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# Standing Committee on Industry, Natural Resources, Science and Technology

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**Tuesday, October 19, 2004**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Brent St-Denis**

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## Standing Committee on Industry, Natural Resources, Science and Technology

Tuesday, October 19, 2004

• (1530)

[Translation]

**The Clerk of the Committee:** Honourable members of the committee, I see you have quorum.

[English]

We can now proceed to the election of the chair. I'm ready to receive nominations for the chair.

Mr. Myers.

**Mr. Lynn Myers (Kitchener—Wilmot—Wellesley—Woolwich, Lib.):** I nominate Brent St. Denis as chairperson.

**The Clerk:** Are there any other nominations?

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Crête (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** No, it is good.

[English]

**The Clerk:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Clerk:** Mr. St. Denis has been elected chair.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

[Translation]

**The Chair (Mr. Brent St. Denis (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, Lib.):** Thank you.

[English]

**The Clerk:** Now if the committee is in agreement, I will proceed to the election of the vice-chairs.

[Translation]

Are there any nominations for the position of first vice-chair?

[English]

**Mr. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** I'd like to nominate Werner Schmidt for the position of vice-chair.

**The Clerk:** Are there any other nominations?

Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Schmidt is duly elected as the first vice-chair.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Thank you all.

[Translation]

**The Clerk:** We shall now proceed with the election of the second vice-chair.

**Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ):** I nominate Paul Crête.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Paul Crête has been nominated as second vice-chairman of the committee. Are there any other nominations?

[English]

Is everybody in agreement?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Clerk:** I would now invite Mr. St. Denis to take the chair.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**The Chair:** Thank you, Louise.

[Translation]

I want to thank all of you for your support. I'm going to work hard so that we can have a good experience. I am not necessarily talking about a partisan team,

[English]

but about a team that is prepared—being partisan when we have to be, by the nature of our business, but a committee and a team nonetheless—and willing to get some things done.

I'd like to congratulate Werner Schmidt and Paul Crête as our vice-chairs.

I want to congratulate all of you, some of you for your first election and others of you for your return from the election.

With your indulgence, I might just ask for a quick introduction around the table, just your name, your riding, a word or two about yourselves, by way of making sure the new faces and old faces are mutually recognized.

Werner, would you mind leading off with that?

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to you too, sir.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** I'm Werner Schmidt, the MP from Kelowna—Lake Country. I hope, Mr. Chair, that the rest of the committee's work is going to be as congenial as the first day has been. I think it's terrific.

**Mr. Michael Chong:** Mr. Chair, I'm Michael Chong. I'm from the riding of Wellington—Halton Hills in Ontario, and I'm pleased to be here.

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** Mr. Chair, my name is Brad Trost, and I'm the member from Saskatoon—Humboldt. I believe I'm the first geophysicist elected to the House of Commons, so I hope to participate particularly in science and technology and natural resource issues across the board here.

**The Chair:** Wonderful.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Serge Cardin:** Good afternoon. My name is Serge Cardin and I am the member for Sherbrooke. I have worked on natural resources issues for several years now. I have tried to bring about the creation of a natural resources committee; it hasn't worked, but I am happy to work with the Standing Committee on Industry.

**Mr. Paul Crête:** My name is Paul Crête and I am the member for Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup. You don't have to learn the name of my riding by heart. I am my party's industry critic, and I'm very happy to have this opportunity to continue working with the committee, a committee I consider very important in light of the circumstances that prevail at this time, particularly as regards global competition.

[*English*]

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** I'm Brian Masse, the member from Windsor West. It's great to be back in the industry committee. I hope we will be as productive as we were last time.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Good afternoon. My name is Larry Bagnell and I am the member for the riding of Yukon.

•(1535)

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Bourassa, Lib.):** Good afternoon to all of you.

[*English*]

I guess I'm an old new face. I'm Denis Coderre, member of Parliament for Bourassa.

[*Translation*]

I agree with my colleague Crête that the Standing Committee on Industry is essential in the global village. There are a huge number of issues. I think that we are going to have a good opportunity to work on several issues that affect people in their daily lives. I am very happy to be here with you.

[*English*]

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** My name is Lynn Myers. I represent the riding of Kitchener—Wilmot—Wellesley—Woolwich, in Ontario. I have to tell you, Mr. Chairman—and by the way, congratulations—that I gave up half my riding to Michael Chong, so I'll be watching to see that he does his job. I know he will. He's a friend of mine, so that will be good. But under redistribution, of course, things change. So here he is and here I am too.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Andy Savoy (Tobique—Mactaquac, Lib.):** My name is Andy Savoy and I am the federal member for Tobique—Mactaquac.

