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# Standing Committee on Public Accounts

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Chair: Mr. John Williamson





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Monday, April 24, 2023

• (1105)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick South-west, CPC)):** Good morning, members. We have a busy agenda this morning.

[Translation]

I now call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 59 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The committee is meeting today to discuss its work.

[English]

I'm just going to turn briefly to the COVID-19 vaccine contract.

PSPC produced the contracts to the committee unredacted, as per the motion adopted on Thursday, April 20, 2023. I know some of you have already had an opportunity to go in and begin your review.

I have just a couple of notes here. The committee received, from Public Services and Procurement Canada, all the contracts on Thursday, April 20, 2023, as ordered by the motion on March 23, 2023. There was a little delay, but I think it was in good faith to get the documents translated and to us in an orderly fashion. I will say that the department did work with me and the clerk to update us on timelines, so I appreciate the department's work to produce those documents in a timely manner.

PSPC sent a correspondence—signed by Lorenzo Ieraci, assistant deputy minister of policy, planning and communications, on behalf of Public Services and Procurement Canada—to the committee on Thursday, April 20. This correspondence was distributed to members earlier today.

As decided by the committee, the said contracts will be made available to members only under the supervision of the clerk.

I'm going to remark on a few things this morning.

Before you go in, I'm going to ask members, urge members and tell members to surrender their phones and any electronic devices outside the room, like any kind of budget lock-up, so that there are no problems with that. This is for your safety, as well as to ensure that we are in compliance with the motion.

As you know, in the room you'll have access to all seven contracts in addition to amendments that were made to said contracts. You're permitted to mark them up and take notes while you're in the

room. Those notes should remain behind. You'll have access to them when we have our in camera meeting on May 1.

Going forward, either the clerk or another member of his team is going to be in the room as well. If you have a winter coat, there are hangers outside. However, in the room, limit your personal belongings as much as possible. You can have them there—except, please turn over electronic devices.

The clerk is available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day, but I would urge you to set a time with him if you're able to do that. It just makes things a little easier, but of course you're not required to. It seems that somehow he's available here, and an assistant is available almost around the clock.

I think that's it. We're all honourable members here, and we know the motion we've passed. I'm reminding you of these things just to ensure there are no errors.

I'm now going to turn things over to Mr. Desjarlais, who has a motion. However, before I do that, I want to highlight a letter, which I think you've all received now, from the Auditor General this morning in response to both Mr. Blanchet, leader of the Bloc Québécois, and a request from the Trudeau Foundation. The Auditor General, as you'll see in this letter, which is available in either official language, is not convinced that a review by her office is appropriate. You can read the letter. I'm not going to try to redact it here.

Mr. Desjarlais, could I turn things over to you to address the motion you presented? We'll see where we go from there. You might want to read it—I know it's short—just so that members can consider it in light of this letter from the Auditor General.

• (1110)

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP):** I'm just looking for it now. Okay, I think I should have the one—

**The Chair:** I can read it, if you like.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Sorry?

**The Chair:** Would you like me to read it?

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** I have it here. It was sent by the clerk in both official languages. I would like to read it in relation to, of course, our discussion last week, Mr. Chair. Is that all right with you?

**The Chair:** Are you going to read the motion or the letter?

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** I will read the motion:

That the committee calls on the Auditor General of Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency to investigate the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation and that the committee believes it is in the public interest to prioritize this investigation.

**The Chair:** Madame Sinclair-Desgagné, you have the floor.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to suggest an amendment to the motion.

In light of the response from the Auditor General of Canada to the requests from my right honourable leader, Yves-François Blanchet, and another gentleman whose name I can't recall and who is from the foundation, I suggest that "the Auditor General of Canada" be removed.

The motion would therefore read as follows:

That the committee calls on the Canada Revenue Agency to investigate the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation and that the committee believes it is in the public interest to prioritize this investigation.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'll just repeat the exact motion in English now with the proposed amendment:

That the committee calls on the Canada Revenue Agency to investigate the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation and that the committee believes it is in the public interest to prioritize this investigation.

Is there discussion around this?

First I'll go to Mr. Desjarlais, and then I'll go to Mr. Genuis.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to committee members. This is a discussion we have been trying to have since last week. I want to thank Mr. Genuis for tabling the original motion to allow us to begin this important discussion.

