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• (1305)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC)): I call the meeting to order.

I'm Marty Morantz. I am the vice-chair of the committee and I'm chairing the meeting today, along with my colleague Mr. Bergeron, who is the vice-chair. We will be passing the chair to each other over the course of the meeting, so that we can each take our individual rounds.

Welcome to meeting number 23 of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. Pursuant to the motion adopted on July 15, the committee is meeting for its study of the export of Russian Gazprom turbines.

As always, interpretation is available through the globe icon at the bottom of your screen.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all participants in this meeting that screenshots or taking photos of your screen is not permitted.

Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. When speaking, please speak slowly and clearly. When you are not speaking, your mike should be on mute. I will remind you that all comments by members and witnesses should be addressed through the chair.

I would now like to welcome our first panel of witnesses before the committee and thank them for agreeing to take the time to share their views with us. We have two ministers with us, the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources.

Minister Joly, please make your opening statement. You have five minutes.

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs): Thank you, Marty.

It's good to see all of you. I hope you're having a good summer.

Colleagues, of course I'm pleased to be with you today with my colleague and friend Minister Wilkinson. We're here to discuss the great consequences of Putin's war of choice in Ukraine, the roles Canada can play to secure Europe's energy security and, of course, how we can support our allies in implementing a green transition.

[Translation]

Yesterday, I hosted my German counterpart, Minister Baerbock, and we discussed these important issues.

Five months ago, the Russian president ordered his troops to invade Ukraine, a sovereign country.

[English]

This is an attack on freedom, on democracy and on the rights of Ukrainians to determine their own future. It is a flagrant disregard for international law and the UN charter, and an attack against the foundations of the rules-based international order.

We have worked with our allies and partners to impose severe costs on President Putin and his regime. This has included 1,600 sanctions on individuals and entities who support, fund and enable President Putin's war regime. These include President Putin himself, his daughters, members of his cabinet and his oligarchs, and key Russian industries, including high tech, chemicals, luxury goods and manufacturing. As a result, Canada has the strongest sanctions regime in the G7 when it comes to Ukraine.

Evidence is showing that international sanctions are having a significant impact on the Russian state. A recent study from Yale University painted a picture of a deeply crippled economy. Russian imports have largely collapsed. Russia faces challenges securing crucial inputs, leading to widespread supply shortages. Russian domestic production has come to a complete standstill, with no capacity to replace lost businesses, products and talent. As a result of the business retreat, Russia has lost companies representing nearly 40% of its GDP.

[Translation]

Of course, Canada's support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is unequivocal, and Canada has provided significant assistance to Ukrainians to help them defend themselves against Russia's invasion.

This morning, our government announced the resumption of Operation Unifier. We also announced \$620 million in military assistance, nearly half a billion dollars in humanitarian support and over \$1.5 billion in loans to help Ukraine's economy.

[*English*]

We've also announced \$50 million for demining initiatives and over \$9 million for initiatives to counter sexual violence.

[*Translation*]

The way that allies stood united in their support for Ukraine came as a great surprise to President Putin. Allies have isolated Russia politically, economically and diplomatically. Whether through the United Nations or the G20, we are hindering Russia's ability to spread disinformation freely.

[*English*]

We saw through Russia's lies and false pretenses for their invasion, and we still do today. President Putin is working to shift blame as he's weaponizing food. Now he's doing the same with energy.

We know that President Putin seeks to further destabilize Europe and sow division among the alliance. To this end, Russia has weaponized energy by cutting the flows of gas to Europe. Putin hoped to leverage Canada's role in the maintenance of Nord Stream 1 turbines to do just that.

We know that Europe is facing an energy crisis. Europeans—Germans—are facing shortages impacting households and industries. Our allies are worried about the situation as they stock up for the winter. Knowing that turbines were being repaired in Canada, the German Chancellor reached out to us, directly pleading for us to call Putin's bluff.

This was a very difficult decision for everyone in this government. It is one that was not taken lightly or without trying to find an alternative. Minister Wilkinson and I engaged directly with the Ukrainians and Germans, and encouraged discussion between them.

The decision was taken to grant a permit that allowed for the maintenance of Nord Stream 1 turbines and their return to Germany. With this permit, Siemens Canada may lead this work as scheduled on six specific turbines. It is time-limited to a maximum of two years.

With the issue of turbine maintenance taken off the table, Putin has nothing left to hide behind. As the flow of gas slows down, the world now knows with certainty that it was Putin's decision, and his alone.

• (1310)

[*Translation*]

Russia has shown the world that it cannot be relied upon as an economic partner. The Europeans no longer want to be dependent on Russia. They also understand the importance of fast-tracking the green transition, and as a solid ally, Canada needs to answer the call.

We are working closely with Germany and partners in Europe to find solutions to the energy crisis Europe is currently facing. That said, we need to stick to our targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. My colleague Jonathan Wilkinson, the Minister of Natural Resources, will have a lot more to say on that.

In closing, I want to reiterate Canada's unwavering support for Ukraine. We will continue to provide the Ukrainians with the help they need to defend themselves against Russia's invasion.

Now, I will turn the floor over to my friend and fellow minister, Jonathan Wilkinson.

Thank you.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Minister Wilkinson, you have the floor for five minutes.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Natural Resources): Thank you very much, Chair.

I welcome this opportunity to discuss Putin's failed attempt to use turbine engines to divide the alliance opposing his unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine. The turbine matter, as Minister Joly pointed out, was a difficult and a complex decision.

The facts are well established. In June, Siemens Canada applied to Global Affairs Canada with an urgent request to continue scheduled services and maintenance of Russian A65 turbine engines at its facility in Montreal, the only facility in the world capable of providing these services.

[*Translation*]

Germany and the European Union expressed, in the strongest possible terms, their desire to see Canada return the turbines.

[*English*]

They saw that Putin could use the turbines as an excuse for shutting down gas flows to Europe and that the blame for this would be placed on Canada and on western Europe. European countries were very clear that should the turbine not be returned, it would become significantly more challenging to maintain domestic support for Ukraine, threatening a split in the alliance. Ukraine, on the other hand, urged Canada not to return the turbines, concerned that it would signal to Putin and the world a weakening in western resolve to maintain economic sanctions against Russia.

The trap that Putin was trying to set by weaponizing the Nord Stream pipeline was obvious. Don't return the turbine, such that Canada and the west are likely to be blamed for reducing the gas flow to Europe and risk dividing the alliance, or return the turbine and risk a perceived weakening in the alliance's resolve regarding sanctions.

Let me say this very plainly to this committee today: Canada will never aid Putin in dividing the alliance that supports Ukraine. We and our allies remain united in steadfast support of the people of Ukraine, and we will not weaken our resolve in imposing punishing sanctions on the Russian regime.

[*Translation*]

During consideration of these issues, I spoke multiple times with my counterparts in Ukraine, Germany and the EU. Our conversations included consideration of potential alternatives for supplying Europe with gas.

[*English*]

Ultimately, our government made the decision to allow the return of the turbine to Germany. Let me underline why.

First, returning the turbine eliminated Putin's excuse for holding Europe hostage to gas supplies. The German Chancellor just a few days ago stated that, thanks to Canada “we were able to call Putin’s bluff...With the turbine ready to be delivered, it is up to Russia to resume their contractual obligations.” He went on to say that the decision to deliver the turbine was “a strong sign of support for Germany and for Europe and of maintaining solidarity amongst close allies in order to sustain long-term support for Ukraine.”

Second, the intention of our sanctions is and has been to punish Putin. It is not to jeopardize Europe's economic stability and potentially weaken the alliance. The intent of these sanctions was never to punish our allies in Europe.

Finally, concurrent with the turbine decision, to eliminate any question of Canada's resolve, Canada upped the ante and imposed additional sanctions on Russia. Canada's course of action has been publicly supported by the U.S., Germany and the European Union.

[*Translation*]

As we all know, the Ukrainian government did not agree with our decision. I certainly discussed these issues directly with Minister Galushenko prior to a decision being made.

[*English*]

However, at the end of the day, our decision avoided Putin's trap: we have strengthened the alliance, supporting Ukraine rather than weakening it, and we have sent a clear signal to the world that we are strengthening our resolve regarding sanctions against the Putin regime.

It is also important to note that Putin's weaponization of energy supply is precisely why the European Union is focused on displacing Russian gas through securing other sources, through conservation, and through accelerating the energy transition towards renewables and hydrogen. The era of Europe depending on cheap Russian oil and gas is over, and countries of the European Union will be looking to Canada and other friendly countries to assist with the supply of energy. In this regard, Canada has indicated that it will boost its exports of oil and gas by 300,000 barrels and barrel equivalents by the end of this year.

• (1315)

[*Translation*]

Canada is also actively engaged with both the EU and Germany on the potential for exports of hydrogen, liquefied natural gas, or LNG, and critical minerals.

[*English*]

The decision taken by Canada on the turbine reflects that we remain committed to actively supporting Ukraine, working to maintain and strengthen the unity of the alliance against Russia, and working to assist our allies with energy requirements over the short and medium term.

I thank you for inviting me to be with you today, and I certainly look forward to the discussion to come.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Minister.

As I have the first round, I'm now going to pass the chair to our second vice-chair.

Mr. Bergeron, do you accept the chair?

[*Translation*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ)): Yes, Mr. Chair.

I am now pleased to turn the floor over to Mr. Morantz, to begin the first round.

[*English*]

Mr. Marty Morantz: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister Joly, I think one of the difficulties we have here is that the European Union, along with the NATO alliance, is providing billions of dollars in cash, weapons and munitions to Ukraine to defend themselves. At the same time, it is paying hundreds of billions of dollars to Russia, which they are using in turn to fund their war effort. Canada, by returning this turbine, becomes complicit in a situation where we're aiding the European Union and essentially funding both sides of this war. Canada should never, ever be in a position like that.

The talking points I've been hearing over the last couple of days from you and Minister Wilkinson are that, well, now we're calling Putin's bluff. But that wasn't what you said in early July when you made the decision. There was no talk about calling a bluff or playing a game with Mr. Putin. No. What you said was that returning the turbine was integral to Germany's economy and its citizens, as the country is currently heavily dependent on Russia energy. That was what you said. You didn't tell the Canadian people that you did it to call anyone's bluff until I think yesterday, when I read your comments in the Globe.

So it's just not fair at all to say that this is about calling Mr. Putin's bluff. In fact, it stretches credulity, in my mind, to say that your conversations with the Germans back in early July or June, whenever you were meeting, were about calling Mr. Putin's bluff. They were about encouraging domestic supply. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress has said that your rationale also makes no sense. We'll hear from them later. It's been known for years that Mr. Putin uses energy as a foreign policy tool to punish enemies. It was entirely predictable that Russia would continue to use energy as a weapon after Canada acquiesced to Russian blackmail, essentially.

The reality is that this was a terrible decision that puts Canada in a terrible spot. It doesn't help Germany, and it makes Canada look weak in the eyes of the Russians. Isn't that right, Minister?

