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—
Chair

The Honourable Don Boudria

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• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.)): We have two groups of witnesses this morning. We have the Honourable Bill Blaikie and the police force of the city of Ottawa—the chief and others.

Before we get to that, we have two other items I want to bring to your attention. I don't expect we'll deal with one of them today. We have the electoral reform draft work plan. I invite colleagues to review that document, and perhaps early next week we can address the document—adopt it, modify it, or whatever. I think we have to do so at our very next meeting, otherwise we'll never get started.

I don't want to cause any delay. That's why I want to put it on the agenda of the next meeting. Through no fault of the chair, I hope, this case of alleged breach of privilege has been referred to us, and it must supercede other things. It's not something I had anything to do with. But we have to deal with that; it's an order of the House that we deal with it as the first priority.

Therefore, next week we will reserve time on the agenda to do that. Perhaps we can reserve half an hour and do that and other agenda items generally—anything that has to do with the agenda. But I'll put that item first to make sure that if we don't deal with all the others, we'll deal with that at least.

Is that okay, Mr. Broadbent?

Hon. Ed Broadbent (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Chairman, am I to understand that we are only going to deal with the question of privilege today, and not divide it up between the question of privilege and democratic reform? Is that the plan?

The Chair: Our difficulty is that we have two groups of witnesses. We can hear the witnesses, and if you want to reserve half an hour at the end today, if members cooperate, we can certainly attempt to tackle some of it today. Is that our wish?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: It seems to me there's agreement on it.

The Chair: Fine, all right.

Next, the subcommittee wants to consult the main committee about an issue. We referred to it last time.

Ms. Longfield.

Hon. Judi Longfield (Whitby—Oshawa, Lib.): The subcommittee met this morning, and this has to do with our public disclosure statement. The Ethics Commissioner has asked for permission to be able to make those disclosures available by fax.

Currently we have to appear in person to look at them and can only take notes. The committee had a compromise position that the public disclosure statements be made available to the public by fax as of February 2, 2005. The reason it wouldn't be done immediately is that there are only a small number ready, and it was felt that by just sort of saying that, the first 24 would receive undue examination and would perhaps be put at a slight disadvantage.

So by February 7 the bulk of them would be ready, and they would be available by fax.

The Chair: I'm just trying to understand this. If we go back, what was the intention of the legislator? Was it ever the intention—I ask all of us collectively—to make these documents public, but only if someone showed up at the office, and that they would only be public as of February 2 or some other magic date?

We have to ask ourselves those questions. My initial view is that if something is to be available, that means you can have access to it. I was the first one to file, so I certainly expected my document to be public the day I filed it.

In any case, Mr. Johnston, you can go first. Let's try not to take up too much time.

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, CPC): I think there's being made public, and then there's being printed in every newspaper, being made public.

I think about my election return, for instance. It was made public and is available to anybody who goes to the returning officer to look over my election—

The Chair: It's available on their Internet site.

Mr. Dale Johnston: No, but I mean...my election expenses and all of that?

The Chair: Yes.

Hon. Judi Longfield: Yes. That's on the Internet.

The Chair: That's the dilemma. It's not the same threshold that's being suggested here.

You're quite right, the other says "being made public", but "being made public" has been with time, meaning if you turn on your computer right now, five minutes from now I could know who donated to your campaign, or something. That's the way it works now.

Monsieur Guimond.

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ): Mr. Chairman, the whole purpose of making these summaries available to the public is to demonstrate the greatest possible transparency.

I myself went over to Slater Street to see the office. There is a small cubicle that is identified as a report examination room, or something like that. However, if you tell someone living in Grand Falls, Newfoundland, or Kamloops, British Columbia, that these summaries are available but he'll have to come to Ottawa at his own expense to review them, well, that's an incredible expense, in my opinion. It seems to that if someone says he would like to receive eight summaries and asks that they be sent by fax, if transparency is our goal, it's perfectly normal, it seems to me, that he not be forced to travel long distances in order to get those summaries.

The Chair: So, your position is that they should be available by fax immediately. Am I right?

Mr. Michel Guimond: Yes. I would suggest that they be available by fax beginning on February 7.

The Chair: Oh, I see.

Mr. Michel Guimond: I'm suggesting they be available by fax from February 7 on, because only a few are available now.

The Chair: Can we all agree on their being available by fax starting on February 7?

Mr. Reid.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): The reasons for choosing that were twofold. One, a very small number are available now. It does seem unreasonable that those who were the most conscientious will get subjected to an undue amount of public scrutiny compared to those who waited until the last minute.

Second, February 7 was not chosen accidentally as a suggestion. It was chosen because it allows for the caucuses to meet back in Ottawa with the resumption of Parliament to review and find out how many are available. We expect it will be the considerable majority of the statements at that time. Given that we all engaged in a process of consulting with our caucuses, it allows for further consultation, which might not necessarily be possible under any other circumstance.

The Chair: All right. I gather there is some sort of consensus on February 7, available by fax.

Mr. Casey, do you agree with that?

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): I don't agree with it.

The Chair: Okay. If there's not agreement, we'll put the item at another time.

Mr. Bill Casey: I want to ask a question, though.

The Ethics Commissioner came and told us these were going to be available in his office if somebody came to see them. What happened? How did we go from there to now faxing them?

The Chair: We received correspondence on that. It was circulated to all of us at a previous meeting. I just thought we could have a consensus on that right now. If we have to go through everything we've done before, I'll put it aside and come back to it either at the end of this meeting, when we have our agenda-setting meeting, or at another date.

We have our first witness today, pursuant to the order of reference, on the question of privilege relating to the free movement of members within the parliamentary precinct during the visit of President George W. Bush.

We have asked as a witness today the Honourable Bill Blaikie, who as we all know is one of our colleagues and also the Dean of the House. He was stopped from having access to the Hill on the day in question. His testimony, it was felt at the last meeting, would be of tremendous assistance to members of Parliament. I would ask colleagues to deal with that.

Afterwards we will have the Chief of Police of the City of Ottawa, who was administering security, along with others, outside the perimeter of the Hill.

Honourable Blaikie, would you please describe for members of the committee the day in question and the incident?

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I want to say it was a little strange to be sitting here and not be able to jump into the previous conversation. It's certainly not what I'm used to when I'm sitting at a committee table.

I will try to describe what happened to me and hope that it's somehow instructive for your deliberations.

I was proceeding up to the Hill. Actually, I was walking up Wellington Street, and I saw Senator Jerry Grafstein ahead of me. Where the security perimeter began and the traffic had already been blocked off, there were two policemen, beyond where you stand and look over the canal on the way up, before you get to the East Block. There were two policemen. They were not RCMP. I didn't take note of who they were. I understand from what you were saying that they might have been Ottawa police, but I don't know.

Anyway, Senator Grafstein was already trying to prove that he was a senator and should be allowed in. I came up, hoping to slide by while they were busy with the senator. They said, "Oh, oh". I said that I was a member of Parliament and was only trying to get up to my office. They asked if I had a security pass. I said no, but that I did have identification. I produced my parliamentary ID, which has my picture on it and says that I'm a member of Parliament. I thought that would be sufficient.

One of the policemen told me that wasn't good enough and I had to have a special security pass. I said that was news to me. There had been no memo to the effect that we had to have special security passes, nor was I aware of any other member of Parliament who had received one. I said that my staff were in my office as we spoke, and that I had just talked to them. I asked why they were up there, as I knew they didn't have special security passes. I didn't understand why, having proved that I was member of Parliament, I couldn't proceed to my office. He told me that he was sorry, but they were told that I'd have to have a special security pass and that was it.

If I had not been willing to pursue it, I guess I could have gone home, because I wasn't getting on the Hill as far as these two guys were concerned. I said that they should consult their superior officer on this because there was some kind of misunderstanding. One fellow went away to talk to his superior officer, and there was one policeman remaining, talking to Senator Grafstein and me.

I told the one remaining officer that I thought there was something wrong, that I had ID with my picture on it, showing that I'm a member of Parliament, and that I didn't understand what was going on. He said that he didn't realize it said I was a member of Parliament. I told him that I had shown it to the other guy and would show it to him. I showed it to him, and then he said that I could go in.

On that basis, both Grafstein and I proceeded to enter. I don't know whether they let the senator in on my okay, once the other guy believed I was a member of Parliament, but anyway, the two of us proceeded up. We were about halfway to the East Block gate, and the other policeman who had gone to see his superior officer was coming back down. He asked us where we were going. I said that I was going to my office. I told him that his colleague down below had decided that it was okay for us. He told us that he was sorry, but we were not going any further. I asked what the problem was. He said that I needed a special security pass.

I asked to be taken to his superior officer because it was getting to be a little irritating. He decided that he was going to take both the senator and me to whoever he was going to consult. As we proceeded up Wellington, we reached the East Block gate. That's where the RCMP were. The RCMP saw me and asked what the problem was. I told him that the two guys wouldn't let me in. He told me to let us in, and we went in.

• (1115)

When I proceeded through the East Block gate, there were protesters on the lawn and one guy with a great big sign that said, "George Bush is a terrorist", and a whole bunch of other signs, and I said, "Do these people have security passes? Because they seem to have got up on the Hill with no problem. I've got an ID that says I'm a member of Parliament and I can't get anywhere near the place". I just think it's a little weird.

What was happening? Was there a misunderstanding that members of Parliament had to have security passes? They clearly didn't have to have them everywhere they tried to get on the Hill. The staff didn't have to have security passes; they got through. So either these people had completely wrong instructions or they misunderstood their instructions, or whatever. I'm sure they were trying to do their jobs as best as they understood them, but there was

something askew about the understanding of who had to have these security passes.

