



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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CANADA

## **Standing Committee on Official Languages**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Monday, November 4, 2013**

—  
**Chair**

**The Honourable Michael Chong**



## Standing Committee on Official Languages

Monday, November 4, 2013

• (1530)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)):** Welcome to the second session of the 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament. On this Monday, November 4, 2013, the Standing Committee on Official Languages is holding its second hearing. We are here to discuss committee business.

Before dealing with our routine motions, I would first like to welcome our clerk, Mr. Chad Mariage. Mr. Mariage is replacing Ms. Suzie Cadieux who is on leave for personal reasons. I hope she will be able to return soon.

I also wish to congratulate Mr. Williamson on his marriage this summer.

[English]

Congratulations, John. It is fantastic news. I'm sure everyone here is very excited about the new path you're on.

Monsieur Dionne Labelle.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle (Rivière-du-Nord, NDP):** Allow me to make one comment: love is blind, but marriage restores one's sight.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

[English]

**The Chair:** We have a number of new members. I'd like to welcome all of you to this committee.

We finished last spring in the middle of the study on French immersion. Today if we can finish them both, we're going to do two items of business. First, we'll consider the adoption of routine motions. If there is time remaining, I'd like some direction from the committee as to whether they would like to start with a brand new study or continue with the study we were conducting on French immersion.

We'll move on to the first item of business in the orders of the day, and that is the consideration of routine motions.

Monsieur Godin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** I move the following motion:

That the committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the chair, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

[English]

**The Chair:** A routine motion has been moved.

[Translation]

Thank you, Mr. Godin.

Is there any debate on the motion?

[English]

Seeing no debate, I'll call the vote.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** I welcome our analyst, who may now join us.

Are there any other motions?

Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, I'd like to move another motion. I think it is important to move it now:

That the Committee may meet in camera only for the purpose of discussing:

- (a) wages, salaries and other employee benefits;
- (b) contracts and contract negotiations;
- (c) labour relations and personnel matters;
- (d) draft reports;
- (e) briefings concerning national security; and

That all votes taken in camera be recorded in the Minutes of Proceedings, including how each member voted when recorded votes are requested.

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

So we have before us a motion concerning in camera meetings.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I'm going to give you a copy in both official languages.

**The Chair:** Are there any questions on the text of the motion?

Is there debate on the motion?

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** I am opposed to this motion because it would interfere with the independence of our committee in future. Consequently, I think that this motion is out of order.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1535)

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I think that the motion is in order, and that we need to vote on it.

Mr. Chair, this motion is important because we are accountable to Canadians. They have to know what we are talking about and we are doing. We should be holding a transparent debate.

Our committee has sat in camera repeatedly. People do not like that and do not accept it, according to comments we have received. What do we have to hide from Canadians? We talk about our work and the witnesses who come here. We have already established rules concerning in camera meetings. For instance, we sit in camera to prepare our reports and drafts. We have to have certain rules. We can't at the drop of a hat go behind closed doors when certain things do not suit the government.

The motion proposes clear rules. We have a responsibility to the Canadians who chose us. They have a right to hear what their members have to say and to weigh in on those discussions. Ultimately it is up to them to decide what will be taken away from members.

As I said, the motion sets out certain rules. Certain meetings would be held in camera, but this would be done according to some clear rules, and not whenever the government wants to hide certain things it does not like. It is important for some things to not take place in camera, as the motion indicates.

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

In my opinion, this motion is in order, and so we are going to continue the debate.

Mr. Nicholls, you have the floor.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, NDP):** Mr. Chair, as you know, our system is based on the Westminster system, and there are procedures and traditions that go along with that tradition. Responsible government has been in Canada since at least 1848. The basis of this system is the idea of parliamentary accountability. It's the foundation of the system.

Select committees in the Westminster system allow the discussion of issues deemed to be relevant to parliament and to legislation. The mother of all parliaments, Westminster itself, has looked at the role of select committees to find out what the role and tasks of those select committees are. They came up with the idea that scrutiny of government, or forms of government legislation, is one of the core tasks of select committees that allow for concepts such as ministerial accountability.

There is some debate now among parliamentarians in Westminster whether that scrutiny is for openness and transparency or whether it's for improving government itself.

It could be said that going in camera might save the government some face when it needs improvement, and often this government doesn't like to be reminded that it needs to improve legislation in certain places. I also think the idea of scrutiny for openness and transparency is an important one. It's one that was popular in this government about seven years ago; it came to power on that idea.

Therefore, I find it troubling that we can't limit the use of in camera to what it was specifically intended to do.

I believe that our motion before you shows that we're trying to frame in camera procedures in a way that would protect their original intent, rather than in camera being used for partisan purposes and the avoidance of putting the government in an embarrassing situation where they'll be reminded that they have to improve legislation and therefore open themselves to public scrutiny on this point.

I appeal to you, Chair, to vote in support of this motion, in the sense that we are working within the Westminster system. Certainly as the government in the U.K. has looked at the role of select committees, I would suggest you consider this carefully when casting your vote.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Nicholls. I generally don't vote on this committee, but I'm assuming you're asking members, through me, to vote for the motion. Your point is well taken.

Now we will hear from Mr. Benskin.

• (1540)

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin (Jeanne-Le Ber, NDP):** Mr. Chair, my argument will be a little less technical and just a little more grassroots.

One of the things I've discovered since being elected is that our job as MPs is twofold. We are elected by our constituents, the people in our neighbourhood for many of us who live in our constituency. They look to us to be their voice and their eyes and ears on issues that concern them directly within their constituency. It's our job to bring those thoughts, those concerns, those suggestions to the big table in Ottawa. The second level of that is to sometimes represent some of those ideas, or if you hold a ministerial position or a critic position, the broader ideas that touch the rest of the country.

Although question period can be a hoot to watch sometimes, it's a small fraction of the public image or the public visibility of what we do. For many years, and when I entered into this world, I was told that the really heavy lifting was done in committee. This is when everybody sits down and takes time on a proposed bill or takes time on a study to look at certain issues.

I'm hearing from more and more of my constituents that they're tuning in, that they are becoming more and more a part of the process, this governmental process. I think it's a service to our communities and to Canadians for them to have the opportunity to see how we come to some of the decisions to make some of the studies.

There are a lot of things that come across our table. We can only talk about so many things. How do we come to those decisions? When we're making those decisions and when we get to those decisions, what kind of discussion do we have not only with witnesses but among ourselves about those topics?

For that reason, the more often and the more public we can make our committee meetings, the more they serve the people who elected us, the more they serve Canadians, the more they serve us as parliamentarians in openness, debate, discussion, and sharing of ideas.

I think I support this motion. I don't think I support it, I do support this motion, and I urge, through the chair, that fellow members on this committee support it as well.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Dionne Labelle, you have the floor.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** In Quebec, we have just gone through a very troubled period involving elected municipal officials, the lack of transparency of management, and the lack of transparency around contracts. Citizens do not have any way of forming some clear idea of what goes on in the back offices of municipalities. Behind all of that is a desire to keep democracy blind.

Since I used to sit on this committee, it seemed to me that everyone here was concerned first and foremost with defending minorities and linguistic duality throughout the country. In order to do so, we have to be able to speak openly without hiding behind smoke and mirrors or closed doors. Since my arrival here, three quarters of discussions have been held in camera. That's incredible. It feeds the cynicism of the population regarding politicians. We are all here because we have a common goal. We should depoliticize this committee and work toward a common objective. That is why I am entirely in favour of this motion.

I hope, Mr. Gourde, that you will share this opinion. Otherwise, when you go back to your riding and people ask you what you did this week, you will answer that you worked in committee, and if they ask you what you worked on, you are going to have to answer that you can't talk about it.

What type of democracy is that? These people who pay our salaries and all of the expenses of this committee don't have access to the content of our meetings. As Conservatives who like to manage money well, in theory, you should be able to justify what you do during your hours of work. This whole situation seems out of balance to me.

And so I am asking you to consider this motion carefully.

Thank you.

• (1545)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Do any other members want to speak?

