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Chair

Mr. Gary Schellenberger

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• (1535)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC)): Welcome to the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

Our first item of committee business is the notice of motion from Maria Mourani. I think everyone has received the motion.

The motion reads as follows:

That the Heritage Committee undertake a study on the living conditions of artists and issue recommendations on measures the federal government could take to improve these conditions.

Would you like to speak to the motion...?

Yes, Mr. Abbott.

Hon. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Chair, I wonder if I may offer something that hopefully will be helpful.

Considering that we will be taking a look at how we're going to get organized with respect to the CBC and other matters of business, and considering that this motion by Ms. Mourani obviously is something very long term and will take up a whole lot more than eight future meetings, and that's what we're talking about, I'm wondering—I'm asking a question here, I'm not even advising—if we should consider the second order of business, which is how we're going to get organized on the CBC; take a look a future business; and then consider Ms. Mourani's motion. Perhaps we could have a discussion about it, but we might want to table the motion simply because we will have used up the time between now and the end of June.

Hopefully that is a constructive suggestion. I think the second order of business will likely use up all of that time, in which case it might be wiser for us to then take a look at Ms. Mourani's motion, the advisability of it...and perhaps doing it in the fall, if we were to do that.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Mourani.

[Translation]

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I understand my colleague's concerns. I am very aware of the fact that we do not have very much time left, unfortunately: there are but eight, or perhaps ten meetings to go. I would nevertheless like us to

discuss the motion even if we wind up having to study it upon our return in the fall. I have no problem with that.

This is a very important issue that will mean our meeting with a certain number of witnesses. I do not believe that two meetings would suffice, because this is an issue that involves various sectors, whether we are talking about writers or sculptors. It is a rather hefty file.

As Mr. Abbott was saying, this study will most certainly require several meetings. I would suggest that we discuss the motion and that we confirm today whether or not we will be studying this matter. If we find that we do not have enough time, our work in the fall could begin with this. We could even begin our planning for the fall session.

• (1540)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

I just want to say that I agree with Madame Mourani. I think it's a very important study to undertake. I'm glad she's brought this motion forward. I think the situation of artists' income is something that should command our attention here at this committee.

I agree with her, too, that it's unlikely that we'll get to it this spring, but I think it should clearly be on our agenda so that when we return in the fall we know that it's one of the things we have to look forward to. Over the summer months, the committee staff can also help us prepare for that study come the fall.

So I think it's very important that we agree to this today and make preparations in light of that commitment.

The Chair: Ms. Fry, and then Mr. Chong.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to support this. I support it wholeheartedly. I wish I'd brought it forward first, before Maria.

I think the living conditions of artists are deplorable. The average income for most artists is about \$24,000 a year. They have absolutely no access to any benefits whatsoever, EI or otherwise. They have no access to retirement income. Many of them—for instance, the artists who write plays, write books, or produce—find that they may spend two years with zero income at all doing that work. Then, when they do get the income, they are taxed fully on it for that year. So such things as income averaging should be discussed.

In many countries of the world, in Europe—in Ireland, for instance—artists are seen as integral to a country's culture. They are treated with a great deal of respect, and honoured. We don't seem to do that here with our artists. So I really support this wholeheartedly.

Jim brought up the issue of when we will do this. I think we could look at it in the summer, because I think it will take some time. It's something that will require a really good, solid study, with good recommendations, concrete and doable, to improve the lives of artists in this country and to show that we value innovation and creativity in a 21st century economy.

The Chair: Mr. Chong, and then Mr. Abbott.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think in some ways we're duplicating the work of other committees in Parliament that have looked at this issue. There was a huge Senate study on poverty that looked at the issue of a guaranteed minimum annual income and issues around that.

My view is that maybe we should focus on studying something else in the fall, as opposed to this specific issue, because this is more tied to income levels and poverty and it's not specific to artists. While many artists may be living below the poverty line, it's not because of their vocation; it's because of the fact that they don't make enough money. That's not specific to them as artists, because many other Canadians find themselves in the same situation. There's been much study done as to what the potential solutions are, whether it be a guaranteed annual income, whether it be increasing the working income tax benefit, or whether it be other measures the government could take.

The point I just want to make here, Mr. Chair—

The Chair: Just a moment. There's a point of order over here, and then we'll come back to you, Mr. Chong.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Chairman, we are discussing the motion, so let us discuss it.

[*English*]

The Chair: I think that's what Mr. Chong was talking about.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: You say that Mr. Chong is discussing the motion. Are we discussing the motion or are we talking about whether or not we are going to discuss the motion?

[*English*]

The Chair: I think they're one and the same thing.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: No.

[*English*]

The Chair: Yes, in my mind they are. I think—

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: If we are discussing the motion...

[*English*]

The Chair: —Ms. Fry spoke to your motion. I think Mr. Chong is speaking to the motion in a little different way.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Chairman, I have not discussed my motion, I have not even presented it yet. Might I at least present it?

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay. Then what we'll do is dispense with Mr. Chong...

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Could we also have copies of the motion?

[*English*]

The Chair: Then what we'll do is dispense with Mr. Chong and we'll let you...and then we will deal with the motion.

What I want to say to this committee is that we dealt the other day with four motions that probably are going to take upwards of six to eight months to do. Now we have another motion coming before us. They're all important. Are we only going to discuss motions, or are we going to decide where this committee is going to go and what we are going to work on? That's what I want to say.

If you want to present your motion, present your motion, and then we'll discuss your motion and we'll deal with it.

● (1545)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Chairman, could everyone be given a copy of the motion? Thank you.

The motion reads as follows:

That the Heritage Committee undertake a study on the living conditions of artists and issue recommendations on measures the federal government could take to improve these conditions.

We wish to study the living conditions of artists in particular, and not those of the general population. Why? Because, unfortunately, only 9% of writers in Canada manage to live on the copyright royalties they receive for their work. Unfortunately, copyright royalties are not systematically exempted at the federal level, as they are in Quebec.

