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## **Standing Committee on Official Languages**

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**EVIDENCE**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Denis Paradis**



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• (0850)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.)):** Good morning, folks.

I am happy. I asked the clerk to find us a venue a bit closer to the Centre Block for this morning's meeting, but I did not ask them to put up all these curtains for us.

**Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.):** They are for me.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** They are for our witness.

**The Chair:** That is good.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are proceeding with our study on the roadmap and immigration in the francophone minority communities.

This morning, we will hear from Claude Harvey, Director General of the Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada.

Welcome, Mr. Harvey.

Allow me to explain the ground rules. You will have approximately 10 minutes to make a presentation. Then there will be a period of questions by committee members.

Mr. Harvey, you have the floor.

**Mr. Claude Harvey (Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning to you and all the committee members.

First, I will talk about the Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada, or RCCFC.

RCCFC was founded in 1995, and its mission is to establish a genuine partnership among Canada's college-level francophone educational institutions. There are many provincial associations, such as the Fédération des cégeps and Colleges Ontario, but ours is truly a national association, from sea to sea. It is a network that provides peer support, mutual assistance, promotion, and exchange for the development of college-level education in French across Canada, while promoting the use of digital technologies and remote technology training.

RCCFC's mission is also to support the development of the Canadian francophone community by providing it with the expertise of its network institutions. RCCFC also intends to make college-

level francophone education more visible to the various government bodies in the provinces and territories and to the federal government.

RCCFC's members include all francophone colleges in majority communities and most francophone cégeps in Quebec. No other organization has this particular type of membership. We are also the only college-level francophone organization that covers the northern territories, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, and certain aboriginal communities. This mix of institutions under various jurisdictions is very rich and results in stimulating exchanges. RCCFC's main mission is to organize specific projects to support the emergence of francophone value added across Canada.

Unfortunately, however, our tools are fragile and limited. For example, the interprovincial cooperation program, which is funded by Canadian Heritage, permits only limited action in support of colleges and cégeps wishing to create new instruments for French-language technical education across the country.

We believe the next action plan will have to focus heavily on interprovincial partnerships for the exchange of best practices, the implementation of joint projects and professional and student mobility.

The partnerships that Quebec cégeps have with colleges in Quebec and the other provinces are particularly productive. Quebec's cégeps are 50 years old, whereas virtually all francophone colleges in minority communities are younger. One of those young colleges, Collège Éducentre, in British Columbia, has just been recognized by its province as a college.

Based on the consultations that RCCFC conducted with the management of some 15 cégeps in 2015, those institutions are concerned and want to help reinforce the position of French as an official language in Canada by cooperating with their counterparts. With Canadian Heritage's assistance, RCCFC provides the only platform for exchange and cooperation among francophone colleges across the country.

Helping educators get to know each other better and to work together also helps build the Canadian francophony and assist in consolidating our country, which is based on its two founding peoples and two official languages.

●(0855)

RCCFC's role is to act as a hub for colleges and cégeps across the country. For a number of years now, however, funding for our organization's programming has trended downward. With very little money and few employees—there are only two of us—we nevertheless have a significant impact. We would be able to do more official languages promotion through our members if we had the staff to help diversify our funding sources. For a small organization with virtually no resources, it is difficult, if not impossible, to compete with larger organizations that are used to seeking funding from Canadian Heritage and other organizations. This factor should be taken into consideration in analyzing projects.

We believe the next action plan will have to support organizations and initiatives that generate actual deliverables, whether it be teaching tools or cooperation and expertise-sharing projects such as those of RCCFC. The rigid nature of accountability requirements must also be reviewed. In this area, we are absolutely required to stick to the form, but that is not conducive to proper accountability in many cases. Excessive emphasis on entering information in small boxes obscures the essential nature of our organizations' actions.

Flexibility and creativity are needed for our official languages to flourish. We cannot anticipate all contingencies when planning for a two- or three-year period. Unplanned actions must be taken in response to sociopolitical developments and current events. Accomplishments under the action plan must not be judged solely as outcomes measured against initial objectives. An “every relevant action” box should be provided for the purpose of reporting results that are achieved outside the little box. That is often where the best results are achieved because that is where the creativity is. I have achieved my best results by breaking rules and venturing off the beaten path.

I must emphasize, with pride and pleasure, that the organizations of Canada's francophone community that are directly and indirectly involved in education genuinely work together and harmoniously join forces for our official languages, in this instance for French.

We are witnessing a paradigm shift in the situation of official languages in this country. The contribution of immigration is resulting in the increased use of French in certain cities. The opening of the campus of Collège Boréal in Toronto is an example of this new paradigm. The vast majority of students there are immigrants and the institution is expanding.

This phenomenon can also be observed in other major cities such as Edmonton, Regina and Winnipeg. The contribution of francophone immigration is essential for French to remain present across Canada. The immigration policies of all provinces, not just Quebec, must focus on accepting francophones based on certain criteria.

As we speak here today, the Table nationale sur l'éducation in Quebec City is setting forth the broad outlines of the strategic plan for French-language minority education.

A new trend that has emerged, and which has been the subject of national consultations over the past year, is the shift from secondary to postsecondary education in French. Nearly 400,000 young Canadians attend immersion schools, but too few of them continue their studies in French at the college level. Many students, even

those from French-language secondary schools, study in English at the postsecondary level.

If we worked on identity-building starting in early childhood and established strategies for reducing language insecurity, more students from minority communities would be able to study in French at the college level. We must also demonstrate that there is a French-language workplace in many provinces and territories. Professional mobility must also be encouraged.

Although Quebec freely welcomes francophone workers from other provinces, it is difficult to have credentials recognized from province to province across Canada. In some instances, it is easier between France and Quebec than among the provinces and territories of Canada.

●(0900)

The recognition of credentials must not be solely the responsibility of the professional associations. Our members are prepared to set to work building these bridges and thus promoting greater mobility for francophone graduates and workers across the country.

The cultural community is a leader in this area. The broader francophone community's creations in music, theatre and the arts travel across the country. The francophone community's expression knows no barriers and art has the power to create a sense of belonging and pride in using the same language to express who we are.

The new action plan must reflect our rapidly evolving situation. The deployment of digital technology has already helped young francophones acquire greater proficiency in English. They are no longer embarrassed or reluctant to speak both official languages, and that ability is absolutely viewed as an asset.

The popularity of immersion schools and the many students studying French as a second language are also very encouraging signs. The survey results published by the Commissioner of Official Languages are also highly encouraging. Linguistic duality is increasingly becoming a Canadian value, and our role as an educational institution is to reflect that reality. To do that, we need support, and that is where the action plan is essential.

We at RCCFC are the interface of francophone college-level education in Canada. Our position enables us to play a central role in promoting linguistic duality. We are working to build complementary relationships with our colleagues from the Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne, the ACUFC. That is why we support the thrust of a government policy based on the three guiding principles and four areas described in the ACUFC's brief.

Thank you for listening. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

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

I have a comment for everyone in the room. As a result of the visit of the Prime Minister of China, security has asked us not to use the door located to my left. If you must leave the room, please use the door at the end of the room.

We will begin the first round of questions.

Mr. Généreux, you have six minutes.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning, Mr. Harvey, and welcome.

Some of you may not know, but Mr. Harvey and I have known each other for many years. When I was mayor of the City of La Pocatière and he was director general of the Cégep de La Pocatière, we were in touch with each other on a number of occasions for various reasons.

Mr. Harvey, you have cited various points. The organization you head is relatively young, some 10 years old. Unless I am mistaken, it dates back to 1995, does it not?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Yes.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** At the end of your presentation, you referred to another organization.

