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● (1535)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC)): I call to order the 15th meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. The orders of the day are to debate some motions.

Concerning the motion put by Maka Kotto and the two motions put forward by Charlie Angus, I'm wondering if they might be better answered at our October 18 meeting when the minister is here. We're going to have the minister here on October 18, and we're going to have the officials here on October 23. The minister could be questioned directly.

Mr. Kotto.

[Translation]

Mr. Maka Kotto (Saint-Lambert, BQ): Mr. Chairman, I have voluntarily and in a spirit of openness accepted that the debate on this motion be postponed to today's sitting. There is some urgency in this matter. Perhaps time is not an important factor for some, but for the people who are now feeling the impact of these cuts—I am thinking particularly of museums in Quebec—time is very important. It is urgent that we, as members of this committee who are supposed to be defending culture and not cuts, give a clear and definite expression to the position that we are about to take.

I believe that this is an urgent debate and that time is of the essence in dealing with this issue. If the minister comes on October 18, it will be an advantage allowing us to go further into this issue. However, she will have, before her appearance, been apprised of the committee's position concerning this file.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): I understand we're discussing Mr. Kotto's motion.

The Chair: Yes. I am wondering if these motions could be looked at when the minister is here and with the committee. That was Mr. Kotto's response to that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I would say certainly not. I think we've wasted enough time in this committee. This is really a simple, straightforward vote. Do we think that cutting funding to the museums is a good idea or a bad idea?

I don't think there should be much discussion about when we have that vote. I think we should just vote and be on the record. We don't have to spend a lot of time on this. Let's just vote now.

The Chair: Mr. Bélanger.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): I have a question about the order in which we will deal with these motions. On Mr. Kotto's motion, which I do support, we should dispose of it now and not wait until the 18th, or whenever. It is somewhat in opposition to the motions by Mr. Angus, in the sense that Mr. Angus calls for witnesses to the committee, whereas Mr. Kotto's motion calls for a conclusion.

So I want some clarification on the order in which they would be dealt with. I'm quite satisfied, if you're dealing with Mr. Kotto's motion, to deal with it immediately, and I would be prepared to vote immediately on that as well. Perhaps after that we can deal with Mr. Angus' motions.

The Chair: Okay, is there anything else?

If that's the case, we'll deal with Mr. Kotto's motion. The motion is:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage recommend that the government maintain the Museums Assistance Program (MAP) at the same level as in fiscal year 2005-2006, that a new museum policy be established, and that the Chair report the adoption of this motion to the House as soon as possible.

(Motion agreed to)

● (1540)

The Chair: We will move to motion number one, put forward by Mr. Angus:

That the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage request officials from Heritage Canada to come before the committee in order to explain where cuts in the department will be made.

That is your motion, Mr. Angus. Would you like to speak on your motion?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes. It is fairly straightforward. We have a sense of what's happening with the museums assistance program, but overall, there is a little bit of vagueness on where some of the cuts may be coming in the department. It would be a chance for us to find out what exactly is planned, because we will need to have a sense of that, especially with estimates and other things.

Motion one is fairly straightforward. It's not tied to motion two because motion two is speaking to the impacts of the cuts we've identified. Motion one is about what other cuts we are looking at within the department.

The Chair: Is there any question?

Mr. Bélanger.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: This is through you, Mr. Chair, directed to Mr. Angus. Would he consider the appearance of the minister here on the 18th to respond to our questions about estimates as satisfactory for responding to motion one, were it adopted?

Mr. Charlie Angus: I don't think so, because it seems that when the minister comes she is in and out quickly and we have two or three minutes—five minutes maximum—to speak to her. There are a number of issues with estimates that we have to address.

I would like to find out, in terms of the cuts that were announced last week, what impacts those are having, and I'd like to talk to department officials. I still have a number of questions to speak to the minister about, so I would prefer to have those as two separate—

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I have a supplementary, then. If we look at the proposed schedule we have before us, we have officials on the 18th, which would be the Wednesday we're back, and on the 23rd, the following Monday. Would that pair of meetings with the minister and officials be deemed to meet the requirement of this motion?

The Chair: Does anyone else wish to speak on that?