It's no secret that what we're seeing and what's happening with the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation, given that it's a foundation supported by public funds.... Given the events that have transpired with the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation, it is important and in the public interest to have an investigation into its finances and donations, and in particular into any possible misdealings the organization may have had.

It is important that the Canada Revenue Agency do this work, because it is, of course, an agency that has not only the capacity and tools but also a mandate to review aspects of this work that maybe the committee, in some aspects, wouldn't be able to do. I believe, given the amendment that was just noted by my colleague from the Bloc Québécois, it is important to make more narrow the role of the CRA in this work.

I accept the amendment, given the letter from the leader of the Bloc Québécois.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Genuis.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Thank you.

Before I make my comments, I have a question of clarification for the clerk. The motion on the floor is the motion that was put on notice on April 18 in its entirety. Is that correct?

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

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Okay, and the amendment is to remove the phrase "the Auditor General and" so it would just be the committee—

**The Chair:** It's "the Auditor General of Canada and".

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Excellent.

The Conservatives are supportive of the amendment and the amended motion.

I want to underline our view that public hearings at committee are critical on this issue. It doesn't have to be as many hearings as we originally proposed last week. We're open to reasonable compromises given the various other issues the committee could be looking at. We feel it is reasonable to ask the Canada Revenue Agency to undertake this investigation, although it will ultimately make that decision independently.

We can't know for sure how the CRA will respond to this request, but it is reasonable for us to make this request. In the meantime, the role we have as parliamentarians for getting to the bottom of these kinds of issues should very much include a certain number of public hearings as well. I want to signal that while we want to be collaborative and we support this motion, we will be moving another motion that we think gets to the heart of the issue, which is the need to have public hearings here in Parliament that involve members of Parliament doing their job to get to the bottom of this. We need to have those hearings as well.

• (1115)

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

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.):** Our side supports what Mr. Desjarlais has put forward with the amendment from the Bloc. I thank both members for being collaborative here.

**The Chair:** Do I have approval, then, for the amendment from Madame Sinclair-Desgagné?

I'm seeing head nods and yeas all around. I'm going to call that passed.

I'm now going to ask for a recorded vote on the motion as amended, which I will read:

That the committee calls on the Canada Revenue Agency to investigate the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation and that the committee believes it is in the public interest to prioritize this investigation.

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 10; nays 0)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I will send a note, as the committee chair, to the CRA, informing them of this motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Genuis, you have the floor.

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

As foreshadowed, I would now like to move another motion:

That, given that the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation received a \$125-million taxpayer funded payment in 2002, the committee hold 3 hearings into the situation at the Trudeau Foundation and report its findings to the House.

Colleagues will recall that last Monday I spoke a bit about the importance of this investigation into the Trudeau Foundation. At the time, we presented a detailed motion that included specific suggested witness names and called for a somewhat broader study than the one we are proposing today. Debate was adjourned on that motion.

I'm hopeful that this motion will find the favour of the committee. Recognizing that there are competing priorities from different members, I think three meetings provide us with a good opportunity to look at this issue while at the same time leaving space for other things, and we'll start the work of identifying what we can identify in the context of those public hearings.

The background of this story I think members and the public know generally, which is that as soon as Prime Minister Trudeau took office, the foundation that bears his name started receiving substantial amounts of new money in foreign donations. The foundation said they had returned certain monies and that turned out not to be true. Subsequently, this provoked a kind of governance crisis in the board and mass resignations.

I think it's important to add today, in light of some new revelations from *La Presse*, that the Prime Minister has made claims about his relationship—or lack of a relationship—with the foundation that bears his name that have turned out not to be true. The Prime Minister has repeatedly told the House that he has had no connection, no involvement, with the foundation in the last 10 years, despite the fact that he is listed as a member of the foundation in their latest annual report.

In particular, *La Presse* identified that six months into his premiership, there was a meeting, an event, hosted by the Trudeau Foundation that happened in the office of the Prime Minister's own department. It was attended by the president of the Trudeau Foundation and was attended by five deputy ministers. It seems that not only the Chinese Communist Party but also multiple senior members of the bureaucracy felt that it was in their interest to have a warm relationship with the Trudeau Foundation at a time when a Trudeau was Prime Minister, at a time when that foundation was benefiting from significant amounts of foreign donations and while the Prime Minister was still listed as a member of the foundation.