What is the basic difference between that organization and the one you head?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** RCCFC represents the francophone cégeps and colleges of Canada, whereas ACUFC represents colleges outside Quebec. There are 11 French-language colleges outside Quebec, some of which are larger than those in Quebec. ACUFC members also include the francophone universities, such as the Université Laurentienne, Université de Hearst and even the University of Ottawa, which is partly francophone. That is the main difference between our two organizations.

In addition, ACUFC receives a lot of funding, which is not the case of RCCFC. ACUFC receives funding from the justice and health departments to put French-language programs in place at the college and university levels in those fields. ACUFC's activities are very much concentrated in those areas.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** Does ACUFC present those programs? Are those programs organized to integrate immigrants or is that unrelated?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I believe that is a factor.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** But the programs are nevertheless intended for everyone.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** They are not established to recognize, for example, the credentials of a physician who arrives from Algeria. They are the same for everyone.

• (0905)

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** Despite its youth, your organization appears to be very active in representing a lot of people. Does it have a component for all matters pertaining to the integration of immigrants at francophone cégeps and colleges across Canada?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Several colleges have that component. I mentioned Collège Boréal in Toronto. It is not even a choice for that college to have a specific program for immigrants, since its clientele consists of immigrants. However, the decision is up to each college.

I would also say that the clientele of nearly half of francophone colleges outside Quebec largely consists of immigrants. I am thinking of Saskatchewan, for example. Collège Mathieu is in

Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, a classic location in Saskatchewan's francophone community. It now has a campus for its immigrant clientele in Regina because not all Africans, for example, are settling in francophone communities. Some choose anglophone communities.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** Earlier you said there were 400,000 secondary-level immersion students in Canada but that they were not pursuing college-level studies in French.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** The immersion programs go from kindergarten to the end of secondary school. Some of those 400,000 students do their primary school in immersion. Others do two or three years of high school. Not all students attend immersion schools from early childhood to secondary V.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** Why do immersion students not attend francophone colleges once they have completed their secondary studies? Do you think there are any reasons for that?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** We know of certain factors that prevent them from doing so.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** What are they?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** One of the major factors is language insecurity. Those who study in immersion schools speak French in class but English as soon as they enter the halls. When they finish secondary school, they say they cannot study in French because they are too embarrassed or that they feel they do not speak French well enough and therefore tend toward English-language educational institutions.

Let me give you an example. With Canadian Heritage's assistance, over the past two years we have been awarding scholarships to immersion students who continue studying in French at the college level. This year, the scholarships were awarded to students studying in French at university. Only two out of 25 scholarships were awarded for college studies; the others were awarded for university-level studies.

When we administered the scholarships, the individuals who won them were francophones whose fathers were anglophone and whose mothers were francophone, for example. They went to immersion schools but already spoke French. They won scholarships, but that was not what we were aiming for. However, it is all right that those individuals received scholarships.

When we say there are 400,000 immersion students, there are many underlying realities.

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

Now we will hear from Ms. Lapointe and Mr. Arseneault, who will share speaking time.

• (0910)

**Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Good morning and welcome. Thank you for being with us this morning.

When you made your statement a little earlier, you mentioned your organization's funding sources. What are they?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** We have three main funding sources.

The first is member subscriptions. The cost of a subscription is not very high compared to those of other organizations, \$1,000 per college or cégep.

The second is funding from Canadian Heritage, which grants us a base amount of \$288,000 a year. It also funds projects under what we call the interprovincial cooperation program. The cégeps and colleges submit projects on which they intend to work together. We receive an annual amount of \$100,000 to support them.

We also have a program called PRECEPT-F. I cannot tell you what that means because I do not know myself. There are too many letters. These are projects involving an exchange of expertise among francophone cégeps and colleges.

Since the Government of Quebec provides \$150,000 out of a budget of \$300,000, a Quebec cégep must be involved in projects with colleges from other provinces and territories. We have \$300,000 to distribute per year for these projects. In October, we will issue a call for PRECEPT-F projects and will therefore have \$300,000 to distribute among our members for transfer-of-expertise projects. There are a lot of projects involving distance training and online education.

The colleges do a lot of work together and that is good.

**Ms. Linda Lapointe:** Do you have an example of a PRECEPT-F project that has been implemented?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Consider, for example, a study program for auxiliary nurses. A cégep may work with Université Sainte-Anne, in Nova Scotia, which has a college section. They may work together and come up with the necessary tools to have their training recognized. Together they may determine how to have the credentials of auxiliary nurses recognized and determine what they would need to become registered nurses. That is one example.

**Ms. Linda Lapointe:** A good example.

You said it was easier to have credentials recognized between Quebec and France than among the provinces and territories. That seems to me to be a problem.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** That is also the case among the provinces and territories, not just with Quebec. The same situation may arise between New Brunswick and Ontario.

In fact, for France, we have developed equivalencies based on projects, but there is no mobility within Canada. There is very little mobility among colleges in Canada, and there are few opportunities for a student from British Columbia, for example, to go and study for a year in Quebec, or vice versa. We have not developed that possibility. Nor have we developed any recognition of programs. A great deal remains to be done.

There is also a problem where professional associations are involved because that situation is more complicated. They do not operate that way in France, and there are no professional associations. So we are able—

• (0915)

**Ms. Linda Lapointe:** Does the fact that the interprovincial recognition of credentials is so difficult discourage young people from studying in French in minority communities?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** No, the same thing happens in English.

**Ms. Linda Lapointe:** The situation is the same.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** The situation does not change. The professional associations complicate matters.

A bill that will make this even more difficult it is currently being debated in Quebec. It provides that the professional associations will have a bigger role to play in the recognition of credentials.

**Ms. Linda Lapointe:** Since we do not have much time, I will turn the floor over to my colleague.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** Mr. Harvey, I am going to continue along the same lines as Ms. Lapointe.

In a national context, the largest minority community, if you will allow me that contrast-based play on words, is the francophone education community. Does your organization conduct studies to determine whether we can ensure there are equivalencies among the various francophone minority colleges and universities across Canada? Are we studying ways to facilitate student mobility?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Unfortunately, no, that is not currently the case. As I mentioned earlier, some work could be done as part of certain PRECEPT-F projects.

In fact, the recognition of credentials as such is not done by the director but rather by the teaching teams working on the exact content of the programs. There has to be a reason to do it. It does not get done if the workplace does not ask us to do it.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** For you who work in the field, could broader equivalencies in the minority francophone community help increase enrolment in minority francophone postsecondary institutions?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Yes, absolutely.

For example, knowing that their French-language credentials were recognized across the country, students would be aware they would have greater mobility. However, that does not mean there is currently no mobility. An employer could tell a student he would hire her even if she has an Ontario degree, knowing she is qualified.

The problem, I repeat, is with the professional associations. That is where matters get complicated. Strictly speaking, among colleges, we can solve the problem.

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

Mr. Choquette, you have the floor.

**Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Harvey.

The Liberal government is currently conducting an extensive consultation on official languages across Canada. Have you taken part in that consultation, or do you know people in the education sector who have?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I have taken part in it three times. I attended two webinars in Montreal and Sherbrooke, and I asked some questions from my office. We have also been consulted by Canadian Heritage and the Table nationale sur l'éducation. I have in hand briefs from my colleagues that we will be submitting. We are very active participants in this consultation.

**Mr. François Choquette:** Mr. Harvey, I am sure the committee would allow you to submit your briefs so that we can read them. As we conduct our study on immigration, we are reviewing the roadmap, which we now call the Action Plan for Official Languages. In that connection, you mention certain points that should be addressed.

