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The Honourable Rob Moore

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•(1105)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC)): Good morning, everybody. We'll get started on our final meeting of our study on Canada's 150th birthday.

Welcome to all of our guests. We have a full witness list today: la Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada; Musée des Abénakis; Parks Canada; the Native Museum of Mashteuiatsh; Exporail; and the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel.

Welcome to all of our witnesses. We're very excited about this study as we look to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday. You've all been invited to provide your unique perspective on how we should celebrate. We look forward to the report of the committee that will be based on the testimony we hear.

The way the committee works is that each group has 10 minutes for opening remarks. Once each group has spoken, we will move to questions and answers.

In the same order as listed on your agenda, then, we'll start with the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada.

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny (President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada): Bonjour. Good morning.

I'd like to say that you've saved the best for last, just looking at the panel before you today.

[Translation]

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair and members.

My name is Marie-France Kenny, and I am President of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada. I am here with Serge Quinty, our Director of Communications.

First, I want to thank you for inviting us to appear. We are here today on behalf of the 2.5 million francophone citizens living in the francophone and Acadian communities in nine provinces and three territories of Canada.

I would like to begin my presentation by telling you about us. The francophone and Acadian communities of Canada are descendants of the Acadians who founded Port Royal in 1604, the Métis and francophones who created the province of Manitoba in 1870, the colonists who cleared the land in northern Ontario in the early 20th century and the pioneers who founded Maillardville,

British Columbia, in 1909. These are people who have lived in every province and territory for a long time.

However, the francophone and Acadian communities are also home to hundreds of thousands of francophone immigrants, individuals and families who have chosen to live in French in Halifax, Toronto and Edmonton and to contribute to our collective enrichment.

They are also Canadians whose mother tongue is English but who have chosen French out of love for the language, for those who speak it and for the opportunities it affords. I am referring, for example, to all those parents determined to have their children educated in French.

Our communities are therefore an integral part of the past, present and future of Canada, a country that we helped build and in the development of which we take part in a thousand and one ways.

It is in that perspective that we want to take part in the celebrations for Canada's 150th anniversary. This is also an opportunity to celebrate what we are and what we contribute to our country. We have a story to tell, to share. It is a vision of sharing, exchange and dialogue that we want to put forward for 2017.

You know as well as I do that Canada has changed a great deal since its centennial in 1967. And the two major principles that have transformed our country most are undoubtedly linguistic duality and multiculturalism. Our communities know something about that. They are now more than ever levers for their own development thanks to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Official Languages Act.

And we are also seeing the growing diversity of Canadian society in our communities. In 2006, 13% of the population of our communities were immigrants. That is why we now talk about an open francophone community that includes all those who choose to live in French, regardless of their mother tongue or origin.

Consequently, you will not be surprised to hear that we wholly support the idea that the celebrations of Canada's 150th anniversary must include anglophone and francophone Canadians, Métis and first nations, as well as new Canadians and ethnocultural communities. We think it is important that our objective for these celebrations be to seek out and seize all opportunities to forge closer ties among all the components of what we call Canada.

Although linguistic duality and cultural diversity are widely recognized by Canadians as values that define our country and society, opportunities for dialogue and exchange among the various communities remain limited. We often get the feeling that Canadian society consists of groups that, as a result of distances or different situations, do not have the opportunity to speak to or understand one another.

When we celebrated Canada's centennial in 1967, we were not just thinking of the past, but also of the future. We must address our 150th anniversary in the same way. To consider it our objective to restore Canadians' desire to know one another and to move forward as a collective "we" is to secure our country's future in a century in which an aggregate of minorities will become the new majority. It is to show the entire world how we can achieve unity in diversity. To be able to say that, in 2017, all components of Canadian society have taken the time to know each other, to speak to each other, to recognize each other as fellow citizens, while respecting each other's specificity, is not only desirable, but also infinitely useful in developing a country such as ours.

For us, the francophone and Acadian communities, that would mean that we would finally stop seeing ourselves solely as minorities and view ourselves instead as citizens. It would also mean that we would understand, once and for all, that francophones and anglophones have equal linguistic rights and that that equality benefits Canada as a whole.

We would be very much in favour of the Government of Canada playing a leadership role on the occasion of Canada's 150th anniversary and supporting activities that create opportunities for dialogue among the various components of Canadian society. The FCFA is prepared to cooperate in the creation of those opportunities for dialogue. We have ideas, key concepts to present to you for that purpose.

First of all, since we are talking about the future, we believe it is essential to focus on activities that encourage dialogue and exchange among young people. Our communities have many success stories in this area. I am thinking of the many editions of the *Jeux de la francophonie canadienne*. I know how many young people have taken part in them, who have enjoyed that intense experience with other young francophones and have emerged from it motivated and proud to be francophone. I am thinking of the *Parlement jeunesse pancanadien*, organized annually by the *Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française* with young people across the country. These activities have had remarkable success and could serve as models for broader initiatives that would bring together young people from the various components of Canadian society.

It is also important that exchange and dialogue initiatives not be launched merely at the national level. They should involve people in all regions of the country and at the local level, where the Canadian experience is more vibrant and original. With regard to these exchanges, which may occur between schools and organizations operating in a single sector or groups of citizens, we believe we should focus not on an outdated vision of the other group, but rather on its assets and knowledge, on who we are today. We believe that tourism, culture, heritage and economic development are promising areas.

Lastly, since we are talking about the importance of a common understanding of who we are, we cannot overlook the fact that, in Canada, perspectives on the history of our society vary from region to region, from community to community. Major events, such as Champlain's arrival in Port Royal, in Quebec City, contact with the first nations, the arrival of British colonists in the 18th century, the opening of the Canadian west and the establishment of the first settlements in the Arctic, are told differently by English Canadians, Quebeckers, the francophone and Acadian communities and the first nations. We think that Canada's 150th anniversary would be a good opportunity to develop a history textbook that brings together many perspectives, that could be offered in the schools across the country. That textbook would be drafted by a committee including experts from the various components of Canadian society.

Of course, as suggested for the Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic Games, it is essential that Canada's linguistic duality be a prominent factor in all 150th anniversary activities supported by the federal government. That means, in particular, including language clauses in all transfer agreements with the provinces and territories for events as part of those celebrations. It also means that the ceremonies at all events funded by the Government of Canada will take place in both official languages.

Lastly, in light of the challenges we faced with signage at the Richmond Olympic oval, it is important that measures be taken to ensure that the entire physical legacy of the 150th anniversary has signage in both official languages.

I will conclude by making a specific recommendation to this committee for the purpose of the report it will be preparing at the end of this study. You have heard a broad variety of ideas and visions from various stakeholders. There is clearly a desire for Canada's 150th anniversary to be celebrated extensively, inclusively and in a positive and unifying manner, leaving a tangible legacy behind it. Now we need clear leadership to ensure all that becomes a reality.

There is still no central coordination to establish a clear vision of the 150th anniversary. And yet 2017 is only five years away. That is why we recommend establishing a committee that would be responsible for coordinating preparations for the 150th anniversary celebrations for the Government of Canada in partnership with the provincial and territorial governments and Canadian civil society. That committee should be inclusive and, in particular, include representatives of the francophone communities outside Quebec. When the Hon. James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, appeared before you, the discussion turned to consultations and round tables with the first nations to determine how they wanted to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary. We consider that idea very appropriate, but it is also important that such consultations also be conducted with the official language minority communities.

● (1115)

[English]

I'd like to thank you, and I will be happy to answer any questions in either official language.

Thank you.

The Chair: Merci.

Now we will move to Ms. Bélanger.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Michelle Bélanger (General Manager, Musée des Abénakis): Good morning, Mr. Chair and honourable committee members.

I will be making my presentation in French.

First of all, I want to thank you for inviting me to take part in today's meeting. I am here as a museologist and General Manager of the Musée des Abénakis, Quebec's first aboriginal museum, founded in 1965 and located on the Odanak Indian reserve in the Centre-du-Québec region. I also want to mention that I am the first non-aboriginal manager that this first aboriginal museum has had since its inception. I would like to make a few observations and comments on the role of small museums in the celebrations for Canada's 150th anniversary and on the ways that can be considered for facilitating their involvement in that very important event.

But first of all, allow me to present the Musée des Abénakis, a small museum similar to most of the 2,000 members of the Canadian Museums Association. The Musée des Abénakis, which is a private institution administered by the Société historique d'Odanak, an independent non-profit organization of the Odanak band council, is located in a small aboriginal community of 400 members. We receive 7,000 visitors every year from 90% of the regions of Quebec and from Canada.

