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## **Standing Committee on Official Languages**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, November 29, 2011**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Michael Chong**



## Standing Committee on Official Languages

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

•(0845)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)):** Welcome to the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages on this Tuesday, November 29, 2011.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108, we are conducting a study on the evaluation of the Roadmap for the purpose of improving programs and service delivery.

Today, we have the representatives of three groups. Testifying first are Ms. Hamelin, Ms. Gagné and Mr. Doiron, from the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité. Then we will hear from Mr. Bourgeois and Mr. Le Blanc, from the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité Canada. Lastly, we'll hear from Mr. Nadeau, from the Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Welcome, everyone.

We'll start with the presentation of the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité.

**Mrs. Marthe Hamelin (President, Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité):** Good morning, Mr. Chair, committee members, thank you for the invitation you have sent us. We are pleased to be with you this morning.

I would like to introduce the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité. My name is Marthe Hamelin and I am its president. I am here with Brigitte Gagné, director general, and Melvin Doiron, a member of CCCM's board of directors. Mr. Doiron is also director general of the Coopérative de développement régional — Acadie ltée, in New Brunswick, and a delegate of the Conseil acadien de la coopération.

The Conseil acadien de la coopération et de la mutualité has been in existence since 1946 and represents 3,700 cooperatives and 54 mutual companies, which generate turnover of over \$23 billion annually. The 8.9 million individual members hold more than \$180 billion in assets and help support 100,000 quality jobs in every francophone and Acadian community in Canada.

Cooperatives and mutual companies operate in every sector of the economy. The *caisses populaires* and credit cooperatives are definitely the most familiar. However, there are also cooperatives in the forest sector, food services, housing, accommodation, funeral services, health care and education. Many cooperatives are established by newcomers and bring people together around activities such as sewing and food services.

The cooperative structure is increasingly popular and increasingly recognized as a good way to start up a business.

I will now hand over to Ms. Gagné.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné (Director General, Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité):** It should be noted from the outset that the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité is honestly unable to evaluate the impact of the current Roadmap as the cooperatives were unable to be partners in the Roadmap's implementation. We argued in favour of including a major economic development component in the current Roadmap, but our recommendation went unheeded.

Today we are back before you to propose that an economic development component be introduced in the next Roadmap. Our argument is simple: if the members of the francophone minority communities and Acadians cannot do business in their language, they are doomed to slow but certain assimilation.

It must be possible to discuss everything and to make every choice in French, whether it concerns family finances or the various necessary transactions of everyday life, in the areas of legal needs, medical care and tax payments. Otherwise, we quickly forget the terms associated with those notions in our mother tongue.

For more than 100 years, the cooperatives have been important players in maintaining, consolidating and developing the francophone and Acadian communities. They have played an essential role in ensuring their cohesion and integration into Canadian economic life.

Some of these experiences are well documented. We can cite the example of the Evangeline region in Prince Edward Island and that of the Lamèque and Miscou Islands in New Brunswick. In fact, the cooperative model has enabled those communities to live and work in their mother tongue through the introduction of measures to strengthen the use of their language in all areas of activity. It has enabled those communities to preserve and support their vitality, to organize and to live on the land they have chosen.

Cooperative development is a serious, effective, transparent and democratic business model. Unlike individual entrepreneurship, it is a collective business model that is largely unknown. It can be presented as an alternative to a possible entrepreneurial venture.

The strength of the cooperative model has been proven. An analysis of the survival rate of cooperatives conducted by the Quebec Ministry of Economic Development, Innovation and Export in 2008 showed that cooperatives have a much longer lifespan than private Quebec businesses. Four in 10 cooperatives have been in business for more than a decade, compared to two in 10 for all Quebec businesses.

However, cooperatives are not just another way to do business, but a specific, value-based business model that can be adapted to all sectors of activity and businesses of all sizes. At a time when a large part of the world's population is indignant, cooperatives can offer new sustainable economic development solutions and more consistent with communities' needs.

In addition, the Canadian government is currently making a significant effort to strengthen the Canadian economy and permit the creation of new businesses. In the circumstances, it could choose to cooperate closely with the cooperative movement to develop innovative and sustainable solutions.

Our commitment to cooperative development has been supported for a number of years by a program of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. It has also been supported by the efforts of existing cooperatives. You will find figures and actual results in the document that was distributed to you.

The Rural and Cooperatives Secretariat is the Government of Canada's entry point for all questions regarding the cooperative movement. The secretariat was recently invited to join the group of ministers working on the new Roadmap. We are pleased to support its efforts and hope the relationship will encourage recognition of the cooperative movement as an essential player in an economic development component that is included in the Roadmap.

Lastly, we support the implementation of an expanded pan-Canadian issue table involving the cooperative movement in order to develop a coherent national policy on economic and social development in which the cooperative movement would be invited to take part. We also believe the cooperative model must be recognized as an economic development tool, an essential business model for official language minority communities.

Thank you for your attention.

● (0850)

**The Chair:** Thanks to the CCCM representatives.

The representatives of the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité Canada will now have the floor.

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois (President, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Canada):** Mr. Chair, committee members and partners, on behalf of the board of directors of RDÉE Canada, the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité, my co-manager and member of the board, the Honourable Guy Le Blanc, and myself, I want to thank you for allowing us to appear before you today to tell you about the initiatives and remarkable results of RDÉE Canada and its network, which have been made possible through various federal government contributions.

Following our presentation, the committee will understand that the alliance between RDÉE Canada and its partners has made it possible to meet the Government of Canada's commitment under the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality by ensuring the continued existence of our francophone and Acadian communities, which has had the effect of promoting Canada's economic development.

Allow me to introduce our network. RDÉE Canada, the national office, works together with provincial and territorial agencies, the 12 RDÉEs across Canada, to support the economic vitality and development of the francophone minority and Acadian communities. The RDÉEs have more than 130 employees, including 100 development officers. As they are non-profit organizations, all those agencies are independent. Some are particularly active in employability development, while others also work in entrepreneurship. Based on the funding the RDÉEs receive, our network's mandate is to reinforce the communities' ability to establish and support a viable and sustainable local economy.

Consequently, community economic development enhances the communities' ability to react and adjust to economic changes. It also fosters the integration of both economic and social objectives in the strategic framework which we established at the outset more than 13 years ago now. That community economic development strategy serves as a backdrop to the implementation of our planning and is based on two themes: economic capacity development and human capacity development.

RDÉE Canada receives most of its funding through the Enabling Fund for Official Language Minority Communities, a financial contribution granted through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. That fund is one of the components of the strategy implemented by the Government of Canada to reinforce linguistic duality in Canadian society. For Canadians, that represents ongoing support for economic and labour market development in the minority communities. This is done through partnerships, development plans and capacity-building. On average, the Enabling Fund constitutes 54% of our network's total funding, which represents approximately \$9 million a year. Other funding comes from WD, ACOA and other federal sources, as well as the RDÉEs themselves and certain provincial and territorial agencies.

Unfortunately, funding must be renewed from one year to the next. This means we have no guaranteed stability. The funding paid by our main funding agency unfortunately does not enable all our provincial and territorial RDÉEs to provide services and support to start-ups or even existing businesses for economic capacity development or to industries or economic sectors. Its objective is to build community capacity in the human resources development sector, in other words employability, which covers only part of the sectors we have to support.

This year at RDÉE Canada, we completed the 13<sup>th</sup> year of implementation of the MOU between the Government of Canada, represented by a number of ministers, and RDÉE Canada, which represents the francophone and Acadian communities. As you will therefore understand, our national committee is an instrument designed to bring the minority francophone communities and the Government of Canada closer together. Through that committee, RDÉE Canada aims to advise the ministers and departments on government policies, programs and services so that they more adequately meet our communities' economic development and employability needs. The committee should help us diversify our funding sources.

With time and effort, this national committee has enabled us to partly change the culture, strengthen the economic foundations of the francophone and Acadian communities, which is essential to their future, and achieve significant progress in all regions of the country.

It is important to note the role of RDÉE Canada. We are the leader in the economic development of minority francophone and Acadian communities. We offer our provincial and territorial RDÉEs a significant range of services, support and intervention to support their actions.

RDÉE Canada's strategic activities are: joint action, communications, research and analysis, professional excellence, funding and strategic alliance.

• (0855)

In recent years, we have been able to rely on other partners, such as Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which has supported us in the development of an economic immigration strategy.

Our network has therefore achieved considerable success in the francophone and Acadian communities across Canada. Our work is producing concrete and tangible economic development results for the country as a whole. It is also enabling us to show not only that it is possible to do business in French across the country, but also that our communities are economically dynamic.

Our network is working with the Government of Canada for the development and vitality of our francophone communities in Canada and influencing the direction of Canada's economy. You can be assured that we are making economic development a priority in our communities. We hope the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Official Languages will help recognize our network as a leader in community economic development.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention.

Mr. Le Blanc and I are prepared to answer your questions.

• (0900)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now we'll hear from the Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau (President, Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick):** Thank you very much.

Good morning, everyone. I'm very pleased to be with you again. I won't do a word-for-word reading of the brief document that we have submitted and that was only in French. The beauty of Canada is that

we have the right to homogenous institutions. In that sense, we are consistent with the philosophy.

