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Chair

Mr. John Williams

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Wednesday, April 6, 2005

•(1600)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. John Williams (Edmonton—St. Albert, CPC)): Good afternoon, everybody.

The orders of the day are committee business, the eighth report of the subcommittee on agenda and procedure—hopefully that will take no more than half an hour—and after that, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), the April 2005 *Report of the Auditor General of Canada*, referred to the committee on April 5, 2005. Once we are done with the subcommittee report, then of course the Auditor General and her senior staff will come forward and present her report.

I presume you all have copies of the eighth report.

Is it a point of order?

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Yes, it is.

Most of you have probably received an invitation from the Archbishop of Ottawa for the memorial service today at 5 p.m. at Notre-Dame Cathedral. Taking this into account and the fact that MPs should not arrive late but should be in the pews at an appropriate time, I would suggest that perhaps we could adjourn today at 4:30 so we can make it to the cathedral in time for the memorial service for the Pope.

The Chair: I'll entertain a motion to adjourn at 4:30 and see what happens.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij: I appreciate it. Thank you.

The Chair: So we're on the eighth report. The subcommittee met on Tuesday, April 5, 2005, to consider the business of the committee and agreed that the committee consider the following in relation to the witnesses for the meeting of Monday, April 11, 2005, on chapter 5, "Management of Public Opinion Research", of the November 2003 *Report of the Auditor General of Canada*.

The first item was that we excuse Mr. David Dodge and Mr. Don Drummond from appearing as witnesses, and there was agreement that this be done, so that is accepted.

Two, it was moved that we invite Peter Daniel to appear as a witness. It was also moved that David Hurley appear as a witness, and it was also moved that a summons to ensure the appearance of Terrie O'Leary and Warren Kinsella at the meeting on Monday, April 11, at 3:30 p.m. in room 237-C, Centre Block, be issued.

Now, there was only consensus on item one. There was no consensus on item two to invite Peter Daniel, no consensus to invite David Hurley, and no consensus on issuing summonses. Therefore,

these last three matters are now before the committee, and I'll just take them in the order they have been presented here.

Mr. Holland, I believe it was you who suggested Peter Daniel appear as a witness. You'll get a little introduction as to why he should and a little bit of debate, and then we'll have a vote if there's no consensus.

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.): I think if we're going to pursue this matter—and I've stated my objections to pursuing it in the first place—and we have a legitimate interest in uncovering facts and learning about what went on, then it's imperative that we have finance department officials. It has been indicated that Mr. Daniel would have very clear insights into what was happening there and be able to give the committee some very worthwhile testimony to help in its deliberations. It would seem nonsensical to me for us to engage in a process where we have the Auditor General and some other witnesses but we don't have anybody from the finance department. I would certainly encourage us to find a way to get Mr. Daniel here. I think it would round out the process and make it a lot more fulsome and useful for the committee.

The Chair: Mr. Fitzpatrick.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, CPC): I think it's very important to have a senior person from the finance department. I was disappointed to hear that Mr. Dodge and Mr. Drummond would not be available, because it seems to me it's all second-hand, it's all hearsay.

The finance minister of the day did not make decisions quickly, and he relied very much on lengthy deliberations with senior officials and advisers before such decisions were ever made. For us to really look into this matter, it's imperative that we have a senior official from the finance department who was privy to those meetings and conversations.

If this official sat in on most of those deliberations and was a senior person who had direct links to the finance minister, I'd say that would be a suitable witness, but if he's far removed and wasn't involved in it, I think we're wasting our time with him.

•(1605)

The Chair: Are we agreed that Mr. Daniels be invited to appear?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: The next item is to have Mr. David Hurley appear as a witness.

Mr. Sauvageau, you were suggesting Mr. Hurley. Mr. Sauvageau, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ): Given that for quite legitimate reasons, two witnesses have been excused from appearing before us, and given that Earncliffe has been mentioned, I suggested to invite one of their representatives, namely David Hurley.

[English]

The Chair: Okay, thank you very much.

By the way, I should just mention that Mr. Dodge, who is the Governor of the Bank of Canada, has an meeting to set interest rates on that particular day. He is the chairman, of course, of that meeting, and we felt it would be appropriate that we excuse him because of that.

Also, we had a communication from Mr. Don Drummond, who is now working in the private sector in Toronto. We would have to bring him in at our expense and he indicated that he was not involved in the issue at all. Therefore, we dropped Mr. Drummond as well.

