



House of Commons
CANADA

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

CHPC • NUMBER 054 • 1st SESSION • 38th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, September 29, 2005

—
Chair

Ms. Marlene Catterall

All parliamentary publications are available on the
"Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire" at the following address:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

Thursday, September 29, 2005

• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.)): I'm calling to order this meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

We have quite a lengthy agenda to get through, which doesn't necessarily need to take a lot of time, but there are a couple of things I think we particularly have to deal with, including the motions with respect to the CBC and the CRTC decision on satellite radio. We do need a decision on whether the committee wishes to review the appointments of the new chair of the board of CBC, Mr. Fournier, as well as the appointment of the new chair of the board of the National Gallery of Canada. We really need to let the Prime Minister's office know if we plan to review those appointments or not.

As well, I wanted us to get an update on work that was done over the summer with respect to our study on film, and there are a number of other items.

Would the committee be agreeable to disposing of the questions of the appointments first so we can let people know who need to know? Any comments?

First let's deal with Mr. Fournier as the chair of the board of the CBC.

Ms. Oda.

Ms. Bev Oda (Durham, CPC): I am wondering if the appointment of Mr. Fournier ties into the big question of the CBC. Couldn't it be considered as being expedited as soon as possible? I think we have to know who's in charge and enable the chair to undertake his role as soon as possible.

The Chair: Any further comments?

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): For the record, I would normally oppose any quick rubber stamp of anybody's appointment to the CBC. I'd like us to be able to review them. I feel in the situation we're in, we need some stability there. I would support passing this immediately. However, I'd like to have him come back. I'd like to meet with him, I'd like to hear from him, but I feel in this unprecedented situation I would support immediate—

The Chair: I don't think anybody is suggesting a quick rubber stamping. I think Ms. Oda is suggesting he be invited as soon as possible. We can take six months if we want to.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Well, I understand, but I feel it's important to get him in his position now. I think we're at a critical level with the CBC. So I would prefer that he be in his position ASAP, and I'm willing to hear from him after that. But I would make the motion that we get him installed.

The Chair: Okay. We will attempt then to have him Tuesday morning, if possible.

I'm sorry, I thought I was hearing a consensus.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): No, I wanted to speak after Mr. Angus. I agree with Mr. Angus's position. It think it is imperative that Mr. Fournier be put in his role as soon as possible in light of this crisis. However, until this lockout ends, what are we going to ask Mr. Fournier? Are we going to ask him about his qualifications? We don't know what his qualifications are. Are we going to ask him about what the vision for the CBC is? To me, that's getting away from the fact that we need this lockout over.

I'm also worried that by bringing him here we're going to put ourselves in a position to prejudice negotiations. I agree he needs to be installed. I would much rather bring him at a time when I'm not limited to questioning him on what he's done on his curriculum vitae, which is all very impressive and which we all know. I want to know what they're going to do about fixing things at the CBC. Again, I don't think it's appropriate to do that while there is a lockout and while negotiations are under way. I don't want to do anything to prejudice those negotiations.

• (1110)

The Chair: Ms. Oda.

Ms. Bev Oda: I would suggest that it may be futile to ask Mr. Fournier what his vision is because he could answer as a former member of the board. But in the role of the chair, I would suggest he would say that until he assumes that responsibility and gets in there as the chair, he may not have a clearly articulated answer. He would also have to be in that role as the chair to get the information he needs to know the impact, etc. I think the fact that the CBC has been without a chair for four months, and particularly at this time—even when the former chair stepped down, which was prior to any lockout—when the leadership should have been there in the role of chair and those responsibilities should have been attended to much sooner than this, it's not in the interest of the corporation to leave it without a significant role being fulfilled. We should expedite it, certainly having him before us, so that we do have the role of the chair being filled at the CBC.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mr. Kotto.

Mr. Maka Kotto (Saint-Lambert, BQ): In my view, Mr. Angus' proposal is relevant. As a resident of Quebec and as someone well acquainted with this environment, I can state that Mr. Fournier is not a newcomer to this scene. He knows what he's getting into. I think it would be interesting to hear what he has to say, particularly with respect to the six years during which Mr. Rabinovitch was in office, an era during which there were five labour disputes and three lockouts. It would be interesting to hear his take on the situation.