Mr. Williamson, you have the floor.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Very quickly in response to Mr. Benskin, when I'm home in the riding, I, too, point to the work that goes on in committee as a real strength of Parliament and urge voters not to get dismayed by some of the theatrics they sometimes see in question period.

I'm voting against this motion because I actually think this committee—and I'm returning to this committee—does good work when we hear from witnesses, write the reports, and prepare the work. I think when it comes to debating issues of contention about how this committee is going to operate—not the actual points that we're hearing from witnesses—I'd prefer to keep that in camera in order for us to get through it quickly, because I worry, frankly, that if we open it up, we're going to lose focus on the importance of the

official language component of this committee and the work we need to do, and we're going to get consumed by politics.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** I am going to yield the floor to Ms. St-Denis and then to Mr. Godin.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.):** I am going to vote in favour of the motion, mainly because it is one way of rebuilding the confidence of the population. We do very serious work in this committee. I have had the opportunity of replacing other members in several committees. Sometimes the people who come to testify do not agree with the government or, on the other hand, do not agree with the opposition. This allows people to see that we aren't just puppets, and that we do do serious work. So this could restore the confidence of the population in the work parliamentarians do. That is why I am going to vote in favour of the motion.

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I'd like to answer Mr. Williamson who said that he wanted the committee to work and that is the reason why we should be sitting in camera. I remember one time where we were made to sit in camera during almost two months. Two government members had to leave the room to bring about the decision to go back into public hearings, and after that we were able to begin work on the items on our agenda and buckle down. Otherwise, we would have sat in camera perhaps till Christmas. I remember this.

Indeed, we want to work. However, holding in camera meetings prevent us from working. Certain things are done in camera, such as drafting our reports after having listened to witnesses and examined a bill. That will always be done in camera. However, it is not acceptable to move meetings behind closed doors as soon as you don't like to hear what the opposition has to say.

That is democracy. As members of Parliament, we have the right to express ourselves, and the population has the right to hear what we have to say. It will be making up its mind. By imposing in camera meetings, not only are you trampling the rights of the members, but also the right of Canadians to hear what is going on. Your government claims that it wants transparency; your government was elected thanks to promises of transparency. However, you now state that you want to sit in camera, because you don't want Canadians to hear us. I find this problematic in the extreme. I could not defend that.

Over the weekend, someone said that he would be doing things his way, and justified that in the following way:

[*English*]

“I don't care what they think. I just don't care.”

[*Translation*]

We feel we are stuck with the vision of your government, and that things have to go your way, otherwise no one will get to hear about it. This is prejudicial to parliamentarians. It eliminates our rights. Moreover, Canadians want to hear us.

As I said, we are not asking that any possibility of working in camera be eliminated. We are simply saying that a lot of things can be done without sitting in camera. That is all that is in our motion.

I would really like you to support it. By doing so, you would show us whether the Conservative government believes in transparency, or whether everything it said in 2006 was false.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Nicholls, you have the floor.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** I would like to add to Mr. Williamson's point about politicization and the worry that the committee might get paralyzed by the politics of a situation. The report that Westminster itself did said that some members are keen to use their privilege in parliament in select committees to improve legislation, while others obviously use that privilege to expose weaknesses in the government.

You could point out that pointing out weaknesses in the government continually is more politics than improving the legislation, but that's for Canadians to judge. If we are under the public gaze, Canadians will judge who is playing politics and will punish the parties responsible for doing so, but without that transparency and openness, the Canadian public cannot know if any political shenanigans are going on. They're kept in the dark.

Don't you believe it's better that Canadians know what is going on in parliamentary committees rather than not know what's going on? If one or the other party, the government party or the opposition, is playing politics and using procedural tactics to jam up things, the public should know that's going on.

Our motion is responsible in the fact that we are limiting the use of in camera to what has been traditionally in camera and not misusing in camera to avoid members who might want to expose weaknesses of the government.

•(1550)

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

I'd like to remind members that if they're going to direct comments to individual members to do it through the chair. It makes it less confrontational.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I simply want to say that my comments were not addressed directly to Mr. Williamson, but that I was speaking through you, Mr. Chair. In fact, I was only commenting Mr. Williamson's remarks. I was not attacking him personally.

**The Chair:** Mr. Williamson, you have the floor.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Mr. Chair, I will be brief.

When witnesses appear before us, they have the opportunity of criticizing the government or of providing us with positive ideas. Sometimes, they may have better ideas than those of the government.

This committee has the opportunity of meeting Canadians to discuss government bills. As a member of the committee, I think that when we discuss the business of the committee, we should do so in camera.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Are there any other comments?

[*English*]

Okay, seeing no other members who wish to speak to the motion in front of the committee, I will call the question.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I request a recorded vote.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** It's a recorded vote.

(Motion negated: nays 6; yeas 5)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Now, if you will, we are going to discuss the eight following routine motions.

Would you like to adopt all of them together?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** No.

**The Chair:** You want to discuss each motion separately? Very well.

Mr. Godin, did you want to move a motion?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, I would like to move the following motion, which concerns the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be composed of the chair and two vice-chairs, another member of the government party...

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** You have changed it this time.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes, I changed it.

**The Chair:** Could you repeat your motion, Mr. Godin?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes. Here it is:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be composed of the chair and two vice-chairs, another member of the government party, and the parliamentary secretary, and that quorum...

•(1555)

**The Chair:** Its intent is exactly the same as that of the original motion.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** No, because I am adding this:

[...] and that quorum be set at three (3) members, one of which shall be one (1) member of the government party and one (1) member of the opposition, and that each member be authorized to be accompanied by one member of his staff, and in addition that each party be authorized to have one representative present.

**The Chair:** I am going to repeat your motion for the members of the committee:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be composed of the chair and the two vice-chairs, plus another member of the government party and the parliamentary secretary, and that quorum be set at three (3) members, one of which shall be one (1) member of the government and one (1) member of the opposition; and that each member be authorized to be accompanied by a member of his or her staff, and that each party be authorized to have a representative present.

Is that clear?

Is there debate?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Clearly we are going to oppose this, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** What did he say?

**The Chair:** The member said that he was going to vote against your motion.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** Ms. Bateman, you have the floor.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC):** Mr. Chair, these changes seem somewhat redundant to me. In fact, vice-chairs are always members of the opposition. I am not sure I understand the reasons or the rationale behind these changes.

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes, members of the opposition were already mentioned, but I am talking about members of the official opposition. Hence, the changes are not redundant. The words “one (1) member of the opposition, and that each member be authorized to be accompanied” apply to the quorum.

**The Chair:** It concerns the quorum, and not the constitution of the subcommittee.

The motion calls for the subcommittee to be made up of five members, that is to say the parliamentary secretary, the two vice-chairs, the chair and another member of the government party.

As for the quorum, there have to be three members, and one of them has to be a government member, as well as a member of the official opposition, and each member is authorized to be accompanied by a member of his or her team or a member of the staff.

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

• (1600)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** The three parties have always been represented within the subcommittee. I would not like to eliminate a party.

In any case, I think that Ms. St-Denis has to check this on her side.

**The Chair:** I think that the subcommittee did not meet during the first session of the 41st Parliament.

Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I want to be clear. I suggested nothing that would eliminate Ms. St-Denis' presence. If Mr. Gourde had read the motion correctly, he would see that it mentions the chair and the two vice-chairs. Since Ms. St-Denis is a vice-chair, she has not been eliminated.

**The Chair:** It is almost the same motion as the one we passed in the first session of the 41st Parliament. Mr. Godin simply added a sentence regarding the quorum for the subcommittee.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** So we are talking about quorum for the subcommittee.

**The Chair:** We are talking strictly about the quorum for the subcommittee.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** The subcommittee is comprised of five members, but we would need three rather than four members to have a quorum. Is that what you are saying?

**The Chair:** Precisely.

Mr. Dionne Labelle has the floor, then Ms. St-Denis.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** According to the words pertaining to the quorum, a meeting could not be held without the presence of a member of the official opposition. Is that what is being proposed?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Should there be a reduced quorum, a meeting could not be held strictly with members of the government party, without members of the official opposition being present. It seems to me that that is very reasonable.