[*Translation*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): Over to you, Minister Joly.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

[*English*]

Marty, of course I hear your preoccupation, and I hear the preoccupation of the UCC. At the same time, the reality is that for too long Europe has been depending on cheap Russian gas, as mentioned by Minister Wilkinson in his remarks. That was reiterated yesterday when I was with my colleague Annalena Baerbock, the German minister of foreign affairs. For too long, Germany has been relying on that gas. In Europe, not only Germany but many other countries, including the Czech Republic and others, have been relying on that gas. The reality is that they are now moving from relying on cheap Russian gas to also finding new solutions. That's why they've been in active conversations with our government.

Mr. Marty Morantz: With the greatest of—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I will just continue to answer your question.

Mr. Marty Morantz: I have limited time, so I would like to move on.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I know, Marty, but my goal really is to answer your question.

Mr. Marty Morantz: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Now, at the same time, this was not an easy decision to make. For many weeks, Jonathan and I were actively in conversation with our German counterparts, who had reached out to us from the beginning, and also with Ukrainians to try to facilitate the conversation not only between the three of us but mainly between Germany and Ukraine, because this is also something that is between both countries.

Now, to make sure that we would keep the alliance together, and we all agreed that we need to continue to be strongly united against Putin, we needed to make sure there wouldn't be any form of pretext or any form of alibi. That's why the expression of calling Putin's bluff is the one that we're using, because clearly that is what we're doing.

• (1320)

Mr. Marty Morantz: With the greatest respect, Minister, why didn't you say you were calling his bluff in early July?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Well, at the time, the decision was still being discussed amongst allies.

Mr. Marty Morantz: That wasn't the rationale then, was it?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: No, no, no, that was always the rationale, because of course, Marty, what was most important was to make sure—

Mr. Marty Morantz: If it were the rationale, why didn't you say that in early July?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: —that we would continue to be united.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Why not say so in early July?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Until that time, we were still in discussion with the Ukrainians. The last conversation I had about the turbine with my Ukrainian colleague was actually when I was at the G20. I think it was in Bali. It was two o'clock in the morning. I had a discussion with Minister Kuleba and the minister of foreign affairs from Germany, Annalena Baerbock—

Mr. Marty Morantz: I do have limited time, and I think you respect the fact that I get to ask more than one question.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Marty, I'm just giving you the facts for you to be able to understand the situation.

Mr. Marty Morantz: I appreciate that. I understand.

When you were doing your due diligence on this decision, did the German government tell you that they needed the return of these turbines to increase gas supply?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: That was never part of the discussion. To the contrary, the discussion—

Mr. Marty Morantz: They never told you they needed the turbine so that gas supply could be increased...?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: In terms of increasing gas supply, that was never the case.

Maybe Jonathan wants to add something to that, because in terms of flow of gas—

Mr. Marty Morantz: Well, no, I'm talking to you. If I want to ask Jonathan a question, I'll ask him a question.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: No, no, but I think the conversation—

Mr. Marty Morantz: Let me ask another one.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Marty, do you want the answer to your question?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Marty, I mean, that question actually was the subject of conversations between me and the Germans, as you would expect with energy ministers, so I'm happy to answer your question.

We certainly discussed the issues around gas supply. As you know, there was concern about the reductions within the pipeline and the Russian statement that this was as a result of the turbine. Certainly, we talked about how returning the turbine potentially could address that issue if in fact the Russians were telling the truth—although most of us were of the view that they were not. Therefore, it was really very much about calling the bluff of the Russians.

As my colleague has said, that statement and that approach was supported not just by Germany but by the European Union and by the United States as well.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Minister Wilkinson, at the time you made this decision, was there any discussion of calling Mr. Putin's bluff?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Absolutely. Certainly, I discussed that with Minister Habeck, who was the German energy minister, on an ongoing basis. That was absolutely part of the conversation.

Mr. Marty Morantz: That was in late June and early July.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Absolutely it was. Yes.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Marty, if I can add to that—

Mr. Marty Morantz: Just one second.

So why—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: —I spoke about that with Secretary Blinken at that time. He was also supportive, because we all agreed that we needed to be united against Putin.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Okay. So why—

Mr. Marty Morantz: So why didn't you say that when you made the decision?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Outremont, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I think the member's time is up.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): Thank you, Ms. Bendayan.

I was just trying to ask the clerk how much time Mr. Morantz had left.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Jean-François Pagé): That was six minutes and 15 seconds.

[*English*]

Mr. Marty Morantz: It's a six-minute round, I believe.

[*Translation*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): Thank you.

Mr. Morantz, I will turn the chair back over to you.

[*English*]

Mr. Marty Morantz: Ministers, thank you.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Thank you, Marty.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I accept the chair.

It's an interesting meeting, passing the chair around, but here we go.

Mr. Clerk, because we're doing this virtually, you're going to have to tell me who is up next.

The Clerk: It will be Ms. Bendayan for the Liberal Party.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Ms. Bendayan, you have the floor for six minutes.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's always nice to see you in that chair, Mr. Morantz.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: It has now been nearly six months since the beginning of the brutal war begun by Russia against Ukraine. I want to begin by reiterating the unwavering support of our government for the Ukrainian people in their fight for freedom, and how important the work of this committee is, not only for our study on Ukraine, but of course for the present study as well.

I'd like to thank the ministers for appearing before the committee.

Ministers, you would agree that Canada has played a leadership role in rallying our allies around the world to put in place one of the most robust sanctions regimes ever against Russia. I believe we need to continue to strengthen those sanctions, as we did just this week on Tuesday, and continue to act in this leadership role.

That of course makes it all the more difficult to be discussing the decision today, a decision of a few weeks ago to send the Siemens turbine from Montreal to Germany at Germany's request. Fundamentally, our sanctions are only as strong as our unity and solidarity amongst allies.

Ministers, what were you hearing at the time? Reports that I have read are to the effect that Germany was making this difficult decision because if it did not get the turbine, then it wouldn't have any gas and, in the German foreign minister's words, "we won't be able to provide any support for Ukraine at all, because we'll be busy with popular uprisings".

I think this makes it clear, to me and to Canadians who are listening, how consequential this decision really was to maintaining the solidarity of the allies against Russia and maintaining a strong sanctions regime.

I understand, Minister Wilkinson, that you were in regular talks with the foreign minister of Germany on this issue at that time, so I'll begin by directing my question to you.

The information that you were getting from Germany at the time, was it concerning to the point that it may have risked the solidarity and the unity of the allied group that we had worked so hard to help pull together?

• (1325)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: The short answer is yes. I cannot overemphasise the depth of the concern on the part of the Germans, but also on the part of the European Union, with respect to the potential implications associated with their effectively not being able to access natural gas.

The German energy minister, Minister Habeck, who is also the vice-chancellor of Germany, reiterated that to me on many occasions. I spoke to him almost every day for several weeks.

It wasn't just limited to the Germans. It was also the Commissioner for Energy of the European Union, Ms. Simson, who underlined this very strongly in the discussions that we had. I will also tell you that in the conversations we had with the United States, they reflected and shared the concerns about the divisions that could end up undermining support for Ukraine, which would be in nobody's interest.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you very much, Minister.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Maybe—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: I have a question for you as well, Minister Joly.

This week, some rather troubling reports appeared in *The Globe and Mail* on Canada's treatment of Ukrainian and Canadian personnel at its embassy in Kyiv. The safety of our personnel is obviously paramount to both of us.

I'd like to give you an opportunity to clarify for the committee how Canada supported its personnel in Kyiv. Please feel free to answer my previous question, as well.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I'll give a brief answer to your previous question.

While Minister Wilkinson was in talks with Mr. Habeck, Germany's minister of economic affairs, energy and climate protection, I was in contact with the German foreign affairs minister, as well as my foreign affairs counterparts in the EU and the U.S.

That's how we operated. We were in unanimous agreement on the approach, in other words, not giving President Putin any excuse or justification. As for the idea that Russia was using energy to blackmail Europe, we wanted to devise a unified approach with our allies, and that's what we did.

In response to your other question, as foreign affairs minister, I have a moral obligation to ensure the safety of locally hired staff and Canadian diplomats abroad. Thank you for asking me about this. I want to reiterate before the committee that the Government of Canada was never informed that Canadian diplomats and locally hired staff in Kyiv could be in danger because their names appeared on a list. I think it's imperative to make that absolutely clear, because we are talking about the lives of people we work with, and I take decisions like these extremely seriously.

• (1330)

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you.

[*English*]

I have perhaps one final question. It's for the deputy minister of global affairs, who I believe is on the line.

Deputy, are you aware of any information suggesting that staff at our embassy in Kyiv were targeted by Russian kill lists, as reported by *The Globe and Mail*?

Ms. Marta Morgan (Deputy Minister, Foreign Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development): Thank you for that question—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Madam Bendayan. That is your time.

Mr. Bergeron, you have the floor.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Chair, can the witness be allowed to answer the question with a yes or no?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): We have a very short time with the minister, so I'm going to keep it very tight.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: A yes or no answer.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): You can submit your question in writing to the clerk, if you like.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Chair, I don't mind giving Ms. Morgan a moment to answer yes or no.

[*English*]

Ms. Marta Morgan: Mr. Chair, we're not aware of any list specifically targeting locally engaged staff at our embassy in Kyiv.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First of all, I want to reiterate the fact that I still believe that the decision the Government of Canada made was not an easy one, and I said that when we met to request this study. It is much too easy to just condemn the Canadian government for this decision, despite how unfortunate and potentially harmful it may seem to many, the Bloc Québécois included. I imagine the Canadian government was in an extremely difficult position, and that's what the ministers have told us. This was an incredibly difficult decision to make—I don't deny that.

I would like to thank the ministers for being here today and answering our questions.

It is most unfortunate that Canada found itself in this situation. I realize that the only person literally laughing it up when this occurred was Vladimir Putin, back in the Kremlin. Everyone obviously recognizes that it would have been better not to wind up in a situation like this.

Nonetheless, it is what it is. I don't want to come across as a purveyor of paranoia, but I think it's important to point out that Russia will most definitely be paying close attention to what we are doing here today.

Any outward display of disagreement, whether between parties in the House of Commons or allies, would be very unfortunate, indeed. The most important thing is, and remains, unity against Russia. With that in mind, when the Government of Canada announced that it was granting the permit to export the turbines to Europe, two of the things we called for were tougher sanctions against Russia and more assistance to Ukraine on Canada and Germany's part.

Are those things Canada is seriously considering?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Thank you for your question, Mr. Bergeron.

There is no doubt that our objective is—and will remain—a stricter sanctions regime. As you saw this week, we announced more than 40 new sanctions against individuals involved in the atrocities committed in Bucha.

More sanctions will be announced soon. We will keep introducing sanctions every week or two, just as we have done since the invasion began. To date, we have imposed 1,600 sanctions.

We are always very keen to work with the opposition parties. As you know, I had a conversation with you this morning, as well as with Ms. McPherson and Mr. Chong, to see how we could work together to strengthen the sanctions regime. After all, as you pointed out, we are all united in our concern for Ukraine.

We must show tremendous unity on this issue because Russia is keeping a very close eye on everything having to do with Ukraine, especially in Canada.