I am very happy to see that there is a geophysicist among us. I am an engineer, myself.

[*English*]

I think I'm the grandfather of the committee. Aside from maybe Monsieur Crête, I think I've probably been on here the longest—and the chair, of course. So welcome, everybody. I look forward to getting to work and doing some good work for Canadians.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

My riding is a northern Ontario riding, Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking. I have an engineering degree as an education.

Do we have any lawyers in here? No?

**Hon. Denis Coderre:** Good.

**The Chair:** That's just a joke. We love the lawyers.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Serge Cardin:** We have some accountants.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** John, we're just doing a quick introduction, our names and our ridings, where we're from. You can take your coat off, if you want.

**Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, CPC):** No, I'll turn the mike on. I've already kept people waiting.

I'm John Duncan, Vancouver Island North, fourth term. I've worked with lots of you guys.

**The Chair:** And you're a professional forester.

**Mr. John Duncan:** Not any more.

**The Chair:** Oh, okay. But you were a professional forester.

**Mr. John Duncan:** Yes. I resigned last month.

**The Chair:** Is that right?

**Mr. John Duncan:** I decided I wasn't going to go back there.

**The Chair:** You didn't want to pay your fees.

**Mr. John Duncan:** That too.

**The Chair:** Thank you, colleagues.

Obviously, looking around, there's a lot more folks on my left and a lot fewer on my right. It's going to be a very interesting adventure for all of us. I'm looking forward to it. No doubt there will be times when I'll be asked to be the referee, and I will be as fair as I can be, within the limits of my ability.

I'm not expecting a long meeting today, maybe just a few more minutes. There will be some routine motions that we'll deal with at our first official meeting. I think the clerk is going to hand out what the motions look like. You can read them, and if you have any questions, you can call the clerk.

Our time slots for the fall session, by the way, are Tuesdays and Thursdays at 3:30. That will change with every season. I do know that our time slot in the new season will be Mondays and Wednesdays at 3:30. I know that will cause some people, including me, some grief in terms of getting home on Thursdays. It makes a difference between getting home at eight o'clock at night versus two in the morning. But it's only for the fall. We won't get that Thursday afternoon slot back for quite awhile. We might as well get it out of the way, I suppose.

So look at those resolutions. They are routine, for the most part. I'm not sure if there's one in there for...

Louise is reminding me that we might as well get our library experts appointed right away.

Is there any disagreement on that one motion, that we retain the services of our researchers as of today? There is a motion to that effect, and I would just ask somebody to move it.

Larry, seconded by Andy.

Do we consent to retaining the services of one or more researchers, as of today?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** For those new to the committee, I'll introduce Dan Shaw and Jean-Luc Bourdages. I guess Lalita is away for the day.

Dan has a master's degree in economics from Carleton University. He is a specialist in industrial organization, competition policy, and international trade. He began work with the Library of Parliament in 1990. He has been assigned to the committee on industry, science, and technology since 1999.

Jean-Luc is a biologist with a master's degree from the Université de Montréal, specializing in land use planning and natural resources conservation. While pursuing doctoral studies, he developed an expertise in forestry, environment, and sustainable development. Since joining the Library of Parliament in 1990, he has been assigned to the natural resources committees of both the House and the Senate.

Lalita Acharya, who is not here today—she'll be here at the next meeting—has a PhD in biology from York University and is a specialist in science and technology policy-making. She has been involved with this committee since 2001.

So we're blessed with three very intelligent and hard-working researchers, and we're thankful for that.

• (1540)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** I want to point out that Mr. Shaw is even older than I and Mr. Savoy.

**The Chair:** I agree.

[*English*]

To deal with the other motions, I propose that we meet Thursday at 3:30. The first business, apart from the routine motions, would be our future business. Hopefully there will be no disagreement with us starting that.

Paul.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Mr. Chairman, are we going to adopt the routine motions today?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** We'll deal with the routine motions on Thursday, unless you want to do them today.

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** Let's do them today.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Yes, we can adopt them today.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I just wanted to give you time to read them.

Let's start with the top one.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Mr. Chair, before you proceed, I'd like to add another motion. It's also a routine one.

**The Chair:** With the consent of everyone, we can do that. Do you want to deal with it at the end or add it now?

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** It doesn't matter.