The Musée des Abénakis conserves the knowledge, know-how and traditions of the Abenaki nation and passes them on to future generations. Its primary mission is to engage in and develop a viable constructive dialogue between Abenaki culture and the members of the community and between aboriginal culture and the museum's visitors.

The Musée des Abénakis is also interested in the experience and achievements of the other aboriginal nations of Quebec and Canada and also feels it has a mandate to promote the creative works of contemporary aboriginal artists. The museum has five full-time employees, including three Abenaki from the community. During the summer, various employability assistance programs, such as Young Canada Works, help us hire additional workers, mostly members of the Abenaki first nation.

The museum has some 20 volunteers who take part in our cultural and funding activities, as well as 150 members.

Our collections comprise nearly 8,000 archeological and ethnological objects and works of art. Through a three-year expansion and renovation program started in 2003, we have established museum reserves in accordance with standards guaranteeing optimum conservation of artefacts and additional exhibition areas.

The Musée des Abénakis is one of the 123 Quebec museums recognized and supported by the Quebec government's department of culture, communication and the status of women. As a result, we receive recurring operating assistance representing 24% of our total revenue. That amount, which has been the same for more than 20 years, is inadequate to support the institution's operation. Our other revenue sources are museum admissions, museum store sales, donations and various federal and provincial government ad hoc project grants.

In 2011, a \$198,000 contribution from the Aboriginal Heritage component of Canadian Heritage's Museums Assistance Program was granted to us for a major archeological research project entitled, Fort Odanak: the past revisited. This is a three-year project, the purpose of which is to locate a fortified village built in 1704 and to establish better documentation on land use during the period when first contact was made with the aboriginal population. Once the project is finished, we will share our research results with Canadians through various development programs: a semi-permanent and virtual exhibition and educational and cultural programs. Without this generous contribution by Canadian Heritage, it would not be possible to share an important segment of Canadian history.

Other national projects have also been made possible through financial assistance from Canadian Heritage: two virtual exhibitions as part of the community memories program and a project to digitize and document our collections.

Although our revenues have risen in the past three years, it will be impossible for us to take part in the celebrations for Canada's 150th anniversary without financial assistance from Canadian Heritage. A funding program will therefore have to be created specially for the museums for that occasion. Eligibility criteria will have to take into account institutions of all sizes and could be similar to those of the Holidays, Celebrations and Commemorations program. There will have to be a call for projects in 2013 since some initiatives will require a long planning and execution period. To encourage more Canadians to take part in the festivities, this funding program should favour institutions that encourage the members of their local communities to get involved in their projects. Here then are a few project suggestions.

● (1120)

The Musée des Abénakis is a member of several Canadian and Quebec museum associations whose representatives you have had the pleasure of receiving here: the Canadian Museums Association, the Société des musées québécois and Médiat-Muse, which is an association of museums and exhibition centres in Mauricie and the Centre-du-Québec. Médiat-Muse's mandate is to coordinate and ensure a supply of services and activities to institutions in a single region. One achievement under that mandate is a territorial exhibition held on a common theme every four years. In a given year, some 30 institutions present temporary exhibitions on the selected theme. Every member is responsible for producing and presenting its exhibition. Médiat-Muse promotes all the exhibitions presented through grants and private funding. It would be appropriate to grant funding to those kinds of associations that could promote commemoration activities in a given region for 2017. The cultural network is very strong and promotes the outreach of small institutions that cannot afford to do so on their own.

The Internet and social media can also play a very important role in disseminating high-quality historical content and enabling people to discover the collections of Canada's museums. A program such as community memories would help small institutions develop virtual exhibitions that can be accessed by the vast majority of Canadians. These exhibitions require little in the way of material or financial resources to develop and could be produced by small museums. Canadian Heritage could conduct a cross-Canada advertising campaign to promote the exhibitions. Smartphone apps for accessing Canadian museums' collections or short history capsules would be of interest to younger audiences. A unique model developed by the Canadian Heritage information network could be available to all museums, and they would be responsible for developing information content. This would be a universally accessible solution.

Another idea to consider is pooling expertise. Federal and provincial government institutions could associate with small museums to develop satellite exhibitions. For example, the Canadian Museum of Civilization would present an exhibition on the first nations based on objects from the collections of aboriginal museums across Canada. Those museums would offer their visitors a smaller, local version of the exhibition presented in Gatineau. This would make it possible to circulate collections across the country, thus encouraging people to discover the rich aboriginal heritage.

Lastly, consideration should be given to ensuring greater access to the mobile exhibitions circulated. Rental and transportation costs for those productions are very high and prevent visitors from discovering extraordinary collections. The eligibility criteria for the exhibition circulation fund will have to be relaxed.

In closing, I want to emphasize that Canada's 150th anniversary is not necessarily an event the first nations wish to celebrate. I am not a spokesperson for the Abenaki or any other first nation, but, from a historical viewpoint, the creation of Canada led to the passage, in 1876, of the Indian Act, which is still in force today. Regardless of the programs developed by Canadian Heritage for commemorative events in 2017, the preferred theme of the festivities, again in my view, should be Canada's cultural diversity. The first nations will have to tell their story, an uncensored story, a story more than a thousand years old in this vast land that today we call Canada. It is that story, that knowledge and that know-how that we convey to our visitors every day.

My sincere thanks to every one of you for inviting me to this committee meeting. I sincerely hope that Canadian Heritage will make it possible for all museums, regardless of size, to take part in the festivities in 2017.

I will be very pleased to answer your questions.

•(1125)

[English]

The Chair: Merci.

Next we'll move to Parks Canada.

[Translation]

Mr. Carol Sheedy (Vice-President, Operations, Eastern Canada, Parks Canada Agency): Good morning, everyone.

I am Vice-President of Operations for Eastern Canada at Parks Canada. That means operations in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. It is a great pleasure to speak to you today. Thank you for the opportunity to do so.

[English]

My colleague Andrew Campbell was pleased to provide background recently on Parks Canada to the committee and to share with you the key strategies and programs of our centennial celebrations. I think it is worth noting once more the three key strategies of our centennial, since they have proven to be highly effective and will be used again as we are planning Parks Canada's road to 2017.

These strategies are, first of all, to leave a legacy of lasting improvements, including renewed infrastructure and built heritage; to expand our impact and to use a multiplying effect by engaging partners in the media, among our stakeholders, and across the federal family; and finally, to engage all Canadians, including our employees across the country.

It would also appear that these strategies could be applicable to the celebration of Canada's 150th birthday. With this in mind, I will not repeat any further information, but I would like to focus your committee's request for details on the Lachine Canal, The Fur Trade at Lachine, and the Fort Chambly national historic sites, as well as your request to share other past experiences of Parks Canada celebrations.

I will begin by discussing our experiences with the 400th anniversary of Québec City celebration.

[Translation]

Preparations for the celebrations surrounding Quebec City's 400th anniversary started as early as 2001 at the Parks Canada Agency. In 2005, the federal government announced a \$104 million investment earmarked for the anniversary in Quebec City, including \$24 million from Parks Canada to build Espace 400^e in the Old Port. Espace 400^e would become the focal point of the festivities for the 400th anniversary of Quebec City.

On the whole, the anniversary was acclaimed as an enormous success in terms of crowds and public appreciation. 2008 was a record year in terms of economic and media spin-off. It was estimated that 8 million people attended the 290 activities. Aside from the economic spin-off, it should be noted that the lasting effect was to develop new products. As well, a wide variety of partners became involved in the events. These partners provided a financial top-up, and their offer had a multiplier effect in terms of marketing.

The 400th anniversary had a mixed impact on tourism in other Quebec regions. Some tourism operators blamed the slow start to the summer tourist season in 2008 to tourists going to Quebec City instead of Quebec's other regions. Others, however, claimed that foreign travellers visiting Quebec City also took the opportunity to visit other parts of the province, such as the Eastern Townships.

•(1130)

[English]

Looking ahead now, you asked my colleague Andrew Campbell about the 2017 celebration plans and opportunities for Parks Canada in the greater Montreal area. You specifically requested details for, as I mentioned earlier, the Lachine Canal, The Fur Trade at Lachine, and the Fort Chambly national historic sites, and opportunities to leverage Parks Canada assets in those areas.

Located in Montérégie, Fort Chambly attracts over 100,000 visitors every year. It is one of Parks Canada's most visited and well-known sites in Quebec. With the Lachine Canal, it is well positioned to make a significant contribution to the federal tourism strategy. With the help of both public and private regional partners, last year Fort Chambly changed its approach to the visitor experience. The new concept involves offering a menu of experience opportunities, targeting different types of travellers, and taking an approach that is now off the beaten path.