That's what I was kind of alluding to. Between the minister and the ministry officials who will be here.... They're already booked to come the Wednesday after break and then the Monday following that. Would that not be the time? We can't get the officials here any sooner than that, because at our next meeting, we have museum people coming in from the Canadian Railroad Historical Association.

Mr. Charlie Angus: It helps if we have those two days. I want to make sure we are getting those officials in, and that's why the motion was put forward. That is satisfactory to me.

The Chair: Would you withdraw the motion then, Mr. Angus?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Mr. Chairman, there may be no need to withdraw the motion if it's understood, as we cast our votes, that part and parcel of the response to the motion is indeed the appearance of the minister on the 18th and of the officials on the 23rd. Then I would be glad to vote for it in that context.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I would prefer that to withdrawing the motion, so that we are then committed.

The Chair: Do we need an amendment to that?

Mr. Charlie Angus: No, we just need to vote on it.

The Chair: Okay, we just need to vote on it. The minister and the ministry people are already confirmed for those meetings. I will then entertain a vote on motion one:

That the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage request officials from Heritage Canada to come before the committee in order to explain where cuts in the department will be made.

That is already booked in for those meetings.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1545)

The Chair: We will move to motion two, again from Mr. Angus:

That the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage request officials from the Canadian Museums Association and the Heritage Canada Foundation come before the committee in order to speak to the impacts of the cuts on their ability to deliver their services.

Would you like to speak on that motion?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Well, yes. I think for many of the museums from across Canada I've spoken to in the past week, there was a great deal of shock and surprise. There was an expectation that the museums assistance program would not only be kept at the present level, but there were indications it might be increased, because we've talked about the years of underfunding. Without that steady funding in place, major questions are being asked within the museum community, and I think it's incumbent upon us as the heritage committee to have a session set aside to talk about what those cuts will mean on the ground so we're better informed.

The Chair: Would anyone else like to speak on the motion?

Mr. Kotto first.

[Translation]

Mr. Maka Kotto: I will support this motion because, as I was saying earlier, these organizations are presently suffering the impact of these cuts. However, if you allow me, I will introduce an amendment to this motion. We will also have eventually to invite a museum association from Quebec in this framework. The amendment is to add to the list the Société des musées québécois.

[English]

The Chair: Okay, there has been an amendment to the motion, put forward by Mr. Kotto, that the association of Quebec museums be added to the list, to make three associations that would come here.

Are there any others?

Mr. Bélanger.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Mr. Chairman, it's a very minor thing, which I suspect might even be considered a friendly amendment.

Given that the relationship between our parliamentarians and the government officials is one and that the relationship between parliamentarians and non-government groups is another, might I suggest that instead of requesting, we invite officials from the Canadian Museums Association and the others?

I'm suggesting that we replace "request" with "invite". I think it's more in keeping with the nature of the relationship we have with non-government agencies and officials.

The Chair: Is that friendly amendment okay, Mr. Angus?

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm sure they'd be thrilled. If we said we'd ask them to come in bouncing on their heads to talk with us, they would come. So it doesn't really matter to me.

The Chair: Mr. Warkentin.

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC): I'm wondering if I could add another friendly amendment, that we might be able to invite Museums Alberta to the table as well for that particular meeting.

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Well, if we're looking at two meetings, definitely, but if we're having one meeting, I think there is a reason to have the Quebec museums association, because there are specific issues. The Canadian Museums Association does represent Alberta museums.

If we want to have two or three sessions with museums, we can have them come, but I think at this point, if we're only going to have two hours, it should be the Canadian Museums Associations and the Quebec group, because then we'd have full representation.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: The Canadian Museums Association doesn't represent Quebec museums—is that right? You're voting down Alberta?

The Chair: No, the way I understand it, if we're going to have two meetings....

Mr. Kotto.

[Translation]

Mr. Maka Kotto: Mr. Chairman, certainly, if you are putting everything on the same level, we are all aiming straight for a debate on cultural duality. I do not believe that we are going to engage in this debate here and now. The specificity of Quebec dictates that we should consider this asymmetry. As far as representativeness is concerned, the Canadian Museum Association is a strong representative of what is happening elsewhere. Certainly both associations often work together. However, Quebec's specific issues are peculiar to Quebec. That is the reason why I insisted on adding the Société des musées québécois. I did not intend to challenge Western Canada, it had nothing to do with this. In any case, whether they appear before us or not, the end result will be the same because conclusions will be the same. We would still like to have them come and express personally their concerns about the cuts that the government has just made.