**The Chair:** Ms. St-Denis, do you have a question?

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** I'd like some clarifications on the second motion, regarding the quorum, Mr. Chair. It only talks about the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, and not about reduced quorum, correct?

**The Chair:** Exactly.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** The member wants to add that to have a quorum, a member of the official opposition must be present.

**The Chair:** There have to be three members, and one of them has to be a member of the government party and there has to be a member of the official opposition.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** And the third member could be me, the parliamentary secretary or the chair?

**The Chair:** Exactly.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Okay.

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

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I want to explain this clearly. The subcommittee will be composed of five people: the chair, the two vice-chairs, another member of the government party and the parliamentary secretary. That would be the makeup of the subcommittee. The rest of the motion concerns quorum. We want the meetings to take place and in order to do so, there would have to be at least three people. This isn't the same thing as what is in the beginning of the motion.

The quorum would be made up of three members, among them one member of the government and one member of the official opposition. We will not hold any meetings without informing the Liberals. If we decide that there have to be at least three members, this gives an opportunity for all three parties to be present. Afterwards, we can begin the meeting of the subcommittee. That is what we are explaining here; there must be three people present in order to have a quorum.

**The Chair:** Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have sat on the subcommittee before and I think it is best to keep the motion as is. We have been criticized in the past for holding subcommittee meetings when the other members were not aware. The decisions were challenged and we decided to go back to the way we used to do things, meaning that the whole committee would make all decisions regarding future business.

We can try to reduce the quorum, but I do not think it would benefit anyone. Whether we leave things the way they are or we completely eliminate the subcommittee, I don't want three members only making the decisions at the subcommittee, because that is not respectful to the other members of the committee. You need at least five members.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Do any other members wish to speak?

Go ahead, Mr. Dionne Labelle.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Mr. Gourde, I don't think the committee will meet if the five members do not show up.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** In that case, there will be no subcommittee meeting. If the members show up, there is a meeting; otherwise, it is simply cancelled.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** So the quorum is five people.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** We do not want—

**The Chair:** He said that, during the first session, the main committee decided how the work was planned and those sorts of things, not the subcommittee.

Mr. Godin, go ahead.

•(1605)

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I move that we go to the vote.

**The Chair:** So we are going to vote on the motion as amended.

[*English*]

All those in favour.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I'd like a recorded vote.

**The Chair:** We will have a recorded vote.

I will pass the floor to the clerk, who will take a recorded vote on the motion from the committee, which is that the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be composed of five members, including the chair, the two vice-chairs, the Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages and a member of the government party; that quorum be a minimum of three members, one of whom is a member of the government party and another of whom is a member of the official opposition; and that members of the subcommittee be authorized to bring a member of their staff with them to the subcommittee; and that each party be authorized an additional staffer, presumably from the whip's office.

The clerk has the floor and he will take a vote.

(Motion negated: nays 7; yeas 4 [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Now we're going to consider another motion.

Does anyone have another routine motion they would like to see adopted?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Godin, go ahead.

**The Chair:** You mean from the beginning of the first session?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, could you please read the previous motion from last time?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Here it is:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be composed of five (5) members including the Chair, the two Vice-Chairs, the Parliamentary Secretary—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** No, no, I am not talking about the previous motion we already voted on. I am talking about the subsequent motion dealing with the reduced quorum.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Does somebody want to present that?

[*Translation*]

Do you want to introduce that motion?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes, but I would like to know what the former motion said, because I am not sure I have the right piece of paper.

**The Chair:** Okay. The motion reads:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four (4) members are present, including one (1) member of the opposition and one (1) member of the government party.

Would you like to introduce that motion, Mr. Godin?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes, and I would like to add the following: “and that when travelling outside the parliamentary precinct, the meeting begin after fifteen (15) minutes, regardless of members present”.

**The Chair:** Could you repeat the entire motion, Mr. Godin?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** The entire motion reads as follows:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least three (3) members are present, including one (1) member of the official opposition...

Or rather:

...four (4) members are present, including one (1) member of the opposition and that when travelling outside the parliamentary precinct, the meeting begin after fifteen (15) minutes, regardless of members present.

**The Chair:** Does your motion require four or three members for a quorum?

•(1610)

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Four members, including one member of the official opposition and one member of the government party.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Could you please read the motion again?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Here it is:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four (4) members are present, including one (1) member of the opposition and that when travelling outside the parliamentary precinct, the meeting begin after fifteen (15) minutes, regardless of members present.

**The Chair:** Let me clarify something. The building where we meet is part of the parliamentary precinct.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes. The reduced quorum applies.

**The Chair:** Yes.

Does anyone want to speak to the motion?

Mr. Gourde, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, I would like a clarification. We are talking about the meetings held outside the parliamentary precinct, correct?

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** That is correct. The motion refers to meetings held outside the parliamentary precinct. For example, we may travel somewhere to meet with people. The idea is for the meeting to begin after 15 minutes, even if some people do not show up. We cannot keep the witnesses waiting because no one shows up.

However, everyone shows up on time within the parliamentary precinct. That is not an issue here.

**The Chair:** So for meetings within the parliamentary precinct, your motion suggests that a quorum consist of seven committee members, including the chair.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes, as usual.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Is that clear?

**An hon. member:** No.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay, just let me clarify for members of the committee.

The motion says that reduced quorum is available within the parliamentary precinct, which includes buildings like this, if four members are present, one of whom is from the official opposition, and another of whom is from the government party. If the committee ever decides to meet outside of the parliamentary precinct, the meeting shall begin 15 minutes after indicated in the orders of the day, even if a reduced quorum is not available.

Okay? Does everyone...?

Madame.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** A new issue is being introduced. There are two issues: the quorum and this motion. The second rule applies only when a committee meeting is held somewhere else, when we travel and we want to interview people there. Is that correct?

**The Chair:** The beginning of the motion actually refers to our meetings here when we have witnesses, but we do not have seven committee members.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** That is how it is written.

**The Chair:** We can receive the evidence as long as four committee members are present.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Yes, that's clear, end of story.

Let's talk about the second part now. When we go somewhere else, this is the rule that applies.

**The Chair:** Okay. We have a motion before us.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin's motion.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It deals with the possibility of receiving evidence.

**The Chair:** As well as printing the evidence.

[*English*]

Are we all clear on what the motion says? The motion says that we can have a reduced quorum here simply to receive testimony and publish it on the parliamentary precinct with four members, one of whom is a member of the government party, the other of whom is a member of the opposition party. If we are off the parliamentary precinct in an official committee, after 15 minutes after the meeting was to have started on the orders of the day, the meeting will start, even if there is not a reduced quorum of members present, to receive testimony and to publish it.

Is there any debate on the motion in front of us?

Monsieur Gourde.

•(1615)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I will oppose this motion, because it can cause substantial harm. For instance, when we travel, a member might be delayed because of a snowstorm. The member will then have to take all the blame for something that was not his fault. Since I know how our friends opposite are, if the member happens to be from the government party, a whole host of negative comments will be made at that person's expense.

At any rate, limits are being imposed.

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** The motion says the opposite. It says that we will not wait for members who are late so that we don't keep the witnesses waiting. The motion actually says: "when travelling outside the parliamentary precinct, the meeting begin after fifteen (15) minutes, regardless of members present".

It is simple. The motion says the complete opposite of what you are saying, Mr. Gourde. We are not going to keep the witnesses waiting. They will be able to give their testimony.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** We must make sure, especially when we travel, that the chair and the people working for us who must be on the committee are present. If something happens, someone will be held responsible.

That is the type of roadblock you are always trying to create; that is all part of your game.

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

Mr. Dionne Labelle, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Mr. Gourde's reasoning amazes me. He thinks that we will make the person who didn't show up take the blame for the meeting being cancelled. Yet it is the opposite. Even if a member does not show up, the meeting will be held. If we don't and if we tell the witnesses that they came for nothing because one of the members did not show up, that member will really have to carry the can.

I feel that it is the opposite of what you are saying.