• (1335)

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Minister, I hope you can assure us that we will see tougher enforcement of the sanctions regime, so it's more than just lip service. We hope that assets will actually be seized and, where appropriate, sold to help Ukraine.

The Government of Canada's decision is temporary and revocable. Our understanding is that the waiver covers up to six turbines for a period of two years.

Can you confirm that?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Yes, I can confirm that. By the way, if the committee members would like a copy of the permit, I would be happy to oblige.

After numerous discussions between myself, Minister Wilkinson, and German, European and American government officials, we made the decision to grant the permit for the six turbines, so the entire contract. That was done so that President Putin couldn't exploit the situation and play with one, two or three turbines.

By allowing all six turbines to be returned to Germany, not Russia, we wanted to prevent President Putin from using the situation as an excuse.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: We would certainly appreciate it, Minister, if you would send a copy of the permit to the committee clerk.

I have one last question for you, unless I have time for more.

The permit is revocable, so under what conditions could the Government of Canada decide to revoke the permit?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Of course, any such decision would be made in co-operation with our allies.

I can also say that the Government of Canada has no involvement in the business relationship between Siemens and Gazprom, so it will also be up to Siemens to decide—

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry to interrupt, Minister. I have to move on to Ms. McPherson for her six minutes.

Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Ms. McPherson, you have the floor.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much to both of the ministers for being with us today and for answering some of my questions prior to this meeting. I appreciate your time.

Like my colleague from the Bloc, I appreciate that this would have been a very difficult decision for you to make.

I want to start today by asking some questions about the turbines and the sanctions regime writ large.

As much as we've heard from Minister Joly that we have 1,600 sanctions in place, I think Canadians are mostly concerned about whether our sanctions are working. I say this because the sanctions don't matter—it doesn't matter how many sanctions there are or who's being sanctioned—if Canada can choose to waive those sanctions or if those sanctions aren't being enforced. If the sanction regime isn't working, it doesn't matter how many sanctions we have or what we're sanctioning if we're not following through on them.

All of us here want to do everything we can for the Ukrainian people. This has been one of those moments in time when I have seen members from all parties work so hard to make sure that Ukrainians understand that Canada and Canadian parliamentarians want to support them.

To start, Minister Joly, the thing that keeps popping into my mind is that this whole decision was based on the idea that there is any trust or belief that Putin would, in fact, continue to provide gas to Germany. We have seen him weaponize energy already and we have seen him weaponize food. There are 40 million people around the world who are at risk of starvation because of Putin.

He lies. We know Putin lies. We know he is not going to act in good faith. We know he is not going to follow the rules.

Why call the bluff, as you say, when realistically, he's already told us and the world what he intends to do. We already knew the bluff was there. What we've done is weaken our sanction regime and weaken Canada's stance standing with Ukraine, and yet we haven't helped to get gas to Germany.

My question to you is very straightforward. Will you cancel the waiver for the other turbines immediately?

• (1340)

Hon. Mélanie Joly: The goal, of course, is to work together amongst allies to make sure that we are united and strong when taking decisions, because, really, Canada in this context is in-between Germany and Ukraine. Our goal was really to make sure that we could all be united.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I understand that, Minister Joly.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I'm getting to that.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Do it quickly though, just because you know how little time we have.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I know, I know.

Our goal is not to.... Like you said, because Putin is lying and we don't trust him, we don't want to give him any form of justification or pretext. That's why we're calling his bluff. That's also why we want to make sure that he doesn't use the number of turbines as an issue. It's one permit, one time, and it is done.

Ms. Heather McPherson: You will not be waiving it, then.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Now, of course, our goal is to make sure that, should Siemens and Gazprom take a different commercial decision, of course the Government of Canada will take stock of that decision.

Ms. Heather McPherson: At this point, you're leaving it in the hands of the Russian Federation and Siemens to make a decision on whether or not the Canadian sanctions will be waived.

Can you tell me, Minister, why is the turbine still in Germany? Why is it still there?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: That's up to the Germans and the Russians to answer. Our goal was to send the turbine to Germany.

Also I will say, while this is obviously something that has attracted a lot of attention, Jonathan and I are actively working with Germans and Europeans to find solutions for Germany as they're decreasing their reliance on cheap gas.

Ms. Heather McPherson: It's very important that we do that, and I appreciate that. Before I run out of time—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: From 56%, I think they're now at 26%, and they need to decrease it even more.

Ms. Heather McPherson: I'm going to talk to the ambassador about that.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Yes.

Ms. Heather McPherson: In the meantime, I have some questions about the sanctions themselves. As I mentioned, Canadians want to know if the measures your government is taking are having

the desired effect. I've put questions on the Order Paper. I've asked questions in the House of Commons, and I can't get responses. In fact, the response I got back from your government was appalling. Global Affairs Canada basically said that because the data was not complete or may not be complete, the department refused to share even a partial list.

I had to, in fact, raise a question of privilege in the House of Commons, because my job as a parliamentarian to hold you to account was impossible to do. What I need to know is how many assets Canada has seized to date. When will we be able to get that information? How do we know how the sanctions are being determined? Who is working on this, and where is this information? How can we get it?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Heather, I think your questions are extremely valid because, obviously, it's important not only to have a sanctions regime but also to be able to implement it.

The information we have is the information that was made public through the RCMP, who are not under Global Affairs Canada but are implementing the sanctions. At this point, the latest information in June was that around \$120 million worth of assets had been frozen and that \$289 million in transactions had been blocked as the result of the sanctions.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Were those specifically under paragraphs 4(1)(b) or the 4(1)(a) of the Special Economics Measures Act?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I'm sorry; I didn't hear you well.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Were these seized under paragraph 4(1)(b) of the Special Economics Measures Act, or were all the sanctions and responses issued under the broader paragraph 4(1)(a)?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ms. McPherson.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Marty, may I just finalize on that?

Heather, I don't have that specific information, but we can provide that to you.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you, Minister.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Minister.

Beginning round two, we have Mr. Bezan for five minutes.

Mr. Bezan, you have the floor.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank Ministers Joly and Wilkinson for joining us today.

I have to say that I am very disappointed and embarrassed that Canada has been outplayed and outmanoeuvred by Vladimir Putin and the Russian Federation. We keep talking about calling Putin's bluff, but we have to remember that Putin is always playing chess, and it seems like the Government of Canada is playing checkers.

I believe that returning the turbines is the thin edge of the wedge that will undermine our entire sanctions regime, because what's going to happen the next time Russia is pushing for something and we have to call his bluff?

I want to ask Minister Joly if she looked at any analysis of the impacts this decision will have on Ukraine.

• (1345)

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Thank you, James.

Of course, we take into account Ukraine's reality when taking any decision. That's why Minister Wilkinson and I had contact with our counterparts. I even spoke to Dmytro Kuleba yesterday, and he didn't raise the issue of the turbine when we had the discussion. The question was much more about Ukraine's grains getting out of Odessa, and making sure that there's more financial support for Ukraine directly as Ukraine is dealing with a currency that is obviously affected by the war, so making sure we and other allies provide more financial support. At the same time, we also talked about military support and you saw what the—

Mr. James Bezan: Okay, so let me—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: —Minister of Defence announced today about the resumption of Operation Unifier.

Mr. James Bezan: I welcome the resumption of Operation Unifier. I think it's necessary, but I'll also say this—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Thank you.

Mr. James Bezan: —do you realize that this year, so far, Russia has only been able to generate about \$95 billion from European gas sales? Last year, it was over \$524 billion in sales to Europe. Do you realize, Madam Minister, that Gazprom is over 50% controlled by the Russian government and that a couple years ago Gazprom had net revenues of over \$123 billion U.S.?

That means that \$62 billion is going back to Russia because it owns over 50% of the company, and we know that over 45% of the Russian Federation's budget is from oil and gas revenue. Did you consider that the dollars Gazprom is going to get will go back to the Kremlin and will help fuel Putin's war machine, such as by buying more AK-74 military rifles, which go for about \$800 apiece, or buy more cruise missiles and all the other artillery that's then fired into Kyiv and around Ukraine, which has already been estimated to cost over \$80 billion? If we're going to give them \$62 billion more, how much more damage is that going to entail for Ukraine and how many more of their lives are going to be lost?

I want to know how many Ukrainians have to die because of this Liberal government's enabling of Gazprom to put more money into Putin's war machine?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Can I take that question?

I think, Mr. Bezan, you actually misunderstand a lot of the things that were going on—

Mr. James Bezan: Not at all, Minister Wilkinson.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: The Ukrainian government actually proposed an alternative route for the gas to flow through Ukraine—that was their proposal. That would have had zero impact on the dollars that accrue to Russia, because it still would have been Russian gas flowing through the alternative pipeline. At the end of the day—

Mr. James Bezan: Let's say this, Minister Wilkinson, as the minister responsible for natural resources, you're also responsible to make sure that we get more gas from Canada to replace that natural gas coming from Russia.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: —if you're saying you think all Russian gas should be cut off from the European Union right now, then you need to be able to explain to the Germans and the French and the Italians how they're going to survive the winter. It's very easy to make those kinds of comments.

I would say—and perhaps you can put this on the record—

Mr. James Bezan: So then I expect that—

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: —if you're saying that the Conservative Party would not have returned the turbines, I think it's important for Canadians to understand that that's the position of the Conservative Party of Canada. Is that the position?

Mr. James Bezan: I think what you just mentioned is that Ukraine had another option, so why didn't you fulfill that option and sit on the turbines? Will you make the decision to actually—

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Because we actually did our due diligence, Mr. Bezan.

Mr. James Bezan: No, no.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: We actually worked with the International Energy Agency to see how viable that option was, and it was not viable in terms of flowing the amounts of gas that would be required. It would actually require that we have faith in Russia that they would [*Inaudible—Editor*] the gas flows—

Mr. James Bezan: Minister Wilkinson, Minister Joly, let me ask you this question—

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: If you did your diligence—

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Chair.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: —on this question, Mr. Bezan—

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Chair, could I have the floor, please.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: —you would know that was not a viable option.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Bezan, you have the floor for 10 seconds.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I would say, James, that you didn't answer Jonathan's question.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

I would just say this, they're going to try to talk over me, Mr. Chair, they don't want to answer the questions.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: No, you didn't answer the question: What is the position of the Conservative Party?

Mr. James Bezan: I want to know how many more—

I'm the one asking the questions here; you guys are the witnesses.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry, Mr. Bezan, your round is up.

Mr. James Bezan: I'll just say this: How many more atrocities are you prepared to witness in Ukraine because of the extra dollars you guys are putting into Putin's war machine?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: James, first and foremost, we're all united—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry, Mr. Bezan, your five minutes is up.

Mr. Sarai, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

My first question is for Mr. Wilkinson.

Were alternative pipeline routes through Ukraine considered, as were being proposed by Ukrainian officials, according to reports?

• (1350)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Thank you for the question, Randeep.

Ukrainian officials did propose an alternative route for pipelines running through Ukraine itself. We reviewed that option by the Ukrainian government with technical experts from the International Energy Agency. We also discussed it with the European Union and Germany. The issue was complex. It involved the consideration of a number of technical issues.

