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## Legislative Committee on Bill C-2

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**Wednesday, May 3, 2006**

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**Chair**

**Mr. David Tilson**

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## Legislative Committee on Bill C-2

Wednesday, May 3, 2006

•(1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC)):** I would like to call the meeting to order. This is the first meeting of the Legislative Committee on Bill C-2, the Federal Accountability Act.

The orders of the day are the organizational meeting. I would like to advise the committee that I have received the following communication from Speaker Milliken:

Pursuant to Standing Order 113, I am pleased to confirm your appointment as Chair of the Legislative Committee on Bill C-2, An Act providing for conflict of interest rules, restrictions on election financing and measures respecting administrative transparency, oversight and accountability.

As the chair of this committee, it is my role to act as a neutral arbitrator of the proceedings, ensuring the orderly conduct of debate and careful attention to the clause-by-clause study of the bill.

There are two people I would like to introduce before we get into some housekeeping matters. The first is the clerk of the committee, Miriam Burke. Let's give her a hand.

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

**The Chair:** As well, there is the legislative clerk attached to the committee for this bill, Susan Baldwin. You'll never miss her.

They, of course, will answer any questions that you have relating to the process we're about to undertake.

I would like to turn to some housekeeping matters. I've given representatives of each of the caucuses a copy of this, which has been varied slightly. These are routine motions that a committee normally adopts at its first meeting. You have a list before you of the possible motions. I would propose that we proceed through the list to consider the ones we want to adopt. You should have that list before you.

I'm going to read the motions one by one, and we'll ask for a mover of the motions, if you wish to do that or to amend a motion.

Mrs. Jennings, did you have a comment?

[Translation]

**Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.):** I want to amend the first one, the subcommittee one.

[English]

**The Chair:** The first one has to do with the subcommittee on agenda and procedure: that the subcommittee on agenda and procedure be composed of the chair and one member from each party.

Does anyone wish to move that motion, or one similar to it?

Two questions, with Madam Jennings first.

•(1535)

[Translation]

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** I would like to move an amendment so that the motion would read as follows: "That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be composed of the chair and one member from each party, and that any decision of the subcommittee must be ratified by the committee."

[English]

**The Chair:** Most of you have more experience than I have in these matters, but my observation is that it's standard. I suppose if you wish to put that in, it would be fine with me.

Monsieur Sauvageau, did you have a question?

Mr. Murphy, did you have a question?

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** He's seconding my motion.

**The Chair:** Mr. Petit.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Petit (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** I'd like to know what exactly you mean by "that any decision [...] must be ratified by the committee". Does that mean that we would have to meet in committee of the whole, with everyone present, to adopt those decisions?

[English]

**The Chair:** My recollection of what happens is that normally someone from the committee reads a report of the committee, which is presented to the committee and voted on, or rejected, or debated—or amended.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ):** I don't mean to speak for Ms. Jennings, but in my experience, when a subcommittee meets and there's a consensus, the information is brought to the full committee so that it can be conveyed to all members. If there's no consensus on the subcommittee, it automatically becomes an item for debate in the full committee. I think Ms. Jennings' motion is an attempt to clarify the situation, i.e., any item that is not agreed on unanimously by the subcommittee would be debated in the full committee.

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** Couldn't we just say that?

[English]

**The Chair:** Through the chair, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** Mr. Chairman, it might be helpful to indicate that any decision we don't agree on would go to the full committee. Otherwise, we're going to waste time, because even if we agree, we are going to have problems. So it would be better to indicate right away what we can work on.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** I take your point. I think my motion was poorly worded. Instead, it should read as follows: "[...] and any decision the subcommittee does not agree on unanimously should be decided by the full committee."

[English]

**The Chair:** Did I hear a question over here?

Mr. Poilievre.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC):** Does it not require a motion to create a subcommittee before we start talking about the way in which this—

**The Chair:** We have a motion, we have an amendment to the motion, and we'll find out what's going to happen soon, I hope.

Any other questions or comments?

Mr. Moore.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, CPC):** I was on a legislative committee in the 2000-2004 Parliament, a legislative subcommittee, and I don't remember there being a subcommittee on agenda and procedure. I think it was the Bill C-55 committee and I think you were on it. This is standard, and I just wanted to make sure that was the case.

I know it's not necessarily standard for a committee, because as a committee you often make these decisions as a whole. Having a subcommittee for a legislative committee is standard procedure, I understand.

**The Chair:** We're going to move on Ms. Jennings' amendment first.

(Amendment agreed to)

• (1540)

**The Chair:** We'll vote on the motion as amended.

Yes?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC):** My apologies for being late; I was tied up in the House.

Could you read the motion, please?

**The Chair:** Madam Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Miriam Burke):** The motion as amended would be that the subcommittee on agenda and procedure be composed of the chair and one member from each party and that all decisions that are not unanimous be approved by the main committee.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** The second item has to do with the services of analysts from the Library of Parliament: that the committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the chair, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

**An hon. member:** I so move.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** At this point I would like to invite three people to the table who are the parliamentary research staff, the people we just approved. Katherine Kirkwood is the director of the law and government division and is responsible for the legislative summary program. Jack Stilborn is the principal and coordinator of the PIRS estimates group and was previously assigned to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. And Kristen Douglas was assigned to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy, and Ethics in the last session.

The third item, reduced quorum: that the chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least three members are present, including one member of the opposition.

Mr. Sauvageau.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** I move that we postpone consideration of this motion until it's time to discuss the committee's schedule, although I don't think that's on the agenda. If you don't mind, Mr. Chairman, we could discuss the schedule, and then quorum. However, if my friends and colleagues don't agree, we can discuss it now.

[English]

**The Chair:** We're going to put that to the end of the list. That's perhaps a good point.

Speaking times: that witnesses be given ten minutes to make their opening statement. I think this is slightly different from what I gave to.... It's the same one? The title is different. It's that witnesses be given ten minutes to make their opening statement; that at the discretion of the chair during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated seven minutes to the first questioner of each party, starting with the opposition parties, and that thereafter five minutes be allocated to each subsequent questioner, alternating between opposition parties and government.