You mentioned early childhood, for example. The Commissioner of Official Languages will shortly be presenting a report on early childhood. Could you tell us about the importance of children learning in their language, in French in this instance, so that they can continue their postsecondary studies in that same language? What could the roadmap provide to facilitate this situation?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Early childhood is being extensively discussed by the Table nationale sur l'éducation and other bodies, including the tripartite committee. Studies have been conducted on the subject. I cannot cite them from memory, but some have concluded that it is essential that identity building start in early childhood.

In fact, everything is determined before the age of six. That is even the title of a book. If the opportunity is missed in early childhood, young children run the risk of not building their francophone identity. Early childhood will be an important topic at the ACELF conference, which begins in Quebec City today. We must absolutely support measures that will help young children build their francophone identity.

Those measures may take the form of visits, people who come and meet the children, and shows by facilitators such as Arthur L'aventurier and others like him who speak to them. In short, we must absolutely reinforce identity building in order to help young children construct their identities. Educators must also work to that end. This is a major issue for the action plan and for the Table nationale sur l'éducation.

● (0920)

**Mr. François Choquette:** Of course, education must be the focus when we begin reviewing the action plan, but we will also have to consider that everything is determined starting in early childhood, as you said. That is a key period that, from what you say, will subsequently have positive consequences for postsecondary studies. As you said so well, the problem occurs when a child does not have enough self-confidence. That is why people are reluctant to pursue their postsecondary studies in French. Is my understanding correct?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Absolutely.

Those two pillars, identity building and language security, are, as it were, the basis of the future of the Canadian francophony.

**Mr. François Choquette:** You mentioned your funding sources. There is Canadian Heritage and other funding bodies. You briefly spoke about how hard it is to meet the specific criteria and mentioned that it was important to show creativity and flexibility. I am sure that one of your recommendations for the action plan is that

we develop programs that show a little more flexibility and creativity.

You also said it would probably be important for you to try to diversify your funding. What exactly did you mean by that?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** As our funding is very tight, in that we do not have a lot of money or room to manoeuvre, it is hard for us to show creativity or to do more. We know we could work harder to promote the Canadian francophony.

There are other organizations that do not exactly do the same thing as we do but that are similar and have large teams and can thus put personnel to work developing projects and looking for funding sources. We cannot do that.

That is why I repeat that, if we could do it, we would probably be able to focus our efforts more on promoting French in minority settings. I have to say that we have done our homework too. There are three of us organizations working more or less in the same field. We have already mentioned ACUFC. There is also Colleges and Institutes Canada, or CICAN, which represents English- and French-language colleges across the country.

Over the past year, we have decided to work together, hand in hand, to establish joint projects so as not to duplicate our efforts. I believe we are striving to become more efficient. For the moment, our way of doing that is to work in close cooperation with the other organizations. We ultimately have the same goal: to support francophone colleges.

● (0925)

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

We will continue our debate with Paul Lefebvre.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Sudbury, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

With regard to the roadmap, how have the members of your organization been affected, and have they survived as a result of the investments available under the last two roadmaps?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I can give you the figures. Since 2002, we have distributed \$1 million under our interprovincial cooperation program. In addition, \$2 million has been distributed through PRECEPT-F. In other words, \$3 million has been invested in francophone colleges and cégeps. The \$2 million from PRECEPT-F has been available since 2005. So that is the first major financial impact. That grant has made it possible to implement 54 projects at more than 50 colleges. Those are quantitative results.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** Excellent.

If investments were increased under the next federal action plan, what would the members of your organization do with the additional amounts? What would that mean for you in concrete terms?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** First, it would mean more projects. I have to say that, when we started, the people from the francophone cégeps and colleges were not used to working together. They did not know each other. Now, 10 or 15 years later, they have become colleagues who know each other very well. Projects now take place naturally because people have gotten to know each other and work together. So it is possible to have more projects.

Some things also remain to be done with regard to the roadmap. For example, we have to help francophones in the Northwest Territories get their college. For the moment, they do not have one. There are laws that should be changed; that may be done this year. There are 5,000 francophones in the Northwest Territories. The day they get their own college, they will need more. They will need to establish programs. There is work to be done.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** I would like to ask a final question before turning the floor over to my friend Mr. Samson.

How are your members outside Quebec being affected by trends in francophone immigration to Canada?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Our members outside Quebec are very much affected. I think they are affected even more than our Quebec members.

For about 10 years now, we have recruited many international students both in and outside Quebec. That is a new trend. Mr. Généreux knows what I am talking about. La Pocatière was a 100% francophone town, but the face of La Pocatière has changed over the past 10 years. This year, there are 65 International students in the little town of La Pocatière, which has a population of 4,500 inhabitants.

That said, immigration affects the Collège Éducacentre in British Columbia as much as it does the Saint-Jean campus in Alberta. Everyone is affected by immigration. I believe Nova Scotia is as well. That causes a problem. For example, the Prince Edward Island campus is in Summerside, on the western part of the island—or the east, I am not sure. However, it is moving to Charlottetown because that is where the immigrants are. In some instances, the tendency is to return campuses to the cities instead of leaving them in the rural areas.

**The Chair:** Mr. Samson, I now turn the floor over to you.

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.):** How much time do I have? I have a number of questions to ask.

**The Chair:** You have six minutes.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** That is not bad.

First, I want to congratulate you, Mr. Harvey. I consider myself a virtual expert on minority education since I worked in the field for 31 years. Your reading of the situation of French outside Quebec impresses me a great deal. You employ terms that are very much in use in the Canadian system today. You referred to a number of organizations operating in the field.

Personally, I will be focusing on immigration. My colleague just asked a question about immigration in your part of the country. Does anyone have data from this year or last on the number of immigrants at universities or cégeps in Canada? It would be interesting to know those figures. There is definitely a strong trend in the francophone

universities outside Quebec toward attracting more international students. I would like to know what they do once they have the students.

Authorities are trying to make changes with respect to immigration in Nova Scotia and in Canada. They want to find ways to attract international students to our universities and even our secondary schools. This is quite a frequent occurrence. They have to be permanent residents in order to begin their lives here, to contribute to the community, and to stay there. If you ever find those figures, I would very much like to have them.

Furthermore, Graham Fraser's report clearly states that a lot of roadmap money is being directed to immigration. I am not personally convinced of that at all. Someone will have to convince me with figures and data that those amounts are actually being allocated to training for immigrants in francophone minority communities. Something tells me it is the majority language that benefits from that instead. It would be interesting to get hold of data on the number of immigrants receiving French language training. I think that is essential information to have.

As I said earlier, you can answer me now or send me a brief on the subject.

• (0930)

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I have some answers for you.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** All right. I am going to ask you the last question and then you can answer it.

What are you doing in the cégeps and within RCCFC to recruit immigrant students?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** First, I will give you the answer regarding the number of international students. There are 501 of them at the colleges outside Quebec. I am not talking about Quebec.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** In French?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** There are 501 in French. That is not a lot.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** No.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** It could be more.

There are 2,612 at the universities. That means a total of 3,100 persons studying in French.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** So that is the total number at the francophone cégeps and universities.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** They are not at the cégeps, but rather at the colleges.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** At the colleges.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** The colleges outside Quebec.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Oh, I see.

However, that does not include the secondary schools.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** No.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** All right.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I also want to tell you that 275 college students come from immersion programs. There are 4,186 at the universities. There are a lot more at the universities.



What can we do? For example, we have just submitted an offer to the colleges and cégeps to go and recruit in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. We have received no response. No one wants to take part.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** When you say “no one”, who are you talking about?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I am talking about the colleges and cégeps.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** They do not want to take part in recruitment missions. Is that it?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** We would have gone to those countries for them. I do not know whether they are uninterested, but they did not answer us.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I know that the Université Sainte-Anne, for example, and the Université de Moncton are recruiting in the field in the countries in question.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** They are going there themselves.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Yes. The Université Sainte-Anne people are going there in any case.

