



House of Commons
CANADA

**Subcommittee on Solicitation Laws of the
Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights,
Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness**

SSLR • NUMBER 001 • 1st SESSION • 38th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, December 9, 2004

—
Chair

Mr. John Maloney

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

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

Subcommittee on Solicitation Laws of the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Thursday, December 9, 2004

•(0915)

[Translation]

The Clerk: Members of the committee, I see that we have a quorum. We can now proceed with the election of the Chair of this subcommittee.

[English]

Once the election is completed, I will invite the new elected chair to preside over the meeting.

I would like to point out that the motion adopted by the Standing Committee on Justice, creating this new subcommittee, specified that the chair must be a member of the government. Do I have any nominations for the position of chair?

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): I'd like to nominate John Maloney.

The Clerk: Okay, John Maloney.

Do I have any other nominations?

[Translation]

Are there any other nominations?

[English]

Nominations are now closed.

[Translation]

The motion before the committee reads as follows:

[English]

that Mr. John Maloney be elected chair of the Subcommittee on SolicitationLaws. Do you agree with this motion?

[Translation]

(Motion agreed to)

I declare Mr. John Maloney duly elected Chair of the subcommittee.

[English]

Do you want to elect some vice-chairs?

For the first vice-chair,

[Translation]

are there any nominations?

[English]

Hon. Hedy Fry: I'd like to nominate Libby Davies.

[Translation]

The Clerk: Do you second the motion?

[English]

Do you agree with this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

I therefore declare Ms. Libby Davies duly elected Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Solicitation Laws.

[English]

Do you want to elect a second vice-chair? It's up to you. No? Okay.

I invite Mr. Maloney to preside over the meeting.

Thanks very much.

The Chair (Mr. John Maloney (Welland, Lib.)): Good morning.

Thank you very much. I appreciate your confidence.

This certainly will be a very interesting committee. We slowly got off the ground last time with Madam Fry and Madam Davies being members of the former committee.

We have a number of routine motions that we should get through. Then we'll perhaps get into a little more substance.

You have before you the slip on routine motions. Could someone address the first one about analysts supplied to the committee?

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): I so move, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Madam Davies, seconded by Madam Fry.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: On the distribution of documents, do I have a mover?

Moved by Madam Fry, seconded by Madam Brunelle.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Next is meetings without quorum, a suggestion on the number of members that would constitute a quorum.

Ms. Libby Davies: What would normally be the number for a committee of this kind? Would it be two, three, or...?

The Chair: At least three, I would think.

Ms. Libby Davies: A quorum would be three, wouldn't it?

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Libby Davies: This is if there isn't a quorum. This is if you want to actually go below a quorum to hear evidence. Am I correct in that?

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Libby Davies: So it could actually be two, because a quorum is three. But maybe that's too small.

Okay, three.

The Chair: Do you move that, Ms. Davies?

Ms. Libby Davies: Yes.

The Chair: All those in favour?

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: The next one is dealing with time for opening remarks and questioning. It's suggested 10 minutes for the opening statements, seven minutes for the first round and three minutes for the second round.

Hon. Hedy Fry: In all the committees I'm on, there is five minutes for the second round, mainly because by the time the questioner asks the question and the person tries to answer it, the time is up. With a substantive issue like this, I would hope that five minutes would be a better second round than three.

The Chair: Five minutes for the question and answer.

• (0920)

Hon. Hedy Fry: Yes.

The Chair: Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: On witnesses' expenses, all those in favour?

Mr. Hanger.

Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, CPC): Mr. Chair, I think the question is on travel. I assume that's just working with witnesses only. Or does it give authority to the committee to travel as well?

The Chair: This is just for witnesses' travel expenses. We have to pass a budget for authorization before the requisite committee. Are you making that motion?

Mr. Art Hanger: I am.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: The next motion is that the clerk be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working lunches when required. These are very important.

Hon. Hedy Fry: May I add an amendment to say that they should be as healthy as possible?

The Chair: That was duly noted, Madam Fry.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Now we have a motion on transcripts of in camera meetings.

