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Chair

Mr. Bruce Stanton

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• (0900)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.)): My name is Todd Russell. I'm vice-chair and I'll be filling in for our chair, Mr. Stanton, for a short period of time.

On the order paper today is Bill C-28, An Act to amend the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act.

Witnesses appearing today for the Grand Council of the Crees are Bill Namagoose, executive director; Brian Craik, director, federal relations; Denis Blanchette, legal counsel, Gowlings Montreal; Pierre Pilote, legal counsel, Gowlings Montreal; and on behalf of the Oujé-Bougoumou First Nation, James O'Reilly, legal counsel.

I welcome you all here this morning. We look forward to your comments. I believe you've already been informed that because of the joint presentation we will allow about 20 minutes for you to speak in whatever order you please and to present as you wish.

I welcome the first speaker.

Mr. Bill Namagoose (Executive Director, Grand Council of the Crees): [Witness speaks in Cree]

First, I'd like to thank the members for this opportunity to speak in favour of Bill C-28. We are delighted that Bill C-28 received all-party support in the House of Commons on May 7 and was referred to the standing committee.

The amendments contained in this proposed legislation comply with those that it was agreed would be recommended in the 2008 Canada-Cree New Relationship Agreement. The amendments will put the Cree community of Oujé-Bougoumou on the same footing as the other Cree communities with respect to local governance, as was agreed to with both Canada and Quebec, and the amendments will bring about an evolution of Cree governance structures from those originally recognized and agreed to in the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

The Cree community of Oujé-Bougoumou is composed of the families of Crees who once were known as the Doré Lake Crees and who, at the time of the negotiation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, had been forced by mining development to relocate to other Cree communities and to camps around the region of the town of Chibougamau.

At that time in the early 1970s, the parties to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement—the Crees, Canada, and Quebec—agreed to provide a just settlement for this community through subsequent discussions. These discussions culminated in the

agreement in 1989 between Oujé-Bougoumou and Quebec and the Oujé-Bougoumou/Canada Agreement of 1992. Both these agreements dealt primarily with the long overdue construction of the community of Oujé-Bougoumou, but also provided for the integration of the Crees of Oujé-Bougoumou into the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

However, several issues and controversies remained outstanding. In 1993, the Crees of Oujé-Bougoumou instituted distinct legal actions against Canada and Quebec respecting their aboriginal rights, their status, breach of trust by Canada and Quebec, and claims for damages, including those from the forced relocations.

Resolution of these claims with respect to Quebec was provided for in the Paix des braves agreement signed with the Government of Quebec in 2002. An out-of-court settlement was reached with Canada in 2008, pursuant to the Canada-Cree New Relationship Agreement. The Oujé-Bougoumou/Canada Agreement of 1992 contemplates specific amendments to the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act respecting Oujé-Bougoumou, and Bill C-28 satisfies this important undertaking of Canada.

The Cree governance structures set out in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement provided for the setting-up of a Cree Regional Authority under provincial legislation to oversee certain Cree responsibilities in respect to Cree involvement in regional governance and in regard to matters delegated to it by the Cree communities. Provisions in section 9 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement also provided for the incorporation of the Cree communities in federal legislation distinct from the Indian Act. The resulting Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act was the first local self-government legislation for aboriginal peoples in Canada, and it broke from the colonial tradition of the Indian Act.

The Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act was passed by Parliament in 1984 after several years of discussion between the parties and consultations with the Cree communities and the Naskapi Band. With great difficulty, a new funding regime was eventually put in place by Canada that was compatible with the assumption by the Cree communities of new responsibilities in respect to the planning priorities for their development and administration.

After adoption of the act, and to the present day, the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec/Cree Regional Authority has acted as a forum for the concerted implementation of the act. It also continues to be the guarantor and protector of Cree rights. While the act opened the door for the assumption by the Cree communities of certain responsibilities concerning their development, there were still many aspects of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement that had not been properly implemented by Quebec and Canada.

It was the announcement by Quebec of its intention to build further hydroelectric development projects in the territory—and particularly the Great Whale hydroelectric project—that sparked the Crees in 1989 to take out a comprehensive court action that sought to stop the proposed developments and also sought the implementation of those numerous aspects of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement that had not been implemented by Canada and Quebec.

Without going into the details of the 1990s struggle of the Cree Nation, suffice it to say that in 2002 the Quebec-Cree new relationship agreement, also known as the Paix des braves, settled certain legal disputes between the Crees and Quebec. It also resolved immediate issues concerning certain hydroelectric developments and set a clear example for Canada with regard to the implementation of some of its obligations to the Crees under the same 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Treaty.

Under the Paix des braves, the Crees assumed responsibilities for certain of Quebec's obligations under the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, and Quebec provided for the funding related to this for a period of 50 years. This largely resolved the lack of congruity between Quebec's priorities and programs and those of the Crees, which had largely been the cause of the legal disputes.

• (0905)

When Canada and the Crees entered into out-of-court discussions from 2005 to 2008, this model of devolving to the Crees the planning and setting of priorities for the certain of the obligations that were in dispute was found to be adaptable to the issues between the parties. However, Canada went further in accepting the Cree view that it was time once again for another step in the evolution of Cree government structures and responsibilities.

The last two whereas clauses of the Canada-Cree Agreement of 2008 state:

WHEREAS the Cree Nation and Canada seek to improve implementation of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, to provide for the assumption by the Cree Nation of greater responsibility for Cree economic and community development, to provide for the achievement of increased autonomy, and to better respond to the traditions and needs of the Crees by ensuring that decisions respecting the Cree Nation will be made at a regional level;

WHEREAS the Cree Nation and Canada have been working and will continue to work cooperatively towards an agreement and conforming federal legislation relating to a Cree Nation Government with powers and authorities, to be negotiated, beyond the scope of the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act;

Chapter 3 of the agreement also states a two-part program for the evolution of Cree governance. It states:

The purpose of this Chapter is twofold:

a. As a first step, Part 1, in order to better enable the CRA to receive and carry out the Assumed Federal JBNQA Responsibilities (as listed in Section 4.3 of this Agreement), to equip the CRA with by-law-making powers similar to those of the Cree bands under the CNQA, through proposed amendments to that Act;

b. As a second step, in Part 2, to set out a process for negotiations leading to a Governance Agreement, Governance Legislation and possible amendments to the JBNQA and to the CNQA concerning a Cree Nation Government with powers and authorities beyond the scope of the CNQA and its amendments in Part 1 of this Chapter. Such negotiations, if successful, would expand Cree Nation governance beyond the CNQA powers by establishing the structures and powers of a Cree Nation Government and the relationship of such Government with Cree bands and federal and provincial governments.