In the interests of clarity, I think it would be interesting to hear his analysis of the facts. Since there is some basis of agreement, I feel the most difficult issue to resolve will not be the negotiations. However, what should we expect? Will the agreement prove to be the network's salvation or will it result in its orchestrated demise? Questions will have to be asked as well, either of Mr. Fournier or Mr. Rabinovitch, about the network's initial mandate.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Chair, I like your suggestion of approving him and then having him here at our earliest convenience. I think it's absurd to suggest that our asking the new chair of the board about what his vision is for the CBC could somehow prejudice labour negotiations. This has been going on for seven weeks. It might go on for another seven weeks. It might go on for seven months, we don't know. But we need to know that we have a man there who has a vision for the long term for the CBC. It has nothing to do with labour negotiations; it has everything to do with where we're going with broadcast. Every day that is delayed, more and more questions are being raised. And people have a right to raise those questions.

Respectfully, I think there are some members who are hiding behind the fig leaf of collective bargaining rather than having him here and having Mr. Rabinovitch come to account.

So I would say I will approve Mr. Fournier, but I would like to have him come as soon as possible so we can hear his vision and understand where he would like to go with the CBC.

The Chair: Mr. Angus, just to be clear, you're suggesting that we write back to the minister so that the Prime Minister can be informed that the committee doesn't wish to review the competence of the individual to be appointed, and that the nomination can proceed. Then we invite him when he is the chair?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Then we invite him, and we can ask him about his vision for future direction.

The Chair: Okay.

I think Ms. Oda was suggesting that in fact we should have him here in terms of our limited mandate to review his competence and ability to perform the duties of the function.

Ms. Bulte has a third opinion.

• (1115)

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: I have nothing more to say.

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.): Madam Chair, I just want to be clear on one thing. Ms. Oda's motion is to have him come here. Is it after the lockout or no?

The Chair: No. The nomination has been referred to the committee. We may, under the Standing Orders, invite Mr. Fournier in for a meeting, or we may do it without him, to review his qualifications and competence to fulfill the duties of the position. It's up to the committee if you wish to do that or not. If we're not going to do it, we have to inform the minister and the Prime Minister so that the appointment can proceed.

Mr. Mario Silva: I guess what I wanted to figure out from you, Madam Chair, is whether I should amend her motion to say "after the lockout", or whether in fact by voting against her motion we can still invite him once the lockout is over.

The Chair: We can invite the chair of the CBC at any point in time. I think the issue is either we decide we're going to review the appointment now, and that means inviting him in, or we decide we're not going to review the appointment so that he can be appointed. I have heard a consensus that it's undesirable that the position be left vacant any longer. The only question is whether or not we want to interview him before the appointment is confirmed.

Do we actually have a motion in front of the committee on this?

Ms. Bev Oda: I don't think so, and I will make it as a formal motion, that we respond to the referral to committee of Mr. Fournier, nominated to become the chair of the CBC, as soon as possible, to review his qualifications, etc., and to enable the CBC to continue working with the position of chair.

The Chair: Okay. The motion is to invite Mr. Fournier in front of the committee so that the committee, in accordance with the Standing Orders, can review his competence and ability to fulfill the duties of the position.

Is there discussion?

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Madam Chair, does that mean that until he comes we're not appointing?

The Chair: Yes.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: So until he comes... I agree with Mr. Angus that he should be appointed as soon as possible. The only thing that differs is the question of when we bring him in.

Ms. Bev Oda: We could see him on Tuesday and report immediately after, and it's done.

The Chair: Or if it's not possible for him to come on Tuesday, then we could report that we're not going to delay it any longer.

Ms. Bev Oda: I would suggest that Mr. Fournier would make every attempt to appear in order to assume that role, particularly at this time.

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Again in an attempted compromise, if we could get an agreement from this committee that we would call him as soon as possible, I would approve him immediately; however, if we do not have that, then I will support waiting until we hear from him. But I would like to have him in that position immediately. If we can get him next week, then I would support his approval immediately.

