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Chair

Mr. Bernard Patry

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Thursday, March 10, 2005

• (0910)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.)): Good morning, everyone.

[Translation]

Pursuant to the Order of Reference of Tuesday, December 7, 2004, the committee is studying Bill C-25, An Act governing the operations of remote sensing space systems.

We had gotten to amendment BQ-6 from the Bloc Québécois.

Ms. Lalonde, please.

Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Please wait a minute until I get my papers out.

[English]

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Chairman, I have a point of order before we get started.

The Chair: What's the point of order?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: On Tuesday, it was no secret to anybody that we were frustrated and unhappy that there were a couple of time-sensitive items that we wished to be sure would be dealt with today. That didn't happen. I'm not trying to rehash the old ground at all, but just to say that we would like to ensure that we leave a few minutes, or agree to take a few minutes before the end of the meeting, to deal with those items, since they are time sensitive, to the point where, with the House not sitting next week, it's a useless exercise for us to deal with those motions two weeks from now.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. McTeague wants to respond to this.

Hon. Dan McTeague (Pickering—Scarborough East, Lib.): I think we understand that, Ms. McDonough. We are rather incredulous that you wasted 10 minutes of the committee's time, first of all, in order to get quorum out there.

Second, I think we're certainly familiar with the comments you have made, because you published them in several papers.

Mr. Chairman, I think we're all familiar with this, but let's get on with doing what we're supposed to do and let's stop wasting time.

The Chair: My understanding of this is the fact that we're now dealing with Bill C-25, and I hope we have time at the end to deal with this. But we need to start if we want to deal with this at the end.

[Translation]

Mme Alexa McDonough: All right.

The Chair: Ms. Lalonde, we're on amendment BQ-6.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Yes, but first I want to respond to the Parliamentary Secretary's comment. I'm sorry we started 10 minutes late, but I remember often waiting for the members of the party in power to arrive so we could have a quorum. So it seems to me these kinds of comments don't predispose us toward happily continuing the committee's business.

Mr. Chairman, I'm counting on you to ensure some calm.

The Chair: You have my whole support, Ms. Lalonde, and you have the floor on amendment BQ-6.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Thank you.

This amendment is extremely important for us. I move that Bill C-25 be amended by adding after line 37 on page 3 the following new clause:

4.1(1) A committee composed of the Minister of Environment, the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the President of the Canadian Space Agency and a Minister of each province, appointed by the lieutenant-governor in council of the province, shall meet once a year to review the provisions and the operation of this Act.

(2) The committee may issue directives to the Minister on the operation of this Act.

(3) The directives of the committee are binding on the Minister.

Why this kind of amendment? Because RADARSAT-2 is private property and because we're experimenting with a public-private partnership that will definitely be hard to make work in the best interests of Canada and the provinces. We don't think this is a pointless measure. The idea is simply to provide that all the ministers who may be concerned by the production of images from RADARSAT-2 can meet once a year to examine the situation and make findings. We think it's entirely possible to do that, and it's not one object that can change the nature of the bill. On the contrary, it would improve it.

The Chair: As the committee Chair, I must say that the amendment you're moving, Ms. Lalonde, is inadmissible. I'm going to tell you why, and you'll then have an opportunity to respond to my explanation.

The amendment proposes the establishment of a federal-provincial committee of ministers which would have the power to issue directives which would be binding on the federal minister. The duties, responsibilities and authority of the minister are clearly set out in the bill. In addition, there are special powers accorded to the Government of Canada. The proposal in your amendment would subject this authority and these powers to the directives issued by the proposed committee, thus going against the principle of the bill. An amendment which goes beyond the principle of the bill is inadmissible, as provided on page 654 of Marleau and Montpetit.

Ms. Lalonde, I must therefore rule that your amendment BQ-6 is inadmissible.

You have the floor, Ms. Lalonde.

• (0915)

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, in view of the spirit of this amendment which I've explained, how could it become admissible? The spirit of this amendment is that all the ministers of the government should have a voice in the matter, which is not clear in the bill as it stands. It's implicit, but not explicit. So it doesn't go beyond the principle of the bill.

As regards the provinces, provision could be made for them to be invited. I'd like you to help me so that this principle is expressly stated in a way that makes it possible...

I repeat that \$430 million of public money is invested in RADARSAT-2. This is a new form of public-private partnership, and our responsibility as parliamentarians is to ensure that the public gets value for money. The partnership is a question that is being debated in the provinces and municipalities. In Parliament, we have a responsibility in this regard. We don't just want to say that Canada has put \$430 million into this thing, that we need the expertise of an enterprise we're not sure about—I reread the document from the Canadian Space Agency—and that it's already invested this money to wash our hands of it. As far as I'm concerned, I'm saying no. The provinces should at least be invited to take part in this annual exercise.

Can you tell me how we could make this amendment admissible?

The Chair: I don't usually draft amendments. We tried...

Ms. Francine Lalonde: No, but...

The Chair: Let me explain. The last time, in a spirit of cooperation, since Ms. McDonough's amendment was admissible, we told her how to make it admissible. Then we did it.

In my mind, the problem isn't simply drafting the amendment. The problem is that what you've put in the amendment is contrary to the principle that the minister decides. You're creating a federal-provincial committee of ministers. What is more, you're taking away some of the minister's duties, responsibilities and authority. That's the basic principle of your amendment. However, it's for the minister to decide. Your amendment thus violates the principle of the bill.

I'm not saying I wouldn't like the provinces to be consulted or that that shouldn't be provided for in a bill, but the way this is written... How should you write it so that it's admissible? I can't answer you.

I'm going to give the floor to Ms. McDonough, then to Mr. Paquette. Ms. McDonough, over to you.

[*English*]

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to say first of all that I think the amendment before us is a response to a concern we had from numerous witnesses about the extent to which the public investment here is being protected, to which the public interest is in fact being served and how we can assure that this is taking place. I'm not a legal beagle, but I understand, Mr. Chair, that your legal advice is that this would actually go against the principle of the bill, and I'm wondering if I can suggest what may be more than a friendly amendment to try to preserve the important implicit message that's contained in this amendment and to be responsive to the explicit advice that we were given by a number of witnesses about how this massive public investment needs to be safeguarded, protected, and maintained.

So I wonder if it would respond to the ruling the chairman has brought, but nevertheless retain the essence of what Madame Lalonde is trying to propose here, to suggest that the wording in 4.1(2), "The committee may issue directives to the minister", be changed to "The committee may issue advice to the minister on the operation of this Act".

I know it doesn't go as far. It doesn't make it as binding or as stringent, but at least it reflects the spirit of both the amendment itself and the advice we received from a number of witnesses. So the proposal would be to change 4.1(2) to "The committee may issue advice to the minister on the operation of this Act", and then 4.1(3), reflecting the same idea of acting on the chairman's ruling, would be reworded, "The minister shall take into account the advice of the committee".

We're talking about a committee of all publicly elected officials. We're not talking about undermining the spirit of the act or undermining the authority of the minister, but we're talking about enhancing the work of the minister by having that input from—and let's be clear that the largest number of persons named here giving advice are in fact the minister's own colleagues.

• (0920)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Paquette.

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): I wanted to say exactly the same thing.

The Chair: All right.

I simply want to tell you that, when we do the clause-by-clause consideration of a bill and the Chair renders a decision, there is usually no debate. I wanted a debate on this in order to really hear the comments of all the parliamentarians. If opposition or government members want to introduce a new amendment later this morning, they may do so, but the wording of this amendment is inadmissible, and, when the Chair has made this kind of decision, no one may move an amendment to something inadmissible. If you move a new amendment between now and the end of this meeting, I'll have no problem with that. So we understand each other.

We can set amendment BQ-6 aside, but, for the moment, it's inadmissible. We can defer the vote on the amendment. When an amendment is inadmissible, the only way to hold a vote is to express one's disagreement with the Chair's decision. In this case, the vote concerns the Chair's decision. I accept that.

My decision was made in light of consultations and comments I obtained from our lawyers here at the table. In its present form, the amendment is inadmissible because a minister's prerogatives in a bill cannot be amended.

Do you sustain my decision or not? That's the question that arises now.

[*English*]

Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): I've been here for 16 or 17 years and I have never known when you could just add amendments any time through the final reading of the bill, clause by clause. I have never known this, but maybe we're making up a new set of rules here?

The Chair: This is at the discretion of the chair. It's always been at the discretion. Sometimes it's not, but this one is receivable, and if the members say they want to go ahead, they need to ask for the question.

[*Translation*]

They want to amend the Chair's decision and call a vote on that decision.

Ms. Lalonde.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I'd like clarification, Mr. Chairman. You're telling me this: either I challenge your decision, or I ask that we come back to this stage later, and I can then introduce the amended amendment. It's one or the other?

The Chair: The first clarification you made is correct. You may request that the Chair's decision be sustained or not.

As for the second clarification, if you want to move a new amendment, it will then be up to the committee as a whole to decide where that amendment should be put. At that time, the committee may decide by a vote whether or not it wants that amendment.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Committee members may vote on the amendment. That's what you're saying?

The Chair: First, we're going to vote on whether the amendment is admissible. Then, as I said, if you move a new amendment, the committee will decide where it wants to put that amendment, by the end of the meeting.

Do you challenge the Chair's decision that amendment BQ-6 of the Bloc Québécois is inadmissible? Are you requesting a vote on the Chair's decision?

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Yes, I request a vote on it.

The Chair: Who is in favour of sustaining the Chair's decision that amendment BQ-6 is inadmissible? Who requests that the decision not be sustained?

(Decision sustained. [See *Minutes*.])

● (0925)

[*English*]

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order. I think there's some confusion—at least I'll admit to some confusion on my part. I don't wish to challenge your ruling on this—

The Chair: What challenge?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: What I want to do is respond to your ruling by finding a way to amend this appropriately.

The Chair: Ms. McDonough, I responded to Madame Lalonde about this. She understands my response, and now the question is about how to challenge the chair regarding his opinion.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I'll come back later.

[*English*]

The Chair: Ms. Lalonde can come back later on. That's what I told her.

Later on it needs to be decided by the committee to see if they accept to put another clause somewhere else.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Okay.

The Chair: Later on they need to be accepted by the committee to see if they accept putting another clause somewhere else. My decision is maintained by the committee right now.

We'll go to amendment BQ-7.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: I'd like to clarify a point. Usually, when we've finished discussing a clause, it's asked whether the clause shall carry. I'm going to wait until the end to ask that in order to be sure that everyone's on the same page.

We'll now move on to clause 5. There are no amendments to clause 5.

[*English*]

(Clause 5 agreed to)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: We now move on to clause 6.

[*English*]

There's no amendment proposed by any parties on clause 6.

(Clauses 6 and 7 agreed to)

The Chair: Now we go to clause 8. It's amendment BQ-7.

[*Translation*]

(Clause 8—*Issurance, amendment or renewal of licences*)

Ms. Lalonde, you have the floor to present your first amendment to clause 8.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I move that Bill C-25, in Clause 8, be amended by replacing line 28 on page 4 with the following:

having regard to provincial jurisdiction, national security, the defence

So I move that the words “provincial jurisdiction” be added before the words “national security, the defence”.

Subclause 8(1) would thus read as follows:

8.(1) On application, the minister may, having regard to provincial jurisdiction, national security, the defence of Canada, the safety of Canadian Forces, Canada's conduct of international relations, Canada's international obligations and any prescribed factors,

- (a) issue a provisional approval of a licence application;
- (b) issue a licence; or
- (c) amend or renew a licence.

The Chair: Mr. McTeague.

[English]

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Chair, when a minister acts, he or she always considers the jurisdiction of the federal government and by implication the jurisdiction of the provincial governments. I think in this case to act otherwise would be ultra vires. This proposed amendment, therefore, adds nothing to the bill. Outer space... specifying conditions to protect the national security, the defence of Canada, the protection of the Canadian Armed Forces, and Canada's international relations and international obligations is exclusively federal jurisdiction, and I will be voting against this motion.

• (0930)

The Chair: Fine.

Are there any other comments?

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I've already stated a number of times...

Mr. Pierre Paquette: We even passed an amendment similar to this earlier.

[English]

The Chair: I call the question on amendment BQ-7.

(Amendment negated)

The Chair: The second amendment is BQ-8.

Madam Lalonde, s'il vous plaît.

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: In clause 8, at lines 19 to 23, on page 5, we're stating more clearly what should be done in the interests of the provinces. I recall that this clause provides that raw data that has been collected in a foreign country shall, under international conventions, be made available to that country on a priority basis. I know it's under an international convention, but I think that what has been granted to foreign countries under an international convention could, even more so, be granted to the provinces. The powers of this new radar, of this new satellite—and this, moreover, is how it's being sold over the Internet—are largely within provincial jurisdiction, as are agriculture, forests...

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Public health.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: ...public health, and so on. This element could be added to this measure. This would thus be available to the provinces. That's all.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: It's the same measure.

[English]

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Chairman, the existing language of the bill reflects the United Nations resolution for access to data among

states for land use, natural resources management, and protection of the environment as well.

These states exercise jurisdiction over the territorial divisions and they would make representations to Foreign Affairs Canada in the event that a Canadian licensee refused to make data available to them. It should be pointed out that in Canada it must be remembered that we too could be subject to being a sensed state, and Canada's provinces could likewise be assured of access by the minister were a licensee not willing to make the data available to a province of Canada.