The amendments before you today in Bill C-28 accomplish part 1 of this program and are set out in chapter 3 of the new agreement. The discussions on part 2 are beginning, with the involvement of Canada, Quebec and the Crees. The intention is to present a new Cree Nation governance law for your consideration within three to five years.

In brief, the phase one amendments call for a recognition in the law of the following powers of the Cree Regional Authority: one, to pass bylaws that have force in the Cree communities and to provide for their public availability, and to provide for the passage of standards that exceed federal and provincial standards; two, these bylaws would include central sanitation services, housing, building use for regional governance, fire departments, protection of the environment, including natural resources; three, to manage funding and assets; four, to promote the welfare of the Crees and the Cree Bands; five, to preserve Cree culture, values and traditions; six, to assume certain federal responsibilities as may be agreed to; and finally, to empower the Eeyou-Eenou police force on category 1 lands.

Moreover, the agreement calls for Canada to consult the Crees on the amendments contained in Bill C-28. Canada has done this, and we are satisfied that the requirements of the agreement will be met by the proposed amendments, once passed by Parliament.

In fact, we commend the representatives at the Department of Justice for the courteous and insightful manner in which they have carried out their work in consultation with us. Moreover, both Canada and the Crees have consulted the Inuit through their representative organization, the Makivik Corporation, and also both parties have consulted the Naskapi Band. From both the Inuit and the Naskapi Band, we have received assurances that they accept and do not object to the amendments and that their rights are rendered safe and untouched by them.

We are pleased to answer any questions you may have.

• (0910)

First of all, Mr. Chair, I bring greetings from Grand Chief Matthew Mukash and Deputy Grand Chief Ashley Iserhoff. They were unable to make it today because they are practising their traditional way of life on the land, goose hunting. It's that time of year in our nation. Chief Louise Wapachee is out on the land also practising a traditional way of life. Some of us get to preserve our culture, and so I'm here on their behalf.

Also, as you know, Oujé-Bougoumou is part of the Cree Nation. James O'Reilly may have some comments with respect to this presentation.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Todd Russell): Thank you, Mr. Namagoose.

We'll hear from Mr. O'Reilly.

Mr. James A. O'Reilly (Legal Counsel, Oujé-Bougoumou First Nation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

It has been a long time since I've been before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. I've been working as a lawyer in regard to various Indian rights and claims for 43 years now. I was involved with the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. Prior to that I had quite a huge battle with the Quebec government, the federal government, and Hydro-Québec.

This is a culmination of a very long quest for the Crees of Oujé-Bougoumou. As Mr. Namagoose has just told you, Chief Wapachee and Mr. Abel Bosum, who was chief for quite a while during the long trek, are out practising their traditional way of life. Unfortunately, you just have me as the witness for Oujé-Bougoumou. But I have been intimately involved in virtually every step of the way since the early 1980s.

It's not often that I can commend the justice department, because I've been locked in vicious battles with Canada throughout the land, in litigation in particular. In this instance, certainly in the last number of years, there has been exemplary cooperation. I point this out to your committee because sometimes, if the initiative were to come from Canada rather than having to come all the time from the aboriginal peoples, you might be amazed at the results.

Often Canada has a defensive position because it's attacked in court. Usually people go to court because they just can't come to agreements or compromises, because the parties are too far apart in principle. I suggest to your committee, in its work, that you consider asking the Department of Justice whether it shouldn't be taking a real advocacy role far more often. By advocacy role, I mean initiating the process. Don't wait for the aboriginal peoples, and for people to say, "Well, we're too far apart." That's a personal recommendation that I've been wanting to make for a long time.

This is an example. The Oujé-Bougoumou were scattered throughout northern Quebec.

● (0915)

[Translation]

I believe that the Bloc Québécois members are the ones most concerned here because this involves their territory. They know that none of these battles were easy.

No one recognized them — except for the Cree Nation. Since the 1980s, they have made tremendous efforts to integrate themselves, to fit under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, along with their brothers and sisters from the other communities.

[English]

In terminating, I want to thank, this very rare time, the lawyers from the Department of Justice and the external lawyer, Ms. Deborah Corber, whom the Department of Justice hired. These were tough

technical positions to have to try to refine in legalese, or legal language, but they accomplished it, and in a cooperative spirit. Maybe this is a new dawn, as I'm about to trod off to other areas, but certainly I think that one of the keys to better solutions for relationships between Canada and the aboriginal peoples of Canada is a cooperative spirit, which is exemplified here, in regard to the Department of Justice and the Government of Canada as a whole.

With that, and reiterating what Mr. Namagoose has said in his presentation, I will say that Oujé-Bougoumou is strongly in favour of Bill C-28. Have no doubt about it, they've been wanting to have this day come—and the day when Bill C-28 will be, hopefully, proclaimed into law—for a long time. The complementary agreement is virtually finished. You see the parallel in the complementary agreement and Bill C-28. Parliament will have the chance, when it is filed in Parliament, for approval through a negative resolution to review the complementary agreement if there are any concerns whatsoever with it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is indeed a pleasure to come back.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Todd Russell): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. It's a pleasure to have your word shared with us. Indeed, it is a rare occasion when the Department of Justice gets such a resounding endorsement. It speaks to the process that has been undertaken on this particular bill.