The Chair: Okay. We have Ms. Oda's position. I think the only way to resolve this is to have a show-of-hands vote.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm sorry, I'd like to know, because I don't know how I'm going to vote yet: can we compromise on it? Otherwise, I have to vote—

The Chair: Are you suggesting an amendment?

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'd like to hear from people on this. Are we looking to get him in soon? If people don't want him in soon, then I would have to vote with Ms. Oda now.

The Chair: If this motion is adopted, I would take it as direction from the committee to have him here as soon as possible, and that means next Tuesday—if it's adopted.

Mr. Schellenberger.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC): This is too important a role to just rubber-stamp. My point is that I think he has to come. To say appoint him and then have him come in is counterproductive. I would suggest we have him here next week.

The Chair: Are there any other comments on Ms. Oda's motion?

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: I'm just going to respond to Mr. Schellenberger. This is not a rubber stamp. Mr. Fournier is very well known. He's an outstanding individual; he's outstandingly well-suited for this job. I don't think there can be one doubt about his qualifications to assume this role. I believe Mr. Kotto even said that, or implied it. So I don't think it's a rubber stamp. I just think it is important that the man be appointed as quickly as possible to the chair.

• (1120)

The Chair: On the motion, all those in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We will attempt to have Mr. Fournier on Tuesday. That's the first item on our agenda.

Now on the appointment of Mr. Sobey as chair of the National Gallery Board, are there any comments, any motions on that? Does the committee wish to invite Mr. Sobey? Can somebody please make a motion that we inform the minister?

Monsieur Lahaie is suggesting the following motion: That the committee waive further consideration of the nomination of Mr. Sobey for appointment as chair of the board of the National Gallery of Canada. Is there any discussion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: I think that takes us back to the motion that we left in discussion—Mr. Angus' motion to invite the president and CEO of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and, I gather, acting chair in front of the committee.

Then we had an amendment by Mr. Boudria—who was signed in as a member of the committee at our last meeting—that the motion be amended by adding after the word “lockout” the following: and that such a meeting be held following the end of the lockout.

Is there any need to discuss the amendment any further? On the amendment, those in favour, please? The amendment is that it be held following the lockout.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: On the main motion as amended, which makes it comparable to Ms. Oda's motion, it would then be that the committee call upon Mr. Robert Rabinovitch, president and CEO of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, to appear before the committee at its first full meeting—that would be next Tuesday—to discuss the CBC lockout and the corporation's use of the parliamentary appropriation that it received during the duration of the lockout.

It's amended now to say “and that such meeting be held following the end of the lockout”.

Ms. Bulte.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: I have no problem with the motion whatsoever. I know we started to discuss this Tuesday. Do we want just Mr. Rabinovitch? I'm asking this for discussion. Do we want Mr. Stursberg? Do we want Mr. Smith and do we want Ms. Chalmers? I'm leaving that open.

Ms. Bev Oda: Madam Chair, just so we know what's possible in our procedure, I would be willing to put forward an amendment, the same amendment that was made to Mr. Angus' motion, to my motion. My motion does articulate....

The Chair: We have Mr. Angus' motion in front of us right now.

Ms. Bev Oda: I'm just suggesting this so people know I would be willing to include the same amendment.

The Chair: I think what Ms. Oda is suggesting is people might want to look at Mr. Angus' motion and look at her motion and determine which one they prefer. Is that what you're suggesting here, Ms. Oda?

Ms. Bev Oda: No. I'm suggesting that if Mr. Angus' motion doesn't satisfy Ms. Bulte, she might look at my motion with the amendment, which may better fulfill what she wants.

The Chair: We have Mr. Angus' motion as amended. Is there any further discussion on that? We have Mr. Angus' motion as amended to say that it would be following the end of the lockout. Is there any further discussion on that motion?

Monsieur Plamondon.

• (1125)

[Translation]

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ): Could you read the motion as amended in its entirety? I'd like to know first what I'm voting on exactly.

The Chair: It is moved that:

The Committee call upon Mr. Robert Rabinovitch, President and CEO of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, to appear before the Committee at its first full meeting to discuss the CBC lock-out and the Corporation's use of the Parliamentary Appropriation that it received during the duration of the lock-out and that such a meeting be held following the end of the lock-out.

