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Chair

Mr. David Tilson

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• (0905)

[Translation]

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Andrew Chaplin): Honourable members of the committee,

[English]

I see a quorum. We can now proceed to the election of a chair. I'm ready to receive motions to that effect.

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC): I move Mr. David Tilson as chair of the citizenship and immigration and multicultural committee.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Dykstra that Mr. Tilson be elected as chair of the committee. Are there any further motions?

The committee has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Actually, could I get a recorded vote on that, please?

The Clerk: All right.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 12; nays 0)

The Clerk: Mr. Tilson is elected chair of the committee.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Chair (Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC)): Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

We continue on with the elections.

The Clerk: If that's the case, then, sir, I would suggest that you want to stay in your seat, because you're supposed to be able to vote in the election of the vice-chairs.

• (0910)

The Chair: Does anyone care? Nobody cares, Mr. Clerk.

Or is there an objection? Would you like me to return to...?

An hon. member: No, stay.

The Chair: Okay. We'll continue on with the two vice-chairs.

So it's one vice-chair, and what's the other position called?

The Clerk: They describe it as first vice-chair and second vice-chair.

I'm now prepared to receive motions—

The Chair: No, I am, sir.

I am prepared to receive motions for the vice-chair.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Vaughan, Lib.): I nominate Jim Karygiannis.

The Chair: Jim Karygiannis is—

An hon. member: Seconded.

The Chair: We don't require seconders, do we? No.

Are there other nominations for this position?

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Chair, I will not be able to support Mr. Karygiannis' nomination for that position. I know that it is the Liberals' by tradition. Could you tell me if I can make a proposal now or if we are going to vote first?

Perhaps I should start again, Mr. Chair.

[English]

The Chair: We have a procedural problem here. Maybe I'd better return to my seat, because I don't want to get in the middle of this before I even sit down in this thing.

So I'm going to go back whence I came, and the clerk will continue on with the elections.

[Translation]

The Clerk: Moved by Mr. Bevilacqua that Mr. Karygiannis be elected first vice-chair of the committee. Are there any other motions?

Mr. St-Cyr.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I am going to vote against Mr. Karygiannis being elected vice-chair. I am aware that, by tradition, the position goes to a Liberal. Should we defeat this motion first and, if need be, propose another member, or should we propose another member now and let the committee decide the matter?

The Clerk: At this stage, I can only receive motions to elect the first vice-chair. If there are two nominations, we immediately move to a secret ballot.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Fine. So I am going to propose Mr. Bevilacqua.

The Clerk: Moved by Mr. St-Cyr that Mr. Bevilacqua be elected first vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any other motions?

[English]

At this point, we'll proceed to a vote by secret ballot. I will distribute to each of you a ballot, on which I would ask that you mark the name of the person you choose. My colleague will pass by with the ballot box, and you can then deposit the ballot in the box.

• (0915)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): In order to expedite things, I think I will decline the nomination and let Mr. Bevilacqua go ahead with it.

The Clerk: Am I to understand that now only Mr. Bevilacqua's name should be considered by the committee?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

The Clerk: Moved by Mr. St-Cyr that Mr. Bevilacqua be elected first vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

The committee has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I am prepared to receive motions for the second vice-chair, who must be from a party other than that of the official opposition. I'm now prepared to receive motions to this effect.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ): I propose Mr. Thierry St-Cyr.

The Clerk: Moved by Mr. Dorion that Mr. St-Cyr be elected second vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any other motions?

Mr. Karygiannis.

[English]

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I would like to propose Ms. Olivia Chow, please.

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): I decline.

The Clerk: Am I to understand that only Mr. St-Cyr's name stands for the post of second vice-chair?

[Translation]

Moved by Mr. Dorion that Mr. St-Cyr be elected second vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

The committee has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: Mr. Tilson.

The Chair: Thank you, members of the committee.

I guess we're now into the routine motions.

Ms. Chow.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I move the adoption of the routine motions that have been handed out, with one minor amendment.

Under "Distribution of Documents", the fourth paragraph on page 1, the clerk of the committee is authorized to distribute documents to "members of the committee". I want to make a small addition, so that it would say "members of the committee and deputy members". I would like my wonderful deputy, Mr. Don Davies, to also receive the agenda.

I make that very minor amendment.

• (0920)

The Chair: I guess it's open for debate, although, as I understand it, any member of the House of Commons can come to a committee, participate in debates, and ask questions. I guess the only thing they can't do is vote.

Is there debate on this, Mr. Dykstra?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Actually, I'm not going to debate that particular issue, but I would like to ask the mover if we could deal with each of these individually.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Sure.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I do have some further amendments, as I'm sure a few others do.

The Chair: Mr. Bevilacqua....

You know, it's going to take me a while to get to know names here. Sometimes it takes me a year, but I'll do my best.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: It's Mr. Tilson, right?

The Chair: It is Mr. Tilson. Very good.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: No, it wasn't that bad.

I think you addressed the point, but I'm just wondering if she's referring to all associate members. There's a fairly lengthy list.

The Chair: It's whatever the committee wishes, but it would seem to me that conceivably all parties could bring in all kinds of people.

Ms. Chow, you might get into a problem if you have to distribute to.... Mr. Davies may or may not be at future meetings—maybe he will, maybe he won't—and the Liberals, the Bloc, and the Conservatives could have members as well. I guess it's a logistics problem for the clerk. That's the chair's opinion, but it's up to the committee.