The bottom line is that the flows that could be expected to move to Germany through the pipelines that run from Russia via Ukraine would be significantly lower than what Nord Stream, when operating at or close to full capacity, can move, and in fact significantly less than what flowed through Nord Stream in 2021.

In addition to the technical limitations, there were two other difficulties. One was that you would have to believe that Russia would be willing to flow significant incremental gas flows through Ukraine. Given that Russia has already reduced flows via Ukraine, and it stated that its view is that the technical capacity of the pipeline is actually only a third of what the Ukrainians believe it is, the likelihood of Russia doing this is not high.

Also, for Germany and other European countries, let's be clear: They currently rely on gas from Russia. The idea of essentially enabling the shutdown of Nord Stream 1 and relying completely on pipelines that run through what is presently a war zone would come with enormous risks for their economies and their citizens.

So yes, we looked at it, and at the end of the day, we deemed, and the International Energy Agency deemed, that it was not viable.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Thank you, Minister Wilkinson.

Deputy Minister Morgan, can you please reiterate whether Global Affairs Canada was aware of any kill list that targeted locally engaged staff working at the Canadian embassy in Ukraine?

Ms. Marta Morgan: Just to re-emphasize what Minister Joly said earlier, we take the security of all of our staff at our missions abroad extremely seriously. We're constantly monitoring the security situation and communicating regularly with staff, including our locally engaged staff.

We are not aware of any list specifically targeting locally engaged staff at the Canadian embassy in Kyiv. We've maintained constant communication with that locally engaged staff since before Russia's invasion of Ukraine and subsequently. We continue to take many actions to ensure that they can work safely, they can work remotely, and they maintain their strong connection to our embassy and are able to deliver the vital work they do on behalf of us.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Thank you, Deputy Minister Morgan.

Minister Joly, have any of Canada's sanctions against Russia been designed to be punitive in terms of any humanitarian needs of either the Russians or any of the neighbouring countries, such as Germany, or are they designed to economically and militarily sanction Russia only? When it comes to food supply and medicine, what has Canada's position been...or the energy needs of those in Russia or around Russia?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I would say a couple of things on that. First and foremost, the sanctions are really to make sure that we're putting maximum pressure on Russia and Putin's regime. That's why at this point we're at 1,600 sanctioned entities and individuals.

What we've been clear with in the G7 is that since Russia is weaponizing food... Heather referred to the 40 million lives at risk of hunger and famine right now. We work amongst the G7 to make sure that our sanctions are not affecting the exporting of grain and food to different Middle Eastern countries—Lebanon being an example, and Egypt—or African countries such as Senegal, etc., or Asian countries. This has been of paramount priority for the G7. There have been many occasions where we have reiterated that the sanctions regimes were not... The fact that there was a food crisis was not linked to sanctions but rather linked to Putin's war of choice in Ukraine. That is a message that the Prime Minister and I clearly stated not only at the Commonwealth but also following the G7 and NATO. I also did so at the UN.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Thank you, Minister Joly.

Chair, do I have time for another question?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): You have 22 seconds.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Wilkinson, can you tell us what Canada is doing to support its European allies to transition away from Russian energy?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Sure. We announced that we were expanding production of oil and gas by 300,000 barrels by the end of the year. We are setting up working groups with the European Union and with Germany to focus on both liquid natural gas opportunities and hydrogen opportunities as they look to both displace Russian sources and to move on the energy transition to address domestic energy security and climate change.

• (1355)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Bergeron, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Wilkinson, I'll come back to Ukraine's proposal a bit later, because I'd like you to tell us more about it.

According to media reports, a number of experts have said that the Siemens turbines were not absolutely necessary in order for the Nord Stream 1 pipeline to function effectively and that suitable alternatives were certainly available so that Russia could supply Germany and others with gas.

Did your department take those considerations into account? Could other turbines have replaced the Siemens turbines? Lastly, do you believe that Russia has no backup turbines?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: No. Six turbines are used for the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, and some replacement turbines are, of course, used when there are problems or to service a turbine.

The turbines currently used on this pipeline are from Siemens, and a maintenance contract has been established with Gazprom.

When we discussed this concern, we wanted to—

[English]

We wanted to remove the excuse that Putin had for why he was looking to essentially reduce gas loads, which was that he did not have access, in his view, to the turbines.

At the end of the day, if we returned the turbine and gas loads returned to higher levels, that would be a very good outcome. At the end of the day, if we returned the turbines and that did not affect gas loads, it essentially would be calling Putin's bluff. He cannot blame Canada and he cannot blame western Europe for the fact that there are no gas loads there. That maintains the solidarity of the alliance, and that was the context in which we made the decision.

[Translation]

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Mr. Bergeron, allow me to add a comment to what Mr. Wilkinson just said.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Unfortunately, that's the two and a half minutes.

Our next round is Ms. McPherson for two and a half minutes.

You have the floor, Ms. McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

These are very short rounds.

Minister Joly, I'm going to ask some questions now about the embassy staff in Ukraine.

We have heard that the deputy minister was unaware of any specific kill lists. However, were you aware of intelligence briefings from the Five Eyes that said embassy staff may be included on lists—not specifically, but may be included?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I never had that information, Heather.

I think we need to get to the bottom of the story, because I think Canadians need to know. Of course, I want to make sure that we shed light on this story, so—

Ms. Heather McPherson: I'm sorry to interrupt.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I'll get to that.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Will you release to the committee the correspondence? Will you share the emails, the memos and the notes between Global Affairs Canada and the diplomatic staff in Ukraine? Will you share that with us so we can play our role as parliamentarians?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Yes. My goal is definitely that you can all play your role as parliamentarians. I think that, since this is intelligence information that is linked to war right now, my suggestion is that, should parliamentarians be entrusted with it, we could definitely have the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians study this issue. Of course, I would make myself available, because it is very important that Canadians know that the Government of Canada was there to protect not only Canadian diplomats but also locally engaged staff.

Ms. Heather McPherson: You didn't get information from the Five Eyes, which is quite worrying because we would hope that some of that information would be available. More importantly for looking forward, as you've mentioned, we know that this happens, because there was a memo put in place by Stephen Harper in 2014 that denied locally engaged staff a duty of care.

Will you immediately rescind that 2014 memo and issue a new memo stating that Canada does have a duty of care towards locally engaged staff, so that this kind of betrayal never happens again?

• (1400)

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Heather, in the context, of what was happening in Ukraine, we went above what was technically the duty of care. We wanted to make sure that since lives could be at risk because the threat of invasion was real and imminent, we offered Canadian locally engaged staff to come to Canada. Some have come, and some have decided to stay in Ukraine.

We also offered them work outside of Kyiv, even though the Canadian diplomats had left. Also, we offered them—

Ms. Heather McPherson: But it is worth noting that that didn't launch until a month after the embassy closed and the other staff were evacuated.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ms. McPherson. That's the end of your round. I'm sorry to interrupt.

Mr. Genuis, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Thank you, Chair. I'm going to follow up on The Globe and Mail story about the locally engaged staff at the Canadian embassy.

Minister, the sources for the Globe story are three separate Canadian diplomats with direct knowledge of these events. Now, you've offered a very qualified denial of the story. You said that you were not aware of kill lists that specifically named Canadians, but that was not the question and that was not The Globe and Mail story. Their story was that Canadian embassy staff were likely on lists and that the Five Eyes briefed Canadian officials that Ukrainians who worked for western embassies were likely on the list, and further, that the Canadian embassy made a decision not to pass that information along.

Minister, to be very clear, is The Globe and Mail story in your view correct or not?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: What I can tell you is that I didn't have that information, my team didn't have that information you heard, the deputy, the department didn't have that information. So we need to get to the bottom of this—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Sorry, could you just clarify, what do you mean by “the department didn't have that information”?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: We had no information—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Do you mean no employee of the Canadian government had this information?

Who's “we”, though?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: We.... That's me, my political staff and Global Affairs Canada according to what the deputy has just mentioned. We had no information regarding the fact that there were lists specifically targeting Canadian diplomats and locally engaged staff in Kyiv.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: But that is not the question. The Globe and Mail story said that Five Eyes gave a brief to the Canadian embassy that it was likely that Ukrainian nationals who were locally engaged staff working at western embassies were likely on the list.

Can you please just give us a clear answer? In your view, is The Globe and Mail story—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Garnett, what I can tell you—

Mr. Garnett Genuis:—true or false? Is The Globe and Mail story true or false, yes or no?

Hon. Mélanie Joly:—is that we knew, and this is public.... What I can tell you is that indeed—and the Americans made that intelligence public—there were some lists specifically targeting Ukrainian people in Ukraine and, of course, we were preoccupied with this targeting.

In the context of having any information regarding Canadians being on these lists—Canadian diplomats, and locally engaged staff—we had no information regarding this. That is why it's really important that Canadians be clear on that, because of course it is about the Government of Canada's responsibility towards not only the people who work for us but also people who are serving us while we are in Ukraine.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you, Minister. I asked a clear question. You didn't provide an answer.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: No, I answered. I provided a very clear answer.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Minister, I have the floor. We had three diplomats speaking to The Globe and Mail, potentially at some risk to their own careers to speak out—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I would be very interested in having that information—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: And let me finish, Minister. Yes, I'm sure you'd like to have the names of the diplomats who spoke to the Globe—

Hon. Mélanie Joly:—because I think it's very important we get to the bottom of this story—

Mr. Garnett Genuis:—and Minister, I've asked you—

Hon. Mélanie Joly:—because you can be sure, Garnett, that this is—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Chair, could you call the minister to order?

Minister, I'm speaking.

Hon. Mélanie Joly:—something that I take very seriously. This is a life or death situation—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: It's my time. Yes, Minister, and you—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Genuis, you have the floor.

Hon. Mélanie Joly:—and as a minister and a human being, I'm very concerned to make sure that we do the right thing.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: The Five Eyes gave a briefing, Minister, and you won't tell us whether you have that information.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: And so Garnett, I'm sorry—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: —and now you're trying to take over the time, Minister, despite the chair's direction.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: No, I'm not trying to take over the time.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Minister, you have not answered the question—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I'm presenting to you what is the moral decision, the right moral decision—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: It was a clear question that I asked you, which was whether or not The Globe and Mail story is correct according to your information. You chose not to answer it and I think most Canadians—

Hon. Mélanie Joly: According to my information, I don't agree with the facts that are stated—

• (1405)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: —will conclude that that story is accurate and, frankly, it is disgraceful—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: A point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Yes, Mr. Bergeron. You have the floor for a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: I hate to have to interrupt my colleague, but I thought the main focus of this meeting was on the permit to transfer the turbines to Germany.

I know the issue of relevance has been interpreted fairly broadly, and I think that has been the case so far. However, I would like to get back to the heart of the matter, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): That's a very good point, Mr. Bergeron.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Chair, I have my hand up on a point of order as well.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Is it on the same point of order?

Ms. Heather McPherson: It is, yes.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Please proceed, Ms. McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate your comment, Mr. Bergeron, but I do just want to highlight that the members of the government had brought this issue up during their questions already, so I think it is fair.