So Mr. Sauvageau is suggesting that we bring in Mr. Hurley. Anybody on the negative?

Mr. Holland.

Mr. Mark Holland: I'll express again my concern about the number of witnesses we're going to have before the committee and the need to expand them. I don't agree to adding more witnesses. I don't think the intention of adding this witness is to expand upon our understanding of the process, but rather to expand upon the circus. Therefore, I would not be supporting adding this additional witness.

I think if we have an interest in getting the facts, we already have the Auditor General coming before us. We have a department official whom we just approved to invite, who's been stated as having intimate knowledge of the goings-on and has very well researched this particular topic. We have two other officials. I mean, we have one meeting. How much are we going to be able to do in a single meeting?

The Chair: We've had nine or ten witnesses here at one time.

Mr. Mark Holland: But I question the productivity of that. It's very good to have twenty or a thousand witnesses, or we could invite the whole country, and the reality is that we can do that, but how productive is it going to be? What kind of opportunity are we going to get to ask meaningful questions or hear from any of the witnesses in a fulsome or meaningful way? We have four witnesses, and I think that's substantive.

The Chair: Mr. Murphy.

Hon. Shawn Murphy (Charlottetown, Lib.): My question to you, Mr. Chairman, is why are we not doing this in the manner we've always done it—have the Auditor General give her report, have a senior person, preferably the deputy minister or the particular official responsible for that particular department, go over the Auditor General's report, and then we decide if we need additional witnesses, if there are gaps in the testimony either of the Auditor General or of the senior official. Why are we throwing out what I consider to be the practice of this committee, which seems to have worked well over the last three years?

The Chair: Basically for two reasons, Mr. Murphy. One, this is a motion by an individual member of the committee that was adopted by the committee. The second one—and I think it was Mr. Holland who put forward the idea—is that members wanted to have control of the witness list. They didn't trust the clerk and the chair to put this together, and now we're finding that this is the result of these kinds of interventions. As you say, it worked fine for the seven years that I've been the chair of this committee, but it was clear that some members wanted to have a say on the witness list, and that was agreed to. Now we're finding this is what we're going to live with.

Hon. Shawn Murphy: Mr. Chairman, I caution the committee, through you, that if it's done in this instance, this obviously will set a precedent to be done in the next instance. I would suggest that the whole committee will break down entirely. Somebody might win this war, but again, this is not the way we've done business. We've never done it before like this. In the long run, if this is the way the committee works, we will become a joke in Ottawa, and you as chairman will become a joke.

• (1610)

The Chair: We're not going to allow that to happen, if at all possible, Mr. Murphy. This may be lessons learned this time around. As I said, when we had a new committee come here in the fall after the election, I think it was nine out of the eleven members were brand new to committee, and about seven or eight were brand new members of Parliament. We are going through a learning and developing process, and we will stumble a little bit on the odd occasion.

This is why I've said that we'll have one meeting on this issue, because we're not going to have two, three, four, or five meetings and drag this out into being a political circus. We always have one meeting on an issue, and that has been my position all the way through. But you as a committee instructed me, as chair, that you wanted to have a say on the witnesses. I had to respect that.

Therefore, I'm at your disposal. After this exercise is finished, perhaps the steering committee will have a discussion on the effectiveness of it, and it may go back to the clerk and the chair deciding who the witnesses are.

Anyway, Mr. Holland, you have a short intervention. You've talked once already.

Mr. Mark Holland: It's more a point of order arising from the report itself. I suggest there should also be number five, because we also discussed at the steering committee the format the meeting was going to take, whether it was going to be a round table or we were going to hear from individuals. I know I'm getting ahead of myself, but I wanted to make sure that would be a point of discussion. I think that should be agreed upon before we report.

The Chair: We're not there. We're talking about Mr. Hurley as a witness. You made your statement.

Mr. Murphy, I'm not sure what your position is. I think you were arguing against Mr. Hurley.

Mr. Sauvageau has proposed that Mr. Hurley be here.

Before I put it to a vote, is there agreement?

There is no agreement, so you want to have a vote.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: The suggestion is that we would issue a summons—there is no agreement here—to Warren Kinsella and Terrie O'Leary. We'll deal with Warren Kinsella first. Warren Kinsella sent an e-mail to Ms. Kingston, our clerk, and he said:

Thank you very much for your messages of last week. I apologize for the delay in responding.

