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**Chair**

**The Honourable Rob Moore**



## Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

Wednesday, April 24, 2013

• (1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC)):** Welcome, everybody, to the 60th meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

Pursuant to the order of reference of Thursday, April 18, 2013, we are going to be studying Bill C-266, an act to establish Pope John Paul II Day. As our witness, we have the member from Mississauga East, Mr. Lizon.

Welcome to our committee. Congratulations on getting your private member's bill this far.

We're going to have an opportunity now for opening remarks. Then there will be a round of questions and answers, for members of the committee to put questions to our witness regarding this bill.

The floor is yours, Mr. Lizon.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, members of the committee.

To start, I have to admit that I'm a bit nervous, for several reasons. It is a special day for me not only because I have an opportunity to present my private member's bill to this committee, but also it's the first time in my life that I am appearing before a parliamentary committee. It is therefore a historical milestone in my life as well.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, I introduced Bill C-266, an act to establish Pope John Paul II Day, to be celebrated on April 2 in Canada. This is not meant to be a statutory holiday and is not meant to be a legal holiday, but a non-juridical day. Therefore, this is an act to have a day to remember the accomplishments of the late pope.

Establishing the day will allow all Canadians the opportunity to reflect on and celebrate a man who took a strong stand on human rights and opened a dialogue with other faiths to promote freedom of religion and speech across the globe. These are values that we as Canadians share. I bring this before you not only as an opportunity to celebrate a man who did so much for millions of Christian followers around the world, but to celebrate a man who did much more to uphold values that we as Canadians cherish so deeply, values of justice, liberty, and democracy.

Pope John Paul II was the third-longest reigning pope in history. In his time as pope he took a strong stand for human rights,

democracy, and religious freedom, and visited more than 129 countries to carry his message around the world.

I have a difficulty, especially, when people try to label me for bringing this act to Parliament. This is not a new idea. For those members of the committee who may not know, a similar bill was already introduced in Parliament in the previous session by the member of Parliament at that time for Brampton West, Andrew Kania. There was a two-hour debate, the election was called, and Parliament was dissolved before the bill went to committee.

Also, it was introduced twice, debated, and voted on at the Ontario provincial legislature. It was Frank Klees, MPP for Newmarket—Aurora, who introduced a bill to establish John Paul II Day in Ontario.

I would like to quote a few people who spoke to Frank Klees' bill, because as I said, it's very easy at this point to label me. First of all, I am a Roman Catholic. Second, I was born, raised, and educated in Poland; therefore, like the late pope, I come from Poland. It is therefore easy to label me, saying that the main reason I am introducing the bill is due to my faith and my country of origin.

• (1535)

I will read part of Frank Klees's speech at the provincial legislature, and I quote:

Since presenting this bill for first reading on April 2, 2007, which was the second anniversary of Pope John Paul's death, the public response to it has been, quite literally, overwhelming. My office received 5,000 signatures on petitions in support of this bill in one day alone, and I know that other members have also received literally thousands of signatures on petitions of support for its passage by this House. Of interest is the fact that many petitions came from non-Catholics, and I believe that this in itself is evidence that people of all faiths recognize the impact of Pope John Paul and that his influence surpassed denominational borders.

Some of the most interesting responses have come when people find out that I, as the sponsor of this bill, am not Roman Catholic—or Polish, for that matter. In fact, I'm a German-born Protestant who studied theology in a Baptist seminary. But like many others, I have been touched and influenced over the years by the life and example of a man who, while carrying out his responsibilities as spiritual leader of millions around the world, never tired of advocating for social justice and human rights at every opportunity. And he had a way of making what he said transcend the ecclesiastical trappings and ceremony that all too often can get in the way of the message.

The second person that spoke was Cheri DiNovo from the provincial NDP. She said:

It's my honour to speak at such an auspicious occasion....

It's fascinating that it is so rare that we acknowledge spiritual giants. It's so rare that we set aside the time, we set aside the place, we set aside a law to acknowledge a day—and that's all we are asking for here: a day, simply a day to remember this incredible man.

