



House of Commons
CANADA

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

SSLR • NUMBER 002 • 1st SESSION • 38th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, December 14, 2004

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Chair

Mr. John Maloney

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• (1745)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. John Maloney (Welland, Lib.)): I'll call the meeting to order.

We understand Dr. Fry is in committee, with their vote, so she won't be able to attend. I'm advised by our clerk that Mr. Hanger has sent his regrets as well.

We were approved today for our initial budget just to get us up and operating so we'll have something to do in February and be able to pay for it.

We have the witness list as prepared by our researchers to date. There are certainly other areas that can be added, with some discussion. I think perhaps before we go on to the travel budget within the country—or perhaps outside the country—maybe we could settle on witnesses who could perhaps be heard here in Ottawa, and we may be able to target those we'd like to visit in other communities.

Let's get onto the witness list. It has been circulated, as has been your briefing book for bedtime reading over the holidays—a little bit of homework.

Lyne, may I ask you to explain your list, as presented, and the reasons therefore. I hope you don't mind me calling you Lyne.

[Translation]

Ms. Lyne Casavant (Committee Researcher): Certainly.

As agreed, we prepared the list with two stages in mind: the hearings in Ottawa and the visits throughout Canada. The list was compiled on the basis of lists provided by members of the former Sub-Committee on Solicitation Laws. Many names were submitted. We retained almost all of them, with the exception of those persons present in the places to be visited by the committee. We can meet with them and add their names when the committee travels.

The list is organized thematically. Thus, the first part does not necessarily contain the names of people who live in Ottawa or the region. However, it does contain the names of people who could give us an overall view of the issue of prostitution. We can decide about the people to be heard in Ottawa and those to be heard in their region.

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): I don't know if it is because we heard 50 groups at the Committee on the Status of

Women, but I find your list long. It seems to me that there are a lot of names here.

In British Columbia, has expertise developed along the lines of a historical perspective? Have certain regions of Canada developed an expertise in this area because of chairs in universities? What is the reason behind that?

Ms. Lyne Casavant: This comes from suggestions by committee members. There are people who have expertise in this area in other regions as well.

[English]

The Chair: Libby.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Just having looked very quickly at the list, I would say generally that it does actually offer a very diverse number of perspectives. I think particularly on the first section—historical view of prostitution—these are three very critical witnesses. Mr. Lowman, for example, is probably the foremost expert in Canada, and has actually done a lot of work for the justice department monitoring the impact of the laws and how they've changed over the last couple of decades. He is a very expert witness, and, of course, Mr. Fraser was part of the Fraser committee. So I think historically for us to have that sense is important.

In terms of some of the academics, in case people think that hearing from the academics is not important, when I first started dealing with this issue, I was actually amazed to find out how much academic research there had been and that is now going on, and in fact it had never come forward in a political sense, in a legislative sense. I think hearing from some of these people actually does give us also a very broad view.

On a quick note here, the one thing I could see as missing, if we're looking at witnesses organized by region...Edmonton has had some very serious problems. They have at least 15 sex trade workers who are missing and presumed murdered. It's not as serious as the situation in Vancouver, but it's pretty horrendous. There is a group there—I forget the name of it—but the woman's name is Kate Quinn. In fact, she was just in a newspaper article in Edmonton a couple of days ago; I always get the clippings around this issue. It was around prosecution issues they were very concerned about. So there might be a couple of groups in Edmonton that we actually need to hear from, even if we don't go to Edmonton.

Quebec looks good. These are some of the groups I know I've talked to. I think this is a very comprehensive list, and I think we will get very varied points of view, which is what we need to hear.

• (1750)

The Chair: Madam Brunelle, do you have any comments?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: I was trying to see whether there was information concerning prostitution and Aboriginal women. This problem was highlighted at the Committee on the Status of Women. Several of these women have been the victims of fatal violence. Are we going to look at this issue? I can't find the information.

Ms. Lyne Casavant: At this stage the people concerned are not in the list under that theme. The topic is being approached in a broader fashion. However, I am sure that the issue of violence against Aboriginal women will be raised.

Ms. Paule Brunelle: I see. Perhaps we should ask that it be included.

[*English*]

The Chair: Although I indicated Mr. Hanger could not be with us today, he has sent three suggestions for the witness list, which include Julian Fantino, the Chief of Police for Toronto; a group called Focus on the Family; and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

Are there any comments?