I would like to see, obviously, a little bit more decorum within our committee so that we are not speaking over each other. If that could be managed, Mr. Chair, I think that would be great, but I do think it is reasonable for us to ask these questions. They are relevant and timely because, of course, the government has had an opportunity to ask those questions already.

Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): As chair, of course I would like people to stay on topic, although historically there's been a fairly wide latitude when it comes to these types of things. I do recall that, at the beginning of Minister Joly's statement, she said that we're here to discuss Putin's war of choice, so I'm presuming other topics related to the brutal invasion by Russia are in order.

Mr. Genuis, you can have the floor. I have you with one more minute left.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to provide a notice of motion to the committee,

The committee request that all documents in the possession of the government of Canada related to the assessed risk to non-Canadians employed at Canadian diplomatic missions in Ukraine at any time in the last 18 months be provided to the committee within 30 days of the adoption of this motion.

That's a notice of motion; I'm not moving it.

Additionally, just in the time I have left, I've been struck by all this talk about the allies, the alliance being united, and about how we need to have the alliance united.

Minister Joly, very directly, is Ukraine an ally of Canada in your view?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Of course.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: So the alliance is divided?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: No.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Ukraine is taking, very directly and sharply, a different position from Canada. Clearly the alliance is divided if Ukraine is part of the alliance.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: No, I don't think that the alliance is divided. I think we have to be steadfast in unity. Sometimes—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Is Ukraine part of the alliance, Minister?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Do you want me to answer your questions, Garnett, or do you want to cut me off every single time?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Minister, is Ukraine part of the alliance?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I'm answering your question.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: That's my question, Minister.

Is Ukraine part of the alliance?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Ukraine is an ally, and we are all standing with Ukraine. Our goal is to continue to support them.

Now maybe we'll be able to get an answer from you, because James didn't answer before. Is it the position of the Conservative Party of Canada that the turbine should not have been sent back to Germany?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: I would love to answer that.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Your round is up, unfortunately, Mr. Genuis.

Mr. Sorbara, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

It's great to see you, Marty, and great to see my colleagues today.

It's ironic that the Conservatives would bring up the issue and talk about division on a day when Canada announced that it would be sending 225 of our Canadian Armed Forces members over to Europe to help train the Ukrainian soldiers to fight Putin's unjust, unwarranted, unprovoked war against the Ukrainian people. We will always stand with the Ukrainian people shoulder to shoulder and side by side as we continue this journey together. It's going to be a long one.

I use the word “long” specifically because I do wish to talk about.... On July 16, 2022, Josep Borrell put out a blog. He is the high representative of the EU for foreign affairs and security policy. In his blog, he commented about the need for strategic patience—that is, the need for Europe to transition away from Russian energy dependence, whether it's oil and gas and even, to a certain extent, coal, and to transition to alternative suppliers, including many countries in Africa, the Middle East, including Kazakhstan as well, for some energy consumers, including Italy and Germany, and also for Canada to play a role in that obviously green transition.

I do wish to ask Minister Wilkinson first, how is Canada—I don't want to say “positioning itself”, because it has been doing so for many years—specifically aiding Europe on the LNG front in its transition to more secure, democratically oriented suppliers of energy and also to the transition to green? I'll then have a follow-up question for Minister Joly, please.

• (1410)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Thank you, Mr. Sorbara.

Let me start by saying that Europe is very focused essentially on moving away from Russian oil and gas. They've set a target that, by the end of this year, they will have found ways to move away from oil. Ideally, Germany has said that by the end of 2024, or thereabouts, they will be off Russian gas. Of course, they've made progress along the way.

Canada is certainly working with Germany and the European Union to be a part of helping them to do that, part of which is the expansion of oil and gas production that we are working on right now with the sector. We are on track with respect to the additional 300,000 barrels a day, which will help with increasing supply around the world.

As you know, we also have two LNG facilities in western Canada, one that is under construction and one that has been approved. Apparently construction will start next year, which will provide additional supplies into the market, which again will help with respect to displacing Russian gas.

We're looking at a number of potential sites in eastern Canada that could meet the window. Let's be clear: It has to be something

that can be done within the next three or four years, or it will be outside the window of what will help Europe this way.

We're also working with Europe on other transitional elements of it, which is hydrogen. There is enormous work going on in Newfoundland and Labrador, for example, on hydrogen that will be used to displace gas and eventually will displace gas entirely as they work towards the 2045 net-zero commitment that Germany has.

Canada is intimately engaged. As you know, the German Chancellor is visiting us later this month, and the head of the European Union is coming a month after that to have exactly these conversations.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Thank you, Minister Wilkinson.

I will now go to Minister Joly.

Minister Joly, for the last 48 hours or so you met with your German equivalent and counterpart. I would like you to touch on these discussions, because unity and the relationship between Canada and the European Union and Canada and Germany is so important. I would like to hear some colour on those conversations.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Thank you, Francesco.

I think there is a reckoning on the part of the German government that for too long they relied on cheap gas and that the conditions have completely changed and that we need to do more “friend-shoring” and work more amongst allies when it comes to energy and to critical minerals. That's why there is a lot of openness on the part of Germany to invest in Canada, to do so in a way also that is in line with our climate agenda. That is why it is, yes, about liquefied natural gas, as mentioned by Jonathan, and also a lot about hydrogen, and the type of hydrogen, so green hydrogen.

I think while Germany is looking at dealing with its own energy security issues right now, it is also looking at doing the green transition more quickly than expected.

At the same time, what is happening in Europe is that there is now a clear solidarity approach when it comes to dealing with Russian gas. All 26 members will be there to support a country should it have an energy capacity issue.

We are also working with the Americans to find solutions. The question of energy security has never been so central to our foreign policy. That's why Jonathan and I talk to each other pretty much every day.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Thank you, Ministers, for your work.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Mr. Sorbara.

I understand that the next round is mine, so I will pass the chair to our second vice-chair.

Mr. Bergeron, do you accept the chair?

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): Yes, of course, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Morantz, you have five minutes.

[English]

Mr. Marty Morantz: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

Minister Wilkinson, you keep asking what the Conservatives would have done. I'll tell you what the Conservatives would not have done. They wouldn't have done everything in their power over the last seven years to absolutely kill the oil and gas industry in Canada so that despots like Vladimir Putin could hold the European Union for ransom under circumstances like this.

Particularly since 2014, it should have been clear to your government that we should have been expanding our oil and gas exportation capacity. Canada has the most ethical energy industry in the world, yet we can't help the European Union, can we, because we're not in a position to export LNG to the European Union?

You weren't in a position to offer that. Isn't that right, Minister?

• (1415)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I think it's important that we look at the facts. If you look at the production levels of the oil and gas industry in Canada, they have gone up significantly over the last number of years. As you know, LNG Canada is in the process of being constructed, so is the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. There's been significant work to expand the role that Canadian oil and gas actually plays in the context of the world economy. But it's also important to remember that climate change is real; it's not going away. It is an existential threat to the future of the human race, and we need to ensure that we're addressing both of those together.

We are doing exactly that through the emissions reduction work we're doing with the oil and gas sector. I would say we've been doing exactly what it is Canadians should expect their government to be doing.

Mr. Marty Morantz: You're not answering the question: Wouldn't it be better to be able to supplant despotic oil like Vladimir Putin's oil with ethically produced Canadian gas? Basically your government—

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Are you asking about oil or are you asking about gas?

Mr. Marty Morantz: I'm sorry. Thank you for the clarification. In this case we're talking about natural gas.

We could have been in a position to supply natural gas to Germany, but we're not. If your government had taken that seriously after 2014, we would be in a position.... That's what the Conservatives would have done. The Conservatives wouldn't do what you're implying, to let Germans freeze.

The other piece of this is this—

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Was there a question in there?

Mr. Marty Morantz: No, it was just a statement.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Okay.

Mr. Marty Morantz: The executives at Gazprom basically came out and said—Mr. Markelov I believe said—it's not really about getting the turbine back, but about sanctions.

Chancellor Scholz has himself said that we're calling Putin's bluff. No one really ever thought this was about increasing gas supply for Germany, so it's not fair of you to imply that Conservatives would let Germans freeze in the cold. Who is letting Germans freeze in the cold? It's your government for failing to expand our export capacity for LNG.

Did you have any discussions with the German government about supplying them with Canadian LNG before you authorized the release of the turbines?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: We've been having conversations for a significant time, not only with the Germans but with the European Union as well, about how Canada can assist with energy requirements going forward. That could include liquid natural gas if it can fit within the time frame when they are looking to make the transition. It also certainly involves hydrogen, and there are many active proposals that are going on with respect to hydrogen.

Yes, we have active working groups with both the European Union and Germany.

Mr. Marty Morantz: How long will it take before we are in a position to provide Canadian LNG to the European Union?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: That is partly up to the government, and it's partly up to the proponents.

The proponents that are looking at the various facilities on the east coast have not yet come to the point where they've made some kind of an FIE, a final investment decision.

Mr. Marty Morantz: Do you think you feel strongly—

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: We are working actively with them to try to help them navigate through what may be regulatory issues. We are also working with them to partner with the Germans and the Europeans—

Mr. Marty Morantz: Do you think—

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Also, the private sector needs to bring capital to the table to ensure that they can put it work.

Mr. Marty Morantz: This is the last question, and then I'll pass the mike.

Do you think that, if you had started in 2014 after Mr. Putin made his intentions clear by invading and taking over Crimea, you would be in a position today to solve this problem for Germany and not have to send turbines to Mr. Putin so he can make more money to fund his war effort?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: No.

Mr. Morantz, you have to look at some of the fundamental economics. Russian gas was always going to be cheaper. Up until the Ukrainian invasion, it was an issue of Germany looking for the cheapest source of gas. Canada's competitive advantage with respect to gas is very much on the west coast, where there is a much shorter amount of transmission transport required. That is why LNG Canada has been moving forward over the last number of years. That is why wood fibre has moved forward.

Certainly energy security issues have changed the dynamic, and it's not just about cheap Russian oil and gas anymore. That is exactly what is motivating some of the interests on the east coast to look at opportunities in Germany.

Mr. Marty Morantz: I put it to you that it's your government's failed energy policies that will—

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I think fundamentally it's an issue of economics.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): Thank you, Mr. Morantz.

[English]

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Prior to this, Morantz and Wilkinson argue over each other, and it's impossible to make out what they are saying. I'd be happy to move forward on the subject of economics.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Stéphane Bergeron): I return the chair to you, Mr. Morantz.

• (1420)

[English]

Mr. Marty Morantz: May I have the chair back, Mr. Bergeron?

Thank you very much, Mr. Bergeron.

Mr. Zuberi, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Thank you.

Thank you to the ministers for being here today.

I'd like to first put forth a question to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

We've been hearing a lot of rhetoric from opposition members about what's been happening with respect to the turbines and the Ukrainian government.

Has this recent incident caused any true strain in the relationship between the Ukrainian governments and us?

Could you please give your comments on this?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I think we've been actively engaged with the Ukrainian government.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: We can't hear you.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Can you hear me now?