I think I'm finished quoting people from that debate. I would like to point out, listening to colleagues in the House during the two hour-long debates...and I would like to stress that this bill is not a religious bill. It's not meant for Catholics. It's not meant for Poles. It's meant for all Canadians because the late Pope John Paul II embraced everybody—those that believe, those that don't believe.

His role, especially in changing the face of Europe over the course of his 26-year papacy, was just incredible. Wherever he went, wherever he spoke, he advocated for social justice, democratic rights, and human dignity.

As Canadians we are very proud of the fact that so many people immigrate here to find a better life for their families, where they are free to worship as they choose. The respect, admiration, and acknowledgement for the ways that all religions have shaped our world, and even given back to Canadian society, are characteristics that Pope John Paul II shared with all Canadians and with this government. Human rights are very important and define the characteristics of Canada's foreign policy, and our country's identity. Our country and this government have been a strong voice for the protection of human rights and the promotion of democratic values on the world stage.

In Mississauga, I attend many citizenship ceremonies, as many as I can, whenever I have time. I attend citizenship ceremonies because it's really a special moment for people that come from around the world to find, in many cases, a refuge and a better life here in this great country. The rights and freedoms that we enjoy here have no protections in many of the countries they come from, where democracy seems unattainable. Similar to them, I myself left behind....

● (1540)

As members of this committee may know, I grew up in Communist Poland. I was part of the Solidarity movement in the 1980s. I stood, striking, in 1981, when the government decided to introduce martial law and bring in the army and police. We were standing there striking, facing tanks, facing riot police. We had no weapons. But thanks to the strength and encouragement not only people in Poland but people who followed in other countries, including the soviet republics, had the encouragement not to be afraid anymore.

We all have to remember that wherever we have a regime that bases its existence on terror, on fear, at the moment that people lose their fear, that regime can't exist anymore. This is what happened.

For those who may not understand how big a change happened at the end of the last century in Europe, it's incredible. When I was growing up, many people did not believe that the change would ever happen in our lifetime. The Soviet Union seemed extremely strong, and the division between the west and the east in the Cold War and the arms race that was taking place were just incredible.

I don't know whether all of you honourable committee members understand that to live in or under an oppressive regime.... I don't think it can be explained or understood by people who take what we have in this great country for granted. I would wish that our young Canadians have an opportunity, at least once in their lifetimes, to go

to other countries just in order to understand how great this country that we live in is.

I don't know, Mr. Chair, how much time I have. I think I probably am over 10 minutes. Therefore, just in closing, I would like to ask all the members of the committee, as I did the House, for support in declaring April 2 Pope John Paul II Day in Canada, to honour this great man and everything he stood for.

Thank you very much.

● (1545)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Lizon. Thank you for sharing information about your bill and also a bit of your life story. I don't think all of us knew all those details.

We have some speakers.

Mr. Boughen.

**Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC):** Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Mr. Lizon, for appearing before us this afternoon.

As you know, Pope John Paul II was instrumental in the downfall of communism. I would like to give you an opportunity to speak on that and to share that personal experience with us as it relates to communism and what role you played in the experience of having a country that was communistic.

Could you share a little of that with us?

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Thank you very much for the question. To be honest, it's difficult because I don't know really where to begin.

When Cardinal Wojtyla became pope in 1978, I was in my last year at university in Krakow, where he was archbishop. I met him when he was Archbishop of Krakow. I used to go to a mass that he celebrated once a month for youth. He was always very close with young people and very active. I guess that's why he eventually, as pope, created World Youth Day where young people can come and celebrate. One of those took place in Toronto in 2002.

When he was chosen pope, it created a shockwave throughout Poland. The authorities had no idea how to react because I guess they were not prepared. People on official state TV—there was no other one—didn't know what to say because they had no knowledge of how the papacy worked. I guess they had to bend and call priests to explain.

The following year, in 1979, the pope made his first visit to Poland. I already graduated. I was married. My wife was doing her master's thesis at Jagiellonian University. She was six months pregnant when the pope's visit took place, and I went to a few masses that he celebrated. One of those was in Krakow, especially for young people, in the evening in the big courtyard of the monastery next to the royal castle. We were so amazed and encouraged by what he said, and he said several times, "Have no fear, be not afraid."

