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Chair

Mr. Kevin Sorenson

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● (1530)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC)): Welcome. It being 3:30, we will call this meeting to order.

This is the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, meeting 19. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are continuing our study on democratic development.

We're very pleased to have two guests with us today. We have George Perlin, an emeritus professor and fellow in the school of policy studies at Queen's University. His teaching and research are focused on issues of democratic development. He is also a fellow at the Institute for Research on Public Policy, where he is directing a project to assess international assistance policies for the promotion of democratic development. Among his many accomplishments and activities, he directs a project funded by CIDA to provide Ukraine with a comprehensive program of professional and post-secondary education concerning democracy and human rights.

In the first hour we're also pleased to have Dr. Jeffrey Kopstein, director of the Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at the Munk Centre for International Studies. He is a professor of political science at the University of Toronto. He has argued that there are differences between European and American approaches to democracy promotion, but that Canada can pursue a distinctive approach that is complementary to both and would strengthen the transatlantic relationship. In his view, democracy promotion should be a leading element of Canada's foreign policy, and Canada should seek to renew interest in the community of democracies created in Warsaw in 2000.

We look forward to hearing from both of you. The way the committee operates is that we give each one of our presenters ten minutes and then there will be questions from our colleagues following that.

I'll turn it over to Mr. Perlin. Welcome.

Dr. George Perlin (Emeritus Professor and Fellow, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, As an Individual): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I understand that later today you're to hear from my colleague, Mr. Axworthy, about the Democracy Canada Institute. It is a proposal that I know is important for you to consider. How one ought to deliver democracy assistance is an important question. I'd like to suggest, however, that there is a prior question that needs to be asked. We have to decide first what we're going to do—what kinds of activities Canada should undertake.

The answer to that question is not an easy one, because international assistance to democratic development is a vast and complex enterprise. If you count individual states, multilateral organizations, and private foundations, there are over a hundred separate donors delivering assistance in this field. Collective international effort embraces thousands of projects and annual expenditures in the billions of dollars.

The complexity of that environment is important for you to understand as you look at what Canadian policy may be. We have to establish our role in that context. I want to say a few things about that, but first there are a couple of things I need to clear up.

First, I want to make a distinction between short-term interventions to deal with special situations and those that involve longer-term democracy-building activities. By short-term I mean activities such as election monitoring or policing in unstable situations. These are activities where we send people in on a short-term basis to carry out specific projects, specific kinds of activities. The recipient countries are essentially acted upon. We are there to perform a task, and then we remove ourselves. This is an important kind of activity.

Longer-term interventions involve something quite different. Their essence is knowledge transfer—sharing our experience to assist a state in making the transition to democracy. Democracy-building, by its nature, is a long-term exercise, and I stress the point about knowledge transfer. That's the essence of this kind of activity. It's very different from the kind of activity we undertake when we become involved in election monitoring, for instance.

So to understand the scope of the field we also need to clarify what is meant by democratic development. This may be surprising to you, but this is quite a contentious issue in scholarly literature, and it's a contentious issue among donors. People use different terms to describe political interventions.

I want to stipulate a definition here, because I think there's a convergence among these different definitions that the donors use. This definition is one that I think reflects consensus now among the major donors. Put in a very simple kind of way, I understand democratic development to be activity that is aimed at creating systems of governance organized around the values of freedom, equality, and justice that are embedded in the liberal democratic foundations of our own system.

I stress that we are talking about an entire system of governance. I emphasize this because of these differences about what the components of democratic development may be. If you look, for instance, at CIDA's policy statement, you'll see a definition of a commitment in the area of political intervention that involves something called good governance, something called the promotion of human rights, rule of law, democratization, and civil society.

● (1535)

When I talk about a whole system, I'm making the argument that you have to see all these things as being the components of democratic development. If you define it that way, you'll see that the compass for assistance to democratic development has a very wide scope and a wide array of objectives and types of activities.

In my own research with the Institute for Research on Public Policy, and in working with colleagues who are producing papers on that series on democratic development that I'm directing for IRPP, I've identified 50 different kinds of objectives to which democracy assistance has been applied. So you can get some sense of the breadth of this approach. Given the broad scale of the collective international effort and the presence of multilaterals, individual states, and private donors, how can we in Canada be most effective in the forms of assistance we offer? That's a question I posed for my colleagues working on the series at IRPP. I framed it in terms of two questions.

The first question is whether there are particular competencies in Canada that we should emphasize and in which perhaps we should become specialists. In fact, I think there are areas where we have some special competence, but their utility is going to vary from context to context. So I don't think we should become specialists. I think we should draw on our whole experience in building and maintaining democracy.

The second question is whether there are functional areas where other donors are already doing an effective job and where interventions by Canada would, at best, have marginal effect and, at worst, would be redundant. This is a very important question, because there are some activities that have attracted a large number of donors. In answering this, I think we can best respond by dealing with situations on a case-by-case basis. I stress again my point that we need to use a whole-of-governance-system approach in defining what we're prepared to do. We need to make decisions about what we are going to do in a particular country based on a needs assessment for that country, taking account of what other donors are doing. So we'll answer that question about duplicating the efforts of others by taking that kind of approach. I wouldn't rule out us doing anything, but I think we have to see the context and understand the specific context of a particular country before we can make those decisions.

These are two general answers, and perhaps not what you'd like to hear. But having said this, I think as your committee continues its activities—and I know of some others where I hope there will be much more detailed information about specific things that are being done—you'll begin to get to some specifics on this.

I want to add that I think there are some areas where we in Canada can make some distinctive contributions. The first one is that there is a significant need for research on how to maximize the effectiveness of democracy assistance. We don't have effective tools for evaluating democracy assistance. We have tools for evaluating how we manage projects, but we don't have categories of analysis or tools for doing the research we need to deal with and to establish desired outcomes.

What I'm saying is I think we could contribute something by Canada becoming a centre for research. It would serve a vital need of consolidating knowledge on lessons learned and in trying to establish a set of best practices for the delivery of this kind of assistance. That's one area where I think Canada may have a distinctive contribution to make.

● (1540)

Another criticism of work in this field is fragmentation of effort by donors' lack of coherence in the programs taken into particular countries. We could do work in Canada to develop strategic plans for democracy assistance in the particular countries where we want to intervene. Again, I stress that in my view there's a need for a kind of whole-of-governance strategy based upon research on the peculiar circumstances of a particular country: its characteristics, where it stands in the process of democratization, where it's coming from, and what kind of experience it had before entering into the process of attempting to develop democracy.

We need strategic plans; we need strategic planning. If you look at the critical research assessing assistance to democracy, you'll see this is one of the issues that's raised. I think Canada could do something useful by doing this kind of research. And if we were to do so, if we were to start establishing these kinds of plans, I think we could deal with one of the most telling criticisms of the work in assistance to democratic development: the lack of coordination among donors, including the duplication of effort and neglect of important elements in the process of democracy-building.

The third thing I think we could do here is establish a training program for practitioners, or for people who want to make careers in this field, in the delivery of democracy assistance. I don't mean this just for Canadians; there is a need for a program of this kind on an international basis. Think about the large number of donors and practitioners. What I'm suggesting is that they need some help, some special training to do their work well.

In this respect, the one final comment I want to make is that from my observations in the field, and from what I've learned in research about what other Canadian practitioners are doing, our way of working with recipient countries has been pretty effective. I don't want to claim there's a uniquely Canadian approach, but I do think there are more or less effective ways of delivering this kind of assistance, and ours has been consistently effective. We're widely seen to be more sensitive to distinctive conditions in recipient countries, more open to local advice and engagement, and more inclusive in our relations with partners.

I think I'll stop there with my general comments.

I understand that the document I prepared on what we've been doing in the Ukraine has been circulated, so I'd be happy to answer any questions. In explanation, much of what I've had to say to you here comes not just from my examination of the literature of this field, but also from my own work in the field in the Ukraine over the past nine years.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Perlin.

Mr. Kopstein.

Professor Jeffrey Kopstein (Director, Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, University of Toronto , As an Individual): Good afternoon. I want to thank you for inviting me to appear before your committee today.

Democracy promotion is a vitally important topic, which deserves the attention of all Canadians. I say this knowing that many Canadians tend to be wary of democracy promotion. Why are they wary? It's hard to say, but I believe it is because it smacks of telling others how they should govern themselves. As well-intentioned as this reservation is, it is misplaced. Rather than casting democracy promotion aside as un-Canadian or attempting to understand it in terms of pre-existing categories of human rights or the responsibility to protect, Canadians need to think about what our distinctive approach to democracy promotion should be and what kinds of strengths we can bring to the project.

Why should democracies bother with promoting their form of government in other parts of the world? The answer is not simply that it corresponds to our highest ideals of government, but also that it serves our national interests. Democracies are more peaceful. They govern their economies better, and they make better trading partners.

It is true that for many Canadians, democracy promotion has a bad name. Many associate it with the huge setbacks in Iraq. Promoting democracy in the Arab world has not been and will not be easy. This much I think we have all learned. But the difficulties facing our fellow democracies, the United States and Great Britain, in Iraq should not be cause for abandoning the long-term project of democratizing the Arab world.

If the origins of 9/11 are truly to be found in the modernization crisis of the Arab world, in their closed and repressive societies, and above all in their dictatorial governments, then surely the failure to democratize that part of the world will only prolong and reinforce the dangers associated with radical Islam, something that justifiably frightens all Canadians.