**The Chair:** Okay, thank you.

Ms. St-Denis, go ahead.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** I am not sure if I am allowed, but I would like to introduce two motions. The first one has to do with what has already been introduced and agreed upon by everyone. We will see about the second one.

Can we proceed in that manner?

**The Chair:** For the time being, we are debating Mr. Godin's motion, so it is up to him to decide.

Mr. Chisu, you have the floor.

[*English*]

**Mr. Corneliu Chisu (Pickering—Scarborough East, CPC):** Mr. Chair, the things I am hearing here, I'm a logical person and to me, a quorum is a quorum. Whether you are on the moon or anywhere else, it is a quorum. You cannot make a deviation from the quorum when you are discussing issues when something is happening. It is not a quorum. That's it.

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

Mr. Williamson.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. John Williamson:** I don't understand. We are the ones travelling. If some members are not at the location of the meeting, we will wait for them. If we want to hear from the witnesses in their ridings, they can wait for us. When they come here, we listen to them and then they go home, but , if we are the ones travelling, I think there should be enough members.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Are there any other comments?

Mr. Godin, would you like a recorded vote?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Yes.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** The clerk has the floor.

(Motion negatived: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** Are there any other routine motions the committee would like to consider?

Mr. Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Let's try to look at a less complicated motion. I will start by reading the initial motion:

That 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the Committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration; and that the notice of motion be filed with the Clerk of the Committee and distributed to members in both official languages.

I would add:

and that;

(a) notice be emailed to the Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday;

(b) notice be distributed by e-mail to members in both official languages by the Clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour;

(c) notices received after the deadline hour be deemed to have been received during the next business day; and

(d) this rule does not prevent a member to give notice of a motion orally during a meeting of the Committee, in which case notice shall be deemed to have been given before the deadline that day.

• (1620)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is there debate?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gourde, you may start. Ms. St-Denis will follow.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Why complicate things when we can keep them simple? Our rules were relatively straightforward. Could the clerk tell me how we would operate based on the new motion? Does he see a problem with that? We can adapt to anything, but I feel things were working well before. Traditionally, that is how all committees have worked. This new measure will complicate things.

**The Chair:** I will give the floor to the clerk after Ms. St.-Denis.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** I don't know which motion we are talking about.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I am talking about the last motion.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Okay, thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is there anyone else who wants to speak to this motion before I give the floor to the clerk? I'm going to give him a minute to read the motion.

Mr. Chisu.

**Mr. Corneliu Chisu:** Why are we adding so much red tape? Forty-eight hours is forty-eight hours. What is the problem?

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

I'll give the floor to the clerk.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Chad Mariage (Procedural Clerk):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will not give you my personal opinion. However, the addition seems feasible. The only new thing is the hour for the notice and the instructions to the clerk on how to distribute the motions. That is sort of how we do things already.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[*English*]

Is there any other debate?

Mr. Nicholls.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** It's just the framing of the current practice, so that it's clear and doesn't deviate from what we're already doing. There is no addition of red tape. They're not going to hire another clerk to figure this out. It's the practice that's already used; we're just describing it in a better way.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I trust our clerk. He does not need any more instructions on how to do his job. I will vote against the motion.

**The Chair:** Are there any further comments?

[English]

Okay, I will pass the floor to the clerk for a recorded vote.

I'll read the motion again before the clerk takes a recorded vote:

[Translation]

That 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the Committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration; and that the notice of motion be filed with the Clerk of the Committee and distributed to members in both official languages, and that;

(a) notice be emailed to the Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday;

(b) notice be distributed by e-mail to members in both official languages by the Clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour;

(c) notices received after the deadline hour be deemed to have been received during the next business day; and

(d) this rule does not prevent a member to give notice of a motion orally during a meeting of the Committee, in which case notice shall be deemed to have been given before the deadline that day.

Mr. Clerk—

• (1625)

[English]

**Mr. John Williamson:** I'd like that in English as well, please.

**A voice:** He has to listen to the translation.

**Mr. John Williamson:** I'm listening to it, and I don't think even the francophones get this, so I'd like to hear it in English.

**The Chair:** Okay.

The motion is:

That 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the Committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration; and that the notice of motion be filed with the Clerk of the Committee and distributed to members in both official languages, and that;

(a) notice be emailed to the Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday;

(b) notice be distributed by e-mail to members in both official languages by the Clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour;

(c) notices received after the deadline hour be deemed to have been received during the next business day; and

(d) this rule does not prevent a member to give notice of a motion orally during a meeting of the Committee, in which case notice shall be deemed to have been given before the deadline that day.

The clerk has the floor to call the vote.

(Motion negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** Do we have any other routine motions for consideration?

Mr. Godin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I move the motion on the witnesses' expenses.

That will be easy; the wording is the same as in the former motion:

That, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses, not exceeding two (2) representatives per organization; and that, in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be made at the discretion of the Chair.

I don't see how anyone would vote against that.

**The Chair:** Is there any debate?

[English]

Is there no debate?

Okay.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I would actually love to hear Mr. Dionne Labelle debate that issue.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

[English]

**The Chair:** Seeing no further debate, I'll call the question.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Is there another routine motion that members wish to consider?

Monsieur Gourde.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, we have the following motion:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be composed of five (5) members including the Chair, the two Vice-Chairs, the Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages and a member of the government party.

It is the second routine motion, without the amendment introduced earlier.

• (1630)

[English]

**The Chair:** We have a motion in front of us. Is everyone clear on the motion? Okay. Is there any debate on the motion?

Seeing none, I'll call the question.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Monsieur Gourde.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, I have another motion, this time on the reduced quorum:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four (4) members are present, including one (1) member of the opposition and one (1) member of the government party.

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

Is there any debate on this motion?

[English]

Mr. Nicholls.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Mr. Chair, in terms of debate, I find it unfortunate that we couldn't have "official opposition". That's all; it's just to register that. Instead of just "opposition", it should be "official opposition".

**The Chair:** Understood. Thank you.

You could always propose an amendment.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** I think we already did.

**The Chair:** We'll vote on the motion.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Mr. Gourde, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, I have another routine motion. This one is about the distribution of documents:

That only the Clerk of the Committee be authorized to distribute to the members of the Committee any of the documents, including motions, and that all documents which are to be distributed among the Committee members must be in both official languages; and that the clerk shall advise in advance all witnesses appearing before the Committee of this requirement and inform them of the availability of translation services.

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

Yes, Mr. Godin?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, I just want to know which motion this is.

**The Chair:** It is the one about the distribution of documents. It is exactly the same as the one we passed in the first session.

Are there any comments?

[English]

Seeing none, we'll vote on the motion.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Monsieur Gourde.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, here is another routine motion, this time about working meals:

That the Clerk of the Committee be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working meals for the Committee and its Subcommittees.

**The Chair:** Are there any comments?

[English]

Seeing none, we'll vote on the motion.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, I have another motion.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Here it is:

That, unless otherwise ordered, each Committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one of his or her staff person, in addition to one staff person from the office of the Whip of each party, at in camera meetings.

[English]

**The Chair:** Debate.

Madame St-Denis.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Is that just for in camera meetings?

**The Chair:** Yes. The other meetings are open to assistants, to the general public, to everyone.

Go ahead, Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Could Mr. Gourde read his motion again?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** With pleasure, Mr. Chair.

That, unless otherwise ordered—

Meaning that the committee could decide something else.

—each Committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one of his or her staff person, in addition to one staff person from the office of the Whip of each party, at in camera meetings.

**The Chair:** You have the floor, Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Rather than talking about someone from the staff of the whip's office, I suggest that it be someone from the party staff.

[English]

**The Chair:** We have an amendment in front of us.

[Translation]

What is your amendment, exactly?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Instead of it being someone from the staff of the office of the whip of each party, I suggest that it be someone from the party staff.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** If it is not done as a motion, it may be out of order.

It works both ways. You can do the same thing.

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin has moved an amendment. He suggests replacing the words “*du bureau du whip de chaque parti*” with the words “*de son parti*”. So it would read “*un membre du personnel de son parti*”.

• (1635)

[English]

Are we clear on the amendment?