I don't think people understood at that time what it meant, but when I was walking with a crowd of people back to the main square of Krakow through the streets, I saw something that I had never seen in my life. People had Polish flags in their windows and they were waving flags, but they were not the flags that I've always seen. They were the flags that were banned, with a Polish eagle and a crown on its head. The crown was banned by the communists. The Polish eagle had no crown on its head during the communist era. Those people had these flags hidden since the end of the war. It was the first sign that I truly understood that people were not afraid. People were expressing what they felt inside.

Two years later the Solidarity movement began with a big wave of strikes in 1980. It may sound funny that in the system that was called.... Poland wasn't really called communist. It was called socialist. Even the Polish communist party was not called the communist party of Poland. It was called the Polish United Workers' Party. It was amazing that in a country that was run by the working class, the very working class had to go on strike to fight for their basic rights.

Do I still have time?

• (1550)

**The Chair:** Between the two of you, you have two more minutes.

**Mr. Ray Boughen:** Maybe we can switch over and you could talk a little bit about how John Paul II influenced youth, and not only in Poland but around the world.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** John Paul II.... I'm not talking about his influence as the religious leader, but again as a person who was standing so strongly for democratic rights, basic human rights, human dignity. Wherever he went on his foreign visits he advocated for human rights, democracy. He was instrumental in bringing down not only communism in eastern and central Europe, and eventually the collapse of the Soviet Union, but also in bringing a dictatorship to its end in many other countries.

As an example, I give Chile, Paraguay, and Haiti. Even his visit to Cuba did not bring the change of a system, but it brought a lot of change because they reopened churches in Cuba around his visit. Therefore, finally, after many years since the Cuban revolution, people were able to go again to church and worship.

**The Chair:** Next we're going to move to Mr. Nantel, for seven minutes.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

I will speak in English while you put your headset on.

I must say, first, thank you for coming here and introducing your bill. As our chair said, it's very interesting to hear your story and your motivation.

[Translation]

Can you hear the interpretation now?

[English]

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Yes, I can.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** Great.

This bill intrigues me a lot. I find the situation very delicate and complex. I am 50 years old, so Pope John Paul II was in the news all through my late teens and my time as a young father, and so on. I am the first to agree that the man played a pivotal role. Was that role positive or negative? Some people very close to the Catholic faith still do not see Pope John Paul II's record as very positive in terms of Catholicism. Were you aware of that?

You have certainly been in contact with people who have told you that. I am not talking about non-Catholics, but about Catholics whose opinion is not as positive as mine was when I was younger. For me, his image as a Pope was very positive. Some people dispute that today.

Have you met people who have taken that position?

• (1555)

[English]

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Thank you very much for the question.

Honestly speaking, I have not. I've had discussions with people who claim to be atheists, who did express their own views that they are opposed to what I am doing. I understand that there are people, there will be people among Catholics, who would not necessarily have or share the same views that many people do share about this pope and about his role in the church.

That's life. I don't think there has ever been a single person in the history of humankind that would please everybody and that everybody would agree to have the same or similar opinion about. Therefore, if there is a criticism among some Catholics of the late Pope John Paul II, I would look at it as something that's normal and something that he would probably view himself as positive. It's positive because criticism usually brings, if people want to listen to it, a positive change.

Therefore, we in the House have different views, even on this bill. People spoke for it and people spoke against it. I may not share their views or agree with their opinions, but I value their stand and the fact that we can exchange ideas and discuss it. This is very positive.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** Thank you for your answer. It was very clear.

I actually have done research with some very committed Catholics, including some who used to preach the gospel and teach the catechism. Their position on John Paul II is actually very critical.

That said, as you said, you can set the religious question aside and look at it from a political or historical perspective. So can you tell me, on this question of a possible national day in Canada—it might be quite natural to imagine one in Poland—whether you have heard people ask why there would not be a day for Norman Bethune, for Mother Teresa or for anyone else who has played a major role?

