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—
Chair

The Honourable Don Boudria

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• (1535)

[*English*]

The Chair (Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.)): Order, please.

First I want to alert the committee that pursuant to our rules, permission was sought to have a television recording of this meeting. As you know, that's a provision within our Standing Orders. It's not used very often. As a matter of fact, we were debating only a few days ago and we were speculating as to why it had been used so infrequently, and almost a week later it's actually being put to use.

I just want to inform members of the committee of two items. One, the House has just passed a concurrence motion in the report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. The object of that is to refer the matter of privilege in relation to the protection of witnesses to this committee. It's a little bit more detailed than that, but we'll discuss that in a minute.

Last week, when it became apparent that this issue would be referred to our committee, there was a meeting by telephone conference call of the steering committee of this committee.

[*Translation*]

When the steering committee met last Friday, a decision was made, to the extent the steering committee has the authority to decide such matters, to strike a subcommittee to deal with this issue.

[*English*]

So I have a draft motion here, which I'm prepared to read, and we'll see if it has a mover and a seconder. It is as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108, a Subcommittee be established to inquire into the matters of privilege raised in the Third Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, concurred in by the House on Monday, November 15, 2004;

That the Subcommittee be composed of one member from each recognized party and a chair from the government party, to be named after the usual consultations;

That—

—and here I need a name—

—be appointed Chair of the Subcommittee;

That the Subcommittee be granted all the powers of the Committee pursuant to Standing Order 108(1), except the power to report to the House; and

That the Subcommittee present its report to the main Committee no later than—

—and here I'm looking for the guidance of the committee, although we have discussed this informally, to actually fill in that blank “no later than”, and we will of course put in the date.

Monsieur Godin.

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): At “no later than”, I think it should be Thursday.

[*Translation*]

Should it be no later than Thursday?

[*English*]

The Chair: That's the report to the House? Oh, the report to the committee. Yes. That would leave the chance....

So the date on Thursday, Mr. Clerk, is November...?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Jeremy LeBlanc): November 18.

The Chair: Now to chair this subcommittee....

Yes, Monsieur LeBlanc.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Chairman, I move that Ms. Longfield be elected Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Guimond.

Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ): As for when the subcommittee should table its report to the full committee, I agree with Mr. Godin's suggestion that it should be no later than Thursday. However, when the subcommittee met via a telephone conference call on Friday, I seem to recall it being mentioned that the meeting with Mr. Kingsley, originally scheduled for tomorrow, would be postponed. So far, all I've received is a notice of meeting for tomorrow. It's quite possible that some members of our committee sit on the subcommittee. I don't want to play down the importance of the meeting with Mr. Kingsley, but I also have no wish to minimize the importance of the subcommittee either. Therefore, as mentioned, I think we should postpone the meeting with Mr. Kingsley.

The Chair: Yes, absolutely. I was just about to suggest, after the motion is adopted, that further to what we decided at Friday's meeting, the full committee hold off meeting until this matter is addressed and that we postpone the second meeting with Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley until next week.

Mr. Michel Guimond: In that case, I fully endorse Mr. Godin's motion.

The Chair: Would you care to move the motion?

Mr. Michel Guimond: Yes, I so move.

The Chair: It is therefore moved...

[English]

Do I need to read it again?

It is seconded by Mr. Reynolds.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1540)

The Chair: Just to formally go through the process in which we will be engaging in a couple of minutes, I would suggest then, pursuant to what we just said, that we not hear the witnesses we had planned at the main committee for this week. They were to have been the Chief Electoral Officer tomorrow. We will postpone that a week, with your agreement, and we will do the same.... We had asked for the Speaker to appear on the estimates process. We can delay that a week as well, if that's okay. That pretty well solves these issues.

There are a couple of more points. I would like to suggest that once this committee adjourns later this day, the subcommittee might want—it's up to you—to remain in the room and sit right away in order to do its agenda, given that your time is so limited. If that's agreeable, you can deal with that, but in order for your first meeting to take place, we're going to have to construct that in some way.

In terms of the members of the subcommittee, can we have the names for each party, please?

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, CPC): I would like to nominate John Reynolds.

The Chair: Mr. John Reynolds.

Other names, one per party.

[Translation]

We have Mr. Guimond and Mr. Godin.

[English]

Hon. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Madame Françoise Boivin.

The Chair: Madame Boivin.

Madam Longfield's already in the motion.

Given that you're one of the few people not on this subcommittee, Madam Whip, do you want to move that the names of Reynolds, Guimond, Godin, and Boivin be added to that of the chair of Longfield to be the members of the committee?

Hon. Karen Redman: I would so move.

The Chair: That's what you thought exactly. All right, so moved.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: That creates the subcommittee, which will then report to the main committee on Thursday. This being said, that means that our main committee will have to sit on Thursday to consider the report of the subcommittee, just so we have the process clear.

I think that pretty well solves that. Monsieur Godin was approaching the chair.

I will receive an adjournment motion in a minute. Just before so doing, I want to indicate that when the committee convenes on Thursday to deal with the main motion, I will ask on that day that the vice-chair take the chair and I will not participate in that debate.

That being said, is there a motion to adjourn the main committee so that the subcommittee can sit?

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): I so move.

The Chair: This committee is adjourned.

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