Thank you, Mr. Namagoose, as well. We hope that the grand chief and the others have happy hunting. I'm sure there will be goose on Sunday, maybe for many.

We will go to our first round of questions. The way it will work is that it's seven minutes both for the questioner and for the response. Each party will have seven minutes on the first round, and if we get a chance to go to the second round, the questions will be for five minutes.

So we will start with the Liberal party. Mr. Bagnell.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Thank you.

I appreciate your endorsement of the bill. I just want to ask about something that came up in previous testimony, and that was a number of administrative concerns that have been asked for, for—I can't remember now—10 to 15 years, and haven't been incorporated. The request was that there be a commitment within a year from Indian and Northern Affairs to deal with those. If that does not happen, should we try to incorporate them in this process?

Anyone who wants to can answer that.

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Yes, there is a commitment from the Department of Indian Affairs that we would deal with those amendments as called for by the Cree-Naskapi Commission. We have a process established for the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, the Naskapi, and the Cree.

So there is a process that will come back and bring amendments again to this, but we feel that Bill C-28 should be passed as is. There is a process established to take care of those amendments, and it will take some time to agree amongst ourselves on how those administrative amendments should be. I think it had to do with referendums and borrowing bylaws. We will take care of those, yes.

● (0920)

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Good. I'm very glad that you are confident it is proceeding.

Mr. O'Reilly, that was a very interesting comment, the systems comment related to justice and advocacy. I think there are some serious system things that we can discuss. I'd be happy if any of the witnesses want to comment on them, but as an example, I think we have improved specific claims in the sense that now there's an independent arbitrator who will deal with them. But as for those particular types of issues, I don't think we have yet dealt with them in comprehensive land claims or in implementation of land claims. They are still seated in a department that has a zillion other things to do. Obviously, when you have two parties negotiating and then the judge of the result is one of those parties, that doesn't make any sense, but that is our present system.

So to at least have Justice as an independent arbitrator is one step. I wonder if any of the witnesses—because we don't often get a chance to see you—have any comments on the structure of those negotiations or any other types of processes within the department or within the federal government that might be changed.

Mr. James A. O'Reilly: Thank you.

If I may respond, Mr. Chairman, I have thought about this for a long time. I worked on a committee in 1989 for the Canadian Bar Association. As I've said often, there isn't equal justice for Indian people in Canada.

You point to a very fundamental problem in regard to land claims—what they call land claims or land rights. I think the tribunal will help, although I think there are some real problems about getting it started. But what happens is that in the United States there had been this idea that a department of the government should in effect advocate the interests and rights of aboriginal peoples even within the department. You know that the courts have said, okay, the crown wears many hats. Fine, but why can't one of those hats be a specific group whose job, whose vocation, is to take the side of the Indian people with the rest of the crown, with the rest of the government?

The crown is the defendant in litigation. I've had a lot of experience in this. Fine, it will keep all of its rights, its recourses, its remedies. The battle will be there. But when it comes time for negotiation, there seems to be a great difficulty to have anybody acknowledge that compromises must be found, that there must be reconciliation.

How does this great reconciliation principle get applied in practice? That is one of your most fundamental problems, and I think it will happen by asking somebody in the department—not necessarily even an ombudsman, just somebody in government who's charged with initiating this reconciliation or trying to reconcile this. That would be my suggestion to the committee.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Todd Russell): Would anybody else like to comment?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Yes, in our negotiations on the implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, even though it was not a land claim agreement but the implementation, we went through seven negotiators from the federal side from 1990 on. It was only when the federal government brought Raymond Chrétien to the

negotiating table that the atmosphere changed. Prior to that, the federal government took a defence lawyer's type of position in the negotiations on implementation. Raymond Chrétien took a problem-solving approach. That changed the whole dynamics for negotiations.

If Canada sends negotiators to the table to act as defence lawyers, of course there will be no agreement. But if Canada sends negotiators with a mandate to solve the problem, then we will have agreements such as this.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Todd Russell): Thank you.

You have about a minute and a half left.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: You've pointed out two problems. One is this. For people who don't know, there's a conference going on right now with all the modern treaty bands in Canada, the first nations, and the only reason it's going on is because of their problems with implementation and people not following up. One of the things they keep mentioning is, as you said, the change-over in negotiators; the federal government keeps changing negotiators. One discussion has been going for 10 years, and then you get a new negotiator.

The other one is, as you said, that if you're sending defence lawyers, why, when you're doing an implementation problem—it's already a signed agreement, and you're just doing a rule of law thing—don't you have someone independent?

Does anyone else want to comment on any of those issues?

● (0925)

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Yes, the commitments are there in the agreement; you just need a mechanism or means to implement them. That's what we've done with this agreement. In this agreement, there was a transfer of the treaty obligations of Canada to the Crees. The problem has been transferred to the Cree Nation government, so we will carry out those treaty obligations.

That's the way we see self-governance. You cannot ask for self-governance and then ask the federal government to do something for you. You have to set up a structure and means, with the proper resources, to do it yourself. That's the way we've approached it.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Todd Russell): Thank you.

That will end the first round. We'll move to the Bloc Québécois and Mr. Lévesque.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Lévesque (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Welcome, gentlemen.

If there is a man who is proud of the Cree Nation, he owes much of this pride to those who represented it. I have known Mr. O'Reilly for quite some time. I have also met with Bill a few times. I am a little disappointed at not seeing Louise here, this morning.

It is however rather difficult to follow the evolution of this file. One must really have participated in it to truly understand. Today, in Oujé-Bougoumou, some people are saying that they are on the Mistissini territory. Nothing will budge unless the government of Quebec cedes this territory to the federal government. That would provide a solution to the problem. I would like you to explain the situation to us.

Mr. James A. O'Reilly: Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would provide the following explanation.

Under the agreements between the Oujé-Bougoumou and Quebec in 1989 and 1992, it was established that in order to make room for Oujé-Bougoumou, those who were considered to be Mistissini at the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement would henceforth be considered as belonging to the Oujé-Bougoumou, and that on that basis certain lands would be taken from the Mistissini, with their accord, in order to be annexed to Oujé-Bougoumou.

