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Chair

The Honourable Michael Chong

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

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• (1535)

[Translation]

The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)): Welcome to the 23rd meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. Today is Tuesday, October 19, 2010.

Pursuant to the order of reference of Wednesday, June 16, 2010, the committee is meeting today to examine Bill C-465, An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day [English]

In front of us is Mr. Norlock, member of Parliament for Northumberland—Quinte West in Ontario. We welcome him for an opening statement.

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. It's wonderful to be here.

It's especially a pleasure for me to be here because I'm talking about something that means a lot not only to this country and the people of Canada, I believe, as it did to our forefathers, but also to my family and me personally. A hunting, fishing, and trapping heritage runs deep within my family. As I look around the room, I strongly suspect that we share that same heritage in our backgrounds. I can tell you that my maternal grandfather, Narcisse Viens, who came to Ontario from Aylmer, Quebec, was a great hunter and an especially great and very successful trapper.

But I'd like to begin at the beginning, which is always a good place to start, and recount how important hunting, fishing, and trapping are to this great nation of ours. From the very beginning of our country, and long before Canada was a country, hunting, fishing, and trapping were practised by our first nations people. They developed the skills that allowed their populations to sustain themselves on this, our great continent. These skills were essential for them to ensure that their communities had adequate food and shelter. Indeed, these same practices are what made it possible for the first European settlers to establish themselves in what would prove to be to them a very unforgiving climate.

We know that as early as 1497 when John Cabot came to this country, this new world, from England, he was reported to have told the Duke of Milan that “the sea there is swarming with fish, which can be taken not only with the net, but in baskets let down with a stone”. What he was referring to was the bountiful fishing on the east coast of Canada in the Grand Banks.

In the 1600s, Samuel de Champlain observed first nations people hunting elk and other animals, which formed a great part of their diet. Like the native populations, early settlers practised a long-

standing tradition of clothing themselves and feeding their families with the bountiful wildlife that is ours here in this great country. There were other references to the use of hunting, trapping, and fishing in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. First nations people primarily hunted for food, clothing, and building materials, but they also used these natural, God-given products for barter and trading amongst themselves and eventually with the new European settlers.

In Cartier's voyage of 1534, he described early experiences in trading with first nations people and indicated that trading furs was one of the first activities that occurred with the European explorers and settlers in the new world. In 1603 Champlain reported bartering for meat, fur, and arrows with different native groups, including the Algonquins here in the Ottawa Valley.

These references have continued throughout our history into today, further reinforcing a deep connection between the origins of our great nation and these activities. Indeed, from a commercial perspective, there was the Hudson's Bay Company and the development of the fur-trading industry. We know that in 1659 the first two French explorers travelled to the Hudson Bay area, where they were told they would find large beaver populations. On their return to France, unfortunately, they were arrested because they hadn't obtained the right licence. However, in 1668 they returned to James Bay in the company of Prince Rupert.

Following their return to England, they created a royal charter that gave Prince Rupert and his partners the right to all the lands draining into Hudson Bay. Years later, of course, we know that one of the oldest companies in the world and indeed in this country, the Hudson's Bay Company, was created. It had a competitor called the North West Company.

The reason I mention these two entities is that they discovered much of what we now know as Canada. In their search for furs, they made maps that helped found this great country of ours. They went right through to the Mackenzie River. Indeed, as I say, knowledge of the western frontier itself can be attributed to the hunters, fishers, and trappers employed by the Hudson's Bay Company, who drove west in pursuit of economic development of the lands that would eventually become part of this country.

I was going to go through a lot of the history, of course, but I think most of us here know of that history, that tradition. We know now that hunters, fishers, and trappers do much more than that. Not only do they contribute to this country in a monetary way—and the value placed on hunting, fishing, and trapping in this country is somewhere in the vicinity of about \$10 billion—but they do more than that. Of course, I consider myself somewhat of an outdoorsman, a hunter and a fisher, and I can tell you that of many of the organizations to which we belong, there is no group of people in this country that are greater conservationists than hunters and fishermen.

I have one of my favourite constituents here, who is the government relations person for the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, and he knows and I know that much of the plentiful wildlife we have today in this country is there because hunters and fishermen give back thousands and thousands of volunteer hours. I'm part of the Quinte elk restoration; we're bringing elk back to the central part of eastern Ontario and right across Ontario. I'm sure that Mr. Farrant can talk about that at greater length than I.

We also are contributors, through Ducks Unlimited and the Delta Waterfowl Foundation, to the very life of this planet, by creating more and more marshlands, which of course are the lungs and the heart of this planet. That's going to be addressed by one of the witnesses from Delta Waterfowl Foundation, who is eminent in these areas and has a Ph.D. in these areas.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank you very much. I'm getting close to the end of my time, I suspect, and I wanted to leave a couple of minutes open for some questions that you may have of me concerning this private member's bill. I think it's important. I think if you talk to your constituents, you will find that many of them have a similar background in their families and are part and parcel of either the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs or other organizations.

I've been in touch, by the way, with almost every outdoor federation in this great land of ours, all of which say they support this bill. They have some suggestions that you will no doubt hear, and I believe there are some friendly amendments.

Without further ado, I would be more than willing to answer any questions or concerns you may have with this bill, Mr. Chair.

● (1540)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Norlock.

We'll have about 20 minutes of questions and comments from members of this committee, beginning with Mr. Bagnell.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. You do a fine job.

Thank you, Mr. Norlock, for presenting this bill. As you know, I had a similar initiative, so I highly commend it. I think it's an excellent initiative and commend you for bringing it forward. You certainly have my full support.

I understand you're in support of my friendly amendments, as you've said, and you mentioned them in your opening remarks, which was great. One was to somehow recognize the aboriginal peoples in the bill or the preamble, and you've talked about that. The

other was just sort of a technical amendment: "from coast to coast to coast". I understand that you're in favour of those two concepts.

Mr. Rick Norlock: Absolutely. I am. I originally didn't purposely leave out the first nations. Actually, I wanted to make it as simple as possible, but in doing so I guess in that simplicity I neglected to mention something as important as that. When you met with me when we were at second reading and mentioned that, I thought it was wholly appropriate that it be included.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: I'd also like to get your views on two amendments proposed by Ducks Unlimited. The third one I'll leave to the Bloc to bring forward, because it's in French.

Just to get your views on these, the first one is changing "fishers" to "anglers". A fisher, as you know, being an outdoorsman as I am, is a long furry animal, and the anglers prefer to be called "anglers". It's pretty common in the vernacular, I think.

The other thing that Ducks Unlimited is proposing is to add "recreational" before the word "fishing". Their feeling is that this is all about recreational hunters and fishers.

I'd just like to get your feedback on those amendments, which make some sense to me.

Mr. Rick Norlock: They do make some sense to yours truly; however, on hunting, fishing, and trapping heritage, although much of the fishing is recreational, we do have, at times, a very healthy—Mr. Simms might argue—and a vibrant commercial fishery. Of course, when you're dealing with first nations, there is a.... I just didn't want to close the door. When you say "anglers", I don't think most fishermen would consider themselves anglers; I'm talking about commercial. Also, of course, we have commercial enterprises that rely on recreational anglers. So while I wouldn't want to imperil the bill on such an issue, I think that saying someone is a fisherman leaves it open both to commercial and to recreational.

I'm reticent to go.... That's one of the only suggested amendments that I'm reticent to readily accept.

● (1545)

Hon. Larry Bagnell: I'd like to share the rest of my time with Ms. Crombie, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Madam Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Thank you.

Mr. Norlock, thank you for presenting this bill.

You've discussed the economic spinoff factors, which are significant, actually. Should we pass this legislation, would there be any additional economic benefit that would accrue?

Mr. Rick Norlock: The reason I was accepting a friendly amendment designating the third Saturday of September as opposed to that specific day is that it somewhat matches the fishing, hunting, and heritage day in the United States of America.

I know that Mr. Angus comes from a part of the country that I worked in on two different occasions when I was with the provincial police, and I can tell you, as I'm sure Mr. Angus can tell you, how important U.S. tourism is to some of our northern communities, especially in northwestern Ontario. I also hunt in northeastern Ontario.

It's very important that we try to match these up. Also, the Province of Alberta and other provinces in Canada are considering a similar date, which I believe happens to be the third Saturday in September. Now, it depends on the year, but you have to somehow nail these things down when you're dealing with a piece of legislation. My preference would be to designate the third Saturday, as a friendly amendment.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: So clearly you would see some natural tourism benefits to us—

Mr. Rick Norlock: Yes, I would, because I think it would help our outfitters advertise better to their American clientele.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I will ask you this as well. For me, this seems like such apple-pie legislation, but are there groups that may demonstrate or oppose? Would there be an anti-hunting lobby that will come forward to oppose this?

Mr. Rick Norlock: To be frank, there probably is. As you know, if you wear a fur coat in some places, it's not considered a good thing to do. I think it's a wonderful thing. You just have to look at the number of people who earn their livelihood by trapping, not the least of whom are first nations people. It's very similar to the people who are against the seal hunt, which I think all of us here are very much in favour of.

I've received no negative mail—not until you brought up that subject, I suspect, because then they'll jump on it. To date, I have not, but I'll be frank and up front with you: no doubt there are segments of our society who just don't like the thought of hunting, let alone fishing or trapping.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

A brief question, Madam Crombie?