We have no expectation that a Canadian licensee would deny a sale to a provincial government. Indeed government officials are not aware of a case where a country had to rely on the UN resolution to secure data access. The essence of this provision is that a licensee may not have exclusive sales arrangements that preclude access to the data by a sensed state.

My advice would be to vote against the amendment.

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the experts here a question.

The Chair: Go ahead. You have to ask me the question, and I'll put it to the experts.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Through you, can we ask the experts who are here whether situations can arise in which a province might need images on a priority basis. However, since the RADARSAT-2 operator is a private company, it might decide, for economic or other reasons, to give priority to a company from another country. That might harm the province, which would be lacking data.

[English]

The Chair: Any comments? Mr. McDougall or Mr. Baines.

Mr. McDougall.

• (0935)

Mr. Robert McDougall (Director, Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Division, Department of Foreign Affairs): I would defer largely to Mr. Baines on this.

My general comment, in response, is that the bill sets out certain conditions and criteria under which priority access can be invoked by the government, by the ministers concerned. They relate primarily to security, international relations, and other such aspects. The provinces would always be in a position to make application to the minister, or to the ministers concerned, if their concerns fell under the criteria set out in the bill.

As we've said, however, we've never run into a case so far where the commercial operator, where the commercial sales point, has refused to ensure the data got to any such entity.

But perhaps I can turn to Mr. Baines for further clarification.

The Chair: Mr. Baines.

Mr. Phillip J. Baines (Senior Advisor, Sciences and Technology, Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Division, Department of Foreign Affairs): With respect to priority access, our approach in this bill has been to restrict that extraordinary power to really the fundamental needs of the state, being national security and foreign affairs issues. I don't believe the provinces have the same need for the priority access.

When we look at what priority satellites offer as a service, the first priority for any operator is to make sure the spacecraft remains healthy, that we don't do anything to destroy the spacecraft. That's always the number one priority. This bill will establish a priority immediately under that for priority access, again for these national security defence of Canada and foreign affairs reasons. Immediately under that is the regular, natural emergency priority service that can be obtained with a commercial buy.

So we foresee a lot of need, and we see a lot of practice where that data is made available very quickly to people who need it in those situations.

So to answer both your questions, I can't foresee any...and with respect to priority access, I think I've explained our rationale.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Baines.

Now I call the question on amendment BQ-8.

(Amendment negated)

The Chair: Now we'll go to amendment BQ-9.

[Translation]

Ms. Lalonde.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

From what my assistant tells me, the amendment we sent was not exactly worded as it is here. In its present form, it makes no sense. It read as follows: That Bill C-25, in Clause 8, be amended by replacing line 37 on page 5 with the following:

...ant, a research scientist from a university or from an international and/or governmental organization in which Canada is involved, or a person to whom they may be

The amended paragraph (e) would thus read:

(e) that raw data from the system be communicated only to a government referred to in paragraph (c), the licensee, a system participant, a research scientist from a university or from an international and/or governmental organization in which Canada is involved, or a person to whom they may be...

May I explain now?

The Chair: Since there's an amendment to what you had proposed, I'll allow "and/or" to be added.

You may now address the subject.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: From what I've been told a number of times, RADARSAT-1 was greatly appreciated because of the large number of images it provided for researchers in all fields: the environment, agriculture and so on. So those researchers are concerned to know whether they'll still have access to those images for research purposes, even though it's agreed that they won't be the first to receive them.

Once again I emphasize the importance of financial participation by the government, which is investing \$430 million in a project totalling \$522 million.

First, I'd like to get the opinion of our experts through you, Mr. Chairman.

• (0940)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. McDougall or Mr. Baines, either of you.

Mr. McDougall.

Mr. Robert McDougall: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Certainly, it is not the intention of the bill or of us, as drafters, to block access to data for legitimate scientific or other purposes, as long as that provision of data does not compromise our security or foreign affairs interests. The way the bill is currently drafted, everybody would have to meet those security requirements.

As I understand this amendment, it would grant research scientists and international governmental organizations a status outside these control of security aspects, which I believe would concern us as officials, at least. The bill, as drafted, would certainly permit research scientists and international organizations to get the data, as long as they met security criteria. If they didn't meet the security criteria for sensitive data, we would have concerns about giving it to them in any case.

The Chair: Thank you.

Oui, Madame Lalonde.

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: The purpose of my amendment is not to make it so we don't meet security requirements. Given the images currently transmitted by RADARSAT-1, I imagine that doesn't entail a security problem in your opinion.

My intention—and this is the best place I've found in the bill to state it—is to enable researchers, not to be the first ones to receive these pictures, which are of major importance, but to have access to them. Once again, I recall that \$430 million of public funds has been invested in this project.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Baines.

[English]

Mr. Phillip J. Baines: I'd like to draw the committee's attention to the purpose of subclause 8(6), where the minister may authorize this raw data to certain persons or a certain class of persons, either on a case-by-case basis where it's subject to the minister's prior approval, under a legally enforceable agreement, or both.

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Where is that?

[English]

Mr. Phillip J. Baines: It's subclause 8(6).

Researchers and persons in these international organizations can have access to the raw data that we don't consider sensitive, through subclause 8(6).

Furthermore, our bill allows any suitable person to become a system participant and thereby execute a controlled activity under this act. So a licensee can seek an amendment to a licence by saying, "I'd like to add this person so they may perform a controlled activity".

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to know, through you, whether the situation wouldn't then be radically different for researchers from that of RADARSAT-1. There are people from the Space Agency here. They could give us an answer on this point. Perhaps you could do so as well.

[*English*]

Mr. Robert McDougall: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The situation is very different for RADARSAT-1 and RADARSAT-2, simply because we do not have the same order of security in foreign affairs concerns over the product of RADARSAT-1. The new capabilities of RADARSAT-2 and the fact that it was under private ownership make it different from RADARSAT-1. Those differences have raised our concerns.

Our concern about this amendment is that the way it is drafted puts research scientists and international government organizations in a separate category from all those other persons who would fall under subclause 8(6), and thereby it suggests that they will be specially privileged, in the sense of having our security concerns applied to them. I concur with Mr. Baines' analysis that in the bill as drafted they would automatically fall under subclause 8(6) and therefore could have access to the data under the same conditions as everyone else.

• (0945)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: I would ask the chair to call the question.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: He answered your question, Ms. Lalonde, but you weren't listening.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: That's not the current situation for RADARSAT-1.

[*English*]

Hon. Dan McTeague: Call the question, Mr. Chair.

(Amendment negated)

The Chair: We'll go to amendment NDP-5.

Ms. McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, as you know, we've had a concern about discharging our responsibilities in this committee to deal with the supplementary estimates before it is no longer possible to do so. I would like to move at this point that we go to the next order of business.

The Chair: No. You cannot go to the next order of business. We're now doing NDP-5, your motion, Ms. McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chair, I believe it is in order for me to have the floor and to move that we go to the next order of

business, which is the motion we have before us that the committee consider supplementary estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2005, under Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Foreign Affairs) and Foreign Affairs and International Trade (International Trade), referred to the committee on February 25, 2005, pursuant to Standing Order 81(5).

The Chair: You're debating something right now; you're not moving anything.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: I'm not debating anything, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: What's your motion? What's your point of order?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: I'm not rising on a point of order. I am moving that this committee move to the next order of business, and I have just outlined what that order of business is. I can repeat it a second time.

The Chair: You don't need to. We have the other business. We've already received it from the clerk. Now, if you want to—

Hon. Dan McTeague: Call the question.

The Chair: I'll call the question on whether we agree to suspend the clause-by-clause and go to some other business at this time.

All in favour of Ms. McDonough's motion? Against?

(Motion negated)

Ms. Belinda Stronach (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): I'm in favour of Ms. McDonough's motion.

The Chair: Does that mean you want to cancel the...?

Ms. Belinda Stronach: Well, suspend. You said "suspend".

The Chair: I said suspend for the moment.

Now I'm going to call the question again, just to be sure, because when I went to the other side you didn't raise your hand.

All in favour of Ms. McDonough's motion? Against?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Okay, fine, we'll suspend for the motion and we'll go to the next...

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could speak to my—

The Chair: I'm sorry, I didn't give you the floor. Would you just wait, please?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Sorry.

The Chair: Now we're going to start back with committee business, with the notices of motion of Ms. McDonough.

Go ahead, Ms. McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the cooperation of committee members in dealing with this matter. I think the committee is aware of the history that the estimates customarily are referred to committee, which was done on February 25.

For reasons of timing, we were not able to deal with this item at the last meeting. There was some frustration expressed, but it was absolutely within the rights and responsibilities of the committee to deal with the business as they saw fit.

But the reason I want to address this issue at this time is this is the last day on which it is possible for us to deal with the supplementary estimates before they go back to the House on March 22. The House doesn't sit next week, and of course they have to be dealt with five days prior to going back to the House. For that reason, I appreciate the cooperation of the committee in moving to this item. I would request that we proceed to dealing with the estimates that are before us, which were referred to this committee on February 25.

● (0950)

The Chair: Mr. McTeague, then Monsieur Paquette.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Well, I have a lot to say on this, Mr. Chairman. Obviously it's a beautiful day outside and we have a lot of things to do here today.

I thought this RADARSAT bill was of course going to be dealt with in a judicious way.

I hear the honourable member offering a reason as to why they want to suddenly stop this. I can now understand why they started late, and why, of course, with that debate on other things—

The Chair: Mr. McTeague, go to the point.

Hon. Dan McTeague: We, on this side of the committee, have, I think, provided what is arguably a very strong budget, and certainly in terms of how we see things transpiring on the trade side, Mr. Chair, we've been through this exercise of Bill C-31 and Bill C-32. We're now dealing with questions as to whether departmental officials would be called to appear prior to the last day of the supply period, which is of course what the motion discusses.

I'm not sure what's intended by the objective of the motion, but I think it's clear that the sponsoring member herself may have some idea of what she is trying to suggest on who we would call, given the time constraints.

Mr. Chairman, it's important for us to understand that if we're going to continue to have motions—I've expressed this before—we're going to continue to tie the hands of the committee. We can't get to any real work. By the end of June, I think it's fairly clear you'll be able to say, Mr. Chairman, you've accomplished very little. All these motions are great, but I think in the fullness of time they do not give accurate direction or give us any purpose. In fact, it's fair to say that the work the committee has done so far is rather disjointed.

We have an opportunity with respect to this clause-by-clause—

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order—

The Chair: Let him finish.

Hon. Dan McTeague: —to suspend the clause-by-clause and to move on to something else for two or three weeks. That's fine.

But, Mr. Chairman, I think we have to be very careful here about how this committee...and it deals almost specifically with time allocation. What little time we have, Chair, in my view, is not being worked out very well. It would appear that if we can simply throw... For the procedures that we have agreed to in our committees,

particularly on our substantive committees dealing with timing, if we are going to simply change these at will, ad nauseam, I suggest this committee will not accomplish anything. And, of course, while I appreciate the motion of Ms. McDonough, I think it is just simply designed to have the effect of throwing a spanner into the works. There is really no intention here of doing something that is constructive, and I think that's fair to say, Mr. Chairman.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Paquette.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: First, I want to say that we agree with Ms. McDonough's motion. If it were deemed necessary to make a recommendation to the House, we would have to be able to do so. However, we know that many votes will be held on the evening of March 22. If we studied the question on the morning of March 22, we wouldn't be able to table a report.

It seems to me entirely appropriate that the committee grant these votes so that it can evaluate them and, if necessary, report. So there's no ambiguity, I move an amendment. I move that the word "immediately" be inserted after the words "that the Committee consider".

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay.

I'll go to Mr. Forseth.

Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

To answer my honourable colleague about why we are here and why we do this, we are fulfilling our parliamentary duty. We must look at the estimates.

I don't think this is necessarily characterized as a delaying tactic; we can deal with this fairly expeditiously. I would like officials to be called right away. I think we can dispose of this whole matter today and get back to the bill and get on with it. But we have certain constitutional matters to take care of. Committees cannot repeatedly go on with other business and allow estimates to just be turfed back to the House without review. That's been the history since I've been here, since 1993. We have to try to turn that around.

I think it's an effort for the committee to do its constitutional duties about reviewing spending; I don't see it as necessarily a delay tactic. We can all cooperate and not talk a long time, get it done very expeditiously.

● (0955)

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

The Chair: Mr. McTeague, do you have a point of order?

Hon. Dan McTeague: To clarify for the honourable member, who is, of course, new to the committee, I want to point out that an amendment has just been made. His comments, I'm sure, were not in the context of the amendment just proposed by Mr. Paquette, because if they were, his comments would be irrelevant.

In effect, we are going to deal with this immediately, and I would suspect that the immediacy will take us right until 11 o'clock. So in fact we are delaying what has been the established routine, Mr. Chairman, of this committee.

The Chair: Mr. Bevilacqua and Ms. Phinney.

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Vaughan, Lib.): Mr. Chairman, I was just reading your motion in reference to dealing with the estimates. I gather when we're dealing with estimates you would probably want to have officials present—I would imagine.

Unless I'm misreading the clock, it's approximately 10 a.m. I guess we would have to invite officials from the department to appear right now, and hopefully they'd get here before 11.