**The Chair:** When we come to the end, we'll look at your motion.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Colleagues, I've had the chance to chair two committees, natural resources a couple of years ago and then more recently industry. The practice I have followed is that we involve everybody in the management of the committee, rather than have a subcommittee made up of a subset of our membership here, which then means extra meetings and reporting back to the main committee. I feel that our group is small enough. In the past, with 18 we managed to do it that way. If there is agreement, I would not even create a subcommittee until such time as you feel you need it. This way, everybody is able to participate. Is there any disagreement with that?

**Mr. Brian Masse:** I'm going to be proposing a subcommittee for a particular issue. If we can't deal with all the items on the agenda, this doesn't preclude us from bringing it forward at that time.

**The Chair:** No. This only has to do with a subcommittee on agenda and procedure, those meetings we have on future business.

We do have notice of your motion, Brian. When we get to the end of these, I'll bring your notice of motion to the attention of members.

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** So we're skipping the first one. If you decide later on that you want a subcommittee on future business, then you can bring it up. Obviously, the opposition has the clout basically to do whatever it wants.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Do you promise?

**The Chair:** Well, it's a promise only you can keep.

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

**The Chair:** We've done the library one. So jump down to the third one, the motion to receive and publish evidence in the absence of a quorum. For the new members, sometimes we have a witness who has travelled to Ottawa and for some reason we don't have enough people to make a quorum, which you would need for voting purposes. When we're hearing witnesses, we're not voting on anything. But if a minimum number of people are present, we can hear a witness and get their testimony on the record. Then the people who weren't here can read the testimony afterwards.

That's fairly routine. Are there any objections? Do you want to move that?

John.

**Mr. John Duncan:** This is a carry-over from the previous parliament, which was a majority parliament. Given that this is not a majority parliament, I would say this formula should change somewhat. I'm not saying that we would reverse it. It might be more feasible to say "four members are present, including two members of the opposition".

• (1545)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Let's say that at least four members of the committee have to be present and two of them must be members of the opposition.

[English]

Four and two,

[Translation]

instead of three and one.

[English]

A minimum of four and a minimum of two opposition. Do you want to move that now, John?

**Mr. John Duncan:** I so move.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** The next motion has to do with an acting chair. I can ask somebody to take my place if I'm not going to be here.

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** I so move.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** The next motion says that witnesses be given 10 minutes for their opening statement. I can tell you from past experience that in some meetings you might want to keep it to five minutes, but if you have a high-profile witness who has come from far away, you might want to go over the time. You just try to balance it.

Paul.

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** I would prefer that the Bloc Québécois be given the floor in second place, immediately after the Conservative Party, in order to reflect the composition of the committee. If I understand correctly, it says here that we alternate from one party to the other. The first to have the floor is the Conservative Party, the second the

Liberal Party and the third the Conservative Party. I would like the Bloc Québécois to be the second one to speak.

**Mr. Serge Cardin:** After the Conservative Party.

**Mr. Paul Crête:** After the Conservative Party. I so move.

[English]

**The Chair:** Do you mind if I make a comment, Paul, on how I would manage it? The time would be in relation to the seats in the House. If you remember last time, when we were together before, I went one, two, three, four.

Now, I'm not sure if we can...

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Yes, but I want to make sure that there is one there, two here and then...

**The Chair:** Yes.

[English]

Conservatives, Bloc, Conservatives, and then—

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Crête :** Where are the Liberals in all of this? That is what concerns me. Do they get the floor after all of the opposition parties?

[English]

**The Chair:** No, we'd have to mix a few Liberals in there appropriately.

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** My proposal is that the Bloc Québécois be the second party to speak : one, two, and the rest...

**The Chair:** Before the Liberals.

[English]

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to support that, but I'd like to go beyond just that whole iteration, if you don't mind. It comes from several other committees where the same thing has happened. I think it's working out very well there.

In the first round, instead of going five minutes, go seven minutes, in order: the Conservative Party, then the Bloc, then the NDP, and then the Liberals. In the second round, five minutes: the Conservative Party, then the Bloc, and then the Liberals. In the third round, the Conservative Party, the Liberals, and the NDP. And in the fourth round, five minutes: the Conservative Party and the Liberals.

That rotation seems to work very well in other committees. It gives, I think, a different distribution, taking into account the actual seat representation in the House.

**The Chair:** Lynn.

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** Can you repeat that?

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** All right. I'll go a little slower.

The first round, seven minutes: Conservative, BQ, NDP, Liberal.

The second round, five minutes: Conservative, Bloc, Liberal.

The third round, five minutes: Conservative, Liberal, NDP.

