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Chair

Mr. Rick Casson



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**●** (1110)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, CPC)): We'll call the meeting to order. Welcome, ladies and gentlemen.

Committee business is on the agenda today. The steering committee met last Thursday and fleshed out a tentative proposal for things we should have a look at, and these have been presented to you, I believe, in a handout.

The first item the steering committee wanted to consider was finishing the procurement study and bringing forward the information from previous times. Under that subject it was suggested that the Minister of National Defence be invited in relation to that study.

It was also mentioned that the Minister of National Defence should be invited to appear before the committee on the estimates. We have until December 3, I believe, to make that happen under a ruling of the House.

And it was suggested that in the new year we study the health of the Canadian Forces personnel, but that we also return to the regular briefings and ask for a briefing on Afghanistan from DND. We also want a briefing on what the preparations are for security at the Olympics.

There are quite a number of things there. I don't know whether any further comment needs to go into this. We should have a little discussion on the items.

The first item would be procurement.

Mr. Clerk, do we need to adopt this report?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Samy Agha): That is correct. The Chair: Okay.

I would accept a motion to adopt the report. Then we'll go into debate.

It is moved by Mr. Coderre that we adopt the first report from the standing committee. Is there discussion of that?

Boy, this could be a short meeting.

Go ahead.

Mr. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC): I'll just say, on the Minister of National Defence being invited, that he will be invited. Obviously I can't, and the committee can't, pre-judge his schedule. He'll be invited, as per the request. It will be worked out between the committee and the minister.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

The Chair: What we're indicating is that if this report is accepted, the process will be put in place through the clerk and through the parliamentary secretary, or however, to get the minister here, to get the briefings set up, and on we go. The first thing we'll need to do after the debate is to adopt the report, and then we can move forward.

Go ahead.

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, CPC): Mr. Chair, I just want to say I'm the only member from B.C. around the table here.

Ms. Dawn Black: That's not correct.

Mr. James Lunney: I'm sorry, Dawn.

The Chair: Rephrase that to say you're from Vancouver Island.

**Mr. James Lunney:** I'm sorry, Dawn. As a new member on the committee, I stand corrected, and I recognize my esteemed colleague from the NDP is also from British Columbia.

I just wanted to say that with the preparations B.C. is making, gung-ho, for the Olympics, I was pleased to see that the steering committee had acknowledged them and was willing to have a look at this subject. Certainly, as a new member, I'm very keen to have a look at what preparations are being made, so thank you for putting it on the agenda.

The Chair: Thank you for that.

You should have said Vancouver Island, not B.C., I suppose, and you would have been all right then.

Mr. Cannis.

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** I think Mr. Coderre was before me.

[Translation]

Hon. Denis Coderre (Bourassa, Lib.): Regarding the report, I agree completely. The work was well done. I also know that the Minister's availability can be quite limited. In that regard, I would like to reiterate that, if he cannot appear twice, we have to see to it that he stays for two full hours, not just one, and that we cover the subjects in depth. The members of the committee agreed on that point. Under those conditions, we could obviously talk about procurement and the estimates.

[English]

The Chair: Thanks, Denis.

Laurie.

**Mr. Laurie Hawn:** Once again, I can't speak to the minister's timetable, but to prioritize the topics for him, am I correct in suggesting that, procedurally, the estimates must be done first or must be done before December 3, in any event?

The Chair: There's a definite timeline on that.

**Hon. Denis Coderre:** I don't mind, as long as we understand that if he's coming solely for the estimates, he'll have to come back for the procurement.

**Mr. Laurie Hawn:** Yes, I understand, and that will be the invite, but just in terms of priority, which ones....

Hon. Denis Coderre: We're okay with that.

The Chair: Very good.

Keep in mind, we had said that we would like to have the procurement report done by 2008, so we have put a timeline on that as well.

Any further discussion?

Mr. Cannis.

**Mr. John Cannis:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to make a quick comment. First of all, I apologize for not being here last week, and congratulations to you again.

On the procurement side, was there any discussion in terms of—you recall in the previous committee in the previous session we had compared notes with other countries, specifically England. Has there been any discussion to compare again by visiting or having them come over at all?

**The Chair:** Well, no, there wasn't along those lines, Mr. Cannis. The committee felt that if we had the one meeting to hear from the minister, that would round out the previous evidence we've heard, and all that would be brought forward and form part of the report. We could just finish up with the hearing with the minister. So there was no talk of further expansion or travel.

Mr. John Cannis: Thank you.

The Chair: If we adopt the report, there's one aspect in that report that I think we need to deal with in committee of the whole, which is our trip to Afghanistan.

I'll call the question on the report. All those in favour of adopting the steering committee report?

(Motion agreed to)

**•** (1115)

The Chair: I would like to suspend for a minute while we switch over to committee of the whole so we can discuss future business.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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