Mr. Tonks moved that. Discussion?

Mr. Lukiwski, then Mr. Sauvageau.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

There's one thing I don't see here, and I'd just like some clarification, if I could. Are we going to enforce a maximum length of time for witnesses? The reason I bring this up is that, as everyone knows, it's a very hefty piece of legislation. There are 317 clauses we're going to be dealing with clause by clause. I'm assuming the committee will want to bring forward a number of witnesses, including some ministers, officers of Parliament, and that type of thing. I would suggest that in order to try to deal with this expeditiously—and of course on this side we would like to deal with this as expeditiously as possible, while at the same time giving adequate time for discussion by all committee members—we discuss a maximum agreed-upon length of time that witnesses could appear before this committee.

My suggestion—and I'll throw this out—

**An hon. member:** [*Inaudible—Editor*]

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** All right, but I would like to get to that at some point.

• (1545)

**The Chair:** I'd like you to finish before we start jumping in. Are you finished with what you wanted to say?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** I know we have a motion here that the witnesses would be given 10 minutes to make their opening statement, but after that, the rounds of questioning are such that I'd just like to....

I'm sorry, I understand there was a motion to that effect, so I'll save my comments then.

**Mr. James Moore:** On a point of order, I'd like to table a motion on this issue.

The motion would be that witnesses' times not exceed 40 minutes. So you have 10 minutes for the presentation, and then after that we have 30 minutes for questions from members of the committee. Questions can be anywhere from five to seven minutes, alternating from opposition to governing parties for that timeframe. Forty minutes seems to be a fair allotment of time, especially with the number of witnesses we want to see.

So I move that at the end of speaking times—I have this in writing, if you'd like it—we add that testimony of each witness or group of witnesses be limited to 40 minutes unless there is unanimous consent to extend that time.

**The Chair:** Could I see that before I get thoroughly confused?

**Mr. James Moore:** Sure. I can repeat it again, because I know you were distracted.

I'm moving that at the end of the speaking times section—

**The Chair:** The 10 minutes?

**Mr. James Moore:** No, the entire paragraph: that testimony of each witness or group of witnesses—in other words, allotted for a sequence of time—be limited to 40 minutes unless there is unanimous consent to extend. In other words, the 40 minutes would include the 10-minute presentation and then half an hour for questioning by the committee members, in the structure that's outlined in—

**The Chair:** Do you want to make that an amendment, or do you want to make that a separate motion after—

**Mr. James Moore:** That's an amendment to add on at the end of the speaking times motion.

**The Chair:** All right. We have an amendment to Mr. Tonks' motion.

Mr. Sauvageau.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Mr. Chairman, do I have to state my position on the amendment, the motion, or both? Either way suits me fine.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Well, it appears that we're on the amendment.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** I have a lot of reservations about the amendment. I have sat on a number of committees over the past few years, but I have never seen a committee where the time given to witnesses was limited. Generally, when you invite a couple of witnesses to a meeting of a set duration and where the speaking times are allotted, you never need to limit the time the witnesses are given. In 13 years, I have never seen a witness engage in a filibuster. I've seen members do it, but never a witness. So I have a hard time understanding why their speaking time should be limited.

The motion is drafted as follows: “That, at the discretion of the chair, during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated seven (7) minutes to the first questioner of each party, starting with the opposition parties”.

If I understand correctly, that means that the Liberals would have seven minutes, then the Bloc would have seven minutes, then another seven minutes, and then it would be their turn. I don't think that's what you meant to say. And I don't think the Conservatives will support that motion and I can understand why they wouldn't. Maybe we need a bit of a clearer picture of who is to have the floor, because this way, at your discretion, of course, we might have more time than the Conservatives and we would go first. That might not be what the motion is supposed to say.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I'm going to have to call you James Moore, because we've got two Mr. Moores.

Mr. James Moore.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. James Moore:** I agree with what Mr. Sauvageau just said. For greater clarity, the order should be as follows: the opposition, the government, the opposition, the government.

[*English*]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Something like that, but we want....

[*Translation*]

**Mr. James Moore:** That would need to be clarified. We can look after that.

In response to the question as to why we want to limit witnesses' speaking time, I would point out that this committee is probably going to sit evenings, perhaps mornings or afternoons as well, and we'll probably be hearing from many witnesses. I think we would be well advised to make sure every witness knows when he or she will appear.

• (1550)

[English]

In the past in committees, my colleague may remember on Bill C-38... We're not limiting people's time. The end of the motion reads that if there's unanimous consent of the committee to extend the time, we can do that. The idea here is to be polite and diplomatic to the guests we're going to have at this committee. I suspect there's going to be a long list of people who are going to be witnesses on this committee. We have a long list of people who we want to propose as witnesses to the committee.

I know there have been times in the past when witnesses have flown here from across the country and have sat in the gallery as we've gone around and around. Often we've had round after round of people talking to a witness about obscure points of legislation.

This is an attempt to have clear blocks of time so that witnesses can come to give their testimony and we can ask our questions. If we want to amend this to a full hour instead of 40 minutes for a concise block of time, for the purpose of booking witnesses and to be polite to them, we can ensure that when people come here they can actually give their testimony on the days they've been allotted.

**The Chair:** Madame Guay is next, on the amendment.

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Chair, we cannot impose time limits on some of the groups that will appear before us. Some groups will be testifying on topics which are far more specialized than others and we will have a lot of questions we want to ask them. So we can't impose such time limits on them; the quality of our work would suffer.

When the Environmental Protection Act was being reviewed, I remember sitting day and night for about a year and a half. We heard from all the witnesses we were supposed to hear from and we really ended up doing some meaningful work. However, if we rush things, the quality of our work may suffer which, in turn, would result in bad legislation.

So, I don't want there to be any time limit. I also think that when witnesses go to the trouble of travelling and drafting briefs, then we should take the time to listen to them. Imposing time limits on them is really not a good idea, in my opinion.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Poilievre.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** In fairness, I think that Mr. Martin was actually before me. You may go to him.

**The Chair:** It's good to see cooperation.

Mr. Martin is next, and then Mr. Poilievre.