For a number of pressing reasons, I regret that I will be unable to attend before your committee.

I thank you again for your notes, and wish you and the committee members the very best.

Sincerely, Warren Kinsella.

It appears that Mr. Kinsella would rather not come before the committee.

It was proposed by Mr. Sauvageau that we issue a summons. Mr. Sauvageau.

[Translation]

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau: Concerning Mr. Kinsella, I believe that he is an important witness. We are now on point number 4, Mr. Chairman, and I do not want to get ahead of you, but I would like to know whether we are talking about the meeting of Monday, April 11.

[English]

The Chair: We're talking about a summons to bring Mr. Kinsella to the meeting on Monday, April 11.

[Translation]

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau: Mr. Chairman, to put a little more pressure on witnesses who are reluctant to meet with us comes under the mandate of this committee. I believe that Mr. Kinsella is really a very important witness about all aspects of this subject matter. We should use this tool that is at our disposal, as the committee has done in the case of other witnesses.

I understand that Ms. O'Leary would accept to come at some other time. That is quite acceptable. Otherwise, as this committee has done so in the past, we should subpoena these two witnesses so that they will appear before us and explain to us what has happened during this period.

•(1615)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Holland, on the negative, I presume.

Mr. Mark Holland: A safe presumption, Mr. Chairman.

I have a number of concerns with this, and I frankly was a little taken aback that this was introduced yesterday at the steering committee. I have to say it was most unexpected.

The powers that this committee is charged with obviously have to be used judiciously and have to be used with extreme caution. The idea that we would subpoena somebody without any effort to accommodate additional dates or enter into discussion about alternate arrangements is disturbing to me, quite frankly. I think this committee has to think very carefully, reflect very deeply, upon the powers it has and when it should exercise the utilization of those powers. And to say that somebody is in no hurry to come to the

committee, when we have extended one date, one time, on an issue that, frankly, is not a pressing matter before this committee....

I watched the proceedings of the sponsorship inquiry. I watched them deteriorate. I watched them become heavily politicized. I don't want to see that happen here. And I can tell you that I have grave concern with the direction we're heading on this. We're talking about a chapter that the Auditor General said in 2003 there were no substantive problems with. And now, all of a sudden, the committee is seized with this. Not only are we considering it such an urgent matter that we're pushing aside other business that we need to be dealing with, including Auditor General's reports that are stacking up and that we haven't dealt with as a committee, which I would say is the core responsibility of this committee, but we're moving now into talking about actually subpoenaing people—bringing them before this committee under threat, utilizing the maximum force of our power to force people to come here—on a matter that isn't even pressing to this committee.

I think we have to reflect upon that very carefully, because in my opinion, it will show very poorly on this committee and the way this committee uses its powers that it would so willy-nilly, so flippantly, decide to use the power to subpoena. And that is a very serious concern for me. Mr. Chairman, I really thin this committee and the credibility of this committee will be called into question. Frankly, the whole process of discussing this chapter will be called into question. It will cast a shadow on the other matters that we need to deal with.

Let's not forget that we have the Auditor General sitting here waiting patiently to talk to us about another matter. Think of all the things we're putting aside—things that are actually core to our business—so that we can pursue this circus. I mean, I'll ride an elephant in here next time.

Let's get down to the business at hand and let's use our powers judiciously.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Holland.

Mr. Wrzesnewskyj, followed by Mr. Murphy and Mr. Lastewka.

A point of order, yes.

[Translation]

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau: Are we limited to about half an hour for this conversation, or can we keep discussing this until 5:00 p.m. or 5:30 p.m.? I am not suggesting that my friends will use dilatory tactics, but I would like to know whether or not there is a time limit.

[English]

The Chair: As you know, we had three votes in the House of Commons before we came here. The meeting started significantly late.

Mr. Wrzesnewskyj gave us notice that he will introduce a motion of adjournment at 4:30 by virtue of the fact that there is a service for the deceased Pope John Paul II, and that motion will be, I presume, put to the vote. If the meeting adjourns, it will adjourn at 4:30. That's about 10 minutes from now.

Mr. Wrzesnewskyj, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Lastewka, and please be brief.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij: Actually, Mr. Holland touched on most of the points that make me feel ill at ease with how we're proceeding with this. This committee is charged, as are all committees, with a number of responsibilities, but this committee has one that is different from those of most committees. We're charged with a special responsibility and we're provided with special tools, and there's a responsibility that comes with that.

