work at the same institution the next year. This makes things very difficult for small institutions, because they have to train new students every time. If even one change could be made to the program, I think that should be it. That would be very useful to institutions, especially small ones, because they have limited staff available to train people.

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra: That's it for now.

The Chair: Mr. Nantel.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Thank you.

First of all, I would like to thank everyone here for all their work. Your presence is very important. The Confederation Centre of the Arts representatives appeared on the list very suddenly. We have seen how important your presence here has been and how many federative ideas you have for the 150th anniversary, especially since that is your role, as the museum of Confederation.

Mr. Landry, what you just said about jobs for students is something that we hear quite often. Many people have talked to us about that very problem. It is too bad you have to train good employees only to lose them every year.

I would like to revisit a few points. First of all, Ms. Inman, you are quite right; hosting weddings to increase revenues is a good idea. The Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec does the same things and it is very nice. So that is something we can explore.

Speaking of revenues, I would like to come back to a point raised by Mr. Calandra and Mr. Légaré. It has to do with funding and the networking aspect of it. I have a very brief question to ask each of you.

Do you think the Canadian Museums Association would be open to the following idea: before the 150th anniversary celebrations, beginning a campaign to sell a card that would give access to all museums in Canada at a reasonable price, with half of the proceeds going to the museum that made the sale locally? This could be your museum in Rivière-du-loup or the Musée de la femme in Longueuil, which is housed in what is practically a closet and is surviving on whatever it can scrape together. For \$100, they could sell a national

passport to celebrate the 150th anniversary. They would keep \$50 for themselves and the other \$50 would go into a communal kitty. There could be partnerships and the passport could offer discounts on travel between the provinces.

Do you think you are organized well enough to take on this kind of campaign? Would this be relevant in the current context?

Mr. Légaré, what do you think?

• (1230)

Mr. Benoît Légaré: That is an excellent idea. Montreal already has something similar—the Montréal Museums Pass. I worked on that initiative when I was on the executive committee of the Board of Montréal Museums Directors, which brings together the chief administrators of 36 museums in Montreal. The board decided to try different marketing strategies in order to bring people into the museums. One of those initiatives was the Montréal Museums Pass.

This strategy is somewhat similar to the one you described, that is, for each institution to be able to sell the Montréal Museums Pass and obtain a percentage of the proceeds on the cards they sell, so as not to lose entrance revenues.

It benefits, too, since we know that everyone who buys the pass will visit these institutions three times. In other words, each card will generate about three visits, which is good. Furthermore, this encourages people to visit other institutions nearby that they would not necessarily have visited otherwise. However, since their entrance is free, it is good for them, too.

This could eventually be a model that others may want to emulate, since this pass also has a partnership with the Société de transport de Montréal. People can also buy a pass that includes public transit for a period of either three days or two weeks or even a year, if they want.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: This card could have many advantages. Emails could be sent out to anyone who signs up who would like to receive discounts, for example, to take the train to Prince Edward Island to go to a museum there.

Mr. Landry, could small museums handle such an initiative?

Mr. Pierre Landry: Yes, I think something like that would be completely manageable, but not by small museums or by the organization itself. Perhaps the Canadian Museums Association could manage the program in partnership with Canadian Heritage, for example. In any case, this has already been done. I know Kellogg's had a similar promotion a while ago. Things like this are conceivable and definitely desirable. What is important is that it is manageable for small institutions and that one organization oversee everything.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: We are running out of time.

Thanks to my colleague, Andrew Cash, you touched on the issue of churches. Would you agree that there is an urgent and relevant need to protect Quebec's religious heritage, from a Canadian perspective? Do you think this is just as urgent as commemorating the War of 1812, which took place in southern Ontario?

Mr. Pierre Landry: I would rather not comment on the War of 1812, but I will say that conserving religious heritage is extremely important. This point has been raised, but I would rather not confuse the issue.