Apparently there were such security passes, because as we were standing there trying to prove ourselves to these two policemen in the initial stages of this story, Susan Riley went by—

• (1120)

The Chair: That's the reporter.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: The reporter. She flashed this thing, and I remember saying to her, "Susan, what have you got there?" And she said, "I've got one of these security passes". I said, "Where did you get that?" She said she had to go to Beechwood or somewhere to get it, and it was at that moment that I knew I'd be before this committee at some point.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Bill Blaikie: It was the sort of thing that I just wanted to deal with and get to my office and forget about it, but I thought, okay, this is going to be a story now—and it is.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Before I start recognizing questioners, does this roughly look like the card you produced for the police officer?

Hon. Bill Blaikie: Yes. Mine's a little more faded than that; you must have a new one.

The Chair: Well, as a matter of fact, it is a new one.

Hon. Judi Longfield: It's expired.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: It doesn't say it's expired.

Hon. Judi Longfield: 37th Parliament.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: No, it doesn't say 37th Parliament; it just says "Member of Parliament".

The Chair: But anyway, you did have the card identifying you as being with the House of Commons, with the Speaker's signature, and so on?

Hon. Bill Blaikie: Yes.

The Chair: Okay, thank you very much.

First question, Mr. Johnston.

Mr. Dale Johnston: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I guess what this committee is tasked with... I thought it was a two-pronged approach, but I've been told now it's simply a matter of privilege. I was under the impression that we were going to deal with security matters, but my understanding is that security is to be dealt with by the Board of Internal Economy. Therefore, I think it's quite clear that a member's privilege has been breached and I'm willing to make a motion to report back to the Speaker that the committee believes that a member's privilege has been breached.

On the whole question of security on the Hill, quite frankly, I'm tired of spinning my wheels in this committee thinking we're dealing with security, and we're not, and so I would also recommend that we refer this whole issue of security to the Board of Internal Economy, where it's to be dealt with.

The Chair: Colleague, with respect, though, we haven't heard from the other witnesses who we've asked to come this morning, and they're in the room.

Mr. Dale Johnston: Well, in my opinion, it's a waste of their time and ours to hear from them if we're not in charge of security on the Hill. When I suggested that we bring in more witnesses, it was my assumption, because we've had so many security witnesses before this committee, that it was our duty to deal with security on the Hill. Quite frankly, I think we should give our apologies to these gentlemen and the lady for bringing them before a committee that can't do anything about security anyway, and refer them to the proper committee.

The Chair: I don't want to engage in a debate, but someone breached our privileges, and unless we hear about those someones who are possibly in the room, how are we even going to determine that?

But anyway, it's your motion, and you can move it at any time; but other colleagues want to ask questions of this witness, and perhaps some of them want to ask questions of the next witness as well.

Mr. Dale Johnston: My motion is that we refer this back to the Speaker. I've certainly heard enough to determine that privileges were breached, and so my motion stands, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Do you want to vote on it now?

Mr. Dale Johnston: Sure.

The Chair: The Chair: All right. Who's in favour of adopting this motion now?

(Motion negatived)

The Chair: We'll not proceed with that motion right now, then.

Mr. Blaikie, do you wish to respond to anything that was said? If not, we move to the next question.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: Yes, I do, actually.

I see the member's point. You may not be in charge of security, but it doesn't mean you can't make recommendations to the board about security or what you found to be curious, or lacking, or in some way askew.

Obviously this is not just a question of privilege; it's a question of how security on that particular day was organized. If it was the Ottawa police, who briefed the constables who were at that checkpoint I was at? Who told them that members of Parliament needed to have a security pass and that parliamentary ID wasn't enough? Were they told that by their own superiors? Was it what the RCMP told the Ottawa police was the case? Was there miscommunication between the two police forces? These are all things that seem to me to be relevant to what the committee is about.

You may not be able to decide anything about it, but you can certainly observe and recommend.

• (1125)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Guimond, it's your turn, but I'd like to give someone else the floor while you are getting ready, and I'll come back to you after that.

Ms. Longfield.

[*English*]

Hon. Judi Longfield: Mr. Blaikie, setting aside inconvenience, do you think it would be appropriate for us to recommend that in instances where there is additional security around the perimeter we designate one authorized entrance point for parliamentary personnel, members and staff—say, the car wash or one other place—so that we're not trying to breach external security to get to the Hill?

Hon. Bill Blaikie: The car wash?

Hon. Judi Longfield: Yes—you know, down on Bank Street there.

The Chair: There are a number of us, Mr. Blaikie, for whom that thing at the end of Bank Street that looks like a car wash is referred to as “the car wash”. Maybe that'll assist you in your answer.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: All right. I hadn't picked that up yet.

Hon. Judi Longfield: Currently, that is where, if you're driving onto the Hill, you have to come through.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: That may be something the committee wants to look at. You might need one on either side of the Hill, particularly if you have a whole area cordoned off where you have no traffic. For someone who's coming from the east side in order to get into the west side, if the only checkpoint where members of Parliament could get in was on the west side, you'd have to walk around the whole thing.

Hon. Judi Longfield: I wasn't talking about inconvenience. I was inconvenienced. I was coming from Gatineau and had to come across the Champlain Bridge to do it. If there was one—

Hon. Bill Blaikie: There may be grounds for... I don't think everything should be as convenient on extraordinary days as it normally is. This, in my case, was not a case of inconvenience: I wasn't getting there.

Hon. Judi Longfield: That's all I wanted.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to come back to what Ms. Longfield was saying. In my opinion, this does not resolve the particular problem you experienced, Mr. Blaikie, for the simple reason that the incident occurred on the sidewalk near the Rideau Canal. The problem was not at the actual entrance to Parliament Hill: the RCMP told him to go through. The problem was downtown.

So, do you think that the Ottawa police should be able to recognize members of Parliament on the streets the same way the RCMP does, which is responsible for security on Parliament Hill?

In this case, someone was visiting Canada from another country—George W. Bush—and everything was focussed on the history of Parliament, which was open that day. So, out of respect for parliamentarians, our country and our democracy, it seems to me that police force personnel on the ground—whether we're talking about the OPP, the Ottawa Police or the RCMP—should recognize that this is where parliamentarians work, and that the best welcome should be reserved for them on Parliament Hill.

[English]

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I agree, but I wouldn't expect the Ottawa police or anyone else to be able to memorize, not just members of Parliament, but everyone else who was coming up to the Hill that day. Not everyone who came up to the Hill that day had the security passes. I don't know how all the people who work on the Hill got to the Hill that day, but they didn't have the security passes; they were in the same boat as I was in. Wherever they got in, all they had to do was show their House of Commons ID card or, if they're members of Parliament, their ID as a member of Parliament.

I think the member's point is well taken. This didn't happen on the grounds of Parliament. This happened outside—down the Hill, so to speak. I'm saying I think there could have been some kind of understanding between the RCMP, who do know us, and whoever else gets involved on a day like this, that you're going to have members of Parliament coming, and this is what their IDs look like, and this is what their names are—even have some place where technologically you can check: “I've got a guy here; he says his name is Blaikie; this is how he looks; he's got an ID”, and , “Yes, let him in”.

Basically, that's what happened. We just had to talk our way up the Hill so we could get within sight of somebody who knew who we were. I just think there was some kind of breakdown in—

• (1130)

Mr. Yvon Godin: No, I was not implying any other police group have to recognize us by face; it's just that you have an identification that is produced by the Parliament of Canada, and it's our working place. That's what I was referring to.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: Yes, fair enough. I'm sorry; I misunderstood.

Mr. Yvon Godin: I came in that morning and I was not asked by anybody. I didn't show any ID; I was not asked. I just came through. I went right up to Parliament and went through all kinds of police on the west side and was not bothered at all.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: From what I understand, most of the problems happened on the east side.

The Chair: Do you have another question, monsieur?

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: No.

The Chair: It's your turn, Mr. Guimond. You're on.

Mr. Michel Guimond: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to apologize for having to leave for a couple of minutes. It's possible Mr. Blaikie answered these questions in my absence. If you've

already answered them, don't repeat those comments; I will simply consult the “blues”.

To be sure I understand, Mr. Blaikie, could you tell me what time it was? I'm not sure whether you stated that or not. I listen to testimony in the language spoken by the witness, as a means of improving my knowledge of English. I'm sure that everybody understands me perfectly when I speak French. I don't know whether you mentioned the time. What time was it?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I said it was around 9:30.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond: You lost me at one point as you were giving your explanation. Where exactly, in relation to the perimeter, were you intercepted the first time? Was it in front of the Chateau Laurier or between the Chateau Laurier and the Conference Centre? Where exactly where you?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I was just past the Chateau Laurier, where what appeared to me to be the security perimeter began. I didn't measure it, but it was perhaps just past where you're looking out over the canal and can see the river. It was right around there somewhere, or maybe just past there.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond: You didn't really seem sure about that earlier. Do you remember which police force intercepted you?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I didn't make a point of trying to get a badge number or anything. The last time I saw somebody do that, they ended up in the back of the cruiser. I just noticed they were not RCMP.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond: Thank you.

The Chair: Ms. Boivin.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, Lib.): I will be very brief, Mr. Blaikie. Since I was elected only last June 28, I am a new member of Parliament. You have been here for much longer, however, and so have experienced a number of visits of foreign heads of state. Was this the first time you saw such tight security? What is your assessment of the security measures put in place for this visit, compared to what was done for past visits? Mr. Fox visited Canada a short while ago. In light of the experience you have gained over the course of your parliamentary career, did you note any differences?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blaikie: This is the first time this particular thing has happened to me. I was here for all the Reagan visits and every other presidential visit—all the visits in the last 25 years—and I never was stopped like this.

I think I remember other occasions where something may have been shut off, but it was shut off to everybody. It wasn't a case of my being required to have something I couldn't possibly have while other people were proceeding. This was an entirely different sort of thing. When there's a security environment, shall we say, on the Hill—sometimes the elevators shut down, or people aren't going here, or we're having people go this way—I'm quite prepared, and members of Parliament generally are prepared, to live with whatever is being designed at the moment.