• (1550)

[English]

The Chair: Do we want to have two sessions? My first concern is that that doesn't go with the motion. I would think that probably there might be other associations that would like to come too. It's just a suggestion from the chair. If we want to make this into a full debate, then we could end up with more people.

Mr. Angus, you had your hand up first, and then we'll have Mr. Bélanger.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I have been speaking with museum associations from across Canada. I think they'd be very pleased if we had the Canadian Museums Association here. I certainly do not want to use this forum as a bitter-batter to say we're voting down Alberta. I really resent that. I don't want that on the record. I think that if we have one session in which we hear from the museums association, that would allow us to get a general picture. Otherwise, if we are following Mr. Warkentin's suggestion, we'll have to have 10 groups speaking individually, plus others, and that's going to deflect us from our other work. I think we are spending a lot of time spinning our tires around this table. I think it's a fairly straightforward motion, and we should just vote on it.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Bélanger, go ahead, please.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I have absolutely no objections to inviting the museums in Alberta as well. You may recall that in June we had, around the table here, probably seven or eight representatives from a number of provinces, and we managed to have a very good meeting in that two-hour period. I think we could have a meeting of similar quality. I'm sure that whoever is invited to discuss the topic would coordinate their presentation and make sure it flowed and that they didn't contradict each other. So I have no problems whatsoever supporting Mr. Warkentin's amendments, because I think museums in Alberta are as worthwhile as museums in Quebec and as those in Ontario and in every province and territory in this country.

The Chair: Okay. Our first bit of business here is to deal with the amendment. There was a friendly amendment, and now we have an amendment put forward by Mr. Warkentin, which reads as follows:

That The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage invite officials from the Canadian Museums Association, the Heritage Canada Foundation and the Société des musées québécois and the Museum of Alberta to come before the committee in order to speak to the impacts of the cuts on their ability to deliver their services.

(Amendment agreed to)

• (1555)

The Chair: So now we have to vote on the amended motion:

That the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage invite officials from the Canadian Museums Association, the Société des musées québécois, the Heritage Canada Foundation and the Museum of Alberta to come before the committee in order to speak on the impacts of the cuts on their ability to deliver their services.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: Now we move to the next motion. This is a motion put forward by Mr. Bélanger:

That pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage recommend that the government continue funding the Court Challenges Program at the fiscal 2005-2006 level and that the Chair report the adoption of this motion to the House forthwith.

Mr. Bélanger, would you like to speak on it?

[Translation]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This motion is quite straightforward. Since the Court Challenges Program of Canada received its funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, this motion is tabled in this committee and not others. Other committees, such as the Standing Committee on Justice and Human rights and the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, are quite concerned by the announcement of these cuts and the elimination of this program. Since this program is funded under our department's estimates, the motion is being tabled in this committee. It is quite clear and we may not need to debate it. The positions on both sides are probably quite clear as well on this issue. If you wish to have a debate, we can certainly oblige. I offer my colleagues to avoid such a debate if they see fit. It is up to them to decide.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Not to debate, but I want to add a friendly amendment to this, that after we go from fiscal year 2005-06:

that the Chair report the adoption of the motion of this House forthwith and that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage call for witnesses to hear from organizations that have utilized the Court Challenges Program.

In the past week I have learned a lot more about this program. I knew very little about it, but I've been talking to a number of the groups that have used this in very key areas where this has played a major difference for the betterment of this country, I believe. Again, it would be incumbent upon us, as the committee that deals with heritage issues, to learn more about what this program does—or did.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: It's not a friendly amendment, Mr. Chairman. It's not that I'm opposed to what Mr. Angus is trying to achieve, but it is something that a number of committees may actually wish to do, depending on the outcome of this motion. Should this indeed not be carried, I'm sure there would be considerable attempts throughout the entire standing committee structure to invite witnesses to speak to this. We may even want to do that even if we adopt this motion.