Ms. Libby Davies: I so move.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Now, the motion on staff during in camera meetings.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Next is the motion on evidence heard during a former parliamentary session, which may be applicable here.

Mr. Art Hanger: You're talking about interviews...?

The Chair: Art, there were apparently five sessions in the last Parliament. In your briefing material, there is a list of the individuals who were heard from the Department of Justice, Statistics Canada, a young lady by the name of Cherry Kingsley, two academics from the University of Ottawa, and the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, as well as Senator Landon Pearson.

The question is whether we adduce their testimony.

Mr. Art Hanger: I hope it's not just confined to that; I would assume there are a lot more people—

The Chair: No, no, that's what they heard. We will certainly hear from other witnesses, and we may wish to—

Mr. Art Hanger: Travel?

The Chair: Definitely, I think travelling would be important for this.

This is just adopting or accepting the evidence that those five or six witnesses provided to the original committee.

Mr. Art Hanger: All right, and will those be made available to the committee?

The Chair: Mr. Clerk.

Hon. Hedy Fry: For Mr. Hanger's sake, the committee had only just begun; we had not even received moneys to travel when the committee was disbanded because of the disbanding of Parliament.

This is certainly not the list of witnesses one would hope to have, but those were the only ones we managed to hear from.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: The final motion is that 48 hours' notice be given for substantive motions.

It is moved by Madam Davies.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: The next item on the agenda is meeting times. We're all very busy people and we all have other committee assignments. The task we have is to consider when in fact this committee can meet on a regular basis. Generally speaking, subcommittees of this nature often meet from 5:30 to 7:30 in the evenings so as not to conflict with.... Trying to put a schedule together of a convenient time for all five of us would probably be almost impossible.

What are your feelings or comments? Some evening, twice a week?

● (0925)

Ms. Libby Davies: I'm open to any day that is convenient for all of us.

Mr. Art Hanger: Even the early morning wouldn't bother me.

The Chair: Some committees start at 9 o'clock.

Mr. Art Hanger: I'm talking about 7 o'clock.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Early morning would not be good for me, because I have a lot of early morning meetings that begin at 7:30, so that would cut into them.

I would just like it to be noted that I can't come at all on Tuesday mornings from 9 to 11 and Thursday mornings from 9 to 11.

The Chair: What about Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 5:30 to 7:30?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): I'm fine with Thursday mornings from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

[*English*]

Mr. Art Hanger: The evening is fine.

The Chair: Tuesday and Wednesday, or Monday and Wednesday? I don't think you want to meet Thursday evening.

Mr. Art Hanger: Tuesday and Wednesday would be great.

Hon. Hedy Fry: As long as Tuesday is not from 9 to 11, that's fine by me.

The Chair: The suggestion is 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Hon. Hedy Fry: That sounds fine.

Ms. Libby Davies: That would be Tuesday and Wednesday?

The Chair: They'd be back to back.

(Motion agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: We don't have much time before the Christmas break. It may come sooner than we think. I think we'd like to try to get organized as much as possible so that in our first weeks back we can in fact be up and running.

Lyne, do you have a witness list from previously?

Ms. Lyne Casavant (Committee Researcher): Yes I do, and I have all the names that Libby Davies, Chuck Cadman, and Madame Fry gave to the previous committee, so I have a list. And also the Bloc member provided a list, so I can easily send a list to all of you tomorrow with all the names that were provided by the former members of both committees.

Mr. Art Hanger: Yes, I'd like to see that list, because I think there may be someone I would like to add.

The Chair: That's fair.

Ms. Lyne Casavant: Certainly.

The Chair: So I would suggest, Art, perhaps by the end of this session, that if there are alternate witnesses you'd like to see added to the list, you might send them on to Lyne and we could then, early on at a subsequent meeting, approve them.

In the interim, if there isn't any dispute, perhaps we could even have witnesses ready for our first week back in the House, at the end of January.

Ms. Libby Davies: May I make a suggestion? I think if we can come back and either look at the existing list or add additional names, that would be fine.

I wonder if it is possible to have at least one meeting next week where we could get some sort of overview. We did have quite a good presentation the last time from the justice department, although we've now accepted their testimony. Because three members here haven't been on the committee before, it might be helpful to have that overview of where things are at, because I think we found it very helpful.