This was a different thing. Other people were getting up, and we weren't, and our parliamentary ID wasn't good enough. That was the problem. Members of Parliament have always been willing to be inconvenienced, like everyone else, for the sake of security. This was a case of some other people being led up who had these special passes, and our not being led up because we didn't have passes that, in actual fact, we were not required to have and were never told we needed to have, and which other members of Parliament and parliamentary staff didn't need to have at other checkpoints.

There's an inconsistency here. It's not a big deal, but it needs to be reconciled for next time so that this doesn't happen again; that's all.

• (1135)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

The next questioner I have on my list is Mr. Reynolds.

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I happen to agree with my colleague that we can probably spend a lot of time talking about this issue. There's no question in my mind, and I don't think in anybody else's here, that the privileges of members were violated. But if you look at the situation on that day, you had the Ottawa police—and all of these people do a good job, and they're well trained—you had the RCMP, you had the House of Commons security, the Senate security, the RCMP for the Prime Minister, and the Secret Service, all doing security work within these precincts.

The Chair: This incident, Mr. Reynolds, was outside.

Mr. John Reynolds: And I'm saying all of the groups were inside and outside the precincts. Thank God nothing went wrong. We probably all would have had some more problems. But we've had Mr. Zaccardelli before the Board of Internal Economy. I'm not sure if we've had him before this committee, but I think we have. He's made recommendations that there should be one security force in charge of all these buildings, but we have the Senate who want to play games with our guys, and everybody's....

Somewhere along the line, Mr. Chairman—I agree with my colleague—we should report that yes, there was a breach of privilege. But when is the House of Commons or the government going to get together and come up with one comprehensive program so these things don't happen again?

We keep on doing this. I have better things to do than sit here. We know there's a privilege violation. We know how to solve the problem: tell Mr. Zaccardelli to put a force together to put security in this place.

I came in here a week ago Saturday....

I'll tell you two stories. The first one is that four of our members, when the President was coming into the rotunda, went down the corridor from the members' chamber on the second floor to go to the rotunda. You can't go there. They were told that, I understand, by two Secret Service agents plus two of our own people. So they went into the elevator, went downstairs, and came up the other side, but walked out into the rotunda. They all got their handshakes done with the President and a picture taken. Now, that's great security: one side says they can't go, and they get on the elevator and come up on the other side.

I came into these buildings two Saturdays ago, in a cab down below—it was Grey Cup weekend; I had some visitors from out of town. It was about 11 o'clock in the morning—at the car wash. There were thousands of tourists walking up the Hill and going in through the front door. She wouldn't let me up the Hill in the cab. She asked, "Who are you?" I said, "I'm John Reynolds, house leader for the Conservative Party." "Well, how do I know that?" I said, "I don't have my pin with me, but go to the list; I'm on the list". I'm sitting in a cab for five minutes.

Finally I got out of the cab and walked in and asked, "What the hell is going on?" She said, "I can't find you on any list". I'm told by security I should be in there in a book with a picture, anyway.

Fortunately, some other guy was sleeping in the back and woke up and said, "Oh, that's Mr. Reynolds. He's okay". Then they let my cab go up to the top of the Hill. I could have just got out of the cab and walked up and been there earlier.

The system is crazy, the way it is right now, given the fact that anybody can walk in through the centre door in this building. As we were told by Mr. Zaccardelli in very plain language, not a very large bomb would blow that Peace Tower down, and the rest of the building would fall down with it.

So, Mr. Chairman, I don't think we need to waste a lot of time. Privilege has been violated. Everybody feels sorry about it, but we should tell the Board of Internal Economy they must come up with an answer.

This is just typical of committees. You go on and on, and it never stops. It's time we set a time limit for the House of Commons and the Senate to get together and come up with a program for the House of Commons that makes sense.

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

I wonder if Mr. Blaikie wants to react to the intervention of Mr. Reynolds.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I do. I think the argument for a more integrated and coordinated security service, whatever you want to call it, on the Hill has been made over and over and over again. I can witness to that myself, both as a former member of the board and a member of this committee for many years.

It'll soon be 20 years since the Special Committee on the Reform of the House of Commons made its first report in 1985, calling for the integration of all these things on the Hill under the auspices of what we recommended would be called a "parliamentary intendant". We had looked at security and at other administrative things in Washington. They have the congressional architect. It seems an odd name, "architect", but the congressional architect is in charge of everything, the Senate and the House of Representatives. They don't have the strict division we have here between the Senate and the House of Commons.

We recommended then, almost two decades ago, that this separation, this *deux nations* that exists in our Parliament in so many ways, be overcome for the sake of the more efficient and more effective provision of a great many services. And this never happens; this never happens.

In my experience, Mr. Chairman, this never happens partly because there's no way to compel the Senate to do anything they don't want to do. I don't want to get started on the Senate here, but we have this unelected, unaccountable body that is able to stand in the way of what the House of Commons wants to do for 20 years. Maybe it's time somebody did something about that.

• (1140)

The Chair: Perhaps I can assist members in focusing in on a couple of things. Then we'll continue with the questions.

In an informal conversation I had earlier today, I was informed by the City of Ottawa that they'd never seen our green House of Commons pass. Whether or not there are one or two police forces on the Hill—and the witnesses will tell us about this later—a sample of that isn't provided to them. These are the things we must hear from our next witnesses. I think it's important.

The second consideration—again, hopefully this will focus us—is that no matter what kind of integrated police force we have on the Hill, nothing will change the fact that Wellington Street is physically inside Ottawa city limits. That will always be the case.

So I just want us to remember that. Whether there are one or two police forces on the Hill, these other things will remain. I invite us to think about that.

At any rate, I'll continue with the questions. I'll come back to that later.

Mr. Casey, you're next.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Two Conservatives in a row?

The Chair: I'm sorry, it should be Madam Redman and then Mr. Casey.

Madam Redman.

Hon. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Blaikie, I can understand how somebody of your stature may try to push through a crowd. Somebody of my stature tends to avoid those kinds of crowds.

The real question, more than anything, is the breakdown in communications. I think that's what concerns me as much as anything. We've already established that, through the dean of the House of Commons.

As whip, I guess I'm wondering what part of this, if any, I'm willing to shoulder. We sent a memo to all of our members, saying wear your pin. It doesn't sound like it would have done you much good, but in good faith, we thought it's what we could do. We also sent out the information we got from the Speaker, who said that the bridge would be closed, which also was not particularly relevant to your case in point.

Given your tenure on the Hill, what in your view is the most effective way to communicate whatever system we come up with? Clearly the breakdown in communication may be among the different police forces as well as members of Parliament on the Hill. I saw those special passes, too, and wondered if my staff should have had them, or me. But I had no knowledge of how those people knew where to get them, and that they indeed needed them.

I'm just wondering, do you as a member of Parliament have any suggestions as to how we can improve that piece of it?

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I think the relevant police forces that are going to be involved in any particular event need to have a plan, one that includes them all having the same understanding of what constitutes required identification. That plan then obviously needs to be communicated to members of Parliament individually, collectively, through the caucuses, or to the whole Parliament through the Speaker, or all three, so that we know what the rules are. That's all.

For a minute I thought, well, maybe I don't know the rules; maybe I'd neglected to get the pass that I'd needed to get. I was pretty sure I hadn't, though, because I keep a pretty close eye on things, and I didn't recall anybody else talking about where they were going to get this special pass.

All I'm saying is that somebody got the wrong message. Somebody got the message that members of Parliament had to have this special security pass, and we didn't. The guys I ran into thought I did have to have it. So whoever told them that I had to have this told them the wrong thing, or neglected to tell them that I didn't need to have it, or whatever. Put it any way you like, something went wrong.

If it's the case that the Ottawa police are not even aware of the fact that members of Parliament have certain kinds of ID, and what they look like, then that's another breakdown in communication. It isn't the fault of the Ottawa police, if that's the correct version. It would have been useful if their briefing notes, or whatever it is police get before this kind of thing, had said, here's what a parliamentary pass looks like, and you're going to run into members of Parliament who probably are going to produce this kind of ID.

When I showed it to the guy there, I might as well have shown him my swimming pool pass or something; he was about as impressed.

An hon. member: You have a swimming pool pass?

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I don't. I was just making that up. You know what I mean.

• (1145)

The Chair: Mr. Blaikie, thank you very much.

We do have other witnesses here. Do you wish to continue with the present questioning, or do we want to hear the next witnesses?

Mr. Casey, did you want to make a statement?

Mr. Bill Casey: Is it my turn to ask a question?

The Chair: It's your turn. It's up to you if you want to use it now or wait until the next witness.

Mr. Bill Casey: I'd like to ask him a question, because a parallel story happened to me.

From your story, I understand that officer one said you couldn't go, and officer two said you could go, after a little debate. And then, as you walked up the Hill, officer three said you couldn't go.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: It was officer one, coming back.

Mr. Bill Casey: So officer one still said no.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: He still said no.

I don't know how the two of them got along after that.

Mr. Bill Casey: In the end, officer four said yes?

Hon. Bill Blaikie: Officer three was the RCMP officer.

Mr. Bill Casey: At any rate, it was no, yes, no, yes.

In my case, I was one of the ones Mr. Reynolds referred to, who went down the hall. I had yes, no, no, yes. It really shows you how inconsistent the security was on that day, I think.

You said that we should have one force inside the House for the Senate and the House of Commons. Should that extend to the grounds as well? I think it should. It should be one force for the whole place.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: I'm going from memory here, but the intention behind the idea of the parliamentary intendand was to perhaps even expand the precinct, so to speak. It wouldn't be as contained or as restricted as it is now.

I mean, these are things that could be worked out if there was at least the political space to even talk about it. But there hasn't been.

The Chair: Can we proceed now to the next witnesses, colleagues? Okay.

Thank you very much, Mr. Blaikie.

Hon. Bill Blaikie: That was more time than I usually get at committees.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Honourable Reverend Blaikie, for attending to the committee this morning.

Our next witnesses, from the Ottawa Police Service, are Vince Bevan, the Chief of Police; Superintendent Pat Hayes, emergency operations division; Jacqueline Loignon, legal counsel; and

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Champoux, our Strategic Support Coordinator.