Mr. Louis Plamondon: The meeting will take place only if the lock-out has ended.

The Chair: Correct.

Mr. Louis Plamondon: There won't be a meeting with Mr. Rabinovitch until the lock-out has ended.

The Chair: That's right. This is the amendment that the committee has just approved.

[English]

Mr. Louis Plamondon: You don't want a meeting with Mr. Rabinovitch now?

Mr. Charlie Angus: We agreed, if we could get it through, that we would have him after the lockout. I didn't think we'd get support to have him here immediately.

The Chair: Mr. Silva.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Silva: It was properly explained to us. The amendment calling for a meeting to be held following the end of the lock-out has already been passed by the committee.

The Chair: That's right.

Mr. Mario Silva: Further to the adoption of the amendment, the next item of business is the adoption of Charlie's motion.

[English]

The Chair: As amended, after the lockout.

On the main motion, as amended, all those in favour?

Mr. Mario Silva: For clarification, Madam Chair, because I think Madam Oda is thinking about voting against this, only because she wants to go forward with her motion, I see both motions as stand-alone motions, so I don't see any reason why we can't also vote for her motion. Maybe you could make a ruling on that.

Ms. Bev Oda: I think this is very complicated procedurally. I think we all want the same thing. We want Mr. Rabinovitch, plus all the other senior managers who can respond to our questions adequately and fully, at that meeting after the lockout.

Mr. Mario Silva: That's why I think both motions are valid and they're not—

Ms. Bev Oda: I would agree, if we could take some wording out of mine to make sure we've encompassed that and to vote for that.

Mr. Mario Silva: They're both stand-alone motions. They're both fine.

Ms. Bev Oda: Vote for both at the same time?

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Vote for both at the same time.

The Chair: Procedurally, can I have a motion on Mr. Angus' motion, understanding that there's a consensus here for those who are going to vote for the motion that they will vote for both motions?

On Mr. Angus' motion...

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Can we not vote on Mr. Angus' motion and Ms. Oda's motion at the same time?

The Chair: No, I don't think we can. Can we trust in the good faith of committee members?

All in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you.

All in favour of Ms. Oda's motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: That is disposed of. Thank you very much.

So we have dealt with the first five items on our agenda.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Number two.

The Chair: Number 2? I'm sorry, Mr. Angus. Could we take out "at its second full meeting", since we're doing our best to schedule a number of things here? I understand you want to do it as quickly as possible.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I want it to be as quickly as possible.

The Chair: This is our second full meeting.

● (1130)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes, we're in our second full meeting now, I know. She could still get here.

The Chair: Provided she wasn't in a cabinet meeting, that might be possible.

Mr. Charlie Angus: So call Paul! No, "as soon as possible" is—

The Chair: I should point out that our researchers, in anticipation of the committee's interest, have prepared a briefing note. It only needs to be translated. I will ask that it be circulated to you as soon as possible and not necessarily wait until the next meeting.

On that motion, Madam Bulte.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Maybe I'll ask Mr. Angus to see if he could break this one up with respect to satellite radio. I think to have the minister come and speak about the lockout, absolutely, yes, but I think perhaps there should be two separate ones.

With respect to the satellite radio decision, may I strongly encourage that Minister Emerson also be here to discuss that recent impact, because it is a shared responsibility? I think Minister Emerson needs to be as accountable to us on this decision as the minister.

The Chair: Would you like to see Mr. Angus perhaps agree to a friendly amendment that would include a second minister?

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: I don't know if he would agree.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Well, I guess my concern is whether we could get Madam Frulla for two separate meetings to talk about these issues. If we could, I would have no problem with that. If we're getting her for one, I'd like to have both issues discussed.

My concern about Minister Emerson is again because we don't have a lot of time when we meet. I think this decision on satellite radio is profound in terms of broadcasting and how we look in terms of the Lincoln report. If we could have a separate meeting with Emerson, I would do so.

But I'm concerned that when we have our heritage meetings, it's very hard to get all the issues that we want addressed. I'd like to focus strictly on heritage for this one. If we could have two separate meetings, I would be more than happy.

The Chair: Can I suggest this? We have a number of motions here today that have to do with our agenda. We can deal with the motions in terms of what the committee would like.