We'll start at motion one, as Mr. Dykstra suggested. I gather that members have agreed to that.

So you're withdrawing your motion?

Ms. Olivia Chow: Yes. We can do each one separately.

The Chair: So we'll do the motions separately, one at a time.

The first motion is on the services of analysts.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I so move.

The Chair: Is there debate?

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

The Chair: The next motion is on the subcommittee on agenda and procedure.

Mr. Clerk, are you okay?

The Clerk: I'm just signalling the researchers to come to the table.

The Chair: Oh, yes, we need help. We need lots of help.

On the subcommittee item, Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would move a small amendment. Actually, it's not a small amendment; it would replace the motion, as follows: that the subcommittee on agenda and procedure be established and be composed of one member of each party, and that the chair of the committee sit as ex officio to chair the subcommittee meetings.

The Chair: Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: In other committees, the subcommittee is normally made up of four members. If I understand this proposal correctly, there would be five members.

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra: No. Actually, Thierry, it would be four members of the committee, but the chair could preside and chair the meeting. He would not actually have a vote on the committee. He would simply chair the meeting. That way, it would give him an understanding of what is happening at subcommittee, so that when we come to full committee, he knows.

The Chair: Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I just want to have a few more minutes for discussion and thought. During the discussions we had previously, it was not clear to me that the proposal would be like that.

[English]

The Chair: We'll suspend for five minutes.

• (0920)

_____ (Pause) _____

• (0925)

The Chair: We'll start again. Who's first?

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Thank you, Chair, for allowing that quick break. I think we've come to a consensus or a compromise on the issue, and it is that the motion would be as reflected in the routine motion: that the subcommittee on agenda and procedure be established, to be composed of the chair, the two vice-chairs, and a member of the other opposition party. I would simply add the parliamentary secretary for citizenship and immigration to the committee.

The Chair: Further debate, Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I just want to clarify that it's the parliamentary secretary for citizenship and immigration, because you have two parliamentary secretaries on that side right now. There should only be one. Is that clear?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Yes. Mr. Karygiannis' comments are noted.

Mrs. Alice Wong (Richmond, CPC): Can one substitute for the other when the other is not available? Because we both look at the same files; I mean procedurally.

The Chair: I don't know. I'm just the chair. You have to work all of this out yourselves.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Yes.

The Chair: Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, I think we have to facilitate it. I mean, we have to make it efficient and effective. As for replacements, if I can't make it or if you can't make it, we have to get on with the business of the committee. We can't really be too concerned about who's sitting there at any given time.

The Chair: Okay. Is there any further debate? Did I see another hand up over here? No.

Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Under the Standing Orders, the parliamentary secretary can come to the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure meetings and participate in them without officially being on the list. In fact, everyone can attend.

I do not see that it is absolutely necessary to add this amendment. We could have left the motion as it was originally and still all understood that the parliamentary secretary, with his contacts with the minister, could give the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure guidance on the government's intentions.

• (0930)

[English]

The Chair: The clerk has made a suggestion to the chair, which we'll leave to the committee. He has a copy of other routine motions that this committee has used in the past. Before we vote on this—I know, you're shaking your heads, you've seen this—would members like to see this?

No one is saying anything, so we'll just move on.

Is there any further debate on this? Is there an amendment? Have we agreed that there's an amendment? As a result of your comments, is there an amendment on the floor?

There's no amendment to this.

Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I take it, Chair, then, that we are adopting again the procedural routine motions that this committee has had in the past.

The Chair: You have before you a sheet.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: But you said there are other...

The Chair: Oh, I'm sorry, I thought we'd passed that. The clerk had indicated that he had a copy of other routine motions that this committee has used in the past, so I threw it out to the committee as to whether they wanted to see that. I gather it must be different from this. I don't know.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: In the routine proceedings, there's an order that we had struck in this committee about speaking and the number of times that every party had an opportunity to speak. Are we going to follow that tradition?

The Chair: I don't know. Is that not here?

That's not here. I don't see that here. Why isn't that here?

Let's move on. Do you know what, Mr. Karygiannis? I'm going to assume that if members of the committee want something else, they'll add it. It's as simple as that. Are you okay with that?

Is there any further debate on this second subcommittee motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: On number three, which is the reduced quorum, Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I'm sorry, I'll leave it as is.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: On the distribution of documents, Ms. Chow.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I'm just adding, after the second instance of the word "committee", "and the deputy critic". Then it's not all the associate members of parties.

The Chair: Is there such thing as a deputy critic?

Ms. Olivia Chow: I don't know. Does a party have such a thing?

The Chair: I've never heard of such a thing.

Ms. Olivia Chow: We're New Democrats. We like to share things, true to form.

The Chair: I don't know. Is it in order? Is there any debate on this?

Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I'm sure, Mr. Chair, the critic can make her notes available to the deputy critic. This committee has been functioning so long now without a deputy critic, should the NDP want to add a deputy critic, certainly the critic can make her documents available to them.

The Chair: Ms. Chow has moved a motion and has moved an amendment to the motion. She can't amend her own motion. Let's start again.

Could I have a motion with respect to the distribution of documents?

It is moved, as is, by Ms. Mendes.