I want to welcome all four of you to the Committee.

[*English*]

Chief, did you wish to make a brief statement before we proceed with questions?

[*Translation*]

Chief Vince Bevan (Ottawa Police Service): Mr. Chairman and members of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, my name is Vince Bevan, and I am the Chief of the Ottawa Police Service. With me today are Pat Hayes, our Emergency Operations Superintendent, Ms. Jacqueline Loignon, our Legal Counsel, and Martin Champoux, our Strategic Support Coordinator.

• (1150)

[*English*]

The Ottawa Police Service has a great deal of experience dealing with security situations, such as the recent presidential visit, and including the G-20-related protests in November 2001 and the G-8-related protests in June 2002. In fact, *monsieur le président*, between our service and the RCMP, we deal with over 500 protests and demonstrations each year.

This experience helped shape our mission statement for the recent presidential visit. I would like to share that statement with you:

Through a cooperative and integrated approach with other Police Agencies, City Partners and stakeholders, the Ottawa Police Service's mission for the 2004 Presidential Visit was:

- To ensure the safety and security of the public and our officers;
- To support the RCMP and their mandate of ensuring the safety and security of the Presidential Visit;
- To respect the democratic right to demonstrate and to create the right conditions for peaceful protest;
- To minimize disruption and inconvenience for Ottawa residents and businesses; and
- To provide security commensurate to the threat level and the public nature of events involved with this visit.

[Translation]

In his testimony before this Committee on Tuesday, December 7, Inspector Louis Lahaie of the RCMP gave a comprehensive explanation of the division of work between the RCMP and the Ottawa Police Service. He also clearly explained the chain of command between our service, the Ontario Provincial Police and the Toronto Police Service. As well, Sergeant Major François Desfossés outlined which police forces were responsible for Parliament Hill, Wellington Street, and other downtown streets.

[English]

It was certainly not our intention, at any time, to deliberately impede access by parliamentarians to Parliament Hill, nor to keep parliamentarians from their duties. As Sergeant Major Desfossés testified on Tuesday, access for parliamentarians and their staff was provided for via the West Block. I would not presume to say whether or not this was properly communicated to parliamentarians, but that is certainly something this committee has within its mandate to determine.

Access to Parliament Hill was never closed. At times, officers may have limited or delayed access to certain areas by parliamentarians, and indeed all individuals, but this was done for reasons entirely based on public safety and in keeping with other elements of the mission statement I outlined earlier. For example, Wellington Street was closed at various times for reasons of public safety. Entrance to the Parliament Buildings could have been gained by taking an alternate route to the designated access point, the West Block.

Several specific incidents have been mentioned during this committee's hearings. Indeed, Mr. Chair, you're quite correct in saying that we have not seen those identity cards before. That was the first time I've had the opportunity to see that piece of identification.

I cannot speak to specific incidents. There were countless individual interactions between police officers and people in the downtown area on November 30, and I cannot possibly comment on a specific interaction.

[Translation]

When there were demonstrations for the G-20 and G-8 meetings, interaction between M.P.s and senators and police was not a factor, because Parliament was not sitting. We learned an important lesson this time around. In future, we will give specific instructions to all police officers with the Ottawa Police Service. So, if an officer is stopped by a member of Parliament, a senator or a parliamentary staff member, he/she will be in a position to identify the best way of accessing Parliament Hill. I am making that commitment to you today.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, we are now ready to take your questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Chief Bevan.

Mr. Johnston.

•(1155)

[English]

Mr. Dale Johnston: Thank you very much for appearing before us today, gentlemen and madam. I have several quick questions, so I'll dispense with all formalities and go straight to them.

What was your role in this? What was your role in drafting the strategy for the day? Were you aware of the overall strategy? Were you briefed prior to the demonstrations? Were you debriefed after the demonstrations? What would you do differently next time?

Chief Vince Bevan: Thank you very much for the questions.

The whole demonstration was run via a unified command centre that involved operational and incident commanders from the Ottawa Police Service, the RCMP, the Service de Police de Gatineau, and the Sûreté du Québec. There was a plan prepared in the very short time period that we had once we were advised that the President was indeed coming to Ottawa. The details of that plan were worked out within the ten or twelve days that we had.

Superintendent Hayes is here, and he was my designate in the planning process. With the permission of the committee, I'd like to have him respond specifically to the process and to what we were told at the time.

Supt Pat Hayes (Emergency Operations Division, Ottawa Police Service): Mr. Chair, as Chief Bevan mentioned, I was the officer in charge of the support group to the RCMP. The RCMP had a lead role on the presidential visit, and members of the Ottawa Police Service, the Toronto Police Service, and the OPP worked in conjunction with the planning team led by the RCMP. So we were a support.

We certainly recognized the mandate of the RCMP for the presidential visit and for the secure areas designated through that plan. Of course, it's common knowledge that the RCMP have full mandate on Parliament Hill. We would be taking direction from our counterparts within the RCMP on procedural matters as they pertain to Parliament Hill, whereas Wellington Street and direction of personnel from all services that were a party to it were under my control. There were members of the RCMP on the city streets assisting us in an integrated fashion for the security of the entire visit, but decisions on the road closures and the appropriate security barriers fell under my team and the direction I was giving to them.

There have been some debriefings. Just to go back to your question, the RCMP had debriefings that I attended, and the Ottawa police are conducting debriefings with our partners. There are some very good lessons to be learned by all of us, vertically and horizontally between agencies, and certainly this particular matter will be brought to the attention of that debriefing process.

The Chair: Merci.

Mr. Johnston, you have time for maybe one more.

Mr. Dale Johnston: Thank you.

Chief Bevan, in your opening comments you said it was a cooperative, integrated exercise. Was it cooperative and integrated to your satisfaction?

Chief Vince Bevan: Certainly every time out, we learn lessons, and we will learn lessons from this time. Generally, outside of the issues that members of Parliament have identified, things went relatively well. This is a learning experience for us, as is the case each time, as I indicated in my comments.

We didn't have the same problem during the large demonstrations for the G-20 or G-8, because Parliament wasn't sitting at the time. For us, when we know Parliament is going to be sitting, we're going to have to have other measures in place to make sure our officers and everyone who is called to assist us understand the role that Parliamentarians and their staff play, and provide them with access to the Hill unimpeded.

Certainly, we've learned thus far this morning that we're going to have to work with our counterparts, our partners at the RCMP, to get the information to our members about what identity cards for members of Parliament look like. I know they're aware there could be designations on licence plates and what not that they come into contact with that identify members of Parliament, but we'd not previously seen the identity cards, so we're going to have make some changes for the next time in the way we inform our members.

• (1200)

[Translation]

The Chair: I'm sorry, but we're running out of time.

Mr. Michel Guimond: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to know how many of your officers were assigned to this operation.

Chief Vince Bevan: Mr. Chairman, there were approximately 2,200 officers.

Mr. Michel Guimond: Ottawa Police officers?

Chief Vince Bevan: No, there were also Ontario Provincial Police officers...

Mr. Michel Guimond: I see. How many Ottawa Police officers were assigned to the operation?

Chief Vince Bevan: Approximately 700.

Mr. Michel Guimond: You are in charge of a total staff complement of how many?

Chief Vince Bevan: We have a staff of 1,500.

Mr. Michel Guimond: So, 700 were assigned. I saw them with RCMP officers. We often see motorcycle officers on Parliament Hill. How many officers are part of that team?

Chief Vince Bevan: If memory serves me, that day, there were 24 motorcycles in the squad, including 19 members of the Ottawa Police Service.

Mr. Michel Guimond: They were 24 in all. Nineteen were members of the Ottawa Police, and the others were from the RCMP

Chief Vince Bevan: Exactly.

Mr. Michel Guimond: To arrive at the 700 figure, I guess your other officers were mainly assigned to road closure operations, to let the motorcade pass. Is that correct?

Chief Vince Bevan: Yes.

Mr. Michel Guimond: Were any of your officers in the perimeter, either inside or outside the gates? Were most of them in the perimeter?

Chief Vince Bevan: Yes. As well, there were a total of six sites—for example, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, on Sussex Street, the Convention Centre, the Alexandra Bridge, and the U.S. Embassy.

Mr. Michel Guimond: In addition to the Canadian Museum of Civilization? I imagine the Canadian Museum of Civilization was more the responsibility of the Gatineau Police Service.

Chief Vince Bevan: Precisely.

Mr. Michel Guimond: And of the 700, what percentage would be bilingual officers, in your estimation? What percentage of your officer complement is bilingual?

Chief Vince Bevan: More than 42 per cent, Mr. Guimond.

Mr. Michel Guimond: Did you personally participate in the work of the coordination committee that Inspector Lahaie talked about? As Chief, were you personally involved in that, or was it Mr. Hayes?

Chief Vince Bevan: Yes.

Mr. Michel Guimond: To your knowledge, was there any discussion of M.P.s' identification? Was that mentioned?

[English]

Supt Pat Hayes: The issue of identification was restricted in our discussions to accreditation for the presidential visit. In concert with the Secret Service, the RCMP, and our other partners, we were clearly informed that people coming through what we would call, for the purposes of discussion, a "hardened area" would require the presidential accreditation. These people, members of the media, members of the entourage coming with the President, and other guests would have to go through an accreditation process that is governed by the RCMP. With the production of proper accreditation, they would be allowed access to certain areas.

We also have what we call a "soft perimeter". There's a harder perimeter that is very restricted. If there's a softer perimeter, then naturally the general public would have access.

In this particular case, where Mr. Blaikie was coming through, it would have been a hardened perimeter. The front of the Chateau Laurier, up to Sapper's Bridge and back to Rideau and Sussex, would be a hardened perimeter. You could not come through that area without proper accreditation.

Anybody coming west on Wellington would have difficulty. If you were coming east on Wellington from another area, you could go onto Parliament Hill. You were not in a hardened area, you were in a soft perimeter on Wellington Street. It meant that no vehicles could travel on Wellington Street, but the public could travel on Wellington Street.