[Translation]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: We can hear you clearly in the room.

[English]

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Sameer, can you hear me?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Clerk, what is the status of our communication?

The Clerk: It's good now.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: It's good now?

The Clerk: Yes, thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Go ahead.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Of course, we've had many conversations with the Ukrainian government, and there is a very open channel of communication.

I speak to the chief of staff to President Zelenskyy, Andriy Yermak, very often. I also speak with my counterpart, Dmytro Kuleba, the foreign affairs minister. As you also saw, the Prime Minister has had many conversations with President Zelenskyy.

Of course, this was a very difficult decision. Some of you have heard that, and I've said it many times. I truly feel it and believe it because Jonathan and I spent a lot of time on this issue.

That being said, we announced something very important today, which is the resumption of Operation Unifier with 225 CAF members going to train Ukrainians as they're fighting a very existential war.

We will continue to have strong sanctions and to make sure that we send heavy artillery. We also want to be there with humanitarian aid and to provide the right support to Ukrainians in these difficult times.

[Translation]

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Thank you.

I'd like to ask you a second question.

You mentioned the importance of keeping the alliance together in response to the Russian invasion.

Can you talk about the challenges you foresee as we enter a new phase of the war?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Thank you for the question, Mr. Zuberi.

I think we have to make sure that there is no fatigue in terms of supporting Ukraine during this war.

We already know that the news about Ukraine is still important, but it is not as important as it was at the beginning of the war. There are other issues we have to deal with. So we need to make sure that Canadians are still interested in this issue and that they stay informed. The same is true for citizens of other countries, whether they are Americans, Germans, French or English. It is important that there be strong support within our democracies.

We will continue to work with Ukrainian organizations. I would like to welcome Ms. Chyczij, who is with us today. We will continue to work with the various regional organizations as well, and of course we will be there to support them.

As I mentioned earlier, there may be further sanctions and assistance announced shortly. We continue to provide our support.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Thank you, Madam Minister.

[English]

Minister Wilkinson, given the current situation in Europe and Canada's standing as a net energy exporter, with regard to our providing energy to become the energy provider of choice to Europe, what are we doing either unilaterally or with America to position ourselves as such?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Certainly, Canada is looking to ensure that we are participating in helping our European friends as they transition off Russian oil and gas. I spoke earlier about the incremental 300,000 barrels of oil and gas that we committed to work with the industry to ensure that that is achieved by the end of the year, and we are on track to do that. We are working on LNG opportunities on the east coast, and we have a couple of opportunities on the west coast that will also help with increasing supply in the world.

We're also very focused on hydrogen, which is going to be the energy carrier of the future as we move to transition to address the climate issue while ensuring that we actually have reliable sources of energy. Canada is blessed with the opportunity to produce hydrogen in different kinds of ways—derived from natural gas, derived from electricity and electrolysis—in a manner that we can be a hydrogen superpower to the world as we move forward. We are looking at all of those things, the short-term opportunities to assist and the longer-term opportunities to be a dominant player on a go-forward basis.

• (1425)

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Thank you for that.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Minister.

It looks like we have time for one more five-minute session.

Mr. Genuis, you have the floor.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: No, I think the Bloc....

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: A point of order, Mr. Chair.

I don't think it's our turn.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Okay.

[Translation]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Perhaps it's the Green Party's turn?

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

This is the advice I've received from the clerk. Perhaps the clerk could clarify.

[Translation]

The Clerk: For the second and subsequent rounds, the time allotted is five minutes for the Conservative Party, five minutes for the Liberal Party, two and a half minutes for the Bloc Québécois, two and a half minutes for the NDP. The Conservative Party and the Liberal Party will then have five minutes each.

There will be a third round, and the Conservative Party will have five minutes.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: So the next person—

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: We are currently in the third round.

The Clerk: No. We finished the second round.

As I was saying, the second round was in this order: the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, the Bloc Québécois and the NDP. Then there was the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party.

We continue with the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and so on.

This is in accordance with the routine motion adopted at the first meeting.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: So we're now at the Bloc Québécois's turn.

The Clerk: No.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Yes.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Is it the Bloc that has the floor, Mr. Clerk?

[Translation]

The Clerk: The speaking order is as follows: Conservative Party, for five minutes. Then, Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, NDP, Conservative Party, Liberal Party.

Then, we'll continue with the Conservative Party.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Genuis has the floor, correct?

[Translation]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Clerk, we've started the third round. So I don't really understand your reasoning.

The Clerk: It's not reasoning. I'm relying on the motion that was adopted at the first meeting regarding the speaking order.

Here's how a round of questions goes: the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, the Bloc Québécois, the NDP, the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party.

Then, we start again.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: If I may, Mr. Genuis was given five minutes after Ms. McPherson's turn.

Five minutes were then allocated to the Liberals, five minutes were allocated to Mr. Morantz and another five minutes were allocated to the Liberals. Therefore, I would normally have the floor for two and a half minutes now.

I am indeed following the order that you just mentioned. There were two successive five-minute rounds for the Liberals and the Conservatives.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Okay, do you know what? We're down to five minutes. It's 2:28. If the ministers would indulge us by staying for five more minutes, let's do two two and a half-minute rounds, one for Mr. Bergeron and one for Ms. McPherson, and that would cap off the ministers' meeting. Does that work for everybody?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: That's fine.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Minister, we started five minutes late. I wonder if we can just finish the third round. I think it is Mr. Bergeron's turn, but I just wonder if we can finish the third round.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I have a hard end of when to leave. I can stay for an extra couple of minutes to finish the two-and-a-half and two-and-a-half minutes, which I think is fair, because the Bloc and the NDP didn't get to ask anything in the third round—but I do have a hard end.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Bergeron, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First of all, I would like to point out to my colleagues that interrupting each other and overlapping times gives the interpreters a lot of trouble. So I would urge my colleagues not to do that for the rest of the meeting.

Mr. Wilkinson, when you answered my question about the different types of turbines that could operate in the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, you ended by talking about the unit.

However, retired General Rick Hillier warned that this decision could weaken the western sanctions regime, and even the common front.

Hungary is already saying that sanctions are counterproductive. The country, which stands to be rewarded with increased deliveries of natural gas, has also opposed the European plan to reduce gas consumption.

On the one hand, isn't this a first breach in the common front of western nations?

On the other hand, I would like you to go back to the Ukrainian proposal, which would have had the advantage of ensuring the supply of gas and oil for Ukraine while at the same time making it possible, if there had been a common front of all European countries, to force Vladimir Putin to decide whether he would continue to supply Europe or cut it off completely.

• (1430)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: You've asked me a lot of questions.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: It's just that I only have two and a half minutes.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I would like to say that it's very important to support unity with our allies and to support the Ukrainian people. We have taken steps to ensure we support Ukraine.

You mentioned Mr. Hillier, but you may have forgotten the other two people who were there, Wesley Clark and David Petraeus. They supported Canada's decision. They, like me, have said that it is very important to remain united with our allies so that together we can support Ukraine.

That is exactly what we did in making this decision.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you.

Ms. McPherson, you have the floor for the last two and a half minutes. Proceed.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I'm going to ask some very quick questions of Minister Joly. I don't know that we got the clarity that we needed with regard to the embassy staff in Ukraine.

The Globe and Mail is standing by its reporting today. It spoke to Ukrainian staff, and this is what the Globe reports they said: "Ukrainian staff members—some of whom have returned to their posts in Kyiv—said that they could not respond to requests for comment because of an internal hunt to find The Globe's unnamed sources. Several said they were afraid speaking out would cost them their jobs."

I just would like yes or no. Is there an internal hunt to find these whistle-blowers at this time, Minister Joly?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: No, Heather, because there is no need for whistle-blowing.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you.

I don't think I got an answer on this when I asked this in the last session, but the second question is: Will you immediately rescind the 2014 Harper-era memo that denies locally engaged staff a duty of care, and issue a new memo stating that Canada does have a duty of care?

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Indeed, there's an issue with the Harper approach when it comes to duty of care, and that's problematic. We've seen it in the context of Ukraine. Therefore, what I will definitely do, in the context of addressing the issue, is to use the ongoing future-of-diplomacy-process to make sure that we study it and abide by our moral obligations to be there for locally engaged staff when the time arises.

Ms. Heather McPherson: To be fair, Minister, we don't need to study it; we could rescind that. You've already said that it's wrong, that it's a bad memo and a bad policy. You have the ability to rescind that policy right this minute. You could do that, and that would protect staff around the world who work for Canadians.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Heather, actually, it's in legislation from 2014, so obviously there would be a need to change that legislation. That's why we have to do it—

Ms. Heather McPherson: It's a memo, and you could do it.

I'm going to ask another couple of questions.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Yes, go ahead.

Ms. Heather McPherson: With regard to the sanctions—and I know it's so fast, I apologize—I have put forward a suggestion for a follow-up study to the 2017 committee study on Canada's sanctions regime. I think we're all very worried that the sanctions regime is not transparent and not enforceable and not being done properly. So I would like to bring the CBSA, the RCMP and national security folks before the committee to talk about the sanctions issues and to discuss the threats to Canadians and to our national staff abroad. I'm wondering if you would agree, given that there are so many problems with our sanctions regime, that an annual report—one of the recommendations from the 2017 study—would be a good idea.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: I haven't read directly the 2017 report. I will look into it. I look forward to talking to you about it for sure.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Minister.

Thank you to both ministers for your time and answering our questions today. It's very much appreciated.

We're going to suspend for a couple of minutes to do a sound check for Ms. Chyczij from the UCC. We will pick it up then.

Thank you and have a nice day.

• (1435)

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Thank you, folks.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you very much.

• (1435)

(Pause)

• (1435)

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): We are resuming the meeting.

We have with us a representative from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Alexandra Chyczij, president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, appearing virtually.

Ms. Chyczij, please proceed with your opening statement for five minutes.

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij (President, Ukrainian Canadian Congress): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity of addressing you on the 162nd day of the war in Ukraine.

Every morning since February 24, I have been checking my phone and giving silent thanks that none of my friends or family were killed overnight. After I check my phone, I ask myself, "What am I going to do today to end Russia's war against Ukraine?" Today what I am doing is testifying before you.

On July 28, Russian social media channels posted a video of a Russian soldier castrating a Ukrainian POW. The next day, Russian occupation forces in Olenivka murdered over 50 Ukrainian POWs. A week before that, the Russians bombed the port of Odessa from which grain was to be exported, and the week before that, the Russians bombed a shopping centre in Vinnytsia, and before that, Kremenchuk, Kharkiv and Mariupol. Evidence of mass rape of civilians—women, girls and boys—has been collected and documented.

In March, after the Russians retreated, mass graves of civilians were found in Bucha. I visited Bucha in June, and what I saw, I assure you, I will never forget.

I could go on, but suffice to say that we've all had a front seat view in our living rooms where we've witnessed the horror of what Russia is doing in Ukraine.

Since February 24, Russia has earned over a hundred billion euros in revenue from fossil fuels, and 60% of that came from the EU. This is untenable. This is the financing of genocide.