What do you say to people who make those arguments? I think that approving this bill is a very complicated issue.

[English]

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** I agree, it is a complex issue. We have to make choices in life. If you look at the history of the world, if you look back in history, people always had a tendency to recognize special people. In many countries, there are rulers who made a significant change in the history of the country or the region and they were called “the great”. There are not many of these. Probably at that time some people had this discussion. Probably they shared the same argument: why would we recognize this person, or that person, and not the other one?

You always get that argument, but I truly believe in the significance of this very pope, who happened to be the leader of the Catholic church and who implemented such huge changes in a big part of the world. We should grant that special day for him in Canada, especially taking into consideration the fact that our country is not a very old country but it is an old democracy, one of the oldest modern, western-style democracies in the world. Everything that the pope did is aligned with the achievements that our great country made in this regard.

• (1600)

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

Mr. Simms, you have seven minutes.

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-sor, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

Mr. Lizon, it's good to see you, as we have had several discussions about this. Like Mr. Boughen, I did not know the circumstances of your past and I thank you for sharing that.

I always thought that Pope John Paul II was one of the ultimate diplomats of the world. One could argue that even his title would have given him that alone. It's one thing to have a big title, but you have to use it in the right way. According to the statistics here, 104 pastoral visits outside of Italy alone should tell you that the man had a grasp of the world. He had a grasp of the issues. I said in my speech, I'll never forget the time when I was a teenager and he visited our little island on the east coast, Newfoundland. It was quite something for all of us to see him there, as we had many Catholics on the island.

But this is not just for Catholics, as you said, as your background alone dictates. You are not Catholic. I am not Catholic, but I certainly endorse what it is you're doing here for what he did, whether it was the fall of communism, helping to feed the hungry, or World Youth Day. These are images and actions brought to us by a man who had a great title, but he did great things with that title.

When you set out to declare a day for him and what he has done, obviously you are looking at deeds beyond what he has done within the church. Is that correct?

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** That's correct.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** We argued this before in the House—I shouldn't say argue because there really wasn't much argument against it. When we discussed it, we looked at the deeds that he did and certainly the impact that he will have. I think certainly history will dictate that his deeds were far greater than we perhaps even realize today.

How do you feel?

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** I agree with you. Thank you for the question. I totally agree with you because we don't have the full scope of information. Probably we won't have it for many years to come because there were interactions by different governments in preparation of certain actions, especially if we're talking about the changes in eastern and central Europe that eventually led to this integration of the fall of the Soviet Union and the fall of the great Berlin Wall.

Eventually we will get that information. We will know more because what information may not be public today will be eventually made public by different sources down the road. Therefore we will have a better view of what happened, how it happened, and how it was conducted.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** To me, another great hallmark of what he has accomplished, when you consider history—and this too, I'm sure, he will be fondly remembered for as time marches on—is building the bridge, within the religion of Christianity, toward the Jewish faith as well as Muslims.

Would you like to comment on that as well?

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Most likely the members of the committee know that Pope John Paul II was the first pope to visit the synagogue. Then, eventually, he visited a mosque as well. If any of the honourable committee members remember, if they watched his funeral in Rome, in 2005, and looked at the people who came to pay their last respects to him, they came from many different faiths. It was not Catholics saying goodbye to their leader. There were people who came from all the corners of the world, from different religious denominations, to pay tribute to the great man who embraced them all, and reached out to them as well.

• (1605)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** That's good.

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

We have Mr. Young, for seven minutes.

**Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

I wanted to congratulate you on your bill, Mr. Lizon.

I'm an Anglican. I grew up in the Anglican church. I want to say that on the record. I have no Polish background, so I might as well say that as well.

I think Pope John Paul II was a great leader who no doubt changed the world and certainly changed the face of Europe. The record shows that the U.S.S.R. started to fall apart after Gorbachev declared glasnost and perestroika. He visited Pope John Paul in 1989, and they became friends. Pope John Paul II influenced him, as he influenced the change in Europe. The story you told is beautifully, eloquently poignant about how he changed the thoughts of the Polish people and how he worked with Solidarity. There's a record of correspondence back and forth between President Reagan and John Paul II. They literally worked together to help free the Eastern bloc, to help free Europe. It's an amazing thing to me, and I think it's perfectly appropriate that he be recognized in Canada.