This poppycock about a firm wall between the Prime Minister's Office and the Trudeau Foundation is, needless to say, hard to take. The Prime Minister's Office and PCO are in two separate buildings. There's a bridge between them, and I think that's maybe an apt metaphor for the relationship that may have existed between the Trudeau Foundation, itself a public institution in statute.... It's not a regular charity. It's a public institution in statute that has received massive injections of taxpayers' money.

I think all of these facts suggest that (a) the Prime Minister of Canada has been less than truthful in his explanation of events and (b) three public hearings at the public accounts committee is the

least we can do to try to help the public understand and get to the bottom of what took place.

Thank you.

● (1120)

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

Mr. Fragiskatos, you have the floor.

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos:** Chair, I never doubt, of course, the sincerity of my colleague, but as someone who I think follows regularly the work of parliamentarians in committees, he will know that at the ethics committee, there was a motion passed to bring to the fore what he's calling for.

I think we have a lot of work to do on this committee—work that we had already committed to—and the motion we voted on at the outset of this meeting still allows us to live up to our responsibilities as parliamentarians by asking the Canada Revenue Agency to examine issues relating to the foundation. I wouldn't want to see a situation where the work of another committee is also taken on here. The ethics committee is going to look at this. I think we need to move on and work on the issues we had already committed to as the audit committee of Parliament.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I have a speakers list going here.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Sinclair-Desgagné, you have the floor.

**Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We received a letter from the Auditor General, who provided very reasonable grounds for not being able to provide further details about what happened and what is happening at the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation.

Even though another committee is looking into this, I feel other stakeholders will need to analyze this very important issue.

I'd also like to point out that, as a result of the motion we just passed, if our request to the Canada Revenue Agency to conduct an audit were to be done properly, it would still take several months. The public has a vested interest in knowing more about the situation as soon as possible.

This motion is necessary for the public to have access to detailed answers and information, which will be presented to the committee, to understand what really happened at the Trudeau Foundation in terms of relationships, missed reimbursements and possible interference.

The public deserves to know this, and we are their representatives. In my opinion, this motion was necessary.

Thank you.

● (1125)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Shanahan, you have the floor.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank committee members for passing the motion introduced this morning.

I believe this motion addresses my colleagues' concerns. The Canada Revenue Agency has all the means and all the tools to investigate and identify issues, whether it's an inappropriate situation, donations or the foundation's structure.

However, I'm concerned about our committee's approach, because we proceed differently than other committees. We work closely with facts and current events. Therefore, we need to let the agencies do their work, including the Auditor General of Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency. We will review their work afterwards, as they are responsible for answering the questions.

Our committee does not conduct baseline studies, and rightly so, because other committees that are more concerned with current events can answer questions of a political nature.

The committee can analyze procedures calmly and with some detachment, to ensure that the process is working properly. Otherwise, we ourselves will be interfering, as it were, in the activities and investigations of the officers appointed by Parliament to do this kind of work.

Therefore, I don't agree with this motion. I believe that comes as no surprise. We need to be careful about this sort of thing, otherwise we're going to undermine the Standing Committee on Public Accounts' mandate.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Mr. Genuis, you have the floor.

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

It is always inspiring to see the gymnastics that my colleagues across the way engage in to try to avoid accountability. I'm sure none of them are being intentionally misleading, but they may have received some faulty information.

The ethics committee is not undertaking anything like a stand-alone study on what happened to the Trudeau Foundation. They are merely including—from what I understand—two witnesses from the Trudeau Foundation to comment on their broader look at election interference. That is very different from what I think is required here, which is an investigation of what happened to the Trudeau Foundation. No parliamentary committees conduct investigations. They seek to answer important questions about public expenditure and the activities and responsibilities of government institutions.

If we're going to see another one-and-a-half-hour gymnastics show from the government's side, then so be it. I'm very proud to be supporting this motion, and I think it's appropriate. It fits squarely within the mandate of this committee and the work required to get to the bottom of what happened at the Trudeau Foundation.