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** That's very gracious of you.

My only concern is making this work. There are a lot of dynamics at play around the table. They're already starting to show themselves. Just being reasonable, I can't imagine how you can not have some limits on a witness. If you fly six people in from around the country, and you have only a three-hour meeting and there are three sets of witnesses waiting to be heard, you can't let the first set of witnesses

go on for the whole three hours or you'll fly those people back to Vancouver until we meet again. It's simply not practical. So I think it's reasonable to have a cap on each witness or group of witnesses.

If we have a panel of witnesses, they have 10 minutes to make their presentation. By the end of 40 minutes or an hour—whatever we choose—that should cap off that group of witnesses. I'm willing to accept that 40 minutes is probably a good idea because it forces us to use our time better and not take as long as I have taken to make this point. We might be able to be more compact and compressed. I agree with the amendment, and I would support it.

**The Chair:** Mr. Poilievre, go ahead, please.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** I think, actually, that was exactly what I was going to say, that 40 minutes is plenty of time. So in order not to waste any more time listening to me, why don't we call the question?

**The Chair:** We have another speaker.

Mr. Sauvageau, go ahead, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Mr. Chair, I think there may be another way of reaching the same outcome without making things too complicated. Why make things complicated when they can be simple? If we plan on a three-hour meeting in which we give each of the two witnesses appearing an hour and a half, we are thereby limiting their time, without explicitly saying that's what we're doing.

**Mr. James Moore:** The problem with doing things that way is that sometimes we only need 20 minutes with some witnesses. But if we were to have an hour and a half per witness...

• (1555)

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Sauvageau, I'd like him to finish what he was going to say first.

[Translation]

**Mr. James Moore:** We don't necessarily need 90 minutes for each witness. Sometimes all we need is about 20 minutes with an expert witness to discuss a particular aspect of a bill, especially because we may just have one question we want to ask. If we give the witness 90 minutes, our committee will sit unnecessarily for a further hour. I think we need to be targeted in the way we use our time. And I think that the 40 minutes I suggested in my motion are enough. What's more, I think that Mr. Martin from the NDP and the Liberals agree.

So, Mr. Chair, I'd ask you to put the question.

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** May I just make a comment on what Mr. Moore said?

[English]

**The Chair:** Could I interject at this point? I'm trying to be unbiased, which will be interesting.

If you have 40 minutes limitation, you'll get one round. You won't get any more rounds. Does everybody understand that? If you want to speak after that, I won't let you, if that happens.

Mr. Sauvageau.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Let me come back to your example. In your amendment, you say you want 40 minutes, but if we want 60 minutes... In the case of a witness who only needs 20 minutes and yet he has been allocated 60, well, your motion won't solve anything. For the most part in committee we do the math and invite as many witnesses as our time allows. It may be that only one out of a hundred witnesses takes less time than allocated. So why complicate things when they can be simple?

[English]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Poilievre, and then Mr. Martin, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** If we don't establish a time limit, we'll have to rehash this issue each time we have witnesses before us. So why don't we establish a reasonable time limit so that everybody has the opportunity to ask questions of each witness, thereby avoiding having witnesses arrive before we are ready to hear from them? That's reasonable.

I think we've talked about this enough and that it is time to vote.

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm going to let Mr. Martin say something.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Thank you, Chair. I just have a question of clarification, actually. I understand that Mr. Sauvageau was saying that it should go opposition, government, opposition, government.

Regarding the time, I understand Benoit's point. But the way this reads now is the way I'm used to on most of the committees I sit on, where opposition goes first—and it goes to three opposition parties—and then to the government side. Are we going to leave that?

**The Chair:** Okay. Just so everybody understands, I'm going to have Mr. Moore tell us what he's trying to do here.

**Mr. James Moore:** Under the section “Speaking Times”, the paragraph stays the same, with the additional language, “that testimony of each witness or group of witnesses be limited to 40 minutes unless there is unanimous consent to extend”.

**The Chair:** All those in favour of the amendment?

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** We're moving right along. The next motion is witnesses' expenses: that, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses, not exceeding two representatives per organization; and that, in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be at the discretion of the chair.

**An hon. member:** So moved.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1600)

**The Chair:** The next motion is for the distribution of documents: that the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute to the members of the committee only documents that are available in both official languages.

**An hon. member:** I so move.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** The next motion is on working meals: that the clerk of the committee be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working meals for the committee and its subcommittees.

Are you moving, or do you have a question?

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** I have an amendment.

**The Chair:** Well, let's get the motion first. Maybe nobody will even move it. You never know.

Mr. Tonks is going to move the motion, and Ms. Jennings is going to say something.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** I would add, at the very last line, following the word “subcommittees”, “as long as it's sushi”.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** Well, I don't know what to do now.

All those in favour of the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** You haven't changed at all, Ms. Jennings, since I last sat with you on a committee.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** And aren't you pleased about that?

**The Chair:** The next motion is on notice of motions: that 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration; and that the notice of motion be filed with the clerk of the committee and distributed to members in both official languages.

Mr. Martin.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I would like to move an amendment to this motion that we change “48 hours”—

**The Chair:** What are you doing? I want a mover first.

Mr. Lukiwski is moving it and then you're going to make an amendment.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I got ahead of myself.

I'd like to change 48 hours to 24 hours notice, and following the word “committee”, delete the words, “unless the substantive motion relates directly to the business then under consideration”. So removing those words and changing 48 to 24 is what I'm seeking to do.

**The Chair:** Debate on the amendment.

**An hon. member:** A point of order.

**The Chair:** Someone said point of order.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I'm sorry. I understand the translation did not pick that up.

**The Chair:** Well, then, let's do it again.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Do you want me to repeat that?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** All right, I'll say it more clearly.

I'd like to delete "48 hours' notice", and replace that with "24 hours' notice", and to delete the words following "committee": "unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration".

That would be my motion.

**The Chair:** On the amendment, James Moore.

**Mr. James Moore:** Yes, 48 hours is the standard, so I'm just wondering if Pat can tell us why he wants it changed.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Through the chair, I'll respond.