Democracy promotion is important for another reason. We are currently living through a backlash against democracy around the world. In the past several years a new group of nations have formed what I would call a new authoritarian international. Among the major countries in this group I would include Russia, Venezuela, Iran, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Belarus, and China. What makes this group and others extraordinary is not only that they have bucked the trend toward democracy but that several have backslid from democracy into outright authoritarianism or semi-authoritarianism. Even more importantly, they have begun to cooperate with each other—for example, through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization—and, perhaps even more ominously, copy from each other legislation designed to undermine the work of foreign-financed pro-democracy NGOs and civic organizations.

If continued, this long-run trend can only make the world a more dangerous place, a place packed full of governments unconstrained by their own populations or, worse, governments prepared to view their own people in instrumental terms, as tools in some sort of struggle against imagined enemies.

What should Canada do? First, it is important to distinguish, as my colleague just did, between the short-term and long-term benefits of democracy promotion. Although there may be some quick wins, clearly this should be a policy for the long haul. The benefits will not come tomorrow or next week, but should be thought of in terms of years, perhaps decades.

Second, as far as concrete policies are concerned, it is probably helpful to briefly examine the successes and failures of the other big democracy promoters in the world: the United States and the European Union. Democracy promotion was first put on the transatlantic agenda after 1989 during and after the fall of communism in eastern Europe. The Americans considered 1989 to be a largely bottom-up phenomenon, one performed by civil society. The job of democracy promotion then was to back civic groups, hold elections, and write constitutions. By the early 1990s, most of my friends in academia and government in the U.S. considered democracy secured in eastern Europe and democracy promotion to have been a success.

Europeans, interestingly, thought about all of this differently. For them, 1989 and the fall of communism were the beginning of the story, not the end. Rather than focusing on civil society, the European Union concentrated on changing the very nature of the post-communist state. First what they said was, in effect—and I put this in quotation marks even though no one actually ever said this —"Yes, we'll let you into the European Union, but on the condition that you change all of your national legislation to make it compatible with EU laws on politics, economies, society, the environment, in short, everything." This amounted to 80,000 pages of legislation adopted by all candidate member states.

● (1545)

The EU remained suspicious of the big demonstrations that so thrilled Americans in 1989, and Canadians of course. Their idea of promoting democracy was not bottom up but rather top down, dictated by Brussels. Democracy for the EU was not consolidated in the post-communist world until May 1, 2004, the day that eight new European members joined.

In subsequent years, this was the framework that Americans and Europeans were working with. It explains the strengths and weaknesses of both approaches. Clearly, the script Americans were working with in Iraq in 2003 was eastern Europe, 1989: bring down the leader, pull down his statue, and let civil society take over. Although this has not really worked in Iraq, it was a good model for assisting in the revolutions in Serbia in 2000, Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004, and Kyrgyzstan in 2005: NGOs with foreign help bring down authoritarian regimes—end of story. Yet clearly this model is not enough, for none of these countries has been a perfect democracy and at least two have backslid, have deteriorated.

If we look at the EU top-down model, by contrast, it works beautifully for countries that have a chance to join the EU, but it is all but powerless in other parts of the world that will not be joining the EU anytime soon. The bottom line is that, to date, apart from enlargement, the EU does not have a viable democracy promotion model.

Canada should draw lessons from the strengths and weaknesses of both the EU and the U.S. approaches. We should proceed on both fronts, both in supporting civil society and NGOs on the one hand, and in using the powerful tools of intergovernmental and multilateral institutions on the other. It is important to remember that democracy promotion does not preclude contact with undemocratic regimes. But it is crucial, at the same time, to get the message right. That will be the central challenge for any Canadian government.

As it trades with and engages dictators in less-than-democratic regimes, Canada should continue to back NGOs and civic groups abroad in those same countries, especially in the Arab-Muslim world and in backsliding democracies that I've mentioned already. Canada should continue to foster contact between the citizens of our country and democracies at risk in the Balkans, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union.

In this respect, l was disappointed to learn of the recent cancellation by the current government of the young professionals international program that has allowed the University of Toronto—my institution—and other organizations to send dozens of Canadians as interns to these countries over the years, and in turn receive students from their institutions for internships in Canada. This is the kind of long-term spadework that must continue and should be part of Canada's democracy promotion tool kit.

I should also add that Canada has nothing like the Fulbright scholar program through which hundreds of leading intellectuals from authoritarian countries have managed to spend time in the United States. This is most unfortunate, because it would be so easy to implement, very cheap to run, and the long-term benefits are proven. First-hand experience with Canadian multiculturalism is not something that foreign scholars soon forget. That is our strength and we should play to it. I should also add that Canada has nothing like the National Endowment for Democracy. That would be a good idea too.

At the same time, as we continue to engage authoritarian states in bilateral and trade relations and in multilateral organizations, we should begin to think of new forums for privileging democracies internationally, in both intergovernmental and multilateral organizations, to make clear the cost to be paid for non-democratic behaviour. This is something the EU has done well with its candidate members.

How can we adopt this model for Canada? Here, if we want to think big for a moment, what I would propose is a caucus or a community of democracies, either within or outside the United Nations. Canada might potentially have great credibility in putting this forward. The UN itself is one venue for this, but it may be discredited regarding democracy promotion—we should be honest with ourselves—especially after the debacle with the Human Rights Council. An alternative, one that I and many of my colleagues have been discussing for quite some time is an attempt to breathe life into a formal organization, the Community of Democracies, which was initiated in Warsaw in the year 2000. And I'd be happy to talk more about that later.

● (1550)

Let me conclude by reiterating that democracy promotion is not something that will yield rapid results. It should be a long-term, multi-pronged policy that should mesh with the other tools of statecraft. If done correctly, I believe it will provide a valuable regulatory ideal for Canada and it will make Canada and our world a better and safer place in which to live.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kopstein and Mr. Perlin.

We'll go into our first round, which will be a five-minute round.

Mr. Patry.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[*English*]

Thank you both very much for your remarks.

My first question is for either of you. One of the obstacles of democracy promotion is the perception of the local society, which perceives it as interference in internal affairs. What is the best approach for this, and how can we maximize the benefits of our aid without being seen as interfering in domestic affairs of other countries?

My second question is for Mr. Perlin. You mention in your remarks that we don't have the tools for the evaluation of our democratic assistance. Does “we” mean Canada doesn't have the tools, or the United Nations, or all the world, all the countries? Knowing that our committee is right now doing a study of democratic development, what would you recommend as a tool for evaluation? Without evaluation, we won't know where we're going.

Thank you.

● (1555)

Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein: Your question is that if we're actually involved in democracy promotion, the project of democracy is perceived as being something foreign, as being something imposed, as a kind of imperial project. That's how I interpret your question.

The best way to proceed is, first of all, at the level of human contact, NGOs. If governments are involved in those, that's not perceived as being something foreign, right?

The Fulbright scholars program in the United States actually had a very good reputation abroad, even at the height of the Cold War. There were still Fulbright scholars coming over from the Soviet Union and eastern Europe. It was an indirect form of democracy promotion.

As far as direct forms are concerned, your question is a very important one. The government should probably not get involved directly in promoting democracy. It should probably get involved through the creation of something like a Canadian endowment for democracy, an arm's-length organization that would be.... You know the details of this kind of thing better than I, but it would be, in effect, a crown corporation that would be separate from the ministries per se.

The Chair: Mr. Perlin.

Dr. George Perlin: Rather than speaking to that issue, I'm going to speak directly to the second question.

The answer to your question is that the tools don't exist, period. It's not just a Canadian problem. If you look back at the journal articles over the past five, six, or seven years, there are two new journals that have appeared since this was done. One, published in Britain, is called *Democratization*, and many of the articles in that journal are focused on how well democratization works. There is a particular series of articles there, two articles in particular by one individual in which this question was specifically raised.

In part, it's a problem that we haven't found a way to pull together these different categories of assistance. We don't have what I'd call a holistic approach, so it's hard to find measures. That doesn't mean you can't find some framework for doing it. The argument that has been made in a couple of articles in *Democratization*, the argument that I want to make, is that if you develop country-specific strategies, you can identify there what the needs are against some model of how a developed democracy should look, you can identify the elements of success and failure in that country against that model, and you can then develop some evaluations of that country's progress and the kinds of things that need to be done.

At the moment, the kind of evaluation research we have, results-based management, for example, which CIDA uses, I find a very effective management tool for the work I'm doing in Ukraine. But the day my project finishes and I write my report for CIDA and it goes on the shelf, that's when the work we've done, the assessment of that work's impact on Ukraine, will cease. So what I'm arguing is that we need something at the theoretical and conceptual level that will give us measurable tools.

May I add just one other comment to this?

The Chair: Please do.

Dr. George Perlin: There is a big difference between how you evaluate this, the successes and failures here, and how you evaluate the successes and failures in the delivery of economic development assistance.

If you put a pump in a village, the pump is there after you go. If you've given them some tools to make the pump work and some training, it will continue to work. But we don't have the same kinds of specific criteria that we can apply here. That's one of the difficulties. So I'm arguing for a theoretical exercise that will produce conceptual categories that practitioners can apply.

We need to connect the academic community, which is thinking about these issues, and the practitioner community. That's a major problem.

● (1600)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Perlin.

Madame Barbot, you have five minutes.

Mrs. Vivian Barbot (Papineau, BQ): Yes, thank you.

Thank you Mr. Perlin and Mr. Kopstein, your presentations were most interesting.