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Yes, really brief.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: It was actually sort of a friendly amendment. I wonder if you could make the bill even more generic if you would consider a compromise on the title. I wonder if you could consider calling it something like “national outdoor recreational sports day” to encompass even more broadly some of the industries you may have overlooked.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Briefly, Mr. Norlock.

Mr. Rick Norlock: I don't think we've overlooked any. If you talk to outfitters, you'll hear that they would much prefer that you call them a fishing lodge or a hunting lodge. That is more attractive to their industry. The people who would be against this bill won't be spending any money in a hunting or fishing lodge.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Norlock.

Madame Lavallée, you have the floor.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Thank you very much.

Good day, Mr. Norlock. Thank you for tabling this bill which has the support of the Bloc Québécois. I have a comment first, and then a question.

After learning of your bill, naturally I contacted the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs, as I am a member of this organization. I know that most of the people here will not believe me, but I even have a hunting license. Let me show it to you, since I know some people will find this hard to believe. For your information, however, I've never gone hunting. Anyway, federation officials told me that they welcomed your private member's bill that calls for a national heritage day and that they didn't have a problem with the proposed date.

However, right before the meeting, I spoke with a member of the federation who suggested that the date should be changed to the third Saturday in September. Is that something you would be okay with?

● (1550)

Mr. Rick Norlock: Yes, it's a friendly amendment.

[English]

I suspect that to be better understood I had better speak the language I know better, so that I know what I'm saying.

Yes, it would be an amendment I would consider. Making it the third Saturday in September is a friendly amendment.

I, too, have a hunting licence—

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: It's not the same colour—

Mr. Rick Norlock: No, it's not the same, but yes, I do believe....

I was speaking to the manager of la Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs. That is one of these organizations that are wholly in support of this bill.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: So then, you would like us to pass an amendment to section 2 of your bill. Heritage day would then be marked each year on the third Saturday in September, instead of on September 23. Are you okay with this amendment?

Mr. Rick Norlock: Yes.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Fine.

I'll turn the floor over to my colleague Mr. Pomerleau.

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Drummond, BQ): Thank you very much for your presentation, sir. It looks like you did quite a bit of research before bringing this bill forward. I quickly glanced at the presentation that you most likely made to the House. It contains a lot of historic facts that confirm that hunting, fishing and trapping have been carried out since the dawn of time, or since the arrival of the Europeans on our shores. These activities are closely tied to our identity. You also mentioned in your analysis that you looked at the United States which has a similar type of heritage day.

Did you have time to look at the impact this day had in the United States? Is there a potential for positive economic benefits?

[English]

Mr. Rick Norlock: Thank you very much for the question.

Yes, it has. From my basic research, of course, when I have time—and most of us don't have time to watch a lot of television, but I do watch what I refer to as the wildlife channel—I can tell you that hunting, fishing, and these activities are looked upon as family activities, as something you can do with your children. As I said to some friends of mine who are business people and are very nervous, well, instead of taking a Prozac or some other anti-whatever, grab a fishing rod, jump in a boat, and go out on a lake somewhere. It will be much more beneficial to you, and you'll have a good time.

Of course, when you speak to your federations, they do have family days, so I think we're looking at this as a healthy and wholesome thing to do with your families. Go hunting. Go fishing. I suspect very strongly that for you, like it is for me, these activities are part of your DNA, actually. My grandson is only five years old and his daddy just took him out to the hunting camp to do a little fishing. He takes him out fishing.

He's in northwestern Ontario. His words to me were that my grandson was just shaking with excitement that he was going hunting birds with dad, so it is in our DNA in our early years. I think that's a story that goes for many, many Canadians.

We had a cottage in the Pontiac. As I mentioned in my speech, my maternal grandfather, Narcisse, was a hunter and a trapper for years and years. He was one of the best. At the risk of saying something inappropriate, he used to say, "I used to teach my aboriginal friends how to trap some animals".

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Pomerleau.

Thank you, Mr. Norlock.

Mr. Angus.

[English]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm very interested in this bill and very interested in the explanation you gave. I will only ask you this rhetorically, because you already know the answer, but it's an answer that everybody else in Ontario always fails. The most historic community in Ontario is Moose Factory, on the James Bay coast. It was founded before any other community, and it was founded because that's where the furs were brought out. The furs were brought up the Ottawa River with

the Algonquins and passed into Cree territory. That relationship defined Ontario, as you say.

I think this bill is important for a number of reasons. First of all, there is a recognition of this important role in my region, which is the size of Great Britain. This is not just a sport; this is a cultural way of life.

It certainly is a huge economic driver. We see that when our fishing lodges and hunting lodges are hit through a number of economic downturns: it affects our whole region. But I'm wary of stressing the economics argument; I think it can always be used against us. In the logging arguments, I heard people tell us that if we picked mushrooms, we'd be better off at the end of the day. They could make an argument for that over logging.

The argument to me is that these are deeply felt cultural activities that people relate to the land with and that should be celebrated as such. We can make the economic arguments and we can make all the other arguments, but would you agree that there's a fundamental relationship, that for rural people and for city people who want to go out into the territory, there's a fundamental relationship that's a cultural expression?

• (1555)

Mr. Rick Norlock: Absolutely and that's why I used not an aside, but just a very short part relating to the economic benefits. Because sometimes we need to be very utilitarian as members of Parliament, and there needs to be something in addition to what we're doing.

I'd go even further than that, Mr. Angus. I would say that if you look at most hunters and anglers, you'll find them to be tremendous stewards of the environment—

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes.

Mr. Rick Norlock: —making sure of the heritage that's ingrained. As I said, that's part of our DNA as Canadians, right from the beginning.

So you're very right: we're talking about some of the economic benefits, but they're secondary to the fact that this is a part of this country's valued heritage.

I can go further than that and say that it's even going to new Canadians. I share a great waterway in one of Canada's greatest parks, the Trent-Severn Waterway. If you come into the village of Hastings or go along Rice Lake, you'll find many new Canadians with their families, sitting at picnic tables, catching fish, enjoying a Saturday or a Sunday afternoon escaping from downtown Toronto and those other built-up areas. That's not only part of our heritage; it's something that even new Canadians will share.

Mr. Charlie Angus: In terms of stewardship, we certainly recognize the role that Ducks Unlimited, for example, plays in restoring wetlands. In my region, Hilliardton Marsh is a great example. Our students are out there as part of their student programs. It has given incomparable benefits in terms of ensuring that we actually know what the bird population is and that we actually have wetlands where ducks can land safely, so there is that role.

I don't want to understress the economic role, but trapping is a time-honoured way of life, and people do make their living through it. I want to go to the issue of first nation hunting and fishing rights, because that is a special and unique relationship identified under constitutional rights. In my region on the James Bay coast—and you've been there and you know what it's like—if people aren't hunting, they're not feeding their families, because otherwise you can't feed your kids with the price of food being what it is at the northern stores in these isolated communities.

So you are supportive of a special recognition on the day so that we are also recognizing the unique relationship that our first nation communities have with their hunting, trapping, and fishing activities?

Mr. Rick Norlock: That's why, when Mr. Bagnell and I spoke.... That's why I'm specifically saying that it's a friendly amendment. We mention in the body of the bill itself that first nations people were the beginners. Since time immemorial they were the people who hunted and fished and trapped, not only as part of their ability to just exist—and I know that you know first nations traditions—but as part of a deep religious connection with the land and the animals they hunt and fish. They actually respect the animals.

Yes, I'm very much aware, from when we worked along the James Bay and Hudson Bay coasts with the North East Patrol, that being able to hunt moose and especially geese, which form a great part of this, and to catch and smoke sturgeon are tremendous parts of their ability just to get through the winter months.

•(1600)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Norlock and Mr. Angus.

We're going to end our first panel here and allow our next panel of witnesses to appear in front of us. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Go ahead, Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough, CPC): We didn't have any opportunity on this side. Were we just going to waive it?

The Chair: I understood that nobody wanted to ask a question, but if you would like to ask a brief question, Mr. Del Mastro, please go ahead.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Yes, it's very brief. I'll take us to four o'clock.

First of all, thank you, MP Norlock, for bringing this bill forward. You represent the riding just to the south of mine, and I'm very proud to speak of this bill in my riding, the home of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

I know that you have a long history in this. I know that you were also a long-serving police officer in our provincial police, and I wanted to ask you something. Obviously there's no question that outdoor groups across the country support this measure, and I wouldn't support any changing of the bill, because I believe this is what you want to recognize. I think it's important. There are a lot of outdoor activities like surfing and snowboarding that don't speak to this heritage, so I think it's important that you keep the name of the bill the way it is. You have a unique perspective on things, having

served for a long time as a police officer and also having this background in hunting and fishing.

I also know that you served on the public safety committee. I remember that long before I was elected there were a whole lot of bumper stickers going around that said, "Remember Bill C-62 When You Vote". Obviously that was something that really divided the outdoors community. Can you speak a little bit to your experience? I know that you voted to end the long-gun registry specifically. Do you see that as something that's alienated this specific group in society, this traditional heritage group?

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I have a point of order: relevance.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Of course it's relevant.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: It's not relevant.

The Chair: The chair has the floor. Let the chair speak, please.

It's not a point of order. The member is speaking about an issue related to the bill, which is hunting, so I'm going to give the floor back to Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Go ahead, Mr. Norlock.

Mr. Rick Norlock: If I can answer your question this way, I was speaking to a reporter today about this private member's bill, and he tried to make the connection to its proximity to the long-gun vote.