Some of the committees I've worked with have waived the notice or changed the notice to 24 hours. We find that 48 hours' notice actually is a real barrier to those working on the committee. It often spans a weekend, and it makes it very difficult to keep the committee moving promptly when you're bound by that 48-hour rule. It actually expedites the work of the committee to have only 24 hours. Anything shorter than that I would be reluctant to recommend, because the clerk and the staff need time to incorporate those motions—at least overnight. "One sleep" is what we go by.

**Mr. James Moore:** If I could continue, the one hesitation I would have on this is that on some committees that may be wise, but as for this committee—we'll get into this—we may be sitting on Mondays and we may be sitting on Fridays, and all members know we often have committed schedules through weekends and so on. So there's a reason why there's a 48-hour notice of motion. It's so that people can make those preparations and travel plans. If somebody gives a notice of motion on a Thursday—and half the House leaves Ottawa on Thursday, as we know—and then there's going to be a vote the very next day, people will have to cancel events in their districts and they'll have to make radical travel plans, which is often not the wisest thing.

I appreciate the sentiment, and believe me, I would like this process to be expedited, but I don't know that there's a real argument about why 48 hours won't suffice. So I would therefore speak against this.

•(1605)

**The Chair:** Ms. Jennings on the amendment. No?

Mr. Poilievre.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** All right...

Do you have a point?

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** Mr. Chair, when I raised my hand, it was before Mr. Martin had an opportunity to respond to Mr. Moore's question, so the information I was going to impart to Mr. Moore was exactly the same. So I won't take up any more time of this committee on this particular issue.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** All right.

I understand that it's a frustrating rule, because I've missed the 48-hour deadline in the past, and it's a great frustration when that happens, but the benefit of having the 48 hours is that with the schedules all of us keep, it sometimes takes a couple of days for a committee member to get an opportunity to study a motion and to arrive with an informed position. I think 48 hours is a reasonable

balance, so that you can arrive at committee, having seen the motion and having studied it, to return an informed opinion, to vote on it and debate it. So I personally believe we would be well advised to keep the 48 hours, though I do very much respect Pat's sentiments on it.

**The Chair:** Do you understand what the amendment is? Is everybody okay?

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** Everybody is happy—maybe.

In camera meeting transcripts: that one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be held in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** So moved.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Staff at in camera meetings: that unless otherwise ordered, each committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one staff person at an in camera meeting..

Moved by Mr. Sauvageau.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Next is that amendments to Bill C-2 be submitted to the clerk of the committee 48 hours prior to clause-by-clause consideration.

Moved by Mr. Sauvageau.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** We still have to deal with the reduced quorum and the sitting schedule. Who wants to take lead on this?

Mr. Sauvageau.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Mr. Chair, I'd eliminate this routine motion, quite simply because, as Mr. Moore explained so well, on several occasions, this is not a traditional committee, and so on. That's why I think the committee should sit when there is quorum, it's as simple as that.

•(1610)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

The rationale is that the proposal is only for the hearing of witnesses and that if any decision were to be made on anything you would require a full quorum. So if we have witnesses and we don't have a full quorum it enables us to proceed to hear those witnesses. That's the rationale.

Ms. Jennings.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** I move that the chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed only when a quorum, defined by at least seven members including four representing two opposition parties, is present.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Petit, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** Could I ask you to repeat the proposed amendment to the motion concerning quorum.

[English]

**The Chair:** Well, we don't have anything at this stage, unless Ms. Jennings is making a motion.

Are you making a motion, Ms. Jennings?

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** Yes, I am.

**The Chair:** Yes, she is. So we have a motion on the floor, as Ms. Jennings advised. We don't need a seconder.

Mr. Petit, did you have a comment or a question?

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** I would first like Ms. Jennings to repeat the amendment so that I can comment on it.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** I move that the chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum, defined by at least seven members including four representing two opposition parties, is present.

That would mean, for example, that there would not be a quorum if there were four Liberals and two Conservatives present, because the rules require four members representing two opposition parties. Even if there were four Liberals and two or three Conservatives present, we would still not have quorum. There would have to be at least one other member from one of the two other opposition parties to ensure that three parties, including two opposition parties, are represented at all times.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Petit.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out to members of the committee that both the government and the official opposition are well represented on this committee. However, Mr. Martin will be the only representative of his party, and were we to adopt the proposed motion, the workload resulting from our continual demands on his time will send him to an early grave.

**A voice:** He could send a substitute.

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** If we want to ensure continuity in the committee's work, the majority of members should be present at all meetings to avoid leaving ground uncovered. If, for example, I always sent a substitute because I was tired, you would get pretty fed up.

In my view, if we say "only when a quorum is present", we will be so restricted that it will be essentially impossible to hold meetings because, given the number of weekly meetings that we have planned, we will not always manage to have quorum. I therefore think it would be easier to work in small groups and, in the event of somebody being absent, he or she could read the clerk's notes and intervene at a later date.

• (1615)

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Where Ms. Jennings suggested that members of two opposition parties be present, I don't have a problem with that, but saying there should be four opposition members from two different parties could potentially be a problem. I'm not saying this would happen, but let's just assume for a moment that if none of the Liberal members showed up and if the NDP and the Bloc were in full complement; we would have two opposition parties but only three opposition members. We would not have a quorum, under Ms. Jennings' suggestion.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** We're okay even if all four Liberals show up. If there is not another opposition party, either a Bloc or an NDP member, there is no quorum.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** No, no, I understand. I'm just saying I appreciate the two opposition parties; I haven't got a problem with that. But having four members as opposed to three....

**The Chair:** Mr. Poilievre, do you still want to say something?

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** I think that it is a reasonable amendment. To my mind, as members of this committee, we ought to attend meetings. If we fail to do so, the media will get talking, and everybody will hear about it on the television.

[English]

**The Chair:** We don't have an amendment; we have a motion, and I'm going to ask you to make sure we all understand it.

Ms. Jennings, go ahead, please.

[Translation]

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** Once again, I move that the chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed only when a quorum, defined by at least seven members including four representing two opposition parties, is present.

[English]

**The Chair:** Does everybody understand?

Okay, we're going to vote.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now do we have sitting schedules?