Mr. Perlin, I particularly appreciated the fact that you emphasized the context in which you intervene. In my opinion, too often, we….

[*English*]

Dr. George Perlin: I'm not getting the translation.

The Chair: Turn to channel 2 or 3. Are you getting the translation?

Dr. George Perlin: Yes, okay.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: Mr. Perlin, I was saying that I appreciated the fact that you emphasized the context in which you intervene, that is to say you don’t simply go and try to promote democracy and certain activities without taking into account the overall situation that is already there.

I am also very concerned about the question of measurement. I understand what you’re saying, that we must have some kind of measurement criteria. However, you also mentioned training programs. You talked about programs that could be set up in the future.

Could these programs not be a concrete means of measuring results? Maybe these programs could, in the long term, perhaps help us identify certain indicators in future behaviour, in future events, that would give us some idea of the training programs’ impact. However, could you tell us to whom these training programs would apply?

I also have a question for Mr. Kopstein. When you talk about establishing a caucus for democracy either within or without the United Nations, I wonder if this doesn’t minimize the United Nations’ role. What greater role would this caucus play that is not already fulfilled by the United Nations?

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Barbot.

Monsieur Perlin.

Dr. George Perlin: I think Professor Kopstein would be better equipped to answer the question about the apprenticeship program. I was thinking about this primarily in theoretical and conceptual terms in terms of developing some tools that we could work with.

I think the problem now is that we don't have any tools. It's possible we could use something like that apprenticeship program, I guess, to put people out there to do the field work. The problem is that if we send them out there now, they don't have anything to work with. They have no model, no set of categories to do the assessments. So that was my concern there.

You asked me about who I had in mind when I talked about creating a training program here. Again, I'm not just talking about Canada, I'm talking about a need generally. We send people out to do this kind of work—and I mean not just Canada, but other donors as well—without a really solid understanding of how one goes about this. On the earlier question about political intervention, for instance, manifestly this is a much more sensitive area of intervention. How do you deal with that?

So what I'm arguing for is a training program, some kind of training centre or program here, that would prepare practitioners—and not just in Canada, but anybody who wanted to get into this field. Nobody's doing it, and there's an opportunity here for us to do something.

The Chair: Mr. Kopstein.

Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein: Thank you very much for your question. Let me deal with the part about the United Nations, because it's a pretty important question.

The United Nations itself was set up not as a democracy-promoting organization; it was set up as an organization after World War II to promote peace. As such, it included both democracies and non-democracies. It's been pretty good—not great, but pretty good—at promoting peace.

We're talking here about doing something different, however. We're talking about promoting democracy, which, yes, is sometimes at odds with stability. When you promote democracy into a country that's a dictatorship, you're destabilizing it. That's clear. So it does have implications for the long-term functioning of the UN.

In certain categories the UN is not good, and the UN has been a pretty lousy democracy promoter. Just now, the UN is getting started with a democracy promotion division. I was just in Washington, D. C., last week, where I heard its head speak, and he even admitted himself that they're really not very far along the road on this. They're starting to understand that democracy promotion is important for guaranteeing the peace. It's not simply matter enough to have treaties between countries, some of which are democracies and some of which are non-democracies.

So I would agree with you that democracy promotion potentially stands at odds with the functioning of the United Nations, but sometimes that might be a good thing.

● (1605)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kopstein.

We go to Mr. Goldring.

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Professor Perlin, I visited the Ukraine and monitored their elections, as well as Haiti, and recently Guyana too. I understand that there are many complexities and many areas that have to be involved in the promotion of democracy and that it is a very difficult subject, and that's why we're studying it. But there seem to be some common concerns that cross from different countries, whereas that may not be as applicable to Afghanistan.

We certainly saw in the Ukraine, and in Haiti and Guyana, that there's a need, at the political party level, to have some indoctrination, some understanding of what their role is in interacting with the municipal communities, what their role is as a servant of the people, and what their role is understood to be by the president, or whatever leadership of the government there is.

Does your program at the university level, which has been going on for eight years and is seemingly quite extensive, not leave out an element of education starting at the primary level? Because the number of students who may very well access this post-secondary education would be a much smaller percentage of the country's population than those who would do it in primary. Have your efforts examined what they are teaching at the primary level, at a more basic level?

Second, how long would this component be, as a term, for educating one person? And how much of a percentage of that educational component in university deals with party structuring and party politics?

Dr. George Perlin: In fact, we are doing work in the secondary schools. The minister of education asked us to take the content of the curriculum we had created for universities and translate it into a course that could be delivered in the secondary schools. The big problem he had, and continues to have, is that he doesn't have teachers trained to teach civic education. So what he's asked us to do is help him train teachers to teach civic education.

On the very point you raise about parties, we're developing a teaching-methods course through a series of pilot courses we're delivering in grade 11 in a selection of schools chosen by the ministry. Last year I visited one of the schools where this was being done, and the teacher had organized the class into different political parties. She was teaching lessons about the functions of political parties, so they carried on a little exercise for me in which they demonstrated what they'd learned about how political parties function and what their purpose is within the framework of a democracy.

To try to answer both components of your question, yes, we are looking at the application of this in secondary schools, and yes, it does include a significant focus on parties.

If I may say so, as well, in that regard, our program is not just creating a university course; we are working with law enforcement personnel. They have specialist institutions for training law enforcement officers and the people I call law enforcement ranks. They're all internal security people. We have a program on democracy and human rights that we're applying in those institutions.

We also have a program that is being delivered through the National Academy of Public Administration Distance Learning Centre. It's part of the Global Distance Learning Centre, the Ukrainian facility, which was, by the way, funded by Canada. We have created a course there for in-service public servants. The first component of that course is the responsibility and accountability of a public servant under a democratic system. The second part of that course explains, if you like, the dynamics of politics. It's done in two courses, and the second course is about the dynamics of politics, about political parties and elections and those processes.

So, yes, we are working on education about parties—that's a very important part of the curriculum, and there are sections in the text—and we are working with people in the security system and we're working with public servants and we're working in the secondary schools.

● (1610)

Mr. Peter Goldring: Is this nearing the point that you could have a short rendering of what your accomplishments have been and perhaps a manual or information on what you have been doing in Ukraine at the post-secondary level, as well as the high school level?

The Chair: A very quick answer.

Dr. George Perlin: The very quick answer is we've already got material up on the project website, the Canadian version of the website, with some of that information, and we are in the process of constantly updating that: what are we trying to do; what have we achieved; where are we going? In respect to any one of our activities, we're trying to make that information available.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Perlin.

Madam McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are so many different things I'd like to pursue and not a lot of time to do so.

I want to say, and I think many members do, how much I welcome the direct comments by Dr. Kopstein, expressing concern about the cancellation of the international intern program, because we've heard testimony before this committee about how exceptionally important that program is, both to young people gaining experience that will open further doors for meaningful employment, but also because of the kind of brain trust that we need to be concerned about helping build up. I'm actually hoping it's something we're going to pursue at this committee level.

Dr. Perlin, I may be going out on a limb here when I say this, but it seems to me that if we're going to be serious about being involved in democracy development, one of the things that's absolutely critically important, and sort of fundamental, is to be clear about what the elements of democracy are that we are either committed to and forthright about, or not.

I'm going to take an example. Some other members of Parliament were with me on the same trip to Haiti when there was quite an impressive and exciting electoral process going on. I think Canada made an extremely important contribution to the logistics of all that, with very impressive results in terms of the overall level of voter participation and the limited numbers of incidents.

At the same time, we were visiting a factory, for example, where the working conditions were so grotesque you could hardly believe that people work under those conditions. But it was absolutely clear that the notion of there being a trade union introduced into that situation was completely anathema. In fact, people would lose their jobs without question, if there was a hint of that.

So it really raises questions about what is the concept that you're hoping people are going to embrace around what democracy means. It seems to me that it goes to the very heart of whether you can be authentic or not in offering to be part of democracy-building.

I wonder if I can ask you to comment—and I don't mean on the specifics of that grotesque workplace, but as a way of raising the question: if democracy doesn't have to do with some notion of people having some power and control over the conditions of their own lives, including their working conditions and so on, how do you make it anything but an abstraction?

A very provocative comment was made yesterday at an extremely good panel on the question of peacemaking and peacebuilding, and Afghanistan was very much the subject. But on a general level, there was the observation that one of the things we don't seem to get is that some of the extremist groups, which have been identified as terrorist groups in some countries, are busy addressing some of the very basic human needs of public services, food, shelter, and so on, and maybe hearts and minds are actually one better sometimes that way than they are at the other end of a barrel of a gun.

● (1615)

The Chair: Madam McDonough, can we get to the question? We have ten seconds left to answer it.

Dr. George Perlin: My five-second answer is that in determining what you mean by democratic development, you start with the values that underpin our system.

You're raising a question about values in the context of our system and how well that particular system might respond to the value of looking after impoverished people or people working in difficult conditions.

My view of democratic development is that you have a model that starts with the underlying values of liberal democracy, and you teach out of this. You try to convey that that is the foundation. It's not just a process of choosing leaders. It's not just a process of establishing the accountability of public servants. That's why I'm arguing for a whole-of-governance, holistic approach, founded on a conception of liberal democratic values.

I hope that helps.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Perlin.

Mr. Van Loan. You have a three-minute round, so be concise.

Mr. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Kopstein. I thought that was an embracing and excellent presentation in all respects.