Again, I did listen to Mr. Blaikie. On the accreditation, I would presume that if there was a reporter who had proper accreditation in that hardened area, versus somebody who did not have the proper accreditation, it would cause a police officer on the perimeter of the barricade to say that one was okay to pass and one did not have the proper accreditation.

It would also apply if there was a member of our police service who wanted to go into the hardened area. I would not be entitled to be there if I didn't have the proper accreditation because security measures have been invoked and the area is sanitized. They know it's a safe area, and nobody goes in there without proper accreditation. The hardened perimeter in front of the Chateau Laurier would certainly have posed a challenge to anybody walking westbound on Wellington Street.

•(1205)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Godin.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Welcome.

You referred to the west side, but in actual fact, it's the east side.

[*English*]

Supt Pat Hayes: The east side, right in front of the Chateau, would be east of the Parliament Buildings. It would be a challenge for anybody. To go through that area, if you came up from the Rideau Centre, you'd be stopped at Rideau Street. You're continuing west, but the secure area is certainly east of Parliament Hill.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvon Godin: But what's the idea here? We're talking about Parliament and members of Parliament. As a parliamentarian, I must say I have a hard time understanding why we should have to cross that kind of security barrier. This is our work place. Based on your explanation, these security measures were intended to ensure the safety of people generally and of the President.

Now a reporter with a pass was allowed through, whereas you, based on your explanation, would not even have been recognized as having the right to go through. In my opinion, it would have been nice for police officers on the ground—from Ottawa, Gatineau, the OPP or the RCMP—to be as concerned about ensuring the safety of parliamentarians as they were of George Bush. In a city like Ottawa, where parliamentary life has always been a strong feature of the town, the system of I.D. cards currently in place just doesn't work.

[*English*]

Supt Pat Hayes: Mr. Chair, if I could again refer to the hard perimeter or secure area, that is for safety and security when the President's entourage or escort is coming. Those are discussions with the Secret Service and their restrictions applying to this visit. That was strictly a hard perimeter. They're very strict about the proximity, of anybody getting close to that escort coming through.

I know especially at 11 o'clock or any time between 9:30 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon—especially when we were having some difficulties with the protestors—those timeframes are rather strictly enforced.

We can assess access, depending on the safety. One request came from a senator who was staying at the Chateau Laurier, Senator Mahovlich. He wanted to come out, and when he did come out, it was about 11 o'clock. He was within the hardened perimeter and he wanted access to Parliament Hill. We were able to accommodate him at that time; however, the presidential escort was right there, so we had to hold on before he could go up.

Later in the day, former Prime Minister Kim Campbell was at the Chateau Laurier requesting access to go through the hardened perimeter. It was a hardened perimeter, but she needed access to go up to Parliament Hill. We had to deny that at that time because of safety, with all the protestors and the ongoing—

•(1210)

Mr. Yvon Godin: The safety of whom? You're saying “because of safety”—the safety of Ms. Campbell?

Supt Pat Hayes: The safety of everyone concerned, sir.

Mr. Yvon Godin: But if somebody were to have a pass, what would happen to that safety?

Supt Pat Hayes: They would not be allowed to pass.

Mr. Yvon Godin: No pass was going through.

Supt Pat Hayes: No pass was going through, accredited or otherwise. We would not let anybody go through that hardened perimeter at that time due to the safety concerns.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Because of the cortège going through.

Supt Pat Hayes: Not only that, but because of the active protest and active confrontations that were going on, which were reflected on immediately.

The Chair: We have a point of order from Mr. Johnston, and then the next questioner will be Madam Longfield.

Mr. Dale Johnston: As I understand, and it just occurred to us, parliamentary privilege applies within the precinct. Does parliamentary privilege actually apply out on the sidewalk, on Wellington Street?

The Chair: Yes, it applies everywhere. For your information, it's for parliamentarians to have what is called unmolested access to Parliament. It has existed since 1755, and it's incorporated, in fact, in our Constitution. No one can deny an MP the right to have access to the Hill.

Mr. John Reynolds: So on the point of order, then, what Superintendent Hayes has said has just given us the question of privilege. The fact is, for any member who was stopped because of that rule, it was a violation of our privileges of access to our House.

The Chair: It could be, but anyway, let's continue with the questions and we can arrive at our conclusions afterwards, although some of them are perhaps becoming a little bit more obvious.

Madam Longfield.

Hon. Judi Longfield: Just to clarify, at a certain time no one had access, no matter what kind of badge he or she had or what kind of things, and it was a short period of time.

Supt Pat Hayes: It was a safety issue.

Hon. Judi Longfield: I don't think my privilege extends such that it should be at the exact moment I want to do it. There may be a time delay in terms of that. So I can accept that.

But what I find—and I don't suspect it's your fault—is that someplace, when this was being set up and they were giving out the security passes, they forgot to say, oh, by the way, there's another group of individuals who should have access, free access, to their place of employment, and that would be authorized parliamentary personnel, which would include members of Parliament, senators, and their staff. Had you been aware of that documentation, there would not have been any problem. Mr. Blaikie could have passed at the same time as the reporter and everyone else. That was the problem, as I understand it.

Supt Pat Hayes: I think that would be a fair summation.

Chief Vince Bevan: I'd like to complete that answer as well.

There were certain times of the day when the motorcade was coming through that no one was going to be allowed to pass. When the President's guests were gathering at the government Conference Centre and the crowds of demonstrators were around the perimeter, we weren't going to open the gate to let anyone pass through, because the act of opening the gate was going to just invite the protestors to come in.

I was there personally at the barricade over the bridge, which would have been at the east end of the parliamentary precinct, and there were parliamentarians who went through there absolutely unfettered during the points in time when there was no crowd at the perimeter, but as soon as the crowd approached the perimeter, it was shut down. Eventually, as you're probably aware, the crowd broke down the first set of barricades and approached the second set of barricades. So at that time, for safety reasons, we would not have opened the gate for anyone to go through.

Hon. Judi Longfield: On follow-up, there seemed to be a well-communicated plan for access within the precinct. For example, you had to access the Centre Block through the West Block. Again, it appears there was no communicated plan on how to access the precinct. Once you were inside the precinct, you knew that if you needed to get into the Centre Block you had to go through the west side.

We didn't communicate, again, in terms of passes or spreading out a general word that if you were outside the precinct you needed...or that our identification was sufficient to do that.

Chief Vince Bevan: What we did know is that parliamentarians and people having business on the Hill that day were to access Parliament Hill via West Block.

Hon. Judi Longfield: But Parliament Hill is a gate. I think you're talking about inside the precinct, in terms of how they were going to access the Centre Block as opposed to how they were going to get to the West Block, because you can't get to the West Block unless you've been inside the perimeter. There didn't seem to be a plan to get inside the perimeter to the West Block.

•(1215)

Chief Vince Bevan: There was no problem...coming from the west, east down Wellington Street, there was no difficulty. The only difficulty was getting outside that protected area around the Chateau and the Conference Centre toward Parliament Hill.

The other thing we knew that morning was that the motorcade itself was to go in the east gate and that access to Parliament Hill itself would be open at the time the motorcade arrived.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

The next questioner I have is Mr. Casey.

Mr. Bill Casey: You said a minute ago that parliamentarians were to have access through the West Block. In your plan, who was to tell parliamentarians that?

Supt Pat Hayes: Mr. Chair, during the planning stages, Ray Pelletier and Mr. Buss from your security staff—both the Senate and, I believe, the House of Commons—attended meetings with the Ottawa police and the RCMP. They were briefed on road closures and the restrictions that were going to be in place outside of the precinct or leading up to the precinct. They were the conduit, in my impression, to go back to your people.

Mr. Bill Casey: You said that members of Parliament were supposed to go through the West Block. When Mr. Blaikie came into the east entrance, why didn't they tell him to go to the West Block? Who is responsible to tell those officers to tell members of Parliament to go to the West Block? Mr. Blaikie wasn't told that. He was simply told he didn't have access.

Supt Pat Hayes: Again, I wasn't there, so I'm not sure what was said. Certainly, if he was coming up to a barricade, they wouldn't let him come through to go to the East Block or even to the West Block. If he was east of the canal, he would have had difficulty coming west.

Naturally, once you come up to the gates of Parliament Hill...the Ottawa police, being on the street, have a good working relationship with the RCMP, who have a very clear understanding of all of the processes on Parliament Hill. So it would be the normal practice of our service to seek the direction and guidance of the RCMP. We were very familiar with all of the processes at that time.

Not knowing what happened that morning, certainly there was an opportunity to speak to a member of the RCMP. That's certainly something we can take back to our planning for the next time.

Mr. Bill Casey: A minute ago you said that members of Parliament, in your planning meetings, were to come through the West Block. The officers, if I understand Mr. Blaikie's testimony correctly, didn't tell him that. They simply denied him access at the gate. So it sounds like there was a breakdown there.

Supt Pat Hayes: It sounds as if there was a breakdown of communication as to how they were to go around to the west.

Mr. Bill Casey: Yes, and it sounds like there was a breakdown as far as communication to members of Parliament goes. I was not told. None of us were told anything. That was from Mr. Pelletier, and who was the other one?

Supt Pat Hayes: I'm sorry, sir. I want to check the name here.

Mr. Bill Casey: You said earlier it was their responsibility.

Supt Pat Hayes: Bob Buss.

Mr. Bill Casey: It was their responsibility to tell us.

Supt Pat Hayes: They were the representatives of the security who attended our meetings who, I'm presuming, came back with the information.

Mr. Bill Casey: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Ms. Boivin.

Ms. Françoise Boivin: My understanding is that 42 per cent of your officers are bilingual. I'd like to know whether at your meetings with various police forces, the Ottawa Police Service was asked to provide bilingual officers. Was that matter discussed?