I wanted to mention here as well, in fact, that Gorbachev actually said that the collapse of the Iron Curtain "would have been impossible" without John Paul II.

That's coming from the man who made it happen. A lot of people don't know that President George Bush presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom to John Paul II, and the citation actually says, "this son of Poland whose principled stand for peace and freedom has inspired millions and helped to topple communism and tyranny."

So, what he was able to accomplish is all officially on the record, on a political level, on a secular level as well.

But your story, to me, is an important story of a lot of people who worked to free their own country. I visited Poland recently. Their economy is doing well and they are doing well, and others came to Canada or went to the United States. To me, it's a touching story. I wanted to ask you how those events affected you personally, with particular reference to why you ran for Parliament in Canada.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** As I mentioned before, I was in Poland during the birth of Solidarity and then the strikes. I was actually planning on leaving Poland in 1981, but martial law was imposed and all travel was banned. Therefore what we consider here a normal thing, that everybody has a passport, that passport had to go back to the police station because they were the ones holding passports. Nobody was able to travel.

Eventually, after martial law was lifted in 1985, I left with no intention of not going back. I left for the United States of America and eventually I decided to apply to come to Canada and that's how I ended up here.

What inspired me to run for an office? All my life, since I was small, there was a tradition in my home of community voluntary work. That wasn't a tradition that was somehow invented by communists. This was something that was a tradition in Poland before the war. Of course my parents were born and educated before the war. Therefore that tradition was kept and I was always involved in organizations.

Therefore when I came here to this country, I was working to provide for my family, but I always dedicated almost as much time as for my job to do volunteer and community work. I did most of my work in the Canadian Polish community. For five years I was the national president of the Canadian Polish Congress. I had interactions with elected representatives working on different issues, and that eventually led to my decision to serve people on a higher

level, because I truly do consider being a member of Parliament a service to the people who elected me.

Thank you.

• (1610)

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

Mr. Cash.

**Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you Mr. Lizon for being here. You might be the first Conservative member I've met who's been on a picket line. I'm very happy to know that.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** More than once.

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** I'm curious, is there a John Paul II Day? Have other states acknowledged Pope John Paul in the way in which you are proposing in this bill?

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Not that I'm aware of. The only thing I know is that there were attempts at the provincial legislature in Ontario and in previous Parliaments.

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** I'm curious about your opinion around the fact that.... I believe, the church has a feast day for John Paul right now. It's October 22nd, or something.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** I'm not sure whether there's an official—

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** In our...[*Inaudible—Editor*]...in Toronto, I believe it is. Sorry, I thought we were in Toronto. That's my problem.

Maybe you could just help us understand why it is that Canada should recognize a religious figure in this way, given the church does recognize him and has set out a specific day to celebrate the life and the work—much of it very excellent work—of John Paul II.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** As you mentioned, I think we should make a distinction between a church holiday that is for the faithful to observe, and a holiday, a day that everybody can acknowledge and observe. As I mentioned, Pope John Paul II was of course a leader of the Catholic Church, but his approach to other faiths, his approach to the unfaithful or people who are atheists, or everybody, was the same.

He was open. He extended his hand to everybody. He treated people equally. Therefore I think it would be appropriate if all Canadians had the opportunity to celebrate his achievements.

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** Thank you.

I would like to inform the chair I'd like to move the motion that I presented a couple of weeks ago. It reads:

That the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage undertake a comprehensive study of the recent changes at Library and Archives Canada including the introduction of a code of conduct and invite relevant witnesses including Daniel Caron as well as representatives from library, archivist and archaeological associations.

I can move that motion right now.

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

Mr. Cash still has the floor. You don't want to have a vote or anything on your motion, do you?

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** Yes, I do. I'm moving the motion and I want to have a vote on the motion.

•(1615)

**The Chair:** All right. Mr. Cash had given the notice for his motion. He's moved his motion, and that starts debate on his motion.