Ms. Chow has moved an amendment, Mr. Clerk, that deputy critics receive copies.

Is there any further debate?

(Amendment negated)

(Motion agreed to)

• (0935)

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Mr. Chair, I have a request to make. I apologize to the committee. When we previously moved the reduced quorum motion, I had intended to.... I'm asking the indulgence of the

committee. As I understand it, at the citizenship and immigration committee in the last Parliament, with respect to reduced quorum, it was that there be at least four members present, including one member of the opposition and one member of the government other than the chair. I wonder if we could revisit that, if the committee is comfortable with that.

The Chair: No, we're not comfortable.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: The only change would mean there would be four members present at committee, including one member of the opposition and one member of the government other than the chair, versus three members being present, including one member of the opposition.

The Chair: I don't think we have unanimous consent, Mr. Dykstra.

We're moving on to working meals. It's always a nice topic. Is anyone going to propose a motion with respect to working meals? The motion is moved by Ms. Mendes. Is there any debate?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: On witnesses' expenses, I need a motion. The motion is moved by Mr. Dykstra. Is there any debate?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Next is staff at in camera meetings. Is there a motion?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I have a motion on that.

The Chair: Do you have a motion or do you have an amendment?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I have an amendment.

The Chair: We'd better have a motion first. Could I have a motion from somebody? The motion is moved by Mr. Bevilacqua.

How did I do? I'm getting better. Give me a couple of weeks, and I'll be just fine.

Mr. Dykstra, do you have an amendment?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: It's just a quick amendment, Mr. Chair, that unless otherwise ordered, each committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one staff person at an in camera meeting and, in addition to that, one person from either the whip's office, the House leader's office, or the research division of each party.

The Chair: Is there any opposition to that?

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to)

The Chair: Next we move to in camera meeting transcripts. The motion is moved by Mr. Dykstra. Is there any debate?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Regarding notices of motions, there's a draft here with a blank. Mr. Dykstra has moved that 48 hours be there for notices of motion.

Excuse me?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: For notification, that's 48 hours to the clerk, not 48 hours from the clerk onwards. Should we be giving a motion, let's say on a Tuesday, to the clerk, then that's 48 hours.

The Chair: That's my understanding, but if we want to, we can put some wording in here to clarify that. You want—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Forty-eight hours from the time the clerk receives the motion. That's what traditionally has been done.

• (0940)

The Chair: I agree. There is an amendment. Is there any further debate on either?

Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Given that our committees meet at 9 a.m., if we pass the 48 hours rule, we are at 9 a.m. two days earlier. In practice, that mostly means submitting motions three days in advance. Since we meet at 9 a.m., we could set the notice at 36 hours, a day and a half, in order to have two full days to study the motion. That would avoid the clerk receiving e-mails at 1 a.m., as Mr. Karygiannis pointed out. As a committee member, it does not give me more time.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, if an e-mail is sent to the clerk during the sitting of the committee between 9 and 11, traditionally that's taken as a 48-hour window. I mean a 48-hour window to the clerk. I think this is what traditionally has been done.

Thierry was here in the last committee, and so was Olivia Chow. This is what traditionally was done. We're debating a motion. We give something to the clerk. That's traditionally 48 hours.

I mean, Mickey Mousing the time between 9 and 11...so you give it to him at 10. Usually motions are considered at the end of a committee meeting, so that takes care of the 48 hours.

The Chair: You're not making an amendment, you're just musing.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: No, I was just checking if there was any interest in that. I do not want to make an amendment if no one else is with me. I was not trying to say that 48 hours comes at the beginning or the end of the committee meeting, but that 48 hours is the same as two days. I point out to the committee that, since we will be here from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Tuesdays, we would have to submit a motion before the Tuesday meeting if we want to get it passed at Thursday's meeting. In practical terms, that is three days. Because of our schedule, if we pass the 48 hours rule, this committee is giving itself no possibility of being able to react on Thursday to anything that could happen after our Tuesday meeting. But if we say 36 hours, we could submit a motion for the next meeting immediately after the previous one. We cannot do that as the motion presently stands. If you see what I am driving at, let us change the time to 36 hours. If I am the only one who sees it like that, there is no need to vote.

[English]

The Chair: There is an amendment by Mr. Karygiannis.

Are there any further amendments?

Are we clear what that amendment is? The amendment is "to the clerk".

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Being 48 hours.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: That 48 hours includes the window...that we're here.

The Chair: Are you clear with that wording, Mr. Clerk? Maybe you had better tell us what you think it is, so we know what we're voting on.

Can you read the amendment when you get a chance, Mr. Clerk?

The Clerk: As I understand it, Mr. Karygiannis proposes wording along these lines: "and that the notice of motion be calculated from the time it is filed with the clerk of the committee".

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Given the window of opportunity between 9 and 11 in the morning on Tuesday, that's part and parcel of the 48 hours. So if you give the motion at 10 o'clock, that makes the committee meeting next Thursday.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Technically speaking then, you'd have to bring it up at 10 o'clock.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I'm saying that the 48 hours includes the two hours we sit.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Mr. Chair, let's be clear: 48 hours is 48 hours. If you're going to come to a committee meeting on Tuesday morning and hand it in halfway through a committee meeting, it has to be within 48 hours of the start of the second meeting. If you come to a meeting and hand in the motion, that's generally where the 48 hours starts.