If you want to do estimates justice, it would only be fair to have officials present. I do have some experience chairing committees, and I can tell you that's the way it's normally done. Unless things have changed, Mr. Chairman, I would imagine as chair you would have to invite the officials. As a member, I would like to ask questions of the officials to deal with estimates. As a member of the committee, I, like every other member, would have the right to request that officials appear.

So unless people can guarantee to me that you can have officials here before 11 o'clock, then I don't think this thing is possible. But of course I leave it to the greater wisdom of other members to deal with this issue.

The Chair: Ms. Phinney.

Ms. Beth Phinney: It's a similar question.

I was just wondering if we could be directed as to whether there are officials here in the room. If we're not going to do that part of the motion, are we just going to sit here and make comments about whether we should have more money for Foreign Affairs? If we're not going to have the officials here, I'm not sure what we would be discussing.

Maybe the member could answer that. I don't know.

The Chair: I'll go to Ms. McDonough, and after that I'll talk.

Ms. McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, I think every member of this committee would readily agree that it would have been preferable to have scheduled officials to be here to deal with the estimates. That's why I submitted a motion to the committee to request that we do so. I asked that the motion be dealt with on Tuesday. This committee did not deal with that motion on Tuesday. We are now faced with the consequence of it not having been dealt with on Tuesday, which is that we were not able to extend the invitation for officials to appear.

That being the case, it does not preclude our getting on with discussing the supplementary estimates. If there is the possibility of some officials coming before the committee in the next hour, that's fine. But I think as a practical matter, we have the responsibility and the right as members of Parliament and members of this committee, to whom the supplementary estimates have been referred, to consider the estimates in the one hour that remains in this committee meeting.

There are some additional possibilities. If the committee members were to say yes, we want to hold an extra meeting in order to comply with the House rules and deal with this in time for a report to go to the House tomorrow, then that's a possibility. But as a practical matter, it seems to me, given the conundrum we're facing by the

committee not dealing with this motion on Tuesday, and as the full committee of foreign affairs charged with this responsibility, we should consider the estimates in the next hour. We are empowered to refer those estimates back to the House tomorrow. In fact, we are duty bound to refer them back to the House tomorrow in order that we have done so before the March 22 deadline, when the supplementary estimates will be dealt with in the House. So I propose that we move forward to consider the estimates if somebody can send a message and is able to have some officials join us.

If it facilitates the matter, we could agree that because of the conundrum we're facing, we will proceed despite the absence of the officials. If it helps to strike that from the motion that's before us, I could do that. In other words, we agree that "appropriate Departmental officials be called to appear prior to the last day of the present Supply period" be dropped and that we get on with considering the estimates.

● (1000)

The Chair: I have Mr. Bevilacqua and Ms. Phinney on my list.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I agree that estimates have to be dealt with by all committees of the House. Obviously, you put in your motion "that appropriate Departmental officials be called to appear prior to the last day of the present Supply period" because you felt that was important.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Right. That's why I wanted it dealt with on Tuesday.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I'm just wondering why all of a sudden today that's not as important as it was before.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, because government members were not prepared to deal with this on Tuesday, the outcome of our not dealing with this on Thursday because of our preference for having departmental officials here would be to not deal with the estimates, period. We are saying we want to spend the next hour discharging our obligations and exercising our rights and responsibilities as members of this committee to deal with the estimates. If it is not possible for the officials to be here, that doesn't let us off the hook, and we should get on with dealing with the estimates. We were in favour of the invitation being extended in time to do this today.

The Chair: Ms. Phinney.

Ms. Beth Phinney: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

There are occasions when the estimates for committees are dealt with by the committee of the whole in the House. Maybe the clerk knows the rules about that and whether we could defer this to the committee of the whole in the House, and it would be discussed there. I know that certain committees do that.

The Chair: Ms. Phinney, we cannot tell the House what to do. Sorry about that.

Ms. Beth Phinney: We wouldn't be telling the House what to do. There are certain committees for which that is done. I'm wondering if the clerk could tell us the rules. We could get the other bill finished now if there was a way of doing that.

The Chair: Mr. Clerk.

Ms. Beth Phinney: If you don't know the rule, okay, but don't—

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Stephen Knowles): Mr. Chairman, what I should probably do is read Standing Order 81(5) into the record:

Supplementary estimates shall be deemed referred to a standing committee or committees immediately they are presented in the House. Each such committee shall consider and shall report, or shall be deemed to have reported, the same back to the House not later than three sitting days before the final sitting or the last allotted day in the current period.

Mr. Chairman, the last allotted day in the current period, according to the Standing Orders, is March 26. Of course, the House won't be sitting on March 26; the House will be sitting March 24. Therefore, the last supply day available to the House would be Thursday, March 24.

The Chair: Ms. Stronach.

Ms. Belinda Stronach: Perhaps Ms. McDonough would accept an amendment to her motion that strikes out "appropriate Departmental officials be called".

The Chair: There is already an amendment. If you want to make a subamendment, go ahead.

Ms. Belinda Stronach: I move to strike "that appropriate Departmental officials be called to appear". Strike everything after "and".

Can you amend this motion so that it can be dealt with now?

A voice: It's a friendly amendment.

The Chair: Everything is friendly here. There's no problem with it, but there are technicalities.

We have an amendment from Mr. Paquette. Your amendment is not touching the amendment by Mr. Paquette.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: I'm prepared to include it in my amendment.

[English]

The Chair: That's fine.

If Mr. Paquette says it will be part of his amendment, we could accept your amendment with the one by Mr. Paquette.

• (1005)

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: For the sake of concordance, Mr. Chairman, I move to insert "immediately" and to delete the three...

[English]

The Chair: The subamendment just amends the amendment itself. That's why I asked Monsieur Paquette, because he was the one who proposed the amendment. If he agrees, his amendment will include that by Ms. Stronach.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC): Can we hear his amendment?

The Chair: His amendment is to do it immediately. That's the one word he had. That was his amendment.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Will he include that at the front?

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Chairman, I agree to include that in my amendment.

[English]

The Chair: Ms. Stronach, could you please repeat what you just mentioned?

Ms. Belinda Stronach: I propose that we strike "and that appropriate Departmental officials be called to appear prior to the last day of the present Supply period".

The Chair: Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: I have several questions.

First of all, to the clerk, through you, Chair, would you have several of the copies of the estimates that can be circulated to this committee now?

The Clerk: I have one copy in my briefcase.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Chair, I don't believe we should proceed with this until we have several copies made, first of all. I do need to see the estimates if we're going to delve into the estimates.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Chairman, we've received them all.

[English]

Hon. Dan McTeague: Excuse me, but I have the floor, Mr. Paquette. I've been listening to you and your guys for a while. If you want to make this work, I think it's important that we all be informed.

Mr. Chairman, I have grave concerns, as expressed by Mr. Bevilacqua, that we're doing so without the presence of the officials. Without the presence of the officials, I think it clearly would lack credibility, in that we would not have the kind of repartee and the kinds of questions that could be properly answered. If the honourable members are asking me to answer the government's position, I can do that, but I don't even have the estimates in front of me here.

I think it would only be fair, Mr. Paquette and others, that we all have copies of the estimates and that those be produced in both languages immediately before proceeding.

The Chair: Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, I figure that's pretty self-evident. You can't deal with estimates if people don't have them in front of them.

The Chair: Ms. McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure we all agree that conditions would have been more favourable if we had agreed to invite the officials for today. That was not done on Tuesday, as we requested. We're now dealing with these estimates because the majority of the committee voted that we should do so. I'm happy to make available to government members copies of the estimates that are before us if that will facilitate things.

Ms. Beth Phinney: She has copies.

He's not listening.

The Chair: I just want to make the point, Ms. McDonough, that you moved to go to some committee business. We haven't moved to go to the officials. That's the difference, and I wanted to pinpoint that for you. We just moved to go to committee business.

Committee business means one thing. You can move to do it immediately, as Mr. Paquette and Ms. Stronach want to do it. After that we need to go to all the other motions, because doing that was accepted by the full committee. After we talk about this, if we agree to do this, we're going to go to Mr. Menzies' motion and your other motion, and then we have to go through all the other motions before we deal with this motion about the estimates. That was your motion in the beginning. You cannot amend your motion that you presented to us in the beginning.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. We have a motion now before us. I guess we should call the question to deal with it, and then if the motion—

The Chair: We didn't call the motion because of your request to keep talking about the motion. I want to be fair to everyone.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Okay. Let's have the motion and the question, and then let's move to deal with estimates.

The Chair: No. The motion is to deal now with the estimates, but we have a previous motion that was accepted by the full committee to go to the committee business. That means all the committee business. That means after we deal with this—

Ms. Alexa McDonough: No.

The Chair: No, no, I'm sorry. You were not done, Mr. Vellacott, when the first question came.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: We passed a motion.

The Chair: We passed a motion. The first motion we passed was
[Translation]

the committee's business,

[English]

the committee's business. Now this committee's business includes I think six motions before this one. We could deal with them in five minutes, three minutes—I don't mind this, but that was the first motion.

The first motion has been accepted. We'll go to this motion now. We have an amendment to the motion. We can deal with the motion with the amendment and get to the motion. After that we'll go to the other motion, and then back to the previous motion of Mrs. McDonough.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Chairman, I don't understand very clearly. The motion we have before us is that the committee consider... However, my amendment asks that it be done immediately. If the amendment carries, we'll study this motion and then move on to the others. Moreover, it's in second position.

The Chair: Except that your amendment doesn't amend the first motion, Mr. Paquette. The first motion can't be amended as such; there are rules to that effect. So if the motion that Ms. McDonough has introduced and that is amended by yours, and that of Ms. Stronach is accepted, we'll move on to the other amendments.

•(1010)

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Why?

The Chair: Because there's another prior motion. A prior motion can't be defeated.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: You're referring to the motion to move on to point 2 on the agenda.

The Chair: No. In her first motion, Ms. McDonough moved to suspend proceedings on Bill C-25 and to move on to committee business. Committee business includes all the motions.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: So we can start with that of Ms. McDonough and then move on to the others.

The Chair: No. We're going to move on to the others...

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Why?

The Chair: There are six of them. We have to move on to the other motions. When we've examined the other motions, we'll come back to discuss the Estimates.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Chairman, in committees, we usually follow the order of the motions as they appear on the agenda. This stands in second position.

The Chair: Yes, but these aren't motions to send for persons.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: If the amendment carries, it seems to me it has been done immediately. So we wouldn't need officials. We also have all the documents.

The Chair: Mr. Vellacott.

[English]

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I'm just saying I don't need to have been here before to understand the fact that if you have put immediately into this here motion...which is then preceding everything else. Those other ones you're talking about are secondary to this at that point. If you pass this—I mean, if we want to get on and we're talking about getting expeditiously to the business, then you have a motion that says we move to the supplementary estimates immediately. You strike the last part. Then you have to move immediately to that and not these other motions.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Let's get on with dealing with it.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: It's first on the list anyway.

The Chair: I have Madame Lalonde and then Monsieur Bevilacqua.

Madame Lalonde.

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me this is all entirely in order, in view of the fact that we've already carried the previous motion and are now on this motion that the committee consider the Supplementary Estimates. We've just moved an amendment that states "immediately". We have to discuss that first. Then we'll vote on it, and, since we're setting ourselves an agenda stating "immediately", we'll dispose of it.

We've debated this subject for 15 minutes. I thought we were going to move on immediately to examine the Supplementary Estimates.

[English]

The Chair: The chair recognizes Mr. Bevilacqua and then Mr. McTeague.

Before, I tried to be fair. Everyone had a chance to explain. I want to allow the members on the ministerial side to give their opinions regarding the matter.

I have Mr. Bevilacqua and then Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, I think there's a little bit of confusion here. We had a motion dealing with the fact that we're going back to committee business. Is that right, Mr. Chairman?

The Chair: Yes.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: That was fine. You're saying now that this means we have to deal with all the motions, right up to the one on Mikhail Gorbachev. Is that right?

The Chair: Yes.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I just want to know, what is the status now?

The Chair: The status is that the opposition have the numbers and they want to discuss it immediately. After everyone explains the situation, we're going to vote on the motion of Ms. McDonough, amended by Mr. Paquette and Ms. Stronach.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: The point of what you're saying is you want to deal with the estimates. I'm asking if we are moving to the other motions as well.

The Chair: We're still on the amendment of Mr. Paquette.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Oh, you're still on the amendment of Mr. Paquette.

The Chair: Yes, we're still on the amendment of Mr. Paquette.

Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Chair, I'm willing to study anything and everything the committee wants. I want to clarify that if we're going to discuss the estimates, I have no difficulty with doing that. Again, I don't see before me here a copy of those supplementary estimates in which I presume we're going to start. Mr. Menzies is not here. He won't be able to move his. Is this correct, if we move on to that? I'm just trying to get some clarification. Mr. Menzies is not here. Will we be able to deal with his as well, in tandem?

• (1015)

The Chair: No. Another member can do it on behalf of Mr. Menzies.

Hon. Dan McTeague: We have, of course, as Mr. Bevilacqua pointed out, another motion from Ms. McDonough, and yet another motion from Ms. McDonough, and yet another motion from Ms. McDonough dealing with Mr. Gorbachev.

I note, Mr. Chairman, the second-last one—the last motion referring to the motion put on the floor here—does indeed deal with RADARSAT. The officials here, poor fellows that they are, are probably going to have to endure our laments on the very subjects before us. If the committee might see it feasible, we could allow them to go. It's fair to say that in the 38 or 40 minutes we have, they're probably not going to have a chance to get back to this.