I've asked our analysts and our clerk to put together what we have to do to complete our work on the film study. The other item the committee has probably expressed an interest in is having the minister come to talk about the response to the committee's report on broadcasting. It's entirely possible that some members of this committee, being members of the legislative committee, may also be seized with the copyright bill.

Can I take these as the committee wants to do them? Then we will have a separate meeting to put together the pieces.

We've agreed to have Monsieur Fournier come next Tuesday. But I'd like the committee to have a view of the scope of work from now until December so we can set the priorities. Is that okay?

Mr. Mario Silva: Madam Chair, for clarification, we are all obviously concerned about the lockout of the CBC, but from the previous motions, when we voted, I thought we were only going to discuss it after the lockout. Are we now saying we're going to be calling the minister to talk specifically on the lockout, but we're allowing the CBC management to come here after the lockout? It doesn't make sense. It's not consistent with our past voting.

We should basically state that we're going to be meeting with the minister after the lockout. Otherwise, I would ask you to then split the motion so there would first be a vote on the minister coming forward on satellite radio and then on the lockout.

The Chair: Okay. Can I suggest this as an editorial amendment? That the committee call upon the minister to appear before the committee (a) to discuss the recent CRTC decision on satellite radio and (b) to discuss the CBC lockout, following the end of the lockout.

We would not deal with the CBC lockout before the end of the lockout, which would be consistent with our previous decision. We could deal with the CRTC beforehand.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: I have one point.

The Chair: Mr. Schellenberger, Mr. Kotto, and Mr. Angus.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: If the minister comes before the lockout is over, how do we predetermine that no one's going to ask questions about the CBC lockout?

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Well, she'd have to say that she refuses to answer the question.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: Well, that's fine, but I have other questions and stuff that I'd like to ask the minister. If we're going to spend the whole time only on satellite radio...it's not that satellite radio isn't important or that it's not an important issue, but there are a lot of issues I would like to raise with the minister. I would like the minister to be able to be asked a full range of questions and to give answers back. I don't want her to say she's sorry, but she can't comment on that.

The Chair: Mr. Schellenberger, I've indicated that I'd take this as an item that the committee wants on its agenda. I'd ask our clerk to bring back a somewhat scheduled meeting for us so that we can fit this in with our other priorities. This isn't a commitment to do it in a week or immediately. That will be up to the committee to decide when we see what else we have to deal with between now and December.

Mr. Kotto.

• (1135)

[Translation]

Mr. Maka Kotto: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Bulte's motion calling for the committee to invite Industry Canada officials to testify as well is, in my view, relevant. I'm referring here to the issue of satellite radio. In arriving at this decision, Industry Canada exercised its full authority, at least in terms of not sending the issue back to the CRTC so that it could address minimal Canadian content requirements. As matters now stand, there is talk of refocussing on certain parts of the Lincoln report pertaining to cultural sovereignty.

A great deal is at stake. Satellite radio is radio for the 21st century. Home subscribers will not be the only ones tuning in. Eventually, all vehicles will be equipped to tune in to satellite radio. Canadian content requirements are very minimal, a fact that goes against the provisions of the Broadcasting Act. Conventional radio stations must meet Canadian quota requirements, whereas others are given a free pass. What will happen when conventional radio stations begin to argue that these provisions violate their rights? We're opening up a whole can of worms and Canada's and Quebec's identity will suffer in the process.

I'd like to hear from Industry Canada officials and find out the reasons why the department supported this decision. Perhaps I'm speculating, because I wasn't privy to the discussions. Nevertheless, I'm fairly confident that Heritage Canada didn't have much say in this matter. The focus was not on cultural considerations.

[English]

The Chair: Do you want to amend Mr. Angus' motion or do you want to put a separate motion? I don't think you're opposed to having the Minister of Heritage come.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: In terms of simplicity, there are two things happening. One is that we are starting to piece together an agenda based on a lot of events that happened over the summer. I think satellite radio is a profound decision and it needs to be looked at in light of the previous work of this committee.

I am not opposed to having Minister Emerson here. My concern is that we have time with the minister to talk about the issues. Mr. Schellenberger is correct as well. He has a number of issues he'd like to speak about with the minister.

