



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

CHPC



NUMBER 002



1st SESSION



41st PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, September 27, 2011



Chair

The Honourable Rob Moore

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

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•(0845)

[English]

The Chair (The Honourable Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC)): Good morning, everybody. I trust you're all enjoying a little breakfast. Welcome to the committee.

This is meeting number two of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. I'd like to welcome all our new members.

Would it be appropriate to go around and introduce ourselves?

Scott, why don't you start?

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor, Lib.):** My name is Scott Simms. I'm a Leo. I enjoy long walks on the beach—

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Scott Simms: I'm just kidding.

The Chair: You had me at Scott Simms.

Mr. Scott Simms: I'm Scott Simms, Liberal and head of this particular caucus, from Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor, which is primarily central Newfoundland.

[Translation]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Good morning. My name is Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet, and I represent the riding of Hochelaga,

[English]

which is on the island of Montreal. Obviously, I'm new here.

[Translation]

I am also an archaeologist, so I am delighted to be on the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

The Chair: Thank you.

[English]

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): I'm Andrew Cash, from riding of Davenport, which is in Toronto. I'm very happy to be here. I'm a long-time worker in the arts and culture sector.

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Bonjour. I'm Pierre Nantel.

[Translation]

I am from the riding of Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher. I am an NDP member, along with my colleagues here today. I have a number of years of experience in music and television.

[English]

Mr. Tyrone Benskin (Jeanne-Le Ber, NDP): I'm Tyrone Benskin. I am the heritage critic for the official opposition. I'm an actor, director, musician, and songwriter. I've been working in the arts and advocating for the arts for the last 30 years.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC): I'm Paul Calandra from Oak Ridges—Markham, just north of Toronto.

Mr. Parm Gill (Brampton—Springdale, CPC): I'm Parm Gill from Brampton—Springdale, formerly a business person and now a full-time member of Parliament.

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): I'm Scott Armstrong from Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, in the northern part of Nova Scotia. I'm a former educator and a political activist.

Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC): I'm Jim Hillyer from the Lethbridge riding. This is my first time as an MP.

Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC): I'm Gord Brown, from Leeds-Grenville, which is just south of Ottawa and along the Canada-U.S. border. This is the fourth time I've been on this committee, starting all the way back in the 38th parliament. I'm happy to be here for my fourth go-round. I'm looking forward to our work.

Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC): I'm Terence Young, member of Parliament for Oakville. I think I've told Mr. Benskin that I was a member of ACTRA for nine years, but of course those years were from ages nine to eighteen. I worked in the music industry not as a performer, but in booking and managing musical acts.

I know that Mr. Cash has a background as a performer as well. He was being modest when he introduced himself.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'm Rob Moore. I'm very pleased to have been asked to chair this committee. My riding is in New Brunswick, along the Bay of Fundy coast, and it's called Fundy Royal.

With that, we'll get started. The first order of business is the election of a new first vice-chair. We elected a first vice-chair at the last meeting, and I guess with the pressures of the committee and all the workload we had between then and now....

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: We need to elect a new vice-chair.

Go ahead.

[Translation]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Christine Holke David): Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the first vice-chair must be a member of the official opposition. I am now ready to receive motions for the position of first vice-chair.

Mr. Benskin, go ahead.

•(0850)

[English]

Mr. Tyrone Benskin: I nominate Pierre Nantel.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Benskin that Monsieur Nantel be elected first vice-chair of this committee. Are there further motions?

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

[Translation]

I declare the motion carried and Mr. Nantel duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

[English]

The Chair: Congratulations, Mr. Nantel.

Moving on to committee business, we have a number of motions that the clerk will be handing out as we go through them. There's a notice of motion from member of Parliament Scott Armstrong and there are notices of motion from Paul Calandra and from Mr. Benskin.

Mr. Armstrong, do you want to start?

Mr. Scott Armstrong: I'd like to place this on the table: That the committee invite the New Brunswick Minister of Tourism, Trevor Holder, and the Bay of Fundy tourism partnership director, Terri McCulloch, to appear before the committee as soon as possible on the importance of the New7Wonders of Nature contest as it pertains to the development of tourism and economic development of the entire Bay of Fundy region.

As the chair knows well, our ridings actually encompass both sides of the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The Bay of Fundy has the highest tides in the world and is well renowned as a tourist attraction for literally thousands of visitors to the Atlantic region. It has great potential to create tidal power, and there's a massive tidal power project currently in place that has a lot of federal involvement.

The contest, which has been going on for several months now, is down to the final stages. The final vote is on November 11. If you read the information I've included for you, you'll see that the European organization sponsoring this contest has short-listed 28 entries out of literally hundreds and hundreds of entries from around the world. The Bay of Fundy is the only Canadian entry left that is eligible to receive recognition as one of the New7Wonders of Nature. The final selection is made by the public through Internet voting and texting.

What we'd like to do is bring representatives of Vote Bay of Fundy—MyFundy.com—here to show us some of the things they've done to promote this contest and to tell us why they think it's important for tourism in the Atlantic region and on both sides of the Bay of Fundy. We'd like to bring them up here, see the promotions they're doing, and see if there's any way the Canadian government can support this.

It would be a very favourable recognition to be one of the seven wonders of the world, the New7Wonders of Nature, and we think it would be a boost to the local economy. I think this would be a good study for us to do: to bring some people up here, to learn about this, and to see if there is a role we can play before the deadline of November 11 in trying to promote it.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Armstrong.

Is there any discussion?

Mr. Tyrone Benskin: I'm just wondering if you can elaborate on the contest itself so we can get a sense of what it's about.

Mr. Scott Armstrong: I'm just going to refer to some of the things I've circulated in both official languages. The New7Wonders Foundation is the organization behind this contest. The campaign for the first contest concluded in 2007. This one will conclude on November 11, 2011. It is a Swiss-based, non-profit organization and was established by a Swiss-born Canadian filmmaker, Bernard Weber.

Again, it's the second contest. They expect more than one billion votes leading up to the official declaration of the seven wonders of nature. You're talking a billion votes. You can vote more than once, obviously, and you can vote by text and by Internet.

It's a big deal on the Atlantic coast. There's been a lot of promotion and a lot of publicity about it. *Canada AM* has been boosting us quite regularly across the country, but if we're going to be successful in getting ourselves to be one of the new seven wonders of nature in an international competition, we really need to get the whole country behind us, and I think this would be a worthwhile thing for our committee to look into.

•(0855)

The Chair: Before we go to Mr. Simms, who is next, on our agenda it shows us going in camera, but apparently we have to pause a bit to do that, for 20 seconds or so.

Is it the will of the committee that when discussing committee business we go in camera, as per the agenda?

An hon. member: Do you want to do that?

The Chair: Well, that's what we normally do for committee business in committees, but...

Some hon. members: Sure.

The Chair: Okay. So that just takes a second.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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