And the fourth round, five minutes: Conservative, Liberal.

•(1550)

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** Which other committees have done this that you're aware of?

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** I think fisheries has done it, and I think heritage has done it too.

**The Chair:** I don't think it's fair.

Brian.

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Instead of going in circles over this today, I suggest we get a couple of proposals submitted to us for the next meeting. We could deal with them then. Everybody could see specifically what's being proposed. That way it's fair.

You know, we worked really hard last time to make sure that everybody had adequate time, and we actually had a good, functioning committee. I think that's the goal we want to have this time as well. Instead of trying to do this at this moment in time, I think it would be prudent to submit them and then decide upon them in the next meeting for this particular motion.

**The Chair:** Do you want to e-mail around your ideas to the other members?

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Can do.

**The Chair:** We can all be creative.

So we'll leave that piece of business to Thursday, before we do future business. I think we can probably come to a consensus. We're just going to table this one until Thursday. Louise will have other examples from other committees to add to Werner's examples.

Turn the page, please, to payment of witnesses' travel and living expenses. It's pretty straightforward.

Lynn Myers moves it. Any questions?

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Next is the distribution of documents with translation.

Paul.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** I suggest that we add the words "and that no document from a witness be distributed without the authorization of the clerk". Last year, it did happen that witnesses had documents that were not in both official languages and they placed them on the table next to us without necessarily having obtained the authorization of the clerk to do so. I want the clerk to have given his authorization before a document can be made available to the members in the room.

**The Chair:** There is no problem with that.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Denis.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Denis Coderre:** I want to ensure that no document will be tabled if it is not in both languages. Is that what that means?

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Yes. We passed the initial amended motion. The documents have to be bilingual, and moreover they cannot be left lying around without the authorization of the clerk.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Next is working meals. For the new members, from time to time we have to work through lunch. This authorizes the clerk to arrange some sandwiches.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** From time to time, including future business, beginning on Thursday.... I suppose the first motion having to deal with the order of statements is open, but once we go into future business, that would be in camera. You could decide otherwise, but it would usually be in camera, and the past practice has been to allow each member to have a staffer in the room—in addition, of course, to clerks and library staff.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** John.

**Mr. John Duncan:** We talked in the beginning about setting aside a special subcommittee for future business. Actually, each party knows what it wants to do on future business. It's a lot more efficient to discuss future business with fewer people, so I'd like to recommend that we actually do initiate a subcommittee and that the subcommittee meet on Thursday, rather than the entire committee.

**The Chair:** Paul, and then Lynn.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** My experience in committee has taught me that when we did that and then went back to committee of the whole, the debate always started up again. We in fact lost a meeting, because between the two hearings information was added that we didn't have at the first one.

We are more productive when we can really settle our issues and then get down to work. In addition, we deal with two completely different areas, natural resources and industry, and people are not necessarily represented at the steering committee. I think that we are better off settling things in committee of the whole, especially since we currently have a minority government. Continuing to do what we did in the past seems more appropriate to me.

•(1555)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Lynn.

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** Mr. Chairman, Monsieur Crête made a number of points that I was going to make. Also, I listened very closely to what you said at the beginning of the meeting about how this had worked in the past, and you thought it had worked well in terms of the larger group. So I think we should go along with that and support you on that. It makes sense.

You pointed out too that it's not such a large group and that hopefully we could draw it together in a fine fashion without having the duplication that Mr. Crête just referred to.

**The Chair:** Could I add, John, that if it becomes a problem you could always bring that motion back. Are you prepared to at least let us give it a try without a subcommittee?

**Mr. John Duncan:** Okay.

**The Chair:** In camera meeting transcripts. Are there any questions from the new members on what that means?

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Notice of substantive motions. Brian is still around, is he not? Louise has his motion anyway.

Basically, it is that except for amendments to bills, 48 hours' notice be given before any substantive motion is considered by the committee, and that the motion be filed with the clerk. It always presumes that if the committee agrees unanimously it could dispense with the notice, but if there is any single objection, then we have to go back to the 48 hours' notice from the moment it's given to the clerk. Is that how it goes? Okay. That's pretty routine.

John.

**Mr. John Duncan:** I have a question on that. What does that mean for amendments to bills? Does it mean we don't have to give any notice at all? Is that what it means? This is just for clarification.

**The Chair:** Amendments to bills happen during clause-by-clause.

**Mr. John Duncan:** Right.

**The Chair:** So it would be totally impractical if a member came with an amendment and then you had to wait. For clause-by-clause you come armed with your amendments and you wrestle it out right here without notice. That's normally how it would go.