The Chair: Before I do this, I'm going to want to go for the motion, as amended by Mr. Paquette.

Hon. Dan McTeague: How many do they have voting on the Conservatives?

The Chair: Seven.

[Translation]

Hon. Dan McTeague: No, there are four of them.

The Chair: Four plus two, plus one.

[English]

Ms. Belinda Stronach: Can we not defer Ted Menzies' motion until the next meeting?

The Chair: Oh, yes, we can defer.

We'll go first to the amendment.

I'm going to call the question on the amendment of Mr. Paquette. Mr. Paquette said immediately, and it was deleted, that “and that appropriate Departmental officials be called to appear prior to the last day of the present Supply period”. That's the amendment.

I call the vote on the amendment of Mr. Paquette.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: : We are going to vote on the motion as amended.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

The Chair: I'm going to ask Ms. McDonough, because she's the mover of this motion, how long she thinks it's going to take to go through this motion, because we have some witnesses in front of us. We're finishing at 11 o'clock. Do you think we're going to have time to go back to RADARSAT later, or do you want me to ask the witnesses to leave the room?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: As a courtesy to the RADARSAT witnesses and officials, I think it is in order for us to indicate that we as a committee have voted to deal with the estimates because this is the last opportunity to do so.

The Chair: That's not my question.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: It's unlikely to take us less than 40 minutes.

In any case, it seems to me it's a courtesy for us to indicate we don't wish to intrude on your time. When we finish dealing with the estimates, we will come back to dealing with RADARSAT when the committee reconvenes after the break next week.

As a practical matter, Mr. Chairman—you perhaps have already noted this—there is not now anything scheduled to come before this committee on March 22. That's the first meeting of this committee after today. We could agree today for the RADARSAT bill to be dealt with on March 22, the next time this committee sits.

The Chair: The next meeting of the committee is on Tuesday, March 22.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: As far as I know—I guess I'm looking to the chairman or the clerk for direction on this—on the calendars distributed there is nothing scheduled for this meeting on March 22. We could, today, come to an agreement. Maybe we could even unanimously agree the RADARSAT bill will be brought back.

The Chair: My question will be very simple, Ms. McDonough. At the next meeting I want to get a courtesy also for our witnesses. At our next meeting are you going to come up with another motion to again push Bill C-25 and get some other witnesses?

You have the majority on your side. I want to be straight because I want to be courteous with our witnesses. This morning you came out. You had your caucus before. That's fine. I accept the rules, and I accept what you've done this morning.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Good.

The Chair: It's not that. But I want to be sure that on March 22, when they appear, we are going to go through Bill C-25 at that time, or are you going to come up with another motion to do the estimates, maybe on 2005-06, or some other motion? I want to be sure.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure it's in order for you to engage in that kind of conjecture—

The Chair: No, no, I asked you very—

Ms. Alexa McDonough: —but let me say again—

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: —which I've already said—it's already on the record—that it seems to me this committee could unanimously today agree that RADARSAT would be dealt with on March 22. We have a blank slate on March 22. And we could continue this until we have no time left to deal with the estimates, or we could do what I suggested, which is extend the courtesy to our witnesses that today we're dealing with the estimates—because the majority will of the committee has been expressed—and on March 22 I would propose that we invite them back, and we'll deal with the RADARSAT legislation.

•(1020)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Valley.

[*English*]

Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.): Not only am I a new member to the committee, but I'm a new member of Parliament. I would just like to apologize to the witnesses who came to give us testimony today.

The calendar hasn't changed. The other side of the room controls the agenda. Things have been left too long, and you've had your day wasted, so I apologize for that.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. McDougall, Mr. Baines, Mr. Johnson, Madam Small, Mr. Mann, thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

We excuse you for this morning. We'll no doubt see you again on the morning of March 22 to continue consideration of Bill C-25. Thank you for your understanding.

Mr. Robert McDougall: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[*English*]

The Chair: Now, I have a question for the members. When we started discussing the motion of Ms. McDonough, I asked my clerk to get the supplementary estimates document for every member. Do

you want to discuss it right now, or do you want to be sure that all members have the supplementary estimates?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Chairman, Ms. McDonough informed me that she had copies of the Estimates.

[*English*]

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Chair, I do trust Ms. McDonough, and I know she has copies in both French and English,

[*Translation*]

but I need two copies, and that request was made to the Clerk. So I would ask that we take two minutes to go make photocopies and distribute them. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Bevilacqua.

[*English*]

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, I do have a question. Sometimes when we have photocopied materials, they aren't actually copies of the originals. Mr. Chairman, I would like the clerk to make sure that the photocopied material we are receiving from Ms. McDonough is in fact from the original document. That's why we have clerks and individuals like you, to check if in fact these documents are as they are in the original document.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. McDonough.

[*English*]

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, could I just seek clarification from you or the clerk? I understood it to have been reported to us that the clerk was quickly endeavouring to ensure that people had copies of the estimates. Is that the case?

The Chair: No.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Believe me, I don't intend to get into a wrangle about whether—

The Chair: No, we don't have the copies. You need to realize one thing, Ms. McDonough. Your motion, which we discussed, was amended. At that time you said the appropriate department officials should be called. Now, this morning we're discussing Bill C-25. I understand all the arguments concerning the time. And even if it's not yet in the House, because we're just sitting for four days before Easter... I understand all this.

But the clerk didn't call the officials because we didn't pass the motion. For this reason, the other members don't have the estimates in front of them.

Now, to discuss the estimates, I want to be fair. I think it would be fair for every member to get all the estimates. I don't know how many members on your side have all the estimates in front of them, the original copies. I just want to be sure about this.

Monsieur Paquette.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Chairman, the motion is quite clear; it says to consider it immediately, with or without documents. Ms. McDonough has documents, and I think it would be offensive to think she's giving us copies that aren't valid.

[*English*]

Hon. Dan McTeague: I have a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: I think we should continue our business.

[*English*]

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Chairman, this committee cannot possibly work in this fashion, where we haven't the documents in front of us.

Now, my request was made almost twenty minutes ago. I'm sure someone could have gone to a photocopier and got me a few copies; it's not a big deal.

I agree with Mr. Paquette. He has a motion to proceed with it immediately, but he's asking us to proceed with something when we don't have anything in front of us.

Do we have copies now?

The Chair: We'll request a copy the minute you put your motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: This is incredible. And they're in the minority!

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Paquette, even though this is something you've determined, if we had produced something in English only, you're the one who'd be listening.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: You've made us waste 45 minutes.

Hon. Dan McTeague: It's you who wasted 45 minutes by arriving 15 minutes late.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: That's...

Hon. Dan McTeague: You weren't here before 1993, so the comments you made at the start aren't valid.

[*English*]

The Chair: Please, order! We haven't adjourned.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: And they're in the minority! Imagine what it would be like if they were in the majority! They're arrogant.

[*English*]

The Chair: There are all these nice conversations.

[*Translation*]

Order, please. You've saved some time. Now all committee members have received their copies of the documents.

[*English*]

The motion was adopted this morning by this committee. Now the committee will study the supplementary estimates, as requested in the motion this morning and as requested also by the House.

Do you want to speak first on the estimates?

Do you all agree with the estimates?

•(1025)

Ms. Alexa McDonough: No. You have to call the estimates.

The Chair: I just gave him a shot.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Nice try. We believe in being expeditious, but that might be a bit much.

The Chair: The clerk tells me we need to call vote 1b.

Ms. McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, I wish to move that the operating expenditures set out in vote 1b be amended by reducing the amount that is before us by \$1.

Hon. Dan McTeague: I think I have one here.

The Chair: I just want to be sure we're all on the same page. It's page 125.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Dan McTeague: And in French, Mr. Chairman?

The Chair: What page is it on in the French version?

Mr. Pierre Paquette: It's on page 98.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Paquette.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Yes, it's on page 98 in the French version.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: We're following, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: The purpose of Ms. McDonough's motion is to reduce the amounts.

[*English*]

Now, you want to give me the figure, but which figure do you want to diminish by \$1? You're on page 125. Give me the figure, please.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: We'd like to propose a reduction of the estimate for \$12,011,400 that is before us to be reduced by \$1.

The Chair: Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, of course, welcome very much the opportunity to look at this very important motion, I'm sure with very substantial impact on the department. I would like to perhaps take a bit of time and read something here. You were referring to 1b, and it says here:

Operating expenditures, including the payment of remuneration and other expenditures subject to the approval of the Governor in Council in connection with the assignment by the Canadian Government of Canadians to the staffs of international organizations and authority to make recoverable advances in amounts not exceeding the amounts of the shares of such organizations of such expenses; authority for the appointment and fixing of salaries by the Governor in Council of High Commissioners, Ambassadors, Ministers Plenipotentiary, Consuls, Representatives on International Commissions, the staff of such officials and other persons to represent Canada in another country; expenditures in respect of the provision of office accommodation for the International Civil Aviation Organization; recoverable expenditures for assistance to and repatriation of distressed Canadian citizens and persons of Canadian domicile abroad, including their dependants; cultural relations and academic exchange programs with other countries; and, pursuant to paragraph 29.1(2)(a) of the *Financial Administration Act*, authority to expend revenues received in a fiscal year from, and to offset related expenditures incurred in the fiscal year arising from the provision of services related to: Canadian Education Centres; training services provided by the Canadian Foreign Service Institute; international telecommunication services; departmental publications; other services provided abroad to other government departments, agencies, Crown corporations and other non-federal organizations; specialized consular services; and international youth employment exchange programs....

This reduction of \$1 raises some very important fundamental issues, and one issue relates to which of these organizations will have to endure the \$1 cut.

•(1030)

Hon. Dan McTeague: Hear, hear!

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: How are they going to do it? How are they going to manage this major reduction, Mr. Chairman, of \$1? Are we saying we're going to take it away from the international youth employment exchange program? I've known Ms. McDonough for a long time and I know she cares about youth issues. How is she going to defend the reduction of \$1?

Some Canadians may say that when you're dealing with this amount of money, in fact a \$1 reduction could be a symbolic gesture, and perhaps they would probably welcome this new-found love of reducing amounts of money by the New Democratic Party, which is known to spend more than it makes—

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order—

The Chair: Ms. McDonough, please—

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: No, but I think—

The Chair: Ms. McDonough, please, there's no point of order when we debate. The floor belongs to Mr. Bevilacqua.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: No—

The Chair: For the first time we're like the opposition. We listened to you many times—

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, my point of order is not to debate—

The Chair: There's no such point of order. There's no point of order. He's debating and he has the floor—

Ms. Beth Phinney: Not in a debate.

The Chair: Fine.

I am right on this. Now what's your point of order, Ms. McDonough?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, I was asked to clarify what figure I was talking about in the estimates. I did so. I went to

talk to why I was making this proposal. You didn't recognize me to continue to do that and you went to Mr. Bevilacqua.

The Chair: I want to make the point that what you're doing right now is not a point of order; it's a debate.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: No, it's not a debate; it's a point of order, Mr. Chairman. You did not allow me to proceed when I...and it was a perfectly reasonable question that was asked: what is the estimate figure that I am asking be reduced by \$1?

I gave that clarification. I was proceeding to clarify precisely the point that is now being raised in ridicule and you did not allow me to do that; you went to the other side, so I didn't get to speak to my motion. I think that is a point of order.

I think it's not only proper that I be given the opportunity to speak to my motion, but had I been given the opportunity to do so, I would have put before the committee exactly what the reason for doing this is, and on that point of order, I still ask for the opportunity to do so.

The Chair: That's fine. Ms. McDonough, you can explain, and you can react right now about your motion. We'll do this, but after you explain to us what you mean, we'll go back to Mr. Bevilacqua.

She is going to explain what she wants.

Go ahead, Ms. McDonough. The floor is yours.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your recognizing my point of order and giving me the opportunity to speak to this.

Let me say very clearly—I think it's very important—there's a responsibility on anybody who moves to reduce an estimate to make it clear why they are doing so. It is obvious, and Mr. Bevilacqua is absolutely right, that the reason is a symbolic one. It is to express the dissatisfaction with the manner in which the government has dealt with the whole issue of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the budgetary supports for Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Were it procedurally possible, which it is not, for any of us to make an amendment increasing the budget, then that might very well have been in order to deal precisely with the concerns we have about the impoverishment of Foreign Affairs and International Trade budgets in recent years.

The reality is that there are many areas of extremely valuable work done by Foreign Affairs, and we're here dealing specifically with Foreign Affairs. We haven't yet come to the International Trade budget. There are a number of areas in which the resources have been inadequate for us to continue as the Canada we want to be, as the Canada others around the world want us to be, to be that peace builder, to be that peacemaker, to be that progressive force with other middle powers in the world, advancing human security.

I would undertake to say that in the area of advancing our agendas for United Nations reform, we need to put more resources behind that with regard to beginning to go beyond the words and the very sound proposal for the right to protect, that through Foreign Affairs we would be well-advised to be doing more work in that area.

We could spend a lot of time talking about areas in which there might be total agreement, or there might be some disagreement about possible areas where we would like to see an increase, but it is not within the purview, it is not within the rules to allow us to propose an increase in the amount that is in front of us. It is also recognized—and this point has already been made—that there is a time-honoured tradition and a procedure available to members to engage in a symbolic amendment to an estimate in order to register protest, to register dissatisfaction with the manner in which the government has dealt with the estimates and conducted the government's affairs.