Most churches currently belong to and are managed by parish councils, or parishes and so forth. Most museums, on the other hand, are autonomous, private institutions that are already established, so to speak. The mission of churches is losing momentum at this time, which is where the problem lies. In my opinion, these are two relatively different things. We need to look at how communities can get involved to safeguard churches, because this is important.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Indeed, for the 150th anniversary, we need to ensure that all aspects of our history are being preserved.

Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Nantel.

Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Thank you.

Sorry, Mr. Landry, I hate to keep focusing on you. It's just because there are probably some parallels between your museum and mine.

In my community there are two small museums, the King Township Museum and the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum. The Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum is one that gets significant support from the local municipality. They have also recognized, though, the importance of doing other things at the museum, so part of their economic action plan initiative was to expand the museum, so they could host functions there and actually bring more of their collection out. One of the things they also talk about is the ability to actually work better and more closely with larger institutions.

I have a number of questions. In your context, how well does the municipality support the museum? Are there larger institutions you already partner with, as a small rural museum? What type of support do you get from larger institutions to actually display some of their collections, so you can actually bring more people into the museum?

• (1235)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Landry: In our case, we receive a good deal of financial support from our municipality. But some funny things have happened. These things may not fall within the scope of today's hearing, but I would like to mention them, because we are talking a lot about funding and these things relate to that.

I receive funding from the municipality of Rivière-du-Loup, and last year, I also managed to receive funding from the Rivière-du-Loup RCM. When the municipality found out that I had also obtained funding from the RCM, it cut back the amount it had planned to give to me by the same amount that it provides to the RCM. I am giving you this example simply to illustrate that this approach is not always productive.

At the SMQ, we are trying to work harder on these issues. We are currently working in partnership with Quebec's Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine to look at the various approaches we can take with respect to the municipi-

palities. It might be a good idea to set some basic rules regarding the amount of funding that can be obtained from municipalities and so on.

As for your second question, I don't remember exactly what it pertained to.

[*English*]

Your other question was....

Mr. Paul Calandra: Just with respect to—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Landry: —large museums. It can be difficult for us, because large museums do offer us travelling exhibitions, for instance, but the cost is often prohibitive and their exhibitions are often too big for our facilities. There is a willingness to develop cooperation and dialogue, but the reality is that it can be hard for us in that regard. It is not due to any unwillingness; it is simply the reality.

And this does not mean that large institutions do not have their own problems. The entire sector is under-funded at this time, so we are all in the same boat.

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra: I have more of a comment than a question. I know, obviously, how important churches are, but it makes me somewhat nervous when we start talking about expanding and moving into other areas when you're talking about the current situation being a difficult one. I know how important churches are. I see them across my riding. But I'd have a really tough time imagining a church as a function of a museum. I can't imagine it would be less costly to make a church a museum than it would be just to provide additional resources for a rural museum.

I'm sure if you tabulated the entire ask of the organizations that you represent, it would be far beyond the scope of this government or any government to actually finance. Having said that, we've obviously opened the door to how museums and theatres get out there and raise money and raise awareness within the community. I think if we accomplish anything out of the 150th, somehow getting the rural museums to participate or cooperate with some of the larger institutions, both nationally and provincially, would be massive—whether it's through passports, as they're suggesting.... Even if we didn't provide a dime—and I'm not saying that's what we're going to do—if we figured out how to coordinate the rural and the large national museums with the large provincial museums, so that there was more funding to provide all of you and that more people think about it, then I think that would be one of the best lasting legacies of the 150th.

I don't know if I have time.

• (1240)

The Chair: No.

Mr. Paul Calandra: I think I might have another question and then I'll just let you speak. How about that?

The Chair: Mr. Benskin.

Mr. Tyrone Benskin (Jeanne-Le Ber, NDP): There's a whole whack of ground to cover here. Now that you guys have introduced the whole church thing, it's problematic as well—problematic in a good way.