• (1130)

**The Chair:** I'm looking for speakers if there are any.

Mr. Desjarlais, you have the floor.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank my colleagues for another important motion.

I think there are three principles for me that we should answer in this discussion today. One is—which I accept—the principle that committees are masters of their own will. In particular, issues that are the most important to the members are the most important to me, as a matter of fact, given our collegiality.

We just passed a motion that I think is a good one. It calls on the CRA to conduct an investigation. However, I take the point the Bloc Québécois is making with regard to the great amount of time that report would take.

I'm more partial to an independent investigation by the CRA for this kind of work. It's dealing with, in particular, very detailed financial statements, I'm sure. I would prefer that the CRA investigate that. I'm sure all of you have agreed to that.

However, to understand it more correctly, Mr. Genuis, the work that we would be conducting in these meetings would be to see whether these members—or at least the members who agree to come here—have some kind of knowledge of these donations in particular. Do you think that would be the nature of the questions we'd be asking? Or would it be more in relation to how they operate, similar to ethics? What would be our objective here? Would it be to narrowly look at the \$125-million taxpayer-funded payments, or could we make that broader in some respect? I need some clarity as to what we would be doing in this particular setting versus what the CRA would be doing.

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

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** I'm happy to address that question.

The motion was intentionally written in a way that gives members broad latitude to ask the questions on their minds. I think that's suggested by the reference to the \$125-million payment. It's a given that it's context. The substantive part of the motion is that “the committee hold 3 hearings into the situation at the Trudeau Foundation and report its findings to the House.”

I think a lot of questions need to be answered, broadly speaking, about the policy that underlies the relationship between this foundation and the Government of Canada. It bears the Prime Minister's name. It held a meeting in the office of his department. It had this spike of all kinds of foreign donations—many of which it has retained. It is listed in a statute as a government institution, but it's also a charity.

There are, I think, a lot of issues behind the structure and vulnerabilities associated with a foundation like this. There are a broad range of questions that I think we can and should ask regarding the vulnerabilities around the effective use of taxpayer money, accountability, oversight, risks of foreign interference, what relationships do or do not exist between ministers and the Prime Minister, how the continuing power to appoint members of the foundation that sits in the hands of the Minister of Industry could be exercised or not, and the kinds of conversations that do and don't happen between the Prime Minister and the members of his family who sit on the board. One sibling sits on the board. One is a member.

These are, I think, all different kinds of questions we could ask. I think there will be a lot of ground to cover in three hearings. I think members will have the latitude they wish to have.

**The Chair:** Yes, Mr. Desjarlais.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Thanks to the member for that explanation.

I think it is reasonable when you put it in the light that we have the opportunity to ask broader questions. Even for the government members, I think it could be valuable as well to maybe better highlight the work the Trudeau Foundation does, because I think that's a question that many of the members have here, and it's the reason this amount of taxpayer funding is there.

The only concern I have is just that, in my own mind, there are competing interests in what items we debate here. In particular, we know that the situation with the lack of clean water on first nations reserves is deplorable, and we've recently heard that it's become significantly worse. I hope that we can find a way to strike a balance between the existing studies we should be doing, the things we should be reviewing, and the amount of time that's allocated here.

I'm not sure if the member would be open to amending the total number of meetings we could potentially have to maybe one or two, just to make it a little more lean for us, because we don't have that much time before the summer.

Maybe, Mr. Chairman, you can briefly talk about what our calendar looks like. I'm curious as to how we can fit this in here, and it has a bearing on whether or not I agree with the total number of sittings.

• (1135)

**The Chair:** I'll respond to that briefly, and then Mr. McCauley is next on the speakers list.

We have a busy calendar, but we could make room for these meetings. I don't see our time limit as an obstacle. My view is that this committee has work to get done, but as issues emerge, the committee should decide what its priorities are.

I've allotted time on the calendar for the outstanding reports we need to look at, as well as time to review the reports as they're produced by the team that supports this committee. I'm comfortable that we can consider these additional dates and still be on track for the committee to produce the reports we're required to do.

Mr. McCauley, you have the floor.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Thanks, Chair, and thanks, Mr. Desjarlais. You bring up a very good point.

I'll let Mr. Genuis speak about the number of days for this study, but on the question of clean drinking water, we just recently received a progress report. In our time here, we've often seen that every AG report is a repeat of things that haven't been properly addressed from past reports, so I think it would be perfect timing.