Here are some of the changes we are considering: Fort Chambly rooms will be refurbished in order to facilitate our offering of culinary experiences and interactive or virtual activities; the inner courtyard may be altered to put on musical productions; the fort's exterior walls could be used to screen films in the evening; and finally, the exterior park and adjacent buildings could be refurbished to become an area for cultural gatherings and activities during the 150th anniversary celebrations.

As we upgrade the visitor experience at Fort Chambly, a new priority clientele for Parks Canada—it's a new audience that we are targeting over the next 10 years, that is, young families and adults from the city—will be more interested in learning about their heritage. As well, we will set the stage for private and public partners to present a wide variety of cultural and community activities, making Fort Chambly a new gathering place for communities and partners to have a chance to experience Canada's heritage.

The Lachine Canal and The Fur Trade at Lachine national historic sites have both played an important role in the history and development of Canada, and Montreal particularly. The Lachine Canal received national designation for a variety of themes: it served as a hub between the heart of the continent and the Atlantic Ocean in the 19th and 20th centuries; it was a precursor of the transportation revolution in Canada in the early 19th century; it played a pivotal role in the industrial and commercial development of Montreal, namely through the production of hydro power; finally, it served as a corridor for industry in the different stages of Canada's industrialization. The Fur Trade at Lachine national historic site commemorates the legendary history of the fur trade that started in Montreal.

The Lachine Canal receives over one million visitors a year, most of them Montrealers. It is a key Parks Canada site in Quebec and it helps us connect effectively with young, urban and new Canadians. After receiving \$100 million in joint funding, the Lachine Canal was reopened to boating in 2002 after being closed to navigation for many decades. This reopening has led to over \$1.5 billion in private investment, basically helping attract even more Canadians and Montrealers to the shores of the Lachine Canal. Additionally, with its \$10 million investment in the Lachine Canal in 2009-10, Canada's economic action plan helped to rehabilitate and set up some of the

elements of the corridor with interpretation tools, meeting areas, street furniture, and repair of the bicycle and foot paths along the shores of the canal.

The City of Montreal has expressed an interest in renewing the partnership with Parks Canada and to continue the development of the Lachine Canal for 2017. Also, 2017 is the 375th anniversary of the founding of Montreal, and Gérald Tremblay, Montreal's mayor, has already stated that he wants to complete the redevelopment of the Lachine Canal and make it one of Montreal's six key legacies. Parks Canada is currently working with the City of Montreal on these projects.

If we look at opportunities, there are two sectors that present opportunities. In the southwest, we could work at developing the Peel sector to make that area a community and cultural gathering place; improve access to the canal, especially to and from the local neighbourhoods that are growing increasingly around the canal in that area; and build a canal square that would become Parks Canada's showcase as well as the Government of Canada's showcase in Montreal.

In the Lachine sector, we could do two things: within the Borough of Lachine, we could develop facilities that provide access to the water and aquatic activities to the many communities in that area; and stabilize the heritage assets there, the old canal walls.

•(1135)

Meanwhile the development of private housing projects is encouraging public partners to prepare and implement a development plan for public areas around the Lachine Canal, representing for us an additional opportunity for partnership with the private sector.

[Translation]

2012-2017 is a period of significant anniversaries of importance to Canada's history, culminating in Canada's 150th in 2017. During this time, Parks Canada will align its activities and resources to best support and benefit from the overall Government of Canada agenda for commemorations and celebrations during this momentous period.

For Parks Canada, highlights of this period will include: enhanced programs and numerous special events in Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada during 2012-2014 to commemorate the War of 1812; significant capital improvements at Fort George and Fort Mississauga and a Parks Canada presence at Toronto's Fort York; a nationally televised six-part docudrama series on the war, with the first episode launching this spring, and supported by other national awareness-building activities; the 300th anniversary of Louisbourg in 2013; the centennial of historic commemoration in Canada in 2014; the bicentennial of the birth of John A. Macdonald, and showcasing historic sites related to prime ministers, in 2015; and preparing for and celebrating Canada's 150th anniversary in 2016 and 2017.

Parks Canada will utilize opportunities presented by these key events to advance the goals of the Government of Canada and the agency. This will be done in a way that helps optimize awareness of Parks Canada places and increases visitation to them, as well as contributing to the objectives of the federal tourism strategy.

The goal of the Government of Canada's commemorations and celebrations is for Canadians to become increasingly aware and informed about their heritage. We endeavour to present how significant events in history led to Canada becoming an independent country from coast to coast to coast with the unique values and attributes that we cherish as Canadians today.

As Canada's plans for our 150th birthday take shape, Parks Canada will be doing its utmost to add the benefit of our experience to ensure this great occasion is truly memorable and engaging for all Canadians.

[English]

Thank you for listening. It would be a great pleasure to answer your questions.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Next we have Mr. Gill.

• (1140)

Mr. Jean-Denis Gill (General Manager, Native Museum of Mashteuiatsh): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and members of the committee.

I'm going to be giving my presentation in French because it will be easier for me. I will try to be slower because I don't have anything prepared for that.

[Translation]

Thank you very much for inviting us here. It is an honour. It is important to get the opinions of a number of organizations or members of the aboriginal communities.

I won't repeat everything my colleague Michelle Bélanger said about small museums and aboriginal museums. We are experiencing appreciably the same situation. The Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh was established in 1977. We went through a major expansion in 1998, and our goal and role are to promote and conserve the past and present history of the members of our community, of the entire Pekogami Innu nation.

With regard to the role that we can play in the festivities for Canada's 150th anniversary, on the one hand, as was mentioned earlier, not all the people of the first nations necessarily have the same desire to take part in those festivities considering all the history surrounding Canada's creation. However, the festivities may spur action or the introduction of tools enabling the various aboriginal nations to redevelop, to recreate a sense of belonging to and pride in Canada's history. As an organization that transmits history, we have that role and that ability to focus on what the aboriginal peoples have contributed since the discovery of Canada, and even before that. The idea is to enable those people, those nations, the members of our nations to feel a certain pride in what they have contributed throughout that history.

Of course, our financial resources are always limited. We do little with little in the way of resources or means. As Ms. Bélanger mentioned in connection with her museum, we are a recognized organization, of course, a museum recognized by the Government of Quebec. We have been receiving minor, although stable, operating funding for many years, as a result of which our small team must constantly find additional, independent funding through programs that are often ad hoc and that do not always assist in taking sustainable action.

If we want the festivities to contribute something to our little museums and to the aboriginal nations, I believe it is necessary to think and take action or to grant funding that will enable our small institutions to make presentations or developments, whether it be exhibitions or other things of that kind. That would help put the emphasis on the role and history of aboriginal peoples in Canada's creation. Thus, if we manage to make people in the communities proud and enthusiastic about their history, we may come out winners in that regard. We will be able to help the people of the first nations be participants in Canada's history and feel that they have had a role to play and still have a role to play, I hope, in Canada's development, in its present and future history.

I also believe it is important to note certain elements from the past because that is somewhat part of the process. Without wanting to address the political aspect or anything that might approach it, I will say that the members of our community had the opportunity to take part in the opening activities of the Vancouver Games. Some people in our community, and even those who took part, felt from the way things were done and the presentation of the event that a secondary role was assigned to the members of the first nations. That of course, once again, made us feel that an attempt was being made to use the nations' history without allowing the members of the community to take part in it.

In conclusion, I believe it is necessary, in the context of the 150th anniversary, to re-establish ties, opportunities for the aboriginal peoples and nations. That can be done through museums, among other things. We must restore aboriginal nations' pride and emphasize the role they played in Canada's creation and earlier history. Regardless of what action is taken, it must be concrete and go beyond the festivities of the 150th anniversary. History will not stop there. There will be other celebrations and other actions, and we must always think for the long term.

Thank you very much.

• (1145)

[English]

The Chair: Merci.

Now we will move to Exporail.

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid (Executive Director, Exporail, Canadian Railway Museum): Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and members.

We are very honoured by this invitation and pleased to be given the opportunity to present our suggestions as part of your study of Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017. I'm going to check my notes to make sure I stay within the 10-minute time limit.

The commemorative celebrations in 2017 will undoubtedly afford a unique opportunity to highlight important events in the development of our nation and the remarkable accomplishments of Canadians. Museums of all sizes across the country have a special role to play in preparing for these celebrations. The heritage they preserve, the history they share, the research they conduct, the works they display, the artistic presentations they organize and the partnerships they develop are just some of the contributions museums make to promoting a better understanding and appreciation of the history and achievements of Canadians.