I've got a number of museums in my riding, including the Emile Berliner Museum, which is a nifty little museum on technical or audio history that is housed in the RCA building, also in my riding, which is home of the first studio to record an audio recording in Canada, which they're also trying to preserve. Right now it's being done through a labour of love. This gentleman has a massive room of just every possible technical innovation, including things that brought tears to my eyes, like the little portable record players that you pulled the speakers off and pulled the turntable down and listened to scratchy records that sounded muffled.

One of the big things I'm hearing is that the paleontology museum has about 10,000 pieces sitting in a warehouse because they can't show them anywhere. They don't have their own space. I know you said that building new museums at this point would be problematic.

How would you see being able to take some of these smaller museums, these labours of love, and finding homes for them, or temporary homes or exhibitions, so that people could actually get to know them and maybe raise some funds through that? I'll put it out there to anybody.

Mr. John McAvity: I think there are a lot of opportunities for museums to work together. This point has come up on both sides of the table. Some of the good examples are actually in Montreal, where virtually all of the museums worked together and established one warehouse, one conservation facility. It's in an old brewery in Old Montreal, and condos were sold on the top. It was a brilliant plan. The federal government contributed and so did the Province of Quebec. That kind of model I think can be built across the country. It's really a matter of the museums being willing to work together.

I think there are many cost-sharing ideas we can do. We brought in a group insurance plan that brought down the cost of insurance by about 50%. We would like to go to the next step, which is to do what the hospitals and universities have done, to set up what is called a reciprocal insurance program, where essentially you insure yourself and you save money.

There are a lot of opportunities to raise the visibility of small museums that are not known. If that comes out of 2017, I think that would be a great opportunity.

Monsieur Nantel, you brought up the question of passes. You may not be aware of a pass that is presently in place, and we're really proud of it. Every new Canadian, when they become a citizen at the signing-in ceremony, is offered a free pass for themselves and their family for one year to all the museums in Canada. We give that out. We had to convince our members to do it. Some of them thought we were going to lose money. This is a community, a constituency that we want to come into the museums. So we open the doors. We have behind-the-scenes visits and make them feel part of the community. So I think we can build upon that kind of thing.

We have looked at a pay-pass. It gets a little complicated. Canada's a really big country, you know. People are really not going to have the opportunity to travel. So it really needs to be done on a

regional basis. We've looked at it, but the costs have just been really difficult for us to overcome. Holland, the Netherlands, has a similar pass. You pay 25 euros and get to visit all the museums in the Netherlands, a great idea.

Mr. Tyrone Benskin: I'd like to move on to youth and basically generating the next constituency, if you will, of visitors. But also you expressed that it's been problematic training young people and retaining them in the sector. You've already mentioned about the Young Canada Works program and how input into that might benefit. What's being done to attract young visitors, people who pay money to go, other than schools?

● (1245)

Ms. Kirstin Evenden: Yes, I'm happy to speak to that.

Something our museum has been doing for the past three years, very actively and very carefully, is audience development of the 25-to-35 audience or market, if you like. It has to do with how you develop your programming, what topics you treat, what people who are 30-something really care about right now. There are a lot of things about the economy, about ecology, etc., that really interest people. It then goes to really accessible and interesting programming and then lastly your marketing strategy. How active are you in the digital sphere? How engaged are you in social media? So there's a whole suite of the kinds of decisions that institutions are making to become more and more relevant all the time to that audience group.

I think what's exciting about something like the matching donation program is to introduce something these emerging or young professionals could really care about in an accessible and affordable way. We have a huge new membership of young professionals at our museum that we've gone after very carefully. We've developed a membership in a year and a half of 100 significant individuals in our city who are not 40 yet, but who are our next donors, etc. They want to be participating, they want to be involved in making the decisions. There are a lot of gen Y characteristics about these audiences that we need to be very cognizant of. A matching donation that they can get behind and argue for, as your volunteer or your donor, is exciting. There's lots of opportunity to do that.