Monsieur Godin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I make this proposal for a reason. Last time, you caused a problem. Government members brought someone from the minister's staff. I do not know if you remember, but he was not from the whip's office. He clearly did not work for Mr. Gourde. It was not a staff member of his. He worked for the Department of Canadian Heritage.

We just want to make things clear now, instead of having to argue later. We discussed this, but we dropped it.

In this way, the party will decide whom it will send to the committee. If we leave the words “one staff person from the office of the Whip”, we will want to know who the person works for. If they work for the minister, they will not be able to attend the meeting.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Gourde.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** If we use the words “his or her staff person”, they refer to a committee member's staff. It will be someone paid from a committee member's budget. On the government side, however, staff members can be paid by a department, because—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** That member is not a member of the committee. The minister is not a member of the committee.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Let me finish, please.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** My apologies.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** A member of a parliamentary secretary's staff can be paid by the department, everyone knows that. Assistants to parliamentary secretaries are paid by the department; they are not paid from the member of Parliament's budget. This is because parliamentary secretaries have more responsibilities than a regular member of Parliament. If parliamentary secretaries used money from their own budgets to pay their assistants, there would be less money in the budgets that are set up to serve their constituents. That distinction has to be made.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** In that case, it is not someone from the staff of a member of Parliament who works here. In my case, it comes out of my budget. If the person is paid by a department, it is not the same thing.

The amendment is simply trying to clarify things, that's all. With the amendment, as the vice-chair of the committee, I could bring someone who is paid by the party and say that, since that person works for me and assists me, the person has the right to be here. So I could use the same argument. The government's ability to bring someone here must be the same for me.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** The motion uses the words “one of his or her staff”. According to your amendment, we have to find out if that staff member is paid from the same budget as the member of Parliament or not. It discriminates against members of Parliament who have people on their staff paid by a department. That needs to be clarified.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** We drafted the amendment to read “one staff person from the party”. A person who works for the minister is automatically a staff member from the party, because the minister is a member of that party as well. But if you say that it has to be a member of the staff of a member of Parliament who works here, that person would be excluded because they do not work for the parliamentary secretary, but for the minister. There is a difference between a member of the minister's staff and a member of the parliamentary secretary's staff. This is because that person is not paid by the parliamentary secretary's budget, but by the minister's budget.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Excuse me, Mr. Chair. but a parliamentary secretary's assistant is tied to the parliamentary secretary. He or she accompanies the parliamentary secretary at work.

I agree that they are part of the governing party, but when it happens under circumstances like these, you are going to say that he or she is not paid from the parliamentary secretary's budget and that he or she has no business here. That is just playing with words.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, we could look at the transcripts. I am sure that, if the same thing happens, he could say that the person is not working for him, but for the minister, and was sent by the minister. That actually happened: the person in question did not work for you, but for the minister.

The way we have drafted it does not say the opposite; it gives you the option. We want that in the motion so that it is clear and so that we do not start getting bogged down again if the situation comes up in a month or two. I do not think you would be opposed if we brought a member of our party staff with us.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** No, no. The staff member—

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Instead of saying a staff person from the office of the whip—

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** So who pays people on your party's staff?

**The Chair:** Through the chair, please.

• (1640)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, could you ask my colleague opposite that question? He is talking about a member of staff paid by his party. Basically, he is saying that he would be fine with someone paid by the New Democratic Party attending an in camera meeting, rather than someone paid by a member of Parliament on this committee.

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

Go ahead, Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I was not talking about a staff member paid by a political party, but by a member of the party staff. That is not the same thing. Staff members are paid by the House. It could be a researcher, for example. The same applies to you. But if you say that it has to be a staff person from the office of the whip, and a researcher comes anyway, that will not work because researchers do not work for that office.

When one of the minister's staff was going to come, we felt that we could call on someone too. The motion specifies that a member of party staff, Conservative, NDP or Liberal, can help us in our work. They cannot ask questions and they have no right to speak, but they come with us.

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

Ms. St-Denis, you have the floor.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** For us, it could be someone from the whip's office, but it could also be someone from our leader's office, or a researcher, for that matter. We have no interest in preventing an assistant or employee from coming to a committee meeting. But we are interested in keeping the door open a little, specifically to replace a staff person from the office of the whip with someone else with a role to play and who wants to come to a meeting. This does not seem very complicated to me.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. St-Denis.

Mr. Gourde, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I agree with Ms. St-Denis. Actually, the motion says “unless otherwise ordered”. That means that, if someone's presence at a meeting raises concerns, we could decide if the person can attend the meeting with a vote. We could talk about it for ever, but the basic motion is enough if someone were to wonder whether it was appropriate for a person to be at a meeting. The question has already come up for interns. Sometimes we agree to their being present, but not always. It has happened previously in other committees, but I am not sure about this one.

The words “unless otherwise ordered” gives us all the flexibility we need to start a discussion and to ask committee members if they agree to the people with us being here.

Personally, I would leave the motion as it is.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Nicholls, you have the floor.

[English]

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Chair, the intent of the amendment is to improve the efficiency in the future and to avoid those debates that might happen if someone other than what is recorded here is present. It will increase the efficiency of the committee and the work of the committee, because we won't have to have the debate over who this person is and who they are paid by. We're taking that out of the way right now. It's going to clear up future business, so I think it should pass.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay, if there's no debate, I'll call the question on the amendment.

[Translation]

The amendment is to replace “from the office of the Whip of each party” to “from his or her party”.

[English]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Just before the vote—

**The Chair:** Yes.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Gourde says that it is not a problem, given the phrase “unless otherwise ordered”. But we have to comply with what the motion indicates. It must be a member of a member's staff or a member of the staff of the office of the whip. So researchers are out.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** We can include researchers, we can include members of the staff of a parliamentary secretary to a minister, we can include anyone we want to have with us.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** But if we are talking about a member—

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It doesn't matter; we can always amend the motion later.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[English]

We'll have a recorded vote on the amendment. I'll pass the floor to the clerk.

(Amendment negated: nays 6; yeas 5)

**The Chair:** We're now back to the main motion.

Is there any debate on the main motion?

Monsieur Gourde.

• (1645)

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I would agree with the opposition's request that a committee member could be accompanied by a researcher. In return, I would like to add an assistant to the parliamentary secretary to a minister to the list. Then I think we would have an agreement.

**The Chair:** Are you asking another committee member to move an amendment to your motion?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I can do it. Let us work on it.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay, you need to ask for—

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I do not want us to do the work for nothing. So I will wait to see whether the folks on the other side agree with that proposal.

**The Chair:** Okay.

A member may not move an amendment to his or her own motion. But Ms. Bateman can move an amendment for you.

[English]

Would you be willing to move Mr. Gourde's amendment?

[Translation]

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Yes.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay, so we have an amendment on the floor.

Monsieur Gourde, could you repeat Madame Bateman's amendment?

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** The motion would read as follows:

That, unless otherwise ordered, each Committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one of his or her staff person, in addition to one staff person from the office of the Whip of each party, at in camera meetings or another staff member, for example, a research officer, and a government staff member who is the parliamentary secretary's assistant.

[English]

**The Chair:** We have an amendment in front of the committee.

(Amendment agreed to)

**The Chair:** We're back to the main motion as amended.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Could I clarify one thing? Ms. Bateman's amendment mentions a research officer, right?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** It mentions a staff member from each party or a research officer. Researchers are acceptable because, basically, they are staff members.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Can you repeat your amendment?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Committee members can be accompanied by a staff member from each party; that includes a research officer and the parliamentary secretary's assistant.

**The Chair:** Okay.

[*English*]

Are there other routine motions members would like to present and discuss?

Monsieur Gourde.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I have the following motion:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the Committee Clerk's office for consultation by members of the Committee.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is there debate?

Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I have an amendment. I would like to add "or by one of their staff members authorized by the Committee member" after the words "by members of the committee".

**The Chair:** Okay.

So we have an amendment before us.