Certainly we want to add some balance in the hearing of witnesses, and I think those groups would set a certain focus.

Ms. Libby Davies: We do have the Canadian Professional Police Association and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, and if you added Fantino, for example, then I would probably want to add someone from Vancouver. I don't know how Chief Fantino views the issue, but I know in Vancouver, for example, the former head of the vice squad that was in charge of this area has some very interesting views on this subject.

So it would then be whether or not we want to get into individual departments or offices, right? And maybe when we do the site visits—hopefully that's what we'll do—we could add that in there at that time. There's a lot for B.C., but depending on how much time we had, that might be something we could add in at a certain point as part of an on-the-ground visit.

The Chair: I'll take note of those comments. I understand that in the last go around both the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and the Association of Professional Police Officers declined to participate at that time. Hopefully, they'll take a different position this time. Maybe it was a time factor, I don't know, but we'd certainly be interested in hearing from front-line officers as well.

Madam Brunelle.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: What is the group called Focus on the Family?

[*English*]

The Chair: Can anyone offer me assistance?

It's probably a group that advocates strong traditional values, religious values, perhaps a moralistic approach on the subject.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: That is what I was afraid of.

[*English*]

The Chair: We have to have balance, as we're going to have to necessarily hear from all sides of the issue. Focus on the Family and the Evangelical Fellowship will perhaps be coming from the same thought.

• (1755)

Ms. Libby Davies: I don't want to add to the list, but if we need to accommodate some of Mr. Hanger's witnesses, I don't mind having Focus on the Family. I'm sure I probably won't agree with their point of view, but I agree with you, we need to have different points of view here, and we learn from that. But the other group, the Evangelical Fellowship...I don't know. I'm not so sure about that.

Ms. Lyne Casavant: They have the same position as the Real Women of Canada about prostitution, apart from the fact that they don't want to criminalize the prostitutes; they just want to criminalize the pimps and the clients.

The Chair: The Evangelical Fellowship is based in Ottawa, I believe.

A voice: I think so, yes.

The Chair: Does anyone know about Focus on the Family?

Ms. Libby Davies: I don't know where they're based.

The Chair: All right.

Often all the witnesses who may be on a list, if the requests are made to them, don't necessarily appear. But is there anyone on the list who you would not want to hear from, subject to your previous comments?

Ms. Libby Davies: There are a couple, such as the Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, that we heard from before, did we not?

No, we didn't? Okay, that's fine.

The Chair: There seems to be a large number on the list, Madame Brunelle, but we often have two, three, or maybe four of these individuals at the same hearing; we won't be having an individual hearing for each individual.

Ms. Libby Davies: We have panels.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: As far as I'm concerned, there are never too many from Quebec.

[*English*]

The Chair: We appreciate your counsel, coming from Quebec. Are there some you think may overlap and may not be necessary? You could advise us at another time, but we want to start narrowing it down.

Ms. Libby Davies: Are you looking for a motion?

The Chair: Yes, I think we're at that stage now. Our research staff has presented us with a thematic classification of witnesses as well as a regional organization of witnesses. Could we have some direction from the committee to adopt this witness list?

Ms. Libby Davies: I would so move.

The Chair: Is that including Mr. Hanger's?

Ms. Libby Davies: Yes.

The Chair: We're reasonably flexible as long as we have the funding. There may be other witnesses you wish to see come. You've suggested the police from Vancouver. I would definitely think that if we get to Vancouver, and hopefully we will, that's where we would hear them. I think it is important that we visit the regions on this subject.

Do we have a motion to that effect?

Ms. Libby Davies: I so move.

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

The Chair: Now let's move on to the suggested travel budget that you have before you, I hope. The clerk just pointed out to me that this was in fact prepared for the previous committee. You may wish to consider whether we want to visit all the sites suggested by the previous committee.

Do we want to narrow the list down a bit?

Subject to any comments, would we need two staffers from research to travel with us? I don't want to suggest otherwise if you think it's very important that....

Ms. Lyne Casavant: It's a decision for you.

Ms. Libby Davies: First of all, it would be five members, not six. That will bring it down a bit. If I'm looking at this correctly, the places we were planning to visit were Whitehorse, Saskatoon, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg.

• (1800)

Ms. Lyne Casavant: And there were Quebec, Montreal, Halifax, and Toronto.

Ms. Libby Davies: I must be missing that somewhere. What page is that on?