Over time, it became known that the Mistissini had other problems. There was not complete agreement as to when all of this was to take place. The government of Quebec therefore accepted that these lands not be withdrawn from the Mistissini and that that community take the time it needed to resolve these problems. It was agreed that if an agreement were eventually reached, the parties would meet once again.

As we speak — and this is the basis for this Bill —, these lands have not been withdrawn from the Mistissini, this community has maintained all of its rights and remedies, and Quebec has accepted to give the government of Canada the 100 km² of category 1A lands. Therefore, if the Mistissini problems are resolved, there will be no transfer. Oujé-Bougoumou will officially have the use of category 1A lands, and the issue will have been resolved once and for all.

Thus, the Oujé-Bougoumou situation will have been resolved, but without causing the slightest injury to the Mistissini. At one time, there was some compatibility between the parties. The Mistissini even participated in the discussions. However, they wanted to resolve certain problems which, I recognize, were very important. It remains that it was their choice. The Oujé-Bougoumou and the Grand Council declared that they had been waiting since the 1980s and that they could not wait another 5, 10 or 15 years. I think that it was very fair for everyone.

• (0930)

Mr. Yvon Lévesque: We know that the Mistissini, Oujé-Bougoumou and Waswanipi communities are very dynamic economically and that they work alongside non-Aboriginals. In this situation, the Oujé-Bougoumou community was slightly more anaemic because it did not have very much room.

I really have the impression that a partnership between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals is going to develop and that agreements will be made. Of course, there is some racism, and sometimes there is too much of it, but it is our hope that it will abate, with the participation of more and more Cree.

Are the 100 km² sufficient for these nations to develop their economy? What had been envisaged when these agreements were negotiated?

Mr. James A. O'Reilly: There are 100 km² of category 1A land, 67 km² of category 1B land and there will be more than 2,000 km² of category 2 land. Furthermore, by integrating the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, these people will enjoy all of the rights that the other Cree have on category 3 lands. They will be able to continue to hunt and trap. They already enjoy the provisions of the Paix des Braves and the agreement between Canada and the Cree that Bill C-28 refers to.

In my view, this will provide greater security to everyone. At the present time, we can consider that these people still have their ancestral rights and that they are still a nation. Neither the non-Aboriginals nor the Aboriginals know where they stand. With this, it will be clear that these people fall under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. I believe that with the security thus being offered to everyone in the region, economic development opportunities will grow considerably.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Todd Russell): You have 30 seconds, Mr. Lévesque.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Lévesque: I wish to take this opportunity to thank you. I do not have enough time left to pursue this any further, but we will probably have the opportunity to speak again. Congratulations for your initiative.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Todd Russell): And now we'll turn to Ms. Crowder, with the NDP, for seven minutes.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Thanks, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank you for coming before the committee today. This is an important bill. I know when the chair of the commission came before the committee he talked about the fact that it took 19 years to get to this place, but that in the last couple of years things had really been expedited.

I want to touch on a couple of things. One is that, Mr. Namagoose, in your speech you talked about the intention being to present a new Cree governance law for your consideration within three to five years. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about the process that's in place, because given that it took us 19 years to get to this point, I think it's important that we have on record the process that's in place, the plan, the timeframe, and the degree of confidence that you have in reaching that next stage, because I don't think any of us here wants to see another 19 years pass before the next round of amendments comes.

My understanding is that when the chair of the Cree-Naskapi Commission was before the committee, he said that the amendments were largely non-contentious from the Cree side. So I wonder if you could speak to that specifically.

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Yes, thank you.

I think you're referring to the undertaking we have with respect to governance negotiations of an agreement and eventually legislation. That process is now under way. The federal government has appointed Senator Jean Bazin from Montreal to be its chief federal negotiator. We are having meetings with him now. That process has started. The Quebec government is also to be invited to these tripartite negotiations. They have recently appointed Judge René Dussault, former chairman of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. He will be the Quebec government negotiator. He's a very eminent person, and we welcome that appointment.

So all the parties now are present at the table to negotiate the Cree Nation governance agreement. However, there is a Cree-federal process. Our position is that if there is an agreement with the federal government on governance, through an agreement or legislation, then that process should be allowed to proceed, even without the participation of Quebec. On the other hand, if we have an agreement on governance with respect to the Quebec government on areas of Quebec jurisdiction, then that agreement and that process should be allowed to proceed, even if the federal government is not ready to be part of that agreement.

• (0935)

Ms. Jean Crowder: So you could have two parallel processes happening in respective jurisdictions?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Yes. The ideal would be to have a tripartite process, but we want to proceed bilaterally if the occasion is there. That has been the pattern with the Cree Nation over the years, and that's why we made progress, because we have not been held back by certain disagreements or policies of one government over the other.

Ms. Jean Crowder: That's unlike the situation in British Columbia, where it's hard to get all three parties at the table.

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Yes. That has been our history, so it works well for us.

The amendments that the Cree-Naskapi Commission had brought up are strictly administrative amendments that have been called for by individual communities in their presentations to the Cree-Naskapi Commission since 1984. It's mostly administrative efficiency measures, like band borrowing bylaws. They don't feel they should have a band referendum to borrow \$10,000. That should be a mandate to give to the council.

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Namagoose, there are actually two very different issues here. We have the bylaws and some of those administrative amendments, which could have actually been included in this current piece of legislation. I certainly respect the wish not to hold up the current piece of legislation to include those amendments. Then there's the larger issue around governance. So could there be two separate pieces of legislation that come before the House then?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Well, not now, but Bill C-28 as it goes, is—

Ms. Jean Crowder: Yes, I mean aside from Bill C-28. In the future, there could be one to do with the administrative and one to do with the larger governance?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Well, the governance agreement could be brought into force by separate legislation or an amendment to the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act. Those are the options we have. So I

guess it'll be up to the negotiation process. Once we arrive at the Cree Nation governance agreement, we will decide or resolve with our federal counterparts if a new piece of legislation or an amendment to the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act is required, such as we are processing now.