I've been following this particular program since its inception, since its first cancellation by a previous Conservative government, and since its reinstatement by the previous government. It is a program that is of immense use to a number of communities in our country, not just in regard to the official languages and status of women, because those are the two principal ones we'll find in this particular department that we're concerned with, but it'll also be applicable to people in HRSDC, certainly in Indian Affairs, Veterans Affairs, Justice, and so forth. If we're going to have to engage in hearing witnesses in order to approve this, fine, but I don't think we need to.

That's why I'm not making it a friendly amendment, Mr. Angus.

The Chair: Does anyone else like to speak on the motion?

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm not clear, is he voting against the idea of having witnesses, or is he saying it's because we would need to have witnesses in order to make this motion pass?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: That's what I don't want to happen.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I think we could vote, and it's going to be pretty clear one way or another.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Let's make it separate motions then.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Okay, we'll make it separate motions.

The Chair: If you're going to make a separate motion, the clerk will talk to you on that. What we'll do, I would say right now with no more debate, is we will vote on the motion. The motion is:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage recommend that the government continue funding the Court Challenges Program at the fiscal 2005-2006 level and that the Chair report the adoption of this motion to the House forthwith.

(Motion agreed to)

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I have a question, Mr. Chair.

• (1600)

The Chair: Yes, Mr. Bélanger.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Can you give the committee an indication as to whether or not we will be tabling a report on these motions tomorrow?

The Chair: I will have to check with my clerk first.

Mr. Bélanger, it is reported that I will be reporting this to the House tomorrow.

Mr. Angus has also made a motion:

That the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage invite witnesses from organizations that have utilized the Court Challenges Program.

Mr. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): That's a notice of motion, because we need 48 hours' notice for this.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Since our next item of business is future business of the committee, perhaps we can dispose of it at that time if there's insistence on the 48 hours' notice.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Abbott.

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): It seems to me that one of the reasons for the 48 hours' notice is so that members of the committee have the opportunity to ponder the implications. Without getting into debate on Mr. Angus' motion, I would like to have that time to give consideration to his motion.

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I would normally say that waiting 48 hours is perfectly fine, but we're being asked to make decisions to fill up our calendar after we finish with these motions. I'm not very comfortable making any commitments on that until I know what's going to happen with that motion. If we have to wait 48 hours, then we should wait 48 hours to make any other decision on filling up our calendar leading up to the November break.

The Chair: Mr. Abbott.

Mr. Jim Abbott: So be it.

The Chair: Mr. Bélanger.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I don't want to prejudge anything, but are we going to be discussing the future business of the committee in camera?

The Chair: It's the committee's decision.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: The committee made that decision, if I recall, at the start of this Parliament. No? I thought we had. We'll have to check that, because we've changed clerks in the meantime.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): I thought it was motion number 10, "that unless otherwise ordered, each committee member...". It seems like a similar motion.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Anyhow, we're going to be debating that, so if the motion requires 48 hours' notice, and that seems to be the will of the government members, let's move on and deal with future business.

The Chair: I just went to a meeting of chairs the other day and I have decided—I hope I'm not being a dictator here—the fair way is to have 48 hours' notice. It's two working days, and I suggest that. We just went through it with Mr. Bélanger. His motion came in last Friday afternoon and we put it off until today. I suggest that with Mr. Angus' motion we put it to 48 hours. That's my decision.

We'll carry on to the next part on our agenda. This will help. Everyone has in front of them a review of crown corporations for future meetings. I don't know if anyone wants to review any of those crown corporations.

• (1605)

[Translation]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: The Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commission, the CRTC, is an actor that it would be important to meet earlier rather than later. A vast number of files are presently under consideration at CRTC and it would be advisable that we synchronize as much as possible our action with that of the CRTC and that we should be able to understand what they intend to do, inasmuch as it is possible to ascertain their intentions at the present time. As well, it would be good that they be briefed about our concerns. In my view, in the list that we presently have before us, the priority should go to the CRTC.

[English]

I also want to add—and I don't know if we need to give notice anymore for this or not, but I'm sure you'll instruct me—that there are two items that are not on the list that I think we may, as a committee, want to consider taking a look at. There are some things I'm sure most of us have had communications about over the course of the summer.