I see your expertise is a lot in the post-communist world and what's happened there. I look at the situation there as broken into three parts: those that were eager recipients and have done well—the Baltics and others; the states that are still in play a little bit, where the story is not over—Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and so on; and those that are young and reconstructed, or going backwards—Belarus and Russia itself. For those harder ones that are, as you said, putting up the barriers, passing the anti-NGO laws, and making it hard for us to influence things from the outside, is there something we can do, and what is the path to doing something past that Shanghai club of authoritarians?

Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein: We have to proceed on two fronts in order to deal with it. The countries we're really talking about here are not so much Ukraine and Moldova, but they do include Belarus and essentially all of central Asia, at this point, and Russia itself.

Really, you have to proceed on two fronts. The first is that it's extremely important to sustain human contact. At the same time, there has to be a mechanism out there—and that's why I propose the community of democracies—in order to make sure that these countries and their leaders understand that they are not in the club of the elect. At this point in time we don't have that mechanism. It's been proposed several times, but no one appears to really want to move forward with it.

The main problem is that on the one hand, if you engage them, you appear to be hypocritical because you say you're backing democracy, but then you roll out the red carpet, as President Bush just did for President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan. On the other hand, he talks about democracy.

It's very difficult to both pursue democracy and engage dictators at the same time. Canada needs to figure out a way of doing both of those things simultaneously, and that was the gist of my comments. The only way of doing that, to my mind, is through human contact in the long term and setting up some form of international organization or caucus that can let these governments know that they are not part of the same group of democracies that are the favoured.

Mr. Peter Van Loan: If we are looking at the old models of NGOs and others that could be undertaking that human contact and helping build civil society, when you have NGO laws being thrown out and the kind of brutality you see in Belarus, how do you help them?

Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein: That's a good question.

This is a tough row to hoe. If you look at what was really successful in the long run in the Cold War, it was really the visits of academics, of normal people. When they would come over here and spend a lot of time, especially if they spent over three months here—I think that's actually the crucial period of time—they would go home and become long-term ambassadors for our system, very broadly understood in terms of liberal democracy, not of the particulars of the kind of institutional order we have but of liberal democracy, broadly understood. If you look at, say, Czechoslovakia during the Cold War, that was one of the most Stalinist countries in eastern Europe, but even at the height of the Cold War, Czechoslovakia continued to send Fulbright scholars over to Europe. Interestingly, they also sent them over to Germany.

One thing Canadian parties don't have, which German parties do, is their own foundations, like the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Many of you have probably heard of these organizations. What they have is extensive contacts on the ground, and a great deal of legitimacy, I might add, throughout the dictatorial countries of central Asia, in Africa, and even in the Middle East. That's also a model that Canada could pursue.

● (1620)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kopstein.

Mr. Martin, for three minutes.

Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.): I will briefly ask questions, then my colleague Mr. Wrzesnewskyj can also ask.

Thank you both very much for being here.

At the end of the day, what we're really trying to do is improve the lot of those people in low-income countries, in order for them to be able to decide their future and improve their health, welfare, and security. Practically speaking, what can we do to leaderships in countries like Zimbabwe, Angola, Nigeria, and Congo, which are patently abusing countries that have vast wealth? Practically speaking, what can we champion to be able to do that through legal mechanisms or other alternatives?

My colleague will ask a question.

Thank you.

The Chair: Maybe we'll have the question first and then we'll get the two answers.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): We've talked of ongoing projects, and you absolutely need to prepare the field, especially because you can't predict when historic opportunities open up, such as whether a regime gets destabilized. Sometimes those historic opportunities are elections. We talked a little bit about Ukraine in the previous session we had this week. Unfortunately, we also only had thirty seconds to ask a question of Mr. Graham, who was a witness before us from the Canadian Foundation for the Americas.

Mr. Graham had referenced the Canada Corps project in Ukraine, the unprecedented 500 observers who travelled to Ukraine. I had asked him if it was a success, and he said yes. But he also then said he would never suggest to do something of the sort again. Having been intimately involved with that particular project, I was quite disturbed by that response, because it was a tremendous success by many measures.

I was curious what your thoughts might be on that. Perhaps it's something for the committee to consider at some point, to analyze something that virtually everyone says was a success, to see whether there are other opportunities that might open up. You can't predict these things, but there might be a model that we can use to take advantage of those sorts of opportunities.

Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein: We have a division of our labour here. I'll deal with the first question.

You've identified the toughest nuts to crack, and these are the especially poor countries. In political science, we have very few findings to report to you. We have two. The first is that democracies don't fight each other. The second is that countries that become democracies tend to stay democracies if—and here's the big if—they have a gross domestic product per capita in excess of $6,000 in 1993 dollars.

It just so happens that many of the post-communist countries were just passing through that threshold, which to a large extent can explain why they made it or—in the case of Ukraine—are teetering on the edge of making it. It's because they're passing through this crucial threshold. In countries in Africa that are well below the $6,000 1993 dollar mark, it's very difficult to sustain democratic institutions. Why? For a whole host of reasons, mostly because there are a lot of other things, as you mentioned quite correctly, that are more important to average people.

That being said, it's very difficult to tell when elections will come around. Let me just give you one example of a country that is poor, has had elections, and is Muslim, and is about to become the chair of the Community of Democracies, and that's Mali. So it is not impossible for a small, poor country—even a small, poor, Muslim country—to become a democracy. It's just that experience tells us, from all the experience that we have of looking at all these countries, it's just much harder. What that tells us is that we should adjust our expectations accordingly, and perhaps that also tells us where we should be putting the limited resources that we have available to us.

● (1625)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kopstein.

Mr. Perlin.

Dr. George Perlin: On the question about election observers, I don't know what Mr. Graham meant, but my observation is that interventions of that sort, under particular circumstances, are very important. Is it something that requires some kind of regular practice? That may be what he means. The answer to that is, no, there are more effective things that we can do. I can give you an illustration out of the Ukraine context.

One of the things that came up out of that observer mission in 2004 was the uncertainty about the way in which law enforcement personnel had worked. We were asked by Ukraine's Ministry of Internal Affairs if we would train their law enforcement personnel on their responsibilities in an election: protecting civil rights, protecting the political rights of citizens. We ran a program, and through that program we reached something like 40,000 front-line law enforcement officers. We were talking earlier about how you measure success. The OSCE, in its report on the 2006 parliamentary elections, commented on the integrity with which the police conducted themselves. To me, that is a measure of an investment that can have long-term effects when you intervene in that way, and that may be what he's talking about.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Perlin.

Madame Bourgeois, did you have a very short question?

Before you do that, I just want to take a little liberty here. We want to welcome a group of individuals who are involved in the governance advisory and exchange program. Some of the men and women you saw entering our committee room just a few moments ago are from Russia. They are part of the exchange program. The goal of this governance advisory and exchange program is to assist Russian leaders and decision-makers in their efforts to contribute to the establishment of a stable, prosperous, and democratic Russia, with a well-developed market economy and efficient, responsive institutions.

We welcome you here to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. Our study is on democratic development, and we're very fortunate to have you folks with us today.

I'm going to ask Madame Bourgeois for a very quick question.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): I have a two-part question. First of all, gentlemen, has Canada ever retained your services and has Canada ever required your expertise concerning the Canadian approach with regards to democracy?

Secondly, Mr. Kopstein, I'd like you to clarify somewhat the backlash you mentioned concerning new countries that have dictatorial international relations.

As to my question that was addressed to Mr. Perlin, Mr. Miller spoke to us about the Canadian approach in matters of democratization. We know that Canada has been giving nearly 265 million dollars to different countries, including China, for nearly eight years now and there seems to be nothing new on the democratic front in China.

What do you think of all this, Mr. Perlin? Would your strategic planning be of any use to Canada?

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Bourgeois.

Mr. Perlin or Mr. Kopstein, very quickly.

Prof. Jeffrey Kopstein: I'll be brief.

On the backlash, in the 1990s it was assumed that democracy was the only way. Everybody talked about that. The phrase was "the end of history", which many of you probably heard, right? There was no other way, apart from democracy.

In the last five or six years, a whole group of countries—and in that group, unfortunately, I would put Russia, Venezuela—that started down the path of democracy have re-authoritarianized. The really scary thing about all of this is that not only have they re-authoritarianized, to use an infelicitous term, but they appear to be cooperating with each other, sending each other draft legislation on how best to do away with their democrats. This is a truly disturbing trend, and it's not one Canada should ignore.

● (1630)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kopstein.

Dr. Perlin.

Dr. George Perlin: On the question of intervention in China, I think this goes back to an earlier question that was asked about what you do in intervening in situations where there is not already some will. I think the answer we got about this was that you build it up gradually. You have to build some popular will for it. Elites will only respond if there is some popular will. So you can make interventions, as you were suggesting, through NGO support, through other kinds of activities that you may undertake, but you have to recognize that there are limits to what you can accomplish there.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Perlin.

I thank you both for coming in and giving us your presentations. Certainly we look forward to getting the blues and to studying some of your answers a little more closely. We appreciate your time.

We're going to suspend for two minutes, and we're going to ask our next guest to take the chair. We'll be back.

● (1635)

The Chair: Welcome back. We will reconvene our committee.

I remind committee members that we do have votes this afternoon. We have been looking forward to Mr. Axworthy's testimony for some time, and I think the votes are at 5:30. We're going to have to figure out how we're going to do this, along with some of the committee's business.