The Chair: On your budget, do you mean? It's the first page.

The Clerk: For the list of cities?

The former budget was adopted, to answer that question. The other one is for two weeks of travelling in Canada. This thing was prepared last fall.

The Chair: For Ontario, you would perhaps visit Toronto; for British Columbia, obviously Vancouver; for Quebec, Montreal, subject to the comments by Madame Brunelle; for the Atlantic provinces, perhaps Halifax; for the prairies, Winnipeg. These are suggested.

The Clerk: Would it be one day per city, for a total of one week?

The Chair: Do you think we could hear everything in one day in a city and then move on to the next city in the evening?

Ms. Libby Davies: In some places you might be pushing it. For example, in Vancouver, I know when the drug committee went there we spent more than a day, because we went out at night and in effect hit the streets and walked around. I know for the members it was a real eye-opener actually to see what was going on. In a couple of places you might want to do that, and there might be an overnight stay as well.

Before, we had said Whitehorse, and Quebec City as well as Montreal.... Could we get away with Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Montreal, Halifax, and Toronto, and narrow it down a bit? Some of them might take more than a day.

I would be happy to include all of them, but I don't know how people feel about the amount of travel it would mean we would have to undertake. I certainly agree with the international travel as well, if we can get it.

The Chair: You're suggesting that we delete Whitehorse and Quebec City?

Ms. Libby Davies: Yes. I don't know how Madame Brunelle feels about Quebec. Montreal is a big issue for sure, and there are a lot of active groups there. I don't know so much about the situation in Quebec City.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: The groups we should hear are in Montreal, rather. The Université du Québec is in Montreal. Concordia University is also in Montreal. There is only one person from Quebec. That person could surely travel to Montreal. That would prevent us from having to go to Quebec, even though Quebec is a very pretty city.

[*English*]

The Chair: We're just trying to economize if we can. We have to realize that the previous committee's request for travel was turned down, so we're trying to craft it to make it a little more palatable to consider.

I was concerned today when I made my presentation that perhaps they weren't taking this issue very seriously. We do want to take it very seriously, so we don't want to let them put their foot in the door to reject travel altogether.

Ms. Libby Davies: If Madame Brunelle is okay with leaving aside Quebec City, I would suggest the same for Whitehorse and even Saskatoon, if we had to.

The main centres are certainly Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Montreal, Halifax, and Toronto. There are other issues in other places, but these are the main ones where we're going to hear a lot of groups and see a lot of stuff. That would scale it down a bit.

The Chair: Let's come to a conclusion.

Do we delete Whitehorse and Quebec City? Would we get the same flavour in Saskatoon as we would in Winnipeg—perhaps more aboriginal in Saskatoon?

• (1805)

Ms. Libby Davies: You'll get a lot of aboriginal viewpoint in Winnipeg too, I think, and in Vancouver and Edmonton.

The Clerk: So we delete Quebec City, Whitehorse, and Saskatoon, and keep the other cities?

The Chair: Delete Whitehorse, Saskatoon, and Quebec City.

Are we in agreement?

Consensus is there. Thank you.

I put a question to our researchers about whether it is necessary that both would travel. The comment was that it would depend on how many in camera sessions we would consider with people who are involved in the situations....

Ms. Libby Davies: Does that have a budget impact in any way? Do we need to decide that now?

The Chair: It's just for the extra cost of the members who travel.

Personally, I would prefer to have both with us, but again I'm cognizant of the fact that they rejected the request last time, and if we could we should pare it down. But I don't want to pare it down such that we're ineffective, and certainly if we're having many in camera sessions, it's just too difficult to keep notes.

Ms. Libby Davies: I think if they're going to turn us down, it won't be because we have two researchers; it will be for other reasons. Maybe we need to talk about that in terms of a strategy about how we successfully get this through. I can tell you this will be very intense work in terms of such things as notes, particularly if it's in camera. From that point of view, it would be very helpful....

The Chair: We don't want to shortchange ourselves, quite frankly.

Ms. Libby Davies: No. In fact, I think it's a good idea to have the two researchers along.

The Chair: So the participants will be five members, one clerk, and two researchers. We already have consensus on the site visits.

Could I have a motion that we instruct the clerk to prepare a budget based on our comments?