One of them is the future of the Indian art collection in the Government of Canada. It resides principally with Indian Affairs, so there may be some question as to whether we should look into it or not. However, as a committee, we may indeed have such a responsibility. That's one item I imagine would need one meeting at the most, just to get a sense of the difficulties and the challenges the collection faces. That's number one.

The other one I'd like to mention—well, there's a slew of others—seems to be a perennial one, and that's the Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund. It seems always to be on its last legs, always scrambling, when it has done tremendous work for our country.

So those are two that I would add. If you want me to do so in writing, I'd be delighted to do so, Mr. Chairman, but those are items on which I think the committee would benefit from hearing something. I also suspect the people we hear from would also benefit from our actions.

The Chair: We've heard those. They're noted, and we can look into them.

My thing is that there have been a couple of requests. I don't know if everyone recently received the response to the report on the feature film industry. That's something I think we could look into somewhere down the line.

I've had a request from a group that would like to make a presentation regarding pirating of movies and those types of things,

which Canada almost seems to be the hotbed for. Again, if we looked at the report and we heard from these people, we'd see it's a crime. It may be in the wrong department, whether it's with Heritage or whether it's with Industry. Maybe it should be with Justice.

There's no way of being able to get at some of these people. Camcording has become a big problem here in Canada. But in our movie theatres, whether the person finds the person who is doing the camcording, there's no justice to be able to take them on. So that's a suggestion that could go along with a review of that report. It's just a suggestion that I have.

The other request to appear is from Mr. Manera. I understand that he's the former chair of the CBC, am I correct? Again, he would be appearing as a private citizen. Maybe we could put him on with something regarding the CBC mandate or something like that, I don't know.

Those requests have been made, sir.

Mr. Bélanger.

• (1610)

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to comment carefully here. If we're going to start accommodating requests, then I would want to make sure that's done in the context of where we've set the schedule of the items we wish to deal with. If the government were indeed responding to the House of Commons' unanimous vote that the terms of reference of a mandate would come first to this committee as the group mandated to review the mandate of CBC—Radio Canada, then in that context it would be absolutely *primordial* to invite the gentlemen, to accept his request, along with a slew of others. But since we have a few other things on our plate, is it the right thing to do without that government initiative?

It's the same thing for the request about piracy. My colleague Madame Keeper suggests that if we're going to do that, perhaps it should be in the larger context of the whole film industry, a whole look at it again, because periodically it's something that this committee has done and should continue doing. It's in that sense that I hesitate to accept, in the immediacy, the request to appear before us that you've just mentioned. I'm not refusing it, but it should be in the context of where we are driving the agenda.

The Chair: I have one question again. I know a few of us at this table worked on that report for the feature film industry. Our report went in and we asked for comments. The government has sent those back. Do we just forget about the study we just did last year and set it on the shelf? That was my suggestion, that a couple of those things might be able to work with that. Are we going to do another total review? I don't think so, not right now. If it had been done five years ago, that would be different. Again, though, some of these issues were very prominent in some of the talks that we had as we went around.

Are there any other suggestions?

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I still see the need for a follow-up to our film study. As you recall, it was a scramble to get that out because the election was coming, and we really never even had an opportunity, as a committee, to sit down and talk about it. It was like the ink wasn't dry and we were all gone.

In deference to all the work that was done, it would be good to have one or two meetings at which we could look at those recommendations so that we are all up to speed on them as a committee. I don't think we need to go any further than that.

The issue of piracy was raised, and we dealt with that in the film study. It's still an ongoing problem, but it seems to me that when we start hearings on copyright, piracy is one element that will no doubt be part of a bill. I don't know, but I would imagine piracy is an issue that would be looked at, so we could maybe deal with those issues then.

In terms of suggestions, I raised this one suggestion last term, but we again spent so much time on film that we weren't able to deal with it.

[Translation]

As far as Franco-Ontarian organizations are concerned, particularly those who are working with remote rural communities, it is necessary to deal with their concerns. I have met with several organizations from the North.