Madam McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Without meaning to prolong, because I know we're anxious to get on with our witnesses, I'm concerned to see us bump our committee business again with the break week coming up. Hopefully we can make some decisions that will give some guidance to staff who are here in Ottawa during our absence, and they can then put that guidance into the schedule. So if we could take even a couple of minutes at the end to do that—

The Chair: We will try to keep that in mind.

In hour two, we welcome Dr. Thomas Axworthy. He's the chair for the Centre for the Study of Democracy at Queen's University. He was the principal secretary to former prime minister Pierre Trudeau, and has held numerous appointments, including teaching at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Dr. Axworthy has argued that Canada should take a more leading role in the field of international democracy promotion. He has proposed the creation of Democracy Canada Institute—and I think we heard something similar in the hour before—which would receive a much larger annual funding than the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development and would include initiatives involving Canadian political parties.

Dr. Axworthy, welcome. You've been a guest with us before. We have appreciated you in the past and we look forward to hearing from you today.

We'll have a ten-minute presentation, followed by questions and answers.

Thank you.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy (Chair, Centre for the Study of Democracy, Queen's University, As an Individual): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'll read a brief statement. As you've said, you may have to leave for votes, and then answer questions, but I'll put this on the record.

I'll be referring in my statement as well, ladies and gentlemen, to very brief summaries of a series of studies that we have done at our think tank at Queen's University. I have some copies of the studies here. If there are any members whose staff or who themselves want to read the background papers, the original sources to which I'll be making brief reference in my statement—some of them are quite lengthy; the blueprint on Democracy Canada Institute is about 100 pages long—we can send them. We also have some hard copies.

The Chair: I would appreciate that, for every member.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: All I need is their e-mail addresses and I'd be glad to do it.

The Chair: Send it to the clerk, and we'll get it circulated.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: Okay.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me begin. The committee is to be applauded for undertaking a study of Canada's role in international democracy promotion. The subject of democracy promotion—its relation to traditional foreign and development policy goals, the push-back by autocrats like President Putin, the recent crackdown on dissent by powerful dictatorships like China, and most of all the anarchy in Afghanistan and Iraq, where democracy-building faces violent opposition—is now one of the core issues in international relations.

Canada has always paid lip service to the value of democracy promotion—what democracy has not?—but unlike trade promotion, or the responsibility-to-protect principle, it has never been a fundamental of Canadian foreign policy. Individual Canadians work abroad for democracy promotion, and many of them work for institutions created by other states or international organizations. The National Democratic Institute, one of the best known in the world, has over 30 Canadians in senior positions. The IDEA multilateral foundation, when I spoke there recently, had Canadians from Saskatchewan. So Canadians everywhere are working for democracy promotion.

The organizational vacuum in our foreign policy machinery, however, means that these people do not work directly for an organized centre of democracy promotion in Canada. As in so many other areas of international policy, on democracy we talk a good game, but the Government of Canada has very limited capacity.

This committee has put out three excellent areas of inquiry that your witnesses and you will be studying, so I'm going to address all three of them too briefly. The first question is "why democracy?" and international comparisons. Then I'll spend a little more time on the Canadian role with the particular institution, Democracy Canada, which our institute has been promoting. On "why democracy?", you asked how democracy promotion, within the wider context of foreign policy itself, fits into a general foreign policy, as opposed to the intrinsic merits of democracy.

Until recently, the priority of democracy for foreign policy decision-makers has never been high. In 1648, in the treaty of Westphalia, the European powers made state sovereignty the centrepiece of international relations. Kings could be beastly to their own populations, but the nature of the regime was of little concern to other states. What mattered was the balance of power between states, not the internal characteristics of the regime.

From Richelieu in the age of Westphalia to Kissinger in our own age, the realist school in foreign policy looks primarily at the determinants of power and how it is used. Such a calculus gives very short shrift to morality and, until very recently, to democracy. As Franklin Roosevelt once said about a local dictator: "He may be a son of a bitch, but he's our son of a bitch."

This overwhelming realist consensus, however, has occasionally been challenged, usually from the liberal or radical side of the political divide. The philosopher Immanuel Kant first made the critical point in his famous 1795 essay *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* that the nature of regimes, whether they were monarchies or republics, empires or local municipalities, did make a critical difference. Republics were less likely to go to war than monarchies, since citizens knew they were the ones who would die on the battlefield. As the previous witnesses have talked about, in international relations one of the few inviolable rules we have is that democracies do not go to war against each other.

In the 19th century, English liberals like John Bright attacked the amorality of *realpolitik* masters such as Palmerston or Bismarck, and called for internal changes to the monarchies across Europe. Bright explained:

> We have the unchangeable and eternal principles of the moral law to guide us, and only so far as we walk by that guidance can we permanently be a great nation

Gladstone, in his famous Midlothian campaign against Disraeli, one of the great *realpolitik* practitioners, attacked Turkey's abuses against its own subjects, and argued that morality should trump state sovereignty.

● (1640)

In 1917 Woodrow Wilson led the United States into World War I to "make the world safe for democracy". Lester Pearson led the fight within NATO in 1948 and 1949 on article 2, the so-called Canadian clause, to make the alliance into more than an old-fashioned military pact by emphasizing the cultural, social, and economic links between the North American democracies. What was important for Pearson was that NATO was a pact of freedom-loving democracies, not merely a military pact. That began to change with the accession of Turkey and Greece and other countries in that early Cold War era.

The liberal idealist perspective butted against the predominant realist tradition throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. But in 1982 a new champion emerged and the debate was literally transformed. Ronald Reagan was a dedicated anti-communist, but instead of just containing the Soviet Union, he wanted to transform it by promoting democracy as a fundamental proposition of American foreign policy.

In 1982 Reagan, the most important conservative in American history, gave a speech worthy of Woodrow Wilson. He told the British Parliament, and I quote:

> The objective I promise is quite simple to state: to foster infrastructure of democracy, the systems of free press, unions, political parties, universities, which allows a people to choose their own way to develop their own culture, to reconcile their own differences through peaceful means.

The Reagan administration created the National Endowment for Democracy. The British created the Westminster Foundation. The Germans have long had their Stiftungs, as we have just heard from previous witnesses, or party research institutes with very active international programs; and multilateral organizations like the Stockholm-based International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance—IDEA—spread the best practices around the world.

In looking at the United States today, total yearly U.S. democracy funding exceeds $1 billion. Now, the literature on democracy is enormous. Do we aim for deep, deliberative, transformative democracy where citizens are themselves engaged in policy debate? That was the question in a point raised by Ms. McDonough to the previous witnesses on what kind of democracy we are addressing. Or is it enough to have procedural democracy, a system that allows citizens only to have the ultimate sway during elections?

Two principles certainly apply: rule of the people, and rights of the people. As theorist Larry Diamon writes in *Squandered Victory*,

"Democracy is a system of government in which the people choose their leaders—and replace their leaders—in regular, free, and fair elections. Democracies are governments of laws, not individual men and women, in which the people are sovereign and government functions with the consent of the governed."

To achieve such consent of the governed, there must be, according to *Challenge of Democratic Development*, a very good and early study by the North-South Institute, 1991-92,

> ...universal adult suffrage in free elections; the right to run for office; freedom of expression, association, political organization and dissent; alternate sources ofinformation and genuine policy choice; and the accountability of government to voters.

Democracy requires a culture of liberty that endorses and envelopes the mechanism of voting as the means to express choice. Liberty, in turn, requires independent courts, equality before the law, and protection for minorities. Citizens must respect the rights of others even as they exercise their own rights. Rule of the people and rights of the people are the basic democratic minimum.

As we then move to transformative democracy, the participatory element of democracy allows human capacity to flourish, so we have a minimum and a maximum. The minimum we can attain, the procedural rules; the maximum, which is each of us achieving our human capacity, is an ongoing and never-changing goal.

Lessons learned from the work on democratic transitions.... There's no magic bullet or surefire formula for democracy promotion. Promoting democracy requires attention to specific circumstances and to the limitations of outside intervention. Change agents must proceed by interaction, not imposition.

● (1645)

There are few straight lines in history. As Kant, the original enlightenment liberal, wrote, “From such warped wood as is man, nothing straight can ever be fashioned”.

Drawing on the democratic case studies of the Queen's University Centre for the Study of Democracy, which are here before you, the following lessons appear to be relevant. First, there is nothing harder than attempting to develop democratic norms when there is no state and anarchy reigns. Since Plato, we have known that there must be order before there is liberty. A functioning state must precede a functioning democracy.

In Afghanistan, a critical initial decision was to hold a *Loya Jirga*, or traditional assembly of Afghanistan notables, to create Afghan ownership of the democratic process rather than dictate some of the occupying power. The Afghan transition began well, but shortages of troops, or boots on the ground, to ensure security now threaten the whole enterprise.

The ratio of international soldiers to inhabitants in places like Bosnia was about one soldier for every fifty citizens. Such a figure has never been reached in Afghanistan or Iraq. In a word, the EU and NATO took the security dimension of Bosnia far more seriously than they have taken it in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Secondly, militias must be disarmed. In the forthcoming Queen's University study of Israeli democracy, which is another study we will have out by the spring, a key tipping point was the decision of Ben-Gurion to disarm rival militias and to create the Israeli armed forces. Ben-Gurion went so far as to fire upon the *Altalena*, an armed ship designed for the Irgun militia of Menachem Begin. Even as Israel fought for its existence in the 1948 war, even as Israel was at war with its Arab neighbours, Ben-Gurion refused to allow private internal militias. Allowing militias to continue to be private armies has likely been the single greatest mistake made in Iraq; there are many of them, but that's probably the largest.