Issuing subpoenas is a very serious matter. I believe that when the public sees us use these tools for partisan reasons as opposed to fulfilling our obligations as a committee... Our committee is obligated to deal with concerns raised by the Auditor General. What we're doing right now is deciding on our own that no, the Auditor General's concerns aren't our concerns; we have other concerns. We'd like to create a political situation because perhaps we'd like to see an election, so we're going to neglect our responsibilities. We're going to abuse the powers we've been given.

You had mentioned there were a number of new members on this committee, new parliamentarians. I was actually looking forward to being on the public accounts committee because it deals with very important issues, and I think these are very important issues at this time. If we neglect to address those issues...

All we have to do is take a look in the papers. The public is concerned about issues the Auditor General raises. We shouldn't treat the Auditor General's reports lightly. We should treat them with seriousness, and we shouldn't allow ourselves to fall further and further behind in dealing with issues the Auditor General has identified for us, all for the sake of playing politics.

• (1620)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Wrzesnewskij.

Mr. Murphy.

Hon. Shawn Murphy: Mr. Chairman, through you to the clerk, I want one little clarification here.

There's a fundamental difference, when we're in a situation like this, between a witness who will not come and a witness who cannot come on the appointed date. When I read Mr. Kinsella's letter, it sounds to me as if he's basically saying he will not come.

Now I'm going to ask the clerk, is that the case? Have there been any follow-up telephone conference calls? Is he available on another date?

As I read it, he seems to be saying he won't come. That puts him in a different position from that of the other lady, whose lawyer was not available on that particular date. I'd like clarification, because there is a very fundamental difference, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: The clerk advises me that she has had no communication with Mr. Kinsella apart from this particular e-mail. She was instructed by the committee to ask him to appear before the committee on April 11. This is the response, and there has been no further communication.

Hon. Shawn Murphy: Has there been a communication with Ms. O'Leary?

The Chair: Ms. O'Leary—again, I didn't bring this issue up but for the record, we have a letter from Andrew Davis, I guess it is, addressed to Ms. Kingston, that says:

This will confirm our telephone conversation this morning during which I indicated to you, as I noted in my earlier voicemail message, that I act on behalf of Terrie O'Leary and that due to a long-standing commitment, I [that's the lawyer] am not available on April 11.

And then, of course, the normal statutory disclaimer is after that.

If you want my opinion, it's not appropriate that we issue a subpoena to Terrie O'Leary. For anybody who is requested to come before this committee and seeks to have legal counsel who is not available at very short notice, we would respect that. Therefore, it's not appropriate that we issue a subpoena to Terrie O'Leary.

I've always indicated that I think we should have one meeting on this issue, as we normally have on the agenda. It would be my advice to the committee that we instruct the clerk to defer the meeting until next Wednesday or another date that the committee would sit and we communicate with Mr. Kinsella, Ms. O'Leary, and her lawyer to see if April 11 is acceptable, and that way we do not have to issue any subpoenas. But I think we can impress upon both these people that the committee is a committee of Parliament and we're not abusing our powers if we issue subpoenas. That is our power, if we so decide, as a committee.

This being the Parliament of Canada, it is a political place. This is where we do politics, so playing politics is the name of the game about this place, and as Winston Churchill said, "it's better to jaw-jaw than to war-war", and we jaw-jaw in this place. That's what it's all about. We have different opinions. We have political opinions. We have diverse opinions. We have opposing opinions. This is where we reconcile these opinions, in the Parliament of Canada.

My advice, as the chair of this committee, is for us to think carefully about issuing subpoenas because we have that power. It's not an abuse of our power. We have that power, but we don't do it lightly. Therefore, my advice to the committee is that we step back today and have the clerk contact Ms. O'Leary and Mr. Kinsella and see if we can put this meeting together for next Wednesday. If so, then let them be advised that we could subpoena them. It seems to be somewhat the opinion of the committee that if they fool around with us, we will subpoena them, but it would be nice if they were to come voluntarily.

That's my advice. If somebody wants to move that, then we'll move forward.

Monsieur Sauvageau.