So I want to make it very clear that the proposal to reduce the estimate by \$1 is not a reflection on the superb work that is done by our Foreign Affairs' officials. It's not a suggestion that in any of the areas that are identified here as falling within this particular estimate there is a desire to curb and constrain the work that is being done. In fact, the opposite is true. It is our feeling, it is our responsibility really as members, to take the opportunity that is presented by the supplementary estimates to indicate that we have concerns about the manner in which this government has dealt with the financial resources to support the work that is being done.

●(1035)

It is our feeling that the government proceeded in an arbitrary manner to allocate funds to divide the departments of Foreign Affairs and International Trade—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Exactly.

[*English*]

Ms. Alexa McDonough:—bypassing the opportunity for there to be debate on this matter, and bypassing the two windows of opportunity where the legislation splitting Foreign Affairs and International Trade could indeed have been considered by Parliament. In its wisdom, Parliament could have decided one way or the other whether this was a course we ought to pursue. The government chose not to do that until way after the fact.

There has already been considerable frustration and dissatisfaction expressed at this committee and in the House around the splitting of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and with the fact that we are still waiting for the government's international policy review paper. If there were going to be a reconfiguration of Foreign Affairs and International Trade—and what we're dealing with here are budgetary consequences of that—it should have flowed from the international policy review, not the other way around. It's really a question of putting the cart before the horse, before we even get to the question of whether there was adequate consultation with the various constituencies of public concern, to have the benefit of their wisdom, experience, and input. In fact, many who have expressed themselves on this subject have been deeply concerned about the implications of the government's proceeding with the splitting of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

I welcome the opportunity to be able to put this motion before the committee. I ask for the support of all members, and I hope that given the short time available we can get through these estimates. If it is not possible to get through these estimates by 11 o'clock, maybe we should consider extending the time, in order to deal with them fully.

●(1040)

The Chair: Thank you.

I just want to tell you that we'll finish by 11 because the environment committee is sitting here at 11 o'clock.

I'll go to Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I welcome the clarification by Ms. McDonough as to the reason why she reduced the budget in vote 1b in relation to the organizations and bodies that are listed there, including some programs for youth employment exchange programs.

I also want to clarify, Ms. McDonough, that I wasn't in any shape or form trying to ridicule what you said, but I believe that when we as parliamentarians make statements we have to defend them. I'm glad you defended your statement by saying that in fact it was a symbolic gesture—to show displeasure, I guess, at the manner in which the government has dealt with this particular issue.

I'm quite happy with the fact that we are dealing with estimates, because it gives us a great opportunity, as a committee and as parliamentarians, to discuss items that are important to Canadians. I'm going to ask the chairman if...

Voices: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Mr. Maurice Bevilacqua: We're going to have to have some silence and respect for members of Parliament when they're speaking.

It gives us a great opportunity, if I may go back to the original point, to go through item by item and assess the importance and the amount of money that is invested in these areas. As I reviewed the estimates, what struck me was how many things we are doing as a government and as a country that are having a positive impact on our foreign affairs and international trade, and the number of people who are being helped, the number of organizations that are receiving funding and putting it to good use to improve the quality of life of people throughout the world, and to also, in many ways, provide necessary resources for Canada to exercise an important role in international trade as well as in foreign affairs.

At a quick glance, as we go through pages 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, and 132, you will recognize some very important investments that the government is making in very important areas, whether you're looking at the Export Development Corporation, the NAFTA secretariat, or whether you are looking at other programs that relate to very specific contributions on international security and cooperation, namely the United Nations peacekeeping operation, the youth international internship program, the permanent secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, the Canadian land mine fund, and the Canadian education centres. You may want to pause for a few minutes to reflect upon how important these programs are in making sure that individuals are provided with opportunities that enhance Canada's place in the world.

Let us look, for example, at the youth international internship program. What does this bring to the table? What does it create—

•(1045)

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I have a point of order.

The point of order is we have not set any time limits for speeches, and I think it would be in order to do that. Until we have an understanding as committee members of how long he continues to go on, I think it's certainly in order to do that.

At the same time, a point of information would be that there is no environment committee meeting, so I also want to move that we continue or extend this meeting. But first we need to set the times here. If Mr. Bevilacqua wants to continue at length here, then we could just simply continue beyond the 11 o'clock hour and go at great length today. This is the last day in which we must do this, and I think the committee would be of a mind to proceed if he wants to continue in that manner. But we need to shorten up the time and decide what length of time we have here.

The Chair: Mr. Vellacott, this is not a point of order—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: In terms of the time?

The Chair: I let you speak. Allow me to respond to you.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Sure.

The Chair: It's not a point of order. It's just that you didn't have the floor and you asked for a point of order. It's all right for any member to make this motion after this speaker has finished speaking. Anyone who is speaking after.... The one who will be speaking after this will be Madame Lalonde. If Madame Lalonde, when she gets the floor, requests to do what you just pinpointed and mentioned, she will be allowed to do so.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Is my question with respect to the length of time of speeches not something that is a point of order?

The Chair: Yes. But you have the floor. That is not a point of order. It will be for the next speaker, or if you've been called as the next speaker you could do it, but nobody requested in the beginning. These are the rules right now.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, but you can insert that as a point. It is a point of order.

The Chair: No.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Yes, you can.

The Chair: It's not a point of order.

Is it, Mr. Clerk?

The Clerk: I don't know what the point of order is, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: The point of order is length of time of speeches, and if he's going to carry on at length, I'm asking if that's possible.

The Clerk: What question of order is being questioned, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: The length of time he carries on.

The Chair: It's not a point of order. That's why. You pinpointed something that was right, but when somebody has the floor, we cannot change his right to speak. You cannot change it. You could change it after he finishes speaking.

Now, it's no problem. You're right when you say the environment committee has been cancelled. I told you in the beginning that we

would need to finish by 11 o'clock. That's right. It's cancelled. If I have a motion at that time to extend after 11 o'clock, that could be acceptable.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: So you're saying he has—

The Chair: He could speak like this for a while.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: So you're saying he has an indefinite length of time. Is that your response on this?

The Chair: After he finishes speaking, the next speaker could request a certain time.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: So he has an indefinite length of time to speak. Is that your point?

The Chair: Yes, that's my point.

Go ahead, Madam McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, I absolutely respect the member's right to speak and to speak at length, but I requested at the beginning that we extend the time, if we needed it, in order to deal with the estimates, and I think at the very least it's a reasonable point of order to request that equal time to the length taken—and I include myself in that, the length that I've already spoken—that Mr. Bevilacqua is speaking, that equal time be accorded to each member of the committee should they want to use that amount of time, and accordingly that we would conduct ourselves in such a way that we could extend the time of the committee to allow for that to happen.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. McDonough, I'm going to give you an explanation. When one raises a point of order, that means that something isn't going right at that time. However, everything was going very well: Mr. Bevilacqua had the floor and he was able to speak clearly, distinctly and precisely.

At first, we were supposed to leave by 11 o'clock because another committee was to sit here, the Environment Committee, but that committee's meeting was cancelled. We may therefore extend our meeting, but I can't tell you right now whether we're going to do so. It's not a problem for me. If committee members want to continue this meeting after 11 o'clock, since the room is available, we'll extend the meeting. But that's not a point of order because, when you raise a point of order, it's to say that something isn't consistent with the Standing Orders at the time the point of order is raised. However, everything was in order. Mr. Bevilacqua had the floor, and he may continue speaking.

Mr. Vellacott, when Mr. Bevilacqua has finished his remarks, if he stops in two minutes, the next person authorized to speak will be Ms. Lalonde. She may then request that a time limit be set for each speaker in order to discuss Ms. McDonough's amendment.

•(1050)

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I could do it.

The Chair: Yes, you could do it, just as you could speak as long as you want, Madam. You'll be the next to take the floor.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: All right.

[English]

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: But she expressed the intent that we should be extending beyond 11 o'clock, and it was not a matter of meeting here or anywhere, and that's in effect the essence of a motion. Why don't we consider that?

The Chair: I won't set the clock for the moment. We just keep going.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, but if she earlier had expressed, prior to Mr. Bevilacqua....

The Chair: She had expressed prior for the reason that I didn't know that the environment committee was not sitting.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: But it wasn't an issue....

The Chair: When I came here this morning the clerk told me we needed to finish by 11 o'clock because the environment committee was coming here for its hearings.

Now, at that time I said to Ms. McDonough we need to finish by 11 o'clock. Knowing that the committee is not coming at 11 o'clock, we can just keep going for the moment. There's no problem.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, no, but her statement wasn't a matter of sitting and doing it here. The environment committee, whether they met or not, had nothing to do with the issue. You could always recess for five minutes and move across the hallway or to another room. That's a different issue.

The Chair: No.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Her request was not that we meet here.

The Chair: To get a room across the hall is much more difficult.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I understand, but that's not the point.

The Chair: Across the hall, I mean....

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: That's a logistics issue, and she wasn't asking to meet here. She was expressing specific intent to meet and to continue after, and it wasn't about the environment committee being here.

The Chair: No. This is your opinion. For me, the opinion of Ms. McDonough was a request to....

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I will challenge the chair.

The Chair: No, it's not to challenge.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I will challenge the chair, and I think we should go to a vote to question the chair's judgment of ruling on that.

The Chair: No, no. It's not a ruling.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Well, what is a ruling?

The Chair: You're giving an interpretation regarding Ms. McDonough.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Okay, then we—

The Chair: No, you're giving an interpretation. I have a different interpretation. I'm going to ask Ms. McDonough what her interpretation was. When she requested going over 11 o'clock, I don't think she was requesting going to any other room—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: She didn't say.

The Chair: Please, Mr. Vellacott, she's the one who moved it.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Then ask her.

The Chair: I'm going to tell what I understood from Ms. McDonough. She pinpointed that she would like to go over.... Usually when we decide to go over, we remain in the same room. That was my understanding. I say it's impossible, because there'll be another committee.

She didn't say that if the committee can't sit here, we'll go to another room. I just want to get clarification of the request from Ms. McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: I appreciate the clarification from yourself and the clerk that we in fact can continue in this room after 11. So in the spirit of moving forward with the committee's business, I would be in favour of Mr. Bevilacqua continuing his comments.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: In favour of me wrapping up, right?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Well, yes, of course. I didn't want to be guilty of trying to shortchange you.

We then go to Madam Lalonde. If we come up to 11 o'clock and there are other committee members who haven't spoken yet to the estimates, we can agree to extend the committee, thank goodness, right in this place, because it's now available.

Perhaps in the spirit of getting on with the committee's work, we can continue to hear from Mr. Bevilacqua.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, CPC): We can do anything we want.

The Chair: Okay. Mr. Bevilacqua.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: What was the clarification?

The Chair: The clarification is that we will keep going.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: We're going to continue on beyond 11 o'clock. Is that what it is?

The Chair: We will continue beyond 11 o'clock.

I have the privilege as the chair. You're always challenging me, Mr. Vellacott. That's fine, but I want to do this properly. I want to get the opposition...and you're the opposition in Parliament, but you rule the committee because you outnumber the ministerial side.

I have the privilege as the chair to knock this gavel and say the meeting is over. I want you to express yourself on this, and we'll spend 10 to 15 minutes on this. I'm not going to close it; I love it. We're just going to keep going. That's all.

But if you're always challenging me to see what I'm going to do, I'm telling you that it is possible for me to knock this and to say the meeting is over, and we would walk out. But what would happen then in the next meeting? Everyone would be pissed off. I want to get a good committee working, as we always say, with friendly meetings.

We're going to keep going. If Mr. Bevilacqua feels—and it's his privilege—that he's going to speak until noon, he'll speak until noon. We want to go on because we now understand that the motion is to diminish it by \$1. We understand the point of view of Ms. McDonough, because you cannot increase the budget. It's illegal to increase the budget by \$1; it would be reversible by the chair. At that time, we'll go to Mr. Bevilacqua. If he says we know your concern, we can go through to other business after that and close.

But I must tell you that I will need to leave by 11:45, and some other members would like to leave also because they have some other appointments in the House.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Can I express my thanks to you for pursuing that.

The Chair: Sure, if you want to express your thanks, I will take it. Thank you. You are very kind.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I appreciate that. We have the clarification, and I would now like to have the floor to move the question. We will move to the question.

The Chair: No, he's speaking.

• (1055)

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: You just gave me the floor, and I would like to move the question.

The Chair: Mr. Vellacott, when we're debating, we cannot call a question.

Mr. Bevilacqua has the floor. After that, it will be Madame Lalonde, and we'll see after that. If you want to speak after Madame Lalonde, I'll take you next.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: We can move the question.

The Chair: We cannot call the question. It's the rule. In a debate, we cannot call the question until the debate is over.

Mr. Bevilacqua, do you want to wrap up? We want to keep going.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, I would imagine that young people who participate in the international youth internship program would probably want to know that this committee not only endorses but is also very proud of the work they're doing across the world in exporting fundamental democratic principles that Canadians cherish, and how, with their youthful spirit, they are able to reach out to individuals throughout the world to help them in the many challenges they face. Why is that important? It's important, Mr. Chairman, because in the final analysis one of the things we as Canadians can take a great deal of pride in is the fact that we have evolved into a great democracy, a democracy that is a real example to the rest of the world.