I consider Mr. Del Mastro—Dean—a friend as well as a colleague. I do not wish to imperil this bill by mixing it with some other issues. Yes, hunters carry guns, because that's how you hunt. Archery is also a great and growing part of hunting. There is a connection, no doubt, but I think what we have to do with this bill, as far as I'm concerned, is look at it for what it is, and that's talking about our heritage. Part of that heritage....

I grew up with firearms in the house. I worked with firearms in my other career life, and I still have some for recreational purposes. I have my opinion on that, and my voting record and party affiliation, I think, speak for themselves, but this bill goes further than that. This bill speaks to something that we've been talking about, and that's the heritage of our country. It's the DNA of Canada. I'm not saying it's our *raison d'être* today, but I'm saying it forms part of who we are as a nation. So while I admit there are some linkages, I think we need to look at the positive aspects of that heritage and realize that from the standpoint of our heritage, there's more in this country that unites us than separates us.

These are other battles we can fight on a different field. Yes, I am a member of the public safety and national security committee, and currently I'm also in justice and human rights, but I like to separate the two. I can tell you that most anglers, hunters, and trappers jealously guard their ability to do either the recreational or the livelihood side.

Mr. Angus said that we'll downplay the monetary aspect; I need to throw in that trapping in this country accounts for \$800 million annually. Much of that money goes to our first nations folks. It is a very important part not only of the sustainability of their culture but also of their ability to just survive.

•(1605)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Del Mastro.

Thank you very much, Mr. Norlock.

We're going to suspend for one minute to allow our witnesses to change.

• (1605)

(Pause)

• (1605)

The Chair: Welcome to the continuation of our 23rd meeting for the consideration of Bill C-465.

We have in front of us on this panel Mr. Farrant, who is the manager of government relations and communications for the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. We have Mr. Rodgers, who is the executive director of the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters. We have Mr. Bailey, who is the vice-president of policy for Canada for the Delta Waterfowl Foundation. Finally, we have Mr. Kendell, who is the president of the Credit River Anglers Association.

Welcome to all of you today.

We'll begin with opening statements from each of the members of the panel, beginning with Mr. Farrant.

Mr. Greg Farrant (Manager, Government Relations and Communications, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters): Good afternoon, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, on behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, our 100,000 members, subscribers, and supporters, and our 670 member clubs across Ontario, I thank you for the opportunity to appear today in support of Bill C-465.

There has been talk already about the heritage values in this country. Well, as you all know, Canada was built on the staples economy, or, to use a more familiar expression, by people who were hewers of wood and drawers of water. A large part of that early staples economy was based upon hunting, fishing, and trapping, which have been part of our history and this country's fabric for centuries, predating the arrival of the first non-aboriginal explorers and colonists to these shores. One of our most venerable and largest retail institutions, in fact, the Hudson's Bay Company, was founded in the late 1600s, largely based on the trade in furs, which Mr. Angus alluded to earlier.

Today, millions of Canadians engage in recreational sport fishing and hunting, while for tens of thousands these activities are a way of life, a means of making a living, a ceremonial or treaty right, or a means of putting food on the table. For all, hunting, fishing, and trapping are second nature.

To date, eight provinces and/or territories have passed, or are currently engaged in passing, legislation that recognizes the cultural and heritage value of those activities and the right of Canadians to participate in those activities according to the law. The provinces of Alberta and Manitoba have also established special days that recognize the importance of hunting.

Ontario was one of the first provinces to formally recognize these activities by passing in 2002 the Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act, which also provided for the creation of a heritage and fish and wildlife commission to advise the Minister of Natural Resources.

This is similar in nature to what was proposed by Mr. Bagnell in Bill C-277, which, quite frankly, could be seen as a companion piece to the legislation in front of you today.

Bill C-465 is inherently a very simple of legislation, but underlying its simplicity is the fact that the activities the bill speaks to are critical, not only in terms of our heritage but also in terms of the impact they have made on the conservation of fish and wildlife populations and the contributions of anglers, hunters, and trappers to our national economy. The bill mimics similar legislation in the U.S. that has celebrated National Hunting and Fishing Day since 1972.

Dating back to the 19th century, anglers, hunters, and trappers were the earliest proponents of conservation and scientific wildlife management. They were the first to recognize that rapid development and unregulated use of fish and wildlife threatened the future of many species. Led by Teddy Roosevelt in the States, Sir Wilfrid Laurier in Canada, and a host of sportsmen on both sides of the border, early conservationists helped to create the first laws restricting unfettered use of wildlife. They worked in support of sustainable use of fish and wildlife and helped to create hunting and fishing licences. This resulted eventually in the creation of the North American wildlife conservation model, the underpinning for most fish and wildlife programs in existence today.

I have provided members of the committee, through the clerk, with a DVD produced by us in cooperation with Shane Mahoney and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. The DVD traces the contributions made over the last 120 years by anglers, hunters, and trappers to the health and welfare of fish and wildlife populations on both sides of the border.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping combined in Canada contribute over \$10 billion annually to the Canadian economy. In 1995 the Province of Ontario set up what is known as the special purpose account, or SPA, the money from which is used to fund fish and wildlife programs in this province. The money comes from two sources. The first is revenue generated by hunting and fishing licences and outdoor cards. The second is from the province's consolidated revenue fund.

It was originally intended that angler and hunter contributions would be matched dollar for dollar by the province. In practice, however, two-thirds of the funding for the SPA is derived from the revenues produced by anglers and hunters. In 2009 this amounted to \$62 million from anglers and hunters, \$28 million from the province. So two-thirds of all fish and wildlife program spending in this province is coming directly from the activities of anglers, hunters, and trappers. This funding is used to protect species that may be at risk; to restore species like elk, wild turkey, and Atlantic salmon; to fight against invasive species that threaten our fish and wildlife populations; and to restore vital habitat for hundreds of species of birds, fish, and wildlife.

•(1610)

In Manitoba, hundreds of acres of wetlands have been permanently protected thanks to grants generated by waterfowl hunters. An \$8.50 stamp on every migratory game bird hunting permit is directed to a fund administered by Wildlife Habitat Canada to support conservation. Over the years this has contributed \$32 million to hundreds of projects across the country.

In fact, According to a report published by Wildlife Habitat Canada in 2000, between 1984 and 1999 hunters across the country directly contributed more than \$335 million to wildlife habitat conservation.

During second reading debate on Bill C-465, which saw strong support for the bill from all sides of the House, it was clear that the members had done their homework. I refer to the member for Yukon and his two friendly amendments, which we support. I also want to refer to the member for Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, who made some very insightful comments about recreational hunting and the control of wildlife populations. Madame Lavallée was dead-on in her remarks.

Bill C-465 is an important first step toward the recognition of the important heritage of hunting, fishing, and trapping in Canada and the contribution that anglers, hunters, and trappers make to the conservation of the resource for current and future generations. We commend Mr. Norlock for introducing this bill and we are proud to support it. We would certainly be prepared to support a friendly amendment. In my printed remarks, we've suggested that it might be brought in line with the U.S. national hunting and fishing day, which is the fourth Saturday of September, but we are more than happy to support the third weekend in September as an alternative.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll now hear an opening statement from Mr. Rodgers.

Mr. Tony Rodgers (Executive Director, Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters): Thank you.

Good afternoon. My name is Tony Rodgers. I am the executive director of the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters. My federation of 32 hunting, trapping, and angling clubs has been in existence since 1930, and we are very proud of our outdoor heritage. We are the largest conservation organization in Nova Scotia and take pride in ourselves for being on the front line of all environmental and wildlife conservation discussions.

We would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to be here today to speak in support of Bill C-465, An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day. We would also like to salute Mr. Norlock for introducing the bill and for his understanding of the outdoor community.

The people who hunt, trap, and fish in Canada are in some ways a very complicated folk. Some people who don't hunt and fish find it difficult to understand why we would get out of a nice warm bed at 4 o'clock in the morning, slip into a pair of rubber boots and a parka, and try to catch a duck or some other wild creature.

Well, there are many reasons. Hunting and angling are good for the soul. They help you to better commune with nature. They put different food on the table. They allow the participants to contribute in a hands-on way to meaningful wildlife conservation and to help promote the North American system of wildlife management.

To me, conservation means a wise use of our natural resources. Regulated hunting and angling is a way to reach those conservation goals. From the time that French and English trappers, along with the existing native trappers, started selling fur in Europe until today, trapping has been sustainable and so have hunting and angling.

Hunters, trappers, and anglers are the only users of wildlife and wildlife habitat who reach into their pockets and financially support these activities through the purchase of hunting and angling licences. They also purchase wildlife habitat stamps that provide money for conservation projects.

Hunting and angling are healthy outdoor activities that provide, for most of us, lifelong enjoyment. I personally have been hunting for 46 years. So far this year, I've gone on a moose-hunting trip, I have a week-long deer-hunting trip planned, and I will have a goose-hunting trip to P.E.I. in November. These trips are all paid for with taxable dollars. However, our activities do not require that millions of dollars in infrastructure be spent. We don't need fields. We don't need gymnasiums and rinks. A natural stream or an open bog will do just fine.

In 2004, my federation, along with our sister organizations across Canada, signed a Canadian hunting heritage accord. This accord could apply just as easily to fishing and trapping. The accord, in summary, states that the signatories will ensure that the activity of hunting—and, by extension, angling and trapping—will continue to be ecological, sustainable, safe, lawful, responsible, and true to the hunting heritage of our forefathers.