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau: It is almost 4:30 p.m. and we will be asked to table the motion. I don't know whether I can ask for the vote, but I propose that Wednesday, April 13—

[*English*]

Hon. Walt Lastewka (St. Catharines, Lib.): Am I off the list?

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Lastewka. I made an observation. I made a recommendation and I thought Mr. Sauvageau was going to move a motion to that effect.

[Translation]

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau: I propose that we hear witnesses on Wednesday, April 13 at 3:30 p.m. These witnesses would be Peter Daniel, since this has been agreed to by unanimous consent, David Hurley, Terrie O'Leary, Warren Kinsella as well as the Auditor General.

[English]

The Chair: And Mr. Cutler?

[Translation]

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau: And Mr. Cutler. I apologize, I had forgotten him because he was not on my list. Thank you for reminding me.

I also propose that exceptionally, this sitting be extended by one hour because there will be many witnesses. Considering that this committee accepts that the meeting scheduled for Monday, April 11 be postponed to Wednesday, April 13 and given that there will be many witnesses, I propose that instead of adjourning at 5:30 p.m., we sit until 6:30 p.m.

So we would be hearing the witnesses we agreed to hear on April 13, in room 237-C, from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

[English]

The Chair: On a point of order, Mr. Lastewka.

Hon. Walt Lastewka: I'm trying to understand what your ruling is, Mr. Chair. We seem to be now putting in motions. In our previous discussions when there were to be witnesses or when somebody was proposing witnesses, a motion had to be put through, and we had to have 48 hours' notice and then the discussion. Have you changed that ruling? I need to understand now what the rules of this committee are. You've hardly answered Mr. Murphy.

The Chair: The rule of the committee, Mr. Lastewka, is that new substantive motions require 48 hours' notice. We're dealing here with an issue that is before the committee. It's a subsidiary motion and therefore no notice is required.

What we are trying to do here is this. I did not give an order to the committee. I gave what I consider to be my advice to the committee that we step back a little bit—this was my advice, it wasn't a ruling, it wasn't an order—from this whole discussion of subpoenas today. It's not appropriate that we subpoena Terrie O'Leary for Monday, because if she wishes to have legal advice she is entitled to have legal advice. Therefore, we would not run roughshod over her desire to have legal counsel here. So it is not appropriate for us to subpoena her for Monday, April 11. Since we haven't asked Mr. Kinsella to come at an alternative date, or Madam O'Leary for that matter, I just said that my advice to committee is to step back and let's see if we can have the meeting on Wednesday, April 13.

Mr. Sauvageau is now saying, fine, let the meeting go forth on April 13 and add an hour.

Hon. Walt Lastewka: Adding witnesses?

The Chair: The same witnesses. Basically the witnesses we've agreed to, which are Mr. Daniel; Madam O'Leary; Mr. Cutler, whom we had agreed to before; the Auditor General, of course; Mr. Hurley, whom we agreed to as well; and Mr. Kinsella.

● (1630)

Hon. Walt Lastewka: [Inaudible]

The Chair: We moved that 10 or 15 minutes ago.

These are the same witnesses. Mr. Holland suggested Mr. Daniel. There was no debate and it was agreed upon. Mr. Hurley was proposed by Mr. Sauvageau. We had a vote on that and it was carried. Mr. Cutler was agreed to previously. The Auditor General, of course, is always here. Terrie O'Leary had been agreed to previously. Warren Kinsella had been agreed to previously. These are not new witnesses.

To me, there are two issues before the committee: one, do we move from Monday, April 11, to Wednesday, April 13; and two, do we have a three-hour meeting instead of a two-hour meeting? Those are two issues to be decided.

Hon. Walt Lastewka: Is that the extent of it? Are we now going to motions to have extra meetings?

Mr. Chairman, I'm really concerned from the standpoint that we agree on certain things and then we change things. We're studying an area, a chapter on which the Auditor General has given some favourable comments, and now we want to go back to where this committee was. I guess we learn very quickly to have a charade.

Just think of it: the recommendations for the previous chapters were completed last May, and I don't know when they're going to be tabled. I understand, Mr. Chairman, you're going to try to table them next week. Is that correct?

The Chair: Tomorrow.

Hon. Walt Lastewka: So from last May until tomorrow, these recommendations have been held in abeyance. We're almost at the point where the Auditor General needs to follow the money and the cost of this committee and the efficiency of this committee and the politics of this committee and the charade that we go through.