The other point I want to make is this. The background of this committee is what's happening out there in the sex trade, and I think it's really important that we try to visit various key centres across Canada, like Vancouver, Edmonton, Montreal, Toronto—perhaps more.

I've had some informal meetings in Vancouver with people involved in the sex trade, and I've been saying all along it is absolutely vital that we hear from them directly. We may have to do hearings in camera and we may have to do it in a much more informal way to provide an environment where people are willing to actually speak. Having that testimony is absolutely critical to our understanding what it is that's going on out there, so I'm hoping very much not only that we will agree to a list of witnesses covering various perspectives, but also that we will be able to find the time to go forward and make a proposal to have a budget to travel.

In fact, the previous committee had wanted to go to, I think, Amsterdam—

Hon. Hedy Fry: Amsterdam and Nevada.

Ms. Libby Davies: — to actually see what's going on there.

This is a very complex subject and I think it's really good that we're doing this. I think Minister Cotler has been very supportive of it, and once you get into it, there is just so much information. I think everybody feels the status quo is not working. There are different perspectives on how we should be resolving it, but what I feel is that everybody agrees that the way things are now, it's a fairly harmful situation.

The Chair: Thank you, Libby.

Hedy.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I want to support what Libby has said, mainly because I think the in camera component is really important, and not only for sex trade workers. In many instances some of this may have to do with organized crime. People may not want to be identified, and they may not want anyone to know what they're talking about, so I think it is key to have in camera sessions for witnesses who don't want to be identified.

I also think site visits are very important. When we were on the committee on the non-medical use of drugs, going to sites was probably the single most important thing we did. It helped us really understand the nature of the problem, how people lived and what they faced, to actually talk to people who were in the situation themselves. We got a different perspective from the academic one, and others.

Finally, I think travelling is very much key. I want to really support that perhaps we can come back with some sort of budget for travelling. On Nevada, whether it's the whole state or just Las Vegas, we need to maybe look at a couple of places in the United States where there is legalization of prostitution—and in Amsterdam, where there is a totally different way of dealing with the issue. It doesn't mean we believe them or agree with them, but I think we need to look at them and just evaluate their outcomes and how they work, because they've been in existence now for such a long time.

I would like to ask the clerk to please make sure we get a copy of the Fraser report, which was a very important piece on this whole issue. It was done many years ago—too long ago. It was very much like the Le Dain commission report that was done 30 years ago. When we looked at the Le Dain commission in the committee on the non-medical use of drugs, nothing had changed. That report, which was done by a commission, might be able to give us some clear insights into where people have gone in the past, in terms of parliamentary discussion, and where we need to go.

Finally, the Canadian Medical Association has written a policy on this, stating it to be a major and urgent public health issue because of the high mortality and morbidity associated with this particular trade. Of course, all of the issues on public health are ones we need to look at—prevention, harm reduction, rehabilitation, and all of the issues surrounding this. It's not merely to look at legislation; it's to look at the whole issue very comprehensively.

● (0930)

The Chair: Thank you very much for your comments.

Art.

Mr. Art Hanger: I'm kind of surprised. If we're moving along the lines of where Hedy Fry is going, it sounds like we're going to have a pretty broad mandate. I'm understanding that it's a little less so. I mean, it's designated as solicitation laws. Are we looking at the whole social impact of this activity? What are we doing here? I'm just wondering what our mandate is.

The Chair: Actually, we have a mandate from the House.

Art, do you want to turn to the discussion paper prepared by parliamentary research, the first indented paragraph there?

Personally, I think it's all part and parcel. You're talking about the whole social impact. I'm not sure we can sectionalize or departmentalize the whole issue. In order to give an effective report, we have to do a broad perspective, a broad consideration.

Mr. Art Hanger: Yes. I guess if that is the case, we have one huge initiative going here. It's certainly going to encompass a number of witnesses from just about every facet of the community. Even many of the solicitation laws or the prostitution laws, for instance, are judged on the community's view of what's acceptable or not acceptable. To my way of thinking, that means you involve the

community beyond just this committee or a few witnesses who may come forward.