However, we do not deal with the universities. We deal with the colleges. There are 80 college students at the Université Sainte-Anne. Then does the university want to conduct international recruitment at the college level? That is the question we must consider. Sainte-Anne is recruiting for the university, but is it doing it at the college level?

For example, we went to France last June. We are working on recruitment, but also on mobility, so that a student can come and study here for a year and then go back to France. We are recruiting, but we also have to consider that it costs \$12,000 in tuition fees alone.

The problem is getting a student visa.

[English]

It is a pain in the butt.

• (0935)

[Translation]

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** We are examining that in our capacity as the federal government, and we will be moving forward soon, I suppose, because this is very important.

Are you offering training for immigrants, as stated in Commissioner Fraser's report? Is that training being given in French?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Yes, many courses in French, as a principal language or second language, are being offered to immigrants at colleges in Toronto, Ottawa, and many other places.

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

Mrs. Boucher, you have the floor.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC):** Good morning, Mr. Harvey. I am delighted to see you again.

We are talking a great deal about francophone education outside Quebec, and that interests me. I have noted two or three points from your remarks. Am I mistaken in saying that many immigrants are already enrolled at most colleges and universities outside Quebec?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Do you mean on the francophone side?

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Yes. When you admit immigrants, do many of them go to francophone colleges? What would be the percentage?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I do not have the figures. However, as I told you, many francophone immigrants in the major cities are not proficient enough in English to study in that language and are looking for a francophone college where they can study.

These days, the education setting no longer consists of 40 students sitting in a classroom with a teacher. The process is done online or remotely, which makes it possible to provide better services.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** You also said it was difficult to organize exchanges between provinces as a result of certain professional associations.

We are admitting many immigrants these days. Have you observed an increase in the number of immigrants at francophone colleges or universities, or has there been no change?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** We have seen many changes. I do not know about the universities, but we have seen many immigrants enter our colleges. Those immigrants have not come as students. They are immigrants who come as family members, who come in other ways, and can thus study at our colleges without any problem. However, the international student pathway is another matter.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** All right, but let us talk about immigration. How can you recruit immigrants or refugees, Syrian refugees, for example, to attend francophone colleges if they do not speak the language?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Courses are given; they are called French courses, francization courses.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** You give them here.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Yes, we give a lot of francization courses. We have previously brought in Chinese students; that is the trend these days.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Yes.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Chinese students did not study at a cégep or university for a year; they learned French for a year. That was part of the agreement. The same is true of Syrian or other immigrants wishing to study in French: they must first undergo francization.

• (0940)

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Is it that way everywhere, including outside Quebec?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** It is that way everywhere.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Perfect, that is another matter.

I have another question for you. Based on your experience, and knowing that some 5,000 francophones in the Northwest Territories are served by no college—

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** They are served by an organization that is not officially a college.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** In that case, how difficult is it for a francophone outside Quebec or in immersion? That organization gives immersion courses to the 5,000 francophones in the Northwest Territories, does it not?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** The organization tries to give college programs, but the problem is that the Northwest Territories' Education Act provides that there is only one college in the Northwest Territories. The act will be amended and should allow two colleges to exist. Currently, if francophones wish to study in the Northwest Territories, they may do so but will not receive diplomas; they will take a course but will not receive a diploma because the college is not recognized. That is the problem at the present time. Courses are given, but no diplomas.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** That is great for those who want to learn French.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** It is not just French.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** No, it is everything.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Yes, it is everything.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** So it is a college that is not recognized by the province.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** It is not recognized by the territory.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Correct, by the territory.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** There are also a lot of immigrants in the Northwest Territories.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Yes, and that is why I was wondering whether they had that problem.

So it must be even more difficult for the immigrants who arrive. They cannot get an education in French or anything else because they do not have papers. They may study, but that will not ultimately give them a diploma. That is my understanding.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** That is correct.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** That does not give them a diploma.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** No.

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

Mr. Arseneault, you have the floor.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** Mr. Harvey, not so long ago, I was travelling to Ottawa by car and listening on the radio to people who work for the universities, who are involved in recruitment outside the country, in international recruitment. I am of course involved in the university field. I quickly understood that the francophone section of the University of Ottawa, the francophone universities in Quebec, and the Acadian universities were competing with each other for international students and that it was a question of survival for the universities. I was surprised to learn that that was the case and that it was a matter of survival, even in Quebec.

I am dying to ask the following question: Do you have any statistics on whether Canadian universities in English Canada are also suffering from a lack of funding and must engage in international recruitment, or is this situation specific to Canadian francophones?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I will not venture an opinion on that, but if you go to McGill University, you will see not a large majority but rather many international students. The way the universities operate is very consistent with their reputation. We do not recruit in the United States, but the English Canadian universities do.

I do not have any figures and I cannot provide a specific answer. I do not want to make a mistake and talk nonsense. In actual fact, we have so little contact that, in some instances, you can say there are two solitudes even in the field of education and colleges. That is unfortunate. I think there should be more contact, precisely so that we can exchange information of that kind.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** If that is indeed the case for the universities, at least for the francophone universities, from what I heard on a Radio-Canada program, immigration is really becoming important.

I would like to add to what our friend Mr. Samson said. There really seems to be a problem with student visas. Unless I am mistaken, visas are issued only once a year, not for the duration of a student's studies. In other words, if a student from Tunisia or the Maghreb comes to Moncton to study for a four-year bachelor's degree, he will have to obtain a visa every year.

Are you aware of this situation?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Yes, I am aware, but I am not supposed to talk about it.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** We give you the right to talk about it.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** We are no longer allowed to talk about it. One of our problems is precisely that recruiters are no longer allowed to talk about immigration proceedings. We no longer have a right to speak about that. It is prohibited now.

I will nevertheless answer the question.

● (0945)

**Mr. René Arseneault:** Perfect.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** A visa is issued for the duration of the student's studies. However, work visas must be renewed every year. People who come here want to work while they study. To date, except where otherwise permitted, a visa for college studies is issued for a period of two or three years. That is fine since the visa is valid for the duration of the student's studies.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** Yes, but, on average, university studies take four or five years. A bachelor's degree takes four or five years.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** I unfortunately cannot answer with respect to the universities since I am not aware of how they operate.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** All right.

Perhaps my colleague Mr. Vandal has a question.

**Mr. Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Lib.):** Do I have time?

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

**Mr. Dan Vandal:** I will be brief.

First, I want to thank you for your presentation.

You said you got better results when you were more creative than the prescribed standards. Can you give me some examples of what you mean?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** As I explained earlier, we cannot do what we want with the money Canadian Heritage gives us. We have to abide by what is called the contribution agreement. We have to do what we are required to do. We have our own funds, which come from our members, with whom we carry out various projects. That is where we can be more creative.

We are currently developing a project that will include a mission in France, where we will have a hub or a portal for all matters pertaining to francophone mobility within and outside Canada. The portal will provide information on mobility opportunities. People will be able to make twinning arrangements. That is a creative approach because it is something that does not currently exist.

**Mr. Dan Vandal:** What are the implications for the next strategic plan?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Are you talking about Canadian Heritage?

**Mr. Dan Vandal:** Yes.

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** We are talking about the international component here. Canadian Heritage is really for official languages. What I am explaining does not necessarily concern official languages. We are talking about mobility, the international scene. We should find a way for that to have an impact on official languages. We have not yet gotten around to funding, but I wanted to give you an example.

We have introduced the program to provide support for international experts. A teacher, an executive, or anyone at a college in Canada wishing to make a transfer of expertise in an emerging or developing country submits an application to us and receives a response two days later. That is not long. We support that person. We do not pay for all his or her travel, but we do provide substantial assistance. We have created this program ourselves. It is something we decided to do for our members. This is an example of the things that are being done off the beaten path.