I would like you to keep the following question in the back of your minds: are all the efforts and extraordinary gains that we have made over many years enough in view of the permanently ongoing erosion? We're winning and losing at the same time. You will see along the way that even New Brunswick, which is supposed to be a linguistic paradise, is not really so. We have our own problems, and they are disturbing.

I represent the Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick, which represents some 30 Acadian organizations and approximately 20,000 individual members. I have been the organization's president for three and a half years, and my term will be ending next June. What we want to make is a kind of declaration of love. We love this country, our province, our community and our people. That is what has made us what we are today.

I live in Moncton, and I believe that city is a miniature New Brunswick. If we can manage to live in linguistic harmony in New Brunswick, which is a miniature version of Canada, I believe we have significant responsibilities. We view matters from that perspective. That hasn't yet been done, but we are working toward it, and we are making enormous progress.

With regard to the concept of the two founding peoples, the first nations must not be forgotten. I have always thought we should establish trilingualism and triculturalism. In fact, why not make it quadri or multi? Whatever the case may be, we very much embrace the concept of the two founding peoples. When I make statements like that, you have to consider that as a group. If French is being lost in Canada, we are all responsible. That will mean that we have not done our job and that we must agree to question the way we approach the issue.

There are gains, but there are also losses. Let's make sure this country doesn't become a second unilingual English United States. I think that having two official languages is an asset for this country and that we must continue making the necessary effort to ensure we move forward rather than backward. There are currently 2.5 million francophones and Acadians outside Quebec. Without federal support, we definitely would never have been able to get where we are today.

I am not convinced we have gone as far as we should, but we have nevertheless made notable, even obvious progress. The University of Moncton could never have come into existence without Canadian bilingual federalism and so on. We are extremely grateful for all that. The Roadmap has enabled us to fight battles in the health field. Sometimes we are forced to institute legal proceedings, although we are reluctant to do so. Among other things, we have also conducted a major debate in recent years in an attempt to regain our right to Acadian governance in health. We have managed to do that without having to conduct a full-fledged battle in the courts.

It is sad to always be forced to fight, but we will clearly have to fight as long as we want to live in French in North America. We have to acknowledge that fact. However, if someone could make that fight easier for us, that would definitely be very much appreciated.

With regard to community management, we have managed to convince our government to allow the new board of directors to consist of eight elected members and seven appointees. We would have preferred to have nine elected members and six appointees, so as to have a stronger majority, but our minister has reserved the right, in the event of resignations, to appoint replacements for those members who have resigned, even if they are elected members. It is therefore entirely possible that, within six months, we may wind up with a new board of directors consisting of a majority of political appointees. We believe that could be done in the form of a consultation. All that to say that this is part of our everyday lives.

The Roadmap has also enabled us to achieve something else. New Brunswick may be the kingdom of community radio. In 1989, I had the good fortune to be the founding president of CJSE, in Shediac. The federal government was very useful in that matter. I would like this tool to become widespread. In the southeast region, when Radio Canada was the only broadcaster of French language programming, only 5% of francophones listened to French-language radio, but now 70% of Acadians do. These are extremely important tools for Acadia and they must continue. The community radio stations enable the population to hear themselves, to dream, to make plans and to witness their successes. It has been extraordinary from an artistic creation standpoint.

• (0905)

With respect to immigration, through the efforts of former premier Bernard Lord four years ago, we have received special funding of \$10 million over five years for francophone immigration. Unfortunately, New Brunswick is not a province that is taking people in. Instead it is a province that is losing people to our friends in Ontario and Alberta. We find it difficult to retain people. Of course, even though that was included in the Roadmap, we will not have completed the work in two years. Consequently, we hope the program is extended.

The only problem is that, since 2001, that is in the past 10 years, the core funding for the Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick has remained the same. Furthermore, considering inflation, which averages 2.2% annually, we've wound up with 30% less revenue. Consequently, our organization does not even have a research officer or communications officer. Since my executive director and I are former journalists, we can offset that deficiency. However, it is not normal for an organization of people such as ours not to have a communications officer or a research officer. For that reason, more money is necessary.

Although people say New Brunswick is a linguistic paradise, I see this morning that 1,650 francophone children in southern New Brunswick—650 in Saint John, 500 in Fredericton and 500 in Moncton—all rights holders, don't have access to French-language schools. I think it's incredible that, in 2011, 1,650 children who are rights holders don't have access to French-language schools. There is currently no more room in the schools and community centres; they are overflowing. That's even the case in Fredericton the capital, and in Moncton, where there are 500 children. The situation is becoming urgent for us. That is why we can only hope the federal government will continue to encourage the provincial governments to deal with education. We know that education is a provincial jurisdiction, but

the fact remains that it is the basis of everything. Without education, you don't move forward.

There is another problem in New Brunswick. Unfortunately, I have to be pessimistic; you have to tell the truth. For the first time in New Brunswick, the number of families for which French is the first language spoke in the home has just fallen below 30%. This troubles us. For the first time, the assimilation rate is now in two figures, having risen from 9% to 11%.

That is why I'm saying we must make a collective consciousness-raising effort together. We have responsibilities. This all shows that we are not doing our job. It is not so much the others. Let's look at ourselves. As president of the SANB, I am sorry and destabilized. MPs, ministers, premiers, senior officials, commissioners of official languages have been telling us for 10 years that, for linguistic duality to be established in this country, they themselves must be champions of linguistic duality in Canada. They have to wear that pride.

I could talk about literacy rates. I thought I had original proposals. However, I hope they aren't original. I hope that my ideas are shared and that they have previously been thought. I thought I had an original proposal, but it seems we've already discussed it, and I'm proud of that.

I believe that, in this country, we have to have bilingualization programs for Canadian university graduates, and the Roadmap should include that. Let's not wait until they arrive in Ottawa to see whether they are bilingual, like our friend Michael Ferguson, who is nevertheless married to an Acadian. It is clearly he who wears the pants in that family since he hasn't learned our language, which is unfortunate. I prefer Mark Carney, or Mr. Paulson, who has just been appointed RCMP commissioner. There are some marvellous anglophones who are perfectly bilingual. There are also marvellous francophones. That's why I propose that we start early. Let's not wait until they arrive in Ottawa and take up important positions, particularly if they intend to work in the public services, such as that of New Brunswick, for example. Consequently, early childhood is important for us.

• (0910)

I don't know whether the other proposal is original. Earlier I told you that, in 10 years, we had lost 30% of our revenue based on the inflation rate. We fought for multi-year funding in the 1990s. We thank the federal government for granting our request. However, we forgot to negotiate to ensure that funding was indexed to the cost of living, which would have prevented us from winding up 10 years later with 30% less revenue. We therefore very much hope to see the Roadmap extended and to see it include a clause providing that funding will be indexed to the cost of living so that it reflects the actual situation. Otherwise we will ultimately be in a losing position.

According to my information, another original idea is also working its way through the federal government. That idea is to help our community improve its self-funding capacity by establishing a trust fund. I very much encourage you to reread the report that the late Senator Jean-Marie Simard wrote in the late 1990s. He advocated the creation of trust funds for minority organizations, which would give them greater independence and more money, and a more permanent way of advancing their issues. It appears that idea is circulating in Ottawa.

However, if it comes this far and the federal government decides to invest one dollar for every one-dollar contribution we make, that must not become a government pretext to encourage self-funding or, at the same time, to shirk its responsibilities and start cutting core funding. We are quite prepared to do our share to provide better funding for our organizations, but the government must not make us bear the cost of resulting cuts.

All that to say that we love living in this country as Canadians, as francophones and, especially, as Acadians, don't we, Guy? I think that being Acadian is the best way for us to contribute to this country's cultural mosaic. We want to continue living as Acadians for a long time, but in French.

Thank you for your attention to my brief presentation.

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

Now we have an hour and a quarter for questions and comments from committee members.

We'll begin with Mr. Godin.

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

Welcome, each of you, to our Standing Committee on Official Languages, whose meeting concerns the study of the Roadmap.

As you know, the Roadmap has been in existence for a number of years and was extended. The purpose of this study is to determine whether there will be a Roadmap in 2014. We want to know whether you recommend that there be a Roadmap in 2014. These are the questions we have to ask ourselves.

I won't perhaps speak to each group, since some of my colleagues will be putting questions to various groups.

Let's talk about government leadership. Mr. Nadeau, you talked about that, which leads me to talk about it as well because it's a hot topic here in Ottawa. We have a government that has appointed a unilingual individual to a position. However, of the 33 million inhabitants of Canada, there surely isn't just one accountant. With all due respect for the former auditor general, I told her it wasn't the auditor who operated the calculator. They say we need an accountant and that we can't find anyone else but Mr. Ferguson. And yet, an auditor has to take care of the entire machinery. How will an auditor who is incapable of speaking one of the two official languages, who is incapable of speaking to francophones, deliver a report on his findings? Once the Office of the Auditor General has done its job and found the problems and recommendations that should be made, how can the auditor speak to the public?

Mr. Nadeau, you say that the two languages should be learned in the postsecondary institutions and that people should learn them before coming to Ottawa. However, isn't the government, which continues to appoint unilingual individuals to these positions, sending professionals who want to work in the public service the message that they don't need to learn both official languages? The government isn't requiring it. Don't you think the government should show some leadership and show that, in this country, where there are two founding peoples—in addition to the aboriginal peoples, let's not forget—and two official languages, English and French, certain positions simply cannot be filled with unilingual people?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** It's definitely not a model that should be followed, and we hope this trend won't continue. At least Mr. Paulson, who's perfectly bilingual, has just been appointed to the head of the RCMP.