Mr. Tyrone Benskin: Do I have time? Okay.

Has there been...? We were talking about large travelling shows. Where are we now? The Van Gogh is where? Here or Montreal or Toronto? Here, okay, which I hope to get to see.

Would there be any value in going into schools with half a dozen items that you could show in a context that would get young people excited enough to come see the rest of the exhibition? Are there any programs like that, reaching out to young people?

Mr. John McAvity: These are the kinds of things that I guess in the interests of time we didn't elaborate on very carefully here.

One example is in Britain. The BBC, the British Broadcasting Corporation, just did an absolutely amazing series of the history of the world in one hundred objects, and this was on the radio. You couldn't see the objects, so they had to make the stories alive and compelling. It was an award-winning series and it was based on items out of the British Museum.

We think the same kind of thing could happen here in Canada to work with the CBC and do 150 iconic items of Canadian history that tell the story. And we'd like to encourage each museum in Canada, during 2017, to mount a special exhibition of the 100 most important things out of their community and the stories that go beyond them, which have to be done through the media and so on.

What we also find with this diversity of accessibility that's available is that people want to see the real thing. They come to the institutions, and in times of crisis they come to the institutions. When 9/11 happened, the museums in New York saw an increase in attendance. They were reaching out for some stability there. When SARS happened in Toronto and in Vancouver, the increase in attendance was there at our institutions. We saw that. It was that sort of reaching out, looking for stability and hope.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Benskin.

Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Paul Calandra: We heard that during the Olympics the provinces provided information or had showcases of some of the things they do. In the context of Canada's 150th birthday, each province has significant history to talk about. I know we'll be celebrating a significant milestone in Montreal. We celebrated a milestone in Quebec. But how can we do more? We might not want to talk about *les filles du roi*, but it was something that's very interesting about Canada's history. The War of 1812 is another important aspect of Canada's history.

Have there been any discussions, both nationally and more locally, provincially, about asking each province in the context of 2017 to coordinate something that showcases their province? So if I travel the country in 2017 I know that I might visit your museum to see something, or I might visit a national museum to see something else, but I'll learn the story of a province based on what I see at the museums that you have. Have you started any coordinating on that at all?

• (1250)

Ms. Jessie Inman: Thank you very much.

As I explained in my presentation, we are celebrating 2014 because it was the first meeting of the Fathers of Confederation in Charlottetown, and we have many celebrations planned for that year. There is a not-for-profit corporation that has been set up called PEI 2014. They are doing many things across the island, and the Confederation Centre is celebrating its own 50th anniversary.

All of those activities and things that we will do will carry us through to 2017, and new ones will happen in 2017. So we're very focused on what we believe is the first milestone on the pathway to 2017 as the Charlottetown Conference. So there are many opportunities for us to do that.

If I may, at this time I'd like to comment on Monsieur Nantel's passport idea. If that could please be an arts and culture passport so that it includes art galleries and theatres and museums across the country, our institution would be very appreciative of that. I think it's an outstanding idea.

Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Landry: Perhaps we could talk about Quebec City. So far, much of the focus has been on Montreal. We saw this during the most recent budget. To my knowledge, I do not believe that there is much interprovincial coordination at this time. Perhaps this is something that the federal government could initiate, in the form of a round table with the provinces, for instance. Of course, we talked about Prince Edward Island, where it is rather obvious, since that is the birthplace.

Furthermore, I personally did not hear anyone talk about anything coming from other provinces, other than what I raised about Quebec, strictly speaking.

[*English*]

Mr. John McAvity: One idea that was touched on briefly in our brief was the idea of what happened in 1967. There was a train that was established, and each car was a mobile exhibit, as it were. We had eastern Canada, western Canada, the north, the prairies, and so on. We wonder if that is an idea you might want to consider. It would go across this country, and it would create a great deal of interest.