Authors and actors are considered to be self-employed workers and they therefore are not entitled to employment insurance. For example, you will see some actors get one, two or three contracts in the course of a year, and they therefore receive a certain income. After that period, they may not get another contract for one or two years. Unfortunately, they must pay their taxes, just like everyone else, for the year in which they are paid, whereas in countries such as France and Great Britain, they could spread out their income tax over five years. Artists in those countries pay their taxes, but it is spread out over time.

Let us look at another example. The budget for the Canada Council for the Arts is unfortunately still at the same level, namely approximately 170 million dollars. This is the organization artists call upon, be they sculptors or painters, in order to obtain grants for the pursuit of their art.

It is my belief that a study of the living conditions of artists is essential.

[English]

The Chair: Now we'll go back to Mr. Chong.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Chair, I think we as a committee have a responsibility for Canadian heritage and issues around arts and culture. While this is obviously focused on that area, it's also focused on the issue of poverty. That issue has been much studied in other parliamentary committees and in other venues. In some ways I worry about duplicating work that has already been done, albeit this motion is specific to artists, but I think the committee's time could be much better used in focusing on arts and cultural issues other than this one.

I'm not going to support this motion, and it's not because I don't empathize with where Ms. Mourani is coming from or her intentions with regard to the motion; it's just that the issue around poverty has been much studied. I think there are many other issues this committee could study that would be more effective in advancing the arts and cultural agenda in this country.

The Chair: I'll move to Mr. Abbott and then Mr. Malo.

Hon. Jim Abbott: I'm wondering, Mr. Chair, if there's some way for us to have more informed discussion than we have the capacity for today.

What I'm referring to is the idea of giving some instructions, whatever they may be, to our assistants and for them to come back and give us an idea of what this would look like, what we could possibly get into, and what would be involved. Because of the very positive work that has been done within the province of Quebec by the Quebec government and because of the interest of the people within Quebec, I have a feeling there may be an understanding different from that of somebody from British Columbia as to what these words on this paper mean.

Here's the difficulty I'm having right off the bat. Mr. Chong has raised a very interesting point. Suppose a person has an income level of \$12,000—just so we're talking about a number—and they're not an artist or would not classify themselves as an artist, but someone else, by whatever definition, may classify themselves as an artist. Would they be wise to find some way to get on the gravy train and make sure they are classified as an artist so that they can get whatever the advantages are? The fact is that \$12,000 is \$12,000. It's stuff like that that I don't understand.

For example, my wife and I happen to have very dear friends who... The woman is a very accomplished potter and world-renowned, but without the support of her partner, she wouldn't be able to do that. How does that all fit?

I would like to understand what we're looking at before going ahead or even having this discussion we're attempting to have today. Certainly I will admit that I will not necessarily be able to make an informed decision, yes or no, on this particular question. I want to know what this looks like and what the possibilities are.

•(1550)

The Chair: Mr. Malo is next, and then Mr. Simard.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to express my opinion on the issue brought up by Mr. Chong and Mr. Abbott, who have questions as to the purpose of this motion. It is clearly important to reflect upon poverty overall or the standard of living of Canadians in general. I believe that it is the role of Parliament to do so. Mr. Chong stated, interestingly, that the Senate is looking into that. However, it nevertheless remains that it is important for us, as members of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, to ask ourselves very precise questions with regard to the living conditions of our artists. We might draw inspiration from the work done by the Senate. If there are important elements flowing from the discussions by senators, then they should be brought here in order to not repeat the work done by them. We will have to begin with the information already gathered by senators.

It is important to reflect upon the living conditions of our artists. It is perhaps in this regard that Mr. Abbott and myself have different views. What is the role of our artists? Do we throw our artists into a collective grab bag or do we consider that artists should have living conditions appropriate to their trade? Do they play a driving role, a privileged role in our society? We must view the living conditions of our artists in the context of what we want our cultural world to be, namely the spearhead for the promotion of the identity of those who are at the forefront of the various currents at play. We must ensure that these people are able to go about their work and their role with a certain level of comfort and peace of mind. We must ensure that the rules we set cannot, as Mr. Abbott was saying, be used piecemeal to circumvent this rule or that and pocket money unfairly, and that the rules and conditions are adapted to the way in which artists live. This way of life is not linear, it is cyclical, transactional and based upon contracts and national or international arrangements.

We must take into account the fact that artists are not public servants and that they do not work Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. They evolve in a world that might seem foreign and strange to us, but it is their world. They face living conditions and working conditions that are very different from those that are found in a lot of other sectors. Because they play an important role with regard to our identity, it is important to take into account the fact that all of our rules must be adapted to their lifestyle. This is why I find Ms. Mourani's motion very interesting and I do hope that the Committee will concern itself with this matter when we come back in September.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

•(1555)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Simard.

Hon. Raymond Simard (Saint Boniface, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm a little uncomfortable with proposing to give a committee I'm not a member of more work, but I would like to comment on the fact that I'm on the industry committee and we're going to be tabling a report within the next couple of days. We had the artists appear before us once, and we dealt with it basically on the economic level. It was a fascinating experience, and income averaging may be a part of our recommendations.

I think there's an opportunity for this committee to delve a little bit deeper into that. I don't think it will take ten meetings; I think you could get a lot out of three or four meetings here. I'm not sure I would limit it to artists. It would seem to me that any self-employed person who's in the cultural industry, for instance.... It seems to me that if you're limiting it to artists.... Obviously, this committee can determine that, but I do think it's an interesting thing.

In one meeting, all parties recognized what they do to improve the quality of life of Canadians and to keep young people in certain cities and all that. So I think it's a good idea, and I think this committee is well suited to do that.

The Chair: Mr. Miller.

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Like Mr. Simard, I don't always sit on this committee, but I appreciate the opportunity to be here on behalf of Mr. Fast.

In reading this and listening to some of the comments—and Mr. Simard just echoed exactly what I was going to bring up—I'd like to point out some of the comments that Mr. Malo made, that we should be addressing any and all kinds of poverty around the country and looking at it.

This would be a question for Ms. Mourani, to her motion. Nowhere, any more than Quebec, and certainly across the country, are farmers, particularly beef farmers since 2003...not only do they make less than the poverty level that you refer to here, but they've been making zero, and a lot of them have been losing years and years of equity in their businesses. Along the lines of Mr. Malo and looking after poverty, and Mr. Simard's comments that it should entail more, is she willing to include all of that?