This has to stop. It's definitely a bad example to set. I don't feel like fighting with Mr. Harper. It seems to me he should understand that himself. What message are we sending? That bilingualism is good in a formal way, but not so good in practice?

The same is true for those of us fighting for equality among communities. There is an official equality on paper, but, in reality, as the figures I cited show, we're losing ground, even New Brunswick. Imagine how that can be for our francophone brothers and sisters in the other provinces.

This is unacceptable. Let's hope this matter is over. I think it's over.

• (0915)

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Was there any money before the Roadmap was introduced?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** I hope Mr. Ferguson comes back home and spends two or three months at home in Shippagan this summer. There's a language school at the University of Moncton in Shippagan and another at Church Point, Nova Scotia, which is very pretty. It seems to me that would do him some good. As I've already said, he is married to an Acadian, but that obviously hasn't helped him learn French.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** The Government of Canada isn't a school. The gentleman is paid \$322,000 a year.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** He is paid \$354,000 a year. It seems to me we should be getting value for our money.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It isn't for learning French, in any case. We've talked about it a lot and we'll continue talking about it because it's unacceptable.

Let's consider the Roadmap itself. It's been around for a number of years. Do you think there should be something more in it for the Acadian community, the francophone communities or for the minorities? What is lacking in the Roadmap? I read that it took you two years to get the Roadmap money for immigration to New Brunswick. Has that problem now been solved?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** It's solved. The agreement nevertheless ends in 2013, and so the work won't be done. That's often the case. Sometimes needs are created, but that's not permanent. As a result, women's organizations have recently lost a lot of money. Youth are also starting to be affected by cutbacks. That concerns us as well.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Explain to us what has been cut. It's all well and good to have a Roadmap and to say that things are going better, but you're saying these people are suffering cuts here and there and that women and youth are having their programs cut back. Is the Roadmap producing the results it should be producing?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** No; if they continue cutting the budgets, it won't.

You're asking me whether we should extend the Roadmap. My answer is that we should, but that it should be enhanced at the same time. However, that's not consistent with the messages we're receiving. The simple fact that the Roadmap grants a fixed amount is a problem. It's the same amount as five years ago. With inflation, there should at least be an adjustment. In francophone affairs, in bilingualism, the status quo is a setback.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I don't understand. The Roadmap should have constituted a surplus. The Roadmap isn't designed to group former programs together and say we have something new. You're telling me there have been budget cuts. Is the Roadmap working, or is it just a facade that will let us announce on the news that we have a Roadmap that's providing \$16 million here and a few million there? You're telling me there are cutbacks to the programs of certain communities. Are we robbing Peter to pay Paul?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** If you're asking me whether the Roadmap should be retained, my answer is that it should, but I think it should be indexed every year, or else we're losing ground.

The Roadmap has nevertheless enabled a number of federal departments to shoulder their responsibilities under Part VII of the Official Languages Act, particularly in immigration, which was not previously done.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** What is the Roadmap specifically doing to assist the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité? Should it be maintained?

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** Thank you for the question. For us, economic development means stimulating the SMEs, encouraging the development of new businesses, going into the minority francophone communities to encourage economic participation so as to prevent the outflow of young people, the brain drain, to keep our people at home and to encourage them to work at home, to have good lives at home and especially to work in French.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** The Roadmap is doing nothing for us. The cooperatives have been excluded from the group of main players in the economic development of the francophone and Acadian communities. We receive funding from a little program of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, in addition to funding from the cooperative movement.

I believe that not a single player in those communities is wondering whether the Roadmap should be preserved. We think it has to be. However, there are questions about its operation. The Roadmap must acknowledge all players in the development, maintenance and consolidation of those communities. That will enable the cooperative movement to put forward a form of entrepreneurship that is at times different from private entrepreneurship, but that also meets the collective needs of the communities.

• (0920)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Gourde, go ahead, please.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the witnesses for being here this morning.

My first question is for the representatives of the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité.

I believe the cooperative model is very well known in Quebec. I remember that, when I was young, I attended the annual meeting of the cooperative back home, the *caisse populaire*. The cooperatives have been well established in my region for about 70 years. They celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the movement when I was young; today they're celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> or 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Groupe Promutuel back home is getting ready to celebrate its 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary. That institution is older than our country; that says a lot.

My riding includes a portion of Lévis, which is the cradle of cooperation. That's where the first *caisse populaire* was founded. It's also where the head office of the Caisses Desjardins is located. I say that to show that it really has very deep roots in Quebec.

Our region—and perhaps others as well—will have a problem to deal with. Businesses with 25 to 40 employees, even 100 employees, will have to be transferred. However, we're having trouble recruiting new entrepreneurs to acquire them. Consequently, the money necessary to acquire businesses that operate well is hard to come by.

Could the cooperative model provide assistance to workers? When a business has to be transferred and finds no takers, can workers use that model to help them acquire the business where they work so that it can continue operating?

**Mr. Melvin Doiron (Administrator, Board of Directors, Director General of the Coopérative de développement régional – Acadie ltée, Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité):** The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has noted that, by 2020, 20,000 businesses will be on the market. Half of them will find no takers. That's obviously an incredible opportunity. It also means there will be a crisis downstream. The cooperative movement can play a considerable role. That's particularly true for the worker cooperative model and for the model of cooperatives run by worker shareholders who gradually acquire shares in the private company.

We are seeing an incredible opportunity in New Brunswick and across the country. And we need improved tools to seize that opportunity or to deal with the problem. Including cooperatives in the Roadmap is a very important option in that regard. We believe it should be given serious consideration.



The work we do when we help groups set up cooperative projects is crucial. There are increasing numbers of requests related to work cooperation, that is to say jobs. On that basis, I believe we must consider this option on an urgent basis. In fact, it's more than an option; it's an advanced model. In the past, cooperatives have been of enormous service to our communities. If we consider the increasing numbers of demands coming from our assistance offices, we realize it is both a model for the future and a model that is in increasing demand, particularly among minority communities.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** You mentioned that you need specific tools. What would those tools be?

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** Those tools exist at the national level, at least for some of our requests. In particular, the Cooperative Development Initiative. We are thinking in particular of the Advisory Services component and the Innovative Cooperative Projects component as ways of assisting projects directly.

At the national level, we obviously need a development fund. A request for that is already in the system. We also need the Cooperative Investment Plan to facilitate the capitalization of cooperatives. We know that very significant reserves are built up over time. However, the initial investment is not as easy as in the traditional private sector, where they are built on utility value, which is the value of the service, of the employment and so on.

On that basis, we also need to be equipped directly for advisory services and assistance. The Coopérative de développement régional — Acadie ltée in New Brunswick has a budget of approximately \$350,000. It currently has six employees, including two part-time employees. It's a vulnerable team to the extent that we partly depend on the federal program. We receive assistance from our contributors, our cooperative members, but the situation is really precarious.

We view ourselves as a form of economic and community development agency that must be supported by all possible bodies. In our opinion, the Roadmap is a part of that.

• (0925)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** The cooperative community often offsets the lack of service in communities. When communities become too small, the convenience store, gas station and grocery store disappear in turn. The services are then grouped together in the major centres.

Does your organization make it possible to retain primary services in locations of less than 1,000 inhabitants?

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** I recently attended a national, even international conference organized by the Canadian Worker Co-op Federation and held in Quebec City on the organization of business in accordance with the cooperative model. There were actual, current examples of communities that have taken charge of their situation regarding the loss of services in their respective communities. So the case is quite convincing. We believe that, since our regions are losing their populations, we can maintain services by joining forces. The notion of profit thus becomes less important than that of retaining services in one's community.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Do I have a little time left?

**The Chair:** You have three minutes left.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** My next question is for Mr. Nadeau.

Earlier, before the meeting started, you told me you had trouble keeping people in your region because they were going to work outside the province. Could the cooperative model or another model help you keep your young entrepreneurs in your region so they could develop an entrepreneurial spirit? What would it take to stimulate your young people and encourage them to stay in your region? When young people leave, you very often lose not an entire generation, but sometimes even three.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** Thanks to people like Melvin Doiron, new worker cooperatives are emerging. We have success stories. For example, the Lamèque fishing cooperative is one of the biggest cooperatives. A cooperative fish plant is a success story. The Fédération des caisses populaires acadiennes has 200,000 members out of a population of 240,000 inhabitants. That represents a penetration rate of approximately 75%. I believe that's undeniable.

It's true that we are currently facing challenges following the closing of branch offices, but I'm a supporter of the cooperative movement, and the Acadian people have always been supporters. The entire Acadian area of Prince Edward Island is known as one of the world capitals of cooperation. Virtually everything is done in cooperative form. A number of our community radio stations are set up in the form of cooperatives as well. We can almost say that the cooperative movement is in Acadians' genes. I believe the cooperative movement, as Mr. Doiron said, could become a decisive alternative.

Now let's talk about the agricultural plan. I know you're from an agricultural region. We still have good land back home. The thing is simply to reactivate it, to revive it. I believe that will be done more through cooperation. Today, we know it's difficult for a young person to start up a farm, especially in a region like ours. However, there are much more human-scale farm concepts that are re-emerging and that do not require 1,000 acres in order to be profitable. We're seeing that in the Charlevoix region in Quebec. I recently attended a meeting in that region and rural areas are being revitalized.