The Chair: Are there any other comments?

● (0935)

Hon. Hedy Fry: There are other government departments that could be called to testify, one being Status of Women Canada.

About four or five years ago, when I was a minister in Status of Women Canada, we did a conference with young workers, commercially sexually exploited youth in the Americas. It was in Victoria. It was quite extensive. There was a whole body of information and recommendations that came out. I think it would be very important for us to look at the recommendations and consider the results of that conference, to help us understand the whole commercial sexual exploitation component.

I would like to state very clearly that I don't consider the term "child prostitution" to be a valid one. I don't think these children have willingly gone into this. This is an exploitation of children and youth, and we should name it that.

If I recall, in that conference, the first recommendation from those young people was that they are not called sex trade workers or prostitutes. They are called commercially sexually exploited children and youth. It's a very strong wording to use because it really does tell the nature of what happens to young people. It is truly an exploitative thing. Because they're underage, they can't make the decision that they want to do this. They're minors and, in many instances, have been exploited.

I really want to ensure that we don't forget youth and children, and that we get some of the information from that conference. It was an enormous one. It brought young people who were exploited from the Americas, South America, Canada, and the United States. It was an extraordinary meeting. It was the first time that sexually exploited youth and children met in a government-sponsored conference to talk about their lives and suggest what could be done to help them with that exploitation.

Ms. Libby Davies: I would agree with Mr. Hanger and others that it is a very broad subject. I've been dealing with it for a number of years. I represent the riding where 69 women are missing and presumed murdered. They were all involved in the sex trade. Many of them were aboriginal women. There has been a huge trauma in the community about what has gone on.

I reached the point where I became convinced that, one, this issue had never been properly examined, and two, the Criminal Code itself was partially the cause of some of the harm and risk that women were facing in the sex trade. It's pretty big, but I would like to keep it focused as well. Otherwise, we'll never get through it.

Maybe this is helpful to the committee. For me, the key question is this. What is the impact particularly on the on-street sex trade, from the perspective of the people involved, from the point of view of municipalities and local communities, from the police perspective, and from advocates who work within the sex trade? There are huge safety issues, violence issues, and legal issues. What is the impact?

That opens up the next questions. What is the legal situation? What is the social environment? What are the health and safety risks in terms of exploitation? How does it have an impact on children? That would allow us to have an examination.

There is another element of the sex trade that is more invisible, and we barely pay attention to it. There are escort services and massage parlours that are in effect fronts for prostitution. We may also want to look at that element as it relates to the on-street sex trade. That would be my question. What is the impact particularly on the on-street sex trade?

It would allow us to then assess what's going on from these different perspectives, whether it is a legal perspective, a social perspective, or the perspective of the people involved, as well as the impact on other people, and then work our way through to recommendations for various changes, whether it's law reform or some social change. There would be a number of things likely associated with that.

That's how I have thought about it.

The Chair: Mr. Hanger, I only want to comment that on page 7, our researchers have set out some items for discussion on exactly what we're doing right now. We may want to address that.

Go ahead, Art.

• (0940)

Mr. Art Hanger: If in part this committee was struck to deal with events that have taken place over the last few years.... I have to say that they are probably extremely unusual events, when you compare much of the history dealing with prostitution and how vulnerable prostitutes are to certain violent individuals out there, if you're looking at the Pickton situation.... There are others like it, such as the Green River killer, just south of Vancouver in the Seattle area, and there are other suspected events and atrocities taking place in and around Edmonton. They really haven't determined that to its fullest yet.

But if this is one of the main focuses of the committee, to try to deal with changes in the law or approaches to prevent some of these things from happening, that in itself would take up an enormous amount of time in this committee. And as Ms. Davies mentioned, a lot of the women who were involved there were right off the street. In fact, in all three of those particular situations they were basically street workers and they were picked up and were willingly transported, in Pickton's case, to his place, or taken off the street by the Green River killer, who had a slightly different MO.