I say that a little bit tongue-in-cheek because there are all kinds of problems. You can have problems across the country. Some of my best friends in my riding are very good artists and what have you.

I wasn't yapping while you were talking, so if you wouldn't mind giving me the same respect....

Some of my very good friends in the riding are well-known artists, like Paul Duff and Sue Ellerton and some of them. They've done very well. They entered that by choice, and the good ones are doing very well, and they will personally tell you that.

Mr. Chairman, it sounds like the committee has a lot of good work to do. In the limited time I have seen this motion...I think the committee could spend its time a lot better and could certainly go more in-depth with other subjects.

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, I want to speak against this motion. We at the finance committee have had these recommendations brought forward in pre-budget consultations for the last two years in a row, and there are very significant problems with recommendations that would allow for income averaging, for example, that would allow for additional support for a given sector of society that you don't extend to others. We have a taxpayers' bill of rights in this country. Why should a given group...?

There are all kinds of problems. What is an artist? Mr. Chair, if I decide tomorrow that I want to be a rock star, there are a few things that may limit me from doing that, not the least of which is talent, but who in the world should support me in that if that's what I decide to do and I can't make a living at it? As an individual, it is at least partly my obligation to be as supportive of myself as I can be. I understand that not everyone is advantaged in the same way or as blessed as I have been, but that said, we do have a responsibility.

There are problems with creating special exemptions within society. Why? Are the contributions of an artist more significant than those of a farmer, more significant than those of a small business person? We do not allow a small business person to average out their income over four years' time, or five years' time, or three years' time. I'm aware that artists have come forward and asked for that; they've asked for special funding so that they can continue to work.

People should pursue whatever they are passionate about. That said, even as we see with people like Olympic athletes, sometimes they are so passionate about their sport and they want to compete for Canada, or for their nation, but a lot of them have to work to support that passion. That is a reality. We have to accept that. We have to acknowledge it.

I agree with Mr. Miller. We would be far better suited to focus this committee on other areas. This is an area that has been delved into, looked at, torn apart. The finance department came before the finance committee and did speak to that presentation, and secondly, the Liberal members on that committee united with the Conservative members and voted to defeat it, because it is discriminatory in the tax system. That is something that everyone, as a member of Parliament, has to be concerned with when we start picking winners and losers in the tax system.

Thank you.

• (1600)

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Fry.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I'm going to begin by saying that this is the perfect committee to deal with the issue of the artist. And by artist, actually I think we mean artist writ large, the creative person, and not just the guy who paints. That is how actually people in the cultural community refer to themselves, as artists.

This is not about poverty. This is not about giving special status to artists.

If the heritage committee cannot speak to the value of the artist to our society, both socially and economically, then this committee is not doing its job. I would ask some of the members this summer to read books called *The Rise of the Creative Class* and *The Flight of the Creative Class* by Richard Florida. Look at works by Jane Jacobs. Read what the 21st century economists are saying about artists.

The 21st century is a century of innovation, creativity, and technology. They have all actually come full circle and are now part of what is going to create productivity and competitiveness.

In this society we need to look at how the work of the artist is appropriately valued. We're talking here about value for work done—not about poverty, not for giving handouts. Artists are not asking for handouts.

In countries like Ireland.... I would like to give you this example, Mr. Chair. As you well know, the greatest export of Ireland, where I lived for nine years, has always been its people. Everybody left Ireland. When Ireland decided to join or wished to join the European Common Market and the European Union, they were given the sort of equivalent of what we would fondly call transfer payments here. They had to take that and create a ten-year plan for themselves so they could pull their own weight within the community.

Therefore they spent every penny they were given on two things. Both of those things had to do with what the capital of the 21st century is, and it is human capital and creative capital. It is the creators and innovators and the people with intellectual property that they bring that are creating competitive 21st century nations.

What Ireland did was spend all of the money they were given on a ten-year plan for education, training, and skills for all of their citizens and for developing the creative capital of their country. Ireland moved from being a country everyone left to a country everyone is making a beeline to. They now have a minister of immigration.

Ireland has become one of the top five most competitive nations in the world, with four million people, and within the space of ten years.

What we're talking about here is looking at the new economies, looking at the global competitiveness of Canada, recognizing that this is the era of creativity and innovation and to value our artists and to recognize the work they do, not by giving them handouts, Mr. Chair, but by recognizing the nature of their work, the type of work they do, and by ensuring that we do not contribute to the flight of the creative class to places that value them. We will have lost our creative and innovative edge if we do so.

Countries that are at the top of the heap in the 21st century are maintaining their creative class, nurturing them, fostering them, and finding ways to value the work they do. And if I may put words in Madam Mourani's mouth, I think that is what she is talking about.

This committee has to understand that artists and culture are not just about social cohesion and about the identity of a nation. This is about being productive and competitive in a 21st century economy.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

●(1605)

The Chair: Ms. Mourani.

[Translation]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I note that many questions have been brought up, which is all the more reason to do a study of what it is to be an artist, of the reasons why one person is favoured over another, etc. We could study the living conditions of farmers or of athletes, but we are the Heritage Committee and not that of industry or of sport. Indeed, there is no sport committee.

[English]

The Chair: Just a correction; sport is part of Heritage.

[Translation]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: I agree. We have two critics, but that is not an issue.

[English]

The Chair: Okay, but sport is part of Heritage.

[Translation]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: We could do that. Statistics show that, as a rule, most artists live below the poverty line. Of course, we could say that it is their choice, that they have chosen professions that do not pay well, but I believe that this way of viewing artists is very stunting. We must realize that the cultural, artistic world generates a lot of money. Artists are not outcasts who contribute nothing to society. We fund festivals, yes, but these festivals bring in millions of dollars. Céline Dion brings in an awful lot of money and she also earns a lot of money. But those people who earn their living from their art are exceptions. The others have great difficulty.