I'm going to raise the topic of sitting schedules. There's no draft motion, but somehow we have to deal with that issue.

Mr. Sauvageau, go ahead, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Mr. Chairman, you said that we do not yet have a draft motion. If that is the case, I would ask that you allow me to propose one and that you then put it to a vote.

I move that this committee sit twice as often as standing committees. Normally, committees meet twice a week. I know that the Conservatives are in a hurry to get this bill adopted, and we are prepared to cooperate fully. That is why I am suggesting that we have twice as many meetings, in other words, four meetings instead of two.

I would suggest that meetings be held on Tuesday from 9:00 a.m. to midday, and from 3:30 to 5:50 p.m. I would remind you that some members are still in their ridings on Mondays. There would be no meeting on Wednesday mornings, because we all have caucus. We could, however, meet on Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., and on Thursday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to midday. That would allow members who have a long way to travel to go to the ridings at weekends. I have not had the chance to calculate the number of sitting hours that would give, but it would give us twice as many meetings as a normal committee.

My proposal is, therefore, that the committee meet on Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to midday, and from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.; on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.; and on Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to midday.

If, for example, a witness were unable to attend a daytime meeting due to his work schedule, and we had to hold an evening meeting, I am certain that, in the spirit of cooperation, we could unanimously decide to occasionally hold one of our meetings outside of our scheduled slots.

As you said that you did not have a draft motion, I consulted with colleagues, and I think that this draft motion will have the support of most, perhaps even all, members of the committee.

● (1620)

[English]

**The Chair:** I think we all understand, and it's nine hours.

Ten hours? I don't know.

Mr. Lukiwski, go ahead, please.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate Benoit's suggestion and I agree with it. I would like to suggest, however, that for 317 clauses, for a massive bill, for many witnesses, we might need additional time. I appreciate the fact that the committee could decide to meet in the evenings. Would it be fair, though, to suggest, since some are flying Monday morning and most members are here Monday afternoons, that we add a two-hour session Monday afternoon, from 3:30 to 5:30? That would be my suggestion.

**The Chair:** Mr. Martin.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Thank you, Chair.

My only comment is that I notice that it does conflict. This is news to me. Actually, I was okay with this, but I understand the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30 to 5:30. I am on that committee, so I serve notice that I will have one conflict. However, I am happy with this arrangement, so I will find a substitute for that one conflict.

I would point out that ten hours a week—

**The Chair:** I'm on that committee too, so maybe we can just pair.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I did notice that, Chair.

But I would like to add that ten hours a week is a lot. I asked of my finance critic.... Even the all-powerful Standing Committee on Finance only meets twice a week for two hours at a time, unless sometimes they take on special projects. But I've never heard of them meeting more than ten hours a week.

**The Chair:** The clerk has just told me, and I hope I get it correct—and most of you will know this—that a standing committee cannot sit at the same time as a legislative committee dealing with the same subject matter. So it will put the ethics committee in an interesting dilemma.

Mr. Poilievre.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** On the issue of the members having other committee obligations, I have another committee I'm a part of, public accounts. I have found a permanent replacement, and in fact all of the members of the Conservatives are planning to do that. I would suggest that other parties do the same thing, because this is a massive omnibus bill. We have to have undivided attention from members of this committee on this particular bill. The committee cannot wait for other committees in order to schedule around it.

Secondly, we're talking about a very large bill. I've done the clause-by-clause already. I can tell you it took me about 15 or 20 hours just to go through, and that wasn't even debating the clauses or proposing amendments; that was just to read them and be briefed on their complexities. So I would propose that this agenda that Mr. Sauvageau has offered is too light. I don't think there's any reason why we could not do something Monday afternoon or evening. In fact, when I spoke to him that was my understanding, that we were going to include an afternoon or evening on Monday night, but that we would cut short on Thursday night because members such as him leave Thursday night to return to their constituencies and arrive late on Monday morning.

So I would suggest that we add to his amendment a further amendment that allows for a meeting from 3:30 to 5:30. Then do you want to do a later one after that? Yes, 3:30 to 5:30 on Monday or 6 to 9, whichever would be more agreeable to Mr. Sauvageau.

Do you have a preference between those two, Mr. Sauvageau?

● (1625)

**The Chair:** Could I just ask the committee's indulgence for a moment, please? I just want to be clear on what's going on.

There's a motion Mr. Sauvageau made. Did Mr. Lukiwski have an amendment to that suggestion?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** I did not have an amendment. It was a suggestion. I didn't make a formal amendment. I think Mr. Poilievre may have an amendment.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** For the purposes of expediting this, of the two options, or the third option being both, which would the opposition members be more inclined to support, a 3:30 to 5:30 or a 6:30 to 9 on Monday night? Is it possible to indicate that? Then I will put my motion for my amendment.

**The Chair:** Mr. Sauvageau is next, but if you're having a chat, maybe you could do it through the chair.

Mr. Sauvageau.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Mr. Chairman, it's a bit comical: Mr. Lukiwski and Mr. Poilievre asked me a question, but I cannot answer unless you recognize me. So, I can now answer your questions.

I am seated next to two women, one is deputy leader of the Liberal Party and the other is deputy leader of the Bloc Québécois. Ms. Monique Guay is not here on Mondays, be it in the afternoons or the evenings. As we also have work to do in our ridings, she is here from Tuesday to Friday and I'm here from Monday to Thursday. So, I think we will be maintaining the status quo.

Yesterday, I did indeed receive information regarding the schedule. However, we did say that if it was necessary to hold a meeting at another time because a witness cannot attend for any given reason, we could reassess the situation and perhaps allow for meetings on Tuesday evenings.

However, the schedule which was handed out and calls for twice as many meetings as a standing committee is the one that I will keep.

[*English*]

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** I would make the following motion, then, to amend Mr. Sauvageau's motion: that we add meetings from 6:30 to 8:30 on days Tuesday and Wednesday. That is my amendment.

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

Mr. Tonks.

**Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.):** Mr. Chairman, I'm going to vote against the amendment, but I don't want the basis upon which that is being done to be misconstrued.