Today I ask you, members of the committee, the same question that I ask myself: What will you do today to end Russia's war against Ukraine?

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress asks that you do the following: call on the Government of Canada to revoke the permit that allows the ongoing servicing of turbines that enable Russia's terrorist war machine to function and to restore full sanctions against Gazprom.

Why do we suggest that? It's because it's absolutely clear that Russia contrived the Nord Stream 1 debacle to test the resolve of Germany, Canada and our allies on sanctions. We have failed that test. Germany and Canada did not understand what the test was. It's about sanctions, the unity on sanctions, not just on Nord Stream 1 but on the ultimate prize, Nord Stream 2. Putin has not given up on that.

When Chancellor Scholz says that he called a bluff, he called the wrong bluff. Nonetheless, he's received a response, and now the choice is clear: It's time to restore those sanctions.

As you know, the UCC opposed and continues to oppose the waiver of sanctions on Gazprom and, indeed, the waiver of any sanctions as they relate to Russia and its genocidal war in Ukraine. It's been the long-standing position of the UCC that seeking to accommodate or placate Russia only emboldens them. The Russian regime responds only to strength. We know this because of events in the past and by Russia's war against Ukraine in the present, and it will be borne out in the future as well unless we collectively put an end to this.

Mr. Sorbara, that journey can't be long, because too many Ukrainians are dying every day.

I submit to you that there is no reasonable justification for the continuation of the waiver, and there was none when the decision was first taken.

As you review the testimony before you today, I ask you to consider two things. Did the Government of Canada do everything possible to avoid lifting those sanctions? Did they leave any stone unturned before capitulating to what everyone knows was blackmail? Secondly, is there an ongoing justification to continue with the waiver?

I believe there were other options that Canada and Germany could have pursued, but it appears that they chose not to pursue them. First, we've already heard mention of the alternative pipelines through Ukraine and Poland. Now, that would have been a bluff worth calling to put that choice to Putin, but Minister Wilkinson has said that those were not a viable choice. Ironically, are they a better choice than the 20% flow rate that Gazprom has now reduced the pipeline to?

• (1440)

We should also note that those pipelines running through Ukraine are the only piece of infrastructure that Russia has not yet bombed. Ask yourself, why not?

There are also alternative energy suppliers on the global market. We have not heard any evidence on that point and it appears that Chancellor Scholz was interested in only one alternative, the continued supply of cheap Russian gas for two more years and through a Gazprom-owned pipeline, and not any other pipeline.

As for the continuation of the permit in light of what has transpired since July 9, we submit there is no justification. As was entirely predictable, Russia did not restore the gas flow and is now demanding further concessions. First, the papers weren't in order. Now the repairs are defective. This dance will continue forever and, frankly, I am very troubled by the ease with which the Government of Canada granted the turbine waiver. It does not instill confidence that further concessions won't be granted.

One of the most important lessons that history has taught us is that appeasement of aggressors and dictators does not work. It has the opposite effect: It emboldens them. Appeasement is what got us here in the first place after the west remained silent on Georgia, on Chechnya, Crimea and the Donbass, Syria, on Salisbury, and countless other blatant violations of international law by Russia.

As NATO secretary, Jens Stoltenberg, recently stated, if Ukraine loses, it's a danger for us: It will make Europe even more vulnera-

ble to Russian aggression. So even if you don't care about the moral aspect of this, you should care about your own security interest. He went on to say that we must pay. We must pay for the support, pay for the humanitarian aid and pay for the consequences of the economic sanctions because the alternative is to pay a much higher price later on.

Yes, we pay a price, but the price we pay as the EU and NATO is a price we measure in money. The price Ukrainians pay is measured in the lives lost every day. So it's time for Canada and our allies to finally take the upper hand in dealing with Russia and to say no to blackmail and stop responding to their demands.

Thank you for the time.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you very much, Ms. Chyczij.

Now we'll go right to Mr. Bezan who has a six-minute round.

Mr. Bezan, you have the floor.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank Alexandra from the UCC for appearing today. This is a very troubling time. It's embarrassing that the Government of Canada capitulated. I appreciate your thoughts about everyone in Ukraine and your strong advocacy on behalf of Ukraine here in Canada.

You talk about the sanctions regime. Do you believe that this is the thin edge of the wedge that could potentially topple the entire sanctions regime, with the return of the turbines, and do you believe that every time Putin wants to call his bluff—as Minister Wilkinson said—that Canada is going to be suckered in?

• (1445)

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: I think this is the first waiver of sanctions that we have seen. I think it is the thin edge of the wedge and the way to resolve it is to revoke that permit and show Putin that the west will not be toyed with.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

Now that more revenues are flowing back to Russia, or potentially could flow back to Russia with the return of the turbines, do you believe Canada should be increasing its military assistance to Ukraine as well as humanitarian relief?

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: We have always advocated for more and continued assistance to Ukraine. We are, of course, grateful for the support that the Government of Canada has provided to date, but the war is not over. The economic situation in Ukraine is deteriorating. They need more help and of course on the military front the Ukrainians must be allowed to win this war. They're prepared to fight our fight—the west's fight—and the least we can do is support them militarily.

Mr. James Bezan: So you would agree, or the UCC would agree, that military equipment, like sending the new sniper rifles that are sitting at PGW Defence in Winnipeg, should be purchased by the Government of Canada and supplied to Ukraine? Or would you agree that the armoured ambulances that we have on inventory that are about to be retired—there are 32 Bisons that are configured as armoured ambulances—should be sent to Ukraine to help save lives, or that the soon-to-be-retired light armoured vehicles that we have, the entire fleet of Coyotes and Bisons and M113s, track LAVs, which are all about to be retired, are things that Canada should be supplying right now to Ukraine, and that Canada has dragged its feet on this?

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: Mr. Bezan, I never thought that I would have to learn the language of war or understand military procurement. It pains me every day that I have to do that. I don't pretend to be a military expert. When we are asked these questions, we defer to our embassy in Ottawa to assist us in understanding what the needs of Ukraine are. All I can say is, if Canada has it, we should send it.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you.

When we're looking at the atrocities you laid out and we talk about the capitulation by the Government of Canada, aside from revoking the waiver and reversing this ill-advised decision, what should the Government of Canada be doing to ensure that those who are responsible for the atrocities and war crimes that we're witnessing are brought to justice?

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: We, of course, have the International Criminal Court that has taken steps and opened investigations. There is ongoing work with the Office of the Prosecutor. Personally, I would like to see Canada playing a greater role in the prosecution of war crimes.

We are blessed to have amongst us a prominent jurist, the Honourable Louise Arbour, who has direct experience in that. She has prosecuted a genocide in her lifetime. I would encourage the Government of Canada to assign Madam Arbour to that role to represent Canada in that effort.

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Chair, I think it's very unfortunate that we invited the UCC to be here for only half an hour when they are the leading voice of the Ukrainian diaspora and those of us of Ukrainian heritage who live in Canada, and when they are so knowledgeable on the crimes against humanity that are occurring in Ukraine and on what Ukraine needs and when they're in constant communication with the Government of Ukraine.

I'd like to move the following:

That the committee invite the Ukrainian Canadian Congress back to answer additional questions on the matter currently before the committee for an additional hour before Saturday, August 20, 2022.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): We have a motion on the floor. Does anyone wish to speak to the motion?

• (1450)

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Mr. Chair, my hand is up in the room.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Ms. Bendayan, you have the floor.

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, I think that it's very important to hear from the UCC. I'm certainly glad that they're joining us here today. I think it's a bit unfortunate that a motion was moved by a Conservative during the UCC's testimony, because it does take away time from this important discussion, and I think we should maximize the amount of time we have with the Ukrainian congress while they are with us. While I appreciate the suggestion, it could be something we deal with when we don't have witnesses before us.

I would move to adjourn debate on this motion.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I'm sorry, Mr. Clerk, but I'm going to need a little assistance from you on this. We have a motion on the floor for—

The Clerk: We have to vote—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): We have to vote on that motion.

The Clerk: To adjourn debate, we have to vote on the motion by Ms. Bendayan to adjourn debate. It's not debatable.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): I call the question, is that correct?

The Clerk: Yes.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): All right. I'm going to call the question on Ms. Bendayan's motion to adjourn debate on Mr. Bezan's motion.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 4)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): The motion has been approved and debate is now adjourned on Mr. Bezan's motion.

Mr. Bezan, you have roughly two minutes left in your round. You have the floor. Please proceed.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to go back to UCC to talk about the situation on the ground. Could they describe in more detail where Ukraine needs more assistance? Now that Russia is receiving potentially more revenues through Gazprom, how can Canada invest in Ukraine to help it win this war?

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: Again, hearkening back to my earlier response, I am not a military expert, but I do believe—

Mr. James Bezan: I'm talking not just about the military. I'm talking about the entirety, including the economy, humanitarian assistance, infrastructure, having a Marshall plan and things along those lines.

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: Of the avenues that have been pursued by the allies so far, I think where we could see more is in even greater sanctions. I don't believe that we have seen the "sanctions from hell" that President Biden forecast many months ago. They seem to be coming in spurts. I think they could certainly be more aggressive and more comprehensive.

On economic support, Ukraine has had to ask for a waiver of interest payments on the international debt that it owes. The contraction of the economy is forecast at something like 40%. Ukraine needs economic support to keep small businesses going. What I marvel at is the fact that there is any business or any economy functioning at all in these wartime conditions, so anything that we can do to assist....

On the humanitarian aid front, while Canada has welcomed, I believe, close to 50,000 Ukrainians in the last few months, there is ongoing support that can be provided to our allies in Europe, where the bulk of the displaced persons remain. They are reluctant to leave the continent.

● (1455)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Ms. Chyczij, I hate to interrupt, but there are other members. We have such a short time, seeing how fast half an hour goes by.

Mr. Sidhu is now up for six minutes. Mr. Sidhu, you have the floor.

Mr. Maninder Sidhu (Brampton East, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll be splitting my time with my colleague Francesco Sorbara.

Ms. Chyczij, thank you for being here with us today and for taking the time to share some of your thoughts and your statement in this very important meeting.

Ms. Chyczij, as you may be aware, just this week, Canada imposed further additional sanctions as we continue to stand side-by-side with Ukraine. There is no doubt that Canada will continue working with our international partners and allies to explore additional measures. As stated by Minister Joly, studies show that Russia has lost companies worth nearly 40% of its GDP as a result of the many sanctions imposed by Canada and our allies.

Given the significant volume of sanctions announced, it is sometimes difficult to compare. When it comes to sanctions against industries such as oil and gas and luxury goods, are you aware of any other G7 countries that have implemented measures as expansive as Canada's?

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: I do not have our comparison chart at hand. Our office runs that metric, and we can share it with the committee if you'd like.

One of the things that Canada could do that would do more than sanctions is declare Russia a state sponsor of terrorism. That would take care of a lot of the issues that we are talking about. It would remove state immunity from Russia and it would make it the pariah internationally that it deserves to be.

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: As you just mentioned, you've called for Russia to be declared a state sponsor of terrorism. It's a designation that Canada has only ever used against Iran.

To your knowledge, have any other G7 governments implemented similar designations against Russia?