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

Mr. G n reux, you have the floor for four minutes.

**Mr. Bernard G n reux:** Let us continue off the beaten path, Mr. Harvey.

What is the idea behind these special programs that do not fall within the funding framework of Canadian Heritage and official languages? What are your intentions in doing these things?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Our intention is to expand our range of services for our members, to offer them one or two more opportunities to do something. That is our primary objective. The present period is not an easy one for c geps and colleges, especially for c geps. Not a lot of good things are happening these days. Budgets have been very tight in recent years for lack of funding. This kind of project is intended as a way to motivate the teams and individuals who work at the c geps and colleges.

In our opinion, this is an appropriate project because we have lost a lot of members in recent years as a result of budget cuts. All the colleges outside Quebec have stayed in our network, but we have lost a lot of Quebec members. Colleges and Institutes Canada has lost half its Quebec members. Quebec seems to be turning in on itself.

However, our special project enables us to recruit members. The more members we recruit, the stronger we are and the more interactions we generate between Quebec and the rest of Canada. We have introduced this project in that perspective.

• (0950)

**Mr. Bernard G n reux:** Ideally, what type of funding or level of funding are you seeking an order to achieve all your objectives?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** We are not talking about millions of dollars, far from it. In fact, we would like to have one or two more individuals to conduct research and development.

You asked me a lot of questions about whether we have conducted research or other projects of that kind. Unfortunately, we are unable to do so for lack of money. If we had one or two individuals to conduct research and find other funding sources, that would be enough. We do not have 500 or even 20 employees. We would simply like to have a little more capacity for research and funding.

**Mr. Bernard G n reux:** I would like to go back to the spirit of the so-called special project. Earlier you said it would be a good idea to add an "other potential projects" box. That was obviously not possible in the funding applications submitted to the government. To obtain funding, you have to undertake to carry out the project described in the funding application.

What recommendation can you make to the committee to make the government accept projects that do not necessarily fall within the official funding framework?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Under the programming or planning component of the funding application, it should add a "special projects" box or something of that kind, in the same way "other related duties" is added to the end of job descriptions. The initial budget should also provide for "special projects", which would allow us to set aside a provision of \$75,000, for example. Of course, applicants would have to account for the way that money is spent.

**Mr. Bernard G n reux:** Accountability is important.

**The Chair:** Your time is up, Mr. G n reux.

I now turn the floor over to Mr. Choquette for one final question.

**Mr. Fran ois Choquette:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

You mentioned the Toronto campus of Coll ge Bor al, which is working well and has a good francophone immigrant clientele.

Can you give us any further details on this point? Why does that college work well? Is it because of the province's immigration policies that promote the retention of francophone immigrants?

And do francophone immigrants tend to stay in their francophone communities once they have completed their studies, or do they return to Quebec or another province? Do they take part in the life of their francophone minority community?

**Mr. Claude Harvey:** Yes, but I am going to begin at the beginning.

What is particular about Collège Boréal is that it has set up where the people are. Collège Boréal has 24 locations. It is everywhere: in Windsor, Kapuskasing, and Petawawa—I may be mistaken. The thing about Toronto is that it has a large number of immigrants.

You wanted to know whether people stayed on after their studies. I went to Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, three weeks or a month ago. I do not know whether you have ever been there, but it is a small town. And yet there are Africans there, people who come from Madagascar and a lot of other places.

The same is true in New Brunswick. I have not gone to Nova Scotia, but I am going there soon. I am sure the same is true there.

Many immigrants stay on after their studies, and that changes the francophone communities. They become more varied.

I unfortunately have no figures to give you.

•(0955)

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

That brings our discussion to a close.

On behalf of the committee, Mr. Harvey, I thank you very much for the light you have shed on this matter.

We will now suspend for a few minutes.

•(0955)

(Pause)

•(1005)

**The Chair:** We will resume our session. I remind you that this is a public, not an in camera, session. Unless I am mistaken, the committee will now consider the Air Canada matter.

Who wishes to speak first on the subject?

Mr. Gagné, you have the floor.

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

On Monday, I asked that we consider the Air Canada question once again. In late June, following the tabling of the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages, our committee held a number of meetings on the subject. I felt it was appropriate to close the loop, at least as regards the intentions expressed by the commissioner in his special report, which he tabled two weeks after his annual report. I had introduced a motion, which we debated, but which was not officially tabled, or rather not adopted. Is that correct?

**The Chair:** That is correct. It was tabled, but it is currently stood.

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** We merely discussed it. After reflecting on it and holding meetings in recent days, I reconsidered the matter and the motion that I had introduced. In view of the fact that, as members of this committee, we are not in a position to alter the situation since we do not necessarily have the authority to do so, it would be appropriate to conduct an analysis.

We have just distributed a new version of my motion. I have essentially amended three or four words in the upper portion of the motion and added a paragraph.

Personally, I am not in favour of coercive measures such as fines. I prefer to cooperate with organizations that are found to be at fault so that they can improve their methods. I am not fundamentally

opposed to the solutions proposed by the Commissioner of Official Languages, but what I am seeking in this motion, which I am amending, is an evaluation of the feasibility of implementing the four solutions that were outlined in my motion and that are obviously drawn from the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

I think it is important for me to reread the motion. Here it is:

Whereas Air Canada has been subject to the full *Official Languages Act* for close to 50 years;

The committee recommends that the Government of Canada evaluate—

**The Chair:** Mr. Gagné, with your permission, to ensure that we are on the same page, I would like to advise you that you may not amend your own motion except with the unanimous consent of the members of the committee, since the matter is already before the committee. I therefore take it for granted that all committee members have received this proposal that you have—

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** It was just distributed five minutes ago.

**The Chair:** All right.

Continue reading to provide us with the context.

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** All right. I understand that it may a bit of an innovation to amend one's own motion, but, once again, I am prepared to—

**The Chair:** Technically speaking, one may not amend one's own motion except with the unanimous consent of committee members.

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** All right.

**The Chair:** I will allow you to continue reading it.

Mr. Samson, do you have a comment?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** If you want to allow him to continue reading the motion, that is fine with me. However, I would like to move an amendment to the motion that includes what Mr. Gagné is proposing. He therefore does not need to amend his own motion, since I myself will move to amend it by adding a paragraph. I will do so following his reading of the motion, if that all right with you.

**The Chair:** Then we will return to Mr. Gagné, who may continue reading.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Christine Holke):** Are we returning to the original motion, in that case?

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** That is a good question.

**The Chair:** What we have before us is your original motion, is it not?

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** No, this is the amended motion.

**The Chair:** All right.

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** However, I do not have the original version with me.

**The Chair:** Perhaps I would prefer that you read the motion you officially introduced.

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** All right.

**The Clerk:** We have copies of it for everyone, including Mr. Gagné.

**Mr. Bernard Gagné:** All right. I will read the motion I initially introduced:

Whereas Air Canada has been subject to the full *Official Languages Act* for close to 50 years;

The committee recommends that the Government of Canada take immediate action regarding Air Canada following the release of the special report by the Commissioner of Official Languages.

The committee recommends:

- a) That the government strengthen the enforcement regime applicable to Air Canada and expand the powers of the Official Languages Commissioner, in particular to enter into compliance agreements.
- b) That the government amend the *Air Canada Public Participation Act* to give the Federal Court the power to award damages for violations of certain provisions of the *Official Languages Act* without the claimant having to prove an actual loss stemming from the violation. The Federal Court could assess damages based on a number of explicit factors to be taken into consideration.
- c) That the government introduce provisions for fines to be imposed by the courts for certain regulatory violations.
- d) That the government provide for administrative monetary penalties that can be issued in response to non-compliance with the legislation.