[*English*]

Is there debate on the amendment?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I have heard some people say that we would be able to take the transcripts and pass them on to them. However, we cannot take the documents out. They must stay where they are. We have to go and consult them. We cannot bring them to our offices. That applies to you as well. If members want to check what was said in the transcripts, they could authorize a staff member to do that so that no time is wasted.

I am sure we can rely on those people. They go to in camera meetings and they know what happens in them. In this case, all they would have to do is look at the transcripts and note what is in them. Sometimes, we want to check the transcripts of in camera meetings just to refresh our memories. That is why I am suggesting the addition that a trusted member of our staff can consult them. It is not difficult.

• (1650)

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

Mr. Chisu, go ahead.

[*English*]

**Mr. Corneliu Chisu:** I just want to ask if you are authorizing the staff to go to consult in camera. You still bear the responsibility if something is leaked.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** You what?

**Mr. Corneliu Chisu:** You still bear the responsibility if something is leaked.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** That's for sure.

**The Chair:** Mr. Nicholls.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** We just adopted an amendment to allow the researchers to attend our in camera meetings. It is logical, then, to also give them permission to consult the transcripts of in camera meetings. If we are trusting them to be present at the meetings, we should also trust them to consult the transcripts.

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

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, the amendment put forward by Mr. Godin is too broad in scope, because it doesn't ensure that it will be the same staff member looking at the transcript of the in camera meeting. The member could ask any other person on staff who did not attend the meeting to check the transcript of that meeting. That would pose an ethical problem.

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

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I understand that, in their mind, it's that person who will check the transcript, but the member could also ask someone else to do it.

**The Chair:** Would anyone else care to comment?

Mr. Godin, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I have to trust my staff member. If he wants to look at the transcript of an in camera meeting held on a given day, he has to have my permission first. He works for me; I am the person sending him. It's not just anyone. What does it matter if it's someone else? In order to do our job, we need staff and we trust them. That's why we suggested the words "authorized by the member of the Committee". If the person isn't authorized, then they can't look at the transcript.

If I was working on a file, I could ask a staff member to check the transcript for me. Regardless, if I were to check the transcript myself, I could memorize it and tell my staff about it anyways. There is nothing stopping me from telling my staff about it. So what's the difference? We work together. In camera proceedings don't prevent us from working with our staff.

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

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, I would like Mr. Godin to clarify a few things for me. I see what he means, but what I was trying to tell him earlier was that another motion would authorize certain people to attend the committee's in camera meetings. We are talking about people who advise and assist us. I would be fine with their being able to look at the transcript. But I wouldn't be fine with a member of my staff who wasn't at the in camera meeting going to the clerk. Otherwise, what would be the point of us meeting in camera. Too many people would be able to access the information and the in camera meetings wouldn't be confidential.

As soon as we give someone else permission to do our work, we risk contravening our own procedure. We would be going down a very tricky road. I was somewhat open to the idea, but not anymore. I'm really not convinced that it will be possible to keep the committee's in camera discussions confidential if we give too many people access to the transcripts. Once that happens, we'll task someone else with our responsibility, and that person could talk about our discussions and so forth.

For that reason, I will vote against any amendment to that effect.

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

Mr. Dionne Labelle has the floor, followed by Ms. St-Denis.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** I would like to move the following subamendment. I move that we add “or a member of his or her staff who was present at the in camera meeting” to the end of the motion.

**The Chair:** Ms. St-Denis, go ahead. Then it's Mr. Benskin's turn.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** I am stricter than that. I am going to vote against the amendment and the subamendment because leaks do happen, and everyone knows it. There are people who pass on information, no matter what it is. It could even be a staff member we've put a lot of trust in.

This amendment would take away from committee members a responsibility that is theirs and theirs alone, a responsibility that should be kept intact. In my view, this opens up access to in camera meetings a bit too much.

•(1655)

**The Chair:** Thank you, madam.

Mr. Benskin, your turn.

[English]

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** I think there's an inherent responsibility each of us has as committee members when we meet in camera, which is a given. We don't give up that responsibility, but if it helps, as my colleague suggested, I think if we amend it to “authorized person in attendance at said meeting” we might be able to limit it so it's not just anybody, that it's personnel who were in attendance at that meeting.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Mr. Godin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, I listened to Mr. Gourde, and I am ready to move a subamendment specifying that it would be a staff person who had attended the in camera meeting.

I have no choice but to disagree with Ms. St-Denis's comment that if we authorize that person to consult the transcript of the in camera meeting, he or she could then tell people about it. That would not happen. Staff members have responsibilities and must respect Parliament's rules on in camera proceedings.

A staff person who attended the meeting has already heard it all. It's the transcript of what was said. They won't see anything new, just what was said while they were present at the in camera meeting.

All I am saying is that we need to help parliamentarians do their job. If a committee member doesn't want someone on their staff to

hear what the committee discusses in camera, then the member should not invite them. If the member doesn't trust their staff, the member doesn't have to invite them to the in camera meeting. I can assure you that my staff members know what an in camera meeting means. I am the one responsible for keeping what is said in camera confidential. If a leak comes from my office, the staff member isn't the person responsible. I am entirely responsible for maintaining that confidentiality. I have never seen someone on a member's staff being called before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. The member is the one who broke the in camera rules, so the member is the one accountable to the committee.

This amendment merely seeks to help members. I agree with Mr. Gourde's argument. If we let just anybody consult the transcript, we won't even know who was present at the meetings and who wasn't. I agree with the idea of moving a subamendment to rectify that. I repeat, this is strictly to help members. The people on our staffs aren't constantly changing. If the same staff person can't consult the transcript, the member will do it.

Am I allowed to propose a subamendment, Mr. Chair, since I'm the one who put forward the amendment in the first place?

**The Chair:** You may suggest a subamendment, but it has to be moved by another member.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Very well.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Actually, I already moved it.

**The Chair:** Mr. Dionne Labelle has therefore moved the subamendment.

[English]

What is the subamendment? I don't know what it is.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** The subamendment would add the following to the end of the motion: “or a member of his or her staff in attendance at the in camera meeting”.

[English]

**The Chair:** The subamendment has been presented by Monsieur Dionne Labelle, through Monsieur Godin.

We're going to have a debate on the subamendment now.

Monsieur Dionne Labelle.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** I would like to make the implications clear here.

Under the initial proposal, the young man who talks to you regularly would not be entitled to consult the transcript of an in camera meeting. The woman who accompanies our Liberal friend, along with my assistant Benoît, would not be allowed either, even if they had been present at the said meeting.

To make our job easier, it would be appropriate for them to be able to consult the transcript of a meeting they had attended. That makes sense to me.

[English]

**The Chair:** So that everyone is clear, the amendment is, “or a member of their personnel, their staff, authorized by the member”.

We're now on the subamendment which is, "who was present at the meeting that was in camera".

Is there any further debate on the subamendment?

Mr. Williamson.

• (1700)

**Mr. John Williamson:** I have a question for you, Chair. Are you even able to police that request? Four weeks from now, how will you know who has been in this room?

**The Chair:** We can police it if you wish to adopt it.

**Mr. John Williamson:** I'm simply wondering, is that something you typically do? Are you aware of the staff members who are here at every single meeting?

**The Chair:** The clerk will keep track of it, yes.

**Mr. John Williamson:** All right.

I think I know the answer, but only to be sure, currently it's members themselves who have access to the minutes right now, and only members.

**The Chair:** That's right.

To clarify, and the clerk can tell me if it's otherwise, I do believe that staff of members are authorized to take a look at the transcript if and only if the clerk receives an e-mail from the member confirming that the staff person can take a look at the transcript. It is already the case that staff can take a look at the transcript, but before the clerk would allow a staff member to look at the transcript, the clerk would need authorization from the member himself or herself.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Yes. Well, I'm fine with that, and I am getting a sense of what an NDP government would be like with rewriting regulations, heaven forbid.

I'll be voting against this, because I think the current rules seem—

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Just wait and see.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. John Williamson:** I have an idea right now. I know, I know. I can just imagine what my tax form would be like.

**The Chair:** Is there any further debate on the subamendment?

Mr. Nicholls, and then Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** I wanted to clarify my previous comments.