Ms. Jean Crowder: On the administrative amendment side of it, is there work being done?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Yes. As I explained before, we have a process now with the Department of Indian Affairs and the Naskapi, who are affected by the same legislation, to work through those amendments. So there is a process in place. Either we can come back for a new amendment to the Cree-Naskapi legislation at a future date, or we could come at the same time as the Cree Nation governance agreement legislation is being discussed.

Ms. Jean Crowder: One of the amendments that were included concerned the police force on category 1 lands. I don't have the details here, but I know the Cree-Naskapi commissioners raised some issues around police forces, and they didn't have information about the effectiveness of the police forces currently. Will this address some of that?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: The Cree police were established in 1975 by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, and they are local police forces. With the Paix des braves we signed with Quebec, they will become a regional police force, with one structure instead of nine separate structures. The new powers they have will be enforceable by the....

I'm sorry, I'm losing my voice.

• (0940)

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Legal Counsel, Gowlings Montreal, Grand Council of the Crees): Essentially, what we had originally was local police forces in each of the communities. This is pursuant to the original provisions of section 19 of the James Bay Treaty. Eventually over the years, we realized that some of the issues and services dealt with by the police were better dealt with at the regional level and that more coordination was required between the communities to deliver some of the services, including investigative work, dispatching, things like that.

Basically, what Mr. Namagoose is saying is that, in 2002 with the Paix des braves and 2008 with the new relationship agreement with the federal government, there was a commitment to amalgamate the local police forces into a regional police force. This commitment has now been enshrined in a complementary agreement to the James Bay agreement, under essentially a revision of section 19 provisions, to provide for this establishment of the regional police at the regional level.

This complementary agreement has been signed. It needs to be put into legislation at the Quebec level, the provincial level. The Quebec Police Act was amended by Bill 54 last year. The bill has passed; it needs to come into force now at the date of the amalgamation of these local police forces.

The counterpart to the provincial legislation is essentially a section of the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act, section 194, which now will recognize the regional character of the Cree police force, which will have jurisdiction in all the communities on category 1A lands and around those communities. This amendment, in section 28 of the amending legislation, was essentially to recognize that regional—

The Chair (Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC)): Unfortunately, we will have to finish up there. We're quite over time.

I'll add my welcome, by the way, to our witnesses this morning and my compliments to our vice-chair, Mr. Russell, who is not here at the moment but is here in spirit. I appreciate members' understanding of my temporary absence this morning.

Now we'll go to Mr. Duncan for seven minutes.

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome, everyone, this morning—Mr. Namagoose and your team, Mr. Blanchette, Mr. Pilote, and Mr. Craik. Mr. O'Reilly, good morning to you. Your reputation precedes you. I know you've been involved in aboriginal affairs for a long time, not just in the province of Quebec but in other parts of the country as well. It's good to finally meet you.

I would like to recognize the comment about the role that Raymond Chrétien played in the negotiations. I had dealings with him when he was the ambassador in Washington. I came to respect some things at that time.

I wanted to ask about the new Canada-Cree Standing Liaison Committee. I'm unsure if we are talking about the same body that's carrying out these negotiations or if we are talking about a separate entity. So I'm asking about the status role and responsibilities of that liaison committee. Also, what kind of dispute resolution mechanism, if any, is predicted or in place?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: The standing liaison committee, our committee, is responsible for implementation of the agreement between the Department of Indian Affairs, representing the federal government, and the Cree Nation. It is functioning now. An ADM has been appointed, Michel Roy, to sit and represent Canada on this committee, along with me and other people. We call people to the committee as we need them. It is not a large committee, just two of us at the moment. We bring representatives to the committee.

There are no disputes at the moment. Hopefully it will stay that way. There is smooth implementation.

I will ask Brian to describe the dispute resolution mechanism.

● (0945)

Mr. Brian Craik (Director, Federal Relations, Grand Council of the Crees): We have a dispute resolution mechanism, but we haven't used it because we've been able to bring the issues and set up processes to deal with them. Basically the dispute resolution process calls for bringing in a third party to mediate a solution. If the solution isn't workable, then the parties maintain their legal positions.

All of the work of the liaison committee to date has been to try to better understand the issues from both sides and to deal with them as

they arise. It's a way of not allowing issues to be buried for too long, and to deal with them as they arise.

Mr. John Duncan: What I understand from that is that if there is good faith on both sides, the current system tends to work. Would that be a fair statement?

Mr. Brian Craik: Yes, I think that's a fair statement. We have many issues that are complex. They involve Quebec, they involve Canada, and they involve other aboriginal parties in some cases. So they can't be rushed.

Mr. John Duncan: All right. I want to go back to the subject that Ms. Crowder was talking about, these administrative amendments. When you're dealing in a trilateral way on the governance, there must be bilateral things that you're doing with the Quebec government as well. How is this working? Does it make any sense to try to do something more quickly than the two or three years you're anticipating to complete the governance on negotiations, or not? Can the administrative amendments wait for the two or three years?

Mr. Brian Craik: Are you just talking about the ones that were brought up by the Cree-Naskapi Commission?

Mr. John Duncan: Yes.

Mr. Brian Craik: A lot of those amendments were put together just after the act was passed in 1984. Within two or three years it was evident that there were a few things that should be adjusted a little bit. The spirit of the discussions between Canada and the Crees at that time was not such that either party could focus on just those issues.

Right now we have to go back for another round of consultation with the communities to discuss whether the amendments, as they were construed at that time, are still exactly what we want or whether we want more. The other issue is that we're involved in this larger process of defining Cree governance.

What we would prefer to do is come back in three years or so with a more comprehensive picture, which might well include some of the administrative amendments that we were thinking about. From our point of view, right now it would be premature to pass those amendments.

Mr. John Duncan: Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Duncan.

We will now begin our second round, with Mr. Bélanger. You have five minutes.