Sitting in what I consider a very comfortable nation, one that respects the rule of law, that is very progressive, that is socially just, that espouses the values of tolerance and compassion, it is sometimes easy to forget that there are countries beyond our borders that do not have the benefits associated with democracy and democratic institutions. As our young people fan out throughout the world and export these very sound democratic principles, and as they really take opportunities to teach young people and participate with non-governmental organizations, the fact is that there is a responsibility on the part of countries like Canada to do that, to give of ourselves to the betterment of the global village.

I think I speak for both sides of the committee table here when I say that responsibility is something we have as a government, because we are indeed blessed to have these principles really as part of our own being, of our inner essence of who we are as individuals. There's a great deal of pride associated with that.

Back in the late eighties and early nineties, Mr. Chairman, I chaired a national task force on youth. It resulted in the youth

employment strategy of the federal government when we formed the government in 1993. I say this because as I travelled the country, young people were not only telling me they wanted to be active participants within the boundaries of our nation, but they also felt a duty and a responsibility to share the benefits of Canadian citizenship with other individuals abroad. As a matter of fact, it's something we raised thereafter—and Madame Lalonde would remember this from our human resources development committee days—

• (1100)

Ms. Francine Lalonde: At first.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: We were struck by the sincerity of Canada's youth and by their willingness to take on these challenges when they said they knew there were things in this world that went above and beyond self-interest, that there was a responsibility of citizenship that went beyond the citizenship found within the boundaries of our nation.

What I'm talking about, Mr. Chairman, is the great position this nation is in when we talk about really establishing Canada as truly a nation of world citizenship.

That message came loud and clear from young people. Those young people reminded me as a parliamentarian that in fact their point of view should be expressed very openly in debates in the House of Commons. As we begin to try to shape a better world, in fact, young people want in. They don't want to be excluded. They want us to practice the politics of inclusion, rather than the politics of exclusion.

What this means is that a government must respond to those needs expressed so eloquently by young people who are saying, provide us with help, provide us with the tools, and we'll give of ourselves to improve the situation throughout the world.

So why am I so proud of this youth international internship program? I'm proud of the fact that we are investing the amount of money we are, according to page 128 of the supplementary estimates (B), 2004-2005, under the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. I'm proud of that fact because it shows our commitment as individuals and as parliamentarians to recognize the role that young people can in fact play. And they can make a contribution that speaks to their awareness and to the considerable talent they can provide other countries with.

So Madame Lalonde and I and so many others travelled the country seeking, I remember back then, a review of social security—

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Yes, the good times....

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: —which was the most important social security review of a generation.

What you gathered from that was that there was a real willingness on the part of Canadians to bring about positive changes to peoples' lives and to improve their quality of life.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: And to not cut unemployment insurance.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I know that people, I remember, from all parties really wanted to support youth initiatives. I'm not surprised, Mr. Chair, that in fact the government has invested in this youth international internship program.

Let's talk about that. What does it mean in real terms? In real terms it means that it's a real win-win situation. It's a win-win situation because young people are going to be provided with an opportunity to contribute to the well-being of our global village. Not only are they helping other people, but indeed they are becoming de facto ambassadors of everything Canada stands for.

The reason why that needs to be stressed, Mr. Chairman, is that we can't simply sit back and think that we don't have a responsibility to people in other countries. I think it's a fundamental issue. I think in many ways it is critical. It's critical that people in this country understand the great contribution we have made and the great potential of this nation. I think when we look within ourselves, when we dig deep, when we begin to really feel what it means to be a Canadian, then the youth international internship program brings to light all that is truly positive about the Canadian experience.

Mr. Chairman, I could speak at length about the youth international internship program—

An hon. member: There goes the youth.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: —because it is a program that I—
• (1105)

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: The youth are going away, Mr. Chairman. I don't know what you did, but you can't—

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: It's a riveting speech. Stay, please.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Which youth are you talking about?

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I just want you to know, Deepak, they may be members of the youth international internship program.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Well, they are going. They are worried about this one dollar you're talking about, the impact of the dollar that's going to be there.

Hon. Dan McTeague: They're leaving because they're too afraid you're going to cut the budget on them.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: It's working quite well. I think what they're concerned about is the cuts that were enunciated early on in the day. I know, Mr. Fitzpatrick, perhaps you missed that point.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, CPC): Was that for the gun registry?

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: There was a reduction of a dollar that Ms. McDonough had announced.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: That's fair. I'll give it back to him. I have a dollar here. Is that what he wants?

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, as we also look at other great investments we have made, like United Nations peacekeeping operations, when you talk about peacekeeping, you're talking about something Canadians are really well known for, that we have an impressive international record on.

Mr. Chairman, we very much need to look, for example, at the great contribution Pearson made in the area of peacekeeping and how important that was in making sure we could contribute to something that is, essentially, a very important element in dealing with situations related to war—helping nations make that transition from the time the war is taking place to when they have democratic institutions flourishing, and, may I say, in some cases also the

economic restructuring of nations. As we have learned recently, when you look at countries that are undergoing that transition you begin to recognize that one of the things that is very important for economies to prosper, for economic structures to become viable, is the issue of security.

I remember in the days dealing with the finance committee, after the tragic events of September 11, how we collectively, as a committee, recognized the fact that national security had become a precondition for economic growth. We saw this in North America, specifically after the September 11 tragic events. We began to realize and we now have a greater appreciation for the fact that when nations are going through challenges worldwide, we have a responsibility to make sure that the people who live within the boundaries of those nations feel secure. It's very difficult to engage in economic development of a nation if there is no security within those boundaries.

What does that mean as we deal with this new reality we unfortunately face in reference to things like terrorism? That is the reason we've made some major investments.

I'll go back to a few years ago, when the finance committee.... And by the way, the majority of the recommendations we made back then were adopted by the Minister of Finance, the now Prime Minister of Canada, who also recognized that because national security—and when we're talking about the United States and Canada, continental security—is extremely important not only to save lives, but also to bring about prosperity to a nation, investments had to be made in that area. That is the reason why, as we examine these Foreign Affairs and International Trade estimates, you will find that there are many items related to this.

Why is this important? It is important because after September 11, Mr. Chairman, North America woke up to a reality that is the reality in many other parts of the world. In many ways, North America prior to that event was immune, really.

• (1110)

We've had very few acts of terrorism, but I think September 11 told us all—in the House of Commons, in boardrooms of the country, and in many other places in our nation—that we need to be vigilant. If it's going to require investments, so be it.

Back then we, the finance committee, promoted a package to invest over \$7 billion on issues related to national security. Why was that important? It was important because it was a response to the tragedy that had occurred, but it was also a response to the fact that there is a new reality within North America—

• (1115)

Hon. Dan McTeague: And in Europe. In Spain.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: —and in Europe that we need to respond to and that we can't simply sit back and hope it will go away. That is the challenge we face as Canadians and, may I add, as North Americans.

It's not a subject that brings a lot of joy to people, of course, because when we lose human lives in such a tragic event, we recognize we have a responsibility as governments to safeguard the interests of individual Canadians and North Americans and to make sure those individuals who have imposed their will in creating the unfortunate—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. I understand that we've already gone into this matter, under Standing Order 61, of moving that the committee sit beyond the ordinary hour. We're into the additional time now. Under Standing Order 26—if the clerk would want to look that up—we can also propose “without notice”. Standing Order 116 is very clear in terms of what we wanted to propose, which is our right to do at this time: we would propose that when you have to leave—because I understand you have other important business to do, Mr. Chair—

The Chair: At a quarter to twelve.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott:—Madam Lalonde take the chair as vice-chair so that the meeting can continue. That's what I would propose as a motion at this time, and in order to do that...according to Standing Orders 61, 26, and now 116.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: What he's saying, Mr. Chair, is that you go.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No. I enjoy—

The Chair: You're much more polite.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: You're an important man, with many other important things to do. At that point it will be necessary to have some other person take the chair.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: You're an important man. Go.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Under those Standing Orders, I propose that Madam Lalonde take the chair at the time you have to step along to more important matters, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: I'll ask for clarification from my clerk, but at the moment I'm still in the chair.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I'm not trying to push you out of here; let's be clear about that.

The Chair: It took me eight years to become chair. I'm not going to let it go that quick.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: It's a non-debatable motion, I think.

The Chair: I'm seeking clarification on a motion to remove the chair.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I'm not asking to remove you; I'm saying when you have to go.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: It's when you have to remove yourself. We're looking ahead.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: That's the motion. Don't be offended.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: It's not a personal attack, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: No, Mr. Fitzpatrick, I understand. I just want to inform Mr. Vellacott of the same thing I told you in the beginning: it's not a point of order.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: It is a point of order.

The Chair: No, it's not a point of order at the moment; we're debating. You have a point of order if something is not going

properly right now, and everything is going fine. That's what a point of order is.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: Didn't you make a motion?

The Chair: No, he cannot make a motion.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: We had an understanding that under Standing Order 61 we were going to carry on the meeting. Is that correct? That was what we—

The Chair: I don't know which article you're talking about understanding. I didn't see the clock, and we're going—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: You said we were going to continue on after—

The Chair: We're going to continue for the moment.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Right, but at the point you leave we'll have a bit of a dilemma, so I'm interjecting at this point. We've not set times as to when that would be, but when you depart—

The Chair: I said at the beginning and with Ms. McDonough that we're going to finish by 11:45. I said that.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, it was that we were just going to continue, that you had to leave at that point.

The Chair: No. I'm going to wait a few seconds for clarification from the clerk.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Under Standing Order 26, you can propose without motion....

It's of an emergent nature here, under Standing Order 116, and one of those is that we have somebody else carry on with the chair.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: You left a void that we have to fill, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay, you explain this, Mr. Clerk.

The Clerk: All I'm saying, Mr. Chairman, is that normally when a member is in the course of a debate, these motions may be moved, but they can't be moved under a point of order.

A point of order is not for the purpose of moving motions. A point of order is for the purpose of calling to the attention of the House or the committee that we are out of order, that there is something that is not functioning correctly, that the rules are not being followed on the Standing Orders.

I often think the French expression,

[*Translation*]

“point of order”, is more appropriate.

[*English*]

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: But with respect, Mr. Clerk, we cannot carry on once the chair is no longer in the way. So that is something under Standing Order 116 that supercedes. We can't carry on a meeting without—

The Chair: What you're saying, Mr. Vellacott, is hypothetical.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, but at the point that you leave—

The Chair: You're losing time.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I understand that, but at the point that you leave, we cannot be in a crisis situation, and Standing Order 116—

The Chair: If by 11:45 I decide to stay and I cancel my other appointment—that I can do—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Oh, so you're telling me at this point that you're going to carry on.

The Chair: I don't know, but we'll debate it and we'll see whether Mr. Bevilacqua is finished or not finished. I'll see at that time. But that's not a point of order.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: But we agree that the meeting continues on indefinitely.

The Chair: No, we didn't say indefinitely. I agreed that—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: You said you had to go.

The Chair: I didn't say indefinitely.

• (1120)

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Mr. Chair, with respect, you said you had to go at that point. I understand, and that's why I'm trying to accommodate you—

The Chair: But it's just 11:25.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: But we have to have a chair at that point, Dr. Patry.

The Chair: No, it's too early.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Well, no, but at that point, before that juncture when you leave, are you figuring or assuming to—

The Chair: I don't know yet, and that's not a problem.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Well, the meeting is not concluding at 12:45. We have to have a chair at that point.

The Chair: That's 11:45; you said 12:45.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I'm sorry, at 11:45.

But at that point, are you assuring me, Dr. Patry—

The Chair: No, we're not assuring for the moment—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: —that you have a chair or that you are continuing?

The Chair: I'll contact my assistant and I'll see what I can do.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: But the meeting continues at that point, whether you or someone else—

The Chair: I don't know if the meeting is going to continue. I told you at the beginning that I wanted to work in the spirit of cooperation with all the members. I said I could have stopped by 11 o'clock. I wanted to get cooperation, and now you have a big motion to reduce the budget by \$1.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Can we ask—

The Chair: It could be that you'll add another subamendment that you want to reduce it by \$1 million. I don't know. Anything can happen.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Can we ask the clerk, then, for clarification—

The Chair: You're discussing the chair. Is he privileged to remain here or not remain here? I have no idea.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: That is true, but may we ask the clerk, then, what happens if Dr. Patry has to remove himself at 11:45? Do we not have to have a backup plan in place at that point?

The Chair: It's not relevant to the discussion right now, Mr. Vellacott.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: But it is, because at that minute when you walk away, if there's nobody in place—

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: There will be a lot more of that.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: —we have a problem. You can't walk away.

The Chair: We'll solve the problem at that time.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Well, let's ask the clerk. Do we have to have that issue resolved before then?

The Chair: No, we cannot resolve the issue before that.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Well, can we resolve it before 11:45? You cannot have a meeting continue with the absence of a chair. Is that right?

The Chair: There's always a chair at every meeting.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Is it correct that we have to have a chair for the meeting to continue at that point? You cannot continue without a chair.

If you can continue, I'm okay with that and that's the end of this discussion.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: Let's hear your conclusions.

The Chair: Mr. Valley.

Mr. Roger Valley: Mr. Chair, there was no agreement to extend the meeting. You agreed to not see the clock. I suggest you see the clock at 11 a.m. This meeting is sinking into discussions on all sides of the table.