Those are essentially the four solutions outlined in the Commissioner's report.

I had originally proposed that “immediate action” be taken. Instead of “immediate action,” the amended motion refers to evaluating “the feasibility and desirability of implementing” those four solutions.

The idea would thus be to call on the government to analyze the proposals rather than take immediate action and to present a bill. In that way, committee members could obtain a report from the government informing us whether that is feasible.

• (1010)

**The Chair:** All right.

I repeat that one may not amend one's own motion. That would require unanimous consent.

Mr. Samson has requested the floor.

Go ahead, Mr. Samson.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I would like to move an amendment. Mr. Généreux refers to immediate action. That is what is causing a problem, and that is why I would state the following at the end of the motion:

WHEREAS serious concerns have been raised by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in its special report on Air Canada;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Standing Committee on Official Languages continues to study at a date to be scheduled later, the Commissioner's report on Air Canada, and present its conclusions and recommendations to the House of Commons.

With this change, the words “immediate action” are removed from the motion, which states instead that the report will be studied “at a date to be scheduled later,” and it is agreed that the committee will “present its conclusions and recommendations to the House of Commons.”

**The Chair:** We have an amendment before us.

Mr. Choquette, you have the floor.

**Mr. François Choquette:** First of all, I want to thank Mr. Généreux and his party for this motion. I think it is very interesting and very appropriate in that Commissioner Fraser clearly

explained that he was speaking from the heart. The situation was a particular one that was systematically causing problems.

Mr. Généreux, I had forgotten you had tabled this motion. I was saying on Tuesday that the motion should be amended in the way you have done. Consequently, I will definitely support it. I feel, as you do, that the commissioner's suggestions should be analyzed before they are implemented. In fact, in my view, these really are suggestions by the commissioner. I do not believe he asked that all the suggestions be implemented, but rather at least one of them.

I think the most appropriate, most important suggestion—and it would be useful in other situations—is to give the commissioner more powers, to reinforce the implementation regime of the Official Languages Act. That would be helpful not only in the case of Air Canada but also in those of other organizations that might be problematic.

In this way, the future commissioner—and it is important that the position be advertised very soon—would have more powers and would be able to reach binding agreements and thus to ensure that the recommendations are implemented. The problem is often that the recommendations we make are shelved. They are forgotten and the problems unfortunately continue.

I think Mr. Samson's amendment is appropriate. I do not have the exact wording.

**Some hon. members:** We just received it.

• (1015)

**Mr. François Choquette:** Oh, I see. We have received it.

I am going to take a closer look at it, but I am sure you will have my support, gentlemen.

**The Chair:** Mr. Généreux, you have the floor.

**Mr. Bernard Généreux:** In the new wording that I had this morning, there is final paragraph that I consider important and that follows logically from what Mr. Samson is proposing. That paragraph reads as follows:

The committee proposes that Air Canada be recalled at a suitable time so it may inform the committee of the steps it has undertaken to improve its compliance with the Official Languages Act within the company and in terms of customer service.

When the report was tabled last June, we brought in the Air Canada representatives in an urgent situation, as it were, which is to say that Air Canada did not have a lot of time to prepare its presentation to the committee. Our committee should give Air Canada the opportunity to explain to us all the actions it has taken to improve its compliance with official languages. Air Canada will thus have enough time to flesh out its presentation. It is up to the committee to determine, in light of the resolution and the commissioner's proposals, whether we should move forward with all the measures proposed by the commissioner.

I am essentially in favour of the resolution and of Mr. Samson's amendment. In this way we will be giving Air Canada the opportunity to present to us once again all the measures put in place to improve its compliance with official languages. The committee will be able to come to a more informed judgement as to whether the measures put in place by Air Canada are valid and appropriate.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Samson, you have the floor.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I am rarely in full agreement with Mr. G n reux. I entirely agree that you should invite Air Canada to make a new presentation to us, this time giving it more time to prepare. That is implicit in the proposal I submitted to the committee. The committee will set a date to discuss it and make its recommendations. Since the committee probably wishes to hear the Air Canada representatives once again, this second presentation will be understood as part of our strategy. I do not like to describe the committee's initiatives, but they are understood.

Since the committee suggested that it was going to invite Air Canada back, in my opinion, it cannot fail to do so. However, it must give Air Canada more notice so it can prepare well. I do not think it necessary to include that in the motion as it is implicitly understood that the committee will determine it at the appropriate time.

**The Chair:** Mr. Choquette, you have the floor.

**Mr. Fran ois Choquette:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have Mr. Samson's motion, but is it more of an amendment to Mr. G n reux' motion?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Yes.

**Mr. Fran ois Choquette:** If it is an amendment, then what is the final motion? That is what I do not understand.

**The Chair:** That is a good question, Mr. Choquette.

**Mr. Fran ois Choquette:** If that is the final motion, this is no longer an amendment, but rather another motion. So if this is an amendment, where does it stand?

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** It is being inserted.

**Mr. Fran ois Choquette:** Where is the amendment being inserted in Mr. G n reux's motion?

**The Chair:** Mr. Samson, you have the floor.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** In my opinion, it is the beginning of Mr. G n reux' motion that suggests it be done immediately. My motion proposes to do it at a later date. This is merely a change of process. We are the ones who will determine everything we are going to do in our study.

So we are replacing "The committee recommends that the government of Canada take immediate actions concerning Air Canada" with "that the committee continues to study at a date to be scheduled later, the commissioner's report on Air Canada, and present its conclusions and recommendations to the House of Commons." So we are merely changing the timeline. In short, it is the start of Mr. G n reux's motion that is being replaced.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** What are we replacing it with?

**Mr. Fran ois Choquette:** We will have to check because I do not understand what he means.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I do not really understand either.

**The Chair:** Just a moment, please. We are going to clarify matters.

Mr. G n reux, you have the floor.

**Mr. Bernard G n reux:** I just want to be sure my understanding is correct.

Mr. Samson, you say we are keeping the sentence that begins with "Whereas Air Canada has been subject...for close to 50 years." As for the sentence beginning with "The committee recommends that the Government of Canada," it would be replaced by the paragraph that begins with "Whereas serious concerns have been raised" and by the one beginning with "BE IT RESOLVED THAT." So these two elements or paragraphs will replace the sentence beginning with "The committee recommends...." Consequently, the four solutions that follow that sentence will remain.

• (1020)

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** That is all right with me, unless you do not accept this motion and we accept mine instead. That is absolutely fine with me.

In fact, that can be part of our analysis. When we discuss Air Canada, we will review Mr. Fraser's report and four recommendations. We may invite the president of Air Canada back, but we could also do something else. The fact remains that the committee will conduct a study and overall analysis.

You have the choice. If you want to accept the way that others are proposing, that is fine with me. If you want to replace the motion with what I am proposing, that is all right too.

**The Chair:** Mrs. Boucher, you have the floor.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** This does not work. Is this a motion or an addition to an existing motion? We are confusing two things and this has become complicated. I understand Mr. Choquette. I am just as confused as he is, and yet I am used to sitting on committees.

Mr. Samson, you are trying to hoodwink us. Is this a motion or an addition to an existing motion? That is not the same thing.

**Mr. Ren  Arseneault:** This is an amendment.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Yes, it is an amendment.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** It is an amendment. So do not tell us it could be this or that. You have to be logical.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Boucher.

Mr. Arseneault, you have the floor.

**Mr. Ren  Arseneault:** Pardon me for getting lost here. I am going to go back to Mr. Choquette's comment and reconcile what I heard from Mr. G n reux and Mr. Samson.