My suggestion would be that we go with the motion and that we learn by experience. We want to move this agenda; there is absolutely no hesitation in saying that. I'm sure everybody believes that. But let's get some experience in the rhythm of hearing the deputations and getting to the essential amendments that are going to be made. Let's learn by experience.

I want to say that I respect the predication upon which the amendment is made with respect to distance factors. Having gone through that with special committees before, I think what is being suggested, the 10 hours...let's see if we can press it, and then if we need more we can reconvene. It's without prejudice with respect to this motion that at some subsequent point we can bring it back onto the table and discuss it, but let's get a sense of the rhythm of the committee.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Ms. Guay.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** I will be brief, but this is important. We are looking at 10 hours of committee meetings per week. As deputy leaders we also sit on other committees. That would involve an enormous workload. We need to take this work very seriously. If we sit too many hours—and I discussed this with Pat, my NDP colleague—we won't be able to focus. This is a very complex bill. We need to start with the schedule we had established. Ten hours a week is a lot.

We have to do our work diligently, take the time to review documents and make the necessary amendments. It's extremely technical work. I have been here for 13 years. I think 10 hours per week, for the time being, will do. Later on, we could look into making changes or dealing with emergencies. We are able to get along. For the time being, 10 hours per week represents an enormous workload.

• (1630)

**The Chair:** Mr. Petit.

**Mr. Daniel Petit:** I have an opinion on the motion and, at the same time, I'd like to discuss the subamendment, if it is moved.

When I decided to sit on this committee, I set aside all of my other duties so as to be available here full-time. If some members are holding down two or three jobs at the same time, I don't think we'll be able to do very good work, because they will be busy in the House, left, right, and centre, in other committees. It is therefore important, considering the work we will be doing—

Although I'm a new member and I don't know what happened in the past, I think it would be important for those who are doing two or three things at the same time to simply focus on this, and if not, to delegate another member from their party who can sit here and work at the same time as us. We are being paid to work here, in Ottawa, and not in our ridings.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Ms. Jennings.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** It is clear, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Petit is not only new to the committee but also to Parliament Hill. First of all, when members both from the government and opposition sides talk about other jobs, they are not talking about other paid employment, they're referring to parliamentaries responsibilities.

Secondly, I think that Mr. Sauvageau's proposal regarding the number of meetings and the number of hours we would sit each week is completely reasonable. Allow me to explain why.

I have already had the honour of sitting on other legislative committees. I have also been a member of special committees and of regular committees. I had the experience, in 2004, of being a member of a committee that sat in the morning, the afternoon and the evening during adjournment weeks of the House of Commons, and I must remind you all that it was I, Marlene Jennings, who moved the motion to add extra meetings in the evening, the daytime and during the adjournment weeks. This was not an opposition member's motion, it was a motion tabled and moved by a member of the government at that time, in this case myself.

It was a painful experience for all the members of the committee, on both the government and opposition sides, to the point where the committee had become almost dysfunctional, was not working properly. This was a committee that had always functioned well, that had always managed to reach consensus and to negotiate reasonable agreements. This nearly broke its back and ruined its reputation. I attribute this in part to the number of hours that the committee members were asked to sit.

Therefore I find that ten hours is altogether reasonable. As all my colleagues mentioned, I think this is a committee where everyone wants to do the right thing. If, in the future, circumstances are such that as an exception it is necessary to hold an evening meeting, I think you will see that we are all reasonable people.

This is why I will not support the amendment moved by Mr. Poilievre and I will only vote in favour of Mr. Sauvageau's main motion.

[English]

**The Chair:** Before we go to Mr. Sauvageau, I'd like to read the section that keeps popping up a little bit. It's Standing Order 115(1):

Notwithstanding Standing Order 108(1)(a), no standing or standing joint committee shall sit at the same time as a legislative committee on a bill emanating from or principally affecting the same department or agency.

Obviously, that may clarify it for some of you.

Monsieur Sauvageau.

• (1635)

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Before the question is put, I would like to address a brief comment to Mr. Petit.

Mr. Petit, I speak to you all due respect. Congratulations on your election victory in your riding.

I have been a member of the House of Commons for 13 years. First of all, generally speaking, standing committees like the Finance Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee, which are relatively important committees, meet on average for six hours a week. We are proposing ten hours per week.

Secondly, you referred to jobs. You probably meant assignments or additional responsibilities. I am sorry, but I think that every day, at 2 p.m., there is question period, for yourself as is the case for the rest of us. We keep that time for question period.

I also believe that, in theory, your party would have a caucus meeting on Wednesday. We can therefore not have a meeting on Wednesday during caucus. In principle, I believe that on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, after 5:30 p.m., there will be votes in the House of Commons on bills that your government will table. And so I do not believe it will be easy for the committee to sit while votes are being held in the House of Commons, because we cannot do so.

Moreover, I am convinced, because you are a professional, that before hearing from the witnesses you will read the excellent information on them that will be sent to us by the Library of Parliament. If you are sitting here 40 hours a week, when will you read the research documents, when will you do the debriefing on the witnesses that you have heard, and when will you prepare your amendments?

I am sorry, but I find it hard to accept being told that we are lazy because we do not want to spend more time sitting on this committee. I wanted to share that with you most respectfully.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Poilievre would like to say a few words.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** I'll just say one quick thing, and that is that if members cannot be here, that should not be a reason for our modifying our schedule or our timetable. They should find replacements. If I cannot be here, I promise to find a replacement. I will never ask the committee not to sit because I cannot attend a meeting. But at this point, I think we've heard both sides of the argument. I gather that most people have made up their mind about how they're going to vote on my amendment and probably on Mr. Sauvageau's amendment, so my suggestion, respectfully, is that we go to the question.

(Amendment negated)

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Okay, Madam Clerk, we still have to ask the question of what we're going to do tomorrow.

Do you have another motion, Monsieur Poilievre?

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** Yes, I have a motion. Now that we have set out some terms for the committee, we're ready to get right down to work. The minister is prepared to testify before this committee tomorrow morning, so I would suggest that we invite the minister to testify before the committee tomorrow morning at nine o'clock.