I would be willing to come back to our committee and say we've got a number of weeks before our Christmas break. We really need to look at satellite radio. We are going to have to look at the CBC. I could put in a motion to get the minister at her earliest possible convenience, but having seen how hard it is to chase her down on an answer now.... She's not going to appear before an end to the lockout anyway, so I might as well accede to real politics here and say bring us back a proposition for a couple of meetings where we can look at broadcast, we can look at the issues, we can get the minister here, we can get other people here from Heritage Canada, and we can get Industry Canada. And we can get down to business. I don't think we need to bicker about the wording of a motion.

The Chair: Thank you.

The chair will incorporate this into our planning for an agenda. We'll bring it to the committee as soon as possible, hopefully by next Tuesday. We'll do our best.

Are you withdrawing your motion, Mr. Angus?

• (1140)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you.

The next items, Bill C-331, the Ukrainian Canadian Restitution Act—that is Mr. Mark's—and Bill C-333, the Chinese Canadian Recognition and Redress Act, we can deal with together. That is Ms. Oda's private member's bill.

I believe members of the committee have already received an email from Mr. Mark's office asking that we defer our deadline for reporting. I spoke to him yesterday. He would be quite happy if the committee takes a motion to the House requesting a deferral of our reporting date on both of those.

We need two motions. The motion on Bill C-331 is that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage present a report to the House requesting an extension of 30 sitting days. That would take us to just before the House breaks.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Does the committee agree to adopt the 11th report, which is the deferral?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: We have the same motion on Bill C-333, that the committee present a report to the House requesting an extension of 30 sitting days.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Does the committee agree to adopt the 12th report?

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: I'm thinking Ms. Oda would like that as soon as possible. Am I right?

The Chair: No. Ms. Oda and I talked, and she's in agreement with Mr. Mark that work is progressing on this within the ministry, that it's being resolved to everybody's satisfaction. Having the committee have to report back within a couple of weeks doesn't help the process at all. Of course, the committee is free to take this up again at any time if Ms. Oda or Mr. Mark are not satisfied with the way things are progressing.

Now an update on the Canadian feature film study. As I mentioned, a great deal of work has been done on that over the summer. This will have to be a major part of our planning for our agenda for the next couple of months.

Are you going to do this, Mr. Jackson?

Mr. Joseph Jackson (Committee Researcher): I'll keep this brief.

As you may recall, last June you tabled your interim report on the feature film industry. Contained within the report was an appendix, appendix B, that contained 43 questions. We set a deadline of September 15 for submissions in response to those questions. To this

point, I believe—and, Jacques, you can correct me if I'm wrong—we've received about 35 briefs.

Mr. Jacques Lahaie (Clerk of the Committee, Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage): No, it's 34 briefs.

Mr. Joseph Jackson: We've received 34 briefs. We've started to separate the answers and we're beginning our analysis of the responses. To our satisfaction, the briefs are quite concise and to the point. It's looking like it will be a fairly instructive exercise to pull apart these questions and to start looking at what is being said by the various groups that submitted their briefs.

In parallel with this we've been doing some research over the course of the summer. We've produced a document on federal film support programs and initiatives in other countries. We looked at a selection of about eight different countries and we've conducted a more focused analysis of four countries that are similar to the Canadian feature film market. That document is in its final stages of the English draft and will be sent for translation soon.

We've also been working on a document on governance and performance measurement as it relates to Telefilm, CRTC, CBC, and the CTF. That document is a work in progress, and we need to incorporate material we've received from the second round of submissions in order for it to be complete.

We also have another document on distribution and exhibition. We face the same challenges with that document because we need to incorporate what we've learned during the second phase of the study.

One other document that we've generated is a chronology, just a history of the feature film industry in Canada today.

In light of what the committee has just discussed as it relates to future business, if this committee is to have a report by December, there are a number of things that need to be considered. If one works backwards, past experience dictates that certainly this report would need to be considered beginning in mid-November if it is to be tabled some time in December.