Third: local government, municipalities, is the building block of democracy. In Taiwan, the immediate post-war decision by the KMT to continue with the Japanese innovation of local elections for municipalities allowed the arts of democracy to grow and gave a non-threatening outlet for dissenting citizens. In democracy transition, we tend to almost instantly race towards national elections. In virtually every study I have looked at, I'm convinced that the investment in local municipalities, local government, and local elections is the way to allow the arts of democracy to foster and build. Taiwan is an enormously important example of that. The investment in Taiwan both allowed the KMT to get used to democracy, and it gave an outlet to the dissidents to learn the mutual tolerance that was required. Eventually, the KMT, an authoritarian party on its own, brought in its own democracy. The learning process was a generation of that.

Fourth, democracy takes time to take root. There are no quick fixes. Outside interveners must be prepared for years of effort and substantial investment. The European Union, the United States, and Canada all made a major commitment to rebuilding Bosnia after the civil war. Bosnia was Canada's first experiment with its three-D policy of defence, diplomacy, and development. It must be understood that each of these elements is necessary if real rebuilding is to occur. With nation-building or democracy-building, we should not go in unless we are prepared for a long and costly commitment. I regret that with the enormous expenditure and the lives of several of our soldiers in the 1990s, we are now moving out of Bosnia after having made that large initial investment and with many problems still in eastern central Europe.

Lastly, five, democratic values are universal. Asian autocrats have promoted Asian values as a counterpoint to democracy, and they have implied that democracy is a western invention. The Queen's University case studies on both Hong Kong and Taiwan show the self-serving nature of this argument. Taiwan is the first Chinese society in 5,000 years to become a sustained, consolidated democracy. In Hong Kong, up to half a million citizens have taken to the streets to demand and to defend their democratic rights.

Amartya Sen, in *Development and Freedom*, puts it well: “Freedoms are not only the primary ends of development, they are also among its principal means”.

The Canadian role—your third area. The committee has asked witnesses to comment on three broad areas: democracy assistance as an objective, comparative lessons, and the Canadian role. My response to these questions is as follows.

● (1650)

On democratic assistance, the nature of regimes is important. If Kant is right, and republics are less likely to go to war against fellow democracies, spreading democracy is in the security interest. If Amartya Sen is right, spreading freedom is a vital component in development policy. If Lester Pearson is right, democratic advancement must go forward at the same time as military engagement in any alliance.

For all these reasons of security, development, and morality, democracy promotion should become a key component rather than an afterthought of Canadian foreign policy. But the lessons drawn from successful transitions to democracy show that the democracy road is long and arduous. It cannot be done on the cheap, and it cannot be done without clarity and commitment.

In the third area of Canadian policies and activities, the main point is that Canada lacks a central democracy assistance organization. Canada has a wealth of knowledge and professional expertise grounded in Canadian values that could make a real and meaningful contribution to democracy assistance initiatives abroad.

A Canadian-based democracy institution—we've called it Democracy Canada—grounded in a federal, ethnically diverse, multilateral, and bilingual country would be welcomed by the international democracy promotion community. This new institution should have the following features.

Democracy Canada should be an independent organization reporting to and accountable to Parliament and a minister. It should not be part of any department.

The mission of Democracy Canada would be to promote and enhance democracy abroad. Democracy Canada would employ a network of experts to provide practical experience and assistance in areas of democratic development to their counterparts in partner countries.

Democracy Canada's activities would focus on political party assistance, including training in campaigns, electioneering, and media relations, which would introduce a tool largely absent from Canadian foreign policy, and that is, concentrating on party-building in democracy, also a question raised with earlier witnesses.

The program should also include, as Mr. Perlin has talked about, investment in civic education, democratic transparency, election monitoring, participation, especially among women, and assisting in the general building of democratic institutions in legislatures and public services.

The focus on political party assistance, election preparation, training, and mechanics would distinguish the institute from the legislative mission of the Parliamentary Centre, one of our best NGOs in this area, and the civic education mission of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, which does a wonderful job on human rights and on civic education.

The board of such a Democracy Canada should consist of 12 to 15 members, drawn from nominees of parties now sitting in Parliament, international partners, and experts in democracy promotion. Replicating a successful aspect of the International Development Research Council, one-third of Democracy Canada's board should come from international partners. The board would have fiduciary responsibility for Democracy Canada.

The institute would also be governed by an advisory Democracy Canada council, consisting of members from the democracy and governance community of Canada as a whole.

An annual Democracy Canada conference would be held to bring together the Canadian and international democracy community to promote mutual learning, the dissemination of best practices, and to help coordinate Democracy Canada's future objectives and priorities.

We have many people working on this area in Canada, but they very rarely talk to each other. The institute would develop its own programs and staff, but it would also partner with others.

We have suggested an annual budget of $50 million, about half of the IDRC budget, both to fund worthwhile projects by its partners and to undertake its own activities.

Democracy Canada would also be allowed to fund proposals for international work submitted by Canada's political parties, as happens in the U.K. with the Westminster Foundation. But it would not automatically allocate a portion of its funding to the existing party structure.

Democracy Canada's permanent bureau staff, in addition to program coordination, would undertake a research function to gain an understanding of the local context of Democracy Canada's partner countries. To enhance its effectiveness, Democracy Canada would work with existing Canadian and international organizations such as the IDRC, as well as organizations within partner countries.

● (1655)

Lastly, Democracy Canada would coordinate team Canada democracy delegations around key Canadian foreign policy objectives. With Democracy Canada, coordinated assistance could be provided to a partner country, including elements of political party assistance provided by the parties, legislative assistance from the Parliamentary Centre, electoral assistance from Elections Canada, civic education as by International Human Rights and Democracy. That is, bringing together several organizations, each with their own piece, and going on a coordinated democracy mission in a country that we think is worthy of such help. Democracy Canada would maintain the overall focus of the delegation and would be responsible for democratization programs in the partner country.

While in the Ukraine studying the Orange Revolution, I met a young Ukrainian woman who told me the story of why, flying from Ukraine to Washington, she waited for hours to file past the tomb of Ronald Reagan as he lay in state in Washington after his death. His call, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall”, had resonated across eastern and central Europe and had allowed young people there to dream that Soviet tyranny did not have to be permanent. She wanted to pay her respects to the man who had once given her hope.

Natan Sharansky, in *The Case for Democracy*, similarly recounts how the example of his teacher, Andrei Sakharov, taught him, and I quote him: “The world cannot depend on leaders who do not depend on their own people”. Sharansky further writes that “Those who seek to move the earth must first, as Archimedes explained, have a place to stand.”

Canada must stand with the world's democrats. We enjoy the blessings of democracy at home. We owe it to ourselves and to those who share our values to make a serious effort to promote democracy abroad.

● (1700)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Axworthy. We appreciate your testimony.

We're going into the first round. We may cut the first round a little bit to get as many questions in as possible.

Mr. Martin, you have four minutes.

Hon. Keith Martin: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Professor Axworthy, thank you for being here.

We have a disease in Parliament called "studyitis" that I'm sure you know very well. It's rampant. Rather than taking a problem and actually doing a study and implementing solutions, we study things to death. But our biggest failure—not peculiar to our institution, as you know—is our failure to implement the recommendations in studies, and you quite eloquently drew attention to the vast number of studies and groups that exist.

We also heard from the last group that democracy can't really have traction unless the GDP goes to above $6,000 per person per year. The problem in the countries we're trying to address is that the economic potential of a country is being thwarted by leaders who engage in behaviours that are egregious, frequently elected. So none of these leaders are people of the calibre of Seretse Ian Khama of Botswana, who even before they found diamonds decided quite intelligently to be a very strong leader and implement and utilize the resources of the country for the benefit of his people.

In your view, what can we and should we do to address leaders like Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, who has destroyed an otherwise very strong country and turned it into a basket case, and negatively affected the future of an entire generation of Zimbabweans?

My second question: We have the IDRC. We have Human Rights and Democracy. We have the Parliamentary Centre. We have the Canada Corps. Why do we need another institution, when we already have all of those institutions? Isn't the biggest problem a failure to implement recommendations that are coming from the very intelligent people in our country, that we're simply not implementing what should be implemented?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Martin.

Mr. Axworthy.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: Right. On the first point, there is an issue about elites and elites' behaviour, and their relationship to people below.

In a world with limited means, limited aid and limited resources, where CIDA is already cutting down from 150 nations to 25 or so, the world has a variety of measures that it can bring, both on a corruption index and on an abuse index. I think human rights and corruption should become one of the central criteria in the allocation of a variety of incentives. It makes no sense to invest with Mugabe. It does perhaps make sense to invest in civil organizations, in the case of Burma, governments in exile, those who are trying to replace the dictators, to help those directly, which again bears on my answer to your second question. If one is in a particularly perilous position, by requiring assistance to go to those who are trying to overturn or destabilize local dictators, as an earlier witness talked about, it is almost impossible for a government organization, in CIDA, DFAIT, or others, to do this.