It also contains 10 articles that support the accord, the tenth one being that "Canada's hunting community will share the rich history and traditions of hunting in all its forms with future generations in a manner that reflects respect for the quarry and the responsibilities of the hunter". These are not just words but commitments to Canada and to our activities.

Many sports-people, such as me, are mentors to young anglers and hunters. I've been involved with hunting education for 25 years, first as a bow-hunting instructor and then as a hunter education instructor, and I have spent many hours helping new hunters and anglers hone their skills. My federation was responsible for bringing the "Becoming an Outdoors-Woman" program to Nova Scotia. It's a program that introduces angling and hunting to women and young girls who may not otherwise have the opportunity to experience these skills.

Hunters, trappers, and anglers have a lot to be proud of. In a way, they have helped governments manage our wildlife resources for all of us. To that end, the recognition associated with a national hunting, trapping, and fishing heritage day will go a long way in cementing our position as conservationists, by once a year bringing attention to our activities as a reminder to all levels of government of the service provided to them by us.

Approximately 135,000 Nova Scotians hunt and fish, and many of them do both. The majority of our provincial populations are quite okay with what we're doing as long as we follow the rules and do it in a sustainable manner.

All of us in this room are the descendants of successful hunters and anglers. In some cases they may be from a few generations back, but we would not be here without our forefathers having hunting and fishing skills.

In my written remarks I say that I would like the national day to be September 23, but following the friendly amendment, I'll go along with whatever is agreed upon by everybody else.

Thank you very much.

• (1615)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Rodgers.

We'll now hear an opening statement from Mr. Bailey.

Dr. Robert Bailey (Vice-President, Policy for Canada, Delta Waterfowl Foundation): Hello. Thank you very much for inviting me and Delta Waterfowl—I'm also representing the Canadian Outdoors Network—to address you on this important issue.

My name is Dr. Robert Owen Bailey. I have an honours degree in agriculture, a master's degree in renewable resources, and a Ph.D. in ecology. I've been active in the conservation field for over 40 years. I am also an angler and a hunter, and I was a trapper when I was on the farm as a kid.

I know that you probably don't know much about Delta Waterfowl. It's one of the continent's oldest conservation organizations. Probably the single greatest attribute has been the education of students at the master's and Ph.D. levels in wildlife and habitat conservation. That's what we have done since 1938, when Aldo Leopold, who is the recognized father of the conservation movement in North America, established the research program in 1938 at Delta Waterfowl.

Since then, we have educated or helped in the education of over 400 individuals from both Canada and the United States. They've produced over 700 scientific peer-reviewed publications in scientific journals. They and that legacy are part of the scientific foundation for managing fish and wildlife in North America, in part, as my colleagues have mentioned, contributing to the very successful North American model of wildlife management.

Just as an aside, when you think about wildlife around the world and how much difficulty wildlife is in around the world, and then you look at Canada, we're truly blessed with still-natural populations, free-roving large herds of different kinds of animals, like the caribou in the north—things that are there not by accident but because people care, and hunters and aboriginal people and others

care. They are there also because of the scientific management that the federal government, the provincial governments, and many conservation organizations undertake. It's very much a combined effort.

In addition to Delta Waterfowl, I'm presently also the chair and national coordinator of the Canadian Outdoors Network. The network was initiated in 2007. It's a coalition of 28 of the major conservation, hunting, fishing, trapping, and shooting sports organizations across Canada. Our collective organizations, including my colleagues' organizations here, include 500,000 members and supporters in every province and one territory. Through our own media, I think we are the voice and the leaders of Canada's 10 million hunters, anglers, trappers, and shooting sports enthusiasts.

Network organizations are also the strength and the backbone of fish and wildlife conservation volunteerism in Canada, and certainly the financial supporters of conservation, in partnership with governments and others.

In terms of notes to share with you on the bill, I'm going to read the statement because these two paragraphs have been endorsed by the 28 organizations, so I want to be clear. This is what we offer collectively to you.

We believe Bill C-465 is an opportunity for Canada to recognize and support our hunting, trapping, and fishing heritage, which was a major part of the foundation of Canada as a nation and continues as an important lifestyle choice and culture for many Canadians. Many Canadians connect with nature, as my colleagues mentioned, through hunting, fishing, and trapping. These enthusiasts are the most critical and vocal proponents of our fish and wildlife heritage, as I'm sure many of you know.

Millions of Canadians derive their livelihood in part or fully through their interest in fish and wildlife and in conserving wild places. Indeed, much of the work done by organizations in the outdoor network is to restore and enhance habitat, and to be a catalyst and an advocate for fish, wildlife, and our natural environment.

• (1620)

In considering Bill C-465 as a celebration of a unique aspect of Canadian heritage, it is important to understand the role of lifestyle choice in the development of our Canadian society, including many cultures. Cultures grow and are handed down as a heritage. Values and traditions are recognized and passed on. The diversity and strength of cultures within any society depends upon freedom and tolerance. Cultures thrive where citizens are free to make legitimate lifestyle choices, even where the activities and views supported by the culture are not always shared by all members of society. Over time, this culture is captured and validated as a heritage.

Perhaps the single greatest social attribute of Canadian heritage is to encourage tolerance and promote harmony among different peoples, while preserving their culture, and encouraging it to realize its full potential as part of the Canadian mosaic. We believe Bill C-465 will be a critical step forward for preserving Canada's outdoor heritage and the many social, economic, and environmental benefits and opportunities that it supports across Canada.

This presentation has been signed by: the Alberta Fish and Game Association; the Alberta Outdoor Coalition; the B.C. Wildlife Federation; the B.C. Wildlife Federation Political Action Alliance; the Canadian Institute for Legislative Action; Canadian Section, The Wildlife Society; the Canadian Shooting Sports Association; the Canadian Sporting Arms and Ammunition Association; Delta Waterfowl Foundation; the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs; the Fur Institute of Canada; Friends of Fur; the Hunting for Tomorrow Foundation; Long Point Waterfowl; the Manitoba Wildlife Federation; the National Wild Turkey Federation; the New Brunswick Wildlife Federation; the Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation; the Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance; the Nova Scotia Federation Of Anglers and Hunters; the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters; the Prince Edward Island Trappers Association; the Prince Edward Island Wildlife Federation; the Ruffed Grouse Society; the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation; the Yukon Fish and Game Association; and Wildlife Habitat Canada.

Thank you very much.

• (1625)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bailey.

Finally, we'll hear from Mr. Kendell, who is president of the Credit River Anglers Association. I'll note that the headwaters of the Credit River are in Wellington County, which is in my riding.

Welcome to the committee. We look forward to your opening statement.

Mr. John Kendell (President, Credit River Anglers Association): Thank you very much.

Thank you to the chair and committee for the opportunity to speak here.

My name is John Kendell. I am president and chair of the Credit River Anglers Association. We are based out of Mississauga on the Credit River, but our mandate has expanded to encompass most of Lake Ontario watersheds and migratory fish around the Great Lakes.

Fishing and hunting has been in my family since my family first came to Canada in the early 1800s. My wife is a new Canadian, but she also fishes; I can't get her to hunt yet, but I'm working on that. My children hunt and fish with me. My daughter is only five and she's been out numerous times already.

This is a wonderful bill, and our membership fully supports it. It's such a key, as has been said, but I'm not going to reiterate what's already been said by the other members beyond saying that fishing and hunting have been ingrained in our society from day one. My grandfather used to take me hunting and fishing; my dad used to take me hunting and fishing; and now my dad takes my grandchildren hunting and fishing. This has gone on for several generations. It's wonderful to have a bill put forth to recognize that heritage.

We do have the hunting and heritage fishing laws within Ontario, but to have it recognized across the country is vital. I have hunted in several parts of the country, and I fish from coast to coast. Again, this is encompassing, right across this great nation of ours.

Also, I think it is important to recognize what anglers and hunters give back to society. I volunteer 1,000 hours a year. My membership of my association volunteers 30,000 to 40,000 hours a year back to the community. That's for wildlife habitat preservation, tree-planting, fish-stocking—all of these things. They do it because they enjoy the environment, but they also do it because it's so important to protect our fishery.

In closing, I think we have to understand, too, that we have a world-class fishery all across Canada. We have unique fisheries within Ontario, B.C., the Prairies, the Maritimes, and Quebec. This bill will make the rest of Canada, those who do not partake in these activities, aware of what we love. It will help with that understanding.

Thank you.

• (1630)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Kendell.

We'll begin now with about 30 minutes of questions and comments from members of the committee, beginning with Madam Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you so much.

I'm going to limit my question to Mr. Kendell and allow my committee colleagues to pick up the excess time.

Mr. Kendell, I just wanted to note that you also received the national recreational fisheries award from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans this year. Congratulations.

Mr. Kendell is one of my favourite constituents, too, and is an outstanding citizen. He has built up the Credit River Anglers Association from 35 members to 5,000.

Congratulations to an outstanding citizen.

Do you think that such a national heritage day as Bill C-465 has would draw attention to anglers in Mississauga, obviously, grow your membership even further—you've done an incredible job already—and ultimately grow the business in the area and around the country?

Mr. John Kendell: Yes. I believe this will definitely help that. I hope that at the federal level some interest will be put forth to make this well known, not just to anglers and hunters, because we're already on board, but to the person who lives on Yonge Street in downtown Toronto who doesn't own a fishing rod, to allow them to understand, and also to get people involved.

Nine out of ten people I talk to in my neighbourhood are shocked to find out that there are thousands of salmon in the Credit River behind our house. So if it's like that in Mississauga, it's like that right across the country. We just need to make people aware. If they're aware, then you're going to have the spinoff benefits to the economy.