Chief Vince Bevan: No, Mr. Chairman, because that day, we were being assisted by members of the Toronto Police Service and the Ontario Provincial Police. I have no idea what their bilingual capacity is. We tried to apportion the skills of our members and of the other teams in place that day in an appropriate manner, but it was practically impossible to guarantee that every team would be able to speak both official languages.

• (1220)

Ms. Françoise Boivin: I want to be sure we understand one another. In your discussions on organizing this operation, was reference made to the need to ensure that officers would be bilingual to the greatest extent possible?

[English]

Supt Pat Hayes: No. Certainly, the direction of the RCMP... I was satisfied that the RCMP, especially with the parliamentary precinct, would have that issue covered. That's their mandate.

On the streets of Ottawa, certainly we're alive to the need for the ability to communicate in both official languages, and there were members up in that area at that time who either could communicate or could seek the assistance of someone to communicate.

Ms. Françoise Boivin: Last question. When you talk about what you call "safety needed", what determines the safety needed? Is it the Secret Service from the United States, the Ridge chart? What is it?

Supt Pat Hayes: When we are planning for any major event, there are risk factors that we would consider toward our safety and the safety of all persons attending. That is based on information we receive from other sources. If we, the police service responsible for the security plan, feel we must implement a level of security, as mentioned by the chief, commensurate to the activities, then we would establish those processes for the protection of the parties.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Our next questioner is Mr. Reynolds.

[English]

Mr. John Reynolds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to say I appreciate the hardship you're in. When I started off, I named the Secret Service, the Senate/House of Commons RCMP, the RCMP for the Prime Minister, the Ottawa police. Now, I've heard in different testimony the Toronto police were involved, the OPP and the Sûreté.

Mr. Boudria and I visited London when we were looking at the terrorism aspects of this House—and I think maybe there might have been some other members of this committee, I'm not sure—but their whole operation is done by the London city police, one force looking after everything. They know who members are. I'm amazed that somehow or other our pass, which not many of use.... Did you also know we all have a special pin that's supposed to get us anywhere in this House?

Chief Vince Bevan: Yes.

Mr. John Reynolds: We all wear it. If we have it on, we cannot be stopped from going anywhere.

I was looking at Erskine May, and it says: It is a contempt to molest a Member of either House while attending the House, or coming to or going from it and in the eighteenth century both Houses roundly condemned assaulting, insulting or menacing Lords or Members...

by anyone. In this situation today, it's possible somebody could have been arrested, as a member, if somebody went out of line. That again is an attempt to infringe the privilege from arrest in civil cases enjoyed by members of both Houses. We cannot be arrested on civil cases, cannot be served a writ. I'm not saying that's right or wrong, because maybe in some cases somebody should. But that is the law, so it is astounding to me....

I guess we can go right back to where we were, and you were all here when this committee started. Mr. Chairman, I think there's no question that members' rights and privileges have been infringed upon. But I wouldn't blame that on anyone. Our police all do a good job. They're here doing the best job they can. But obviously somebody's at fault for their not knowing we have a pass, that we have a pin, and that there are 308 members of Parliament and 100 senators who have rights in this place that cannot be infringed upon.

I tell you, nobody would have stopped me from going through any of your barricades. You would have had to arrest me, because I know the rules and I know my rights. I was pretty ticked off, when I was standing in a room waiting for Kim Campbell, to hear she'd been blocked in some kind of motorcade—a former Prime Minister of this country—and it kept a whole bunch of—

The Chair: She doesn't have the privileges, though.

Mr. John Reynolds: She still has the right to have a secret service with her and the right to have arrived here. She had the Prime Minister of this country and other members of Parliament waiting for an hour and a half in a room, late for a function. It affects all of our privileges.

I think that we as a committee, Mr. Chairman, whenever we want to move that motion, can say yes, but this has to go to the Board of Internal Economy with the strongest of recommendations that there be one force on the Hill in charge of everything.

It wouldn't bother me if it was the Ottawa police. They do a great job. I live here half the year. I think that your police force does a great job in this city. It's a safe city. I walk from here to the market and home at nighttime. I've never been accosted by anybody. That's a pretty nice thing to know, because you can't do that in most cities.

Nevertheless, they have to make a decision. I think it would make your jobs easier if you had one unified command of some type. What is your opinion on that?

•(1225)

The Chair: Before the chief answers, I'll remind you that if you're getting to ready to move the motion again, which you're certainly entitled to do, we had told the Sergeant-at-Arms that we would have him here again before we concluded our deliberations. You may or may not want to do so, but of course that's your business. I would remind members who may not have been in the room at the time that it was said.

Chief.

Chief Vince Bevan: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

With reference to your question, we work very closely with the RCMP. As far as integrated policing goes, with the RCMP, the OPP, and our neighbours, Service de Police de Gatineau and SQ, there's very high level of integration.

To be frank, Parliament Hill is not our responsibility, nor would I be particularly anxious to have it part of our responsibility. We don't pay a good deal of attention to what goes on here. We rely on our connection with the RCMP.

We have learned lessons this time that we will certainly apply in the future. We appreciate the opportunity to be here and hear the proceedings of this committee. It will certainly help to inform us when next we put a plan together.

If you were making an invitation for this to be part of our precinct, thank you very much for the offer.

The Chair: We have two more questioners who have asked for a second round. There are only five minutes left before we proceed with what we agreed to do with Mr. Broadbent. I'm going to ask both questioners to ask their questions, and then, we'll ask the chief to answer both of them.

First,

[*Translation*]

We'll hear from Mr. Guimond, and then, Mr. Godin. And after that, we will ask Mr. Bevan to conclude.

Mr. Michel Guimond: You may not be able to answer this question. If that is the case, I will put it to Ms. Carbonneau of the RCMP when she appears. What was the Toronto Police Service doing here? Why was it involved in this operation?

Chief Vince Bevan: Members of the Toronto Police Force came here to provide assistance to the Ottawa Police Service. They included officers assigned to crowd control and members of the regular force. Their job was to assist the Ottawa Police Service with such things as controlling traffic, intersections, and the like.

Mr. Michel Guimond: My understanding is that just prior to the official visit of President Fox, you yourself were unaware that members of Parliament have an I.D. card. Is that correct?

The Chair: Mr. Godin, ask the question, and then...

Mr. Michel Guimond: I want to know whether the same situation prevailed when President Fox visited Canada.

The Chair: Listen, he has just learned that this card exists. This is my card, which he saw today.

Mr. Michel Guimond: This is my last question, and I believe it to be relevant. Were the same control measures put in place for President Fox's visit?

Chief Vince Bevan: No, the threat level was very different.

The Chair: Mr. Godin.

Mr. Yvon Godin: This business about the I.D. card bothers me. You may not have seen this card before, but it seems to me your officers are capable of recognizing an I.D. card. It is identified as a card for the Parliament of Canada; after all, it wasn't made in Fredericton. A parliamentarian says to a police officer that he is a member of Parliament, presents his I.D. card, with his photograph as well as the coat of arms of Parliament, and the officer tells him he doesn't recognize the card. How convenient.

I want this to be put on record, Mr. Chairman. I know Mr. Reynolds keeps talking about the idea of having a single police force. I, personally, am completely opposed to that. He was referring to the fact that they only have one police force operating at Parliament in London. But I don't think they have a single police force operating all across England or London. That may be the case for their Parliament.

Here, the gates to Parliament Hill fall within the responsibility of the RCMP. It may be the same thing in London. They let the M.P.s through. As far as we're concerned, the problem was not at the Parliament Buildings. The problem was a lack of coordination between the city police force and the police force responsible for security on Parliament Hill.

I recall that the RCMP was responsible for security at the Prime Minister's residence when an individual managed to get in there during the night. It was no better there. I don't know which is better, but the fact remains that such incidents occur and we need to try and avoid them. We also have to try and determine whether parliamentary privilege was in fact violated in this case.

• (1230)

Chef Vince Bevan: I agree.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Is that it?

Perhaps before doing anything else, the first thing I want to do is to thank very sincerely the chief, the superintendent, and others who've come to the meeting today. I think I speak on behalf of all of us when I say it has assisted us at least in understanding, if not agreeing about, why some incidents occurred in the way they did. We want to thank you for taking the time to explain it to us personally, both you, Chief, and the superintendent, of course, who was the person in charge on that particular day.

[Translation]

I want to thank every one of you for being with us today.

[English]

As you know, we have agreed that at 12:30 we will discuss the order of reference regarding electoral reform. But I understand that before that, Mr. Johnston, you want to bring up a similar subject again.

Mr. Dale Johnston: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I've thought about the motion that I—

The Chair: Order, please. The committee's in session.

Mr. Dale Johnston: I've considered the motion that I put earlier, and I think you might find agreement if we instruct the researcher to prepare a report to say that, indeed, we do find this is a case of a privilege being breached. That would not preclude us from hearing more witnesses regarding the security.

The Chair: Okay. Now, the only question I have again is this.

[Translation]

I want to come back to the point we were discussing earlier. Do we want to do that immediately or, as originally planned, do we want to hear from Major General Gaston Cloutier again?

Mr. Guimond.

Mr. Michel Guimond: I think it would be a good idea to have Sergeant-at-Arms Cloutier back before the Committee. I am neither suffering from amnesia nor have I allowed myself to become distracted by the holiday spirit. We had also agreed to hear from Ms. Carboneau of the RCMP

I want my colleague, Dale, to know that I am not interested in unduly pursuing our debate of this issue. Things are becoming clearer and clearer in my own mind. I also want to tell my colleague, Mr. Reynolds, that I fully agree with the idea of referring this case to the Board of Internal Economy. However, had I known, I would have placed this matter of privilege on the Board of Internal Economy's agenda, rather than raising it here. Like him and Ms. Redmond, I am a member of the Board. I chose to raise this matter here, but at the same time, I have no desire for this to drag on until next June.

The Chair: Mr. Guimond, we have other issues we must address. Mr. Johnston wanted to see whether there was a consensus. If there isn't, we will obviously continue our discussions.

Mr. Reynolds.