I don't speak too often other than speaking right to the point of trying to get the job done, as you know, Mr. Chair. I'm really concerned that we're just going back into a charade.

I've read the clippings of Mr. Sauvageau and others from our previous discussion. I heard other members, such as Mr. Kramp, wanting to make sure we stick to the agenda and try to accomplish something. I agree with Mr. Kramp 100% on that. It will be very interesting to see what's going to happen between now and Wednesday.

The Chair: I have restricted this particular chapter to one meeting. There have been many people proposing that we continue with a number of meetings, Mr. Lastewka. I've said, on behalf of the committee, that I don't think the committee should spend more than one meeting on the subject. The question that's now being proposed is this: is that single meeting a three-hour meeting or a two-hour meeting?

Anybody is entitled to make that proposal. You're entitled to discuss it and make a decision upon it. I think the feeling I have from the committee is that we've backed away from issuing subpoenas, which I think is a wise move on behalf of the committee, if I read the committee properly.

We're now at a single issue of one meeting of three hours or two hours. I don't think that is a major thing to debate, but it is a proposal by Mr. Sauvageau.

So Mr. Sauvageau has proposed it. Is anybody opposed to a three-hour meeting?

Briefly, Mr. Holland.

Mr. Mark Holland: There are a couple of things. First of all, I do have some concern with the motion being introduced the way it's being introduced, because we had agreed to a certain set of witnesses—with the qualification, again, that I continue to have reservations about the entire process.

What we had talked about having was two officials, Mr. Drummond and Mr. Dodge. We'd have two officials from the finance department, and we would have two circus witnesses who were brought in for partisan purposes. Now we're moving away from that; we only want to have one. Why aren't we going to go back to, say, Mr. Drummond—

The Chair: I'm going to stop you, Mr. Holland, because I know Mr. Wrzesnewskyj wishes to move to adjourn the meeting for a particular reason we all know of.

But, Mr. Holland, you must appreciate that you are the one who introduced Peter Daniel's name. It's not appropriate for you to start talking about other people moving witnesses around, because you're the one who yesterday at the meeting introduced the name of Peter Daniel.

Therefore, I don't find these types of discussions directly helpful to the committee's coming to a decision. The decision is quite simple, and I'm going to—

Mr. Mark Holland: Mr. Chair, I have no objection to the introduction of witnesses' names; I have no problem with talking about who the witnesses are going to be. But if we agree to one set of witnesses and then we have a motion to change the duration of the meeting and change who the witnesses are, that to me is a substantive change.

It's an observation. It's your call.

The bigger issue for me is that if we're going to move to a three-hour meeting, we should have the balance we originally established. We should have Mr. Dodge, Mr. Daniel—

• (1635)

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Holland, I'm going to rule you out of order because I know we want to wrap this up. There was unanimous agreement that Mr. Dodge be set aside—

Mr. Mark Holland: It was only because he was not available on Monday.

The Chair: There was unanimous agreement, period.

Mr. Mark Holland: Because he wasn't available on Monday.

The Chair: The rationale is irrelevant. He was set aside by unanimous consent, and that is why his name is no longer on the agenda.

Also, just as one final point, your opinion and the committee's opinion are not necessarily the same thing. You can speak for yourself, but you can't speak for the committee.

I know Mr. Wrzesnewskyj has a serious point of order for adjournment, so I'm going to ask for the vote on a two-hour meeting or a three-hour meeting on April 13. That's basically the intent. Are we agreed on a three-hour meeting? Let me ask the question.

Mr. Mark Holland: I just have a direct question on this. If we're going to have three hours, will we then have the opportunity to deal with each witness individually and deal with them how we normally do it, which is to have the Auditor General first, followed by the finance department officials, followed by the others? That's normally the way we do it. I'm willing to go for three hours if we have the normal process.

The Chair: We will have the normal process.

Mr. Mark Holland: So we will hear from the Auditor General, from the finance department officials, and then—

The Chair: Absolutely. It will be the normal process. We're not throwing the rules out the window, by any means.

Mr. Mark Holland: So to confirm it will be the normal process, I can say we're going to hear from the Auditor General, we're going to hear from finance department officials—

The Chair: You have my word that it will be the normal process.

All those in favour of a three-hour meeting?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Mr. Wrzesnewskyj.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: I'd like to make a motion that we adjourn so a number of members here can attend the memorial liturgy at Notre-Dame.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.

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