The Chair: Mr. Simms, go ahead.

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mrs. Crombie.

There are just a couple of points that you brought up earlier. In your opening statement, Mr. Farrant, I'm glad to see that you included the non-aboriginal settlers who first came here. You mentioned John Cabot—Giovanni Caboto—but before that, the aboriginal component was very important, because the now extinct Beothuk Indians in Newfoundland and Labrador were actually some of the greatest hunters known in history. So I support the friendly amendment that I hope will succeed through the preamble on that one; I commend the mover of this, as it is long overdue.

When you talk about establishing heritage days for several issues, as I've seen thus far in my six-and-a-half years here, we don't see a lot behind them when it comes to promotion, for whatever reason. With private members' bills you can't spend money, and there's no money tagged to this. We went through this with lighthouses and that sort of thing, and I understand that.

How do you envision the government departments taking this third Saturday in September and promoting it as something that is part of our heritage, our DNA, as the mover mentions, and which I agree with?

Mr. Greg Farrant: I can't speak for the government, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Environment Canada, or whatever federal level would be responsible for such promotion. But as an outdoor network, and with those 28 groups, we would certainly approach the government, behind Mr. Norlock's bill, to work with them to try to free up some funding for support of this initiative.

We've seen it at the provincial level in Alberta and Manitoba and in Ontario, where we have family fishing weekend twice a year, and there is also a national family fishing week that is promoted across the country. We hope that similar support will be given to this bill not only by the federal government, but also by the provinces in each jurisdiction.

Both collectively and individually as organizations we will seek to move forward to government and say, "It is now time for you to put some money behind this". It has been recognized in eight provinces and territories. It will be recognized nationally if Bill C-465 is approved. It's something that you need to put some oomph behind. Let's celebrate it not just by providing some framework and structure legislatively, but also by providing some funding dollars.

Mr. Scott Simms: I agree. One of the things that I notice they're doing is promoting the new regulations for pleasure craft, for instance, on the new licensing you need. Some of the groups around that are busy promoting how to get the certification and the education behind that. I don't know if you envision that as part of this, but I would like to get the opinions of others on it as well.

Mr. Bailey.

• (1635)

Dr. Robert Bailey: I think it would be a challenge, and I say that not in an unfriendly way. One thing is that, personally, being in Ottawa for quite a long time, working with the different departments and meeting with many different ministers over actually decades of

time, sometimes anglers and hunters don't really see our culture reflected in government bureaucracies very much. Not everybody agrees with hunting and fishing, as you know.

So I think this bill is very important because it highlights.... Plus, it's a very important bill because it receives the support of all the parties here.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bailey.

Thank you, Mr. Simms.

Madame Lavallée.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I will start, and then I'll turn the floor over to my colleague, if that's alright with him.

I want to come back to something Mr. Norlock said earlier. The fact that the Bloc Québécois supports this bill is completely separate from the matter of the Canadian firearms registry. In our view, the two issues are totally unrelated. Our support for the bill has nothing to do with our support for maintaining the firearms registry. Unless you say differently, I'll take it that you agree with us. I don't wish to discuss the registry. I just want to be certain that everyone is clear on our position.

Getting back to the date of September 23 mentioned in section 2 of the bill, Mr. Norlock let it be known earlier that he would be open to our amending this provision right away, right this very afternoon, and to changing the date on which National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day would be commemorated across Canada to the third Saturday in September.

Are there any objections to changing the date? I'll start with Mr. Rodgers.

[English]

Mr. Tony Rodgers: Yes, we certainly support any changes that may come out. I think it's the day that's important, recognizing the day as opposed to when exactly it is or what specific date it is—as long as we get to the fact that there is such a day.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Monsieur Farrant.

Mr. Greg Farrant: As I indicated earlier and as we suggested in our written statement, certainly I would support perhaps the fourth Saturday of the month, simply because that is when the U.S. recognizes their national hunting and fishing day. But maybe we need to be a bit different from the U.S., as we should be. I understand that my good friend and colleague Alain Cossette, from the Quebec federation of anglers and hunters, is supportive of the third Saturday, and therefore we would certainly be supportive of the third Saturday.

The Chair: Mr. Bailey.

[Translation]

Dr. Robert Bailey: I think it's important for this national heritage day to fall on a Saturday, because people will want to mark the occasion in some way. It wouldn't be the same if the day were to fall on a Monday or Tuesday.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: What would be the better date, in your opinion? The third or the fourth Saturday?

Dr. Robert Bailey: I think the third Saturday would be preferable.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: What about you, Mr. Kendell?

[English]

Mr. John Kendell: I would also agree that the third Saturday is more than suitable. It works for our membership.

The Chair: Monsieur Pomerleau.

[Translation]

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: Mr. Rodgers, I'd like to thank you for your rather eloquent presentation. It's obvious that you are a true nature lover. I have a question for you, as a nature lover, and one for Mr. Bailey, as an expert who has taken courses in this subject.

The question is not directly related to the topic under discussion. However, I would like to get your opinion on this. You've told us, as have others, just how much sport hunters and anglers benefit the environment through the money they invest, the hours of work they put in and their conservation efforts. From a commercial standpoint, however, we're facing a completely different situation.

How do you feel personally about that fact that in your region of Atlantic Canada, the waters have been overfished? How could this have happened when there are so many people involved in conservation efforts? What is your take of this situation?

• (1640)

[English]

Mr. Tony Rodgers: I think it's a different type of fishing that we're talking about, to start off with, because a commercial fishery....

But let's get back to the feelings, to the first part of your question. I think the thing that happens to me, and I will probably speak for 99% of the people who participate in our activities, is that once we step into the field or step into the brook, the worries of our days disappear. The stress comes flowing into the water and away from us. That is very rewarding—so rewarding that at times it's hard to get back to work.

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: I wonder what you're doing here.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tony Rodgers: All of us walking down the street coming here were saying that we should be in the woods hunting pheasants today—all of us. So yes, you're right on.

The commercial aspect of losing the fishery on the east coast, as Mr. Simms also knows, has been devastating. It has hurt a lot of our small communities. A lot of these small communities, though, have found ways of utilizing angling and other aspects of wildlife to get back into it. For instance, there are fishermen taking tourists on whale-watching tours and bird-watching activities. Things of that nature have helped commercially. There's still some commercialization within the trapping, of course, and we heard the numbers earlier, and some of the people have worked off into those industries.

It has been difficult, but there has been good news in the last little while. It appears that some of the stocks are starting to come back. Hopefully, that will be something we can rely on in the future, if we haven't lost our skills to catch the fish in the future. I say this because the young fishermen have now gone into computers and have disappeared from the shoreline. They're now working in Alberta in

the tar sands. God knows if learning how to actually fish is going to be something.... My brother-in-law is a lobster fishermen in P.E.I. He sold his equipment last year. He had four sons and none of the sons went into the fishing industry.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Rodgers.

Merci, monsieur Pomerleau.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Obviously, we have widespread support, at least around this table, for this bill. I'm interested because I deal with fishing and hunting issues all the time. When I knock on people's doors, they don't tend to talk to me about the national issues of the day; they talk to me about slot sizes for fish. It is all very much under provincial jurisdiction.

Since we have this chance to talk, I'd like to talk a bit about wildlife management policy. The other day when I was here in Ottawa, we had a bear in my garage. I have a dog, and the dog's job—though he doesn't know it's his job—is to deal with the bears. If he doesn't deal with the bears, we'll get another dog.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Charlie Angus: I guess that comment is really going to come back and hurt me. You guys won't run those attack mailings, but the other guys might: "Charlie Angus doesn't like dogs". No, I like dogs that are efficient at dealing with bears, and our dog is very good at that.

There's a general sense in the north in terms of wildlife management that when decisions are made that are not based on sustainability, not based on science or conservation, we have bad outcomes. For example, since Premier Harris cancelled the spring bear hunt, we've not seen in the north the balance that existed before. We've had periods of time when the bear population has gone completely out of whack. We ended up a year ago with all kinds of orphaned bears getting killed at the sides of the roads; the mothers were being forced to come into town because the big male bears that normally were killed during the spring hunt weren't being killed.

Mr. Farrant, I'd like to ask your opinion, not so much on the spring bear hunt but on what role OFAH would play in terms of public policy. If we're looking at changing an activity because there might be a particular community or constituency that is opposed to it, how does OFAH play a role in ensuring that we have wildlife management decisions based on science, based on conservation, and on what is actually being seen in the field?

Mr. Greg Farrant: Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Angus.

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters is a non-profit, charitable, conservation-based organization. We rely on science in all of our policies. Whether it's invasive species, species at risk, or restoration of species, science is the watchword.

You're quite correct that the decision to cancel the spring bear hunt was not based on science, unfortunately, and we are now paying the price for it. Madame Lavallée, on second reading of the bill in the House, made some comments about wildlife management, the control of wildlife populations, and the role hunting plays in that. She's quite right.

In particular, the Government of Ontario, strangely enough, which cancelled the spring bear hunt and has caused so many problems because of that, has made the point in its policy documents at the Ministry of Natural Resources that hunting is the most valuable wildlife management tool available to it. Madame Lavallée noted, which was very insightful on her part, that other methods of controlling wildlife populations, such as birth control or relocation, are ineffective and costly. Wildlife managers have indicated that if recreational sport hunting is not available to them for wildlife population management and control, there aren't enough dollars to replace that for the actual management and control of wildlife.