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: That debate is ongoing south of our border. Our American friends, in both Houses, are considering a motion to do just that.

As Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker, said, "If Russia is not listed as a state sponsor of terrorism, tear up the list."

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: Can you speak to the importance of Canada's continued support for Ukraine with financial and military aid, and why it's important that Canadians not become fatigued as this war drags on?

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: It's a war that Ukraine is fighting for all western democracies. If Ukraine loses this war, as Jens Stoltenberg said, eventually that war will bleed out to Europe and beyond. We know that from Putin's statements. You've all read his manifestos, in which he foresees a reconstitution not just of the former Soviet Union, but of the Russian empire.

We know that the support of Ukraine's neighbours is particularly strong, because they know that all that stands between them and Putin is the Ukrainians.

Mr. Maninder Sidhu: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll now turn the floor over to Francesco Sorbara.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Thank you, Parliamentary Secretary Sidhu.

To the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, thank you for your testimony today.

Obviously, we want this war to come an end as soon as possible, and for Ukraine to have its territorial sovereignty and integrity protected and belonging to the Ukrainian people and no one else. Full stop.

In terms of the view of the world, our allies and working together, wouldn't you agree that it's important for Canada to continue working with our allies? You mentioned the United States. The United States came out and said they supported our decision on the turbines. The Europeans said the same thing. In fact, moving the turbines back over to mainland Europe will not impact the amount of funds that Russia collects. Those are done under a contract with Europe. MP Bezan alluded to this fact. I'm going to have to disagree with that. My understanding of how that works is that it would not actually allow Russia to gain any additional funds. I want to make that point.

Don't you agree that Canada has been working with its allies and with Ukraine? Even today, there was the announcement of the Canadian Armed Forces going over to the U.K. to continue to assist in the training of Ukrainian soldiers to defend their territorial integrity.

● (1500)

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: The Ukrainian Canadian Congress appreciates all of the assistance that Canada and allies have been providing, but on this point we respectfully disagree. We believe that this was a test of unity on sanctions. We believe that this has created a chink in the armour.

It's not too late to reverse that decision. It is a revokable permit. We call upon this committee to ask the Government of Canada to revoke that permit.

We have not heard what the Americans or any other allies have said since July 9, when we saw the result of the return of that turbine.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Chair, I've finished my line of questioning. Thank you.

Thank you for your attendance today, Alexandra. God's blessings and Godspeed to the people of Ukraine.

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Mr. Sorbara.

Mr. Bergeron, you have the floor for six minutes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First, I'd like to assure the representatives of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress of our full support.

The vote that took place a few moments ago in no way reflects that we do not wish to hear from you further, quite the contrary. I told the clerk and the chair that I felt that half an hour wasn't enough time to have an opportunity to speak with you.

Having said that, I don't think it's appropriate to bring a motion at the last minute to impose witnesses on committee members. I would be very much in favour, when we discuss the next witnesses, of calling you back to allow you to continue the discussion with us, especially since things may have changed in the meantime.

You know that the European Union, in all of its sanctions, has taken care to avoid having them in any way target energy supplies from Russia. It's a precaution—let's call it that—that Canada did not take when it decided to put its sanctions regime in place, so it ended up in the situation we're in.

Considering the fact that the European Union has taken care to avoid including in its sanctions any aspects that might affect the supply of energy from Russia, do you think that this precaution has the effect of invalidating any criticisms that the Canadian government's decision results in allowing oil and gas from Russia to be supplied to Europe, thereby feeding the Russian war machine?

[*English*]

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: Thank you, Mr. Bergeron, for the clarification with respect to the motion. I am always ready to testify before this committee and any other.

With regard to the EU sanctions, I believe the EU will reconsider its position, given that we have now seen Russia cut off Poland, Bulgaria and Finland because they did stick to the sanctions. When they were called upon to pay for Russian gas in rubles, they took a principled position, refused to do so, and Russia cut them off. I understand that Russia is now cutting off other countries and strategically cutting off other businesses and industries.

It is clear that Russia is now engaging in the continuation of the gas wars they have played for the last 30 years. Every time there was a political problem with Ukraine, they would cut the gas off to Europe so that the Europeans would pressure the Ukrainians. When speaking of unity of the allies, one of the principles of that is “noth-

ing about Ukraine without Ukraine”. The point was made earlier with Madam Joly that Ukrainians are allies as well, and there is no unity on that question with the Ukrainians. They object to the waiver of those sanctions.

• (1505)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: If we accept the Canadian claim that this permit has provided an opportunity to expose, I would say, Moscow's true motivations...

You heard from Minister Wilkinson about the possibility of moving gas through the Ukrainian pipeline, and you made it clear that this was the only infrastructure in Ukraine that had not yet been bombed.

Why do you think this infrastructure is, contrary to what the minister said, an interesting, plausible and valid option?

[*English*]

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: For the simple fact that it exists; there are pipelines through Ukraine and through Poland that are alternatives to Nord Stream 1.

If this is about the turbine, you avoid the question of the turbine by using one of the other pipelines. If the question is about sanctions, though, then you don't avoid the question. I think it has always been about sanctions and not about the pipeline or the turbine. Canada has allowed itself to be party to blackmail that resulted in a waiver of those sanctions.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Mr. Bergeron.

Now we have Ms. McPherson for six minutes, and that will bring us to the end of our meeting with the UCC.

Ms. McPherson.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Thank you very much.

I would like to thank our guest from the UCC, and just give my heartfelt thanks for the work that you and the entire organization has been doing over the last terrible, terrible months, as we see what's happened in Ukraine. I know that not only are you expected to be the voice of Ukrainian Canadians but you are also dealing with the horrific burden of what we are watching happen in Ukraine. Your bravery is admirable, so thank you for being here, and for your voice. Thank you for the work that you've done to this point.

I'm also very keen on having you come back and speak to the committee. I look forward to that opportunity.

What I'd like to ask are questions just about the sanctions regime itself. Yes, I think we can look at what happened with regard to the waiver and say that, basically, we've now set up a system where Germans aren't any better off for the weakening of our sanctions. Putin has very clearly used this as a tool to blackmail our allies and us. Now it has proven to have worked. Why would he not use the same system with regard to food, with regard to energy in other countries? He has, as we know, weaponized food to the point where millions of people's lives are at risk. Will he use this to chip away at our sanctions?

It's a big worry that I have. I just wonder, from your perspective, if that's something that you see, if you do have some worry about setting a precedent where we allow a man like Vladimir Putin to blackmail Canada and to undermine our sanctions regime.

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: Absolutely. That has been the position of the UCC since before the war began. We warned in the months leading up to the full-scale invasion that strong deterrence was the only way to stop an invasion. We called for arming Ukraine, for sanctions, before. Unfortunately, that only started to happen in the days leading up to the war. Canada only made the decision to send lethal weapons some 10 days prior to the actual invasion.

I urge you all to become historians, students of history, and understand who we are dealing with. Ukrainians, unfortunately, have lived with various versions of Vladimir Putin for over 300 years. We know exactly how the psyche works. Appeasement does not work with him. Only a strong hand will show Putin that the west means what it says. By caving on sanctions we are showing him our weakness.

• (1510)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Absolutely.

I'm sure you were watching while the ministers were here providing testimony for us. I did flag with Minister Joly that I'm very concerned about how our sanctions are being enforced, and the lack of transparency about them, so that parliamentarians and Canadians can see what is being seized, what those assets are. I've brought it up in the House a number of times. I've asked it in Order Paper questions. A perfect example is that we learned yesterday that the CBSA was able to stop a shipment of dual-use weapons to Russia, but that's the only one that they can tell us any information about. They can't release details about any other shipments.

We also know, from John Ivison's story on July 21, that Italian officials had seized Russian-bound drones sent via Canada and that the CBSA missed that shipment.

When we hear the government talk about the 1,600 sanctions it has in place, do you worry that it is performative, that this sanction regime is, in fact, a performative thing where it is saying the right things, telling us the sanctions are in place, but there is no way for us to check, no way for Canadians to know if they're working, no way for us to measure the efficacy of that sanctions regime?

Ms. Alexandra Chyczij: The UCC would certainly welcome greater transparency of sanctions regimes. Since 2014 the UCC called for the imposition of strong sanctions following the invasion of Crimea and the Donbass. We did not see anything particularly muscular coming from Canada. We urged, at a minimum, a mirror-

ing of what the Americans were doing and what the EU was doing. We certainly would welcome greater transparency.

Also, we would like to see a beneficial ownership registry in Canada so that we could see who owns what. The purpose of sanctions is to freeze those assets, but I think the next step—and we have the legislation in place now—is to seize them and sell them. That can only happen if we know what we're looking for. I think \$120 million of seized assets is probably just the tip of the iceberg of what is being controlled in Canada by Russians and their proxies.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Absolutely. I have heard from people who have said that it is very difficult for us to understand the shipping between Russia and Canada and that, in fact, the transparency of the Russian Federation is higher than the transparency of the Canadian government on that. I think there's a lot of work that the Canadian government could do to make sure that's in place, and I agree with you that we 100% need to understand who is benefiting from it.

I know these corporate relationships are very complex, and it will take some specialists to do that. I look forward to working with the minister and working with all my colleagues to make sure that happens.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Ms. McPherson.

That brings us to the end of our meeting with the UCC.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: I have a point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Mr. Genuis, you have the floor on a point of order.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wonder if you can clarify something. The committee passed a motion specifically wanting to hear from the UCC. We are hearing from them, but for an unprecedentedly short period of time. You've heard from Conservatives, NDP and Bloc that we think the time is too short. The UCC is an extremely important organization representing Ukrainians across the country in a very challenging context with the war going on.

Could you clarify for the committee, given the motion that was passed, who made the decision that we should hear from them for only half an hour today? Was there any rationale given as to why it's such a short amount of time for the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, given their importance and given the explicit wish of the committee?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you, Mr. Genuis. I'm not sure it's a point of order. It's more a matter of discussion and the negotiations that should be taking place with the committee.

Having said that, as you're aware, I am the vice-chair, and I subbed in at the last minute. I was not privy to discussions that went on with respect to the timing of the visit by the UCC. I share some concerns that the time is simply not enough, and it would be nice if the committee could agree before the end of this meeting....

It was clear to me in the motion that we were supposed to have more than one meeting. I think it's right in the motion to hear from witnesses. I think we should all be able to agree on that, so we can move forward.

I leave that for the discussion of committee members. That would be my recommendation.

• (1515)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Chair, to clarify, you as vice-chair were not consulted by the chair—

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

You have clearly stated that what Mr. Genuis is doing right now does not fall into the point of order category. I would invite you as chair to please continue on with the meeting.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): On the meeting, I don't think it's a point of order, although I think it would be reasonable to have more meetings. That is what was discussed in the motion.

We are at the end of our first meeting. We are going to adjourn. I understand that new login details will be issued by the clerk. We will reconvene at 3:30 eastern time.

Thank you.

The Clerk: The new link was sent at 1:18 to all members.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Marty Morantz): Thank you very much, Mr. Clerk.

The meeting is adjourned.

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