I believe that studying this issue is part of our role. In a way, artists sustain our culture, our history, our identity. It is they who make our voice heard, whether they are in Quebec, in New Brunswick or in Alberta. We must respect them and ensure that they do not live in utter destitution. If we are able to help them, then why would we not do so? In order to do so, we must listen to them and try to determine what is not working, so as to be able to recommend measures to the government.

We talked about businesses. Businesses benefit from tax credits. In Quebec, writers are entitled to an exemption for copyright royalties, but why is such not the case at the federal level? I would invite you to show openness, to listen to these people talk to us about their problems and to see how we might help them.

●(1610)

[English]

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Del Mastro, and then we have Mr. Siksay and Mr. Abbott.

Just before we go there, I would like you to know that the chair does live in a riding that has a lot of artists, from many sides of art. Stratford, Ontario, is the home of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, so we have those who make lots of money and those who are starting as artists—actors and people in all the areas that fit around a theatre, whether it be stagehands, light technicians, and all of those things.

We also have a lot of potters, artists, painters—and not painters like me; I painted walls, very good walls, but these people do very good pictures. We have singers, and we have musicians of all sorts in our area. So I do understand where you come from on these things.

I just want you to realize that I do come from an area where there are a lot of artists that go right across the realm.

Mr. Del Mastro, Mr. Siksay, Mr. Abbott, and then maybe we can call a vote on this.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I've indicated that my position on the motion as it stands is to oppose it. I would like to move an amendment, if the members so wish, and then I could see my way to supporting this study.

What I would recommend, Chair, is, beginning after “artists and”—so at the word “issue”—we would strike the balance of that and have it now read:

That the Heritage Committee undertake a study on the living conditions of artists and table a report in the House with their findings and recommendations.

The Chair: There's been an amendment by Mr. Del Mastro:

That the Heritage Committee undertake a study on the living conditions of artists and table a report in the House with their findings and recommendations.

I will call the question on the amendment.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: We will move on the motion as amended.

Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: I haven't said a lot in this debate, because I thought our reasons for doing this were self-evident. I want to support what my colleagues who have spoken in favour of this motion have said. We need to appreciate the difficulties under which so many cultural workers struggle to make a living in Canada. We need to do all we can to support them, for all of the reasons that have been indicated.

I don't believe the finance committee is the appropriate place to do this kind of study or to make these kinds of recommendations. I think this is the appropriate committee to be looking at that.

I find it rather ironic that in this country we can regularly find the means to give huge tax cuts to big corporations, to the wealthy, to the big polluters in Canada. Yet when it comes to some of the hardest-working, lowest-income people in Canada, who contribute so much to our economy and our culture, we say that it's too complicated and we can't address it. I find this very sad.

I hope we can proceed with the study and break through some of the thinking that has dominated this place for far too long.

●(1615)

The Chair: I ran a small business for 40 years. When I left that business five years ago, my top painter who worked for me 12 months a year, at least 40 hours a week, and got two weeks' holidays, was making \$24,000 a year. I heard the poverty line. I heard these things.

I have to speak for the people who worked for me and the others who work throughout this country for \$20,000 and \$24,000 a year. This was mentioned earlier.

Mr. Abbott would like the question called. It is:

That the Heritage Committee undertake a study on the living conditions of artists and issue recommendations on measures the federal government could take to improve these conditions and table a report in the House with their findings and recommendations.

All those in favour?

(Motion agreed to: yeas 8; nays 3)

The Chair: The motion carries. We will table that motion and put it on the agenda somewhere behind the other three or four we already have.

We come to planning our future business.

Mr. Malo.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Malo: The part of the meeting dealing with future business will not be held in camera, Mr. Chairman?

[*English*]

The Chair: No.

Mr. Luc Malo: Are we never going in camera for the future business of the committee?

The Chair: It's been asked that we stay in public.

Mr. Luc Malo: Okay, good.

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Mr. Chair, we spoke with the clerk in advance of the meeting. I understand that the delegation having to do with our Expo exhibit is not available to appear. We might be able to speed things up if we could just agree to expedite the study on Radio 2 that Mr. Siksay has brought forward. It's time-sensitive. After that, we can do what we can to organize witnesses on that study.

The Chair: Ms. Mourani.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Chairman, to answer the question you asked last week about the Internet, I would suggest that we hear from the CRTC first, to get their views, to see what they have done since 2000 and what the complaints are.

I read a CRTC report that said they are unable to control the Internet and do not have sufficient resources for that. This report goes back to 2000 or 2001. Maybe things have changed or evolved since then. Before hearing from other witnesses, it might be appropriate to meet with representatives of the CRTC to see where things are and what they are doing. Maybe they are doing things that we do not know about. Then we would be in a position to decide how many witnesses we want to have on the subject of the Internet. So that would be my proposal.

• (1620)

[English]

The Chair: Okay.

We also have another motion regarding the CRTC. I look for guidance from people around the table.

Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: It makes sense to invite the CRTC to appear on both issues on our agenda—the administrative penalties and the Internet—get them to present at one meeting, and have our rounds. As Madam Mourani has suggested, this may give us a sense of where we need to go in the fall on the Internet question. We would get a better sense of where we need to go on both issues, frankly. I think we could be doing the work on the CBC study that we've agreed to undertake.

The Chair: Anyone else?

I don't have a problem with that. Our biggest thing is that the clerk has to make sure she can have representation from the CRTC. We'll instruct our clerk to see if she can get the CRTC here for next Tuesday. If not, we'll try for next Thursday. I think we have to give them at least two dates. We'll see if we can't get them here next week to talk about these things. This can go forward as we move down the line. We will do it.

Now we can move on to future business beyond those issues. They will require just one meeting, to find out where we're going. It will either be on Tuesday or Thursday of next week. We don't have to have the CRTC here in consecutive times.

Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: I didn't understand Mr. Del Mastro's intervention about the folks from Expo 2010. Are they not available at all, or are they just not available—

The Chair: Would you like to expand on that, Mr. Del Mastro?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: My understanding is that they're not available now. They're out of the country. Some are involved with things like Cirque du Soleil. This isn't a particularly good time of year for them. But I would like to try to get them in the fall, so we can hear what they're planning.

It's not my understanding that they'll be available immediately. But we can put in a request for possible dates and look to schedule them.