**Mr. John Duncan:** I just wanted to clarify that. Thanks for that.

**The Chair:** Paul.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Personally, I would prefer a 24-hour notice rather than a 48-hour one. In practice, a 48-hour notice easily takes us into the following week. When we discuss something at a Tuesday meeting, if we can submit a motion on Wednesday, it cannot be debated on Thursday but only the following week. That is sometimes a bit long.

So, I move that we have 24-hour notices. Let us vote to see what we will choose.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Are there any comments on the amendment to 24 hours?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Denis Coderre :** Mr. Chairman, I think that a 48-hour notice does have its advantages insofar as preparation is concerned. There is an administrative aspect. We mustn't forget traditions just because we have a minority government. There are things that worked very well in the past. I think that the 48-hour notice gives all the parties the possibility of preparing themselves well and of getting organized accordingly. I think that we should keep the 48-hour notice.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Let's deal with it quickly. Let's vote on the amendment. All in favour of 24-hour notice?

**Mr. John Duncan:** I call for a recorded vote, please.

**The Chair:** We have a quorum. This is the first test.

A yes vote means you're supporting 24-hour notice, and the main motion then would be 24.

(Amendment agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

• (1600)

**The Chair:** Okay, 24 hours it is. We'll be adventurous.

Brian sent his motion in, and we'll take both of these as notices starting now, because we weren't constituted until now. So it's notice for Thursday. I'll do Brian's first and then we'll go to yours, Werner.

It hasn't been translated, so I'll read it out so that it's translated.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Do you have mine as well?

**The Clerk:** It is not a motion, it is a letter.

**Mr. Paul Crête:** It is a letter asking that the motion be submitted to the committee.

**The Clerk:** I know.

**Mr. Paul Crête:** I hope it will be considered as a motion because there was no committee at that time.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** We'll get it on the table. Here is Brian Masse's notice of motion: that pursuant to Standing Order 108(1)(b), the Standing Committee on Industry, Natural Resources, Science and Technology establish a subcommittee to conduct public hearings receiving the views of Canadians and stakeholders specifically on the current government processes of foreign investment review and generally on the political, economic, and social issues stemming from the increasing globalization of investment and trade in Canada; and that the subcommittee prepare a report summarizing the views of those heard, with recommendations to this committee by February 2005.

In summary, Brian is calling for the creation of a subcommittee of this committee to look at the whole question of foreign investment.

There's no debate now. That just serves as a notice that it will be on the list of things to consider on Thursday, and it will be distributed.

Werner.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Mine is actually a routine motion. I would like to move that whenever the main estimates or the supplementary estimates are tabled in the House, the committee invite the minister and any relevant senior officials of the department to appear at a meeting of the committee, which is televised if possible.

Second, whenever a chapter of a report of the Auditor General refers to a subject under the mandate of the committee, I move that the committee invite the Office of the Auditor General of Canada and any relevant senior officials of the department to appear at a meeting of the committee, which is televised if possible.

**The Chair:** That will be circulated.

What would you say about changing it to “the committee may invite”? The committee might decide that for certain estimates it didn't want the minister to appear. So if you simply said “the committee may invite”, it would still give the committee the right to issue the invitation.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Or “invite”.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Does it force us to have the minister appear even though the committee didn't want that?

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Actually, I think the issue here is that when the minister appears, it be televised, and the same thing for the Auditor General.

**The Chair:** I was concerned that we were forcing ourselves to invite the minister every time. The words “the committee may invite” mean that each time they come up, you can make that decision.

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** Since we meet as a group, Werner, we would then determine that.

**The Chair:** Yes, each time.

This means it's compulsory to invite. What if the committee says we don't want the ACOA minister here, for example?

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** My concern primarily is that it be televised. I want that for sure. There are times when perhaps the minister isn't required. But very often we would want the minister to appear. I don't know of any instance where we wouldn't invite the minister if the main estimates were here, and for the Auditor General's reports, clearly we'd want them to be called.

**The Chair:** Do you want to adopt that now or leave it until Thursday?

**Some hon. members:** Leave it until Thursday.

**The Chair:** Okay. It's a notice for Thursday.

I have here a letter from Paul Crête to the clerk, which says:

At a committee meeting last March, we unanimously passed a motion to hold hearings on the impact of international competition, particularly China's, on Canada's manufacturing industry.