**The Chair:** Which minister?

• (1640)

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** The President of the Treasury Board, the minister responsible for the legislation, tomorrow morning at nine.

**The Chair:** Please give me a moment.

Mr. Poilievre, do you have another comment to make?

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** My motion is clear: for nine o'clock tomorrow morning, the minister has availed himself to present before this committee. I understand we have no other business planned for tomorrow morning. We do have a scheduled meeting, now that we have accepted Monsieur Sauvageau's planned schedule. At nine o'clock tomorrow, we're meeting anyway, so why not hear from the minister? We've all debated this matter in the House of Commons. We all have very well-developed opinions. Let's just get down to business and invite him.

I would suggest that we go straight to the question.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Mr. Sauvageau.

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** I agree. However, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that someday you would want to have a list of witnesses. I would like you to tell us when that might be.

[English]

**The Chair:** You're back on, Mr. Poilievre.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** I would like to suggest that all committee members bring in their lists of proposed witnesses tomorrow. I think the chair should accept these lists tomorrow. That gives us an evening to prepare all our lists. For our part, our list of witnesses is ready now. If the other committee members want to prepare their list, they will have an opportunity to do so this evening, and we could begin tomorrow. I think the lists will be long and that we will be hearing from many witnesses.

[English]

**The Chair:** We are, I expect.

Mr. Sauvageau, before I recognize you, I just want to be clear.

Eventually, all the caucuses, or at least most of the caucuses, if not all, are going to submit lists to the chair, and I need some guidance as to where we go from there. So I get four pieces of paper, then what do I do? That's just something for you to think about.

Mr. Sauvageau, go ahead, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Here again, you can see how cooperative we are. I agree with Mr. Poilievre's proposal to submit the lists tomorrow. However, we would like to be able to add to the list between tomorrow and Tuesday or Wednesday of next week. Then we would set a deadline. Our intention is not to add witnesses to the list just for the fun of doing so. We do not want to set deadlines either. For example, we could submit a preliminary list tomorrow and a more complete list next week.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** I disagree. We should give the chair a list so that he can draw up a full work plan for our committee, rather than getting endless lists from members.

My motion is that we invite the President of Treasury Board. I would like to know whether committee members support the motion.

[English]

**The Chair:** We're going to deal strictly with the Treasury Board.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** It appears to be unanimous.

Now I want to talk about what we do next.

Monsieur Sauvageau.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I should have been on that list.

**The Chair:** Well, you're not, Mr. Martin, but you're going to be afterwards.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I don't know how you get recognized on the list.

**The Chair:** And I keep leaving Mrs. Jennings off the list, but she hasn't looked at me for a while.

Let's not fight, people. I'd like to keep this moving.

Mr. Sauvageau.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I have a difficult time getting recognized.

**The Chair:** All right, Mr. Martin, go for it.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Using any conventional manners, you don't get recognized.

•(1645)

**The Chair:** Absolutely, Mr. Martin. You go right ahead.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I was simply going to say that given the sheer magnitude of the document we're going to be dealing with, it wouldn't be unusual to have a couple of days with the technical advisers. Usually when we have the minister, it's a formal presentation; it will be a chance to have an informal exchange about the broad strokes of the legislation. But it's also not unusual to

have two or three or four meetings with the technical adviser, so that we all understand all of the complexities of the bill. Then we can start hearing witnesses once we have achieved the same basic level of knowledge and are on an equal footing, because my colleagues on the other side, the parliamentary secretaries, have been steeped in this for months, but this is relatively new to us. I have a lot of technical....

So I don't think we need to have the total witness list early, because there are at least two or three days' worth of work with technical advisers as our witnesses.

**The Chair:** The reason I raised that was, what happens after the minister comes? That's all I'm asking; we have to know what happens next.

Ms. Jennings, and then Mr. Sauvageau.

[Translation]

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** I am pleased at the suggestion that the President of Treasury Board appear before the committee. In addition, I think it is quite reasonable to ask committee members to submit a preliminary list. I think next Tuesday at 5 p.m. is a reasonable deadline.

Of course, once we begin meeting more often, one of the parties or one of the members may want to hear from other witnesses. It is normal practice to be able to add names to the list. It would be more up to the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure to meet soon to start planning the meeting schedule.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Martin, before we get into this, I just wanted it to be clear what you mean when you say technical people. Do you mean people from the ministry? What do you mean by that? Who are technical people?

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Ministers' advisers...I don't know, but the senior people who drafted the bill.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Mr. Sauvageau.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Mr. Chairman, Ms. Jennings has read my mind.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Poilievre.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** I'll quickly say that the department has indicated they will be glad to make themselves available for any technical briefings that are necessary. I don't believe we need to use committee time for those briefings. The department is extremely flexible. They will meet you on your terms in your office, in the opposition lobby, or anywhere you need to meet them, basically at any time within reasonable business hours, to ensure that you're fully briefed on all the technical matters of this bill in the same way that all of us have been briefed.

I don't believe we need to spend three days of witness time on technical briefings that members can gather for themselves. We should be listening to the briefings, and we should be listening to the witnesses who are giving substantive testimony.

I should note that before any clauses are voted on in this bill, we'll go through clause-by-clause and there will be a technical briefing on every single clause. There's no clause that will go by, be passed, or be defeated without a detailed technical briefing on that particular clause.

**The Chair:** Okay. I want to be clear. The minister is coming tomorrow morning. Unless the committee is going to use the entire time for the minister, I'm throwing out a suggestion to carry on with what Mr. Martin was talking about, to use his words, to use that time for technical people. Even if you wanted to have somebody after Minister Baird, there's not enough time.

**Mr. James Moore:** Is it two hours tomorrow?

**The Chair:** It's three hours tomorrow.

**Mr. James Moore:** If that's acceptable to the committee, then the parliamentary secretary to the minister will make the recommendation that they come tomorrow, and the members of the committee can be prepared for any questions. Is that fair?

**The Chair:** I'm only trying to commit the first day, Mr. Martin. Lists are flying around.

Mr. Tonks.