So, yes, the cooperative movement is definitely a decisive economic development solution for Acadians.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

Mr. Bélanger, go ahead, please.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for being here this morning.

The world recently experienced the Occupy movement which, I think, is a reflection of a considerable uneasiness about developments in our societies. All the statistics, even Canadian statistics, show that the rich are becoming richer and the gap between rich and poor is growing. This morning, after hearing the representatives of the cooperative movement and RDÉE, I want to make a wish. I'm going to ask you to cooperate because I believe the cooperative movement is a long-term solution to that uneasiness.

Yesterday, unfortunately, Parliament abolished a major cooperative in western Canada. The Conservative majority decided to put an end to the Canadian Wheat Board, which was a major blow. In the greater Canadian francophone community, I hope your two organizations can work together. Although this is something I haven't seen in the past, I am nevertheless going to make that wish.

I only have a little speaking time because I only have one opportunity to speak. This morning, I have to settle some administrative matters. Mr. Nadeau raised the topic of immigration. At the committee's last meeting, I said I intended to introduce two motions, which I have done.

The first resolution calls for the committee to adopt again its report on immigration that was prepared during the last Parliament and for which you played a considerable role regarding the situation in New Brunswick. I introduced that motion.

I intended to bring forward those two resolutions, as I said at the public meeting. What was to happen has happened, that is to say that the Conservative majority requested an in camera session. I made that statement during my speaking time. I'm doing the same thing this morning; I am repeating what I said at that time. As the committee meeting continued in camera, I cannot tell you what happened, but I can tell you the result of that in camera meeting: two resolutions were negated, but I cannot tell you which ones.

• (0930)

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** You're in form this morning.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I can also tell you that, before the in camera session, the New Democrats and the Liberal representative said they would vote in favour of the two resolutions that I intended to introduce. However, I cannot tell you what resolutions those were. With regard to the second, I cannot tell you what was put forward.  
[English]

**The Chair:** Monsieur Bélanger, before I go to the point of order from Mr. Menegakis, I'd just point out that proceedings in camera are confidential and not to be revealed to the public. What happens to a motion in an in camera portion of a meeting is not to be revealed, with the exception—

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** —of the result.

**The Chair:** —of a motion adopted. So whether a motion is defeated, disposed of, or debate on it is adjourned, it is not to be revealed. Only a positive action on the part of a committee—

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** And if there is no positive action?

**The Chair:** —in an in camera portion of the meeting can be revealed.

In other words, anything that's in the meeting minutes published from that portion of the meeting can be revealed; anything else is to be kept confidential.

I just remind members of the committee to remember that rule.

[Translation]

Mr. Bélanger, go ahead, please.

[English]

**Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC):** That was my point of order. Thank you.

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I can't tell you the fate of the resolution, as you can see. We're all learning.

I had intended to bring forward another resolution this morning. In the absence of one of the members of the government party, I will not do so. The resolution proposed that the committee ask the headhunter—I suppose that isn't the right term—at the recruitment agency that had responsibility, the mandate—

**The Chair:** Menegakis has a point of order.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Will I always be interrupted?

[English]

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the honourable member is referring to.... He's trying to bring motions that are committee business to be discussed with our guests here today. It is not relevant to the presentation of the guests whatsoever. I believe he is using his time to discuss things that are committee business, which we customarily discuss in camera here.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Customarily?

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** Yes, customarily.

**The Chair:** A number of times members have questioned other members' commentary or questions to the witnesses. I'm going to give members a great deal of latitude in this committee to talk about the things they want to talk about. It's the right of a member to ask questions of the witnesses and to comment on things in general, and I'm not going to be too restrictive on the interpretation of the rules.

Monsieur Bélanger has the floor, so I'm going to allow him to use his time as he sees fit. But I would ask that if there is a point of order that relates to procedure—which I think you were originally bringing up, and I think it's relevant—you interrupt and ask the chair to ensure that the rules are respected. But when it comes to commentary on what other members are saying, or asking the chair to clarify a point of information, or asking a member to speak to the veracity of what they're saying, I'd ask that we respect members' time and allow them the floor, which they were given.

We're all given a short amount of time to speak here; often it's only five or seven minutes during the two-hour period. So in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the committee, let's ensure that we allow members the time they are given without interruption.

I'm going to pass the floor back to Monsieur Bélanger.

• (0935)

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I hope that hasn't encroached on my speaking time.

**The Chair:** Of course not.

**Some voices:** Oh, oh!

[English]

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** It's all gone.

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

That member who is absent today said that he had mounted the barricades because he agreed and was disappointed at the selection of a unilingual individual. Out of respect for the person who said that, I'm going to wait for him to return to the committee before introducing that motion.

I detest in camera sessions, and that is not customary for the committee. I have been sitting on this committee for years, and we have always conducted our discussions in public. I don't like to hear it said that it is customary to sit in camera. I refuse to allow anyone to impose this custom on us. That is not true. We are in the Parliament of Canada, and we have a responsibility toward Canadian voters to speak publicly. So I'm going to take advantage of the time allotted me to do that.

Here's a subject that also annoys the government. Are people aware that members of the government party are tabling positions in the House calling for the defunding of CBC/Radio-Canada? Are you aware of that?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** No.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Do you have a comment to make on that subject?

We're talking about abolishing all funding. In their words, they want

[English]

to defund the \$1.1 billion that CBC/Radio-Canada

[Translation]

receives. This is the nature of the positions they're tabling.

Do you have any comments to make on that?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** May I make one? It will be very simple.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Yes.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** I've lived in western Canada for 10 years, in a particularly anglophone community. I was the francophone. I frankly have to admit that what attached me to my community was Radio-Canada. No other media outlet did that. As an individual—I'm not speaking on behalf of the council—that affected me deeply. So I wouldn't want that to happen in any case. That would be an enormous loss for all communities outside Ottawa.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you, madam.

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** On behalf of RDÉE Canada, I can assure that, when we talk about economic and partnership development, we are in fact talking about communication. There's nothing without communication. It has to be done in our language, in our language of choice, in French, please. French is fundamentally important in northern Ontario, all across Ontario and Canada.

Thank you.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Mr. Le Blanc, what do you think?

**Hon. Guy Le Blanc (Administrator, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Canada):** The same is true for me. Without Radio-Canada, without that means of communication... It is important in the regions, especially in the rural regions, as Ms. Gagné said. The community radio stations are there, but that doesn't meet the full range of our needs. I'm not aware

of the comments, but a cut in services to Canada's francophone population would be unacceptable.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** We weren't aware of that, but we aren't surprised. Even if we didn't have increasing numbers of community radio stations, Radio-Canada definitely creates a network, a sharing of certain information. Radio-Canada is our only common radio and television network in Acadia in the Atlantic. That's why we like the fact that it's called Radio-Canada Acadie.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you, Mr. Nadeau.

Mr. Chair, this morning I received a letter from Mr. St-Pierre of the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, who appeared before the committee. I believe you and Mr. Godin received it as well.

Is it possible to distribute copies of that letter to all committee members?

**The Chair:** Yes, we'll do that.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

Lastly, I would like to request some information from our researcher.

On a number of occasions, we've heard comments to the effect that the Roadmap had increased the budget by 40%. In one sense, that's probably true, but in another sense, that may be misinforming people. I would like us to prepare a document for everyone on the Action Plan for Official Languages and its funding, but on an annual basis. From memory, I believe that the action plan's funding increased from year to year and that funding amounted to more than \$200 million in the last year of the action plan. If, for example, we added to that RDÉE, which was attached to it at that point, and others, the funding largely exceeded \$200 million. I believe it was \$230 million, but we would have to check. So if you take \$230 million and multiply it by five, that equals \$1.1 billion. So we could argue that there has been no increase, as Mr. Nadeau said.

I would also like to know, based on the documents we have received thus far from Canadian Heritage, how much money has not been spent every year since the Roadmap was put in place. That would let us know what the actual figures are. If it were possible to have that document for all committee members and the public, I believe that would be very useful, Mr. Chair.

Lastly, I would like to tell you about a concern. I don't know how we will manage to get this information, but the president of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne, the FCFA, made quite a disturbing comment last week. She said that the federation suspects—this isn't an accusation—that existing programs have been eliminated or cut because the Roadmap now covers 15 departments and that some of those departments receiving Roadmap money have withdrawn money from existing programs.

How will we be able to determine legitimately whether that is true?

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (0940)

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

We'll now go to Mr. Trottier.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to our guests for being here today.

I am a francophone from outside Quebec, for lack of a better description. I am a francophone from Ontario, from Toronto now, but I grew up in Alberta's high north. So I am a Gaulois from the Canadian Prairies.

My first question is for the representatives of the Réseau du développement économique et d'employabilité. I believe you said you receive \$9 million in funding a year for housing. Is that correct?

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** Roughly, yes.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** You have operations in all Canadian provinces except Quebec. Is that true?

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** That's correct.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** What was the funding allocation per province for those activities? I'm not asking for exact figures, but an approximate response. Was that allocation proportionate to the distribution of francophones? How did that work?