The Chair: Does that answer your question?

Okay, then we'll move forward. The next part of business is Mr. Siksay's motion that we went through the other day, and how we are

going to approach our meetings on Radio 2 and the Vancouver orchestra.

Our clerk has been hard at work coming up with scenarios on how we can go forward. It's my understanding that we would call witnesses to Ottawa. At the same time, I've heard from various other members that we should be travelling. I think the motion the other day said we weren't going to travel to Vancouver, or at least not to Vancouver alone. Do we have that motion in front of us? I don't think "alone" was in there. I think it was to be one meeting held in Vancouver.

• (1625)

Mr. Bill Siksay: When Mr. Coderre proposed taking out that phrase, I think it was because he didn't want to discuss the travel at that moment. He thought we could consider travel at a later moment, which seems to have arrived. I don't think the implication was that we shouldn't travel to Vancouver or somewhere else.

The Chair: I'm going to read the amended motion:

That the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage hold hearings prior to the summer recess on the decision by CBC/Radio Canada to disband the CBC Radio Orchestra, on CBC/Radio Canada's commitment to classical music, and on the changes to CBC Radio 2.

So it doesn't say specifically. It's just what was removed from your original motion.

Mr. Abbott.

Hon. Jim Abbott: I'd like to make some suggestions about what we need to deal with at this moment, but prior to making those suggestions, I want to restate that this exercise is going to create an additional platform for listeners of CBC Radio 2 who are interested in this issue. This may be a desirable thing to do. I'm not commenting on its desirability or lack thereof. However, part of the value of these hearings would be to create another platform. I think we've heard this clearly enunciated in the testimony. We had the executives of the CBC come before committee, and they were very fulsome in their answers and what they were about.

We exhausted our questions, if I recall. Bear in mind that the CBC has absolute independence in their decisions on programming. As long as committee members are aware that this is going to be nothing more than an exercise in giving the CBC audience a platform, then we can be making decisions about the advisability of putting out tens of thousands of dollars to travel and take up the committee's time.

My motion, which also passed, was something within the purview of this committee. The minister specifically asked this committee for advice on coming forward with administrative monetary penalties. This is something that is desirable. It would actually make a difference in the lives of viewers of television. If it's the desire of this committee to create this platform so people can vent, that's just fine. What we need to do—

Mr. Bill Siksay: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: We're re-debating the debate we had. We're doing it over again. We've already made the decision to go ahead.

If Mr. Abbott was making suggestions about who should be appearing before us, he'd be in order. But he seems to be wanting to go back and rehash the debate we had the other day. I'm not sure that's appropriate without a motion to reconsider. But he hasn't done that.

Hon. Jim Abbott: I thank you. I will get to my points.

First, we need to decide on travel. Secondly, we need to have the clerk prepare a draft budget. Thirdly, the committee needs to approve a draft budget. Fourth, the chair needs to present the proposal to the Liaison Committee.

The next Liaison Committee meeting is at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, May 13. Even if the heritage committee approves the budget proposal in time, it's doubtful that the Liaison Committee will approve travel when the Broadcasting Act prevents the heritage committee from issuing directives to the CBC. That was my point.

The Chair: Ms. Mourani.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have a few proposals to make. With regard to the agenda, we could decide, as you suggested earlier, to have a meeting on the 13th or the 15th at which time we could hear from the CRTC on the Internet. We could also, on the 27th or the 29th, have the people who want to talk about Radio 2, as Mr. Siksay's motion proposes. I do not know how many hours we would plan for that, maybe four; I do not know. Mr. Siksay would be in a better position to say.

Then we could decide, on the last day of our week in Ottawa, either on the 12th or the 19th, to go to Vancouver if our budget allows. In order for our budget to allow for this, I suggest we each take one travel point out of our budget as MPs, so that the Committee would not have to pay for our travel. The travel costs of the employees we need to take along would be picked up by the Committee. In that way, if we each used one of our travel points, the budget would be lower. Maybe we could even return on the same day rather than stay overnight. Those are suggestions.

[*English*]

The Chair: Ms. Fry.

Hon. Hedy Fry: In the past, other committees that were cash-strapped or coming to the end of their budgets have travelled with representative members from each of the parties. The entire committee didn't go. The support officials went, plus maybe a person or two from each party.

I would like to point out that Bill Siksay, Mr. Abbott, and I live in Vancouver. So if you do it on a Friday, for instance—one can go on a Friday as well as a committee day—you have already cut out three of your travel people.

Mr. Bill Siksay: Mr. Fast would make it four.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Yes. You could have two representatives from the government, Mr. Abbott and Mr. Fast, along with one other person. I would be glad to come for the Liberals. Mr. Siksay would be there. This way, we can cut down on our costs.

If we're going to discuss the CBC Radio Orchestra, we should do it in Vancouver, because it's a Vancouver issue, really.

I think Mr. Abbott makes a good point. The Liaison Committee may not let us get the kind of money we're looking for to travel. It could all be moot, whatever we say, because we have no mandate to interfere in the programming decisions of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. However, we could do one meeting in Ottawa that would deal with Radio 2, classical music, etc. Then we could go to Vancouver and do Radio 2 classical changes and the orchestra in an afternoon or a day. It might be possible.

I think this was what Mr. Coderre was talking about when he said we should see what we can afford. It may very well be that we can't make a decision until we hear from the Liaison Committee about whether we can travel to Vancouver. If we could do the two days, one day here and one day in Vancouver, we could cut our costs. It would be a simple matter of doing what I suggest with regard to the many of us who live in that beautiful province.

The Chair: And who would be on the list of witnesses?

Hon. Hedy Fry: I think between us—all of us—we could give you lists of witnesses.

The Chair: What about the people who have a voice in Newfoundland? What about the people in my riding who would like to have a say in front of the committee? What about the people in the rest of the country?

Hon. Hedy Fry: On the CBC Vancouver orchestra?

The Chair: All I'm saying is that when we get into this.... We had to change when we looked at the public broadcaster in the 21st century. We started out with about four places we were going to go, and we ended up having to go to six or seven because there were people who were not represented.