[English]

These organizations receive their support from Heritage, and what I'm hearing from them is that it's not so much a lack of funds—because everybody, of course, wants more funds—as it is how the funds are allocated for francophones outside of Quebec. I thought it would be a good opportunity for us to actually meet with some of these groups, because they're doing the work on the ground. A session or so would be sufficient, and it would again be a chance for us to learn from some of the groups that are dealing with Heritage, because they're doing a lot of very strong grassroots work. So I'd like to find a session at which we could accommodate them, sometime between now and the spring.

• (1615)

The Chair: Mr. Bélanger.

[Translation]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Mr. Chairman, I have no objection to Mr. Angus' suggestion. However, for your information, yesterday or the day before, I replaced a colleague at the Standing Committee on Official Languages. This committee is about to travel all around the country; they have been attempting to do so for ten years, but they always met with filibustering from the opposition.

If the Standing Committee on Official Languages indeed succeeds in undertaking this tour around the country, the purpose of the trip is to meet with all communities. We could benefit from their undertaking by determining where are the problems in the Department of Canadian Heritage, because there are some, as Mr. Angus was saying.

Here is what I have in mind. If we do want to meet with communities later on, it might perhaps be useful for us to make suggestions—or even requests—to the Standing Committee on

Official Languages. We might request from them that during their trip around the country, they ask questions specifically on bureaucratic red tape.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: That's a good idea, but what I'm hearing from these groups is that they're always being told to go to official languages, yet they deal with their funding from Heritage. It's just a pragmatic issue that this is where they're getting their dollars, and they just want to inform this committee.

Also, I'd had a commitment from the minister to meet with the organization. She said at a public committee that she'd meet, but she has been busy and it hasn't happened. So if we're always just putting it in the box of official languages, these issues still aren't being addressed because official languages isn't dealing with the programs the way we are. I don't think we'd be circumventing the work of official languages if they are doing a project. What I'm looking for is a session, although it might be two, because I'm sure the Acadians would want to be involved as well.

The Chair: Mr. Kotto.

[Translation]

Mr. Maka Kotto: Mr. Chairman, before dealing with another matter, I would like to come back to the proposal put forward by my colleague Mr. Bélanger.

He suggested earlier to invite the CRTC. We had made up at the beginning a list of Crown corporations, but the CRTC is not a Crown corporation. I wanted to clarify that.

However, I support this request because it is a very hot topic. I will also support other proposals, given the response given by the minister concerning the film industry policy, because new developments came up last summer, especially in Quebec, which resulted in us giving even more careful consideration to this topic. Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: If everyone takes a look at the schedule they have in front of them, until October 25, those are confirmed.

There is October 30. Our staff has put in a copyright briefing on new technology, but it's a question mark. If there is something else someone would like to put in that spot, that's fine. If we still want to look at copyright, we can get our witnesses here for that particular meeting.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I am definitely keen on copyright technologies. My concern is that there's going to be a big gap, because we don't know when the legislation is coming in. If we're having legislation this fall, I think it would be very pertinent to have the meeting now. If it's not coming until the spring, I feel this is going to be left out on its own. I'd prefer to bunch this up closer to when we know the legislation is coming in.

An hon. member: Hear, hear!

• (1620)

The Chair: Is it agreed around the table that on October 30 we don't have the copyright session?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Unless we have information about the legislation. Let's wait until the legislation is tabled in the House. Then, between the tabling in the House...I'm sure we could set a—

The Chair: We can always move things around, but our experts here need to know where we're going so they can have their research done for us. They can't do it overnight.

One thing we could do on October 30, then, as Mr. Bélanger has requested, is have the CRTC come here. We could ask some questions or get some clarification on some things. It seems there's interest around the table.

What would be your pleasure? Do we have agreement around the table that we have the CRTC here on October 30?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Now we get into November.

Again going back to Mr. Bélanger, we have the future of the Indian art collection.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: That would be great.

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: We talked about bringing museum witnesses, so I certainly want to make sure that's happening before we allow too much time to be allocated.

The Chair: Would that be Wednesday, November 1?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: And the art collection the following week.

The Chair: Then on November 6, the next Monday...?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I can share the correspondence I received. Most of you might have received it too. I'll send the correspondence to our research staff so they can follow it up.

The Chair: Is that on the Indian art museum?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Yes.