Like every other museum, Exporail, the Canadian Railway Museum, is committed to protecting and promoting heritage—in our case, a railway heritage that is of particular significance to contemporary society and future generations. Exporail is Canada's largest railway museum and, in the opinion of museologists, one of the finest in the world. The museum celebrated its 50th anniversary on July 21, a date that also marked another important Canadian event: the 175th anniversary of the launch of Canada's first public railway linking La Prairie, on Montreal's South Shore, with Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu.

The museum houses a treasure of national interest: the collection of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association. Owner and operator of Exporail in Saint-Constant-Delson, Quebec, the CRHA is a non-profit organization incorporated under federal law in 1941. It has 800 members and 11 divisions covering all regions of the country.

The museum's impressive collection includes 168 locomotives, streetcars and other rolling stock, close to 10,000 artefacts, 1,000 scale models and 200 archive groups containing more than 250,000 plans, photographs, maps, documents and other material. According to a report prepared by Lord Cultural Resources Planning & Management Inc., a leading firm of museum consultants, ours is a national collection of international calibre. We share our railway vehicles, exhibitions and archives with various museums across the country, including the Revelstoke Railway Museum, the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario, the Canadian Museum of Rail Transport, and the New Brunswick Railway Museum.

We believe that "Railways: Builders of Canada" is a theme that should be included in the event. The 150th anniversary of Confederation will celebrate the British North America Act, which created Canada as we know it today. Introduction of the steam locomotive to Canada and construction of the railways connecting the Maritimes with Upper and Lower Canada provided a cheaper and faster means of transporting people and freight over long distances. Expansion of this innovative method of transportation would even become a condition for several provinces to agree to join the federation.

In political terms, when the last spike of the Canadian Pacific Railway was driven on November 7, 1885, Canada truly began to exist as a nation. In other words, the railways made Confederation not only possible but viable.

If any time remains at the end of the presentation, the president of the museum will show you the 1881 contract between the Canadian Pacific Railway Syndicate and the Government of Canada for the construction of a transcontinental railway, fulfilling one of the main requirements of the BNA Act.

● (1150)

Canadian railways have always played a significant role in the development of communities across our vast country, specifically by opening new lands for settlement, facilitating communication, developing tourism, encouraging immigration, fostering innovations in engineering, driving industry in the east and agriculture in the west, and providing access to Canada's natural resources. Today more than ever, railways continue to be the lifeblood of the country. In our opinion, one of the goals of the 2017 celebrations should be to hold this heritage high for Canadians of all ages to appreciate.

While railways have made an important contribution in all regions of the country, Quebec remains the birthplace of the railway in Canada and home to the nation's first five public railways: the Champlain & St. Lawrence Rail Road, 1836, the Montreal & Lachine Railroad in 1847, the St. Lawrence & Industry Village Railroad in 1850, the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad, in 1852, and the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada in 1853. This province is also the hub of an industry of which Bombardier Transport is now a world leader.

We would like to make the following recommendation. In our opinion, it is essential that activities to commemorate the 150th anniversary leave a concrete legacy. The railway heritage that commemorates the building of our great nation deserves a national museum. If the motion adopted by the Parliament of Canada in February 2007 recommending that the government recognize Exporail as the national railway museum were to be implemented, this would serve as an enduring, valuable and symbolic gesture for all Canadians. This project could continue the public-private partnership already in place at Exporail: if the current financial involvement of the railway industry, the Government of Quebec, local municipalities, private enterprise and individuals were to be complemented by the full support of the federal government, the long-term position and visibility of Canadian railway heritage would be ensured.

With regard to our second recommendation, we believe that the invitation for museums to participate in the 150th anniversary celebrations should include financial support. Museums are uniquely positioned to keep memories alive by presenting, sharing and preserving heritage. An appropriate level of funding for commemorative projects would help them to achieve their mission. This could take a lot of forms. Museums have ideas, but we suggest that a fund be established to restore railway equipment, large heritage objects. That could also take the form of upgrades to museum equipment and infrastructure to ensure that heritage is preserved. It could be circulating exhibitions that can be presented outside a museum and at other institutions. In short, there are a host of ideas because museums are extremely creative. They need only be offered the opportunity to do so for them to deliver events in which the community and communities will take part.

As for our third recommendation, we believe that a commission or independent organization should facilitate activity planning for the 150th anniversary. Non-profit organizations would be asked to work with that organization and with federal institutions such as Canada Post, the Royal Canadian Mint, ports and airports, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Parks Canada and VIA Rail Canada, to name but a few examples.

In conclusion, we thank you for listening to our presentation and wish to inform you that Exporail will be lending the British-built locomotive Dominion of Canada—a gift received in 1967 as part of celebrations marking the Centennial of Confederation—to England's National Railway Museum, considered to be the most prestigious museum of its type in the world. It will be on display in 2013-2014 for the 75th anniversary of the world speed record set by the locomotive Mallard. One million visitors are expected to attend the exhibition.

• (1155)

Finally, 2017 is also the centennial of the victory at Vimy Ridge, the culminating point in the war effort by Canadian railway troops. The unique expertise of these Canadian railway construction units, acquired primarily right here in Canada, was recognized by all of our allies. This victory earned Canada the right as a nation to sign the Versailles peace treaty in 1919.

Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Merci.

Now we will move to the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel, and Mr. Garry Anderson.

Mr. Anderson has some pictorial illustrations that staff were prepared to hand out, but due to our routine motions, I just want to point out to you that the description of the illustrations on the pages is in English. In order to hand them out we need the unanimous consent of the committee.

Is there unanimous consent to hand out the pictures?

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): We can look at them but we can't accept them. We can't keep them.

The Chair: In order to distribute them, we must have unanimous consent.

Mr. Justin Trudeau: Then I don't grant unanimous consent.

The Chair: So you don't want to see the pictures?

Mr. Justin Trudeau: I'd like to see them, but you can't distribute them—

The Chair: You can hand them back afterwards, if it makes you more comfortable. It's up to the committee. If there's no consent, we can't hand them out.

[Translation]

Mr. Justin Trudeau: I don't grant my consent.

[English]

The Chair: All right, there's no consent.

Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Garry Anderson (Executive Director, Canadian Museum of Rail Travel): Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

I should point out that the pictures are listed at the end of the presentation in both French and English. They're not meant to provide anything other than the visuals. If you wish to look at them later they are in the packages.

Thank you for making it possible for me to make this short presentation on how we think we can participate in a meaningful way in Canada's 150th anniversary and support similar aims by the Canadian Railway Museum's Exporail.

My name is Garry Anderson and I have been the chief executive officer of Trains Deluxe, the trade name of the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel in Cranbrook, British Columbia, since it began in 1976. We may be a relatively small community, but we have established an internationally renowned collection of vintage deluxe Canadian hotels-on-wheels, representing various eras from the 1880s to the 1950s. My background is in architecture, so I have approached railway passenger train interpretation from the perspective of architecture on wheels.

My work in assembling and restoring this collection and developing public access programs resulted in my becoming a member of the Order of Canada in 2007. Just yesterday I received the award of distinguished service from the Canadian Museums Association for the same reason, hence my reason for being in Ottawa, and the timely and inexpensive ability for me to make a presentation to you. This was done on very short notice, so I must thank the committee's staff for making arrangements.

One of the train sets is a complete seven-car original set of the 1929 Trans Canada Limited, and it was given national historic designation last year. One of the first orders of business of our then-new MP, David Wilks, was his effort to get a precise time of the designation in June 2011 to include it in our local community celebrations. This train is one of the highlights of the displays at the museum, and was determined by the national historic sites and monuments staff to be the most luxurious train ever built in Canada. It is the first such designation for railway heritage of this type. Several other cars from other trains are also federally designated as movable cultural property.

I have been fortunate to have an uninterrupted 36-year career in railway heritage. This has allowed me to develop a long-range perspective on the incredible impact the railway has had and still has on our country. The railway literally brought British Columbia into Confederation, thus saving the whole western half of the country from becoming part of the United States of America. The railway also made Confederation work by linking the diverse parts of our landscape. Without it, connections and communications would have been ineffective, and Canada probably would not have survived as a unified country. So the railway's place in an anniversary such as this is absolutely essential. Not to do so would be an historical travesty.

My perspective has also made me aware of the historic and internationally recognized achievements made by our country in railway matters, particularly passenger car design, interior decor, operations, and the support technology that make Canadian car-building among the finest in the world for the many climactic conditions that Canada experiences.