● (0950)

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[English]

I want to continue on the same line of questioning as Mr. Duncan was on, on these non-contentious amendments.

My first question is to the clerk. Have we received any communications from the Cree-Naskapi commissioners? They said they might get us some documents on the non-contentious amendments within a week. Did we receive anything?

The Chair: We did receive a letter clarifying that....

Go ahead, Mr. Clerk.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Graeme Truelove): They're not sending a list of amendments at this time. They sent a letter explaining that, which is currently in translation.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Would you care to tell us what it says?

The Chair: After our presentation by the commissioners, you will recall two weeks ago, there was a brief discussion about those items that were non-contentious that we might consider if there were all-party agreement. Essentially, the commissioners undertook to consult with the Cree and Naskapi leadership. They had the opportunity to talk with senior officials. They expressed—in their words:

We all agree that it is important not to jeopardize the early approval of the amendments currently before Parliament, especially given the many years that Cree Nation of Oujé-Bougoumou had waited for its legislative recognition as a Cree Band.

So they're requesting that we proceed with these amendments straightaway and await the next phase of the process.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Thank you.

Mr. Todd Russell: Thank you, Mr. Bélanger.

I just want to follow up, because it was an interesting discussion. We're faced with a number of pieces of legislation, and not all go as smoothly as Bill C-28, let me assure you. I'm sure it hasn't been smooth for you in terms of arriving here after decades of negotiation.

My understanding is that Bill C-28 was co-drafted with the Department of Justice. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. James A. O'Reilly: You can't say, according to your parliamentary system, that outsiders could dare to be involved in the drafting as such. In practice, extremely intensive consultation occurred. What was given was perhaps suggestion as to what the bill might look like. Then later on, I think it got very fuzzy as to whether we were looking at the draft bill or not.

But certainly, every step of the way there were very intensive consultations. This bill, insofar as Oujé-Bougoumou is concerned... and Denis, I think, can speak for the grand council. We knew exactly what was happening. There had to be the correlation with the complementary agreement.

I won't go quite as far as saying it was co-drafting, but certainly there was consultation in respect of the drafting—as it should be, by the way. I can vouch for the fact that the so-called consultation of the federal government and aboriginal peoples in many instances is a failure, but not in this case.

Mr. Todd Russell: I see that the 43 years have treated you very well in terms of the language one engenders around that.

Would you also say that you're undertaking this intensive consultation with respect to other pieces of legislation that we can see coming before us maybe in three years or five years? Is that the undertaking?

Mr. James A. O'Reilly: Let me give you an example. Back in 1984, when the original Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act took place—and I was involved in that, I think, just at around that time—it was a

very, very difficult process. There was confidentiality and secrecy and all the rest. Amazingly, it was much more open with Quebec in the legislation related to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, which came out in the period from 1976 to 1978.

So I'd say that the federal government is perhaps starting to adopt a new attitude: that in effect, if bills are approving agreements, there's no reason there shouldn't be as close to co-drafting as possible. In practice, I'll say to you that it was co-drafting. In theory and in the law, no, they protected their values and their traditions and parliamentary supremacy, subject to the Constitution. So there was no breach of ethics on the part of Justice. They made very sure of that, and we cooperated with that.

• (0955)

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Russell and Mr. Bélanger.

[English]

Now we go to Mr. Albrecht for five minutes.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

Mr. O'Reilly, you commented on your 40-plus years of service and then you indicated you're prepared to trod off into other areas. I'm wondering if you're prepared to announce your second career today.

Mr. James A. O'Reilly: No, I'm trodding into other big fights with aboriginal peoples. I've been continuing, and it's becoming vast; there are still a lot of unsettled and unresolved issues in Canada, as your committee is well aware.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Namagoose, you referenced in your comments the courteous manner in which the Department of Justice carried out their work and their consultation. As a committee, I can speak for all of us in saying that we're pleased to hear that.

I'm wondering if there are specific examples you can share with the committee that may actually be groundbreaking or foundational stones, which maybe this department or other departments could replicate in the future. Could you give us one or two specific examples of how that consultation experience was positive?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Maybe some of the lawyers could speak to this, but the Department of Justice was, as I said, courteous and open, and we had good consultations. The Department of Justice was present at our negotiating table throughout the whole process. So when we arrived at an agreement, we just continued on to the consultation process on the drafting of the bill, so it was a good take-off. When you set a good rapport at the negotiating table, the follow-up in the implementation is going to be successful.

That's the approach we would like to take.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: All right. Let me just ask a question regarding the financial implications of the agreement and the amendments here. I understand that after the agreement is signed, there'll be \$100 million within 30 days of royal assent. Could you comment a bit on what the plans are for that?

Further to that, what implications are there as we move five years, ten years, or fifteen years down the road in terms of financial agreements that may be forthcoming from this agreement and future negotiations?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: The financial portion of the agreement provides resources to the Cree Nation government to carry out Canada's obligations as specified in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. We are taking over those obligations. We will use those resources of \$1.4 billion to carry out those obligations—and \$1 billion has been transferred so far. The money is not there to spend at our discretion; it's there to cover the federal government's obligations.

There will be an additional \$100 million to be transferred when this bill is in force, plus another \$200 million will be transferred if and when we have a Cree Nation governance agreement and legislation is passed by Parliament. So there will be a further \$200 million, which brings it up to \$1.4 billion. Those moneys, as I said, are strictly for Canada's obligations in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Are there any future implications beyond what's specifically talked about in these amendments in Bill C-28?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Hopefully, in 18 years there will be another process established to negotiate a successor agreement to this. Hopefully, it will be as successful as this one. This agreement that we are discussing now or have signed recently has a 20-year lifespan. After the 20 years are over, all the obligations that have been transferred to the Cree Nation government will be transferred back to the federal government. We're hoping there's another similar agreement where those obligations will be transferred back to the Cree Nation government with the proper resources to carry out those obligations.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: So just to clarify, there will be future negotiations surrounding financial obligations as well.

