

Madam Speaker, we recognize that there is some urgency in this regard within the Acadian and Francophone community.

*Bien que la Loi ne soit pas encore entièrement promulguée, on note depuis un certain nombre d'années une amélioration dans la relation gouvernement-communauté. Il existe maintenant une plus grande ouverture de l'appareil gouvernemental envers les besoins de la communauté acadienne et francophone.*

While the act is not completely enacted, we have noted during the past few years now that relations between government and the community have improved. Government is now more open to the needs of the Acadian and Francophone community.

*De façon générale, on peut tirer les grands traits suivants à propos de ces améliorations: création de postes bilingues, dans le domaine de la santé en particulier; représentation de la communauté au sein de divers comités gouvernementaux, dont ceux reliés à l'enfance, aux aînés et à la situation de la femme; augmentation du nombre de publications bilingues; programme d'affichage routier bilingue; et l'établissement de centres-scolaires communautaires.*

The following are the key areas of improvement: creation of bilingual positions, particularly in the field of health; representation of the community on various government committees, including those related to children, seniors and status of women; increase in the number of bilingual publications, bilingual road signage program and the establishment of school and community centres.

*On peut également prendre comme exemple le programme « 30 minutes pour la famille » que nous avons lancé récemment.*

We can also take as an example the Take 30 for the Family program which we recently launched.

*Ce programme qui relève du Secrétariat à l'enfance a été conçu de façon entièrement bilingue et ce, dès le départ. Tout le matériel promotionnel - incluant le site Web, les auto-collants, les affiches et la publicité - est disponible dans les deux langues.*

This program, which comes under the children's secretariat, was developed in a completely bilingual format from the start.

All promotional material, including Web site, stickers, posters and publicity, is available in both languages.

*De plus, les intervenants de la communauté acadienne et francophone ont eu l'occasion de se prononcer sur le contenu du programme en plus d'être des partenaires clés dans la mise en oeuvre du programme.*

Also, the Acadian and Francophone community had the opportunity to voice their opinion on the contents of the program as well as serve as key partners in the implementation of the program.

*Madame la Présidente, nous reconnaissons qu'il reste du travail à faire pour sûr. Pour être franc, il y aura toujours du travail à faire, car nous vivons dans une société toujours en mouvance, où les changements démographiques et la mondialisation se font continuellement sentir.*

Madam Speaker, we know that there is certainly more work to be done. To be honest, there will always be work to do because we live in a society which is in constant evolution, where the effects of demographic changes and globalization are continually being felt.

*Mais la position de notre gouvernement est sans équivoque : nous souhaitons travailler en collaboration avec la communauté acadienne et francophone afin d'assurer son épanouissement aujourd'hui et pour les années à venir.*

But our government's position is unequivocal: we want to work in collaboration with the Acadian and Francophone community to ensure its development today and in the years to come.

*Et puis, Madame la Présidente, je sais que des fois on fait des publications dans le gouvernement et quelqu'un m'appelle au téléphone pour dire qu'on n'a pas fait ça bilingue. Des fois on fait des invitations et ce n'est pas bilingue. C'est des choses que je sais qu'on doit améliorer ou essayer d'améliorer et puis on va travailler vraiment fort pour essayer d'améliorer ces choses dans le futur.*

Also, Madam Speaker, I know that sometimes we prepare government publications and then someone calls me on the phone to say that it wasn't done in a bilingual format. Sometimes we prepare invitations that are not bilingual. Those are

things that I know must be improved or that we must try to improve and we will work really hard to try to improve these things in the future.

In my earlier comments, I talked a little bit about how much the French community contributes to Prince Edward Island socially, economically, culturally. I just want to talk for a couple of minutes on economical because since having the privilege of becoming Premier, I've been away on many business seeking missions, and I know whether or not I'm in Toronto, whether or not I'm in western Canada, whether or not I'm in the northeast US, whether or not I'm in Montreal.

When you can sit down with a company and one of the things you are able to tell them is how much of a French presence you have on Prince Edward Island, how many people are bilingual, it makes an enormous difference in trying to attract a company to come to Prince Edward Island. The general population and myself - I didn't have any idea how much it helps that we have French immersion, that we have French languages in our schools, that we have training at the post-secondary level.

I know myself and the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning just recently met with a company, it was a gaming company from France. They had never been to Prince Edward Island before. They came here and they were shocked a little bit that the Premier was able to converse in French to a certain extent. They were amazed at how much we were able to deliver French services in terms of our school system.

I talk a lot when I'm talking with these companies how it's only going to grow in the years to come. Because of a lot of the work that the people that I mentioned earlier did in the past to make sure that the rights could be delivered so that people of Acadian or Francophone descent or any Islanders were able to take French in the school system.

When you look at our school system right now you see a large decline in our English schools in terms of enrolment. But believe it or not, our French schools, starting right off in grade 1, a huge increase. In fact, our school in Charlottetown here, we're going to have to expand on it because it's growing so much.