**Hon. Guy Le Blanc:** I can give you the figures by province for the period from 2008 to 2011. The amount was \$520,000 for Prince Edward Island, \$750,000 for New Brunswick, \$520,000 for Newfoundland and Labrador, \$520,000 for Manitoba, \$2 million for Ontario, \$334,000 for Nunavut, \$519,000 for British Columbia, \$520,000 for Alberta, \$520,000 for Saskatchewan and \$334,000 for the Northwest Territories. As for the RDÉE du Yukon, the amount was \$334,000, whereas it was \$520,000 for Nova Scotia. For Canada, it was \$1.9 million.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** So the larger shares went to New Brunswick and Ontario, as is the case for most of your activities, which take place in those provinces.

Those aren't small amounts of money in the small provinces. What were the investments? What in fact can we do to change the fate of francophones in those regions?

**Hon. Guy Le Blanc:** There were various projects in certain provinces. In Nova Scotia, we worked a lot in the tourism field and with entrepreneurs. For example, there are lobster fishermen in my region. They are the best lobster fishermen in Canada.

**Some voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** That's debatable, but—

**Hon. Guy Le Blanc:** We also worked with young fishermen to form businesses, cooperatives and find better markets. As you know, that's good for consumers, but the price of lobster won't be very high, depending on what we can see on the Nova Scotia market these days. I hope that will be reflected in Toronto and that you can eat some.

There are also agriculture projects. In British Columbia, the organization Femmes d'affaires en mouvement is a shared activity. There was an agriculture and agri-food partnership in Saskatchewan. There was intervention with individuals and entrepreneurs, approximately 200 in that community. The goal is to do things in French. That was the project for newcomers to the communities, particularly

in Saskatchewan. There are also bilingual forums on renewable energy. In Ontario, there are a number of projects, such as Place aux jeunes en région. These are projects and activities. In New Brunswick, they have the Rendez-vous Acadie-Québec. There are exchanges between those two provinces and new business opportunities for francophones. In northeastern New Brunswick, there is the knowledge economy development forum and there's an economic forum in Nova Scotia. Business participants were able to attend a round table to learn about all the services in French and to work toward developing others. There's the Faut que ça bouge! project in Prince Edward Island. It's a youth community leadership program for young people 14 to 17 years of age.

As Mr. Nadeau mentioned, Prince Edward Island and the regions of the Atlantic are probably francophone minority regions, like a number of rural regions in Canada. There is an exodus of our young people. We have to work with young people and encourage them from an early age to develop an entrepreneurial spirit in order to develop an economy that is less and less dependent on resources, which were traditionally the basis of the economies in those small regions. We have to equip our young people and create a culture of entrepreneurs, an economic culture that encourages them to live in our regions rather than move away to Alberta or Toronto, before coming back to retire in New Brunswick. I have nothing bad to say about Toronto or Alberta, but—

● (0945)

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** Thank you very much, but I'm just trying to understand your activities. Can we describe the largest part of your activities by saying that they are mainly training activities to help entrepreneurs find markets or to work with their suppliers, for example? That's their main activity. However, you are involved in training activities with entrepreneurs to develop their skills.

**Hon. Guy Le Blanc:** There are human resources forums. We try to help small and medium enterprises that may not have any personnel training expertise. We have courses.

In some provinces, we have cooperation forums, either with the university or with other economic development agencies, to respond to the needs of small and medium enterprises.

In some regions, there may perhaps be a need in the human resources field, whereas, in others, it may be another type of need that has been established by the community.

All the RDÉEs in each province and territory meet specific needs in their regions. So there are different actions and needs depending on the place.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** Thank you.

The following question is for the Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Although I'm an Ontarian and I've lived in various parts of Canada, I was trained in large part by Acadians.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** Ah!

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** I had very good teachers everywhere. So I feel like an Acadian in a way.

You mentioned the funding you pay to try to integrate immigrants or to encourage immigration to New Brunswick.

In Toronto, my city, the biggest role of the societies that work in immigration is really to enable people to learn English as a second language. Do you try to help immigrants learn to speak Acadian, to speak French?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** First of all, New Brunswick is a province that does not take in a lot of immigrants. Last year, there were 2,300 immigrants, 2,000 of whom have integrated into the anglophone community.

We have minor internal problems to solve because bilingual organizations were previously created. However, everything bilingual leans, somewhat like the Tower of Pisa, toward the anglophone side. So historically, the immigrant intake societies have been quite bilingual, and therefore anglophone. There is a bad reflex whereby even francophone African refugees are transferred to English-language schools. We're in the process of resolving that internally. That's why we need this kind of program so that we can take them in ourselves.

• (0950)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Weston, go ahead, please.

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to today's guests.

I was quite interested by what my colleague told me. I don't have as much of the character of a Gaulois from Alberta or Toronto as he, but—

**A voice:** It will come!

**Mr. John Weston:** —I'm a francophile from British Columbia and I'm very interested by what you are doing to promote the vitality of both languages in Canada.

I'm interested in the economy. You deal with cooperatives, which are businesses. Unless I'm mistaken, cooperatives are all entrepreneurial businesses, aren't they?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** Yes.

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** Yes.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** Yes.

**Mr. John Weston:** Can we advance the argument that, in business, knowing both language isn't just a bilingualism issue, but also an asset that gives us an economic advantage in an increasingly competitive world? Can we think that?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** I believe the cooperative model has two purposes: an economic purpose and a social purpose. In economic development, it is very profitable, as you saw from the description of the movement as a whole, but it is also very profitable socially because it gives the community cohesion.

The cooperative model also helps support the efforts of people who otherwise could not be in a position to achieve positive results, be they minorities, immigrants or others. Moreover, that is why the cooperative model is often viewed as a tool for the poor, which I

believe is a completely watered down perception; that isn't the true picture, but that is why it is viewed as such.

**Mr. John Weston:** Are there any other responses?

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** Thank you for your question.

RDÉE Canada's mission is first to find economic development opportunities, to promote them, to step them up and to give them that francophone flavour and colour. It isn't easy to encourage entrepreneurial youths to work in French. It is so much easier for people who open a store to put out signage in English and to sell in English. You can try it yourselves. Walk around the towns and villages that fly the colours of the francophone community, that say they are bilingual, and look for services in French. Look for that single individual who speaks French and English, who has gone off on vacation and who can't be found in the business for the next three months. Those people are lacking. The RDÉE Canada people are looking for young francophone entrepreneurs, and they are encouraging them to work in French in their rural areas, towns, villages and provinces. Work in French, please.

**Mr. John Weston:** We constantly tell young people that it is important to speak both languages. My three children attended a very fashionable French immersion school in west Vancouver. We often hear it said that it's very important in the business world.

Do you have a few words for young people? Can we think of a new Canadian world where everyone will speak both languages in 20 or 30 years?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** I attended the annual banquet of the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick, which is a francophone council. There were 600 entrepreneurs at that banquet, which is quite good for New Brunswick. It's an entrepreneurial environment. The business that won the award for business of the year invented a new machine in the forest industry. That conference was also attended by Mr. Deveau, president of Les Algues acadiennes, a Nova Scotia business that does business with 80 countries.

We Atlantic francophones are sending out our message, but we must not forget the 200 million francophones around the world and the 50 countries where French is spoken. Let's think of the Sommet de la Francophonie in Montreux, where I met the prime minister. All that's important.

I'm thinking of the francophone fibre which is increasingly in evidence, particularly in New Brunswick, where all those call centres were established in the 1990s. That has almost made Moncton the current Canadian capital of call centres. That was Mr. McKenna's idea at the time. Increasing numbers of anglophone economic analysts from the Moncton Times & Transcript understand that bilingualism is an investment, that it pays to be bilingual. That's the message that is increasingly circulating and we are proud of that.

• (0955)

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

Thank you, Mr. Nadeau.

Mr. Aubin, go ahead, please.

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning and welcome to our distinguished guests.

With your permission, I'm going to use my first few minutes to speak with the CCCM people.

I get the impression that our meeting started off in a hurry this morning. We are here to go through the process of evaluating the Roadmap, which should soon be arriving at mid-term. However, the first thing we heard this morning was that you aren't able to evaluate the Roadmap since you aren't a party to it. How is it that you aren't a party? Could you bring me up to speed? I'm a new member. I wasn't here during the last session. I find that a little incomprehensible.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** We pleaded with the committee to include an extremely important economic component in the last Roadmap, one that reflected the cooperative model, among other things. This is a tool that has always been used in the minority communities. In our view, it was important to get the cooperative movement involved so that it could provide a different vision. Individual private entrepreneurship is different from the collective version. Cooperative development expertise can be found in the cooperative movement itself.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** You don't have to convince a Quebecker of the importance of the cooperative movement.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** That's true; I had forgotten.

However, we were simply not heard.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** So, in a way, you didn't get an answer regarding your exclusion.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** We were told we couldn't solve all the problems at the same time.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** So your turn would come with the next Roadmap, if that's not at the same time.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** That's why we're here.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Between the moment the first Roadmap was introduced and now, have you taken any steps to try to become recognized as an essential partner in the next Roadmap? If so, what are those steps, and what reception have you received?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** We are so busy with requests for consulting and cooperative development services that our objective was not necessarily to lobby various departments to get that point of view across. Instead our purpose was to get ourselves recognized and to be there. So we attended certain meetings of various departments.

From the outset, I would like to clarify one point, that the cooperative model and RDÉE Canada are cooperating in the field based on needs. We are there and we work together when necessary. However, the cooperative movement does not appear in the Roadmap as a partner or player.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Even though you are not one of the main players, have you perceived any impact from the Roadmap?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** Yes, I'm going to hand over to my colleague.