This perspective also involves railway art and architecture, but in particular the great railway urban hotels and resorts that developed world fame. The Canadian Museum of Rail Travel displays and interprets all of this in a most unusual way. It de-emphasizes the technology and mechanical aspects while emphasizing the social history of rail travel, along with the creative arts of design, art, and architecture. We have been described as more of a fine arts or decorative arts collection by many, which is a distinct departure from the norm and a compliment.

The handouts—if you're able to see them—show some of the beautiful interiors of some of the railcars in Cranbrook. A picture is often worth a thousand words, and these photos show a side of railway heritage not often portrayed, at least not on this scale, in a small community remote from major centres. Calgary is the nearest centre at 400 kilometres away.

Canada is often described as a vast and diverse country, which I think also aptly describes our railway heritage. There are many railway collections that tell many stories from the local, regional, and provincial levels. However, there are very few that tell national and even international stories, and they must be part of any celebration of our country's survival for the past 150 years. It also surprised me that the Canadian railway story does not figure more prominently in the story of Canada as presented by our federal institutions. This is a very big oversight when compared to the stronger federal portrayal of our relatively recent aeronautical story, including the Avro Arrow, for instance, which dates from only 60 years ago.

● (1200)

We do have a national aeronautical museum, but no equivalent national railway museum. The national Museum of Science and Technology has too large a mandate to tell a true railway story, so that institution cannot do it justice. The missing historical link needs to be corrected or Canadians will continue to be uninformed on the central role that the railways played in the building and development of our country, a role unique to the railway at that time.

I'd like to offer two proposals for the committee to consider for the 2017 celebrations.

The first proposal is to designate the Canadian Railway Museum-Exporail as the new national railway museum of Canada, with connections to other railway collections of national significance, to instantly create a lasting legacy for the 150th anniversary of our country. This act would suddenly profile the central role that the railway played in the act of Confederation in making Confederation work, and how it continues to affect the lives of Canadians and businesses of Canada.

The Canadian Museum of Rail Travel has been able to expand the definition of a national collection so that other public railway heritage collections with artifacts of proven national significance and located across the country could also benefit through a decentralized

approach, but with formal connections to the CRM. In this way, more Canadians would have improved geographic access to the railway heritage that built and linked this nation by making Confederation work.

The railway contributed significantly to the development of the country into one of the wealthiest in the world, and this needs to be better understood so it can be celebrated in the way it should be as part of the Canadian identity. We recognize that while not all of the national collection resides at Exporail, it is the largest railway collection in Canada. There are also other important collections that contain items of national significance and contribute to the story line. This issue was discussed by this committee in October 2006 and it did come for a vote in the House, although nothing further transpired.

The second proposal is that the federal government should involve and promote nationally significant railway heritage in an expanded role in the 150th celebration to better acquaint Canadians of all ages with the central role that the railways played and still play in our country. Broad-based and cost effective federal promotion leading up to and including 2017, assisted by the railway companies and provinces, would increase visitation to railway heritage collections across the country, improving access for all Canadians and visitors to Canada.

Preserving the large artifacts that make up many railway heritage collections is expensive, but it would develop support from this type of partnership over the short to long term. It would greatly improve awareness of the long-standing importance of the railways to Canada.

I will close by pointing you to five short quotes from an important historic document on the trains collection done in 1992 by Robert Turner, curator emeritus of modern history of the Royal BC Museum. These are also available on the museum website. I will leave the quotes for the record, so I'll just let you read them.

The intention of these quotes was to show that collections not located in major metropolitan urban areas are significant and do contribute to the story.

I want to applaud the government for taking the lead so early in the development plans for the 2017 celebrations and we want to assist in any way we can. We have the actual artifacts to celebrate with, while the federal government has the ways and means to make it happen in time for 2017.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

● (1205)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Anderson.

That concludes the witness testimony. So now we'll move to our questions and answers. I remind you that the first round is seven minutes for each question and answer, and we will start with Mr. Armstrong.

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank you all for your presentations today.

There are a lot of you and I have seven minutes, so I hope that as we go through the question and answer session, you'll all get an opportunity to expand on the facts you've brought to us for Canada's sesquicentennial .

I'm going to start with a couple of quick questions on Exporail to Mr. Anderson.

I see that Exporail started in 1961, but the fact it is called Exporail would lead me to believe it had some sort of participation in 1967. Could you expand on the name and what type of role your museum played in 1967?

Mr. Garry Anderson: Actually, that's more of a question for the Exporail people.

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid: In 2001, when we expanded the Canadian Railway Museum, it was to show that we weren't just dealing with the past and present of the railways, but also with development, directions and future visions, as well as the importance of railway development for the country.

The board of directors chose to add a bilingual name: Exporail. It's also easier to promote commercially. We nevertheless wanted to retain the name Canadian Railway Museum, since, at the national and international levels, all the major industrial countries have national railway museums, and it is important that be reflected in their names. So we retained the name Canadian Railway Museum, but we added it to the more commercial corporate name, which is Exporail.

[English]

Mr. Scott Armstrong: Thank you for clearing that up for me.

The next question I have is also for you, Ms. Reid. You touched on the fact that Vimy Ridge is also celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2017, and the railway's historic involvement with Vimy Ridge.

Do you want to expand on that just a bit?

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid: I'm not a specialist on that theme. My curator is in a better position than I am to talk about it because he is preparing an exhibition on the subject.

At the time of the events, Canadian railway troops worked hard to dig underground railways in Europe and to repair the railway lines that were being dismantled with whatever resources they could find. That was highly characteristic of the railway workers who had acquired experience in Canada. At the time, development in the Rockies and across the north often required them to find ways of doing things and certain tools in order to innovate and be able to make repairs quickly. The Canadian railway troops did that job, which helped win the battle of Vimy Ridge, among others.

When I get back, I will ask my curator to give me some details on his research, which I will forward to you. The railway component is one of the main reasons why the allies paid great tribute to Canadian troops.

● (1210)

[English]

Mr. Scott Armstrong: It allowed the quick mobilization of troops so they could build up a great force right before an offensive. They were able to mobilize troops much more quickly. The expertise that Canadians had in the development and implementation of railways was very valuable in mobilizing and transporting troops. For Vimy Ridge in particular, there was a huge buildup directly before that, which was undetected by the Germans.

Moving on to the question of financial support for museums, I'm going to ask Ms. Bélanger a question.

You said that you almost need to know by 2013 what programs are going to be in place so you'll have time to prepare. We asked other museums this earlier, and they said they needed at least two years. So would between two to three years be adequate to allow you to put a proper program in place?

Ms. Michelle Bélanger: Because of the size of the museum, planning a long time ahead would be better for us. We don't have a curator at the museum, so with only five people working at the museum on a full-time basis, it would be very difficult. If we know three years in advance what the program will be, we will participate if the funds were there. It's not a matter of how much time we will have but what funds will be available. If there are only small programs of \$2,000 to \$3,000 per museum, it won't be worth expending all this effort, the investment in human resources, etc. That's why it's important to have a *réseau*, a group of museums all together. It could be by theme or by region, but if we receive funds for a group of museums, that would be more appropriate to develop a very nice program.

Mr. Scott Armstrong: Thank you for that.

I'm going to move on to Parks Canada really quickly. My question is about infrastructure.

You discussed the idea of building new infrastructure and investing finance in infrastructure. Would it be also possible to focus on looking at what we already have and maybe rebranding it, for example, maybe taking a new park or a new historic site and calling it Sesquicentennial Park? Would there be some options for Parks Canada to look at those types of initiatives?

Mr. Carol Sheedy: I imagine we could explore that and probably have it as a tag line or a branding for our specific initiative on the road to 2017. We intend, as I mentioned earlier, to align our presentations in our national parks and national historic sites as much as possible to 2017. So this could be something that we could put in place.

Mr. Scott Armstrong: What role did Parks Canada have in the centennial in 1967, and also the 125th anniversary? Did Canada invest in infrastructure? Did they rebrand things? Could you describe a little bit about the history of Parks Canada in celebrating our milestones?

Mr. Carol Sheedy: I don't think Parks Canada was actively engaged in 1967 or in the 125th anniversary. To my knowledge, the first time we became very actively involved and had one of our buildings branded was with the 400th anniversary in Quebec, as I described earlier, where we invested and contributed to the development of *Espace 400*^e.

The Chair: Mr. Nantel.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): I would really like to thank all those who have come to meet with us this morning. This is a meeting full of information. We rarely have such long and informative presentations.