One reason we think a new institution is required is twofold: first, to put some daylight between the government of the day and a body that reports to Parliament but is influenced by parliamentarians and not influenced by the executive; and secondly, virtually nobody works in the area that I happen to think is important—because I come from, at one time in my life, a political background as well as now an academic one—that the roles of parties are absolutely crucial. We have troubles with our own parties at home. We certainly need to build parties abroad. The people who know how to build parties are people who have been in parties. With all the institutions you've talked about, they do wonderful work. The party extension is certainly not one of them. Therefore, we are missing a piece in Canada, in my regard, a very vital piece, which is the party piece of the democracy equation. You either have to add that to an existing organization, or create a new one complementary to what exists but having a real value added in what I think is one of the essential pieces of the puzzle.

● (1705)

[*Translation*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bernard Patry): Thank you, Mr. Axworthy.

Madame Barbot, please.

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: Thank you for your presentation.

I am more and more worried when I hear about that type of democracy promotion. It's strange, because I am in total agreement with everything democracy represents. What I will say is probably due to the fact that I come from a country that was perceived to be under-developed, a country that is probably more on its way to under-development. I often have the impression, when we attempt to promote democracy abroad, that we want to bring democracy elsewhere but that we fail to examine the state of democracy in exporting countries.

I also have the impression that we don't take sufficiently into account the notion of freedom that you spoke of and freedom is at the heart of democracy. If people don't accept democracy in the way that we want them to, it isn't going to work. We go as far as to decide who has a right to democracy. That worries me.

In this country, democracy has many aspects. Our acts and regulations reflect its general aspect. We can go so far as to say that democracies don't fight amongst themselves. The fact remains however that democracies often have profound differences. Indeed, in a democracy such as ours in Canada, certain parts of the country don't agree on the fundamental principles of democracy.

That being said, what worries me, is when you send the International Development Research Centre, an organization that promotes democracy, in countries whose citizens have voluntarily chosen or accepted a government, to tell them how their government should work.

Is there not a danger of interfering in the internal policies of that country?

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Barbot.

Mr. Axworthy.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: In any aspect of foreign policy, but particularly in democracy promotion, it's best to begin with humility. Nobody is arguing that Canada or any of the western democracies are necessarily superb. But what we can point to is that there are practices and traditions that other nations, that dissident groups, might find useful to learn from on a comparative basis. That's really the essential point.

Where we've had tremendous difficulties in democratic transitions—in Iraq, for example—hubris, almost a democratic imperialism, has been part of the problem, as opposed to listening and working with people on the ground. My experience has been, though, that Canadians are invited, are welcomed, are asked, everywhere around the world, by a host of people who want to at least learn comparatively what we've done in the Charter of Rights, what we've done in the status of women, what we've done in multiculturalism, what we've done in federalism, what we've done in election party financing. It's not that we are better, it's that we are different. We have had some experience, and we've learned some lessons.

I think anybody who works in democracy promotion learns as much in the countries they are working with. What we hope to achieve in our program at Queen's, for example, is to create a multilateral source of democracy promotion so that when we work with refugees in Bosnia, the next time we're asked to work on refugee problems, it will be with our Bosnian partners, who we worked with in Bosnia. And so it goes.

What I would like to do is take the local experiences of a host of countries who have some successes or failures and then use that for an international training or teaching corps. Canadians may put the overall framework, and Canada may fund it, but in our concept of the centre—as I've said, I'll be glad to send the papers to you—we want to help local partners do much of the work. My idea is for a consortium of democracy builders based on talent around the world but funded and guided from Canada, in part because we're not seen as an imperialist power.

● (1710)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Axworthy.

Mr. Van Loan.

Mr. Peter Van Loan: Thank you very much.

I don't know if you recall, Mr. Axworthy, when we first met. You were scrutineering for a fellow named Jim Coutts.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: Yes.

Mr. Peter Van Loan: I was scrutineering opposite you, for a woman named Laura Sabia, in a byelection a long time ago. You ended getting Jim Coutts' job, as I recall.

In any event, I want to thank you for this. We are doing an intensive study. Your proposal, as I've observed to the committee before, is probably the most tangible one being put in front of us. For that we thank you a great deal. I think it's a worthy and a good proposal.

I'm particularly interested in what you call the "multiparty and umbrella model", and its potential application here. Part of the committee is going to be travelling next week, and they will have an opportunity to hear from the Westminster Foundation people. We've talked about doing some kind of Washington component so that we can learn from the National Endowment for Democracy people, the National Democratic Institute, IRI, and labour and business organizations.

On the party aspect, I think you've really put your finger on it when you say that's important. I don't think we recognize it in our volunteer-based parties, but Canada has a lot more to offer than I think the Americans, who do their politics with money, and some of the other countries that are involved in this. We actually have a lot of hands-on skills and so on that can apply, which makes that part of your proposal appealing.

With regard to the National Endowment for Democracy model, the Westminster Foundation model, and the Dutch inter-party model, how would you compare them or assess them vis-à-vis each other?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Van Loan.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: The model that I would like and think would be appropriate for our country would be the multi-party model, based on the Dutch or Westminster models. Whatever divides us in Canadian politics at home on the issues, the men and women who work in our parties and are in Parliament at least believe that democracy is a system worth promoting and they are expert at because they are practitioners in it.

I have found in working with Canadians abroad—and I've worked with well-known Conservatives and members of the New Democratic Party, and so on—that those kinds of differences matter very little when you are trying to teach about poll organization, media relations, or how Elections Canada operates.

I also think our own parties are oriented domestically so heavily that it would do the parties themselves some good to think about issues abroad. Their work in such an institute could have an interesting impact on the local parties themselves—broaden them, and they might actually enjoy cooperating with their fellows. I know it's different from the parliamentary atmosphere in question period; committees are a little more collegial. The model of a multi-party institute, agreeing on a series of programs in countries and sending out activists or militants from those parties, seems to me a better model for us.

I have also been employed from time to time by the American models, and you'll speak to them. But in certain places I have seen the NDI group working with one set of problems and the Republican group working with another. They may meet at the airports, but they don't seem to meet on the ground very much. If I could avoid that by having a team knitted together in a joint mission, that's a personal preference. In our comparative study, this is the one that's best for Canada.

● (1715)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Axworthy.

Madam McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Our time is very short, and I think what we look forward to is receiving that more comprehensive proposal for the Democracy Canada Institute.

We've got them here, great.

A couple of the questions I was going to ask were answered, but I want to zero in on one thing very specifically. The economic threshold for success in democracy-building has been mentioned a couple of times. In the composition of a board, which you referred to, I think you mentioned "one-third democracy-building governance" kinds of representation, but do you also envision some representation from more of the economic development, international aid, and humanitarian community, as part of that governing board?

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: When we look at the literature, one of the older lessons of democracy was that it was the growth of the middle class that leads to demands for democracy. That seems to be empirically valid, but there are many poorer countries—Somalia has just been mentioned—that have made that jump. I wouldn't be held in thrall that unless you have a large middle class, don't even attempt it.

I believe that pluralism and democratic accountability are in fact critical components of the development nexus. When you look at debt levels, for example—the vast debt levels in Iraq, and so on—most of them are run up by dictators because they're not accountable to legislatures or to people. The lack of accountability, even in a minimally functioning democracy, as opposed to deep democracy, makes it much harder to have personal agendas on those macro scales, in terms of development assistance. I tried to make in my argument why there is a security dimension in democracy. In my view, there is a moral or values dimension, and also a development dimension.

One of the best organizations I know in Canada is the IDRC. I think they have been helped enormously—and some of the meetings I have gone to there—because so much of their board is international and reflective of local experience, precisely on the point that was asked earlier. I would very much want that part of Democracy Canada, not forgetting the development context of democracy. Sometimes in the development world that's a debatable proposition, but I think it holds and should be reflected in the organization I'm recommending.

The Chair: You have two minutes left.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: You spoke about the importance of political parties. You wouldn't get much argument from us. But you also stressed that often the most successful approach to democracy-building is at what we would think of as a municipal level, very much community-based, which, with some minor exceptions in Canada, is without political parties. Can you comment on that?

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: I wasn't necessarily recommending that parties work at local levels. Local government here of course has been primarily independent. Occasionally there are informal party relationships locally, but it's been primarily locally based. My perception has been, in the countries I have been in and in my study of the literature, that in neighbourhoods.... It's an old lesson. It's in the assemblies in Massachusetts. It's neighbourhood democracy. The most essential thing in democracy is to learn how to lose—not just lose elections, but lose on issues all the time. You have to sign on to the rules of the game knowing that this time you're only going to get a quarter of the pie or none, but you keep coming back. There's almost nothing that creates that awareness better than working on local issues and local neighbourhood issues.

Secondly, where there are authoritarian governments, they are less threatened by that because you're not talking about political parties at the national level; you're talking about a better way of delivering service or getting a feeling for the people at local levels. So you're entirely correct that the party focus that I am recommending, which would apply to legislatures and countries that were going into elections, has less application in one of my main recommendations, which is to invest in local infrastructure. Here in Canada, with the federation of municipalities, we do have several organizations that work at that. If I had to make one single suggestion, it would be to make sure that piece is really well funded, because that is less threatening to autocrats but it is most important in getting the reign of tolerance that has to bear on democracy. You learn it, really, when you're debating whose garbage is going to get picked up.

● (1720)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Axworthy.

We have a choice, committee. I've been asked to at least try to reserve the last five minutes or so for committee business. Is that still the wish? If that's the case, we forfeit the second round.

With that, we thank you, Mr. Axworthy. You know the system here. We're kind of run by the anticipation of bells in a very short period of time. We have some committee business.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: Are there any whips here?

The Chair: We thank you for your presentation. Welcome back, and thanks for being here.