If we're going to be looking at that, then we have an enormous task on our hands. It would definitely have to involve enforcement agencies. There's no mention of enforcement here at all. There's some invaluable information that has been accumulated by the RCMP on the Pickton investigation. They have not only devised ways and means of dealing with their investigation.... It goes beyond just sifting ground at the Pickton farm; it also goes into the social aspects of it, which I think we should hear testimony on.

I'm trusting that we have some of those investigators, or at least the coordinators of those investigations, down on the list.

The Chair: Madam Fry.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I want to just make a cautionary note here.

I think enforcement is absolutely an important piece of it, but I wonder if, as you suggested on page 7, there are some questions that we shouldn't focus our discussion around.

As a committee member, one of the things I would like to see is that we stay as far away from sensationalism as absolutely possible and focus this in as objective a manner as we can, dealing with the things that we, as a federal government, can do within our jurisdiction. Because there's absolutely no way we can tell provinces what to do.

I do think the second question, with regard to the relationship between the criminal court provisions and various provincial and municipal laws, is core to discussing some of these things. But I think as much as possible we need to stay away from the criminal elements of organized crime and trafficking, because I think if we do that, then we're into international trafficking. I mean, there are no borders anymore.

I do want to suggest that Internet procurement is a huge piece, and we've found that young people have been used. The Internet has been used for procuring young people mainly because they don't have to be seen on the streets; therefore, they're not visible. The Internet has presented a huge new form of solicitation that we need to look at. I think if we don't look at it, we won't be able to understand, especially with regard to children and youth safety, how that medium is being used for exploitation. So I think we need to add that to it.

But I would hope that we don't go into the huge issue of international organized crime, because that will take us into a totally different place, where we don't want to go.

• (0945)

The Chair: Mr. Hanger.

Mr. Art Hanger: I don't know how you can skirt the issue when it comes to enforcement. I don't think there are any better experts out there, even when it comes—

Hon. Hedy Fry: [*Inaudible—Editor*]...I'm just saying not in terms of organized crime. It's huge.

Mr. Art Hanger: I know the issue of organized crime is huge. Unfortunately, when you're dealing with prostitution, it is organized crime. I don't care whether you're looking at Hell's Angels on a local level or some other groups that are affiliated substantially with prostitution and play a major role in the events that unfold in the lives of those women; if we ignore it or even skirt it, we're not going to get a full picture of what's going on. We have to have that.

Being a former police officer myself, I have seen the misery that is attached to so much of this activity. I believe some of it can be avoided, but we have to have an insight; that's going to be essential. I don't know of anyone else on the ground. We can talk to theorists if we want, but ultimately I think for the full picture we have to include everyone.

The Chair: Ms. Davies.

Ms. Libby Davies: I wouldn't disagree with that.

I think the point Hedy is making is that if we make the focus international trafficking.... In fact, the justice department is already doing work on that. My own feeling is there is a huge issue there in terms of the sex trade coming into Canada, and we may touch on it, but I don't think it should be the primary focus, because there is work already underway in the justice department and internationally. What we should focus on is the domestic sex trade, what's happening in our local communities.

There is a connection to that international trade; you can't avoid it. But to me the question is the impact. If we focus on that, it means we must talk to law enforcement agencies. I've talked to lots of officers in Vancouver, some of whom were involved in the special task force on the missing women, and they have a huge amount of information about what they think went wrong and what the situation is.

Clearly, law enforcement is a part of it, but as I said earlier, I think it's bringing out the various perspectives on what these impacts are that will give us a very realistic picture of what is going on and will illuminate for us what we need to begin recommending as possible changes. I think I'm fairly safe in saying that changes are needed.

Looking at these questions here, I don't disagree with.... If anything, I think they're a bit narrow. That's why I'd like to think of it in terms of asking ourselves all the time what the impacts are and then thinking of those impacts from the perspective of different players who are involved in this, whether it be police, whether it be municipalities, whether it be prostitutes, whether it be agencies and advocacy groups, or professional associations that have an opinion. If we can line up witnesses covering that kind of area, we will learn a lot, and it will start guiding us in terms of what we need to do.