I am setting aside the amended motion that Mr. G n reux introduced this morning. I am talking about the original motion. I want to make sure we are actually talking about the original motion.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Yes.

**Mr. Ren  Arseneault:** This motion refers to "immediate action."

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** It also refers to recommendations.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** Is that correct, Mr. Samson?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Yes.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** Let us set aside the amended motion that Mr. G n reux has suggested to us this morning.

Mr. Samson, the original motion begins with “Whereas Air Canada has been subject...for close to 50 years.” That sentence will remain as is.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Yes.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** You would replace the following paragraph, which begins with “The committee recommends to the Government,” with the second paragraph, which begins with “Whereas” in your motion. Is that correct?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Yes.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** Then we would have “The committee recommends:” and then points a), b), c), and d), which follow.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** That is not necessary. We can delete or leave that. Personally, I would put in the last paragraph from my motion, the one beginning with “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Standing Committee on Official Languages continues to study,” to replace the four points, a), b), c), and d). However, if he wants to keep them, that is fine with me.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** We should know that.

**The Chair:** Mr. Samson, we will hear from Mr. Choquette while you are thinking about that.

**Mr. Fran ois Choquette:** Thank you.

I am thinking about the analysts, who will have to finalize this motion. We have to understand it in order to move forward.

I entirely agree on Mr. Samson's amendment, which proposes that the committee continue the study. However, the words “at a date to be scheduled later” are troubling because that could be any time. Perhaps we could set a deadline, which would be better.

I want to emphasize something else. Mr. G n reux's motion recommends, without requiring, that the government analyze the commissioner's recommendations. It is extremely important to clarify that. The committee can demand nothing from government, but it is proposing that the commissioner's recommendations be analyzed. Those recommendations refer to feasibility and things of that kind—the exact terms escape me. We are recommending that to the government. Its response to us may be that there is not enough time to do so, but that will be its decision.

Our committee could do that. We will continue this analysis until the government reaches a decision on the matter. Perhaps we could set a deadline. I do not know whether that is possible, Mr. Samson. I do not know whether you have a date to propose. I leave that in your hands.

In this way, we would have your part of the motion as an amendment and would continue the study at a later date. We could set a deadline and recommend that the government analyze the recommendations. We would have the two statements contained in the motion. I do not know what Mr. G n reux thinks of that, but that is how I see the amendment.

•(1025)

**The Chair:** Mr. G n reux, you have the floor.

**Mr. Bernard G n reux:** Mr. Samson, what you are saying is essentially that the second paragraph, beginning with “WHEREAS” in your motion, and then the one beginning with “BE IT RESOLVED THAT” could be put at the end of my motion, replacing the last paragraph of my new motion from this morning. That would solve the problem.

That is similar to what Mr. Choquette said. We have to retain the four solutions from my motion. Personally, I would definitely not delete them from my motion. We have to verify feasibility; that is what my new motion states.

I agree with you that we must continue to study the commissioner's report at a later date. However, let us get this straight: that date will not be in 2020. That has to be very clear.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** We must not simply move on to the new one without dealing with the old one. However, I agree with what you just said.

**The Chair:** Mr. Lefebvre, you have the floor.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is somewhat in the same vein. I agree. I think we are on the right track, Mr. G n reux.

I have only one concern. Your motion states: “The committee recommends that the Government of Canada evaluate...” However, before doing that, it must first analyze the recommendations of the Commissioner of Official Languages. I suggest that the committee analyze the four solutions proposed in the commissioner's special report.

The last paragraph of Mr. Samson's motion could be inserted in your motion as a conclusion, as you suggested.

**Mr. Bernard G n reux:** Are you proposing that the committee analyze that?

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** Yes. We cannot make recommendations immediately without first conducting an analysis.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** We will probably have to hear from the Air Canada representatives again.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** And from other people.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** We are going to do our homework and then submit our recommendations.

**The Chair:** I am going to read the wording of the motion that is unanimously supported, but first I will turn the floor over to Mr. Choquette.

You have the floor, Mr. Choquette.

**Mr. François Choquette:** I would like to recommend that the people from Mr. Samson's office and that of Mr. Généreux work on the new motion. Then we would have a clear written version at our next meetings, which would facilitate our understanding. When it comes to adding one word and deleting another, it gets a little complicated. However, if the people from the two offices agreed to work together, we would have a clear and precise motion next Tuesday. We would of course send it to the clerk and it would be easier to complete the work.

**The Chair:** I think that is a very good idea, a wise piece of advice.

Mr. Arseneault, you have the floor.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** I do not want to make matters worse, but, while the new motion that you will agree on is being drafted, I would like us to ensure that any applicable implementation regime or coercive tool that might be suggested not be exclusive to Air Canada. The Official Languages Act is not limited to Air Canada. I do not know whether I am making myself understood.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** We want to give the motion some teeth, but it must not be rigid. We are talking about Air Canada. I understand that you want to ensure that the motion applies to Air Canada, but not exclusively.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** Yes.

**The Chair:** All right.

Mr. Choquette, you have the floor.

**Mr. François Choquette:** With your consent, we will now move on to the motion that I tabled on Tuesday.

**The Chair:** Just a moment, please. First we are going to settle this one.

Mr. Samson, you have the floor.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** The people from my office and those from Mr. Généreux's office will rework the motion. The problem for me is simply that Mr. Généreux arrived with a new version of his motion this morning. However, the essential aspect of my amendment concerned the first version. Now that we agree, the people from our offices will rewrite this and submit the whole to you next Tuesday.

**The Chair:** All right. You are going to rework the entire motion and send the text the clerk so that we have it in hand next Tuesday.

Is that correct?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** Yes.

**The Chair:** All right. Then this part is settled

Is there anything else?

Yes, Mr. Choquette?

• (1030)

**Mr. François Choquette:** I tabled a motion last Tuesday. As you probably know, the Commissioner of Official Languages was to leave his position on October 16. He has fortunately agreed to an extension of his term until mid-December, but he has clearly stated that he will then spend some time with his family and devote himself to other projects. That is entirely understandable. As you probably know, Commissioner Fraser has occupied that position longer than any other commissioner in history.

He has done an excellent job. His knowledge and expertise are extensive. As there is a large number of open files, he would be wise to ensure transition. I know the government is working very hard to advertise commissioner positions. Two positions were advertised this week, that of Ethics Commissioner and another position. The fact that commissioner positions are subject to a transparent, open and skills-based process is really a good thing. I congratulate the government on that. On the other hand, it must also ensure that there is a transition. However, there has been a delay in advertising the position of Commissioner of Official Languages, which is something of a concern.

The purpose of my motion is to invite the Governor in Council to proceed with the advertising of the position as soon as possible. The idea is simply to remind the Governor in Council that we are concerned about the transition.

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

Mr. Vandal, you have the floor.

**Mr. Dan Vandal:** Is it a notice of motion that Mr. Choquette is giving today?

**The Chair:** Notice has already been given. It was in the motions for consideration.

Mr. Samson, you have the floor.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I honestly cannot support this, but the others may decide otherwise.

With respect to the transparency of the process, there can be no doubt that this takes a little more time than what should be considered normal. Judges have not been appointed and officials are trying to do many things. Officials want to select someone and ensure that the process is clear and transparent when candidates are invited to apply. We acknowledge that this kind of process takes a little more time than usual.

I would like to let our government go through the necessary steps. Those responsible know that they must advertise the position as soon as possible. The same will now be true for the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court. It must also be as fast as possible, but let us not rush the process. We cannot have a transparent process that requires us to go through a dozen steps and still advertise the position tomorrow. We have to allow a little time.

I consider this motion a little premature. I would not want to be telling my government to appoint someone or announce an appointment if it has not done the necessary thinking to ensure the process is transparent.