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** With your permission, I will also react to the comment by Mr. Bélanger, who invited our organizations to work together. I don't want to speak for the other provinces, but, in New Brunswick, our organization currently represents 40 cooperatives from various activity sectors and 20 member support organizations, including the Société nationale de l'Acadie, which Mr. Nadeau

represents. Our organization has very good relations with RDÉE, which is collaborating on various cases in which we are assisting new cooperatives, on special projects of existing cooperatives and consensus-building forums on cooperative development opportunities in our area.

Our roles are complementary, as it were. That aspect of New Brunswick has to be acknowledged. While we offer direct assistance to cooperative project promoters, which includes business plans, feasibility studies, governance training sessions and strategic plans, RDÉE contributes as a partner to funding, which has a leverage effect. Even though it's modest, it's significant. RDÉE officers sit on various promotional committees that we assist. They assist a number of committees, but not necessarily all of them.

In New Brunswick, we recognize the importance of that collaboration on both sides. We also acknowledge that the cooperative network is in the best position to provide direct assistance. RDÉE instead plays a facilitation role in that regard. It has become essential for it to be included in the Roadmap as a recognized partner with the resources it needs, or at least for both RDÉE and us.

• (1000)

**The Chair:** Mr. Aubin, you may ask a brief final question.

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** No, that's all right; I don't have enough time to speak.

**The Chair:** All right.

Mr. Menegakis, go ahead, please.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

**Some voices:** Oh, oh!

[English]

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** That doesn't take up my time.

[Translation]

Thank you for being here today and for your presentations.

As you know, we are studying the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality. You discussed the economic aspects of the businesses in the francophone communities across Canada. My question is a general one. How has the Roadmap helped businesses? What improvements in particular would you like to see?

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** On behalf of RDÉE Canada, I can say that we fit well into the Roadmap. We would like more money to do more work and to work more in collaboration with the people in the cooperative movement, just as we are doing with the FCFA and all our partners in the francophone community movement.

The presentation of the Roadmap and the ideas it contains are good. In fact, the Roadmap is valid as a whole. However, like anything else, we have to improve and re-evaluate it so it can meet the population's needs.

We fit quite well into this Roadmap, but there isn't enough money to enable us to do all the work requested. We are in it willingly. We are pleased to be part of it, but we would like more money so that we could do more things.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** May I ask a question?

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** Yes, go ahead.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** The presentation of the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité contains a recommendation that a national issue table be established to develop a coherent national action plan. I believe that dialogue among all the departments concerned regarding investment in the economic development of the francophone and Acadian communities is very important. However, it must also be reflected within the organizations working on the ground. I believe it is very important to ensure this coherence among the players of the various departments covered by the Roadmap and the players who are working on the ground.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** As regards New Brunswick, RDÉE has a symbiotic relationship with the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick, which is the New Brunswick council of business people. The board of directors of the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick is the same as that of the RDÉE New Brunswick. Consequently, there may be a more significant alignment.

Whatever the case may be, the most important tool for francophone economic development in New Brunswick is the University of Moncton, which was founded in 1963. The funding the federal government allocates to it must continue. It's as simple as that.

**M. Costas Menegakis:** Thank you.

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** I'll give you a concrete example. We are currently assisting a group of agricultural producers who are developing a completely new product. We're talking about the exploitation of an annual plant called reed canary grass that grows in abundance. It can be processed into pellets and used in that form as animal litter and even for heating. This is a very promising project since we're talking about local production, consumption and energy. The fact is that we need experts on the ground in order to provide these kinds of assistance services.

In that respect, I must honestly say that we really have our hands full. However, additional revenue could change matters, especially in view of the upcoming wave of business transfers. A form of cooperative is being considered, which we believe represents promising opportunities. In our province, the CCCM will soon be implementing a pilot project involving one or two large business owners who have no guaranteed succession plans. To go back to what could be added, I would say we should be better equipped to do this assistance work. RDÉE obviously supports our projects.

• (1005)

[English]

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** How's my time?

[Translation]

**The Chair:** You have one minute left.

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** I have no more questions to ask, but I would like to make some comments.

When petitions are submitted to MPs, they may table them in the House if they wish. However, I haven't heard one single Conservative, NDP or Liberal member recommend abolishing CBC/Radio-Canada. That's for sure.

Thank you.

[English]

I'm done.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Michaud, go ahead, please.

**Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP):** Thank you very much.

Welcome, everyone. I would like to say a word to the CCCM people.

Your work is extremely important. I hope that your message is heard and that you are included in the next Roadmap.

My riding is Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier. You may already be familiar with the Coopérative de solidarité d'alimentation de Rivière-à-Pierre. It has a gas pump, an SAQ, a grocery store and links with Desjardins, among others. It really helps the community. You were talking about social cohesion, and this is an example of that. All the people in the community are involved in that cooperative. It has made it possible to support business and development in the region. People are no longer required to drive 30 or 40 minutes to shop.

I think it will be important to bear in mind all the work you've done. I still can't completely understand how you've proceeded. You submitted a recommendation to the government that it include a cooperative development plan in the Roadmap. Was that recommendation solicited? Did you simply submit it to make sure it was taken into account?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** That's exactly it. There were national consultations on the Roadmap. We appeared in all the regions. We took steps to do it, but they really didn't produce any results.

**Ms. Éline Michaud:** Your recommendation concerned the development of a national plan, a more specific cooperative development strategy. Why do you think that recommendation was merely dismissed?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** I was told the Roadmap could not solve all the problems of the minority communities. Consequently, a cooperative economic development was viewed as not that important.

**Ms. Éline Michaud:** I hope things will change in future. I believe you'll be an important player. The economy is a factor in a number of debates in the House, in speeches and statements. It is time to explore new methods that would promote economic development.

Do you have something to add, Mr. Doiron?

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** Allow me to share a perception.

In view of the quite surprising figures revealing the extent of the cooperative movement's assets, perhaps we were considered too rich to have access to certain programs.

In reality, it must be understood that every cooperative sector has its own mission which is related to its members. The money invested on an inter-cooperative basis is obviously related to the principle of solidarity. However, we can't sacrifice the assets of the members of certain sectors for cooperative development in general.

On that basis, the movement is doing what it can. However, the fact remains that this is nevertheless a cooperative, governmental and community responsibility.

• (1010)

**Ms. Éline Michaud:** Thank you very much.

My next question will be for the representative of the Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick.

You mentioned that more than 500 francophone children do not have access to school in their mother tongue. I think that's absolutely abnormal. Is that just in Moncton or in the province as a whole?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** It's not just 500 children, but 1,650 children.

**Ms. Éline Michaud:** All right, it's 1,650 children.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** It's 650 children in the Saint John area, 500 more in the Fredericton region and 500 children in the Moncton area.

**Ms. Éline Michaud:** It's worse than I thought.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** Those children don't go to French school because transit time can be 75 to 90 minutes, morning and afternoon.

The Sainte-Anne community centre in Fredericton is overflowing. The entire premises are occupied. The centre is very much involved in what we call rights holders intake. Previously, when 60% of rights holders went to the École Sainte-Anne, the Sainte-Anne community centre could accommodate the other rights holders for the first three months. It was possible to accelerate the francization process. Now we have to redistribute them. That has caused some extreme problems. It's complicating our mission to francize those children.

This is an emergency. We've been talking about it for three years. However, there isn't enough money from either the federal or the provincial government.

**Ms. Éline Michaud:** What solutions are you considering? What initiatives could be put in place under the next Roadmap?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** Historically, the federal government has supported the provinces well, particularly on education issues, even though that was not its jurisdiction. Funding should be increased in order to build community school centres. I believe it's scandalous that this abnormal situation should arise in New Brunswick, which is supposed to be the most bilingual province.

We're losing ground. The percentage of families where French is the first language spoken in the home used to be 30%, but it has just fallen to 11%. Something somewhere isn't working.

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

Thank you, Ms. Michaud.

Now we'll have Mr. Leung.

[English]

**Mr. Chungsen Leung (Willowdale, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm sorry, I'm probably the only anglophone here. Although in Canada I'm not considered bilingual, I speak five other languages. So I apologize for that.

In my opinion, the preservation, protection, fostering, and continuation of a second language should really be driven by commerce and not so much by political necessity and desire.

I'll give you an example. About 20 years ago, I went to Grand Manan and I wanted to buy dulse, but because only French was spoken there, I made an attempt to use whatever little French I had. What it brought to me is that I've done business all around the world—in the Middle East, in Asia, and so on—and everywhere I go, I attempt to use.... If I'm in the Middle East, I learn Arabic, and if I'm in Asia, I speak three other Asian languages.

One of the directions we need to face in a pluralistic society like Canada is to foster not just the French and English sides, because then you're limiting yourself to doing business with anglophones. There's a big market available to you in Asia, especially for all the natural resources that New Brunswick has to offer.

It's my opinion that we should take a further direction and start conducting business in the other languages that matter to your market. Commerce really should be your driving factor and not a political decision to do this.

Do you wish to comment on that? Perhaps it's time for the Acadians to learn Chinese and Japanese and so on.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** *Ich spreche ein bisschen Deutsch, puedo hablar español también....*

**Mr. Chungsen Leung:** *Danke schön.*

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** The next step is in Arabic it would be...? I would like to know.