• (0945)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Traditionally it has been the practice of this committee that, should a motion arise during the discussion of committee work, the member hands it in to the clerk and, as of 9 o'clock in the morning, the 48 hours starts ticking. Technically, if you hand it in at 10 o'clock, then you have to deal with it on Thursday morning at 10 o'clock.

We usually deal with motions at the end of the committee, so it's part and parcel of the same thing. Let's not nitpick on 10 o'clock, 9:30, or 10:30.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I understand what Mr. Karygiannis is saying. That's not my point here. The point is that we either have a timeframe or we don't have a timeframe. If it's 48 hours, it's 48 hours. If we want to make it 46 hours, then make it 46 hours.

The Chair: Do I hear 40 hours?

Mr. St. Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Thirty-six hours is perhaps a little short, but I would like to propose 42 hours, because that solves the problem that Mr. Karygiannis...

[English]

The Chair: Are you amending the amendment?

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I do not know whether we have to debate the amendment first, or whether or not this is a subamendment. But first let us make sure that we understand each other. This would allow us to submit a motion up until 3 p.m. on Tuesday and still have it considered on Thursday.

[English]

The Chair: We're having a chat back and forth. Could you please direct your comments to the chair?

Are you making an amendment, Mr. St. Cyr?

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Yes.

An hon. member: I have a point of order.

The Chair: We'll go to that in a minute.

Mr. St. Cyr, I understand that your proposal is to change 48 hours to 42 hours.

Mr. Dykstra, you have a point of order.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Mr. Chair, I moved a motion of 48 hours, and an amendment to move to 42 hours is not an amendment; it's actually contrary to the motion. So I would suspect that we have to vote on the motion, and when that fails, Mr. St. Cyr can move his motion.

The Chair: I am going to rule the amendment in order; we'll vote on Mr. St. Cyr's amendment.

I just shudder to think that someone is going to say 40 hours or 50 hours. Then we're in trouble.

Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC): Perhaps I'm confused right now as a new member, but it would be extraordinarily helpful if we could vote on the motion that we actually have here, and then just re-explain—

The Chair: We're going to vote on the amendment to the motion, which is proposing 42 hours instead of 48 hours.

(Amendment agreed to)

All those in favour of the motion as amended?

● (0950)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I withdraw my amendment.

The Chair: Okay.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

The Chair: Are there any other proposals?

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I have a few proposals in terms of motions. Generally speaking, I think the ones I have here have been accepted by the previous committee.

The first is that in the case of previously scheduled meetings taking place outside the parliamentary precinct, the committee members in attendance shall only be required to wait for 15 minutes following the designated start of a meeting before they may proceed to hear witnesses and receive evidence, regardless of whether opposition or government members are present.

The Chair: Mr. Dykstra, by chance do you have copies? They're shaking their heads, so maybe if you have copies, they could look at your proposal.

Some hon. members: [Inaudible—Editor]

Mr. Rick Dykstra: The quorum motion supersedes.

The Chair: We're still in session here, folks. Could I just ask if everyone has a copy of this? The chair doesn't.

An hon. member: I don't.

The Chair: Have you any more copies?

Mr. Bevilacqua, and then Mr. St-Cyr.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I have a concern in reference to the last part of it. It says, "regardless of whether opposition or government members are present". But if we look back at the quorum issue, it says, "That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least three (3) members are present, including one member of the opposition".

So if we're saying that the quorum rule has to be respected, then this can't work, because you're saying here that regardless of whether opposition or government members are present....

The Chair: Monsieur St-Cyr, and then Mr. Dykstra.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Thank you. My impression is that this applies to committees that travel. I do not think that it is at all necessary, given that the quorum provisions already allow for this possibility when we hold hearings on the road. It is possible to function with three committee members only. Frankly, I do not think that we would hold the hearing if we did not even have three members at the table, if only out of respect for the people who have come to give evidence before us. This motion is not necessary, and, in my opinion, sets us on a slippery slope. It specifically applies only to meetings outside the parliamentary precinct. In other words, if you want to manipulate the quorum, you just have to call a meeting across the street or somewhere else in Ottawa. I do not think that is helpful.

So I am going to vote against the motion.

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra: To clarify this, Mr. Bevilacqua makes a good point.

The intent of this.... If you recall the committee hearings under the previous Parliament—and I certainly do at the finance committee, where we had a number of occasions when the committee was actually split up and went to different areas of the country. And the difficulty that we had, certainly at the finance committee, was that we didn't have enough people. We only had a couple of members of Parliament sitting at the table, and the witnesses who had come either from across the province or across the country to that particular hearing were unable to present because of the fact that the committee was split up and there weren't enough members sitting at the table to be able to proceed.

The purpose of this is to make sure that while there may be less than a reduced quorum at the table, at least all of the witnesses' presentations will be heard by a couple of folks and, obviously, also be read into Hansard and therefore become part of the committee's work.

• (0955)

The Chair: Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Mr. Chair, Mr. Dykstra is right. Motions like this have already been made—certainly at this committee—except that we were travelling at the time. So instead of saying “outside the parliamentary precinct”, it would say “when travelling across Canada from such-and-such a date to such-and-such a date”, and we fill in the blanks. So if the committee was going on the road and Mr. Dykstra made a motion like that, I would support him with no problem. But I do not think it is helpful to pass such a generic motion.

