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CANADA

## **Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs**

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ACVA



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41st PARLIAMENT

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, October 20, 2011**



**Chair**

**Mr. Greg Kerr**



## Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

Thursday, October 20, 2011

•(0850)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Greg Kerr (West Nova, CPC)):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, we do have a quorum. It is time and so we will start our session today. I remind committee members that because we have business to deal with at the end of the presentations by the witnesses, we will be restricting the question time of all the members this morning.

If we are ready, Mr. Casey.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.):** I propose a motion:

That the committee suspends its current study on "commemorating veterans" and commence hearings into the impact of the recent decision by the Conservative government to cut over 200 million dollars from the Veterans Affairs department, and that the committee specifically assess the impact these cuts will have on programs and services to our veterans and the impact these cuts will have on staff and, that the committee report back its findings to the House.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Casey.

We would much rather you had done that in the business period, instead of interfering with the presentation this morning. But since you have raised it, if there are no questions, we'll put it right to a vote now, if that's agreed.

**Mr. Sean Casey:** Thank you, sir.

**The Chair:** On the question being called, those in favour of Mr. Casey's motion? Those opposed?

Where are our members?

We're going to suspend for one minute, folks, just to check the process or the legality.

•(0850)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

•(0850)

•(0855)

**The Chair:** Mr. Lobb.

**Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC):** Mr. Chair, before we go any further, I would just like to bring to the committee's attention the point that although the motion was read, Mr. Casey read the motion in French—and good for him for doing that—and a few members on this side of the table did not have the translation and did not hear the motion. I would just like to point that out.

In fairness to the committee, I think that is an important thing. The vote has occurred, but all members have a right to hear what the

motion is whatever their language, and that did not occur on this motion.

That is not BS; that is the truth. I heard the motion, but there were members on this side of the committee who did not hear the motion in their official language, and I don't believe that is fair. I believe members have a right, before they hear a motion and are asked to vote on it... They were not given a chance to even raise a point. The vote was taken very quickly. Our members should have had an opportunity to hear the motion in their language.

I would ask that this be reconsidered, and I would like to hear what the clerk has to say about this.

**Mr. Marc-Olivier Girard (Procedural Clerk, Committees Directorate, House of Commons):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I don't know when the mover of the motion...if the interpretation services weren't functioning, which I assume was the case.... I know that the mover of the motion did read the motion and then there was a period of debate that began.

**Mr. Ben Lobb:** Where was the debate?

**Mr. Marc-Olivier Girard:** Nobody was on the speaker's list and then the chair had to put the question on the motion. That's what he did.

**The Chair:** I think you are making a fair point, but my understanding is that there would have to be agreement by the committee to have it read again in English, and then you could vote again. That's the process. You would need the consent of all of the committee to do that, of course, but I'm just saying that is an option, that we could do it in English and do it over again.

Is that fair?

**Mr. Sean Casey:** You don't have my consent.

**The Chair:** We are at an interesting stage here, and I apologize to the witnesses. This process that took place is unusual, but as it stands now our committee business is suspended. We will have to go into the committee business section to deal with the overall picture and the rest of the business here.

With our apologies, if you would excuse us.... It may only be for a few moments. We will go in camera to deal with committee business. I think that's the fairest thing to do. So anybody who is not directly attached to staff, if you wouldn't mind excusing yourselves, please, and we will resume in a couple of minutes.

Thank you very much, and please don't go too far away because we are hoping to get back on track here.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*

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