[Translation]

The promotion of bilingualism shouldn't be based solely on commercial needs in Canada. If this issue depends solely on commercial requirements, we'll become a unilingual English country faster than we think, like the United States. We have to watch out for that.

However, it's not because they are engaged in commerce that business people are gods. When Staples advertises on television in Quebec, it's under the banner of Bureau en gros. Back home, since they don't know it's affiliated with Staples, that company loses money. When Pharmaprix advertises on Radio-Canada's national French-language television network, in particular, that company loses money in Acadia, because it's Shoppers Drug Mart back home.



If there is one thing this committee can do, it is to make people a little more aware. Anglophone business people are losing money from 2.5 million people. It would be surprising if they could lose 2.5 million consumers, including Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and for that to have no impact on their sales. If they want to reach people, they have to speak to them in their language. The rest of Canada is too often considered as though it were a homogenous anglophone population. I believe that a committee such as this has a responsibility with regard to public education.

Currently back home, there is the signage issue, for example. Some people say signage isn't important. However, if your language isn't displayed in the street, if your language is just good enough for your bedroom and bathroom, how can you develop any pride or reinforced identity. There too, I believe we should have a Canadian strategy that could simply say that bilingualism is good. Bilingualism brings in money and there are also ways to make money in French.

I am drifting away from my presentation, but we've also tried to create a mission in Quebec and to go and meet Quebec businesses like Cora, which is also called Cora back home. When Cora set up in Moncton as a unilingual English concern, it was completely abnormal. People have to be educated, and I believe a committee such as this one has a collective responsibility to create interaction between francophones and anglophones in Canada.

Let's at least capitalize on these two languages, and there won't be any problems. I speak nearly four languages, though perhaps not as well as Mr. Lueng, who speaks five. Whatever the case may be, I believe we have to avoid setting a bad example.

●(1015)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Harris, you have the floor.

**Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Nadeau, for giving us an idea of the passion the people there have for language.

I'm going to go back to what happened with my colleagues earlier. It has to be said that it was the third or fourth time the chair had repeated during this meeting that members are entitled to ask the questions they want without being interrupted.

It also has to be said that it has never been customary for the committee to sit so often in camera for motions. It has to be said that this is a Conservative custom that is starting now, in this 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament. I frankly think the government party doesn't want to have to defend the decisions made here for Canadians. When we sit in camera, we can't even talk about what has been brought to the table and what has been rejected.

I'm going to start by putting some questions to the RDÉE people.

During the 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament, a study on linguistic duality in the north was started and has not yet been completed. We think it should be completed. We would simply have to go and visit Nunavut. Do you think that completing it and submitting a report to Parliament would help you with economic development in the north? Would that help you to know exactly the status of linguistic duality?

**Hon. Guy Le Blanc:** Yes, definitely. I must tell you that, at a meeting of the board of directors, an annual general meeting held yesterday, we ratified the appointment of a representative from Nunavut to the board. This is the first time we have had a Nunavut representative at RDÉE, and I believe it's a good start. It will definitely provide the board of directors with information and knowledge on that region, on the needs of the people living in a minority setting, on the francophones of the Nunavut region. As some people have said, they are far away, and no member of the board from Nova Scotia or British Columbia knows their needs.

Restructuring the board of directors means including representatives from all the provinces and territories. We are starting our reorganization, and your study, once completed, will definitely supplement the work that RDÉE will be doing in your regions and in other regions, in particular the north.

●(1020)

**M. Dan Harris:** Thank you.

That may be the case if we finish it. We've already spent \$100,000 of taxpayers' money, which will be wasted if we don't finish the report.

Do you have anything to say, briefly?

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** Mr. Harris, are you telling us you would like RDÉE Canada to help you finish your study?

**Mr. Dan Harris:** We have five members here who would like the study to be finished. Now we have to convince the government party.

**The Chair:** Once again, I have a point of order. It is very important to abide by the rules of all the committees. All business discussed in camera is confidential.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Mr. Chair, I don't believe I said anything—

**The Chair:** You must not discuss voting intentions, the debate or the decisions of committee members. That must be left—

**Mr. Dan Harris:** I have a point of order. What did I say that was discussed in camera?

[English]

**The Chair:** Some members indicated that they supported particular motions presented to the committee that were debated in camera.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** I didn't speak of anything that was presented to the committee.

**The Chair:** There was a motion concerning the study of linguistic duality in the north that was discussed in camera. Members have indicated—

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** That wasn't revealing what was discussed in camera, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** It was, because notice of motion was given. Members of the committee have indicated who supported the motion, and that is something that should not be revealed to the public. I'm simply trying to be consistent here about the rules.

The rules are clear. Only positive actions taken by the committee—in other words, motions adopted in camera—are to be discussed publicly. Any other matter is not to be discussed publicly.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** What Mr. Harris has done—

**The Chair:** He said that all opposition members who are members of the committee supported the motion.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** What motion?

**Mr. Dan Harris:** It's public. At the last meeting, we said we thought the report on the north had to be finished.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It's a public matter.

[English]

**The Chair:** I know, but it was—

[Translation]

**Mr. Dan Harris:** It's public.

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm just cautioning you to be careful, because—

**Mr. Dan Harris:** Well, I think you've actually brought more to light than would have otherwise been perhaps known.

**The Chair:** No, I'm trying to be consistent here. We're skirting the line very closely, and I don't want to have this committee—

**Mr. Dan Harris:** And I believe I'm on the right side of the line.

**The Chair:** I haven't said you weren't. I'm just reiterating the rules of the committee.

It's an important thing. I've allowed a lot of latitude in debate. I just want to reiterate that what goes on in camera remains in camera. Members should not make reference to how members voted or debated or took positions in that portion.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** It's a simple fact of math.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Why do we sit in camera now more often than we used to?

[English]

**The Chair:** That is a decision of the committee, and it's not up to the chair or frankly any other member to comment on other members' decisions. It's a collective of 12 members.

[Translation]

This committee has 12 members. If one of us wants to vote for or against a motion, he's entitled to do so.

[English]

It's their choice. It's not for me to comment on how members vote; it's not for other members to comment on how other members vote. I just caution members to not comment on what positions members have taken in an in camera portion of a meeting.

I'll give you back the floor. I'm sorry for interrupting.

• (1025)

**Mr. Dan Harris:** I'll accept that interruption, because actually I think it brought more information to light than anyone was expecting. I wasn't going to get into that.

[Translation]

I've lost track of my ideas. My next question is for the CCCM.

How would you like to be included in the next Roadmap? What type of actions do you think you can carry out if you are included in the next Roadmap?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** In fact, if the next Roadmap is able to acknowledge cooperative economic development as an important player in the communities, that will enable the cooperative movement to position itself better and to provide considerable assistance in the case of requests that we receive from our communities.

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** We hope that a portion of the budget can be granted to us for this community assistance function, using or hoping to use the cooperative model to develop their businesses, keep them active, or take over those that have not been taken over by the conventional private sector, in view of the fact that there is currently no succession.

**Mr. Dan Harris:** How much time do I have left?

**The Chair:** You have no time at your disposal.

Thank you, Mr. Harris and Mr. Doiron.

I will now hand over to Mr. Lauzon, but, first, Mr. Bélanger has advised me that he will not be introducing his two motions. We therefore have 15 more minutes for questions and comments.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** May I have those 15 minutes?

**The Chair:** Oh, oh! No.

You have the floor for this round, Mr. Lauzon.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** Welcome to our guests. Pardon me for being late; the traffic was terrible.

I heard all the witnesses say that the Roadmap should include more investment to improve the situation of francophones. As you know, our government's priority is the economy and job creation. So if we want to encourage the government to invest more, perhaps we have to talk about our success stories that have made it possible to create jobs and to stimulate the economy for francophones.

Can you give us any examples of situations in which the Roadmap has made it possible to create jobs or to stimulate the economy, particularly for francophones, since the Roadmap is supposed to assist francophones? Do you have any examples of investments that have been profitable?

I would like an answer from all the witnesses, if possible.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** I would say that it's on a number of levels.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** I would like you to give us some concrete examples. If you have a success story, we would definitely like to hear it.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** I've just attended the Festival international du cinéma francophone en Acadie. We just attended the FrancoFête en Acadie. Look at the list of Acadian artists who are currently appearing on the national stage. For example, on a program such as *Star Académie*, probably five of the 14 young people are Acadian.

Why can they occupy those kinds of positions? Artists create jobs and have an economic impact. Film-making also has an economic impact. In artistic terms, the mere fact that Acadians can now make films makes young people want to follow in their footsteps. This pride makes them want to do it in French.

I mentioned the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick. Twenty years ago, we would never have been able to get 600 or 700 business people into the same room to celebrate economic development in French. That's possible today thanks to the investments that have been made in recent years. That's job creation. Those entrepreneurs themselves are creating jobs.

I don't know how many examples you want.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** If the other witnesses have more concrete examples, I would like to hear them.

• (1030)

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** I mentioned the problem at the outset, but perhaps I can give you a few ideas.

The little program we have with the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food represents approximately \$3.75 million a year. That includes consulting services, cooperative development and research programs, and so on.

Last year, 64 official partnerships were established in the provincial associations, which took advantage of them. There were also 90 unofficial partnerships established, either for sectoral expertise, as Mr. Doiron said earlier, for example, when we need very specific expertise, or for technical support or research expertise, with various collaborative relationships with universities, for example. In addition, 65 cooperatives were established under that program in 2010-2011, and more than 570 groups received assistance for extension, consolidation or governance.