First of all, I would like to inform Mr. Gill and Ms. Bélanger that the lack of enthusiasm or the reservations—the word "reservations" is poorly chosen, but you understand what I mean—that they feel toward the celebrations for the 150th anniversary have previously been expressed here by other spokespersons. I hope we will be able to produce a report that, beyond the celebrations of Canada's 150th anniversary and its future, will take into account the need to evoke history and to do some housekeeping. Ideally, we shouldn't boast too much about our roots at a time when problems are still unsolved, particularly in northern Ontario. It's all well and good to organize a party, but if the roof is leaking, it's better to repair it first. I hope that is indeed taken into account.

You also provided a good description of the financial situation of museums, which is always very difficult. That's particularly true of small museums such as yours, which are established in communities. You talked at length about the possibility of rallying all the museums, of establishing networks and themes. I have previously discussed the idea of establishing a pass for the museums which would cost \$150. I don't know whether that could be tax deductible, since a donation would be made to a local museum. You would keep half of that amount and the other half would be used to fund the program. The idea would be to network and to invite people to go to their local museum to buy a pass so that they could enter other museums across Canada free of charge. There is a direct connection with trains, which no doubt helped build Canada.

As I am not an actuary, I can't calculate the costs involved, but the fact nevertheless remains that this project could be a relatively profitable investment in the context of the celebrations. How do you react to that kind of idea?

• (1215)

Ms. Michelle Bélanger: That's a very good question. In 1967, I was very young; I was two and a half years old. My parents went to Expo 67 almost every weekend. My father worked there. The Expo passport has been carefully preserved at home.

Museums are the guardians of our heritage, because they conserve objects, but, given the people who work there and the activities presented there, they are also very lively places. A passport would be a kind of throwback, a nod to 1967. We're talking about a physical visit, but as I mentioned earlier, it is also important to go and discover the thousands of objects that every museum has in its museum reserves. We also have to be able to exhibit them.

I believe the passport is a winning idea. We would have to see. In that case, the museums visited would be compensated. Earlier I mentioned Médiat-Muse. A territorial exhibition was produced and involved costs to visitors. That experience was really very successful, at the Musée des Abénakis, among other places.

Mr. Jean-Denis Gill: That might be a good idea. However, for some museums such as ours, which is located in a slightly more remote region, relations with other museums are somewhat limited. There are a few in the region, but not many. There might be less interest in this kind of passport among people in the area than among people in the major centres, where it might be a good option, but it would have slightly more mixed success in the regions.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: That leads me to the subject of trains, which I want to address briefly. You suggest that would not be very appealing to the local clientele, but the goal is to make Canadians travel inside Canada. If people in your town buy their passport at your little museum so they can have cheaper access to VIA Rail in order to go to Toronto to see a museum, there may be some interest. I would like to emphasize how interesting physical contact with the object can be. I also hope the locomotive that is going to London will be back here by 2017. It would really be unfortunate if it were not.

• (1220)

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid: That's obviously a condition of the loan.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: It's a big item.

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid: It's important for the country. We do not collect foreign locomotives, but that one and the one from France were gifts that the organization agreed to accept in the context of very special celebrations.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: That's it.

I would like to verify something regarding the aboriginal and Abenaki museums. One day, we heard from some people who talked about Black History Month. They mentioned an exhibition called "Missing Pages". I thought that talking about missing pages in history was an interesting idea.

Do you believe that each of your museums could consider creating a missing pages committee so that each of the communities represented could say what, in its view, has been poorly told? The Acadian coalition also mentioned this.

Mr. Jean-Denis Gill: I think that might be a good idea. That could be an opportunity to focus on the positive parts of history, on the aboriginal contribution to the history of Canada, not just to go back to the discovery.

We recently filled a blank page with regard to the entire residential schools issue. It may not yet be completely written. It's a slightly darker part of history, but we can focus on the somewhat more positive parts. This could indeed be an opportunity to do that.

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny: That is somewhat the idea we suggested today in connection with a book. First of all, we realize that history is being taught less and less. I read the comments by committee members on this point. And we are teaching a history that is often viewed from a single perspective. For us, it is important that we first recognize the entire contribution by the first nations, that founding people—they aren't often called a founding people, but they are—by the Métis, by the francophone and anglophone communities. We should have a book that reflects all those perspectives. A Quebecker will not tell the story in the same way as I do, nor will a member of a first nation. It is important to give our young people this tool, which reflects all Canadian perspectives, our common history.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Do you believe we could ask each of these storytellers to gather their versions together in a single work rather than spend five years trying to determine how to write it?

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny: Yes, absolutely. That is why we suggest striking a committee that will take the components of society into account. A single history textbook should be produced including all these various perspectives. This is an option that would enable the young people to whom we teach this history to form their own opinions. We will not impose an opinion on them.

Le président: Thank you very much.

[English]

Mr. Trudeau.

[Translation]

Mr. Justin Trudeau: Thank you very much.

I'm pleased to see you here today. This is the second time I have attended a committee meeting like this one; I am replacing a colleague so that I can hear all these discussions on the 150th anniversary. I'm very pleased that we are receiving, both on Tuesday and today, so many representatives of museums, some of which are small, that have come to make a presentation. I believe that, if we make a success of this 150th anniversary, that will enable us to break through everywhere.

There was the exhibition in 1967. That was the big event that brought an entire country together, and we made a considerable impact. It was proposed that the 2017 exhibition be held in Edmonton, but that proposal was not supported by the government. So we are now faced with the challenge of trying to bring people together having regard to Canada's diversity. I believe that may also be something very positive.

In response to my question, I would like to hear the perspective of the aboriginal and francophone communities first and foremost. It must be said that they often have different perspectives from those of the Canadian majority regarding a celebration such as the 150th anniversary.

In addition to identity aspects, are there any themes in particular that you think more readily lend themselves to a pan-Canadian celebration that would reflect local issues of interest to your communities?

•(1225)

Mr. Jean-Denis Gill: I said something about specific themes earlier. I believe this is in large part a matter of recognition. If all of us, across Canada, are able to work on aspects that enable us to be recognized as a people, through our history and through our contribution to the creation of Canada, we will already have taken a major step.

I don't want to fall into the whole issue of negotiations or debate on lands and land use, but the fact remains that the general attitude of governments toward aboriginal peoples also has a role to play in all that. People have to treat each other with respect.

If, in the context of the 150th anniversary, we put in place measures or actions that recognize respect for and shared recognition of each of the peoples, I believe we will have taken a big step.

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny: We agree with that. For us, it's the whole issue of dialogue and getting to know each other.

I am Fransaskoise, and I live in Saskatchewan. My anglophone neighbour may not know me, and I may not know him either. It's important to have that dialogue. We put forward the idea of a youth Parliament. We have one; it's francophone, but we don't want a francophone youth Parliament; we want one that really is representative of Canada. So it would include first nations, Métis, anglophones and francophones.

You have an interpretation service here. Why not have a real Parliament with young people who would come and consider issues of dialogue, pride and belonging and who could table bills in Parliament, things for us? That would be an opportunity for exchange for our young people.

Sometimes I get the feeling—and I would say this is partly true—that our young people are more open to the world than the people of previous generations. They no longer wonder whether they will speak to their first nation neighbour, whether they will learn English or French. They wonder what other language they're going to learn, to whom else they can speak. Our young people are more open.

Perhaps that is what we Canadians should draw inspiration from. To my mind, if we see young Canadians from all parts of society come together in Parliament to debate issues such as that, the entire question of identity and pride will emerge, and we will get the impression, first, that we are speaking to each other and getting to know each other. I believe that will have a significant impact, not only at that moment, but for the future of this country.

Ms. Michelle Bélanger: I sincerely believe that the theme is diversity; not just culture, but diversity from one province to the next. We have different landscapes, different climates and weather; the people who live there are different; there is language, the first nations.

In two weeks, we will be presenting a temporary exhibition called *Fibres du monde*, or Quilt of Belongings, which was presented at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, in Gatineau, with which you are familiar. This mural, this tapestry, in fact represents 263 nations present in Canada: 70 first nations and 193 immigrant nations. It's unfortunate that it's being presented this year; I would have presented it in 2017. I believe it is what we want to show our visitors; that is to say that there is diversity in Canada and we must be proud of it. People must discover that diversity, and that is what we are trying to show at the museum.

[English]

Mr. Justin Trudeau: Thank you very much.

I'll change to the railway side of things. Obviously, I'm very pleased that all of you have made the point that the railways formed an extremely important part of the foundation and creation of Canada as a successful country in the post-Confederation years.

These days, however, if you look in the news there are discussions about CP and CN's delivery of services. There are concerns around the subsidies to VIA Rail. Rail is not getting perhaps the positive attention that it could be and should be.

Certainly I'm one of those who thinks that rail represents a really important part of our future as we look towards high-speed transit between Calgary and Edmonton, for example, and along the Quebec–Windsor corridor.