[English]

Mr. John Reynolds: It's just a point or order. I'm saying exactly what Michel is saying: I think the committee has decided there was a privilege violation. The clerk could draft that up and then send it to the Board of Internal Economy. If we're going to hear more witnesses and then we tell the board to look at it, we're going to listen to the same witnesses again. So why can't this committee say yes, we've decided there's a privilege problem, but it is a security problem and the Board of Internal Economy should fix it?

The Chair: Why don't we settle this very quickly?

If I could suggest, there are really two options: one, we make a report now; and two, we listen to Madam Carboneau, whom we had said we would listen to—and I'm sorry if I had forgotten that one person—and the Sergeant-at-Arms, or even just one. Then we would proceed, meaning that we would end it on Tuesday instead of today.

Are you willing to wait until Tuesday?

Mr. John Reynolds: Oh, yes.

The Chair: Okay. We will wait until Tuesday. We invite the other two, and that will close it off.

• (1235)

Mr. Yvon Godin: Does it make any difference if we—

The Chair: Yes, but let's not restart the debate.

Thank you, that's it.

The next thing I need to know from you, because we're dealing with agenda, is do you want this meeting to be in camera right now?

Mr. John Reynolds: It doesn't matter.

Some hon. members: No.

The Chair: Thank you.

Then the committee will consider the draft work plan that we have on the order of reference. Again, this is an order by the House regarding electoral reform.

The first thing we should be doing, I think, is considering the report from the subcommittee, I shall call it, which met last Friday and prepared some material for our committee.

The subcommittee had its meeting on Friday, pursuant to what was ordered last week, and the new motion recommended by the subcommittee will be circulated. It is considerably shorter than what we had before and it was agreed to unanimously last week. I will read it very quickly.

Therefore, it is recommended unanimously to the main committee:

That, pursuant to the Order of Reference of Thursday, November 25, 2004:

(a) The Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs prepare a work plan

—and we're going to deal with that immediately afterwards, should this pass—

designed to develop a process to conduct an examination of our electoral system with a review of all options;

(b) That, as part of this examination, the committee facilitate a range of comprehensive methods to receive the views of Canadians in every province and territory and engage a broad cross-section of the public to understand their values and preferences with respect to this issue;

(c) That the committee table a report summarizing its findings by April 22, 2005.

Mr. John Reynolds: I move that, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Is there someone to second that?

Mr. Broadbent seconds that.

Mr. Reid.

Mr. Scott Reid: I want to ask the obvious question here. I'm sure it's been dealt with, but April 22 is prior to British Columbia having dealt with theirs. Am I not correct in that? Isn't May 4 the day on which they deal with theirs?

The Chair: Just to inform you, Mr. Reid, we're recommending the process to consult Canadians, not the method or whether or not we're in favour of proportional representation, or something else. This is just the process that we will use to consult Canadians.

Does that clarify it?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Next, we have the draft work plan in front of us. With your permission, I will ask our researcher to walk us through it.

I know we discussed informally last week whether it would be possible to have a round table before Christmas. I gather time is overtaking that somewhat; but anyway, give us your opinion on that, Mr. Robertson, as well as anything else about this work plan that you wish to say.

The floor is yours.

Mr. James Robertson (Committee Researcher): Very briefly, using the target date of April 22, this would mean there would be nine sitting weeks from January to April. In the discussions in the working group last Friday morning, given the New Democratic Party's different members who deal with this, Mr. Broadbent, and other matters before the committee, the suggestion was made that one of the two regular meetings of the committee could be devoted to electoral reform, thereby leaving other matters that come before the committee to the other meeting. There's also the possibility of having additional meetings either in the evening or on other days. That would have to be worked out.

The other suggestion was there might be some need or desire on the part of the committee to travel, and the target date for that would probably be the break week starting February 28. One suggestion that was made was that there be two subgroups of the committee that could travel to different parts of the world or of the country. The suggestion would be to have panels or round tables of witnesses,

roughly one-and-a-half to two-hour meetings. If it was an evening meeting, it might be possible to have two panels, one after the other. That could be in late afternoon or evening, and teleconferencing would be possible if that would facilitate the work of the committee.

The suggestion we would have would be to try to wrap up the witnesses in February and March, so that would leave the month of April, in which there are three sitting weeks that would be available for drafting a report in order to meet the target.

We've grouped the witnesses under the bullets. Essentially, on the first one, the suggestion was to try to get that before Christmas. I believe the clerk has been trying to find evenings when members would be available, and that looks difficult between now and the end of next week. This would be some witnesses on the consultative process, and Mr. Broadbent's office had provided to the clerk a list of six people who could be invited to do that as to the process of consulting the public. The Law Commission of Canada, as you know, did a report including a chapter on where to go from here. It might be an interesting witness to have near the beginning. There are obviously a lot of academics within Canada who have studied the political process. We could try to get them to focus on the process for consulting Canadians and getting views.

On the representatives of the provincial electoral reform initiatives, the primary ones would be Quebec, British Columbia, New Brunswick, and possibly Ontario, although they're just starting, but it would be interesting to look at why they have adopted the process that they are adopting.

On the other countries, New Zealand and the United Kingdom are the two most relevant, given that New Zealand has adopted a form of proportional representation and the United Kingdom has had a royal commission on electoral reform, among other matters. This may be less necessary if there is going to be travel to these jurisdictions by members of the committee.

There are various interest groups, lobby groups, and public opinion research groups.

Obviously, the members may have other witnesses to suggest, but given the limited time, we would try to group them within certain groups in meetings so that we could maximize the number of witnesses and the issues to be discussed in the time available.

• (1240)

The Chair: Very good.

Let's start debating this or adding to it.

First, Mr. Reynolds.

Mr. John Reynolds: Mr. Chair, this is a good report. The only suggestion I have is regarding the two subgroups, one to New Zealand and Australia, one to the U.K. and Germany. I did talk to the House leader of the NDP and the House leaders of the Liberals and the Bloc, and I suggested that because the NDP only has one member on this committee, for that trip, if Mr. Broadbent wanted to go on one and Mr. Godin wanted to go on the other one, it would make sure they were represented on both sides of that issue. The Bloc would have one each and the rest of us would have two each, if that's okay.

The idea is great. I move we take this report and move forward.

The Chair: Are there any further contributions to this?

Don't forget as well, if you've seen the list of parties...I'm not saying this is the final crack at it, but if you think of other organizations that would have an interest, please contribute that.

Next we will have Mr. Broadbent.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Mr. Chairman, first of all, I'd like to compliment the clerk for laying out this agenda. It seems to me to be very comprehensive and it seems to me also to be doable within the given timeframe.

I would just like to emphasize, in light of what this committee had to deal with today, that one of my concerns from day one was about having this committee deal with this subject, as it gets referred to it other important business and it has timeframes. In order for us to meet this agenda—I don't know if we need to do it now—we'd decide that on Tuesdays of every week or Thursdays of every week the subject matter would be democratic reform. Frankly, I would have a preference for that, so that when we're planning our own agendas we will know it's either Tuesday or Thursday that we deal with this. If there could be consensus on that, I, for one, would appreciate it.

Do you want to deal with that at this point?

The Chair: Yes, Mr. Broadbent, we do have, I think, still nine items that are not disposed of, items other than this one. So I think, particularly initially, we should reserve one item a week for other business and one slot a week for strictly the order of reference on electoral reform.

Perhaps we could word what you want to say in such a way as to have at least one meeting a week preferably, whatever it is, Tuesday or Thursday, and if we can exhaust our other list, maybe that week we can have two if we manage to get the rest of our work done.

• (1245)

Hon. Ed Broadbent: I appreciate your approach, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy with that. But if we could indicate, say, preferably Tuesday under the understanding that we—

The Chair: Is that your case, Tuesday?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: I'm happy with Tuesday or Thursday, but I'm saying preferably one of those days. Let's begin with Tuesday, and as you say, we might end up in a given week having two days on that.

The Chair: If I may contribute to this personally, I think Tuesday works better. That way, if we want to add a second meeting, you can actually add a meeting that night. If you have your meeting on

Thursday, may I suggest that having a second meeting Thursday night would probably not be very popular.

I don't want to decide if it would be productive or not, but probably it would not be very popular. So I think Tuesday works better, but I invite colleagues to say what they think. I'm not saying there will be a second meeting on any given time, but I think if we make it on Thursday we're closing the door on a second meeting in the second week.

[*Translation*]

So, can we tentatively agree that next Tuesday's meeting will be devoted to electoral reform?

Mr. Guimond.

Mr. Michel Guimond: I may have missed part of the meeting. In any case, I agree with the motion and I see that this point has been removed. However, had we not agreed that the Sub-committee would be given the task of reviewing this matter on a full time basis? Did I dream that?

The Chair: There is a conflict of interest there.

Mr. Michel Guimond: We were only talking about the Sub-committee assigned to develop the work plan. If members had agreed to strike a sub-committee, it could have met two, three or even four times a week...

The Chair: But we voted against that: that is already settled, Mr. Guimond. So, we are agreeing that when Parliament resumes in February, Tuesdays will be devoted to that topic. We can begin with that item.

[*English*]

Mr. Broadbent, you wanted to add something else, and then we'll move on because there are still many other items on agenda setting to go through today.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: I know, Mr. Chairman. That's one of the reasons I would have preferred another committee to deal with this. I won't repeat it.

The only other point I would make, the clerk having done such a good job—and I really mean that—in laying out this schedule, is this. I wonder if he could prepare for us—and I don't know if it needs to be discussed informally before we first come together after the Christmas break—a certain sequence that we begin with. For example, there's the think tank discussion that we were going to try to get laid on. I turned in names of half a dozen groups. Perhaps they could be contacted maybe for our first meeting. so we know when we come back that we actually start with something.

The Chair: The draft group for this round table would consist of Dr. Judy Maxwell, Jodi White or Jan Elliot for the Public Policy Forum, Dr. David Zussman of EKOS, Ann Dale of Royal Roads University in Victoria, and Hugh Segal, the president of the Institute for Research on Public Policy.