There are a few things that have happened in parallel with the work we're doing. I believe earlier this week Heritage released its summary evaluation of the Canadian feature film industry. This is a document that was in fact produced by Nordicity for the Department of Canadian Heritage. Contained within this document are a number of recommendations related to the Canadian feature film industry and related to the policy itself. There are a number of comments relating to Telefilm and its relationship with the department. I think for this committee to move forward in looking at the feature film policy, it will be very important to call in departmental officials to explain this document to us. There are management responses to all of the recommendations in this report, and we need to know how these responses are going to work in parallel with the work this committee is doing right now.

At the same time, I think the other issue that needs to be considered is at what point is Telefilm called back before the committee. Telefilm has come out front and centre as an agency that needs to be studied more closely through the course of our hearings. I think there's an opportunity here for us to perhaps look at the agency more closely in order for us to have a full picture of the industry. I think it's important to remember too that Telefilm is expected to release its 2004-05 annual report quite soon, so we could use this as a pivot point for discussing some of the issues related to the agency.

The other issue that needs to be recalled as well is the committee was talking about holding some round tables last fall. The notion was to bring in a selection of people from across the different sectors—creation, production, marketing, distribution, exhibition, and so forth. The idea was to bring them together and pose them some questions, in order to help us shape the recommendations we want to do.

Given what I've said about different things that we need to do, this doesn't leave us with many opportunities to do this. In the coming weeks we need to hear from departmental officials, we need to hear from Telefilm, we need to hold two round tables, we might want to hear from Telefilm again, and then at that point the committee could start to consider a draft report. That brings us into mid-November.

I'll leave it at that.

• (1145)

The Chair: Does everybody feel exhausted already?

Ms. Bulte.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: If I may, I agree with everything Mr. Jackson said, and I think it's important that we finish our study.

Perhaps I could refer to when we did the Lincoln report. We actually started sitting late. We sat until midnight, and we were in a separate room and we would go through it. I think we could do that, maybe not so much for the witnesses, but there's certainly an opportunity, if we're committed to doing this. That's how we did the Lincoln report. We sat from 6 o'clock on, or until 10 p.m., and brought in dinner and simply hammered it out. We did that for two weeks, until we got that done. I don't think there will be quite as much, because we don't have two years of testimony here, but that might be one way, Madam Chair. If people are committed to it, we have to find the time and do it at night after the House starts sitting.

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes, I agree. And I'd like us to get this done.

As to the question of the round tables, the only thing I would propose is that we do the round tables closer to the end. I would like

us to have some recommendations, and I would like it if we could set up perhaps a couple of round tables where we could say, "This is what we're coming out with. What do you think?" That's our last fact check. If we get blown out of the water at the round table level, then we know we have a problem.

What I have felt throughout this process is that we've heard so much, we've covered so much ground, and even if we go for another round table, I think we're getting to the focus point now. So let's do the round tables toward the end and let's slot in the time we need to get these recommendations forward.

The Chair: I would ask our researchers and our clerk to work together to do some sort of schedule, obviously subject to the committee's approval, of the various meetings they think we need to have to complete the film study, as well as other things the committee has agreed it would like to try to get done, either today or previously.

I think we're all pretty well aware of the likely defined life of this committee and any other committee around here. There is nothing more frustrating than having put a lot of work into a project and then not being able to complete it, so I think the committee generally is committed to that.

So we'll come back with a proposed agenda of meetings from now through to completion. The committee can obviously look at it and say if there are other things it thinks need to be plugged in there. We need to leave some flexibility for unanticipated issues that arise, but is it agreeable if I proceed that way and bring a proposed agenda back?

Ms. Bulte.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Agreed.

I wanted to thank our researchers for their work over the summer. Thank you on behalf of the committee.

The Chair: They've done a fantastic job.

Is there any other business? A one-hour meeting, it's amazing.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: That will make up for all those 10-hour meetings.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Madam Chair, coming into the new year—whether there is going to be a new year or not—I'd like us to talk about some ideas that we could start to look at in other areas, because there is a lot of stuff out there that I think we could look at and could do some good work on. But we don't need to do it today.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

This meeting is adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons

Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes

**Also available on the Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire at the following address:
Aussi disponible sur le réseau électronique « Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire » à l'adresse suivante :
<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.