The Chair: We're coming at it from different aspects, but I think there's a consensus that it's more than just a narrow view of section 213; it's the broader context. I don't think anyone disagrees with the law enforcement involvement. The front line officers who work in Libby Davies' area I'm sure would give us an insight, and most Canadians would be surprised at their true feelings on this.

Do we have consensus that we're going to look at it in a broader context, then, as it impacts section 213?

Mr. Art Hanger: I certainly agree with Libby that if we get beyond our country, we may be running into cross-purposes with other committees. Although some of the items that were mentioned here will be difficult to segregate, when it comes to the international movement of women in this whole area of prostitution we could probably deal with it, but in a lesser manner, I suppose, concentrating on what's going on here. It's going to be hard to separate some of these matters.

• (0950)

Hon. Hedy Fry: On page eight there's a question about whether the subcommittee wishes to set a deadline for the tabling of the report in the House of Commons. I would suggest it's premature at the moment because we don't know how long this is going to take. I don't think we should say we should do this for the next two years, but in setting a deadline for the tabling of the report we should try to make it a longer deadline rather than a shorter one. I don't know whether a year might be a suitable time, or nine months. I don't know.

Ms. Libby Davies: Is it possible we might look at the idea of even an interim report? We could consider it. I agree it's a bit of an open question right now, because none of us really know, but it may well be. Maybe we shouldn't foreclose the idea that by the end of the session in June we have something on an interim basis, so that we can say this is what the committee is moving towards; or maybe there are some specific recommendations. I don't think we should foreclose that option, but we might not be ready.

Hon. Hedy Fry: The only reason I'm suggesting we maybe give it eight months rather than to June is that given the minority government status, many of us are not going to be able to do some of the work travelling as a committee, at certain times, that we would like to do. We may find ourselves very restricted in our ability to go around the country and do some of the important visits we need to do. We may have to spread this out a little bit and wait until we have.... This may be a difficult thing for us to organize. That's why I'm saying the time may have to stretch a bit, because of the circumstances of government at the moment and everybody being whipped to be here at particular points in time. It's something I would like to think about, rather than just suggesting we go for June, because I have a sneaky feeling it's going to be difficult.

The Chair: Mr. Hanger.

Mr. Art Hanger: I have a question.

In this report that was presented from the Library of Parliament, on page four there's a question that arises out of this whole area about bawdy houses. I'm wondering if we're going to get into all of this. It's right at the latter part of the paragraph before (b):

Further, a community standard of tolerance test is used to determine whether an act is indecent.

—now, this is coming out of a court—

Within this framework, interpretation of indecency will depend on context, looking at factors such as consent, the composition of any audience and the level of privacy of the room, community reputation of the place, and any harm caused.

That's all court precedent. Are we going to be getting into all of this?

Hon. Hedy Fry: I'd like to respond to that.

If you look at the Fraser report, this is key, because some of the issues we're talking about here have to do with solicitation, the definition of what is a bawdy house, the definition of what is a public place. There are some key things that were discussed in the Fraser report when they looked at this very issue the last time. It might be interesting if members could get the Fraser report as Christmas reading, because it actually answers some of the questions Art is asking. We have to get into these, because they are the key parts of the issue that we need to look at.

The Chair: Our researchers are preparing a briefing book. The Fraser report will be in it, and hopefully the CMA report. It would be nice if we could get those before Christmas, or they could be sent to our offices—

Next week? We have a commitment.

Mr. Hanger.

Mr. Art Hanger: I don't know what's in the Fraser report. I'm certainly eager to see it. However, these are matters that are reflective of a community attitude or position. I'm trusting that the Fraser report has dealt with this on that level. I don't know. If a community sees something, and this is the view of a court—and again I'm not sure what's in the Fraser report—and if it's just the views of a certain person or even a handful of individuals, it is not reflective of a community. That's why I'm curious about just how much scope we're going to be using when we deal with issues like this one.

• (0955)

Hon. Hedy Fry: The Fraser report is that of a commission, actually, made up of quite a lot of learned people. Some community people were on it. I think it's worth looking at, because unless we deal with legislation and the provisions of the Criminal Code on some of these issues, then we're not dealing with the issue at all. We need to look at this. No one is second-guessing where we come down: we may think the Fraser report is full of holes; we may not agree with it. But I think these are key components if we are to look at this issue of solicitation, communication, luring, procurement, and some of the issues of organized crime in terms of pimps and violence. These need to be looked at in the context of this issue. If we don't look at them, we're missing the point here.