I'm getting a tiny bit off topic here, but I certainly support one or two days specifically for that progress report so that we or replacement MPs are not sitting here five years from now—

**The Chair:** Mr. McCauley, I'm just going to pull you back into this motion. We'll be happy to discuss additions to the other additions—

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I am done.

**The Chair:** —to the calendar, but I'm just going to raise relevance here.

Mr. Desjarlais, do you want the floor back? You had a proposal. I don't know if you want Mr. Genuis to ask about it or if you want to make an amendment, but I'll turn the floor back to you.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** I just wanted to see what the...

I may end up just voting in favour of this motion. The only concern I have is the number of days, just in reference to the other studies that I'm hoping to have here. Mr. McCauley mentioned one of them that we've been trying to work together on and trying to get some clear answers on. I'm just looking at the number.

I agree with the nature of it and the request. I think we should be bringing these folks in, but would we have any flexibility on the number of hearings? We can do one to three, I'm saying, or perhaps one or two. Is there a critical loss if we don't bring them in for three days?

**The Chair:** I'll let Mr. Genuis respond to that, and then I might have a comment.

Go ahead, Mr. Genuis.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** I'm happy to “reason together”, to quote *The Godfather*. Three is already fewer hearings than I wanted. I could live with two; I think one would be too few.

Maybe another way to do this is that instead of defining the number of meetings, we define the number of hours of hearings, because if we say the number of hours of hearings and a witness is available for one hour, we give the chair flexibility to have something else happen in the same meeting.

Another option would be that if a witness is able to get an extra hour, we could do three hours of hearings together, so maybe we could say as a compromise that the committee would hold five hours of hearings for the situation, which would add up to two-and-a-half normal meetings.

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

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** What's so funny, guys?

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Three meetings of five hours....

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** It's four and a half hours.

My initial motion had, I think, all the witnesses we needed to hear from, and this would have been substantially longer. I feel that I've already come up with a compromise. You're asking me to meet you halfway again when I've already gone two-thirds of the way.

Anyway, Mr. Desjarlais, basically, because of the way votes will work on this committee, it comes down to you. I would strongly object to fewer than two hearings. Maybe if we define it by the number of hours instead of the number of meetings, we'll give ourselves and the chair more flexibility.

I won't propose an amendment. I'll leave it to you to propose an amendment, Mr. Desjarlais. In general terms, that would be the way I see this.

• (1140)

**The Chair:** Let me make a quick comment, Mr. Desjarlais. Then I'll turn it over to you.

One option is setting a number of hours. Members are aware that on Thursdays we are able to extend our hours as necessary. It's a perfect spot in the parliamentary calendar, because it's a low-usage time. If members prefer to set hours, whether five or six, I could endeavour to hold two meetings in that capacity, but I will look for your direction on that.

Mr. Desjarlais, you seem to have the decision here. Either it's the number of meetings—it sounds like Mr. Genuis is willing to meet you at two—or you can do hours—four, five or six. I'll turn it over to you, though.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Thank you very much.

Thanks to my opposition colleagues for striking a good balance for the work I'm interested in doing and the other work, of course, in trying to make sure that first nations people are best represented. I think striking a balance of two meetings is reasonable.

Kelly, you mentioned one meeting, but if we're all amicable to two, I would prefer one or two on this. I for sure want to have this happen, considering the comments made by Mr. Genuis. I'm in favour of voting for this.

We can maybe hear some comments from the government members, the Liberal members, on whether they'd be amicable to two meetings. I think it's reasonable considering that he did start at five. I think two are fine. Honestly, I think we can get to the work we need to do with two meetings.

I'd be prepared to move an amendment to Mr. Genuis's motion to move it to two hearings.

**The Chair:** Thank you. We have an amendment on the floor. The amendment is to move it from three meetings to two meetings.

Mr. Fragiskatos, you have the floor.

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos:** Chair, can I ask that we suspend the meeting for just a few minutes to consider this?

**The Chair:** Sure. Would three minutes be enough?

**Ms. Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.):** How about five?

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** How about five hours?

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

**The Chair:** I will suspend for five minutes.

• (1140) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1150)

**The Chair:** All right. Do I have a speaker?

Mr. Fragiskatos, you have the floor.