Mr. Bill Namagoose: The treaty is perpetual; the obligations are perpetual.

• (1000)

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Is that my time?

The Chair: You have a few more seconds, Mr. Albrecht.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: If you could, just outline briefly as well some of the proposed regional bylaws. I understand that Bill C-28 provides authority for regional bylaws. Could you give ordinary Canadians a snapshot of what some of those might be that would be developed by the Cree Nation?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Well, that remains to be seen, but they're mostly with respect to community development, installing infrastructure, sewer systems, housing, public buildings, regulating public buildings, regulating the police force. On the environmental standards, there's a provision in the agreement that says we can have higher environmental standards than the federal-provincial legislation presently does, so that's a good power to have.

We also promote the welfare of the Crees and the Cree management, which we will do. Of course we have bylaws with respect to financial management and investments. Those are obvious things. Of course we have a mandate to pursue Cree culture, values,

and our tradition. That's why I am also able to speak for the Crees here this morning. That's part of the obligations of the Cree Nation.

Thank you.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Albrecht.

[Translation]

We now move on to the Bloc Québécois.

Mr. Lévesque, you have five minutes.

Mr. Yvon Lévesque: I would have liked to have let my colleague speak, but if I follow James and Marc's example, we will be here for the rest of the morning.

Some members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Marc Lemay (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Just a second! I will let Yvon speak, but before he does I would just like to welcome you. I apologize for having arrived late. I had an urgent meeting with the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador regarding another file — not that yours is not urgent, much to the contrary; it is very important. I know that Yvon is very interested in seeing your issue resolved.

Mr. Yvon Lévesque: In the agreement you had, there was something about Washaw Sibi, but I do not remember all of the details. I do not know if we are the ones who asked a question in that regard. We nevertheless know that the Washaw Sibi issue generated the same kind of debate as the Oujé-Bougoumou file at the time, and that this is still ongoing as far as the Kitcisakik issue is concerned. Oujé-Bougoumou serves as a model and is putting pressure on the federal government to resolve the Kitcisakik issue. In the case of the Washaw Sibi file, have the talks begun?

It was stated earlier that Quebec always served as a model for Canada. Quebec also had close relations with the First Nations. Indeed, Quebec's fate is the same of that of First Nations: the issue is the recognition of one's autonomy.

This question I am putting to Harold: what is going to happen to the billion dollars in 15 years? I hope that between now and then the Cree will have become an autonomous and self-sufficient nation, capable of making its own decisions, making its own regulations, and that it will be on an even footing with the other peoples of the world.

For example, are you affected by bill C-28, An Act respecting family homes situated on First Nation reserves and matrimonial interests or rights in or to structures and lands situated on those reserves, or are you excluded, given the agreement you have?

[English]

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Washaw Sibi is the Cree Nation in this area that doesn't have a community and is seeking to have one. It opened up the issue with the federal government years ago, but that has now been transferred from the federal government to the Cree Nation government as part of this package. So it'll be up to the Cree Nation government to establish the community, acquire some land, and provide the resources for the capital costs of that community. While those processes are going on, we will establish a corporation that will manage the construction of Washaw Sibi. That's been decided already by the Cree Nation government. But we have not decided yet what capital resources are required.

So the process is under way. Washaw Sibi will be the first Cree urban community, or urban reserve if you like that terminology, and it will be in the Amos area.

That issue will be solved by the Cree Nation government, since it has been transferred from the federal government. However, we will be back to the federal government about the legal status of the community in the future and other obligations with respect to communities. So Washaw Sibi will become another Oujé-Bougoumou and will be the tenth community of the Cree Nation.

• (1005)

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Lévesque: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Lévesque.

Mr. Rickford.

[English]

Mr. Greg Rickford (Kenora, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and welcome to the witnesses.

My first question is actually my colleague Harold's last question. I want to give you an opportunity to develop it a little more.

Bill-28 provides authority to develop regional bylaws. You said it was going to be an opportunity to be a framework for allocation of resources for regions and communities. I notice that in proposed section 9.2 there's a capacity for bylaws that can prohibit activities. Have you thought about what they might be? You talked about what it could facilitate, but what could it prohibit?

Mr. Denis Blanchette: The idea of these amendments was essentially to replicate what the bands can or cannot do. So we elevate these powers and possibilities, including the possibility in the future of enacting bylaws to prohibit something. But at this time I can't think of an example.

Mr. Greg Rickford: That's fine. I was just curious.

I want to talk about the new relationship agreement—sort of a retrospective view on the consultations that called for discussions between the Cree Regional Authority, the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach, and the Inuit of Nunavik during the development of this legislation. Can you provide an overview of those consultations and describe what aspects of them you found beneficial?

Mr. Bill Namagoose: We had to consult with the Inuit of Nunavik in northern Quebec, since some Inuit people were living in Chisasibi,

one of the Cree communities. They have certain rights specified in the treaty—how they occupy and enjoy their rights within the Cree community of Chisasibi. Those discussions went well with the Makivik Corporation. There were good, courteous discussions and consultations between the Cree, the federal government, and Makivik.

The Naskapi are affected by the legislation. It is called the Cree-Naskapi Act, and they fall under that act as well. We informed them that we wanted to amend the Cree-Naskapi Act to empower the Cree Regional Authority to act as an interim Cree government. That legislation affected them, so that was the context of our consultations with them. So they are in favour of it, and they're happy the Cree are making another incremental step toward autonomy or self-government.

Mr. Greg Rickford: In a previous meeting where we were discussing this, it was clear that these agreements were far-reaching in terms of their impact on other communities or other regions. What I'm hearing you say is that it's particularly beneficial from the outset to get into discussions with those folks and identify them as key stakeholders and move forward collectively.

Mr. Bill Namagoose: Yes, they were notified right from the outset about what our intentions were.

Mr. Denis Blanchette: If I may add something, Mr. Chairman, there is a specific clause in the legislation that seeks to speak to the fact that nothing in this legislation should affect the rights of the Naskapi and the Inuits under the JBNQA, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, or under the implementation legislation.