Call the meeting at 11 a.m. and adjourn.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I think you have to put it to the members at this point in terms of what was the understanding.

Hon. Dan McTeague: It's a motion of adjournment. There's no debate on a motion of adjournment.

The Chair: No, there's a motion of adjournment right now. We have a motion.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: You have a motion to adjourn? Okay, well, go for it.

The Chair: No, sorry—

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: We don't accept it.

The Chair: I'm sorry, I'm going to get clarification from the clerk.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: It's a debate. How can you accept a motion?

Ms. Francine Lalonde: It's important that those rules stand.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Could we have your motion?

Hon. Dan McTeague: It's desirable on one side.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: There was already a speaker.

[English]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: We want to hear what you have to say.

Continue, Robert. Paul will be happy with you, Maurizio.

The Chair: Your point, Mr. Vellacott, is not a point of order. I told you this. I repeat this. It's not a point of order.

Since the point of order is not a point of order, I'll go back to Mr. Valley, who requested an adjournment. We're going to vote on the adjournment, yes or no.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Chairman, he didn't have the floor.

[English]

The Chair: No, I said after I finish with Mr. Vellacott, because any time during a debate you can ask for adjournment.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: And if adjournment isn't agreed to, we move on to the next speaker.

[English]

The Chair: I didn't say that. You say that, if you're so keen, Monsieur Paquette.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: The rules should be rewritten, Mr. Chairman. We should be imaginative, inventive.

[English]

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Then what takes place?

The Chair: You do the vote, and after that Mr. Bevilacqua will keep....

Mr. Roger Valley: There was no agreement to extend debate, and if my memory is right, you agreed not to see the clock in deference to the opposition. I'm suggesting now you see the clock at 11 o'clock.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: On his comment, I think that's where there's an error of understanding on the part of at least the members on the government side. Mr. Chair, at this point you are required to poll the members here.

My understanding was clearly that you were leaving at 11:45. I did not understand that to be the conclusion of this meeting. You were leaving, so I put my motion forward so you could leave. So you need to poll the members to find out what their understanding was, without a presumption of what.... A member here has rendered his opinion, but ask other members here what they understood you to say at that moment.

• (1125)

The Chair: Okay. I said I didn't see the clock and in the spirit of cooperation I could stop by 11. I said that. It was very clear. I said we were going to keep going. There was no motion at all to say we would go to such and such a time. There was no motion.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Exactly.

The Chair: There was no motion from anyone, and having no motion at that time—Madame Lalonde just said that, and Madame McDonough also—that meant we were going to keep going. I said I'd like to finish by 11:45. That's what I said.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: I don't think that's the case.

Hon. Dan McTeague: For purposes of clarification, perhaps it might be helpful—

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: No point of order.

Hon. Dan McTeague: It's not a point of order; it's a point of clarification. I want to know, given the importance of the motion Ms. McDonough has brought forth on the question of supplementaries, if what we're dealing with right now can be reported to the House, and if so, under what strictures.

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: That requires a vote.

[English]

Hon. Dan McTeague: No. I need to clarify whether or not what we're discussing here can even be reported to the House.

The Chair: I'll ask the clerk to make this clarification, please.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, I read Standing Order 81(5) earlier during the meeting. All I can say is we only know at this stage that the last supply day in the period, according to the Standing Orders, is March 26. We know that the last sitting day is Thursday, March 24. We know that some time between now and March 24 there will be the last supply day in the period—the seventh supply day. Today is the sixth.

We probably imagine that this afternoon, during the Thursday question, the government House leader will indicate when next week the final supply day will be, but that doesn't mean the government could not change its mind and have it later or earlier.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Lalonde, do you have a comment to make on this clarification?

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I don't understand what the Clerk is saying on this point. We know the vote will be held on March 22. So I don't see what the point would be in meeting and talking about that on the twenty-fourth.

The Chair: He didn't say that, Ms. Lalonde.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Since the vote will be on March 22, we have to do it now.

The Chair: He didn't say that.

[English]

Hon. Dan McTeague: To clarify that point, I've just noted that the final allotted date was March 22. This was agreed to by the leaders in the House. Therefore, at this time, given that the routine proceeding has already passed, Chair and Clerk, could you now let us know the status of what we're doing? Put it in the proper context in terms of the decision that was just made by the House.

The Clerk: All I can say, Mr. Chairman, is of course I've heard these things too. I know most members are operating under a particular assumption—and I think most of us are—but all we can say is that no order of the House has been adopted, and of course the government has the latitude to change government orders if it so wishes. Therefore, I can't say that a particular day is definitely the one that will be the last day of supply days.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Chair, I'm just wondering if the clerk could tell us if indeed we would be in a situation now where we have in fact tabled a report late. What requirements would the House be under?

The Clerk: I would think, Mr. Chairman, that if the last supply day intervenes inside that three-day period, then the report would simply not be taken into account by the House. It would be invalid.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Are you telling me it's possible this is invalid then?

The Clerk: The standing order is quite clear, I think. The committees must report or are deemed to have reported no later than three days before the last supply day in the period.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Wait just a second. Can we just have one conversation at a time?

The Chair: Yes, go ahead, Mr. Bevilacqua. I just wanted to understand this point.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: The point I'm making here is if in fact we proceed with a vote today—I'm talking about right now—

The Chair: Sure.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: —what will happen with that? Are we still on time to report? That's the only question.

• (1130)

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, if, for example, the government does call the last supply day for Tuesday, March 22, we would not be on time.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: We would not be on time. That's a hypothetical situation, of course.

Hon. Dan McTeague: In context with that, I'm looking at the Standing Orders of the House, and the deadline, as far as I know, may have already passed, as routine proceedings ended some time this morning. The only possibility, I suspect, would be some kind of arrangement between all parties.

If I'm not mistaken, Chair—and Clerk, if you could correct me on this—perhaps that is something.... If we know that the date has passed, under our orders the only way we could get that back and report it—it doesn't matter what we do here—is by unanimous consent. Is that correct?

The Chair: The answer is yes.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Okay.

The Chair: Mr. Vellacott.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: That being said then, this is a hypothetical situation, of course. We don't if this is the case or not.

The Chair: Yes, that's true. Until it's in the House this afternoon, we don't know. If Madame Lalonde says yes, or if both sides agree it's going to be done this afternoon...but right now it's not done.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: So this is the last day, right?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: So to my earlier point, such that you can depart within 10 minutes—

The Chair: What about my coming departure? I mean, it's—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Let's vote.

[*English*]

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, but I'm just saying that this is an issue that needs to be resolved.

The Chair: Gosh, you want me to get out. I don't know; I'm going to start taking it personally.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, I don't want you to go. I want you to stay. Don't take it personally. We've worked together too long for you to think that I have anything personal at stake here.

I'm just saying that you do need to get an understanding from what others.... My clear understanding was that you were going to depart—regrettably—so we agreed with that, to get on, but we didn't know as well at that point...you need to get an understanding of what others—

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: Certainly, when this committee ends today is a point of order. Everybody at this table is entitled to know when for certain this committee hearing will end today.

You just can't leave it up in the air, Mr. Chair. We have a right to have that determined, and either you decide it or the committee does, but we just can't leave it open-ended. You have to agree with me on that point, don't you?

The Chair: I agree, and the fact that I said I'd—

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: Well, quit beating around the bush. Let's get a determination on this question.

That's a point of order.

The Chair: I need to get my clerk. The clerk is speaking with one of the assistants.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: I want to know when this meeting is ending.

The Chair: We could end the meeting right now.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: This is something for the committee to decide, sir; it's not just you entirely.

The Chair: No, I mean to say you are not—

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: If I make a motion to that effect, it's completely in order.

The Chair: There are no motions for the moment. We cannot accept a motion at the moment.

Sorry, I need to get my clerk for clarification.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, I have a question. I'd like to know from you, what time is it?

The Chair: Right now it's 25 minutes to 12.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: It's past eleven o'clock.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Before you depart, you've already extended and you have to depart at 11:45, we need to, within minutes—

The Chair: Stop by 11:45, please.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: You have to leave by 11:45. If the committee is not completed by then—

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: The committee decides that, not you.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: —that's not our decision.

The Chair: I must say there was no motion to extend the committee meeting after 11. I said I didn't see the clock at 11; that meant we could keep going. Any time now I can stop the meeting. That's clear.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: The chair is getting angry.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: I think that's for the committee to decide, sir.

The Chair: No. If we had said at that time, "I have a motion", or if there was a motion at 11 to say we wanted to extend, and I accepted the motion and the committee accepted the motion at that time to go until 12 o'clock or 1 o'clock at that time, it would have been up to the committee.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Can I say something?

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: It was obviated by the fact...there was no vote required, because you as the chair, the official spokesperson, said we were extending, so there didn't need to be a motion. That was in effect a statement of declaration.

The Chair: I want to go to Madame Lalonde.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, I've been in the House for a few years now. I've witnessed similar situations in which the discussion continued for 24 hours or more because, according to the procedure, debate continues whether or not it's planned.

If Mr. Vellacott is listening to me, I'll add that, when the Chair has to leave the meeting, which can happen to any normal individual, a vice-chair present at the meeting occupies the chair in his place and continues that way.

It seems to me we're in that situation. I'm going to put that in Mr. Vellacott's ear.

• (1135)

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Obhrai.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Chair, since I came here you have been saying this is a debate, there is no motion you are entertaining, you are doing nothing, and you're not taking points of order. Yet you just went back to state that there was no motion to extend this meeting. You have not been entertaining anything as you've been going by just talking about the debate going on here.

Now you're saying that you're not watching the clock, you've extended the meeting over here, and you are now coming back out here by saying, no, there's no motion, but I'm doing this and I'm going to adjourn it. You are leaving all of us here, committee members, out in the cold, especially the opposition. What is coming out of you is just what you're entertaining. What the government is trying to do out here is to not vote on this motion that was brought in here, which, frankly speaking, is not a fair way of handling this committee.

So I am asking you a straightforward question, Mr. Chairman. This has already been extended. Are you going to adjourn it, or are you going to entertain a motion to extend it so that everybody can have their point of view? You cannot say, "I'm not doing anything here".

The Chair: Who's speaking? Are you speaking or—

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: I'm speaking.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: You can hear my voice now?

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, if you are going to leave this thing here, we need to know because of the allocation of time, in fairness, whether we can entertain a motion to extend this and finish the committee business, or are you just going to walk out of here, adjourn it, and say this is it? There is no clear direction coming out of you. One minute you are saying nothing and the next minute you are saying Mr. Vellacott can talk all the time he wants. I don't mind him talking—there's nobody listening anyway—but the fact of the matter still remains: it is the speaker's ruling that we are done at 12:45. So are you putting a timeframe? Are you ruling that this is going to finish at 1:45? What is the ruling? We need some definite direction here. Let's get direction from the chair.

The Chair: The direction from the chair is we're going to keep going with the debate with Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Dan McTeague: But, Chair—

The Chair: That's all.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: When are we adjourning?

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: Are we done at 11:45?

The Chair: I don't know yet. It's not 12:45; it's—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, but is it your ruling that we're done at 11:45?

The Chair: There's no ruling for the moment. We'll get the ruling when it's time to come to the ruling.

Mr. Bevilacqua.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: No, that's a valid point, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: No, it's not a point of order—

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: It's absolutely a point. Is the meeting over at 11:45 or not? That supercedes everything else. We need to know. Is the chair ruling—

Hon. Dan McTeague: What supercedes anything, Mr. Chair, if I could just say this—

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: We need some direction here from—

Hon. Dan McTeague: The report can't be accepted in the House. It's clear that we've overshot the time.

We can talk about this, but I think we're navel-gazing, and we're basically setting ourselves up for some kind of ability just to do something when in fact the House has... Given that the final allotted date has been established at March 22, I think we should really understand that it's good to talk about it, but there's probably very little we can do at this stage. We've gone beyond the time.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: He needs to indicate what his ruling is in terms of the completion of the meeting. Is it 11:45 or not?

I will ask the clerk this. Does he not have to give us a yea or a nay with respect to that ruling? Is it done at 11:45 or not? Is he not required to indicate what his ruling is?

The Chair: The ruling at the moment is not 11:45. If you want to wait until 11:45, it's up to you.

Mr. Fitzpatrick.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott: You're going to give us a ruling?

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: Mr. Chair, with all due respect, there is absolutely no certainty to your position. Procedurally, I have a lot of difficulty trying to figure out how you can just arbitrarily say "We're extending the meeting and it will go on until I decide when it ends". I think that's a decision for the committee, and there should have been a motion presented to this committee to say we're extending the hours of this meeting.

That's what I'm going to do right now.

Please listen, sir. Please listen.

According to Standing Order 26, I am moving that this committee sit beyond the ordinary time, and the committee will decide at what time this meeting will come to a halt.

It's non-debatable. You can refer to Standing Order 116 on that point, and it goes to a question. So it's a non-debatable motion.

• (1140)

The Chair: Okay, now, Mr. Fitzpatrick, if you want to play by the book, I'll play by the book. You're not allowed to move a motion. A substitute cannot move a motion. It needs to be a properly signed substitute, and it was not done.

If you want to play by the rules, the rules.... I'm not going to play that rule. I'm just going to tell you that you cannot put a motion. You said it very clearly that there was no motion put at 11 o'clock to go longer, to go further. There was no such motion.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: I'm just challenging your decision.