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I am certainly prepared to accept the amendment around the—

The Chair: Why don't you just change your motion, Mr. Dykstra?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: It would read “that when the committee is on official business and will be travelling outside of Ottawa”.

The Chair: Debate?

Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Can we not just wait until we are travelling? We would pass this motion before we left. That is what we normally do. Generally, when we travel—and we do not know whether we are going to—we pass a whole series of motions, that we will not pass substantive motions, for example, or what the quorum will be, or where we will be going. I do not see how it helps to pass it now.

My comment to Mr. Dykstra is that, if we travel, we will make proposals that reflect the exact dates and places, and I will support it with no problem. But, at this point, I do not see that we need to pass so generic a motion when we may not be travelling.

[English]

The Chair: No, I hold that the motion is in order.

Is there further debate?

(Motion negated)

The Chair: Are there further motions?

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Further, I move that one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee.

An hon. member: Can you repeat it again?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee.

The Chair: It's on this form. I think we voted on it.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Fair enough, thank you. I'm reinforcing how important that is, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Indeed.

Are there further motions?

Ms. Chow.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I don't know whether that has been moved. Are the main and supplementary estimates already in there? I don't see that.

I move that whenever the main estimates or the supplementary estimates are tabled in the House, the committee invite the minister and appropriate senior officials to appear at a televised meeting of the committee. It's standard practice, but I just want to state it.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Are there further motions?

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I move that when the chair and the vice-chairs are unable to act in that capacity at or during a meeting of the committee, the chair shall designate a member of the committee to act as chair at or during the said meeting, and such an acting chair shall be vested with all the powers of the chair at or during the said meeting.

• (1000)

The Chair: Is there debate?

Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, we do have a chair and two vice-chairs. I'm not sure if this is required.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: This is only required if the chair and the vice-chairs are actually unable to act.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Well, if they're not, then we'll wait until the next meeting.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Well, then I guess we'll vote against the motion.

The Chair: Is there further debate?

Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: In all sincerity, I do not see the relevance of this either. If the chair and the vice-chairs are away, how can the chair name a replacement? I do not see that the motion is relevant.

[English]

The Chair: That's a good point.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Actually, Mr. Chairman, there may be an occasion where you could leave the chair halfway through a meeting.

The Chair: Exactly. You've raised a good point. If I'm not here and the vice-chairs aren't here, I guess we don't meet.

The issue has been raised. It is possible that I might have to leave partway through the meeting for some reason and the two vice-chairs are not present. I don't know. Dotting *is* and crossing *ts*, I think the motion is in order.

(Motion negatived)

The Chair: Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: The next motion, Mr. Chair, is that the witnesses from any one organization shall be allowed ten minutes to make their opening statement. During the questioning of witnesses, there shall be allocated seven minutes for the first round of questioning, and thereafter five minutes shall be allocated to each questioner in the second and subsequent rounds of questioning.

The Chair: Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Tilson, I think we need to talk about the rounds. Last time around, what we had was a special formula whereby every member was able to speak. I was wondering if the clerk has that motion from the last Parliament.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I do. I'm actually going to move that next.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Okay. Do you want to read that?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I have one on the floor already. This is for when we have witnesses.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: But you're saying seven minutes. That should be part and parcel of it.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: No. What I am moving is what the witness time allocation will be. This is what this motion is about. Then it's the subsequent questioning of the witnesses. The next motion I have is with respect to the direct order of questioning under normal circumstances.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. Can we have that read again for the record?

The Chair: Sure.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: It is that the witnesses from any one organization shall be allowed ten minutes to make their opening statement. During the questioning of witnesses, there shall be allocated seven minutes for the first round of questioning, and thereafter five minutes shall be allocated to each questioner in the second and subsequent rounds of questioning.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, is there any possibility that we can add the order that the questions flow in? If we go Conservative, Liberal—

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I'm sorry, I think I can handle this. I'll put this motion aside. I'll move the order of questioning first. As a motion, I think that'll help in terms of understanding it.

I'll withdraw that motion and move that the order of questions for the first round of questioning shall be as follows: Liberal, Bloc, NDP, Conservative. Questioning during the second round shall alternate between the opposition members and government members in the following fashion: Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, Conservative, based on the principle that each committee member should have a full opportunity to question the witness or witnesses. If time permits, further rounds shall repeat the pattern of the first two at the discretion of the chair.

The Chair: Monsieur St-Cyr.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I would like to move an amendment. At this committee, the second round has always traditionally gone like this: the Liberals, the Bloc and the Conservatives. That is what we did last year. It allows us to keep our forum interesting and balanced.

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Mr. St-Cyr may want to live in the past of the 39th Parliament. There are actually more members for the Conservative Party sitting at committee; therefore, we do get an additional question. That's the reason for this motion. I'll leave it as stands.

● (1005)

The Chair: Go ahead.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I am not suggesting taking a round away from the Conservatives, just changing the order so that it is similar to the first round. On the first round, the order would be: Liberals, Bloc, NDP and Conservatives. On the second round, it would be Liberals, Bloc, Conservatives, then Liberals, then Conservatives. The Conservatives would still have one more chance to speak. It is just about the order.

[English]

The Chair: I'm sorry, just one second.