**Mr. Peter Fragiskatos:** I understand, Mr. Chair, based on conversations we have had across the aisle, that there is agreement on two meetings. Elected officials would not be invited. Family members would not be invited. In order to ensure we are doing what we need to do at public accounts and focusing on the issues tasked of us, we're not going to get into an extended discussion on witnesses at this meeting. That can be taken up at the subcommittee level.

I'm looking at my colleagues. I see nodding.

**The Chair:** On your second point about witnesses, I completely agree with you.

As for the first two, I'm going to let members speak to that.

Mr. Genuis, do you have comments? I just saw your hand go up.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Chair, I think in the spirit of compromise and from my firm conviction that these committee hearings need to happen, we are going to do two committee hearings regarding the Trudeau Foundation. At those two meetings, we will not be inviting elected officials or members of the Trudeau family. My personal view is that some questions need to be answered by those folks, but I also understand the reality that we have to come to an understanding here in order to allow these hearings to proceed.

This specific witness list should be discussed at the subcommittee with the caveat that, given those exclusions, we would certainly like to hear from everybody else who is important and not have any other exclusions. I am confident that the subcommittee can work in good faith to ensure that we are able to hear from the leadership of the Trudeau Foundation and get to the bottom of this, or get as far as we can in two meetings given those exclusions.

**The Chair:** Very good.

Go ahead, Mr. Desjarlais.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to thank my colleagues. I believe we have an agreeable motion and amendment. If members are prepared, I think we can go to a vote.

**The Chair:** I'm sure the clerk is pulling his hair out because we have several amendments to the motion. I'm going to try to unravel this.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** We don't need a vote. We can just proceed by agreement.

**The Chair:** Well, I'm taking Mr. Fragiskatos's remarks as an additional subamendment. I was going to begin with Mr. Desjarlais before I deal with....

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** On a point of order, Chair, could we not just proceed and have the minutes reflect the fact that an agreement was made?

**The Chair:** I have a clerk to manage this, just so we're in order here. Hold on one second.

I'm going to wrap all this up and we're going to have a single vote on it.

The motion will read as follows: That, given that the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation received a \$125-million taxpayer-funded payment in 2022, the committee hold two hearings into the situation at the Trudeau Foundation and report its findings to the House. Witnesses will not include any elected officials or family members.

• (1155)

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** That's 2002.

**The Chair:** What did I say?

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** You said 2022.

**The Chair:** I meant 2002, of course. I misspoke. Thank you.

Is that okay?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** It's "or Trudeau Family members".

**The Chair:** Pardon me. Yes. It's "or Trudeau Family members."

I'll read it again. I'm hoping the clerk will take notes so that I don't rewrite what I've said.

That, given that the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation received a \$125-million taxpayer funded payment in 2002, the committee hold two hearings into the situation at the Trudeau Foundation and report its findings to the House, and that the witnesses will not include elected members of parliament or Trudeau Family members.

I'm going to call a recorded vote on this even though I think there's agreement.

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 10; nays 0)

**The Chair:** Well, thank you very much.

Unless there are any comments that members want to make, I'm going to suspend the meeting in one second—I'll recognize you in a second, Mr. Desjarlais—and then we'll return to a line-by-line of one of the reports we have scheduled to report back to the House.

Mr. Desjarlais, you have the floor.

**Mr. Blake Desjarlais:** Mentioned in our last discussion on the motion was the importance of the progress report on first nations' water issues. I'm not going to table the motion today. I just want to give members a bit of a heads-up that I've consulted some of my colleagues here, and I think I'll be tabling a motion to that effect in relation to the number of meetings needed to review the progress report on first nations' water issues. It will likely be this week or next week. If any members have any input on that, I'd be happy to hear their input prior to the tabling of that motion.

Thank you.

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

This is all very timely. We're going to have a subcommittee meeting scheduled for this Thursday. If you could table that motion between now and then to give us an indication of what you're thinking, that would be very helpful for our planning. That way, I can consider it along with today's motion and future business.

With that, I want to thank all committee members for their collaborative work.

I will suspend for five minutes so we can go in camera. I'll be back with you all soon.

Thank you. We're suspended.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]





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