• (1650)

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** I'll bow to Mr. Martin, because where we're coming from is to get going tomorrow. I think Mr. Martin might have some suggestions vis-à-vis the kind of background that would help us to get started.

**The Chair:** Yes.

Mr. Martin, do you have anything else to add?

I don't know where we are on motions, but I think the suggestion is for Minister Baird to come and bring some technical people with him for questions. I don't want to read into what people are saying, but that's the way I interpret this.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I don't disagree.

The minister usually comes with some technical people. It's not always a technical question. It's more about questions on why they chose this initiative, and why now.

I also want to comment on the kind of tone that's already starting in this committee. We have the parliamentary secretary telling us how things will unfold and telling us that we will get all the technical briefings on every clause-by-clause as we need them.

I'm not here to take direction from another member of this committee. You are equal to me on this committee. You are not the parliamentary secretary and a representative of the government on this committee. As soon as you walk through that door, you are only another committee member. You won't tell us what we're going to do at any point in this process, in my opinion.

The tone is already starting to deteriorate.

**The Chair:** You've made your point, Mr. Martin.

Mr. Tonks.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that the sooner we get past tomorrow, the better.

I thought Mr. Martin's point was well taken in terms of technical background, and we've covered that.

If we could set a deadline for next Tuesday, the subcommittee could then meet with you as soon as possible, reflect on the kinds of suggestions that are coming forward, and then state the agenda for the next three or four months, or whatever.

I think you'll find once the subcommittee gets going that there'll be a fair degree of consensus on how to go and report that back to committee, and we're well on our way. I'd like to see us get on with it as soon as possible in that manner.

**The Chair:** Mr. Poilievre, and then Ms. Jennings.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** The purpose of my remarks was to avail the committee membership of all of the benefits of the ministry. I'm sorry if Mr. Martin took offence at that offer. If he does take offence at it, he doesn't have to accept the offer. Because I am communicating with the ministry, that is my job.

Is the committee asking me to bring some technical briefings tomorrow? Is there a motion for that, or are we only having a polite conversation? I'm only trying to get a sense of what the committee is asking of the government.

**The Chair:** Okay. This is actually your motion, and as I understand it.... Haven't we voted on that?

**The Clerk:** Yes. We agreed that the minister will come, and now we're talking about—

**The Chair:** So the only issue is the technical people. Do we even need a motion for that? I mean, you're going to bring them. Do we need a motion?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Chair:** No, we don't need a motion.

Ms. Jennings, and then Madame Guay.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** I'll cede my speaking turn to Madame Guay.

**The Chair:** Madame Guay.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Mr. Chairman, when we have requests to make, we should be speaking to you. Your clerk is there to help and advise you. She will tell you whether or not these requests are feasible. If we want specialists to appear tomorrow, we should be making that request of you. You, not the committee members, will be making the decision. It is up to Pat to ask you exactly what he wants.

I've never seen such a situation in a committee. We must respect you and always speak through you. We are not supposed to be speaking directly to each other. I would like us to behave with some respect, otherwise things will be chaotic.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Oh yes, indeed.

The chair takes the position that I am here at the will of the committee, and when the committee agrees on something, that's what we'll do.

The way I've interpreted it, what is going to happen tomorrow is that Minister Baird is going to appear with some—to use Mr. Martin's words—“technical people”, or people who have worked on the bill. He will make a presentation and questions will be asked. That's my interpretation.

In answer to you, I believe that it's doable. As far as next week is concerned, Mr. Tonks has made a suggestion, and unless someone speaks to the contrary, I will call a subcommittee meeting perhaps Monday afternoon—we can talk about that—and we'll try to arrange for subsequent meetings. By that time, hopefully, we'll have some lists.

That's my understanding, unless someone wants to correct me.

• (1655)

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** We have some other meetings scheduled for the rest of this week. In the interim period, if all the witnesses are going to be submitted by the subcommittee, how are we going to get witnesses here for later in the week?

**The Chair:** Tomorrow is Thursday. We have one time tomorrow. Right?

You've got to help me, folks.

Mr. Martin.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I'll just ask, then, what is the formal deadline for your list for witnesses? I know you would like to have a preliminary list very soon, but what can we say—

**The Chair:** I don't know. I mean, whatever you people tell me to do. My job is to keep it moving, and we can't have blank days, so I trust that....

I don't see how I could have a steering committee meeting until Monday afternoon, and to do that I will need some names if we're going to set something up for Tuesday. So whether it's an interim list or a permanent list, I need some names for the clerk to contact people and arrange—

**The Clerk:** First we need to just get the list together.

**The Chair:** Yes.

Any other questions or comments?

Mr. Sauvageau, and then Mr. Lukiwski.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau:** Mr. Chairman, one does not have to be a clairvoyant to predict that some witnesses will appear on the lists put forward by all the parties. We need only look at who will be most affected by Bill C-2. That will help everyone draw up a preliminary list of witnesses. It is not necessary to give the names. The clerk can help you. Subsequently, we will be able to submit a more complete witness list. I think we can already guess at at least 10 of these witnesses.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I'm going to look at some names Monday afternoon with the subcommittee, and we'll see where it goes.

Mr. Lukiwski.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** I have two quick points.

To underscore what Benoit was saying, if you wish, you can see our list right now, because I know there will be duplication. I think we're all going to say that the minister has to be here, and the information commissioner, etc. So you can certainly take a look at the list of names we've compiled so far. That might assist you to say, well...our list will be shorter.

The second point I want to make is in support of what you were saying, Mr. Chair. I'm confused about what we're going to do when we meet on Tuesday, if the lists are only going to be submitted on Tuesday at 5 p.m. But if you're meeting with the subcommittee on Monday, would that give you enough time to develop an agenda for Tuesday? I suppose the challenge of the chair and the subcommittee is to make sure we have some witnesses, or some work we can actually do on Tuesday.

**The Chair:** Mr. Sauvageau....

I'm clear. Is everybody else clear?

I have one more question. We're meeting in this room tomorrow. Is it the will of the committee that this meeting be televised?

I hear no nays. Does anybody else have anything to say?

The meeting is adjourned until tomorrow morning at nine o'clock in this room.





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