We can debate the motion.

Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** Sorry, I have the floor.

This motion is in fact in response to two questions that I and my colleague Pierre Nantel asked on March 18, in which Minister James Moore replied, "If there are controversies about the code of conduct, and I gather there are..., I invite my colleague and the heritage critic for the NDP to invite Daniel Caron to come before committee to explain the code of conduct".

Now, this is an issue of grave import in terms of how we preserve, how we share, how we collect the important documentation of Canadian history. This is something we hear time and time again, that the Conservatives think it is a grand priority. Yet we've seen that cuts to Library and Archives Canada have resulted in the end of the interlibrary loan program; the relieving of duties of archivists; the internal re-identification of archivists from specialists to generalists, which raises all sorts of concerns; the fact that the government isn't doing its due diligence when it comes to acquisitions; and the fact that we have had archivists and historians who have really raised the alarm bells around this stuff. Then to come out with a code of conduct that essentially muzzles debate....

It did seem as though the minister had said this was something that concerned him. I think it concerns many of us; that's why I move this motion. That's why I think it's important we get on with a study, and we bring in the stakeholders and the people who are really focused on this issue.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** To add to what he was saying, there is no doubt about it, that in no uncertain terms, the direction we got from the minister in the House was that this would be something we should look into. He even cited Mr. Caron, specifically, as a person of interest to discuss this with.

Not only that, but the fundamental shift in Library and Archives has taken everyone off guard, to the point where there is a fundamentally different way of thinking that's going to be applied. It seems the government is trying to move into some kind of digital world without thinking about the expertise of the individual librarian or archivist.

As a case in point, the local program, the NADP, was such a wonderful program for people in local communities to learn how to archive their material. The answer we got was, "We cut it because all you need to do is digitize it". That negates the fact that to archive something is an art in and of itself and it takes talent and it takes education for people to do this. It's not just taking something and downloading it to a disk. How do you do that? How do you tell the story? How do you allow the local communities to display their history, both in static displays in a museum as well as online?

I don't understand how there's the disconnect between what a librarian or an archivist does and the way the government makes decisions, including Mr. Caron. Because, quite frankly, I'm astounded at how Mr. Caron can just let this go as far as it has.

As per the direction of the minister, I think it's quite obvious. I think we come in and have a hearing with relevant guests, not just Mr. Caron but also relevant witnesses to speak to this and to show us and illustrate what it is to be a librarian or an archivist. Because I think that for a lot of people on this committee—myself included, and I'm not trying to be nasty about it—there are a lot of things they do that we just don't quite understand. I think the government could benefit from this as well, as a matter of fact. Maybe the minister would, otherwise he probably wouldn't have suggested we bring the individual in along with other relevant guests.

Thank you.

•(1620)

**The Chair:** Mr. Nantel is next.

We have a witness here, where we have a bill before us, and we do have a subcommittee scheduled for Monday. Is there some reason why people want to debate this now?

You've moved the motion. The committee has carriage now of the motion. Do we want to return, then, to...?

Mr. Nantel, you're next on the list.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Nantel:** I just wanted to ask for a vote, Mr. Chair. I feel that this motion is fully in the spirit of what the Minister of Canadian Heritage has said in the House. So let us call for the vote. Fortunately, no witness can be more understanding of this situation than a member of Parliament.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Calandra, go ahead.

**Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC):** I move to go in camera.

**The Chair:** There is a motion to move in camera. Is it the will of the committee to move in camera?

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** No, right now we have a vote on a motion to move in camera.

Is it the will of the committee to move in camera?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Okay, we're moving in camera.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

•(1620)

(Pause)

•(1625)

[Public proceedings resume]

**The Chair:** Okay, we're back in public.

We have no one left on the speaker's list.



Mr. Calandra.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** I think we have a couple of minutes left, if I'm not mistaken.