Is Madame Desrosiers not available? There are two more, including Ken Carty, Citizens Assembly of British Columbia, if available; and what about Madame Desrosiers? Would we not want to have her at that round table too?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: The clerk had her down for a separate session. Absolutely, we should hear from her, in my view.

But the groups that have been proposed are groups that are specialists themselves in assessing and understanding public opinion, as opposed to Madame Desrosiers. I think they're separate items, and that's why she wasn't on that first—

The Chair: All right, so we'll tentatively start with this group as our think tank session, or round table session, and if someone thinks of another witness to add to that, please inform our clerk.

I don't think we need to be all fully consulted in order to add one person around the table for a consultation, or whether there are five of them—anyway, not everyone will be available—or whether there's one less or one more.

Would you agree with that approach?

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Just so everyone understands, Mr. Chairman, I think the specific task of these groups was to suggest to us the best way of our assessing public opinion on this.

The Chair: Madame Longfield.

Hon. Judi Longfield: Because this is really our formal kickoff to this, I wonder if perhaps we might want to televise this one, just to let the public know we've started our work and this is how we're beginning it.

• (1250)

The Chair: That brings a broader question. Generally speaking, and providing the committee rooms are available, do you want these hearings televised or not? What is the wish of the committee?

Do you want them generally televised?

An hon. member: Yes.

The Chair: That's if a room is available, of course, because we're always in competition with others and there are only three such rooms in the building. Room 269 West Block has a temporary arrangement, and it's operating now. I was in a televised committee meeting yesterday. As well, there are two major ones in the Centre Block, so there are in fact three rooms.

So you want them generally televised, starting on that date.

Could we now move to other items awaiting our decision? We still have seven or eight items, and I'd like to get through a couple of them this morning.

Mr. Reid.

Mr. Scott Reid: Very quickly, on the literature search side of things, I want to mention this before Christmas because there might be some interlibrary loan requirements or consultation with libraries overseas.

I believe the literature search should include something that's not being dealt with by witnesses—that is, the process by which Australia has more variety at the state and territorial level in terms of

electoral systems than any other area in the world. A lot of this was done a long time ago and would be recorded in the literature, but presumably the sources would be hard to get. I'm just advising our researcher that I think that would be a very good area to start with because of the length of time required to get those sources.

The Chair: Okay. I'll just move on to list, for the benefit of members, what else is on our agenda.

We have the issue of order in council appointments. It was referred to our committee, as you know, and we haven't contributed to that process. I alert you to it. We could try to bring this up on Tuesday, if we have a little time at the end of the meeting.

Our first thing on Tuesday will be to hear from Madame Carbonneau and then the Sergeant-at-Arms.

What I think we'd want to do on Tuesday, after we conclude with those two witnesses, is to ask our researcher to prepare a report, which we could deal with on Thursday of next week, assuming we're sitting. We could deal with the report on that day and end that on Thursday of next week.

Meanwhile—I'm sure he's doing that already—perhaps Mr. Robertson could start working on that, based on the evidence we have, and add to it so that when we finish on Tuesday we will have a good part of the work already done.

On Tuesday, then, if there's any time left at the end of the day, we'll deal with the issue of the order in council appointments, on which we still have to give advice.

I want to alert you that we're going to have, at some point—maybe—Bill C-30, An Act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act and the Salaries Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. I'll leave it at that.

There's the issue of the performance report of the House of Commons as well, and I understand we've missed the mark now—well, that's obvious—on the issue of the estimates, because of course they're being dealt with this evening. We did one set of them; the other ones we did not review because we were overtaken by other events, so they were deemed reported.

Those are some of the things I wanted to bring to your attention. Please look at some of this.

Also, there is the issue of chapter 7 of the Auditor General's report. I believe that had to do with written questions and the length of time for and the accuracy of the responses. The Auditor General made a remark about that.

We also have a request that was made to us by one MP. Mr. Greg Thompson submits to us that the rule that says a member can't ask any more than four questions at a time should be lifted. I bring it to your attention because he wrote to us.

Anyway, we'll bring all that back at the earliest opportunity. I just want to jog people's memories. So on Tuesday, as we said, we will listen to Madame Carbonneau and the Sergeant-at-Arms. Our meeting is an hour and a half long. Maybe we could have half an hour with each witness or group of witnesses, which will leave us half an hour at the end to start thinking of some finality on this issue.

I think Mr. Johnston would probably like that. I don't pretend to be his spokesperson here, but I seem to have gleaned that from our deliberations.

Thank you very much.

• (1255)

Hon. Judi Longfield: We were hoping that perhaps at the end we could have some resolution on the subcommittee's request.

The Chair: Okay. We have to get back to that. I'm awfully sorry.

Ms. Longfield reminds us that at the beginning of the meeting, we had the report of the subcommittee that interfaced with the Ethics Commissioner. As you know, the Ethics Commissioner is unsure about a definition in the code for making the summary public. We're not talking about making the disclosure public, only the summary, the one that we assume is public. The subcommittee recommends that it be made available by fax, so that someone doesn't have to go to his office, and that we put this in force on February 7.

At that point, there will be a critical mass of replies. It won't only be two of them who have replied; most people's replies will be available. It also gives opportunities at the first caucus meeting for everybody to tell their caucuses to be on the lookout, starting on February 2, that this will be public.

That's basically how it worked, I think.

Mr. Reid.

Mr. Scott Reid: That wasn't quite the understanding I had. I thought that it would come back for discussion so that a decision could be made on February 7. The point is that we have our first caucus meeting on February 2, I think, at which point people would have a chance to see what the summaries consist of. Therefore, the caucuses could then proceed to give approval. That was my understanding of what we agreed upon.

The Chair: Madame Longfield.

Hon. Judi Longfield: I misunderstood. I thought you needed time just to talk to the caucus and let them know that we decided that on February 7 they would start to go up.

The Chair: I invite colleagues to be careful. I always thought it was the intention that these public summaries were to be just that—public. If we start saying that we're delaying until February 7 so that we can again consult on whether or not they should be public, it's not quite the same.

Mr. Broadbent.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Mr. Chairman, the Ethics Commissioner was before our other committee yesterday. I'm named to the ethics committee. He was looking for advice on how he should make this public disclosure, to pick up on the emphasis that you put on it, and he was getting a variety of suggestions.

I should make it clear that there was no decision by the committee. Various committee members made different suggestions, but ultimately, it's his decision.

One that was popular, and one that I personally supported, was that he put it on his website. The names would go on the website, and that's it. It has to be a public document. I certainly don't favour his holding back on the provision of the information.

The Chair: Look, we need some resolution. By the way, there can't be two or three committees looking at this. This material is assigned to this committee, and a subcommittee of our committee was tasked by this committee to give us a recommendation.

To remind you, the code says that each summary is to be placed on file at the Office of the Ethics Commissioner and made available for public inspection during normal business hours. It's not a matter of whether it's a good idea; that's already the code. It's only how we make it available that is before us.

Madame Longfield.

Hon. Judi Longfield: I think we should bring it to a vote. It's before us.

The Chair: We will run out of time in two minutes.

Hon. Judi Longfield: The idea of putting it on the Internet is not possible at the moment. There would need to be a change in the act. Our researchers told us that is the case. We may well recommend it, but it's not an option at the moment.

The commissioner's view was that if he doesn't make it available in terms of sending it out through a fax, then he's not going to let people photocopy it when it's in his office. As to the opportunity for someone to come in, review it, and make little notes, you may not be getting the fullest report or it may be selective.

There is actually protection for the individual if the document is the document as it appears in his office, not someone's handwritten notes about what he or she thinks may be on it and subject to interpretation.

• (1300)

The Chair: We're going to have to end this. Otherwise, we're going to bring it back at the next meeting because time will run out.

Mr. Casey.

Mr. Bill Casey: What bothers me is that we were told before that it was going to be in his office. We were told very clearly that it was going to be available for someone to come in, look at it, and make notes. I don't know how all of this was changed.

I don't think it should be changed. He clearly told us what the rule was. All the members of Parliament were told that in caucuses. He came to our caucus and told us. It meets the requirements, and I think it should be like that. I don't like the idea of somebody writing in and asking for faxes of statements by 308 members of Parliament. It's going to be a fishing expedition.

The Chair: Anyway, we're debating the content now.

Are you ready to vote on it? We can just vote one way or vote the other, and then deal with it.

Mr. Bill Casey: What is the motion?

The Chair: That we accept the report of the subcommittee—

Hon. Judi Longfield: That it is communicated that all public disclosures be available by fax after February 7, 2005.

Mr. Scott Reid: That wasn't my understanding.

In all fairness, I am one of the three members who was there. If we regard it as being a vote, then you can say that I was overruled. Or you could just disregard the vote. Don't make the vote on the subcommittee, but make it on the substance, and deal with it that way.

Hon. Judi Longfield: I've made that motion, not that it is coming from a subcommittee, but just the motion that this committee would deal with it.

The Chair: That this committee recommend to the Ethics Commissioner that the public summaries of members' statements be made public by way of fax—

Hon. Judi Longfield: Be available by way of fax.

The Chair: Be available by way of fax, commencing February 7, 2005.

Is that the motion?

Mr. Broadbent.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Mr. Chairman, on the issue of whether or not he can use the Internet, as recently as 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon he was asking advice as to whether he should put it on the Internet. Presumably, if he said to someone else that he wasn't constitutionally permitted, that's a bizarre thing.

Hon. Judi Longfield: He said that today; he indicated that he was just going one step further.

Hon. Ed Broadbent: Oh, he said that today, did he, that he can't do it?

Hon. Judi Longfield: He was at our subcommittee today. That's correct.

An hon. member: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Hon. Judi Longfield: No, he just agreed with the researcher and our law clerk, who indicated that the code did not allow it. He agreed; he did not argue about that.

The Chair: Are you ready to vote on the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: So we've given that as our advice.

Could someone move the adjournment?

An hon. member: I so move.

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.

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