I know that the Vancouver orchestra is in Vancouver, but there are people across the country who have pros and cons on that also. I have received some of those. In fact, some people from my riding are very disappointed with what's happening with CBC Radio 2 and with the orchestra. I don't think this is something that can only be handled with people from Vancouver.

• (1635)

Hon. Hedy Fry: I'm just suggesting a cheap way to travel, that's all. I threw it out on the table. You don't have to agree with it.

The Chair: I have to say that whole committees haven't been travelling. When we travelled on the CBC, I think there was the chair, two and two, and one and one. I do know that only half the committee travels.

We have to decide, is this just an exercise to get the voice from Vancouver? Is this an exercise where we'll have four or six witnesses here one day? How many witnesses from Vancouver, and how many witnesses do we have here? Do we listen to people from Newfoundland or from Stratford?

Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Mr. Chair, I'd like to make a recommendation. There's an important point here, and I think it's what Mr. Siksay is getting at.

I think the CBC as a public broadcaster must have their independence from government. We shouldn't be telling them what to do. That said, there is a responsibility to the public they serve. I think he wants to give them a voice. He wants them to be able to be heard, and I think that's important.

Certainly in other committees that I've been participating in we've been doing an awful lot of video conferencing. It actually works quite well. The committee doesn't have to leave town, the costs are low, and it's a very easy forum for people in Vancouver, for example. We can get as many witnesses in by video conference as you'd like.

So it may be a trade-off, I'm suggesting. It may be a means of getting accomplished what we want to accomplish. If there are people in Stratford who would like to speak on the issue, they can come in on video conference as well. It's very cost-effective, no one has to travel, it's a greener way of doing it, it has a lower carbon footprint; there are all kinds of positives on this. We can do it without any of us needing to impact our other commitments that we have as members of Parliament.

I would like to suggest that we can have this forum. We can provide this stage for people to speak their minds. I believe CBC will actually hear it, and they may well consider it in their ultimate decision. I think it's important. Let's do it by whatever means we can to make sure that we hear the voices.

I would like to suggest that perhaps we look at a video conference as a means of allowing people the forum and the access to us in Ottawa. At the same time, we'd be allowing people who would like to come to Ottawa the opportunity to appear before the committee.

The Chair: Thank you for that.

That goes back to our study. When we couldn't go to Great Britain, BBC did a teleconference. I think it worked very well.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Video conferencing is even better.

The Chair: Yes. Well, it was video conferencing.

So we could maybe look into that.

Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: Thank you, Chair.

When I originally proposed the motion, I included travel to Vancouver for at least some of the hearings, because it is very important to people in Vancouver.

As I said at the time, this is a national cultural institution based in Vancouver, and as far as I know, there aren't any other national cultural institutions based there. I think it is important to go there to hear from people, and to allow people in the community to be present at those hearings as well, even if they're not testifying before us. That would be a respectful thing to do for that community that has no other national cultural institution based there. I think this question is of very particular interest to people in the Metro Vancouver area.

That being said, if the Liaison Committee denied us, and given your record, Chair, it seems very likely.... Given the parliamentary secretary's statement, it sounds like it might be very likely that they will deny us. We should try, but if they deny us, then video

conferencing sounds like a good idea to me, or bringing people to Ottawa.

As somebody from the west coast of Canada, I know there is a big carbon footprint for travelling across the country. But if we deny Canadians from the west coast the ability to come to Ottawa and make the connections that other Canadians who live closer to Ottawa can enjoy all the time, to see the operation of Parliament, I think we are getting into serious problems about our democracy. I don't want to say that we should always be doing video conferencing. I think there is great value in allowing Canadians to come here to make their presentations, to meet other parliamentarians, to meet other people who are presenting on various issues. If we deny that consistently to people from the west coast of Canada, and people from other parts of the country as well, we are making a very serious mistake.

It seems to me that there are some very key places that are organized around this. Toronto seems to be well organized. Vancouver certainly is. Maybe Toronto would make sense for us to visit as well. But I think we should go out of our way to bring people here from other parts of the country and to have those hearings here, Chair. I do think we have to be careful about how we make these kinds of decisions on who we're letting in and leaving out because of where we happen to come from in the country.

That's what I have to say for now.

• (1640)

The Chair: There's one thing. I'm not going to be able to make it to the Liaison Committee on Tuesday because we cannot get a budget ready for the presentation in that particular time. We'll have to wait for the next Liaison Committee meeting. I can instruct the clerk to come up with a budget. The budget has to come to committee, and the committee has to approve the budget. That's the big thing. We have to approve the budget and then go to the Liaison Committee. And the Liaison Committee is before we have our next meeting.

I'm going to ask the clerk to prepare a budget to go to Vancouver and meet for one day with the regulated amount of participants. That is, two Liberals, two Conservatives, one Bloc, one NDP, the chair, plus the staff—the clerk and the translators and support staff who go along with that entity. The clerk will get a budget together, and we'll bring it forward.

Yes, Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: Chair, can I ask how long the clerk will need to prepare that budget and maybe whether it's possible to have a special meeting of the committee to look at it?

The Chair: The clerk says she could have it by tomorrow. If that's the case, we'll get it together.

Mr. Abbott.

Hon. Jim Abbott: I apologize that I had to leave the room for a couple of minutes, so I'm not sure who will be coming as witnesses. How will we determine who the witnesses will be? Are there going to be x number of witnesses per party? Are we going to have a maximum number of them? At what point will we have exhausted all of the witnesses we're prepared to consider? I think that obviously has to be considered.

•(1645)

The Chair: The other thing that needs to be considered is the date when this will happen, because without a date it will not pass. One time, because of the weather, we stretched a day and had trouble with Liaison, as far as the committee was concerned. So we have to make sure all of those things are together.

As far as the budget is concerned and people going, will there be two Conservatives plus the chair?

Hon. Jim Abbott: Sorry, I'm talking about the witnesses who will be coming before us here.

There's another thing that just crossed my mind. In normal circumstances, when any standing committee has witnesses, the witnesses come with some background and expertise. The witnesses who will testify before the committee on Radio 2 will have very valid opinions, and we should hear those opinions. But having heard them, I'm just wondering how we would then get to questioning.