Mr. Lizon, let me just apologize to you for what just happened here at this committee. As you may or you may not know, this committee has business scheduled to undertake review of motions, and so on and so forth, at our next meeting. It's unfortunate that the NDP chose yet again, during a period of questioning, to take on committee business, especially when it was a private member's bill that was brought forward, and especially when you're relaying the importance of open government and the struggles that you faced under a communist dictatorship and how proud you were to actually be in front of the committee and be elected to a Parliament that actually gives voice to all members.

That right was taken away from you by the NDP. Let me apologize to you on behalf of our side that such a silly game was played with your rights as a member of Parliament. Let me congratulate you on bringing the bill forward. Let me congratulate you on representing your community so well and for bringing this forward and for helping us better understand how important it is not only to the Polish people but to hundreds of millions of people who suffered under communist dictatorship.

One of the things that really stressed me over our last break week was hearing a member of the NDP talk about the efforts of our soldiers in World War I, praising the efforts of communists and how the communist dictatorship somehow represents a style of government he would have been proud of.

I think your story—

**Mr. Andrew Cash:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. I think that it is incumbent on everyone to keep a respectful tone for this debate on this issue. I think that we on our side have kept a respectful debate, and I think that we need to keep on the high road here and talk about it.

**The Chair:** That's not really a point of order.

Mr. Calandra still has the floor.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Let me again congratulate you. I think you outlined very eloquently how important this bill is, and just how increasingly—I don't want to say “annoying” but how they have lacked foresight and vision. Perhaps that particular member might have sat down with you and talked a bit about your experience of living under a communist dictatorship before he went and made the statements that he did.

Congratulations. I know we're now moving to clause-by-clause consideration, but congratulations on all of your hard work on this and for being able to finally get this bill through Parliament.

**A voice:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Thank you very much.

• (1630)

**The Chair:** We have one more person on the list.

Mr. Dubé.

[Translation]

**Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Lizon, we are very sorry that your time was cut off. We are making comparisons with Communist regimes here. The unfortunate reality is that, when we are always going in camera like that, we sadly have no other choice but to resort to such actions. We are sorry that you, or any other witness, bore the brunt of it. If the government was insulted by the approach, it should be a little more open about these things.

With that said, I would like to ask you a question about your bill, Mr. Lizon. You brought this up briefly during your testimony.

I recognize the contribution of John Paul II to society and to the world. But if we give him this recognition, where are we going to stop? We are going to feel obliged to recognize other historical or religious figures. Is this not a slippery slope?

What are your thoughts about that?

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Lizon, we'll give you just 20 seconds to answer that, and that will conclude our time for questions and answers. We're scheduled to go into clause-by-clause consideration, so just a very brief response.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As I mentioned before, in life we have to make choices and we make choices based on our best judgment. On a personal note, I personally don't see.... There are many great leaders, but none comparable to the achievements of John Paul II.

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

You're welcome to stay—or not—while we go into clause-by-clause consideration. You can sit at the table or—

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Mr. Chair, if I don't have to stay, I may have to go back to my House duty.

**The Chair:** Okay. We'll let you know how it turns out.

Thank you, Mr. Lizon.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** To all the members of the committee, thank you.

**The Chair:** We're now moving to clause-by-clause consideration. Does everyone have Bill C-266 in front of them?

Shall clause 2 carry?

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** I'd like a recorded vote.

(Clause 2 agreed to: yeas 8; nays 3)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 3 carry?

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** I'd like a recorded vote, please.

(Clause 3 agreed to: yeas 8; nays 3)

**The Chair:** Shall the short title carry?

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** I'd like a recorded vote.

(Clause 1 agreed to: yeas 10; nays 1)

**The Chair:** Shall the preamble carry?

• (1635)

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** I'd like a recorded vote.

(Preamble agreed to: yeas 8; nays 3)

**The Chair:** Shall the title carry?

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Can I have a recorded vote?

(Title agreed to: yeas 10; nays 1)

**The Chair:** Shall the bill carry?

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** I'd like a recorded vote.

(Bill C-266 agreed to: yeas 8; nays 3)

**The Chair:** Shall the Chair report the bill to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'll report it to the House. Shall the committee order a reprint of the bill for the use of the House at report stage?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** That is all for committee business today. The meeting is adjourned.

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