It was my intention, in line with the subamendment, that people of our staff who have already been authorized to be here in camera be able to consult the minutes.

**The Chair:** Yes. Okay, thank you.

Monsieur Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Legislation is not made in two minutes, my dear colleague. I hope that if the NDP get elected, we'll do other legislation, and follow it after, too.

[*Translation*]

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

Ms. Bateman, go ahead.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** I would like a clarification. Unless I'm mistaken, all our assistants—with our permission—have access to transcripts for analytical purposes, whether they attended the meeting or not. Isn't that right?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** The way it works is that if you want to see the transcript for an in camera meeting, they are kept physically with the clerk. You can at any moment in time visit the clerk and see a transcript of that meeting. If you wish to send a staff person there, the clerk will require your express authorization for that staff person to take a look at the transcript.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** It doesn't matter if that staff person was there or not at the meeting, they would still have access.

**The Chair:** That is the current practice, yes.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Okay, so what we're talking about is actually a

[*Translation*]

waste of time, it seems to me, as this is already common practice.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Is there any further debate on the subamendment?

Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Members are talking about a waste of time, but I just want to point out that I am paid on an annual basis. So it will not cost the government more if we clarify certain matters today. I don't think that it's a waste of time. There is a motion on the table, and we are free to adopt it or not.

I have to say that we did not know that anyone could consult the transcripts.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I did not know that either.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** There you have it. Since that is the case, we should be able to adopt the subamendment in order to clarify this aspect for everyone. That's all we were saying. I hope that no one will object.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

On the subamendment, is there any further debate?

Seeing none, I'll call the question on the subamendment.

(Subamendment negated)

**The Chair:** We're back to the amendment.

Just to refresh everybody's memory, the amendment is

[*Translation*]

to add the following: "or by one of their staff members authorized by the Committee member".

[*English*]

Is there any debate on the amendment?

Seeing none, I'll call the question.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I just wanted to know where we are at. The subamendment has been passed. We are now....

**The Chair:** No, the subamendment was negatived.

• (1705)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** So we are now dealing with the original version. Correct?

**The Chair:** We are currently discussing the original amendment.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** You should reread it, so that it is clear.

**The Chair:** The amendment aims to add the following: "or by one of their staff members authorized by the Committee member".

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I would like to withdraw my amendment, Mr. Chair.

We are talking about my amendment, right? I'm no longer sure where we are at.

**The Chair:** No, we are talking about Mr. Godin's amendment.

[*English*]

You defeated your own subamendment. We're now back to the amendment as proposed by Monsieur Godin. We're now on the amendment as proposed by Monsieur Godin, which would add to your motion that you originally presented the phrase "or a member of their staff authorized by the member", which is current practice but is not explicit in the routine motion that was adopted in the first session.

Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, if this is common practice and the government agrees, there is no problem.

Mr. Gourde, if this is common practice, do you still object?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Frankly, I'm starting to think that this is a problem. I think that Ms. St-Denis was right. I never dared to send a member of my staff to the clerk in order to consult the transcript. I didn't even know this could be done; I thought that it was not allowed.

A Pandora's box has been opened, and we need to think about this. I personally think that Ms. St-Denis is right. We should not change the procedure. We should go see the clerk ourselves to consult the transcripts of in camera meetings.

It was a good idea to say that this was an accepted practice. That helped clarify things regarding a practice we in this committee were not familiar with. I'm no longer sure.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is there any further debate on the amendment?

Seeing no further debate on the amendment, I will call the question.

(Amendment negatived)

**The Chair:** We're now back to the main motion moved by Mr. Gourde.

Is there any debate on the motion?

The motion reads:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the Committee Clerk's office for consultation by members of the Committee.

If this motion is adopted, the chair will use past practice to guide our interpretation of this motion, which is if a staff of a member wishes to see the transcript and that staff member has express authorization from the member, the clerk will allow that staff member to see the transcript.

Is there any debate on the motion?

Mr. Benskin, go ahead.

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** I'm sorry but I'm slightly confused at this point. Maybe my blood sugar is low or something. I'm type II diabetic and I'm on new meds and so forth, so maybe it's the blood sugar sort of going weird, but I thought we just voted on that and defeated that, did we not?

**The Chair:** No.

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** The practice, unbeknownst to many of us in this room, has been that we could send an authorized member of our personnel to go see the transcript. This has been the practice.

The amendment we just voted on basically put that on paper. We just defeated it. The fear that Mr. Gourde put forward of other people having access to this, this amendment now comes into play if we're going to go back to past practice.

I'm confused.

**The Chair:** I'm just telling you what—

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** I know, I know. I just wanted to say....

**The Chair:** Is there any further debate on the motion in front of the committee?

Mr. Gourde, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** We have discussed many things. The motion reads as follows:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the Committee Clerk's office for consultation by members of the Committee.

As drafted, the motion does not allow our assistants to consult those transcripts. In practice, this may have been allowed, but I would have never thought so. This issue should really be cleared up.

Does this kind of a motion allow that procedure in all committees? We need to think about this. We could perhaps set this issue aside and think about it in our own corner.

• (1710)

**The Chair:** Okay, I will consult the clerk, who will consult his colleagues in order to answer your question.

[*English*]

I will ask the clerk to consult, to double-check what the practice is if and when this motion is adopted. I will ask the clerk to remind me to confirm at the next meeting what the interpretation of this routine motion is if it's adopted.

Is there any further debate on this routine motion in front of us?  
[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Did we adopt the last motion, Mr. Chair? It's the one that states that 48 hours' notice is required for any substantive motion to be considered by the committee. It seems to me that we did not.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** No, we have not adopted the motion regarding notice of motions. We're still on the motion regarding transcripts of in camera meetings.

Is there any further debate on the motion in front of us?

Mr. Nicholls, go ahead.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** The parliamentary secretary said that being able to read the minutes is more dangerous to in camera than being able to hear them when they're present.

**The Chair:** You're going to have to review the blues. I don't know exactly what he said.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** That's the implication.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Dionne Labelle, go ahead.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Mr. Chair, according to my understanding of the discussion, Mr. Gourde wants the motion to be set aside until we receive an official notice confirming that the motion as read before our amendment would enable the committee members' staff to consult the transcript—if that is indeed a common practice. That's what I heard. I think we could set the motion aside and wait to see what the situation is.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** If the motion is adopted, I have already instructed the clerk to seek advice from his colleagues as to the interpretation of this motion with respect to staff members accessing and looking at the transcript of in camera meetings. At the next meeting I will endeavour to clarify the interpretation of this motion.

Madame Bateman.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Should we get that interpretation before we vote on it?

**A voice:** I think so. It would be wise.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** I think so too.

**The Chair:** Okay, we can adjourn debate on this and we can continue to debate routine motions at the next meeting on Thursday.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** It's just that you're saying we should vote on something which we don't know the meaning of yet. I'm very uncomfortable doing that because I want to know the meaning.

**The Chair:** My view of the motion as it's currently worded is that staff members, with the express authorization of a member of this committee, are allowed to view the transcript at the clerk's office, in the same way staff members of a member of this committee can review the draft report before it's released, even though they may not be present in the room when that report is being discussed. That's my interpretation of the motion, but I will double-check with senior people in the clerk's office to get an exact interpretation.

Now, if you wish to adjourn debate on this particular motion I'm prepared to do that.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** I just want to make perfectly clear that I don't want to vote on something when we are not clear on the interpretation.

**The Chair:** Are you moving a motion to adjourn debate?

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** On this issue? Absolutely.

**The Chair:** Is it the wish of the committee to adjourn debate on this motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** We'll adjourn debate on this motion until the next meeting. The clerk will get me an answer for clarification.

Are there any routine motions that the committee would like to consider?

Mr. Gourde.

• (1715)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, this is the last motion, and it reads as follows:

That 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the Committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration; and that the notice of motion be filed with the Clerk of the Committee and distributed to members in both official languages.

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

We have a motion before us. It concerns notices of motion.

Do we have a debate on the issue?

[*English*]

There's no debate on the motion.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Are there any other motions for consideration?