In other words, if we're talking to a nuclear physicist about something that's happening at Chalk River, that person has some expertise other than what they can bring to their testimony. A person who would be testifying that they are unhappy about the way Radio 2 has decided to do their programming has a perfectly valid point of view, and I want to hear it. But past that point they really won't be bringing any more wisdom to the table other than their opinion.

I am an avid listener of Radio One in my constituency. Am I an expert on Radio One, or am I an observer of what the programming happens to be? There's a difference.

The Chair: Just before we get into too much back and forth, there are a couple of things here that we have to get straightened out. I've already instructed our clerk to get a budget ready for this trip. We have to decide how many meetings we're going to have—one in Vancouver? If that's the case, how many meetings are we going to hold here? How many panels will there be per meeting, and how many witnesses per panel?

The last time we had two panels of one hour each, usually with two witnesses in each panel. We can work out how many minutes we'll allow for opening remarks, but will we have one or two meetings? How many people are we going to bring here? Has anyone given that any thought?

Will we still go back to Mr. Siksay's original motion from the other day to just have one meeting in Vancouver?

Mr. Bill Siksay: That wasn't the motion, Chair. You're misrepresenting what my intention was. It said to have at least one meeting in Vancouver.

The Chair: I'm sorry I misrepresented you, but I want to have an idea of how many meeting we're going to have.

Mr. Bill Siksay: Maybe I can make some suggestions, Chair.

May I ask first if the clerk has heard from any people who have requested to appear as witnesses at this point? Can you give us some sense of how many people we've heard from?

The Chair: It's less than 10, but I will speak to that. The other day I said I wanted each party to give me a list of about 10 witnesses, so it could be circulated—who we want to have as witnesses. If we get

1,000, who's going to make the determination? My clerk is not going to make that determination.

I know it's on Facebook.

Hon. Hedy Fry: We could have a rally.

The Chair: We could.

Do I go back to Mr. Del Mastro?

Mr. Bill Siksay: Chair, you recognized me and then you interrupted me.

•(1650)

The Chair: Sorry for the interruption. Go ahead, Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: I think we need to go to Vancouver. We need to have a full day's session there, with as many witnesses as we can fit in during an afternoon, morning, or maybe even an evening. I think there will be quite a number of people who want to appear as witnesses.

With respect to Mr. Abbott's remarks, to say that we're going to hear only from people who listen to CBC Radio 2 and don't have any other expertise is demeaning to people interested in this issue. There will be people of the calibre of nuclear scientists who want to appear on this issue. There is a lot of interest in the importance of the CBC Radio Orchestra to Canadian culture, the cultural life of Vancouver and Canada, and the promotion of classical music in Canada. These folks are going to want to talk to this committee. These people are presenting themselves, and will continue to present themselves, as potential witnesses. I don't think the quality of witnesses is anything we should be concerned about.

It's also important to hear from folks who describe themselves as dedicated listeners to Radio 2—they're part of what we need to consider. I think there will be lot of people who can present expert testimony about the importance of the orchestra, Radio 2, and the commitment to classical music in Canada.

We should be doing this in Vancouver. We should have at least two meetings here in Ottawa, to have panels. We could have more than two presenters on a panel. We could have three or four. I've seen this work well in other committees. We could get through quite a number if we had at least that time, and if we started work the week after the recess.

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro.

I won't interrupt anyone, but afterwards I will have a statement.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: I have a simple suggestion, and I'm sure all parties would be agreeable to it.

If you set a deadline of, say, Monday for all of the parties to submit a potential witness list on Radio 2, this would give you direction on how many meetings are needed in Ottawa and Vancouver.

Right now, it's all hypothetical to say how many meetings we need. Let's get a witness list in, see how many people want to appear, and then decide how many meetings we need. This way, we'll know we have a deadline to get it done. We'll figure it out from there.

Hon. Michael Chong: Why don't we send a message out on Facebook?

The Chair: Before we go any further, I want to say that the Liaison meeting on Tuesday is the last one that's going to be held before the end of this session. We have to have a date for when we think we're going to Vancouver. What we should do around the table is, first of all, decide whether we want to go to Vancouver. I know some people think we should go and others think we shouldn't. Let's take a vote.

All those in favour of holding one meeting, at least one day meeting, in Vancouver?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay, we will go forward.

Can someone give me the date that we should be going to Vancouver? It takes a bit of arranging to make sure we have our witnesses ready.

Mr. Bill Siksay: What about May 30, or, if folks are amenable, May 31, the Saturday?

The Chair: Mr. Chong.

Hon. Michael Chong: If members from outside British Columbia are going to go, my preference is to do it mid-week. I'm here Monday to Friday; I see my family on Saturday and Sunday. If I go to Vancouver on the Friday, I certainly will not be seeing my family on the weekend, because it's not possible for me to get back from the west coast.

Maybe we could do it on a Thursday, which would allow you to stay through the weekend. Alternatively, I'd suggest Monday. A Monday might be better, because then at least members can get to Vancouver on Sunday, attend the meetings on Monday, and then take the red-eye back to Ottawa on Tuesday.

• (1655)

The Chair: Ms. Mourani.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Chairman, I had to leave the room for a while. My colleague just told me that we are going to Vancouver on Monday, June 2. I would like to remind my colleagues that the CRTC hearings on TQS will take place on June 2. This means that I will not be able to go to Vancouver because I will be tabling a brief before the CRTC.

I am sorry to tell you only now, but I was not here earlier.

[*English*]

The Chair: What about the...?

An. hon. member: There is only one Bloc member anyway.

The Chair: Yes, there's only one Bloc member.

Hon. Jim Abbott: I would like, if I may, Mr. Chair, in the name of equal time, to point out to Mr. Siksay that I was not suggesting that a nuclear scientist might or might not have an opinion on Radio 2. The problem is whether or not they have expertise on Radio 2. That was what I was saying. I think your characterization—

Mr. Bill Siksay: Does the head of the Canadian Composers' Association have expertise on this? I think so. That's all I was saying, Jim.

Hon. Jim Abbott: Okay.

The Chair: We really don't need to get into an argument. We can do that out in the hall.