The Chair: Libby, did you have a comment?

Ms. Libby Davies: I was just going to add, in terms of Mr. Hanger's point about a common bawdy house, that the courts have actually interpreted that to include a hotel, a house or, as it says here, a parking lot.

Again, I think this gets us back to the issue of what the impacts are. We'll have to look at the common bawdy house, because right now one of the huge issues is the sex trade taking place virtually in public, or in very unsafe areas, in parking lots or back lanes or deserted lots. Where this activity is taking place becomes a key question in terms of what are the impacts, what are the safety issues, and what are we doing around enforcement? Are we just chasing people from A to B, and actually putting people into more and more dangerous situations? This is one of the very big questions in Vancouver, anyway, and I think in Edmonton.

So I think it's very relevant to the debate, as are all of the sections pertaining to the sex trade, but the soliciting law and the common bawdy house are key parts of it.

Hon. Hedy Fry: And walking possibly to a public place, and Libby would know this very well. In her riding, the kids get up in the morning to go to school and they walk through a park, and there are condoms lying all over the place because that's where the sex trade is going on.

These are things we need to talk about, because they're key to public safety as well, not just the safety of the workers but also the safety of the community and the public.

[Translation]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: When I hear people talk about community acceptance, or non-acceptance, I think we need to reread the Fraser report. It was released several years ago and perhaps we need to see if its findings are still current. In terms of community tolerance, perspectives are constantly shifting, and they do so quickly. Sexuality is a topic that receives more and more media coverage.

Over the past five years, people's way of thinking has evolved. Opinions and mindsets differ from one part of the country to the next. We constantly see the NIMBY, or not in my backyard, principle at play. Therefore, we need to rethink these notions and hear from people right across the country. Situations are different, as are mindsets.

[English]

The Chair: I'm just wondering whether the boundaries of our consideration may become more apparent as we get into it. Preliminary study, perhaps of the Fraser report and the briefing book, may help us with our focus, or it may not, but perhaps we may want to revisit this issue when we reconvene in February, after we've had a lot of consideration of it.

Mr. Hanger.

Mr. Art Hanger: I hope the committee isn't of the mind that where we should be heading is to establish red light districts for prostitutes in this country. I get that impression.

I'm not saying that's wrong; what I am saying is that looking at it from my former life as a police officer, and certainly having had the experience of dealing with prostitution on the street in a very direct way, working undercover in those areas.... I know the one thing that always struck me is that where you have the prostitutes, you have the criminals, and you have criminals of just about every stripe, from the most violent to those who are part of organized criminal activity, and they draw huge sums of money from it. No one can convince me that red light districts stop that.

On that note, I'm very eager to see what kind of broad information we're going to extract from all of the sources. It's going to be very key, if we're going to deal with the prostitution or solicitation angle itself. I've stood on the street as a police officer under cover, and I know the intricacies of how it all comes together and where the pimps all stand waiting for their opportunity to grab that money. What I mean is that this does not even stop in a red light district.

I'm hoping that's not where the committee, individually, is already heading.

• (1000)

The Chair: Well, I'm not sure where anyone's heading. I have no preconceived notions of where we're going on this. It may develop out of what we hear and see.

Hon. Hedy Fry: I just want to put Mr. Hanger's mind to rest here. I can't speak for anybody else, but I can speak for myself. I often think I go into an issue thinking I have information about it and that I know where I'm going to go, and I often find that the more people I listen to, the more I understand the issue differently and see perspectives that make me decide in a totally different manner. I think the chair is very wise in saying let's not second-guess anything at the moment. Let's start listening to some testimony, let's see where that moves us and how we go and what we hear.

I have never been on any group or conference where I didn't learn something I thought I knew something about and didn't really understand it at all. That's one of the reasons for travelling; that's one of the reasons for not coming down on any one side of any question at the moment until we hear from all the people we may not have heard about.