The Chair: Okay, then we'll do that on November 6.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm not against it; I don't know anything about it. But again, we have an outstanding motion about the court challenges program, which is a major issue right now. I would prefer holding off on those two dates until we know whether or not we have consensus at this table that we want to be hearing from the court challenges people soon.

The Chair: On both of those? Well, why don't we leave November 6 open? We'll leave November 1 for the museum witnesses. Again, because of some of the pending motions here and how we're going, maybe what we should do....

Does that help our research staff? Does that get you far enough ahead right now, that we could have...?

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Well, we haven't come to the native art collection, have we?

The Chair: No, we've just postponed it. We could have it on November 8.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Let's block it in, because we know we want to listen to them.

The Chair: Mr. Angus, would you suggest we have the Indian art collection on November 8? Would that be okay? We'd leave November 6 open.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Well, as long as the date's left open. That's my only concern.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Angus had the suggestion about the francophones who don't live in Quebec, the funding that they...we should put that one in someplace. Because that will take some time, to get some people in from different areas.

The Chair: Okay, so on November 8 we do the Indian art.

Would we go to your francophone groups outside of Quebec?

• (1625)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes, I agree it would take us some time, so we could do that after the break. That would probably give them enough time to get prepared.

The Chair: November 20? Then on November 22 we could look at the response from the government on the feature film industry.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Either that or the video...because they were in dire straits; they have been for so long now. It would be good to look at that and see if we could give them a bit of a breather.

The Chair: Okay, that's the Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: And at some point in this, necessity being the mother of invention, it probably kills two....

The Chair: Let's put that in then for November 22. It might even relate back to something that came out of copyright or out of the feature films, because I don't think we stayed directly on film through that particular thing. I think there's some....

Yes, Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: If we're going to look at film, there are some areas, I think, that jump out from there as unfinished business; for example, Telefilm. We spent a fair amount of time just getting up to speed on Telefilm last session. Following our film review, it would probably be worthwhile, just to get everybody back up to speed, to have Telefilm here, because it is a major player in cultural programs. It would help our new members.

As well, I would suggest following that with the Canadian Television Fund, which again is a big player. We really need to be up to speed as a committee on what happens with these organizations, how the funds are allocated and who they serve.

The Chair: Just as a suggestion, could we even split a meeting with the Canadian video people and the feature films?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I suspect that would be a disservice to both, Mr. Chairman.

I'm feeling a little awkward here. You've been fairly adroit at setting up the following meetings, Mr. Chairman, and although I can't speak for everybody on this side, as far as I'm concerned I have a great deal of confidence in your capacity to get an agenda with some logic in it and move us forward.

You've heard all of our wishes, and if we consult with members on a periodic basis in terms of other things as they come up, I'm sure we'll go forward quite capably. I'm trusting your ability to make sure we do productive work.

The Chair: Thank you.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Is there any other business?

Mr. Kotto.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maka Kotto: Mr. Chairman, I come back to the issue of Telefilm Canada. Correct me if I am wrong, but Telefilm Canada still does not have a board of directors that is working in accordance with the rules, given that some of the directors were prevented from taking part by Bill C-18. Decisions that have been made by Telefilm Canada since March 2005, if my memory serves me right, have not been made by the whole board of directors. This situation is dragging on. In a spirit of emergency, I would like to have them appear before our committee to examine how they are working, how they are doing and how their decisions are made, all the more so that they have made a quite important decision in giving someone or some group the mandate to advise them in the matter of the

production of a feature film, ideally. I would like to know the ins and outs of all these dealings by a board of directors that is not supposed to be operational.

[*English*]

The Chair: It has been noted: Telefilm Canada. I think what we'll try to do is work that into the agenda.

Mr. Angus.

● (1630)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Not to belabour this, I think we've made our suggestions and you can come up with how this piece of pie is going to look.

To reiterate, I think it's important that we do the film review first, so we're set up. But I would prefer that Telefilm and the Canadian Television Fund each have their own days, because as Mr. Kotto pointed out, there are major issues with them. I wouldn't want to bunch them together.

The Chair: Okay, we'll take that under advisement.

Is there any other business?

As there is no other business, the meeting is adjourned.

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