Can we put something together by the 27th?

Mr. Bill Siksay: What about Monday, the 26th of June, Chair?

The Chair: You don't want to work overtime? Again, what that means is that we would hold it on the 27th or we would hold it on the 26th.

So you fly there on the Sunday and you come back on the Tuesday.

I need a date. Can we put things in order for that?

Mrs. Maria Mourani: I agree with the 26th. It's okay for me.

The Chair: That's the date we'll pick, then, and that's what we'll put on the....

We're going to have to have a quick meeting next Monday to go over the budget and approve the budget, and we'll go from there.

Hon. Jim Abbott: Mr. Chair, there's no such thing as a quick meeting in this committee.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: This is a really quick one today. We're almost there.

Next week we'll make sure we get this part of it done, because our clerk is going to have to work extra hard to put everything together to make sure it happens on the 26th. We have to get a meeting place. We have to do all of those things. We'll work on getting that done.

Then I'm going to ask for a list, from the various parties around the table, of who we're looking at to have as witnesses here and in Vancouver, so we can circulate that list again. Maybe that's something we can talk about. Something will have to be circulated, and we'll have to work on it to at least make sure we have the right number of people and a full contingent in Vancouver when those witnesses come forward. We'll then decide if we have a list at arm's length. Then we'll have to decide how many meetings it's going to take to get through those things. I think we have to make sure that everyone is heard, and if there's someone, as I said, in Newfoundland.... This is a national orchestra, I think, in Vancouver. I think it's the CBC Vancouver orchestra, so it belongs to the whole country.

Yes, Ms. Mourani.

• (1700)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Chairman, when will we know if we are going to Vancouver? Do we have a travel budget?

[*English*]

The Chair: You'll know next Tuesday.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Next Tuesday? Fine. Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Yes. Then we have to have permission from the House. We have to make sure the whips say okay, so we have to have permission. There is quite a bit of work we have to do in the short term, and we'll work from there.

Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: Mr. Chair, how many witnesses do you want from each of us? Mr. Del Mastro had suggested 10. Is that what you're asking for?

The Chair: I'm saying 10.

Mr. Bill Siksay: Ten from each party?

The Chair: If you have 10 from each party, that's 40 witnesses.

Mr. Bill Siksay: And there may be duplicates on those lists, as it turns out.

The Chair: Yes.

As I say, if we do that and we find out that you have a list that's far longer than that, we'll go through the 40 and decide what's going to happen, and then we can always decide if we think we have to have other meetings. Until we have that list—so we know how many people are coming—we don't know how many days we're going to have to meet here in Ottawa.

Is everyone fine with that?

I think we have a lot of work for our clerk and our analysts.

I'm going to let Lara...please, go ahead. She has a question.

Ms. Lara Trehearne (Committee Researcher): Mr. Chair, I just wanted to ask for the committee's direction as to whether or not you're going to want to write a report about all of the hearings you're going to hold, and if so, to whom will that be addressed, given the jurisdictional issues that Mr. Abbott raised. Would it be tabled in the House or would it go to the minister, if indeed you do want to write a report of some kind?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Because this is an all-party committee, the chair could write a letter to CBC saying we did three days of this, this is what we heard, and we're just sending it to you for you to know what we've heard without a direct—

Hon. Jim Abbott: I have one last suggestion.

If that is going to happen, I think we should ask the CBC to have the programmers—or the people responsible for Radio 2—to make a statement. We could allow them to respond to what we have heard. We've heard from the executives, and it would be a waste of time and valuable resources to bring them back.

The Chair: Okay.

We can look into that as we go. It seems this is a work in progress. It seems as we go forward....

Yes, Mr. Siksay.

Mr. Bill Siksay: Mr. Chair, I would just like to say that I think, at the very minimum, a summary of the evidence needs to at least go to the CBC. But as we have our hearings, there may be another option that becomes apparent to us. So there will be some written project that comes out of this—at least a summary of evidence to the CBC—

but there might be other good suggestions that we hear that we want to do something further with.

The Chair: Mr. Chong.

Hon. Michael Chong: Through you, Mr. Chair, I'd like to answer the analyst's question.

I think having it reported to the House is probably more appropriate than having it directly sent to CBC, because as the 1991 Broadcasting Act states, we have no say in the programming decisions of the corporation. Therefore, if we send it to the chair of CBC or to the president of CBC, or any other officer of the corporation, we're going to get the response that we've been getting to date, which is that they're responsible for programming, we have no say in it, and thank you very much.

But if it's reported to the House, then at least the legislative body that some time ago actually passed the 1991 Broadcasting Act is voicing its position on this, which I think in some ways is more powerful than having it sent directly to CBC.

• (1705)

The Chair: Okay.

We can cc the—

Hon. Raymond Simard: We can do both.

The Chair: Yes.

I think we can deal with that as we go forward.

I request that everyone from each party give a list to our clerk for Monday or, at the latest, Tuesday at noon, maximum. It would be fairer to her if we could get it on Monday.

Hon. Jim Abbott: I have one last quick question.

Ten times four is forty. If we have people coming from all across Canada, does that have to be included in the budget?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Yes, it will have to be.

An hon. member: It's \$1,500.

Hon. Jim Abbott: That's having to spend potentially \$1,500 times 30 of the 40 people, so there's another item that we need to take into account.

The Chair: As I say, this is a work in motion. It's in progress as we go.

First things first: we'll deal with the Vancouver issue and then we'll go on from there.

Hon. Jim Abbott: Mr. Chair, what I'm saying is that the cost and the plans and the budget for Vancouver are one item. The second item is that if we have 30 of our 40 witnesses coming at a cost of \$1,500 each, that's another item that somebody, somewhere, is going to have to approve. It may not go to Liaison, but we are going to have to get that approved.

The Chair: That's a different budget, because we're not travelling. That part, here, is a different budget.

Again, I've been reminded to ask you to put your witnesses in order of importance by ranking them one to five or one to ten as you go down. That might make it easier too, because there might be the same witnesses on some of the lists. We'll do that.

Our clerk and our analysts have a lot of work to do from now until Monday, so we'll adjourn the meeting. The meeting is adjourned.

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