Mr. Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I propose the following:

That whenever a minister is appearing before the Committee, every effort should be made in order for this meeting to be televised.

[*English*]

It's a new one, that when a minister comes to the committee, the meeting be televised.

**Mr. John Williamson:** What does that mean?

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** That means CPAC or...

**The Chair:** Mr. Williamson.

**Mr. John Williamson:** We have no control of what the media covers or does not cover.

**An hon. member:** Yes, it's—

**The Chair:** Let me just provide some clarification of the motion.

We can request that the meeting be televised. It doesn't necessarily mean that the media will pick it up. What it means is that the meeting will be recorded and will be available to the media if they so choose to pick up the feed. It depends on whether or not the rooms are available as well. Not all rooms have television capability, and it's first-come, first-served for the committees that wish to access them.

Mr. Williamson.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Again, I'll ask some basic questions.

What's the practice now?

**The Chair:** The practice now is that if a member asks for a meeting to be televised, the chair seeks to book that room. That's the current practice.

**An hon. member:** I just want to....

**The Chair:** Mr. Williamson has the floor.

**Mr. John Williamson:** I don't want to start something.

That's the convention already; this motion is just the convention.

**The Chair:** That's right.

Current practice, even though the routine motions are silent about it, is that when a member asks for a meeting to be televised, the chair makes his or her best effort to book a room where that can be done, and it's on a first-come, first-served basis.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I would like to move an amendment to include the Commissioner of Official Languages. The motion would be the following:

That the meetings with the Commissioner of Official Languages and any Minister be televised if possible.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** We have an amendment in front of us that adds "the official languages commissioner and all the ministers, if possible".

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** No, it's that if a minister or the Commissioner of Official Languages is going to appear before committee, they try to televise it, if possible.

**The Chair:** Okay, we're on the amendment. Is there any debate on the amendment?

Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I would like to clarify what Mr. Gourde said. He used the words "if possible". I would say that, when a minister appears before the committee, every effort should be made for the meeting to be televised. So every effort will be made to try to find an available room. The idea is the same; the effort will be made.

We would just have to replace the beginning with the words "that whenever a minister or the Commissioner of Official Languages appears before the committee". That way, we would not need to ask for that every time; it would already be done. We currently have to ask for that. If we do not ask for it, we realize it in the middle of the week, after receiving the notice, and then we have to ask for it.

Mr. Chair, you have always made the necessary efforts, so there's no issue there. We cannot say that you have not made the efforts for those meetings to be televised.

The only difference this motion would make is that efforts would be made automatically to televise the meetings with any ministers or the Commissioner of Official Languages. That's all.

• (1720)

**The Chair:** Mr. Gourde, could you repeat your amendment?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I would replace the motion with the following:

That the meetings with the Commissioner of Official Languages and any Minister be televised if possible.

This is just a motion that replaces the other one.

Here's what we could do. We will vote on Mr. Godin's proposal, but we will reject it. Then, we will be able to put mine to the vote. That way, we would no longer be talking about an amendment, but rather another motion. So things will be clearer for you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay, I'm going to consider the amendment that Monsieur Gourde has presented defeated, because it's clear that he is going to defeat the amendment he's proposed. We're now back to the main motion as proposed by Monsieur Godin.

Is there any debate on the main motion, which says:

[*Translation*]

That whenever a minister is appearing before the Committee, every effort should be made in order for this meeting to be televised.

[*English*]

That's the main motion as proposed by Mr. Godin. Is there any debate on the main motion?

Mr. Williamson.

**Mr. John Williamson:** I'm going to suggest defeating this and reverting to the routine motions from the last session, simply because of the language that says we use all possible measures. I don't know what that means. Does that mean changing dates?

To me it's important to have these individuals come and speak to this committee. I don't want to get into a debate beforehand about what level we are.... Don't get me wrong; I believe it's important to have this televised, but I believe what we have done in the past has worked sufficiently. I don't want to be debating timing and rescheduling meetings just to ensure that the practice we've been using, which has been successful, will now suddenly turn into a debate every time we're having one of these individuals come to see us.

**The Chair:** If there's no further debate on the motion as presented by Mr. Godin, I'm going to call the question.

I'll pass the floor to the clerk. This is a vote on the motion as presented by Mr. Godin.

(Motion negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Gourde, did you want to move another motion?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Yes. I have another motion that is very similar to this one and will probably appeal to everyone. It reads as follows:

That the meetings with the Commissioner of Official Languages and any Minister be televised if possible.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** We have a new motion in front of us to the effect that meetings with the Commissioner of Official Languages or with any minister be televised, if possible.

Is there any debate on this motion?

Mr. Nicholls.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** May I clarify?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** No, that's fine.

**The Chair:** Is there any further debate?

(Motion agreed to)

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Are there any further motions?

Mr. Godin, go ahead.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** The following is what I am proposing:

That whenever an Order in Council appointment or a certificate of nomination for appointment is referred to the Committee, the Clerk, pursuant to Standing Order 111(4), shall obtain a copy of corresponding curriculum vitae for distribution to all Members of the Committee.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** We have a motion in front of us concerning nominations. Is there any debate on this motion?

Mr. Williamson.

**Mr. John Williamson:** It's concerning nominations of what?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Godin, are you saying that you would like to have the curriculum vitae after the appointment? That would certainly be after an order in council appointment. In any case, we can invite the appointed person to appear before us to answer questions about their curriculum vitae. I don't understand why you want to have that, as well.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** We don't want to ask for that person's curriculum vitae when they are here; we want to have it beforehand.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** The chair could ask appointees to send us their curriculum vitae when he invites them.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** If the procedure is already established, the clerk would do that in advance. We should clarify this with him. Currently, the clerk does not have to request the document ahead of time. We have to remember to do it.

When an order in council appointment or a certificate of nomination for appointment is referred to the committee, the clerk knows it. By adopting this motion, we would make sure that the clerk would ask an appointee in advance to send him their curriculum vitae. That way, when the individual appears before the

committee, we would have already read their curriculum vitae and would be able to do our work.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. St-Denis, go ahead.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** My apologies, but I don't really understand. What appointment are you talking about?

**The Chair:** We are talking about an order in council appointment.

[*English*]

We need to deal with an order in council nomination. Whenever the cabinet makes an order in council nomination and it concerns this committee, we are notified by the minister's office of the nomination. The committee, under Standing Order 111, has the option to call that nominated candidate in front of the committee for questioning.

[*Translation*]

Would any other committee members like to debate this motion?

Mr. Gourde, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I am not sure I understand why Mr. Godin wants to move this motion. The committee can always ask its guests for their curriculum vitae, without exception.

So I will vote against this motion, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I don't understand why we have to ask for it every time. The motion only aims to make it so we no longer have to ask every time. It's normal for the work to be done automatically prior to the person's appearance before the committee. That way, we won't have to repeat that we want their curriculum vitae to be distributed to everyone. I think that every member will want to have it, including you.

The idea here is to work together. We are not proposing much in this motion. We just want to have information on individuals who will be appearing before us. If you are not prepared to vote in favour of that, then don't. However, we are not asking for much. We simply want to give our clerk the authorization to provide us with the curriculum vitae of the individuals who are invited to appear. That way, we will arrive here prepared and ready to work. That's what we want, and that's what you want, as well. You will not always be a member of the government, you know.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** This is not a trick. The time for Halloween jokes has passed.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Ms. St-Denis, go ahead.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** People's biographies are on the Internet. I have always checked on the Internet who the guests invited to appear are.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Look, under Standing Order 111, there's the right of the committee to demand a resumé. We're making it explicit in our routine motions, but the committee already has the right to demand a curriculum vitae from anybody. If a member of the committee asks for it, the chair, through the clerk, will get that resumé.

We only have a minute left. Is there any further debate this motion?

Seeing none, I'll call the question on this motion. A recorded vote has been requested. I'll pass the floor to the clerk for a recorded vote.

(Motion negatived: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** Before I adjourn the meeting, I just want to let members know that we will have a meeting on Wednesday at which we will consider any remaining routine motions and also plan for future business.

This meeting is adjourned.

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