How do you see not just celebrating the past of rail in Canada but also the present and the future of rail in Canada, folded into the 150th anniversary celebrations?

• (1230)

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid: When we address the railway theme—
[English]

Sorry, I'll switch to French. I'm more comfortable in French.

[Translation]

When we address the railway theme, we do so from all angles. For example, last summer, when we celebrated the 175th anniversary of the first railway, there were, on our site, the very recent, very modern equipment of VIA Rail Canada, representatives of the Railway Association of Canada and available publications of *Canadian Geographic* concerning the current situation of railways and the contribution and development of new hybrid locomotive technologies. All that helps to inform visitors about what is going on and about the environmental benefits of this mode of transportation, which is often for intercity transportation, but also to cover long distances, and to encourage it.

So our role involved presenting very contemporary, current, modern objects and objects from the past, exhibitions, demonstrations, talks and theatre. Art was present in all its forms and grouped together based on themes, which could be simultaneously from the past, present and future.

We have also taken virtual action, made outdoor presentations, helped develop books and established partnerships in which we can address the current railway system. Our role is obviously to make

young and old alike aware of the importance of rail transit, but also to inform them about the importance of the railway system, which represents 75% of freight transportation and 77 million passengers a year in Canada. These things are part of our environment, but people forget about them because they are part of our everyday life. In a way, it is important for us to be able to provide a forum so that we can further develop this aspect and encourage people to do so. So we are doing it; we would like to do it more, and we are also doing it through other partnerships in order to get it done.

Le président: Thank you very much.

[English]

Mr. Gill.

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

I also want to thank the witnesses for being here with us today and for your wonderful presentations.

We've heard a lot about 1967 and how wonderful the celebrations were back then, even though some of us were not around at the time to witness them. I also feel that over the last many years since 1967, Canada has changed considerably in terms of new Canadians and other dynamics.

What is your organization doing, or what can you do, to reach out to new Canadians to get them to participate in Canada's 150th birthday? Anyone?

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny: First, I'd like to say that francophone communities no longer have one culture. Francophone communities outside Quebec have several cultures and, because of immigration, in 2006, 13% of francophones outside of Quebec were new immigrants. So francophones are very much part of our community.

As for *néo-Canadiens*, new arrivals who speak English or any other language, it's important that they take part in these celebrations and that we recognize them as well. When we talk about establishing dialogues between the different components of society, we of course do include new immigrants. They are part of this country. They contribute to every sector of this country.

• (1235)

[Translation]

Ms. Michelle Bélanger: However, it is very difficult to attract new Canadians to new museums, and I don't mean just the Musée des Abénakis. I belong to an association of museums and tourist businesses, and I know this clientele is very difficult to attract to museums. So both Canadian Heritage and the museum associations will have to consider how they can attract them. Perhaps we are not offering them what they are looking for in a museum that they are not used to visiting. As a museum, we wonder how to attract this clientele.

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid: We have previously tried to reach the cultural communities. Contacting the organizations and media of those communities is a good way to let them know that we exist. In our minds, the railway theme is universal. For newcomers, for example, the railway is a very easy reference point because the railway story, which is a benefit in North America and in most countries around the world, began virtually around the same time, give or take 20 years. Everyone has a heritage or a history of his or her country that can be transposed. In a country where people have immigrated, or where their family immigrated before them, they can see how to set guideposts and understand more and more about Canadian history, based on the reference points of their own history. We can also try to reach them through the media of their communities, which is a major benefit, but we have to be able to do that and have the necessary resources to do so.

[English]

Mr. Carol Sheedy: For Parks Canada this is definitely one of the challenges that we have, in the sense that we realized that we were no longer at top of mind to a large percentage of Canadians because ethnocultural communities did not feel a sense of connection to national parks and national historic sites the way that people who have been in Canada for many generations had.

It was mainly an awareness issue. So the approach we've chosen to use is to target young families and school children through a variety of programs using the curriculum. For example, there's a grade 8 pass that allows them to come for free with their families. So one way to create the interest through the children is to have the families come to national parks and national historic sites.

As well learning to camp is something that a lot of people associate as a traditional national park experience, but has presented a lot of challenges for recently immigrants or new Canadians. So we're using our national historic site lands that are in the middle of large urban areas. For example, we organized a learn to camp session at the Halifax Citadel where, in collaboration with Mountain Equipment Co-op and Canadian Tire, we created a tent site.

There were people there who allowed young families, or more older families, to come in and have the experience of camping. Some of us learned to camp by sleeping in our backyards, but it's no longer necessarily something that people do. So we're offering them a chance to experience it that way. That's the entry point into the potential of discovering more about Canada's nature and going to a national park.

Similarly, as Madame Reid mentioned, when we develop interpretation programs in our national historic sites, we aim to build a bridge between the reality of the countries they come from and Canada's history. First of all, we present the multiple voices we have been discussing—not just one history but all the elements of the history—and also provide them with a reference point from their personal history of the country they came from.

We're explaining, for example, a war event or a social change in a context that resonates and is relevant to them from their reference points. We found that this approach has been very efficient, very effective, because it is really allowing them to discover Canada initially from their perspective and on their terms, making it their personal experience. Then they come out of that with a definition of

their sense of Canada, their place in Canada, and the place of Canada in the world.

• (1240)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Gill.

Mr. Cash, for five minutes.

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

Thank you all for being here.

I have some questions for Madame Kenny.

[Translation]

You talked about establishing a committee that would be responsible for coordinating the activities involved in the celebrations of the 150th anniversary.

Why do you insist that the francophone and Acadian communities should be represented in those activities? Could you tell me more about how you would suggest that committee be constituted?

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny: Thank you for your question.

As I said earlier, I am Fransaskoise. I am originally a Quebecker, and I must tell you that the vision in Quebec of a bilingual Canada and the vision that francophones outside Quebec have are completely different. We often get the feeling that, in government and elsewhere, people think that life in Quebec goes on in French and that there is

[English]

the rest of Canada. Well, I live in the rest of Canada. I'm a proud francophone. I'm bilingual, but I'm a proud francophone.

[Translation]

My francophonie is a different experience from that of the people from Quebec. I wouldn't claim to represent someone who comes from Quebec or his or her opinion. I expect people to respect the fact that Quebeckers alone do not represent the Canadian francophone community.

We have artists back home, as is the case across the country. There are 2.5 million individuals who speak French outside Quebec. The differences between Quebec and us should be recognized. However, we like Quebec very much; it's a partner in many areas, but we are completely different. So we would not want anyone to think that, because you have a French-speaking Quebecker on a committee, the francophone and Acadian communities are represented on that committee.

I would also like to emphasize another fact. We talked about the various components of society. It's important for us that the first nations and the Métis community be represented as well.

When I come here as a Canadian, yes, I represent the francophone and Acadian communities, but, to my mind, there is first of all a principle of justice, of equity. Everyone has to be taken into account. We are not minorities.

I am a proud Canadian who contributes, and the cheque I am going to sign tomorrow for my taxes proves it. I contribute in the same way as any member of Canadian society today. The same is true of newcomers, of our first nations and of everybody. We contribute in our way to the economic and cultural growth and heritage of this country. I see no minorities in our country. We are full-fledged citizens.

[English]

Mr. Andrew Cash: Thank you.

You also referenced the importance, when agreements are signed with the provinces and with stakeholders, of having that linguistic duality in our country, that this fact needs to be woven into these agreements.

Can you expand on that and tell us why this is important?

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny: We've had an Official Languages Act for 42 years. Governments, all governments, have timidly made commitments. We make commitments and provide funding, but when it comes to the federal government providing funding to a province, it has to include the official languages component or the linguistic duality clause, saying, "You know what? If we're going to provide you money for some legacy building, it needs to be bilingual. If we're going to provide money for celebrations, they need to be bilingual."

Some people will say it's not possible across the country. Well, it is. As I said, there are 2.5 million of us. But when we did the Olympic relay, we reached 95% of the country; I can't remember exactly what it was, but we were within, I think, 10 or 25 kilometres of every Canadian across the country. All of the celebrations were done bilingually.

So that's important as well if we're going to give money to a province to distribute among the components. There are francophones in every province, every territory. We want to be part of those celebrations. We're proud to be Canadians. We want to celebrate, just like everybody else. We want to favour things where francophones celebrate but also where francophones, anglophones, first nations, and any Canadian can celebrate together, exchange, and dialogue. I think that's the important piece here.

• (1245)

The Chair: You have 15 seconds left, Mr. Cash.

Mr. Andrew Cash: Okay.