I just think the chair has made some important points. Perhaps we should move on and get our briefing book, look at it, and when we come back talk about what we're going to do and how we're going to do it.

The Chair: I would concur with that.

We do have a few more housekeeping issues to address. We don't have any money, as we sit. We need a preliminary budget to get us rolling at the end of January and early February.

There is a motion, which the clerk has circulated, regarding just the operational budget. We'll just review that for a minute and then perhaps someone would care to move that motion.

Ms. Libby Davies: Is that \$10,000, the way it's written?

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Libby Davies: I would so move.

The Chair: All those in favour? Opposed, if any?

[Translation]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: Could we possibly get some details? An operating budget of \$10,000 seems rather paltry to me. Exactly what would these funds be for?

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Clerk.

[Translation]

The Clerk: Right now, we don't have any kind of budget. As a rule, standing committees are allocated a base budget of \$5,000. Unfortunately, the same does not hold true for subcommittees. Therefore, the request is for a starting budget of \$10,000. Once committee members have defined the parameters of their study, determined their witness list and agreed on whether or not to travel, I will then draw up another budget. For now, the committee's base budget is \$10,000.

Ms. Paule Brunelle: We can come back at any time with a request for additional funds.

The Clerk: Absolutely. You can request funds for specific initiatives.

Ms. Paule Brunelle: Fine then.

[English]

The Chair: Also, from the preliminary discussions there would appear to be consensus that we would like to travel to various communities throughout the country, and perhaps out of the country.

With your indulgence, perhaps we could ask our clerk to prepare a budget for travel within Canada, and if you feel we'd like to visit Amsterdam, and perhaps the United States, to Nevada, then perhaps we could do that on a preliminary basis. We're trying to expedite things so that we can address this early in the beginning of the new session. If that's the committee's wishes, if we approve that budget, then we would have to appear before the parliamentary committee that approves them.

• (1005)

Hon. Hedy Fry: You will have to appear, Mr. Chair, and we will go—

The Chair: I love the passion of some of our members.

Hon. Hedy Fry: And we will need to make sure that those of us on this committee go back and tell our political parties that we would like their support in this.

The Chair: Another point. Perhaps you could explore with your respective whips that it would appear that we have representation from all the parties and that we have a bit of pairing that could go on, and I'm sure they would be agreeable to it. There's no sense in suggesting or indicating that we want to travel and have them cut us off at the knees. So perhaps you wouldn't mind doing that in the next week or so, and then if there's any problem, please get back to me.

I'm being flagged here by *le greffier*.

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Can I ask when you want this travel budget to be ready? I really need clear instructions. I need to know what cities you want to visit, how many days you want to spend in every city, and when you want to visit. So I need all these instructions in order to prepare a clear budget.

Ms. Libby Davies: Yes. I would suggest that we go back and look at what was proposed the last time, because I think we did limit it to key centres in Canada and—

Hon. Hedy Fry: No, we did have Amsterdam and we did have London on it.

Ms. Libby Davies: Yes, and then we also had some international.... We had put down the number of days and so on.

Is it something we can bring back to the next meeting, and then look at it and approve it?

The Chair: We're going to have a brief meeting perhaps next week.

Ms. Libby Davies: So we could even do it then, perhaps.

The Chair: Tuesday evening? Would that be too much or not enough time?

The Clerk: No, that's fine with me.

The Chair: Is there consensus?

The researchers are just seeking some direction as well on whether the witnesses' proposal would be from two parts—one for beyond Ottawa and the various communities we may wish to travel to, as well as within Ottawa. The consensus is yes.

The Clerk: I would like to make it clear. You want a meeting next Tuesday and you're going to discuss the future business again, and we can also review the former budgets that have been prepared in the past?

The Chair: Yes.

The Clerk: That's all for next week?

The Chair: Certainly I don't think we'll be ready to really focus on the direction the committee will take by next week, but perhaps we can get some more of these preliminary matters put away so that our friends can have an enjoyable holiday working on our file.

Are there any other concerns or problems or comments?

There being none, we'll call for an adjournment.

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

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

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

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

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