I would actually suggest, if that is a go, that you approach it differently from the way it was done in 1967. It was very top-down. I would do bottom-up. I would work with the museums and the provinces to design and create something meaningful that would be there and then could go across the country. The provincial museums in each province are ideal for that. There could be one car per province, perhaps, or you might go on a regional and thematic basis. It becomes a spark plug, a lightning rod, and communities get excited when it goes there, and so on.

Unfortunately, there are two provinces the trains can't get to any more, but I think it may have merit. A series of mobile trucks and vans can do that. We've done that in the past.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Do we have time...?

Ms. Jessie Inman: May I compliment John McAvity on his idea about the train? I was personally on the discovery train of 1979 and 1980 that travelled for those two years to 120 cities and towns across the country.

In Newfoundland we actually had to put the train on a ship and sail it around the island because the gauge is different. It was such a moving experience for all of the people who worked on this train, and also for the people we visited. We landed at the top, at Botwood, Newfoundland. That's at the very top, and 3,000 people who lived there were standing on the dock waiting for us to come in so that they could see the history of Canada on this train.

I believe that a moving mobile exposition museum, our history of theatre and dance, etc., could take place for this celebration in 2017. I think it's a wonderful idea, because I've seen for myself what Canadian rural communities think about this idea.

• (1255)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Mr. Chair, on a point of order, I know we're going to run out of time, but if possible could we have five minutes at the end to go in camera on committee business? There's something I want to share with the committee.

The Chair: Okay.

Finally, we have Madame Boutin-Sweet.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Thank you.

I would like to bring something to your attention, Mr. Landry.

The Très-Saint-Nom-de-Jésus church is located in my riding, Hochelaga. The church has a Casavant organ. Several months ago, the archdiocese decided to turn off the heat, which is putting the organ at risk. Mr. Calandra talked about preserving heritage. It is not a question of building all kinds of museums or preserving churches, but in this case, this is one part of our heritage that we could protect. I think something needs to be done in that regard.

The question of research was also raised, but I do not think we spent enough time talking about that. The federal government can provide funding for research, but in which domains would it be most useful do so?

Mr. Pierre Landry: If we are planning to celebrate an event in a few years' time, we could consider exhibitions produced by various museums. We can start to think about programs that will allow these institutions to begin working on these projects well in advance. Indeed, people must understand that conceiving an exhibition does not happen in just three months or six months.

Furthermore, if we want to present products that are really interesting, well documented and thorough, and to allow institutions to work on their collections and artifacts, we need to begin the process rather early. Announcements could be made very soon about a program that will be managed by Canadian Heritage. This could involve allowing institutions to present projects and to begin doing research.

I meant to say in my presentation that we should use this celebration as an opportunity to irrigate, so to speak, the entire network of museums across Canada. We could implement programs to bring the museums together and to help them get out of the slump that they seem to be in right now.

As for churches and the organ that you mentioned, I think we need to focus on communities, and ensure that they become involved in the process and that they themselves determine where the most crucial needs are.

One community might want to carry out a major project on a church, for instance, take it over and restore it, while another community might want to focus on another kind of heritage building. Instead of going from the top down, the best approach for communities might be to work from the bottom up. Basically, what I mean is that we need to use this event as an opportunity to ensure that the money invested is put to good use and that communities get the money they really need.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Mr. McAvity, you wanted to say something?

[*English*]

Mr. John McAvity: There are a number of federal programs to fund research, but museums are not eligible to apply. For example, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council is a huge funding council, but that money is restricted to higher-education institutions. We assert that museums should be eligible for that kind of funding. If you can investigate that to see if it can happen it would be a huge step forward for our community.

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Boutin-Sweet.

Thank you to our panel of witnesses. Thank you for coming with very specific recommendations that I think our committee will find very helpful. Thank you for answering all the questions our members had. We look forward to working with you in the future.

We'll suspend for 30 seconds and go in camera.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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