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

Mr. Arseneault, you have the floor.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** When I read this motion in a literal manner, I am prepared to support it as it stands. We are inviting the Governor in Council—because we do not have the power to choose—to advertise the position and to select a commissioner as soon as possible.



Mr. Samson, if that is done as soon as possible and in accordance with the process, then so much the better. I understand your view, Mr. Samson. You have stated it in an entirely honest and transparent manner.

Perhaps we could just add a few words to suggest it proceed “in accordance with applicable procedures.” I do not know how we could word it exactly. By adding a minor element, we could say the same thing without complicating matters.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I would be more comfortable if the added element concerned compliance with procedures.

**The Chair:** Mr. Choquette, you have the floor.

**Mr. François Choquette:** I support the amendment.

**The Chair:** The amendment consists in the addition of the words “in accordance with applicable procedures”.

**Mr. René Arseneault:** The motion would therefore read as follows: “... as soon as possible, in accordance with the applicable procedures in place, in order to provide for time to transfer files....”

**The Chair:** Are we all in favour of the amendment?

(Amendment agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now I will reread the amended main motion:

That the Committee invite the Governor in Council to publish the job posting for the position of Commissioner of Official Languages and select a candidate as soon as possible, in accordance with the applicable procedures in place, in order to provide for time to transfer files, knowledge and expertise between the new commissioner and the outgoing commissioner, Graham Fraser.

That is the amended main motion that is being put.

(Amended motion agreed to)

● (1035)

**The Chair:** Are there any other matters?

**Ms. Linda Lapointe:** We must discuss the calendar.

**The Chair:** Mr. Lefebvre, you have the floor.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** Do we have the time to do it, Mr. Chair? At the last working meeting, we considered the calendar question and said we wanted to address the issues of immigration and roadmap. That was clear.

With respect to the roadmap, we are talking about the vitality of our communities and also about education. I strongly encourage you to read the Roadmap for Canada’s Official Languages 2013-2018.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** We have it.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** I think all of us have already read it. That being said, the calendar is full, as we all know. We have prepared a list of names of people we would like to invite here to discuss immigration. The Chair told us that some 20 hours would be reserved for witnesses. We already have 13 witnesses, to address immigration alone, which raises major challenges if we also want to discuss education and the vitality of our francophone communities.

In my opinion, our challenge is to review the calendar and perhaps reduce somewhat the number of witnesses who will discuss immigration so that we can ensure we invite people who will discuss education and the vitality of our francophone communities.

I suggest that the three parties work together outside this committee room to develop a calendar and a list of guests and that we propose the action plan to the clerk at our next meeting. In that way, we will not waste any time during meetings.

**The Chair:** So members who would be participating in—

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** Each party may propose one or two persons, such as Mr. Choquette for the NDP and Mr. Gagnéux, Mrs. Boucher, or Mr. Nater for the Conservatives.

**The Chair:** And also from the Liberal Party.

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre:** We will name one or two person on our side.

Is that all right?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** I would ask you informally to meet as soon as possible and to submit to us a suggestion that suits everyone.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** It appears that I am the one who has been delegated to do that.

**The Chair:** I would remind you that government officials will be appearing before the committee on Tuesday.

Is that settled?

Yes, Mr. Samson?

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** I would just like to raise a point. Perhaps we should think about this a little more. I am troubled by the description of our study.

I listened to Mr. Harvey, who made a very good presentation. Roughly 80% of his message focused on the roadmap and only 20% concerned immigration. I would even say that our questions focused 75% on the roadmap and 25% on immigration. I am not pleased about that. I am not sure we looked closely enough at immigration.

We should pay special attention to that when we invite the witnesses. We said we would prepare four standard questions for witnesses who would like to submit a written report to the committee. Last night, I read the document entitled “Study on the Roadmap and Immigration in the Official Language Minority Communities,” and it scared me a little. We are going to hold four meetings on immigration and then we will study roadmap. I know we said we could study both topics at the same time, depending on the witness groups, and that is fine with me. However, we must ensure that we focus on immigration over the next four meetings if we really want to make a recommendation to the government on the subject.

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

We asked the analysts to inform us about the statement that was submitted to the people who were invited to come and testify. Then we asked them to submit questions to us that we could put to witnesses so that they could respond, in their briefs, to the main questions raised. I will read you what was presented to us.

Yes, Ms. Lecomte?

**Ms. Lucie Lecomte (Committee Researcher):** The members have a copy of it.

**The Chair:** You already have a copy of the statement suggested by the Department of Canadian Heritage in summer 2016, which is entitled, “Study on the Roadmap and Immigration in the Official Language Minority Communities.”

I will read that statement to you.

In summer 2016, the Department of Canadian Heritage undertook a nationwide consultation to develop the Government of Canada’s next multi-year action plan for official languages. In this context, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages (the Committee) will study the *Roadmap for Canada’s Linguistic Duality 2008–2013: Acting for the Future* and *Roadmap for Canada’s Official Languages 2013–2018: Education, Immigration, Communities*. The objective is to identify the priorities of Canadians with regard to official languages and, more specifically, those of official language minority communities (OLMC), in order to make recommendations in order to develop the new action plan.

Immigration in OLMC figured in the last two roadmaps and remains a priority issue for the vitality of OLMC. Therefore, the Committee will examine federal government programs and tools that encourage immigration in OLMC, specifically francophone immigration in Francophone minority communities (FMC). The Committee hopes to make recommendations that will help to improve the ability of OLMC to recruit, intake and integrate immigrants. Furthermore, the Committee is aware of the potential that refugees represent for the development of OLMC and the challenges they—and their host communities—face. The Committee will look into government and community initiatives aimed at refugees in order to shed light on this issue and to make recommendations to help refugees settle in OLMC. Lastly, the Committee believes that it is important to hear the testimonies of individuals to understand what they have gone through and to keep in mind the human aspect that is intrinsic to the immigrant experience.

Does anyone want to comment on the subject?

Mrs. Boucher, you have the floor.

• (1040)

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I do not know whether you received the report on immigration that was prepared in June 2015. The Hon. Michael Chong was committee chair at the time. The committee prepared a report on immigration. If you have not received it, you can find it online. I have looked at it and I advise you to read it because it refers to many matters that we will be discussing.

Yes, that was under another government but these are very good avenues. Here we are concerned with exactly what you talked about, such as the express entry program, Destination Canada and the economic prosperity of immigrants. There is even a list of witnesses to appear before the committee.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Boucher.

We have about five minutes left to—

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I just want to say that this is important because some of the witnesses that we had on our list may already have appeared here. It could be informative.

**The Chair:** The clerk will distribute the report again.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** All right.

**The Chair:** Are you satisfied with the statement?

Mr. Samson, you have the floor.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** This is quite a detailed statement. Thank you. It is obviously unclear as regards the questions, but it is all right.

We should focus a little more on the immigration aspect when we communicate with these organizations or individuals. It is not as clear as I would like in the description you read.

**The Chair:** All right.

Now let us take a quick look at the questions that are suggested to you in that same document.

Let us look at the first question: “In your opinion, what were the...”

**Ms. Linda Lapointe:** Mr. Chair, have we received this document?

**The Clerk:** It was sent to you electronically.

**The Chair:** You do not have it in hand?

**Ms. Linda Lapointe:** No, we do not have it.

By the way, I have another meeting at the Valour Building at 11 o'clock.

**The Chair:** I know.

We still have three minutes.

Look, I am going to allow you the time to read it. I will to ask the clerk to resend you the document.

**Mr. Darrell Samson:** We have more questions.

**The Chair:** We will try to find time to resolve that on Tuesday, all right?

The meeting is adjourned.







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