Mr. Greg Rickford: I have no further questions.

• (1010)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Rickford.

Just momentarily, I'm going to go back. Mr. O'Reilly, I think, was indicating he wished to speak.

Mr. O'Reilly, did you have a response to Mr. Lévesque's question? I didn't see until afterward that you perhaps wanted to respond to his question in the last round. Did you have something you wanted to add?

Mr. James A. O'Reilly: I'm not involved in Washaw Sibi as such, so I can't speak for them. I think Bill Namagoose has communicated the position. The only parallel I wanted to make is that he, Mr. Lévesque, is right that it is very analogous to what happened with the community. The hope is that they won't have to fight every inch of the way to get recognition from both Canada and Quebec and that they finally can be the community. And it'll be for the benefit of not just Washaw Sibi and the Cree Nation, but also the whole area.

That is the only comment I would have made. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity.

The Chair: Very good. Likewise, thank you very much.

Ms. Crowder, you can ask a very brief question.

Ms. Jean Crowder: I just have a very brief one.

I noticed that you said, about the non-consultation of drafting the bill, that the Department of Justice was at the table throughout the process. I'm reminded that the Auditor General did a report back in 1998 that said that the Department of Justice was rarely at the table until the very end, and that's often why some of these agreements went sideways.

Am I understanding that it's an unusual experience to have the Department of Justice at the table throughout a process? Could you say a little bit more about your experience around that?

Mr. James A. O'Reilly: Don't forget that in this particular case, with the Cree-Canada New Relationship Agreement, several court cases have been resolved. I've been involved in all of them, but this one was 1989, 1990, 1996. Quite often, the justice department lawyers are very suspicious, and their mandate is to think just in terms of the litigation, primarily, and then perhaps negotiations. In this particular case, what happened was that they got beyond that and they had a series of department lawyers from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Justice lawyers, and then an external lawyer or two—I mentioned Ms. Corber, and Mr. Namagoose mentioned Mr. Chrétien and some of the lawyers from his firm—so that they got a team together inside and they were coordinating with the draftsmen and draftswomen on the legislative end.

So that's the way they got around that. They, in effect, formed their own internal team and they were able to interface on all levels. The usual experience has been maybe one or two negotiators, and they're thinking of the crown's position, the crown as a defendant, and this didn't happen in this particular case. There was a will to try to resolve it.

Ms. Jean Crowder: I just think it's an interesting model, because again, coming back to the Auditor General, she has identified time after time, on treaties and comprehensive land claims, that these agreements have been signed, that there was a spirit and an intent around those agreements. If we agree that there was a spirit and intent around those agreements, it would make sense that we used a more collaborative approach to look at implementation or problem-solving as problems arose.

I just think it interesting for the committee to note that there is another way, a less adversarial way, to approach implementation agreements. I think that's a really important point to highlight for the committee for perhaps looking at other issues that are facing us.

So thanks for your time today.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Crowder.

Now we'll go to Mr. Payne.

You didn't have a question? Okay.

Mr. Bélanger.

[Translation]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Mr. Lévesque tried to draw a parallel between traditional native claims and the claims to autonomy of the Bloc Québécois. He did not extend this parallel to land partition.

[English]

The Chair: We'll take that as a comment, I guess.

Monsieur Vellacott?

There being no other questions at this time, I must express on behalf of all members our thanks for your appearance before the committee today on this very important piece of legislation. In many ways it caps a very long and comprehensive process that you have been involved with. Our compliments to you in the hard work you've undertaken to get it to this stage. You made the point that here is still more work to do, but it's somewhat satisfying to see that at least this step is getting to a point where we'll see it through to the House of Commons and the Senate, I hope in the weeks ahead.

At this point, members, we are going to suspend for five minutes, tops. Then we will begin the next segment of our meeting, when we'll invite officials from the department to be on hand. The intent here is to move to clause-by-clause consideration of this bill.

We'll suspend for five minutes. Thank you.

• (1015)

(Pause)

• (1020)

The Chair: Thank you, members.

We're going to continue with the consideration of Bill C-28. Before we go into the clause-by-clause consideration, I'd like to welcome representatives of the department with us here today. Stephen Gagnon is the director general for the implementation branch. Marianne Kroes is external counsel to, I think, the department in this case. Deborah Corber is also here with us representing the AG of Canada.

Before we enter into this consideration, are there any questions you would like to direct to the representatives of the department before we proceed? *Il n'y a pas de questions?*

It's going to be a very short meeting for you here today, it would appear.

At this stage do we have a point of order or a question? Mr. Bagnell.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Having talked to the chair and the clerk, I'd like to propose that we approve all clauses except clause 9, which has a minor wording amendment and then deal with that minor wording amendment.

The Chair: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

I will say one thing. Because of the sequence of the agreements, we could do that by considering clauses 1 through 8 as one block. We'll then proceed to consideration of clause 9 with the amendment that has been proposed by government members. Depending on how that goes, we'll then carry it on with clauses 10 through 33 as one group as well.

(Clauses 1 to 8 inclusive agreed to)

(On clause 9)

The Chair: On clause 9, we have an amendment that was forwarded to members.

Mr. Duncan, would you like to speak to that amendment?

• (1025)

Mr. John Duncan: Yes. It's very simple. It's in the English version only on page 6. It corrects an error in the bill that was identified after it had been printed in final form. It adds one word, which is "time", so that it reads "as amended from time to time" as opposed to "as amended from to time", which makes no sense. Obviously, it doesn't change the meaning of the bill as drafted.

That's it.

The Chair: (Amendment agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

(Clause 9 as amended agreed to)

(Clauses 10 to 33 inclusive agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the bill as amended carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the chair report the bill as amended to the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: That's it.

Members, we appreciate your understanding and cooperation this morning. I would just add a reminder to subcommittee members before we adjourn that we are going to have a brief meeting to discuss committee business.

We'll adjourn this meeting.

Have a good morning. *Bonne fin de semaine.*

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