So it's a valuable tool not only in terms of the recreation, culture, and heritage that we're talking about here today, but also in supporting the scientific management of populations in wildlife management units in Ontario and across the country.

• (1645)

Mr. Charlie Angus: In terms of, for example, the moose population, what I hear on the street is that the moose tag system is broken. It's badly broken. It's always broken. Everybody I know says they have never gotten a moose tag, and everybody I know knows some guy who gets a moose tag every single year. I don't know how that can be. I've never met the guy who gets it every single year, but everybody knows someone.

There is pressure. There are a lot of people who want to hunt moose. There are a lot of people who, come the fall, if they're not out in the bush, are driving their wives crazy. The wives will put them out in the bush anyway, even if they don't have a moose tag, and they'll send the dogs, too.

Is the moose-tag hunt system in Ontario working? Is it based on science? Can we improve the system so that it is fair for people? I mean, it is part of a way of life for many people.

Mr. Greg Farrant: We've gotten somewhat off track on the bill we're here to discuss today.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Well, as I said, this is the only chance I'm going to get to ask you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Angus, for the question.

Mr. Farrant, could you answer it? Then we'll move on to Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Greg Farrant: There is an Environmental Bill of Rights posting right now to change the way the moose tag allocation system works in Ontario. You're quite right: it hasn't worked well. There are many areas, such as the areas around Algonquin Park and elsewhere, where the tags have been difficult.

It's a good thing you didn't ask my colleague, who shot his first moose just two weeks ago and actually brought a picture today. Don't ask to see it.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Greg Farrant: The system is being revamped now, as we speak. As I said, there's an EBR posting there. We are working with the province to try to fix it, because it is broken.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll go to Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to all of you for being here today to talk to us about a subject you're obviously all very passionate about. I know that you could be enjoying the activities you're here to speak about, and I hope that at the end of the day you will feel that your time here was as worthwhile as I know it has been for us to hear your points of view and your opinions. Thank you very much.

I also want to take a very brief second to thank my colleague, Mr. Norlock, for bringing forward this bill. It's a very important initiative he has undertaken to recognize a very important part of our heritage and our history here in Canada.

The area I come from out west was settled first by our native peoples, of course, who obviously relied very much on hunting, trapping, and fishing for their way of life. Also, as it was settled later by us Europeans, the fur trade was a very important part of settling many of the communities we have today. So it's a very important initiative Mr. Norlock has undertaken here and I commend him for that. I commend you all for being here to support him in that initiative.

I have a three-part question. I'll just lay out the three questions and then allow all of you to answer as you see fit—any or all parts of the questions.

First of all, you've all mentioned that you have fairly extensive memberships. I'm curious as to the kinds of consultations and discussions you've had with your members about this particular legislation and how important they feel it is for ensuring they're able to carry on the heritage and the activities they enjoy in hunting, trapping, and fishing. Or do they see it more as a symbolic piece of legislation or as something that in practical...that nature will help to ensure we can carry on with the activities that you and your members all enjoy so much?

Second, by way of comparison, I'd like to know about the consultations and discussions you've had with your members in regard to the recent vote on the Liberal long-gun registry, and obviously the deep concern that many of your members would have about what took place during that vote on keeping the long-gun registry in existence. Certainly, we had a number of Liberal and NDP members who flip-flopped on the positions they previously had put forth and previously voted on. Of course, we have three who are in this room with us today on the other side of the table. I want to know how your members feel and about their concerns about the flip-flops we saw from these Liberal and NDP members who allowed that piece of legislation to be voted down.

Perhaps you could do that by way of comparison in terms of the consultations and the discussions you've had with your members. How much have you been hearing from them on these two particular issues by way of comparison?

• (1650)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Richards.

Before I let the witnesses respond, Madam Crombie, did you have something you wanted to ask the chair?

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I just wondered about the relevance of the question, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Well, we are on the study of Bill C-465, An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day, so it is relevant in that it does relate to the topic of hand. I'm going to allow the question to be put.

Thank you very much, Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards: I did have a third part to the question as well, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards: Mr. Chair, the third part to the question is that obviously we know that some of these members did flip-flop on that particular piece of legislation.

The piece of legislation is deeply concerning to your members, I'm sure. Are you concerned that they may flip-flop on this piece of legislation as well? Obviously, they've indicated support.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Richards.

Let's have some order here. Everybody has been accorded their time to make their interventions, whether in the form of commentary or questions, so please respect members' time.

Are any of the witnesses wanting to answer the question?

Mr. Rodgers, go ahead.

Mr. Tony Rodgers: With respect to this legislation, the bill was taken to our board of directors, and it was discussed quite thoroughly. Everybody understood it and what it meant. There is some symbolism there; there's no question about that. But by the same token, it's something we can also wrap ourselves around and take back to our provincial government to get them moving on a day we've asked for in the past and for which they haven't yet come through. It would help us in that respect.

With respect to the vote on the long-gun registry, I had a very busy phone. That's as much as I'll say right now with respect to that.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Rodgers.

Are there any other witnesses who wish to answer?

Go ahead, Mr. Farrant.

Mr. Greg Farrant: With respect to this particular bill, our board of directors has endorsed this. I have one of the larger boards of directors—some say too large—and there are actually 65 members on our board from across Ontario. It is also something that our

membership has been kept apprised of since the bill was introduced by Mr. Norlock. We have received nothing but positive feedback.

I think our membership sees this as not only symbolic, which it is, but also as the precept for moving forward for some other things, such as perhaps looking at the creation of a national fish and wildlife commission, as you've seen in some of the provinces. I've spoken to the OFAH. I'm in a unique position here: OFAH is located in Mr. Del Mastro's riding, and I live in Mr. Norlock's riding, so I have two members here who listen to me sometimes and who sometimes don't want to listen to me when I get too yappy, I guess.

I have spoken with both Mr. Norlock and Mr. Del Mastro about a national fish and wildlife heritage commission that would provide advice to the government—whichever government that may be—on fish and wildlife issues from a national perspective. This is perhaps a prelude to moving in that direction, so I think it's important not only for the principle but also for what it may offer us down the road.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Farrant.

Go ahead, please, briefly, Mr. Bailey.

Dr. Robert Bailey: On the present act before you, we did, on behalf of the Outdoors Network, have twenty-eight groups sign on to that letter. Similar to what Mr. Farrant said, in many cases they went to their board and to their executive to get that endorsement.

We're very enthusiastic about it. We think it will do good things. We don't believe anybody is going to flip-flop on it. I have a very good feeling from the room on that.

But that is a very distinct and separate issue from the past activity with the long-gun registry. We worked very hard. As twenty-eight well coordinated groups, perhaps we did not work quite hard enough. It's very important to us. I talked to you about our lifestyle. We believe the long-gun registry is a barrier to our lifestyle. Sometimes we feel as though our hunting and fishing heritage lifestyle is somewhat under attack in this country, because certainly it is from time to time.

• (1655)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Bailey.

We're going to allow Mr. Bagnell the floor now because we're short on time.

Mr. Bagnell, go ahead.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First of all I want to thank Mr. Norlock, Mr. Farrant and everyone on the committee and the panel for understanding the point about aboriginal people. Obviously, it was fundamental to their history, and it's fundamental in their lives now. It's a fundamental right and, really, it has to be in the bill somehow. I certainly appreciate everyone's understanding.

It's very important, of course, in my riding. We have all sorts of fishing derbies. I remember the five types of salmon and the fish traps from time immemorial. Even the Klondike gold rush is named after.... Tron-duick is a place where they would hammer the fish in the Klondike River.

As for the third Saturday, we had a snowstorm this year by the third Saturday in September—

Voices: Oh, oh!

Hon. Larry Bagnell: We have snow every September, so I'd prefer the third as opposed to the fourth Saturday.

Ducks Unlimited still thinks a “fisher” is a furry animal. The point about Ducks—and I'm glad they're here today—and all the groups that are here today is that it emphasizes the important point you made about conservation and what you do through conservation. Some of these species probably would be extinct if it weren't for the work you do.

I just want to mention very briefly the Ducks Unlimited third suggested amendment, which I'll talk about later, and to suggest, in the fourth paragraph of the preamble, changing “*contribution appréciable*” to “*contribution remarquable*”.

Mr. Farrant, I wonder if you could talk more about the re-establishment of the survey on the importance of nature to Canadians.

Mr. Greg Farrant: Yes. I wish I had something in front of me that I could refer to. I don't.

But you're quite right, and I know this is something you have raised in the past, and we appreciate it. Because whether it's the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Environment Canada, or non-governmental organizations that do surveys and things, like Wildlife Habitat Canada and others, it's important to have this information and to have up-to-date information. The survey on the importance of nature to Canadians is something that used to give us a bellwether on where we were in terms of our wildlife resources and our natural resources in this country.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans, for instance, does surveys every five years, which they publish, and that gives us a fairly good snapshot of where fishing is in this country in terms of how many are participating and what they're participating in, etc., which is a useful thing for governments in terms of making policy. It's useful for non-governmental organizations and charitable conservation groups like us and the other groups that are sitting here today to understand where we're at.

It gives us that accurate snapshot in time, as I said, and it allows us to compare how things have happened over the last five years, which is why the surveys that you speak of are important. Because it's not just anglers, hunters, and trappers that it's important to: it's important to all Canadians to understand just where our natural resources are going.

There is a general feeling among conservation organizations in this country that governments—and I say governments in general, including provincial and federal governments, and even those at the local level to a certain extent, right down to conservation authorities—are not placing a great enough emphasis on our natural resources, not only in terms of policy, but in terms of funding dollars for the future.