I'd like to thank you all for being here.

The Chair: Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC): I'm actually going to ask a selfish question of the rail people. It has nothing to do with the 150th.

Hopefully no points of order will be made. I'll try to get it out first.

A voice: [Inaudible—Editor]

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP): Paul, do we have a point of order...?

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Paul Calandra: I have what's called the "Acadia" railcar in my riding, at the Markham Museum. I'm told this railcar was used by governors general, and definitely used by Prime Ministers Diefenbaker and Pearson. I believe Prime Minister Trudeau was the last person to actually use the Acadia. It's a spectacular, marvellous train, built in the twenties.

The railcar is in desperate need of help, but obviously at the Markham Museum we don't have the expertise to do that. I wonder if you guys actually have people available who could come in and advise us on how we could upgrade that train and how much it would cost.

As part of Canada's 150th celebrations, is that something the Markham Museum should look at? Are there also examples of other such beautiful trains out there that we can look at fixing up?

Mr. Garry Anderson: I can try to answer this.

You can do anything with money.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Paul Calandra: Yes.

Mr. Garry Anderson: We have done a lot of work in this regard, and I think the Canadian Railway Museum has done a lot more. We've done specific work on interiors of certain cars with beautiful panelling, which is very fragile. We may be able to offer some advice, but we're a lot further away, so there are travel costs.

Montreal is nearer, and they may have some comments.

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid: We could offer advice on how to restore a railway car. We do that kind of work at the museum. However, our facilities are very small. We often ask our volunteers to make an enormous contribution, in time, to restore a vehicle. That varies with the type of vehicle, its condition and so on. The costs for a single vehicle can amount to \$200,000. This is no simple task. If there are a number of vehicles, we have to have a very big budget and a lot of time. You can't do that by waving a magic wand. There's also the entire dynamic involved in moving vehicles that have to be restored. Some businesses may cooperate on the restoration, but you have to look for them.

Whatever the case may be, we normally don't do that work for others, but we could cooperate in developing files and a strategy.

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra: Thank you, Mr. Gill, and Madame Bélanger.

We heard much earlier in testimony that the way the Olympics worked with first nations communities was better than had been done in the past.

I'm going to ask two questions and I'll let all of you answer, but I'll start with Mr. Gill.

Obviously, we can use the Olympics as an example of how we work with first nations moving forward. My question more specifically for all of you is this: Is the 150th anniversary more of an opportunity for smaller museums, and maybe the larger museums as well, to do one thing to celebrate 150 years, or do you see it more as an opportunity to look at some of the problems you may be having?

Maybe one of the benefits of the 150th anniversary is to solve some of the problems, be it financing small museums, be it our historic relations with first nations. If you could have one or the other, what would be your ultimate goal out of the 150th anniversary? It doesn't just have to be about having a great party in 2017. That's for the francophone community and Acadian community as well.

• (1250)

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny: Celebrating is absolutely wonderful, but we could correct some of the inequities in justice. I'm not talking specifically about francophones, but any of those we've had over the last 150 years. That would go a long way to re-establishing my pride.

I am proud. I said I am a very proud Canadian. I'd show even more pride on the 150th birthday of Canada. That's for every component of this society. We want Canadians to be proud.

There are things over the history that, as a Canadian, I'm somewhat ashamed of and there are things that I'm really proud of. I'm not just speaking as the *présidente de la fédération*, but as a Canadian. If we could correct some of the things that have gone wrong in this country over the past 150 years, man, I would celebrate and I would pay for my own celebration.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Calandra.

Ms. Sitsabaiesan.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank all of our witnesses who have joined us today.

My first question is for Exporail. Since the adoption of the motion in Parliament in February 2007, which you mentioned in your introductory remarks, to officially designate Exporail as Canada's national railway museum, have there been any steps to respond to the motion, to make it happen?

Mr. Stephen Cheasley (President, Exporail, Canadian Railway Museum): I'm pleased you asked that question because I was here at the hearings five years ago when this issue came up. This committee at that point was holding a hearing on the Auditor General's report that had come out about the deterioration of Canadian heritage. The committee had met to look into this.

One of the recommendations was that the railway history should be preserved, and that Exporail should become the national railway museum. That went to Parliament, and Parliament adopted it.

Following that, we met with Bev Oda, who was the Minister of Canadian Heritage at that point. She recommended that we meet with the Museum of Science and Technology to work out a proposal that it could give to the minister, which we did.

We met with the science and technology museum. We looked at how we could integrate the railway collections, and we came up with what we thought was a very good a proposal.

Then that proposal was taken by the science and technology museum to the minister, but by that time the minister had changed and was now Minister Moore. After he looked at it, he came back and said that unfortunately, they didn't have the funds to carry it out. That's where it ended. That was five years ago.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: That was five years ago, and ever since there's been nothing to actually make the designation happen.

You did mention in your presentation that it would be a nice thing to have it officially and properly done for the 150th celebrations.

My question is for both Exporail and the Museum of Rail Travel. Both of you mentioned that if anything helped build this nation, it was our coast-to-coast railway. You suggested that museums be included in the 150th celebrations.

Will your museums be financially sustainable and viable up to and beyond the 150th celebrations? If you think you won't be, what do you think you may need to ensure that you get to the 150th celebrations?

Mr. Garry Anderson: We are self-sustaining to a point already, but our profile is not very high. We require not only that local people see us, which is a small population base, but also a lot of people who are travelling.

I wanted to bring up one of the problems. It's a public perception, I think, in Canada that for many of the railway museums, because we deal with such large objects, it's very hard to maintain them in a display-looking condition, unless you happen to be in a building, which the CRM now has. Many of these collections are still outdoors. Ours are still outdoors, but we maintain the interiors beautifully. That's where the money goes for environmental controls.

The outside ones are much more difficult and they're more cosmetic, but I think it leads Canadians to look at railway museums as maybe unprofessional. A lot of them look like they're on their last legs. Some are doing okay. Funding would help, but I think in building the profile of the importance of the railways and some of the major collections in the country, it would help the various museums to help themselves more.

We really need to do more profile-building, along with some of the funding that would come for the celebrations.

•(1255)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Claude Reid: We receive assistance from the Quebec government. It's an operating grant that we have been awarded for 35 years now to help us carry out our projects. We won't conceal the fact that maintenance costs, that is just insurance and heating, have amounted to nearly \$490,000 a year since the expansion in 2004. However, we are temporarily receiving \$490,000. We get 25% of our funding from the Quebec government. The rest comes from donations and museum admissions.

We talked about a pass, and we are interested in that, but an adult has to pay \$17 to visit our museum. That's very expensive, based on museum standards, but, to obtain funding, we have to do rentals, weddings, films, a lot of looking for donations, in short everything we can do.

[*English*]

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Sorry, I need to interrupt you because I know my time is running out.

The Chair: I hate to interrupt you, but your time ran out.

Mr. Calandra, for just a couple of minutes.

Mr. Paul Calandra: I'll ask one question, and then you can come back and finish it afterward, Mr. Gill.

Ms. Kenny, it seems like we're getting a good sense that perhaps we should also be putting a bit more focus on how official languages can become part of the 150th celebrations. I'm going to assume that would agree that we should maybe take a look at official languages and separately take a look at doing something in that regard when it comes to Canada's 150th.

Mrs. Marie-France Kenny: I think official languages should already be a part of everything the federal government does, and they should continue to be.

You were speaking before about whether we should be correcting.... We've had this wonderful Official Languages Act for 42 years, yet it's never been applied totally in its integrity in any government in those 42 years. Something as easy as saying "*Allô, bonjour*" is not being done in a lot of our federal institutions. The only thing we need to correct this is will. It's not money.

I'm a former federal employee. We used to manage the national official languages program for a crown corporation in Saskatchewan, so I'll leave you to figure out which one it was. We were able to do it. My unilingual English CEO at the time, John Ryan, received an award from the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Leon Leadership Award.

You don't need to be bilingual, and we don't expect everybody to be bilingual. I respect anybody's right to teach their children whatever language they want as long as my rights are respected as a francophone.

If we were able to win the Leon Leadership Award in Saskatchewan for official languages, I don't see any reason for our not being able to do this here now in Ottawa and across the country. As I said, all we needed was the will of one person way at the top, but over those 42 years, we have not been able to do that.

The day we start doing that, I'm going to be very proud of my Canada. If I'm already proud, I'll be even prouder.

•(1300)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Calandra.

Thank you to our witnesses.

This is our last meeting to hear testimony on Canada's 150th, and we will now be formulating our report. Thank you, merci, for your input.

The meeting is adjourned.

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