Since then, a number of problems experienced by businesses in various sectors (textiles, clothing, bicycles, etc.) have underscored the importance of the Committee undertaking this study as quickly as possible.

Given the urgency of the topic, I would appreciate it being placed on the agenda immediately following the election of the chair.

Paul, it's on my list for Thursday.

The following items are on my rough list from before: the economic impact of the Kyoto Protocol, requested by James Rajotte, and number two is yours, the economic impact on Canada of offshore outsourcing by Canadian manufacturers. That's China.

Then there are a whole range of science issues, if we're interested. We may want to have the new science adviser appear before us. There is the Academy of Sciences, which was mentioned in the throne speech, the Arrow space program, and so on.

There's the issue of automotive, property, and casualty insurance, which a couple of members raised last year, along with the southern Ontario trade corridor infrastructure to the U.S., which I think was Brian's suggestion. Copyright reform is also on the list. Then there are all the estimates within Natural Resources and Industry, which we would have to look at. There will be a steady stream of Auditor General reports to deal with. There will be appointments that you may be interested in reviewing. Some will be interested in the Noranda Mines offer to purchase by China Minmetals. That may come up as an issue. There's the issue of black and grey market satellite TV, which we were studying when we broke. That may come back. There's notice of compliance in the pharmaceutical industry. Some may be interested, some may not. It depends. I think Brian is interested in that one. There are oil and gas issues.

There's Bill C-9, the drugs to Africa bill, which we passed last spring. We may want to do a follow-up and see whether progress is being made on getting drugs to Africa.

Of course, there are a whole range of issues in forestry, including the softwood lumber issue and European attitudes toward the forestry industry. John will remember a visit by European parliamentarians. They never complained after they had their visit with us, John.

• (1605)

**Mr. John Duncan:** Actually, they wrote a report that basically vindicated our position.

**The Chair:** You wanted to raise something about the agenda, John.

**Mr. John Duncan:** Yes, and I'll just put it on the radar screen. That is this whole area of smart regulations. A lot of the things you just talked about fall under the category of smart regulations, or they could fall under that umbrella. Certainly pharmaceuticals and foreign investment could, and such things as the auto sector and the trade corridor. Certainly our natural resources sector and the industry sector are both tied together under this umbrella of smart regulations.

We have the report that was tabled by the government on September 23. It is a very good report. It actually covers every department of government. It needs a champion in the House of Commons in terms of parliamentarians trying to move this agenda forward, and I think this would be the logical committee to do it. We would be doing a great public service by so doing. Right now it's an exercise within the bureaucracy. It needs political leadership. I think this committee would want to think very seriously about whether that isn't a very good direction for us to go in.

**The Chair:** My view is that any idea of a member will go on the list. Our job will be to put them in order at some point. We have to decide what work is first and second and third.

For the new members, bills that come to committee usually have to be dealt with as a priority.

I'll put that on the list for Thursday.

Paul, and then Lynn.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** There's one thing I'd like to know about bills. Currently there is a bill that should normally be referred to us, on the change of status of Economic Development Canada, which is going to become a regional agency. Are we the committee that will be studying it?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Paul is asking about a bill establishing the Economic Development Agency of Canada for Quebec Regions. My understanding is that, yes, it's part of the Department of Industry Act. If it goes to committee—and maybe there'll be agreement in the House to deal with it, I don't know—it's going to come to us.

So that's also on the list of...the only bill we have right now.

•(1610)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête:** So it is a priority. In that case, the committee could work on the bill and we could strike a subcommittee that would work on something else. That is one possibility. I am not saying that that is what we should do, but that is one possibility.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I believe the committee is free to do that, yes, if it so chooses.

Lynn.

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** That was my question, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Okay.

You may have other ideas. I mention this as a rough agenda, in no particular order. On Thursday, when we start to discuss future business, again, I won't put them in order. They are going to be in random order, just as I collected them from my old notes and from Louise's notes. And other things will come up. If you think of something different for Thursday...

So your item is on the list to discuss on Thursday.

**Mr. Brian Masse:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** This will take us to Christmas.

**The Chair:** Which Christmas?

Is there anything else before we adjourn?

The clerk always has something more for us to do. The briefing book for the various things will be sent to you electronically.

You have it?

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** Yes.

**The Chair:** I beg your pardon. Mine is probably on my desk.

So we'll meet Thursday. You can plan on meeting Tuesdays and Thursdays. If we need or want extra meetings, it's up to the committee to decide.

With that, seeing no other business, we'll adjourn for the day. The best of luck to you all, and I look forward to working with you.

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