On a point of order, Ms. Chow.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Can that be distributed? It was quickly read out. I just want to compare the difference between it and what we had before, because it's slightly more complex. If you have a copy, is that possible?

The Chair: You know, we seem to have gotten out of the meeting.

Monsieur St-Cyr, we're going to continue with the debate on Mr. Dykstra's motion. If there is no more debate, we are going—

Ms. Olivia Chow: On a point of order, can I just get a copy of the motion?

The Chair: I'm sorry, Ms. Chow, I thought you had one.

Ms. Olivia Chow: No, I did not get a copy.

The Chair: So we don't have enough.

Does the committee want a little break to discuss things? We'll have a five-minute suspension.

● (1005)

_____ (Pause) _____

● (1010)

The Chair: We're all set to go again. There appears to be a motion on the floor.

Ms. Chow first, and then Mr. Bevilacqua.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I believe there are two very friendly amendments. Mine is that if time permits, further rounds shall repeat the pattern of the first round—at the discretion of the chair, of course.

The Chair: Sorry, I....

Ms. Olivia Chow: I'm changing one word.

The Chair: Ms. Chow, I'm sorry, I wasn't listening; I was chatting here with Mr. Bevilacqua. He was helping me try to pronounce his name.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I'm changing "first two" to "first round", of course at the discretion of the chair. I just want to put myself back in, if there is time.

The Chair: In other words, the second round you're putting at the discretion of the chair? Is that what you're saying?

Ms. Olivia Chow: No, no.

The Chair: Because I don't want that discretion.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Right now it says that if time permits, further rounds shall repeat the pattern of the first two. I just want to make sure that the NDP is on the first round, and I want to make sure it's explicit that if time permits, I come back on.

The Chair: Indeed.

Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: You will find unanimous consent if this particular motion is dealt with in this fashion: that the order of questions for the first round of questioning shall be Liberal, Bloc, NDP, Conservative, and questioning during the second round shall alternate between the opposition members and the government members in the following fashion: Liberal, Bloc, Conservative.

You just have to switch the positions there of Bloc and Conservative.

And then, as Ms. Chow has already said, it would state that if time permits, further rounds shall repeat the pattern of the first round, at the discretion of the chair.

Is that clear?

The Chair: Mr. Clerk, could you read it so that the committee is aware of what it says?

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: The only clarification I'm asking for with regard to the end of the sentence, where we mention "first" round instead of "first two" rounds if time permits, is that we're not just going to go first round and then first round again. I think the motion needs to be clear that we go back to the original pattern; it's not that we're going to go first round, and then first round again, and so on.

An hon. member: We'll never get that far, Rick.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I understand that, but if we ever did, you guys would be saying, "Hey, whoa, I've got you"—or Olivia would, anyway.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Well, if you want, I can agree to the original—if that's the understanding.

An hon. member: Right, as long as the understanding isn't objected to when we get there, or if we ever get there.

An hon. member: Sure, fine.

The Chair: Okay, one at a time.

Mr. Clerk, there has been an amendment proposed. Could you confirm what the amendment is so that we know?

The Clerk: As I understand it, it is that the order of questions for the first round of questioning be as follows: Liberal, Bloc, NDP, CPC. Questioning during the second round shall alternate between the opposition members and government members in the following fashion: Liberal, Bloc, Conservative, Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, Conservative, based on the principle that each committee member should have a full opportunity to question the witnesses. If time permits, further rounds shall repeat the pattern of the first round, at the discretion of the chair.

•(1015)

The Chair: You have to be clear, because you're going to prepare a chart. Are you okay, Mr. Clerk?

The Clerk: I believe so.

The Chair: There is an amendment. Is there any further debate on either of these things?

I call the question on the amendment.

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to)

The Chair: Further motions?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Mr. Chair, I would then put the previous motion back on the table: that the witnesses from any one organization shall be allowed 10 minutes to make their opening statement. During the questioning of witnesses, there shall be allocated seven minutes for the first round of questioning and thereafter five minutes shall be allocated to each questioner in the second and subsequent rounds of questioning.

The Chair: Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I have just a point of clarification. Sometimes it could be that we have a lot of witnesses stacked up, and if we have, let's say, three or four organizations here and we only have two hours to hear them, maybe we'd want to consider that. Instead of ten minutes an organization, the chair might be allowed to shift that around. If we had four organizations, that's forty minutes, and if you go those rounds and we have only two hours to hear them, we could be way out of whack.

The Chair: The chair has a comment. What happens if there is one witness? I don't know how often that would happen.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: It does happen, but then that witness is given 10 minutes and then we get the rounds.

The Chair: Excuse me, Mr. Karygiannis, my observation is that you could conceivably have one witness for one hour. So you're still saying 10 minutes, as opposed to 20 minutes, for example.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Definitely, and if we have four or five organizations, as sometimes is the case, we only have two hours. So instead of giving each organization ten minutes, that would take you to an hour—

The Chair: You are suggesting the chair has some discretion.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: With consultation with the two vice-chairs.

The Chair: Of course.

Are you okay?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: If we get more than one....

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Yes, if that's understood. I understood that would be the case at all committees, that if we had a number of witnesses coming forward we would leave some discretion with the chair to be able to allocate less time for speaking.