Things like that survey you refer to are important for us to then go forward and say, “This is what Canadians think and this is why you need to be focusing on this”.

● (1700)

Hon. Larry Bagnell: I have one last question.

I visit aboriginal fish camps in my riding. From time immemorial, they've had salmon hanging there for subsistence, but now the salmon run has diminished dramatically. I've lobbied Hillary Clinton to reduce the bycatch from the huge pollock industry, but I've also lobbied for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada to put more research into what happens to our salmon in the Pacific Ocean. Would any of you agree with me that those are important priorities?

Mr. Greg Farrant: I can't really speak to that one. We're an Ontario-based organization. Certainly we do have members here from the east coast and the west coast, through the B.C. Wildlife Federation, as part of the coalition. There are salmon federations on both coasts that receive significant funding from the federal government, to the tune of about \$30 million to \$35 million a year, if I remember correctly.

In Ontario we have been working with organizations, as has my colleague here, on the restoration of Atlantic salmon in the Great Lakes, particularly Lake Ontario. The two millionth salmon has just gone into Lake Ontario this year.

In terms of internationally, we work with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission—and as you know, there is a Canadian as well as an American section to that—the International Joint Commission, and others on binational issues affecting the Great Lakes in particular.

As to the coasts, I'd have to defer to my colleagues.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bailey, go ahead.

Dr. Robert Bailey: Backing up to the other question, when you have those socio-economic surveys of the benefits of these natural resources to Canadians, such as the survey that Environment Canada used to do and the recreational fisheries survey that's done by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans every five years, those become important to decision-makers such as yourselves when you have policy decisions and development decisions.

They become important when you have to decide whether you're going to do some specific infrastructure development or human activity or allocate land in a certain way or for a certain use and you want to know what the trade-off is, because there are always trade-offs. When you don't have the information in front of you, then you don't know what the value of that trade-off is.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're going to suspend for a couple of minutes to allow our witnesses to leave so that we can then come out of suspension and go into clause-by-clause consideration of this bill. This meeting is suspended for two minutes.

● (1700) _____ (Pause) _____

● (1705)

The Chair: The committee is coming out of suspension for the clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-465.

Pursuant to Standing Order 75(1), consideration of the preamble and clause 1 is postponed until we have first considered the other clauses.

(On clause 2—*National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day*)

The Chair: The first clause in front of us for consideration is clause 2.

I understand that Madame Lavallée has an amendment to move. Go ahead, Madame Lavallée.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: In accordance with the wishes of the witnesses who have testified and of Mr. Norlock, I move that clause 2 be amended to read as follows: “Throughout Canada, in each and every year, the third Saturday in September shall be known as”.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Lavallée.

I will read the motion in English.

[English]

Madame Lavallée has proposed an amendment to clause 2 that would replace line 2 on page 2 with the following:

year, the third Saturday in September shall be known

Is there any debate on this amendment?

(Amendment agreed to)

(Clause 2 as amended agreed to)

(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: We'll now go to the consideration of the preamble.

I understand that there are two proposed amendments to the preamble. Could I have a mover for the first amendment?

Mr. Bagnell, you're moving your amendment....? Which one are you moving?

Hon. Larry Bagnell: I move:

That Bill C-465, in the Preamble, be amended by adding after line 2 on page 1 the following:

Whereas the Aboriginal peoples of Canada have practised and been sustained by traditional hunting, trapping and fishing activities for food and for ceremonial and commercial purposes since time immemorial;

I understand that we may have a technical detail here, which we'll deal with.

The Chair: The chair is going to rule the amendment out of order. I will give you my reasons why. If the committee wishes to challenge my ruling, it can do so and overrule me, but out of the defence of the rules of the House, I just want to remind members that any amendment to a preamble is not allowed to any bill, unless, of course, the amendment to the preamble comes as a result of an amendment to the body of the bill, which is not the case here.

So I'm going to rule the amendment out of order, but I understand, Mr. Bagnell, that you wish to challenge the chair.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Yes. It's my understanding that, in spirit, everyone seems to be in favour of this amendment.

First of all, if we challenge the chair and it's overturned, then the Speaker may or may not make the same ruling, so it leaves a possible opening to get this bill through in a manner we all respect. But I'd like to also perhaps ask for unanimous consent of the committee to consider these sorts of friendly amendments to the preamble at today's meeting in the spirit of—

The Chair: Sure. There's no such thing as a friendly amendment, but I understand what you're telling the chair.

Mr. Bagnell is asking the committee to overrule my ruling that the motion is out of order. All those in favour of overruling the chair so the amendment can be put?

The chair is overruled. The amendment is in front of us. Is there any debate on the amendment?

Mr. Angus.

● (1710)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes. I would implore this committee to come through with language, because it would send a very wrong signal in terms of where we, as a House, came down in terms of heritage hunting rights because we did not have a clause in there that said, “This in no way...”. If we weren't going to go with a preamble, we would have had to take the time to have some language to say that this is not overriding or impeding treaty rights. It opens a whole unnecessary set of arguments that nobody, I think, around this table would wish to open up about what exactly this bill means, what exactly this day means.

Because clearly, under the section 35 rights of the charter, there are specific rights for hunting, fishing, and trapping that have already been defined. If we're seen to overlook them, certainly people will infer that it was through political intent, and I didn't have that sense that this was the desire around this table.

So I would say that either we take this further up or we find a way to get some language in there so the intent of this bill is not misinterpreted by this ruling.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Angus.

The amendment is in front of the committee because the committee has overruled the chair. Is there any other further comment or debate on the amendment as moved by Mr. Bagnell? Seeing none, I'll call the question on the amendment: shall the amendment moved by Mr. Bagnell carry?

(Amendment agreed to—[See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: The amendment has carried, so we'll go to the consideration of the second amendment. Do I have a mover for the second amendment?

Mr. Bagnell, could you read your second amendment?

Hon. Larry Bagnell: I move: That Bill C-465, in the Preamble, be amended by replacing line 7 on page 1 with the following: “from coast to coast to coast;”

Basically we're just adding the other coast in Canada. I think it's just a technical, grammatical, almost friendly amendment.

The Chair: That's right. This amendment is in order because it's a clarification of the text of the preamble.

The amendment is in front of us. Is there any debate or comment on the amendment as moved by Mr. Bagnell?

Mr. Del Mastro.

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

I guess this is more of a philosophical question. I've always assumed that coast to coast just meant from coast to any coast, because we actually have at least four coasts in Canada. I live pretty close to a major coastline known as the Great Lakes, which is a border between Canada and the United States, so I hope we don't have to move to "coast to coast to coast to coast".

I'll accept the amendment here, but I think that our country's coat of arms says "from coast to coast". I think they meant all coasts, all lines, and all borders when they wrote it; I think it was an inclusive statement. But we'll accept the amendment.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Lavallée.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I'm prepared to accept my colleague's amendment, even though it is more philosophical in nature. As it so happens, I have another amendment to propose, having just noticed something. The word "national" is used in the expression "national heritage day." As you know, there are at least two nations within Canada: the nation of Quebec, the existence of which was formally recognized in this House, and, of course, the nation of Canada. If we dispensed with the word "national," it wouldn't change anything in the bill, but it would be a philosophical amendment. But in short, I support Mr. Bagnell's amendment.

[English]

The Chair: Okay.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I'll have more to say about this later.

The Chair: We are now considering Mr. Bagnell's amendment. We'll get to your amendment later.

Mr. Pomerleau.

• (1715)

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: I also have a bit of an issue with Mr. Bagnell's amendment. The English is fine, "from coast to coast", but the French translation "*d'un océan aux autres*" doesn't have the same impact at all.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I don't have a problem with the translation.

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): "Coast" is not the same as "*océan*". The French translation for "coast" is "*rive*".

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: I agree, but the French reads "*rivières et les fleuves d'un océan aux autres*." That's what the French says.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Translation is a profession, as we all know. Often, we don't have word for word translations. The word "coast" can often be translated several ways.

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: That's why the expression "coast to coast" seemed—

[English]

Mr. Royal Galipeau: It's "*A Mari usque ad Mare*".

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: We could go with Latin, "*ad mares*."

The Chair: Mr. Pomerleau, are you alright with...?

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: I would have had no objections if the expression "coast to coast" had been rendered by the expression "*d'une mer à l'autre*."

[English]

and that's it.

[Translation]

We understand the meaning.

The Chair: The wording in Mr. Bagnell's amendment is "*d'un océan aux autres*."

Mr. Royal Galipeau: That's not right.

The Chair: Would you care to suggest another translation?

Mr. Royal Galipeau: All we have to do is vote down the amendment and that will be the end of it.

The Chair: "*D'un océan à l'autre*." Is that what you're suggesting?

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: Yes, "*d'un océan à l'autre*."

[English]

The Chair: Well, I'll ask the clerk to see if we can get a more accurate translation....

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I think we should let the translators do their job.

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: Let's leave it at that and trust the translators.

The Chair: It is easier that way. Thank you.

[English]

Go ahead, Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes, quickly, we're not inventing anything new here. There has been a move in recent years to utilize "coast to coast to coast" in recognition of the communities of the far north. It doesn't translate into French and it hasn't.... I think we have past practices with other attempts; "*à l'autre*" has been the expression, and I think it's correct. I think "coast to coast to coast" is just another level to say that in English we want to make sure, because there are differences in the translation. I think it's fairly straightforward. We're not going to come out of here and create a constitutional crisis if we do this.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: It may be.