**A voice:** Jobs.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** Jobs.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Please ask your question briefly.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** Ms. Hamelin, you haven't spoken yet. Would you have an example to give us?

**Mrs. Marthe Hamelin:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Guy Lauzon:** You haven't spoken yet. Do you have an example to submit to us or something to say perhaps?

Mr. Doiron?

**The Chair:** I believe Mr. Doiron would like to have the floor.

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** It may be difficult to attribute success stories that we could tell you about to the Roadmap. We can't necessarily link to the Roadmap the funding allocated to certain partners associated with our achievements or with cooperative development, although that did help.

I would not dare put any project forward, except the initiative projects. However, we can't necessarily link them to the Roadmap as such.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

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

Chunseng Leung said that he spoke five languages and that he had visited a number of countries. He said that, when he travels in a country, he learns the country's language. However, he apologized for not speaking French in Canada. I don't know whether he realized that there were two official languages in Canada. He could have learned them, but he was not required to do so.

In Canada, anglophones don't all have to learn French. Someone once said that anglophones didn't all have to learn French and that francophones all had to learn English. However, we want bilingual people to provide services. We also want to preserve our languages and culture in our regions. If we leave that up to companies or the markets, it will be worrisome.

Mr. Nadeau, you explained it very well. In Tracadie-Sheila, all the gas station signs are in English. And yet it's a francophone area; it's the heart of Acadia. I know that Dieppe would like to be the heart of Acadia, like Nova Scotia now. However, if we let those things go, it will be disturbing. We see that some people don't even take the trouble to learn French, and that's all right, except that we can't say the markets will resolve the matter. No. The government has responsibilities. You all agree with me: the government has responsibilities.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** It's a social contract.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** The Official Languages Act has been in existence for a little more than 40 years and, even today, they are appointing unilingual auditors general and Supreme Court justices. They couldn't care less about the two official languages.

It must be recalled that the two official languages are recognized out of respect for the country's two founding peoples, not to mention the aboriginal peoples. There is something special in Canada: two official languages are recognized out of respect for the two founding peoples. That has to be respected. If that were respected, I believe it would solve a lot of problems.

Now that the Roadmap is halfway through its term, I would like to know whether you have been contacted by the government for an evaluation of the projects you have done and of what you have accomplished, to determine whether you are satisfied and what you would recommend to the government.

Let's start with you, Mr. Nadeau. Has the government contacted you?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** Yes, through the FCFA at the Conférence ministérielle sur la francophonie canadienne. Those people came to a meeting in June. The start of the process was announced to us. We received letters and correspondence, including responses from Hubert Lussier, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister for Citizenship and Heritage, to start the assessment. I believe there will be some kind of investigators, people who will call us in order to go into a little more detail. I don't know whether they will do that in the whole—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Among the organizations that you represent, were any forgotten in the current or previous Roadmaps?

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** As I told you, the idea is to continue helping existing organizations. The only original idea that comes to my mind would be to obtain assistance to francize our anglophone brothers and sisters. At the university level, that could even help the University of Moncton and the Sainte-Anne University as well, but I believe the University of New Brunswick should provide some more French courses because Canadian graduates, especially those aspiring to high positions in this country, in New Brunswick, among other places, know from the outset that they have to speak both official languages.

• (1035)

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It doesn't seem that has to be necessary—

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** It's a celebration. The three languages—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** That doesn't seem to be the case, Mr. Nadeau. They don't stop making appointments—

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** That's the contradictory message that has recently been conveyed by the government. I hope the bleeding is over.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Bourgeois, what do you think?

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** Thank you for your question, Mr. Godin.

RDÉE Canada reports at the start of every fiscal year. We submit strategic planning to our funder. We submit a monthly report on activities and potential repercussions for the communities concerned.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Briefly, because I believe my speaking time is nearly up, tell me whether you are in favour of extending the Roadmap. I would like to hear the answers of the representatives of the three groups.

**Mr. Collin Bourgeois:** Definitely. I would even go as far as to say that we need an enhanced version, of course. We have to move forward.

**Mr. Jean-Marie Nadeau:** Absolutely.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** Yes, undeniably.

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** I'd also like to add, in connection with what Mr. Lauzon said a little earlier, that with strictly as small a budget as that cited for the cooperative development initiative, 1,677 cooperatives have been supported with consulting services; 131 of them were created and 701 others were reinforced. We're talking here about 334 jobs. So we've supported 63 more. That's a very good performance in percentage terms. So imagine what we can put into the Roadmap in terms of a direct assistance approach, and we're in business.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** All right, thank you.

Mr. Gourde, go ahead, please.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, I would like to acknowledge the work of the Conseil canadien de la coopération because I see your 2012, International Year of Cooperatives badge. You've done a lot of work in cooperation with two of our former ministers, Jean-Pierre Blackburn and Lawrence Cannon. I want to acknowledge that because it's a great achievement. We are very pleased.

I know there will be a lot of francophone activities during the International Year of Cooperatives. Can you remind us what those former ministers have done to achieve this international recognition? It didn't happen by itself. Canada had to take on an international leadership role. Explain to us how that happened?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** It was all in cooperation with a lot of people, including through steps made to approach the UN. For first time in its history, Canada has supported a theme year before it was introduced by the United Nations. So I would say that, in terms of partnerships in relations between the government of the moment and the people in the cooperative movement, it was really a work of art. Now we have to make it work. Having it proclaimed is one thing, but making it work is another. We'll need leaders who can be there with us during the year. It is really very important to make it work at the international level. Canada is recognized as an important place for cooperatives and a model to be followed.

For example, the International Cooperative Alliance just adopted a motion at its last meeting to include mutual companies in its membership. That is the case in Quebec and nowhere else in the world. So I think it's important to acknowledge the influence we are having at the international level.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Will many of the activities be in French?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** Many of the activities will be in French, and many of the activities in Canada will also be in English. It must be understood that half of the participants in the cooperative movement are anglophone.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** So we'll be able to attend those activities in our language?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** Yes. For us, they'll be bilingual. The activities in Quebec, for example, will be in French. The activities in Ottawa will be bilingual. The other activities in the other provinces where the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité is involved will be bilingual.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I wish you every success. It's thanks to organizations such as yours that the Canadian and Quebec cooperative movement can be shared around the world. It's important for us to do that. We thank you for your great work.

• (1040)

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** Thank you.

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

The head office of the anglophone cooperatives is in Guelph, isn't it?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** In fact, there are two national organizations. One is for the anglophone cooperatives, and it is located here in Ottawa. The other one, for the francophone cooperatives, is also located here in Ottawa. However, there are members everywhere, in all the provinces. We are established in nine provinces.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

To close, Mr. Bélanger, you have the floor.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

Earlier I raised the question regarding CBC/Radio-Canada. Mr. Menegakis was kind enough to clarify some points. I will also clarify a few other points. He said he did not know a single member on the government side who had supported that. I'm going to say two things.

First, I will refer to an article in the *Globe and Mail* of September 23, which refers to a survey that the Conservative Party conducted of its members. They were asked, among other things,

[*English*]

whether the more than \$1 billion Ottawa spends on the CBC is good value or bad value.

[*Translation*]

That's taken from a survey conducted of its members.

I will also refer to the website of the member for Calgary West, who belongs to the government party, where the first page promotes a petition calling for the defunding of the CBC.

That's a clarification on the subject for Mr. Menegakis.

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** I didn't say much about the CBC.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** He said that no member of his party was talking about the subject, whereas the first page of the website of one of his colleagues promotes the petition.

Second, a member can very well table a petition without making the customary remarks. He can do so without making any comments. For example, he can refrain from using the words that those two Conservative members used, that is to say

[*English*]

"I have the honour"

[*Translation*]

and

[*English*]

"It is a pleasure"

[*Translation*]

when the petition is tabled. You have to take a balanced approach.

My question is for Mr. Doiron.

You opened my eyes to a phenomenon I wasn't aware of. There are apparently some 20,000 small businesses having problems transferring their property. Have you any documents or studies on that subject? If there are no buyers, are large companies acquiring them?

**Mr. Melvin Doiron:** It's large foreign companies. I'm referring to a document prepared by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. We also carried out a project to validate those figures in various regions and provinces. According to the estimates, by 2020, 20,000 businesses will change hands, but half of them will find no takers. They're saying that 200,000 jobs could be jeopardized. That's a very big issue.

So we have to consider this possibility, which is significant for a lot of business owners who would like nothing better than to assign their businesses to local buyers or to their employees, naturally. But they should be made aware of this option. The necessary measures must also be taken, for example, to offer tax credits, tax incentives and other measures.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I'll stop you.

I remember that, in the 2005-2006 budget, the minister of the time, Ralph Goodale, included \$30 million to support development of the cooperative movement. Is that figure still included in the budgets?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** What portfolio are you talking about?

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I'm talking about the federal budget for that year.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** We don't receive \$30 million.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** That was to assist in capitalization.

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** No, it hasn't been continued.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** It hasn't continued?

**Mrs. Brigitte Gagné:** In fact, a few years ago, we received an amount, but it was for the north. It came from a very specific budget that had been set aside for northern development.

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

Thanks to all the witnesses for their presentations, and thanks to committee members for their questions and comments.

[*English*]

This meeting is adjourned.





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