If you want, we could actually amend and add one word: that the witnesses from any one organization shall be allowed a maximum of 10 minutes. That allows the chair some discretion.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: That is a maximum of 10 minutes, at the discretion of the chair.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chair, so that we are very clear, these are guidelines, and some are rules, but with workings of the committee, of course we have to be a little bit flexible, so that if there is a person who is engaged in some very interesting questioning of a witness, flexibility can be allowed so that we have a dynamic process rather than something that is strictly adhered to. You have to have flexibility in these types of committees. We work with the chair at all times.

The Chair: I'm glad to hear that.

Then you have changed your—

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Yes, I made just that—

The Chair: Are there any further amendments?

I call the question—

Ms. Chow, sorry.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Previously we had it that whenever a minister or any officials appeared before the committee, if they are to speak from notes, a copy of the statement or notes be distributed by the start of their statement.

The Chair: That's coming up.

All those in favour of this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Following up on Ms. Chow, it sounds as if she supported the motion that whenever a minister or any officials appear before the committee where they are able to speak from notes, a copy of the statement or notes be distributed by the start of their statements, to be fair to each member of the committee.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I have a point of order. In the notes given to us, it was attached as the same questioning of witnesses. It's the same thing.

The Chair: I don't know what all that's about.

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I move the motion.

The Chair: That's a motion.

Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: On a point of verification, what I understand from Mr. Dykstra is that when the minister or officials from the department sit down to speak, their notes will be given to us

at the same time as they start to speak, in both official languages. There was a time when Mr. Minister came in and the notes were just in English, and unfortunately—

• (1020)

The Chair: I'm sure Mr. St-Cyr would put us in line if that changed.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I would.

The Chair: You would indeed.

Is there further debate?

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. Chair: Are there further motions?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I have a couple more. I'm almost done here.

The next one is that the consideration and examination of any bill—government or private member's bill—that falls within the express mandate of the committee shall take precedence over any study or non-legislative examination, and in such circumstances the non-legislative study shall be deferred until such time as the bill is reported back to the House.

The Chair: Are we submitting copies?

Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I think the committee is the owner of its own demise or agenda. To have it put forward by the parliamentary secretary that we're going to put in a bill that will take precedence is certainly not in good form or friendly. The parliamentary secretary can come and ask if we'll do it, but I think the committee is the master of its own agenda.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I thought that in the spirit of cooperation to move legislation as quickly as possible, the committee may see fit to support that motion.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Did we forget Bill C-50 or Bill C-17?

(Motion negated)

The Chair: It appears to have failed, Mr. Dykstra.

What is the next motion?

Mr. Rick Dykstra: My confidence and resolve remain the same. It's just heartwarming to see how engaged I've been able to get everybody this morning.

The Chair: Let's proceed.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Yes, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry, I'm just trying to bring a little levity to this very deep and important meeting.

The next motion is that every party shall have the right to attach as an annex a dissenting opinion on any report to be presented to the House of Commons by the committee, and that this dissenting opinion shall be submitted to the clerk of the committee within 72 hours of the passing of the report by the committee, in both official languages.

The Chair: Is there any debate?

Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: If I'm not mistaken, I think it was customary to have 24 hours.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: If you really want to put a dissenting opinion together, I think—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I'm sure that any dissenting opinion will come from the government side. You will certainly have all your folks here and the department. I'm sure they will be able to come up with something like that within 24 hours, in both official languages, of course.

An hon. member: What about 48?

The Chair: The chair is losing control here. Is there an amendment? We're having trouble with the number of hours.

Ms. Chow.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Let's make it 48.

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to)

The Chair: I guess it has carried then with 48 hours. I'm glad to see such cooperation.

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I'm exhausted, sir, of any further motions.

The Chair: Mr. Karygiannis, then Ms. Chow.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, I would ask that we ask the clerk to bring forth the motions that the previous committee were still working on—there were a number of reports that still had not been dealt with—and for us to continue finishing those reports.

The Chair: Before we get to that, I want to make sure we're finished with these motions.

And I don't know what Ms. Chow is up to, so....

• (1025)

Ms. Olivia Chow: I'm just reading the notes that were distributed, actually.

Last time, we had one more motion, which was on the distribution of unedited transcripts. I thought I would just make sure it got back in: that the unedited transcripts of committee meetings, the blues, be distributed on request to interested members of the bureaucracy, media, and public, provided that a clear caveat on their appropriate use accompanies them.

That seems to be what we had last time. I don't see any reason why we shouldn't have it.

The Chair: Are you putting that as a motion, Ms. Chow?

Ms. Olivia Chow: Yes, I just put it on the floor.

The Chair: Is there any debate?

Mr. Calandra.

Mr. Paul Calandra: Actually, could you repeat it?

An hon. member: Maybe we should have a copy.

The Chair: I understood the clerk passed this around.

The Clerk: No. I didn't get consent from the committee to pass it around.

The Chair: All right.

Could you read it again, Ms. Chow?

Ms. Olivia Chow: Yes. This was distributed to the members in the briefing book that we each got. It was attached to the last section, which contained the original motions that we had from before. It's in the last section.

The Chair: Clerk, could you read the motion, please?

The Clerk: That the unedited transcripts of Committee meetings ("Blues") be distributed on request to interested members of the bureaucracy, media and public, provided that a clear caveat on their appropriate use accompanies them.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: What does appropriate caveat mean?

Some hon. members: Yes.