Dr. Thomas Axworthy: Thanks for inviting me.

The Chair: We will not even suspend. We'll just give them a few moments to leave the table and then, committee members, we will move on to committee business.

● (1725)

The Chair: We have two notices of motion that have been brought forward and that have met the criteria.

Madam McDonough, do you want to speak to your motion, please?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Very briefly, I'm asking for support for that very straightforward motion, basically informing ourselves, through departmental officials from CIDA and from the Department of Foreign Affairs, on developments in Darfur, on current and projected assistance to the African Union mission, and intended or planned contributions to the UN peacekeeping force in Darfur.

So it's very straightforward. There wasn't, obviously, an opportunity to hear from officials before last night's debate. We might have benefited from it had there been, but I think it's an important thing to do by way of follow-up, and invite the members' support for that motion.

The Chair: All right. Thank you, Madam McDonough.

Mr. Menzies.

Mr. Ted Menzies (Macleod, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I certainly appreciate Madam McDonough's concern over this, and she expressed it very eloquently last night, too.

There are a couple of points. We've had two take-note debates on this very issue, one again last night that several of us participated in. The government members pretty much laid out what the latest developments are, what the current and projected Canadian assistance is, and what this government's role and ambitions are.

So to that point, Mr. Chair, logisticaly I would think this might be more relevant if we did it after we get done the major study we're working on right now. Some members of the committee are travelling next week to do with this major study. I think that while that's fresh in their minds, they would like to follow up on what they learn on that study. We may have main estimates from both DFAIT and CIDA, and we'll have supplementary estimates coming in. We have a report on Haiti that's not completed.

Mr. Chair, I would argue that we have enough on our plate right now. I'm not saying that we shouldn't do this, but let's not overburden this committee. Let's make sure we get done what we've committed ourselves to right now.

The Chair: Thank you.

We're just going over the schedule here and taking a look to see what is possible. I don't think there's any need circulating it now.

Did anyone else want to speak to this motion?

Borys first, then Madam Barbot.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Thank you, Chair.

I'm glad that Mr. Menzies has said let's do this. I would suggest, though, especially considering the situation on the ground, that you have the potential of a genocide by attrition. We've seen what's happened in the recent past, and knowing that it's the very same regime that is in place that began the genocide not that long ago, and things seem to be building to the potential for another catastrophe, I think time of is of the essence. So I agree—and I noted it down when you said let's do this—let's do this, but let's not do it after the fact.

I think we need to support this motion, and in fact look at our schedule to do it as soon as possible. I think everyone's glad that we've had the opportunity for parliamentarians to discuss the issue, and the importance of addressing the genocide in Darfur in the House of Commons, but what this will afford us is greater detail and insight from the departmental officials.

If we're to move forward, and move forward expeditiously, it's critical not just to debate in the House, but to hear from the departmental officials, so that when we do move, we move in a way that will actually make a difference on the ground.

● (1730)

The Chair: Thank you.

Madame Barbot.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: My first comment is that the French translation doesn't adequately reflect the English version. You will be getting a translation that really corresponds to the English version. The translation also contains many errors.

[*English*]

The Chair: We would certainly appreciate that.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: Of course, we must have answers to be able to appraise the situation. During yesterday's debate, these answers weren't really given. The government spoke highly of its accomplishments but these comments were of a general nature.

The questions that we want to ask are much more precise et are related to whatever direct action the government has taken concerning Darfour. Consistent to yesterday's motion during the debate, I would also like to propose certain amendments to the motion.

In view of the lateness of the hour and of the fact that we have to return to the House for the 5:45 p.m. vote, I think it would be preferable to adjourn the meeting and to reconvene next week.

[*English*]

The Chair: I think the intent is to look for a suitable time.

I'm in agreement with Madam Barbot. Again, I think the translation thing is one thing, and that's an issue, but we want to be able to debate this.

In trying to find a time and looking at the schedule, after we have ministers booked, I don't see anything before November 1. We have Ed Broadbent coming. I don't know how that would work.

Mr. Bernard Patry: I want to comment.

The Chair: Mr. Patry, yes.

Mr. Bernard Patry: Mr. Menzies mentioned that we had a debate yesterday. That's fine, and it's great. I mean, we appreciate this. I think this motion is in a sense a consequence of the debate yesterday.

My understanding about this motion is that it's not a full study. We can have one day, for one or two hours, for officials coming from CIDA, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Department of National Defence to give us an update on what's going on there and what Canada's intentions are for the next month.

We cannot postpone it right now because the crisis is there at the moment. From my point of view, we need to deal with this. But it's not a study. I agree that we have enough studies for the moment. We cannot study, study, and study. But to me, it's to at least get an update on one day when we can fit it in.

I fully agree in the sense that it's an emergency and in the sense that if we need to sit on another day, such as a Thursday morning, I'd agree to come on a Thursday morning, if we can find a room. We would then keep going with our schedule.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Menzies.

Mr. Ted Menzies: I have a point of clarification.

My intention was, and I was quite sure I said, “if we are going to study this”. If that isn't what came out of my mouth, it was my intention. I don't think I said we “should” study this. I'm not a permanent member on this committee, so I'm not going to make that suggestion.

But I still plead the case that this committee has a lot on its plate right now. At some point, we have to make a decision. As you said, we have ministers coming and we have estimates coming.

The Chair: Madam Barbot, and then Madam McDonough.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: Despite my recent motion, if the other parties are willing to adopt the motion without amending it, I would be willing to drop the amendments that I wanted to bring forth so that we could vote on this question. The motion doesn’t raise any problems.

[*English*]

The Chair: Borys.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: I'd like to make a friendly amendment to the motion: that we schedule an extra committee meeting the week after the recess to address this particular issue.

The Chair: Madam McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Yes, I certainly accept that. I think it's a reflection of the sense of urgency that's appropriate for us to express here. What's been called “a genocide in slow motion” is very quickly going to start to be understood to be a genocide speeded up. All of the statistics on what's been happening the last two months make that clear. After the Rwanda horrors, for us to not respond in a more urgent fashion I think is really unfortunate.

I totally accept it as a friendly amendment. I think it is appropriate for us to agree to have not a great big study but a session, where we can have an update from the appropriate officials from CIDA and the Department of Foreign Affairs.

● (1735)

The Chair: I know that everyone's schedules are pretty full. We now have the human rights committee up and running. I know they're meeting on Tuesday.

Monday is booked, Tuesday is booked, Wednesday morning is caucus, and we have this on Wednesday afternoon. It could potentially be on Wednesday evening or Thursday morning. I don't know what other people think.

Hon. Keith Martin: Call the question, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Could we have the question? There's been a suggestion made.

The Chair: All right.

We do have the one other date there, but we have the motion, as amended, that if need be, we plan an extra meeting for this.

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

The Chair: Madame Bourgeois, are we going to be able to get through this one?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think the motion is quite clear.

[*English*]

Mr. Ted Menzies: Mr. Chair, is this clock accurate?

The Chair: No, it's three minutes fast.

We have a notice of motion. The problem with this is that when we started our committee we said to leave two or three minutes for committee business, and I don't feel we're giving enough time to debate some of these motions.

Mr. Ted Menzies: Mr. Chair, I call for adjournment. We have a duty in the House.

Mr. Bernard Patry: We don't agree with this. We have seven minutes left. We can do it in two minutes.

Hon. Keith Martin: Madame Bourgeois, maybe you could make the intervention, and then we can vote.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I think that the motion is quite clear. We simply have to be up to date and invite interveners or non-governmental organizations that are involved, directly or indirectly, in Afghanistan to come forth and help us gain some understanding of what Canada is doing as part of its reconstruction and aid strategy in Afghanistan.

[*English*]

The Chair: What are you asking for here? Are you asking for one meeting?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: It had also been suggested that the committee hold one or two meetings with people who work in Afghanistan, because this hadn’t been done for some time. My motion simply restated what we have already discussed. It reflects our wish to be kept informed as to what is happening in Afghanistan.

Than, why not use the NGO or experts who work in the field to find out what is happening?

[*English*]

The Chair: You say “as soon as possible” and “immediately”, and some of these things are kind of open-ended—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: As far as I’m concerned, it will be after one week break. If I remember well, we have a meeting scheduled and no agenda.

[*English*]

The Chair: We do have Minister O'Connor coming, as well as Rick Hillier, but that is not what this motion addresses. This motion addresses NGOs and other organizations.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Precisely. There is a big difference between the Minister of National Defence and the NGOs that work in the field. I'd like us to invite the NGO people who work in the field.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Menzies.

Mr. Ted Menzies: I have some concerns with the final wording of this. I would like to propose an amendment, if I could. After the words "democratic development", remove the rest and replace with "should address how reconstruction and aid strategies can be used as a tool to promote democratic development". I think that fits into what we're studying here.

● (1740)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Vivian Barbot: That's not what we want.

[*English*]

Mr. Ted Menzies: I think that fits into what we're doing there.

I'm sorry, I wasn't laughing at your motion, so please don't laugh at my....

I think this is a friendly amendment. It addresses exactly what we need to address, if we're going to go through with this.

The Chair: I am not going to push through a vote here. We are going to either put this off, take it under advisement, and bring it back, or we're going to miss the vote.

There is an amendment here and there is debate.

Are you willing to put this off?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Mr. Chairman, I agree that we should postpone the motion to give you a hand.

[*English*]

The Chair: Merci.

We're adjourned.

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