Mr. Charlie Angus: We could. We could if we tried, but I don't think we are.

The Chair: Is there any further debate on Mr. Bagnell's amendment? No? Shall Mr. Bagnell's amendment carry?

Mr. Royal Galipeau: I'd like to record my dissent.

(Amendment agreed to on division)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Galipeau.

We now have—

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: *Je voudrais proposer un amendement.*

The Chair: *Oui. Un moment, s'il vous plaît.*

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Okay. Don't forget.

The Chair: Before we go to the consideration of clause 2 as amended—

A voice: It's the preamble.

A voice: No.

The Chair: —by the two previous amendments, if everybody could just let the chair speak, that would be great.

Before we go to consideration of clause 2 as amended, I understand that Madame Lavallée has another amendment to make to clause 2.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Can I move my motion now?

[English]

The Chair: Go ahead.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: In the title and at various times in the bill, there is reference made to “National Heritage Day.” The House of Commons recognized that Quebec is a nation too. This is somewhat confusing. If we deleted the word “national”—

The Chair: Madame Lavallée, we are discussing clause 2 right now. Do you wish to propose an amendment to clause 2?

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: To clause 2?

The Chair: Yes, to clause 2?

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: The clause that now reads: “[...] the third Saturday in September”?

The Chair: Yes.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I'm not sure if it is part of clause 2, but the heading reads “National Heritage Day.”

[English]

The Chair: Oh, I'm sorry. My apologies: we're on the preamble.

Go ahead.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: The bill's preamble refers to An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day. The word “national” also appears elsewhere in the bill. I don't intend to move an amendment to each clause in which the word appears. I simply want to remind you that you voted to recognize the existence of the nation of Quebec. That said, perhaps it isn't completely appropriate to use the word “national”. It could cause some confusion. Deleting the word wouldn't change anything. People

would still mark the occasion on the third Saturday in September and everybody would be happy.

● (1720)

[English]

The Chair: *Un moment, s'il vous plaît.*

Okay. I'm going to rule the amendment out of order, because we've adopted clauses 2 and 3, which incorporate the word “national”. So unless the committee wants to overrule the chair again, I'm not going to allow the amendment to be put.

Is it the wish of the committee to overrule the chair again?

Mr. Norlock? You don't have a vote here, but you can—

Mr. Rick Norlock: I'm fully aware—

Mr. Charlie Angus: You can only do that once a session.

Mr. Rick Norlock: I'm fully aware that I don't have a vote, but perhaps I can bridge a gap here.

In Quebec, it's a national hunting and fishing heritage day. In Canada, it's a national fishing and hunting heritage day. So I guess what I'm saying is that it can work to your advantage, if you wish, in Quebec or the rest of Canada. You can't say that it's a “national national” and say it twice, so I guess if you want to be literal and specific, you can say it works in Quebec because Quebec is a nation within Canada. So it's a national hunting and fishing and heritage day in Quebec.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Norlock.

Monsieur Rodriguez and then Monsieur Pomerleau.

[Translation]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Thank you. May I speak, even though Mr. Bagnell is substituting for me today?

[English]

The Chair: Yes. You just can't vote.

[Translation]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Fine.

With all due respect, Madame Lavallée, I don't think we should spend too much time debating this point. Quebec has been recognized as a nation within the nation of Canada. We could also talk about the Acadian nation or about Canada's first nations and the debate could go on forever.

However, I think the meaning here is clear to Quebecers. With all due respect, the only party that is confused about the meaning is the Bloc Québécois. The meaning is quite clear, and I do not think any amendments are warranted.

[English]

The Chair: Monsieur Pomerleau.

[Translation]

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: I disagree.

A voice: Come on!

Mr. Roger Pomerleau: I really do. We're clear on the meaning of the word "national." We know that Quebec is a nation. There is no confusion on our part. We know exactly what we are.

When a bill is tabled, we are receiving some recognition from the other nation as well. We cannot put forward a bill and tell people that they will recognize themselves in that piece of legislation. When the Prime Minister recognized us as a nation, he was the one who took the initiative to do so, not us. We know that we are a nation. Theoretically, we do not need the Prime Minister to tell us that, but it is important that he recognize our nation status. So then, when a bill that is tabled refers to a nation, it is important that our nation status also be recognized.

[English]

The Chair: We're debating the preamble, as amended.

I'll go to Mr. Del Mastro, and then Mr. Angus.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: I'd like to suggest that since nobody is actually challenging the chair on his ruling, which I think is correct, we shouldn't entertain a lot of debate unless they want to challenge the chair. Then we can have a vote and kill the thing.

I suggest that "national" speaks to Canada as a nation, of which Quebec is a part, which we all appreciate. As many of us come from many different parts of the country, we are all one nation.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'll be quick, because I have such great respect for my colleague, Madame Lavallée.

She has three motions and she has almost talked the clock out on the potential to get to those three motions, so call the question.

The Chair: Mr. Bagnell, go ahead.

• (1725)

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Sorry, it's on the preamble.

The Chair: Yes, we are on debate on the preamble as amended.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: This is a translation thing. I don't want it to be an official amendment, but Ducks Unlimited suggested that in the French translation of "significant contribution" in paragraph 4, "*contribution remarquable*" instead of "*contribution appréciable*"—I don't speak French—would more closely reflect the English.

The Chair: Are you moving that?

Hon. Larry Bagnell: I don't know if it's a technical translation.

The Chair: You have to move an amendment.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Okay.

The Chair: Are you moving an amendment to that effect?

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Yes.

The Chair: Okay.

We have an amendment in front of us to change the word "*appréciable*" to "*remarquable*".

Madame Lavallée.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I agree. There is a slight nuance. I do not intend to vote against the amendment because I want the process to move forward.

[English]

The Chair: Is there any further debate on the third amendment to the preamble?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: No.

(Amendment agreed to—[See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: We're now back to the preamble as amended three times. Is there any further debate on the preamble as amended?

Seeing none, I shall call the question. Shall the preamble as amended carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the short title of the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the title of the bill 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: The chair will report the bill at the next opportunity. Shall the committee order a reprint of the bill as amended for the use of the House at report stage?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We will now go to our last and fourth item of business today, which is the three motions that Madame Lavallée has moved.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I'll make it quick, as there is not much time remaining.

I believe most of you are already quite familiar with these motions, as I tabled them quite some time ago. In fact, I put forward the motion respecting the Canadian Tourism Commission on September 10. The motion calls on the committee to send for the executive of the Canadian Tourism Commission to appear and explain in what way the commission meets the eligibility criteria of the Marquee Tourism Events Program from which it obtained \$8 million.

As you may recall, the Marquee Tourism Events Program had a total of \$100 million to award over a two-year period. Deputy Minister Richard Dicerni testified before this committee that the program had a funding shortfall. Montreal's FrancoFolies was unable to secure the funding it was expecting, although it met all program eligibility criteria. It seems the minister invented another criteria after the fact. This just gives you a sense of the program and why the FrancoFolies did not receive any funding.

Fees of \$6 million were also charged. The most surprising and disturbing fact is that the Canadian Tourism Commission obtained \$8 million from the program. It begs the question: Why?

The committee needs to meet with commission officials to ask them why there was not enough money in the usual budget to conduct business as usual—perhaps it wasn't business as usual—and in what way they met program eligibility criteria. Crown corporations are not eligible for funding under the program and just like that, the commission receives \$8 million, the largest amount awarded.

I think we need to have a meeting to look into this matter. I'm moving right along, because I have two other motions to put forward and I know you will not be debating them today. By the way, I'd like to thank the chair for allowing me to table these two motions at this time because unfortunately, I won't be here on Friday.

The second motion has to do with cultural diversity. This topic is in the news a lot these days because another round of talks on a free trade agreement with the European Union is under way in Ottawa. As you know, in 2005, Canada became the first country to promote and sign the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. This convention provides broad protection to cultural industries and to the arts and culture in countries that recognize the distinctive nature of cultural activities. Culture is especially important and needs to be protected.

The fifth round of talks got under way yesterday in Ottawa. We feel that the Canadian government is not defending the convention on cultural diversity or defending cultural exemption provisions, whereas it is important to understand that our culture, the very essence of our identity, must be protected, and that goes for both Canada's and Quebec's identities. Furthermore, whatever conces-

sions we make to the Europeans, the Americans will soon be demanding the same thing.

● (1730)

The Chair: You haven't said anything about your third motion.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I'm getting to it.

The third motion concerns the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement. ACTA is a proposed international agreement that addresses a number of issues, specifically intellectual property, counterfeiting of goods and the unauthorized sharing of copyright files on the Internet.

A number of countries are taking part in the negotiations to establish this trade agreement. Several issues have emerged since 2008. The United States, the European Union and Canada are some of the nations participating in the discussions. Participating countries are being slammed for negotiating ACTA in secret.

The Bloc Québécois would like the committee to invite the Minister of International Trade and the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages to come before it to provide a status report on the ACTA negotiations and to summarize Canada's demands.

[English]

The Chair: Okay.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: We want to know why the agreement is not being negotiated by an existing forum. In particular, as far as Bill C-32 is concerned, how can Heritage Canada and the Government of Canada put copyright legislation on the table while they are negotiating at the same time copyright arrangements with other countries.

The Chair: Thank you for these three motions. We will discuss them when the committee meets on Thursday.

[English]

If there are no other questions or comments, this meeting is adjourned.

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