The Chair: Oh boy, is there debate here?

Ms. Olivia Chow: Why don't I just put a full stop? If people have trouble with that, I will take off the last line.

An hon. member: But I want to know. I'm interested in that caveat comment.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I didn't write this before. I think Jim probably did—no?

The Chair: All right, the motion has been changed. Is there further debate?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, I have a point of clarification or a point of order. If we're going to be in committee, the hearings and the workings of the committee are published, so people can tune in, and people can be here to listen, so whether we distribute unedited transcripts or not, it really doesn't make any difference. I don't see what the problem is from the government side. People can come in. They can listen in.

The Chair: Let's see what happens here. We're going to have a vote.

All those in favour of the motion? One.

An hon. member: Is there a debate?

The Chair: Oh, I'm sorry. I thought the debate....

Ms. Olivia Chow: I'll ask for a recorded vote on this one.

The Chair: There's now a question as to whether we've had sufficient debate. I thought I'd asked for that.

Monsieur St-Cyr, did you have some comments to make? We're going to have a vote if you don't.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I'll have a vote, Chair.

The Chair: We're going to vote on this. It will be a recorded vote, Mr. Clerk.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5)

The Chair: Are there any further motions before we get to Mr. Karygiannis's question? I don't see any.

Mr. Karygiannis, you raised an issue. It is now 10:30, and we now get into what the committee is going to do next, which is where I think you were going, on reports and unfinished reports.

I'm looking for guidance as to whether the committee wishes to deal with future business or whether we want to adjourn and have a subcommittee meeting to discuss future business in the next half hour. I'm open to suggestions from the committee as to what you want to do next.

Mr. Karygiannis.

• (1030)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, there were a lot of people who came when the committee travelled. We did Iraqi refugees. We did undocumented workers. The committee travelled throughout Canada and—

The Chair: I'll stop you for a minute. I'd like to know whether you want future business now, which includes what you were getting into, or whether we want to adjourn the committee until Thursday morning and have a subcommittee meeting for the next half-hour.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I'll leave that. If you want to go to the subcommittee, by all means, but I think when the subcommittee gets together, we should consider the following.

A lot of people travelled to come and make depositions to us. A lot of people are looking for those reports. Not finalizing those reports that are relevant, I think, will be an injustice to the people who came in front of us and spoke. I think we should look over what was unfinished and the motions that were there, and certainly we should adopt them. I don't know if we even need to go to a subcommittee. With the indulgence of everybody, I think we just take the work of the committee as it was and continue from there.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I certainly understand Mr. Karygiannis's point. I think there is agreement around the table that we want to try to finish the reports that were not completed by the previous committee in the 39th Parliament.

I would suggest a potential agenda for the next number of weeks, and I've given a copy to both Mr. St-Cyr and Mr. Bevilacqua. I was hoping that the subcommittee could, after we meet, have a look at that. I also have one for you. We could actually have a look at it and make some decisions as to next steps and what we'll do in the upcoming weeks.

Now that we've completed routine motions, I move that we adjourn and let the subcommittee meet for a few minutes to talk about the upcoming schedule.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I understand there was something passed.

The Chair: Do you want to circulate his motion to adjourn?

Excuse me, Mr. Karygiannis. It doesn't appear that everybody has the list.

Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I think we could deal with it in committee right now, because right now, the only thing we could really get is agreement on the topics we will be looking at. That's all

you can get right now. As far as scheduling goes, the staff and steering committee will take care of that.

As for the subject matter, we would be looking at, first of all, we'll have the departmental officials outlining the plans and priorities for the department, as well as studies, or whatever needs to be done, in these areas: undocumented workers, temporary foreign workers, and/or Iraqi refugees. The government intends to do a study on immigration fraud and marriages of convenience. Mr. Karygiannis brought to my attention as well that he'd like a study, or to complete a study, on Sri Lanka.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I thank the parliamentary secretary for bringing the list, but I would ask for a comprehensive list from the clerk, just in case the parliamentary secretary missed something or in case something was not put in there.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Those are the topics. If there is general agreement on that from all parties, we can do the administrative scheduling.

The Chair: Ms. Chow.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Mr. Chair, in terms of procedure, how we function really is part of the subcommittee agenda. Given that there is a proposal, I would support the adjournment of this committee and having a subcommittee meeting as soon as possible to fine-tune what was given out so that we would have some discussion.

I have several items I want to discuss. I sent a motion to the clerk yesterday. That's for notification only. We will have all of that carefully discussed at subcommittee, because there are some items on this agenda that I may not agree with having a study on.

• (1035)

The Chair: Motions to adjourn aren't debatable, but somehow we're into a debate.

Mr. Karygiannis, we'll let you be the last one on this motion.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I do want to go with what I said in the beginning. You can look at it either as a motion or as guidance.

The Chair: The motion on the floor, Mr. Karygiannis, is to adjourn this meeting.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, I respect that. However, what I said in the beginning is that we ask the clerk to bring back unfinished items and distribute that to us before we start considering anything else.

Some hon. members: It's in the briefing book.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: That's not what's reflected there.

The Chair: We're now going to vote to adjourn or not to adjourn. All those in favour of adjourning?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: It is carried. We're adjourned until Thursday at 9 o'clock. We could be in this room. We'll wait and see.

We'll call a subcommittee meeting now.

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