The Chair: No, you're not going to challenge me. You said that. You said that by 11 o'clock there was no motion at all to go longer. There was no motion passed.

Ms. Belinda Stronach: There was acceptance by the chair—

The Chair: It was accepted by the chair and it was agreeable, but that's the rule; the motion was not a rule. I said we were going to keep going on like this to be friendly, in fairness to everyone on this.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: They're not too friendly there.

The Chair: That was done, and Ms. Stronach was there. Madame Lalonde said that too and Ms. McDonough said that too. Now, I'm not going to have a motion because there is a debate right now, and you cannot put a motion when there is a debate. This is the rule. You can challenge me, but you cannot challenge me.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: We can go right back to the debate. We have a motion on the floor.

The Chair: No, you cannot have a motion when there is a debate. We know this, for one, Mr. Fitzpatrick, because we're going with the majority. We've listened for so many hours, for so many evenings and nights on this, and Madame Lalonde can say that too.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Yes.

The Chair: When there is a debate you cannot bring a motion, and you've pinpointed very clearly that by 11 o'clock there was no motion. That means this can go on as long as this...unless the chair decides, because there was no motion, it was agreeable—

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: The committee is going to decide when this ends, not you.

Some hon. members: No, no.

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Fitzpatrick.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Nasty, nasty. I see your old habits from the industry committee haven't left you, Brian.

The Chair: We'll go back to the debate with Mr. Bevilacqua.

Every party agreed to meet—Mr. McTeague, Madame Lalonde, Ms. McDonough, Ms. Stronach—they agreed to talk together, to see how we could find a solution to this. I agreed. You could talk together to try to find a solution.

But the floor goes to Mr. Bevilacqua.

Mr. Bevilacqua.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

It is really unfortunate that we spent so much time dealing with procedural issues when we could perhaps have debated the issues. There's a lot to this.

I'm sure, Mr. Fitzpatrick, you've taken the time to clearly read the estimates line by line, and you would probably understand that there are many, many issues that need to be addressed within a context that brings to light the clear objectives and principles of the Government of Canada's agenda in Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

I think earlier we touched on the issue of the important role that young people play. I think we also touched on, if I remember correctly, the issue related to national security concerns that arose as a result of the tragic events of September 11.

As well, Mr. Chairman, I spoke at length about the great values that really are part of Canadian citizenship, and how important it is for us as Canadians to export those values and principles, which are indeed part of the democratic fibre of nations that believe in the rule of law and individual freedom in the pursuit of self-fulfilment, and which would, in many ways, bring to light the great contribution Canada can in fact make at the international level.

What I was struck by in reading the estimates was that it's really unfortunate that we do this in a room like this. I wish we had even greater opportunities to express to Canadians what we in fact do as a federal government to enhance Canadian values. As I read through the estimates, I'm struck by how we as a nation really focus on the greater good, on enhancing what we feel is right about our citizenship and our role in the world. For example, there is the great contribution made by the Canadian International Development Agency, known as CIDA, and the important role it plays to make sure that countries that perhaps don't enjoy the advantages, natural and otherwise, that we do, are helped. This spirit of giving, this spirit of compassion, this spirit of generosity that is in fact part of who we are as a people is really embodied in the work of these organizations like CIDA; and of youth organizations related to the item on page 127, the youth employment strategy, for example; and in the support for the activities of the permanent secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal; and in our initiatives increasing contributions under the Canadian land mine fund for the removal of land mines in Nicaragua.

What about that particular issue of land mines? The issue of land mines, once again, is a clear demonstration of how this country has taken on a leadership role in that area. You know, it's really interesting; sometimes we're really hard on ourselves, but as I travel in other places across the world, there is a positive impression about the work we are doing as a nation.

There is also the funding to support and engage Canadians working on governance programs abroad, Canada Corps. This has been a great initiative by the federal government.

• (1145)

As we read through these estimates, Mr. Chairman, let us be mindful that behind every single line item there are people. If we were to read these estimates as mere numbers and words on a page, I think we would be missing the significance associated with these sums, because the investments we make, line item by line item, speak to improving people's lives and to the great contribution that Canada has in fact made. So let's look at some of those items.

I think this would interest Madame Lalonde quite a bit: the funding for a grant to the Forum of Federations to enhance learning and exchanges on the values and possibilities of federalism—

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Don't twist the knife in the wound.

[English]

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: —in Canada and abroad. There are people—

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Twenty-one million dollars last year, and another \$20 million.

[English]

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: —across the world—

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Only Canada pays for that.

[English]

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: —who look to Canada's federal structure, and they want to replicate the federal structure, because they know it's a structure that works well for Canadians—

• (1150)

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: There are some who are doing well.

[English]

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: —that it's a structure that embodies the true spirit of nation-building, one country.

When you go abroad, people want to know from Canadians: how is it that this federation works so well? Tell us how you have been able to achieve the greatness of Canada's federation? How have you been able to achieve the great results?

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: That's because Quebeckers are democrats and they're not violent.

The Chair: Ms. Lalonde, please.

[English]

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: So, Mr. Chairman, you may ask me, why do I support the funding for a grant to the Forum of Federations to enhance learning and exchanges on the values and possibilities of federalism in Canada and abroad? It is because I believe in this country.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Hear, hear!

An hon. member: How's your leadership bid doing?

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: I believe in the fact that over many years we have been able to bring about an experiment that's gone right. Canada works and works well. What is important about this line item is that people want to know—people across the world want to know—how this federalism works so well. That is the reason why I fully endorse funding programs such as that one.

There's also a line item on public security initiatives. Public security initiatives are a very important area, an important area for a number of reasons. One of them is that people within a nation need to feel secure. They need to feel safety around them. They need to feel that their nation is protected, and public security initiatives outlined here in the estimates speak to the commitment of this national government to clearly protect the nation and its citizens.

Let's go back to asking why it is important to us sitting around this committee to discuss these issues. It's because these expenditures are not made for no reason at all; these expenditures are made because people benefit from them.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Mr. Chairman, I have a point of order.

Perhaps I might be of some assistance here to my colleague, Mr. Bevilacqua. He is really on a roll here. I think it's important that we bring this to some head.

I've just discussed with the opposition. It would appear they wish to bring forth a particular motion that speaks to the real concerns they have.

I appreciate what Mr. Bevilacqua has done, but perhaps through you, Mr. Chair, I could just ask him to tie up his comments. I realize they were riveting—it was up there with “*Ich bin ein Berliner*”—but I want the honourable member to know that perhaps there is an opportunity here for us to discuss this more plentifully and get to the real *raison d'être* as to why we're running 55 minutes past the scheduled time.

The Chair: Mr. Bevilacqua, if you understand what Mr. McTeague is saying....

Maybe you would like to wrap up your preamble.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Oh, very nice, Mr. Chairman. That was politically correct.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for referring to it as a preamble, because you probably would know that I would go on with further substantive issues that are important to people not only here in Canada but throughout the world.

The Chair: Yes, I know. That's why I said “preamble”.

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua: If there is a sense that we can deal with this issue, I am willing to wrap up by saying, you know, come to think of it, if we do the estimates right, going line by line on these things, I think it's very important.

It's important for one major reason, because I think sometimes we as parliamentarians are really not fully aware of all the things we are doing to help Canadians and to help people abroad. That's fundamental in this debate, because at the end of the day, I don't know why everybody else is here, but I'll tell you one thing, I'm here to improve the quality of life and standard of living of Canadians and to make a contribution, not only within our borders but beyond.

Thank you.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Chair: As I said previously, when Mr. Bevilacqua was finished speaking I would give *la parole* to Madame Lalonde.

[Translation]

Ms. Lalonde.

• (1155)

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would have liked Mr. Bevilacqua to consider the reason why we, the three opposition parties, have formed a common front to introduce this kind of amendment to the budget. In addition to being useful, it could have served as a basis for his comments.

Moreover, I would point out that I'm happy to see Mr. Bevilacqua enjoying politics again. For some time now, he's been quite...

The Chair: Don't make personal remarks, Ms. Lalonde.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: It's a compliment.

The Chair: But it's personal.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, this is the core of our protest. As you know, this motion is symbolic. We very soon saw—and there are comments that attest to this—that the Supplementary Estimates took no account of the vote held in the House, that is to say of the fact that we, the three opposition parties, disagreed with the idea of dividing the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade into two separate departments. The vote in the House of Commons was very clear. However, we're now looking at documents that show it was business as usual.

So we wanted to take advantage of what little time we had left to join forces and say we find it completely unacceptable that the government should not take into account a clear vote held by the House. It should deal with the fact that the government is in the minority and the opposition in the majority. This was the first time that this kind of vote had been held, and we now see that the government took no account of it. It was therefore anger that led us to make this decision. True, it was at the last moment, but, we think, at the right time.

If you're willing, we'll vote soon. After my remarks, I'm going to call for the vote. It was important that the reason for this action be very clearly explained. I note in passing, for those who aren't entirely certain of the truth of our criticisms, that the government is clearly not taking into account the vote that was held. It stated in a number

of places in the text that the budget follows the directive of December 12, 2003, which was rejected by Parliament.

The Chair: I'm listening to you, Ms. Lalonde.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Mr. Chairman, I therefore ask that you call the vote on Ms. McDonough's motion.

[English]

The Chair: Because you've asked for a vote, I want to say something.

[Translation]

The motion was introduced by Ms. McDonough, but it now belongs to the committee. I have to ask whether anyone else wishes to speak to this subject. If there's no one, we'll move on to the vote.

[English]

I don't see any other people who want to speak on the motion. We're going to vote on the motion before the committee right now to diminish the budget.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE (FOREIGN AFFAIRS)

Department

Vote 1b—Operating expenditures.....\$12,011,400

[Translation]

Hon. Dan McTeague: Please read the motion.

[English]

The Chair: The motion is to diminish the budget of vote 1b by \$1. Instead of being \$12,011,401, it will be \$12,011,400.

Do you want a recorded vote? We'll call a recorded vote, Mr. Clerk, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Bevilacqua, it's a recorded vote to reduce the budget by one dollar.

[English]

(Motion agreed to: yeas 7; nays 2)

• (1200)

The Chair: Now we'll move to the next motion from Mr. Menzies. We need to vote on the report.

Are we going to keep going on the estimates, because we started the estimates, or do you want to close the estimates right now?

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: The report has to be done today. Do you want me to move that?

The Chair: Before that's moved, we have to know whether we're still discussing the Estimates.

[English]

That means we won't be discussing the estimates any more.

Madame McDonough.

Ms. Alexa McDonough: I just want to clarify that I think we've had the opportunity to make the point we wanted to make. I just want to ensure that it will be reported back to the House.

The Chair: As I just said to Madame Lalonde, before we report to the House, need to know if you want to keep going on the estimates—on 1b, 1c, 1d, and everything. That's the first question. We'll deal with this first question, then Madame Lalonde said she wants a motion to report to the House. That's what she said.

My question was—and you raised your hand to ask a question regarding my question—are we going to keep discussing this estimate? If everyone says no, we're going to close that debate and go to the motion to report to the House. Do you understand my question?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Yes. Let me just say in response to your question—because you've raised the question with members—that it's a messy and frustrating process sometimes, but we've had an opportunity to make the point we wanted to make. We could go through the further estimates, but in the spirit of cooperation that has been extended by yourself, Mr. Chairman, to extend the meeting, for Mr. Bevilacqua to yield the floor, for the parliamentary secretary to say, in the spirit of what we're trying to achieve here...let's move forward.

The Chair: Good.

I'll ask the question now. Does everyone agree that we're finished with the estimates?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Madame Lalonde, you have a motion concerning the report.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Please, I'd like us to send a report to the House as soon as possible so that we can...

The Chair: You mean the amended report, since it's amended.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: Yes, I mean the report as it has been amended.

[*English*]

The Chair: Is it agreed that we report to the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: I want to ask the members, do you want to keep going with the motions, or is that fine?

[*Translation*]

Yes or no?

Mr. Pierre Paquette: No, let's stop.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Paquette says we should stop there.

Okay, that's fine. We will stop.

Madame Lalonde.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I just want to ensure that the report is tabled today.

The Chair: As soon as possible. If it's ready today, it will be done today.

[*English*]

That's up to the clerk.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I'm ready to help you, if necessary.

The Chair: You're very kind. Thank you.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: That's a quick clerk.

The Chair: The clerk tells me that the next round of routine proceedings in the House won't be until Friday.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Yes, but if there's unanimous consent...

The Chair: Routine proceedings aren't the committee's responsibility, but rather that of the House leaders.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: We're going to talk to our leaders.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: We can request unanimous consent.

The Chair: You can request the leaders' unanimous consent.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Yes.

The Chair: You can do it by means of a memo from the committee.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: No.

The Chair: The committee's motion says "as soon as possible".

Ms. Francine Lalonde: I understand, hence the importance...

The Chair: If the leaders agree that it should be as soon as possible, that is tomorrow or today, that's not a problem for me; it's accepted by the committee. However, if the leaders say no—you know they proceed by unanimous consent—it will be tomorrow. Do you understand?

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Yes.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: But that mustn't depend on us.

The Chair: No, it depends on the leaders.

Ms. Francine Lalonde: The report has to be done quickly.

Mr. Pierre Paquette: We're going to talk to our leaders.

The Chair: All right.

Thank you very much for your patience.

The meeting is adjourned.

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