Ms. Libby Davies: I would so move.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: International travel. You have a suggested budget before you, one the previous committee had put forward, to visit the Netherlands, specifically Amsterdam. It had been suggested at a previous meeting of this committee that Nevada might be considered as well. Do you want to make an attempt to visit both these places? My concern is that we'd certainly want to have a very strong case to do so.

I think we'd like to try to present both of these as early in February as possible. Any changes that may come to the Liaison Committee for funding requests will come into effect April 1, apparently. There is money in their budget now. We could get a commitment before March 31 and still do the travel later on in the new budget year, until April 1, 2005.

So Amsterdam.... Comments?

Ms. Libby Davies: Previously the committee had actually thought of the idea of going further afield, to New Zealand, for example, because recently they have at least decriminalized it.

The Chair: There's new legislation.

Ms. Libby Davies: I think we dropped that because it was just going to be too much.

There was the idea of going to Amsterdam, which is probably the longest-standing situation of a legalized form, just to get an idea of what the impacts are and what the successes are or are not. I think it would be very helpful if the committee could go there.

In terms of Nevada, I don't know. I don't feel so strongly about that. Would it be possible for us to do something by teleconference or even to bring a witness up or something like that? But as I say, I don't feel strongly about it either way. If others felt Nevada was important I wouldn't oppose it, for sure, but I don't know what it would add.

The Chair: Madam Brunelle.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: As for the Netherlands, that seems normal. As far as Nevada goes, I'm not convinced. I would have to hear some arguments and someone will have to explain to me why it is important that we go to Nevada. It might be possible to have a witness come here. All of these trips are expensive.

•(1810)

[*English*]

The Chair: I think we'd all like to hear the case. The committee that would approve these is going to want to hear the case to visit Amsterdam. We'd want to visit the question of why we were going out of the country as opposed to video conferencing. Perhaps our researchers can assist us in making a very strong case, and your assistance as well would be very important.

Shall we instruct the clerk to prepare a budget for a potential trip to the Netherlands?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Would our researchers be able to assist us with a range of witnesses we might anticipate hearing from in Amsterdam, explaining why?

Ms. Lyne Casavant: Certainly.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: If a first budget request is submitted for approval and refused, can you submit a modified request, or is it game over?

[*English*]

The Chair: Yes, you can, and I would probably suggest that once we review the application and the justification for travel, we make a trip to see our respective House leaders and give them some explanation, rather than hitting the Liaison Committee subcommittee cold. I think if we justify it to the House leaders, by strategizing, it will make it easier for it to go through.

Ms. Libby Davies: You have to go through the Liaison Committee first, though.

The Chair: Yes, but if we speak with the House leaders and convince them first, that might be a good way of breaking the ice vis-à-vis the individuals on the liaison subcommittee.

The clerk rightfully points out that the approval of travel ultimately belongs to the House. It would be a good step for us in getting those approvals to have all the House leaders onside. There is a concern that if one of the parties does not think travel is warranted, we may be thwarted, so it's good to—

Ms. Libby Davies: I agree.

It won't actually formally go to the House leaders until it's been through the Liaison Committee, but I like the idea of talking to the House leaders and getting them to talk to their respective chairs who are on the Liaison Committee. Hopefully, they'll approve it there, and then it will come to the House leaders, where basically it will have to be unanimously agreed to; it's usually by consensus. We'll have to work at it.

I would appreciate it, if you know when it's going to go to the Liaison Committee, if someone could let us know. I'd be very happy to figure out whether or not there are committee chairs we can go to and informally talk to prior to that, because this was part of the problem before. Some people may have been opposed to the idea, but there were other members of the Liaison Committee who maybe didn't know the background, who didn't know what it was about, and it just went flat.

The Chair: We will inform you of who the members of the Liaison Committee are. I think the more information they have, the more educated the decision they'll be able to make on the request.

We'll definitely let you know when it will be going to the Liaison Committee, but we'd like to, hopefully, consider the budget and approve it early in February and then move on shortly thereafter.

Now, the timing for travel within Canada as well as beyond Canada is also a consideration. Does anyone have any thoughts on what would be a good time or a bad time?

Ms. Libby Davies: One consideration I know helps with the issue is if the committee is prepared to do some of the travel during the down weeks, but that's always a struggle because we all want to go back to our ridings and so on. Not everybody is here today, and I don't know whether it's something we can do later at the next meeting.

The Chair: We can do that.

•(1815)

Ms. Libby Davies: That would be one possibility, to put it forward to actually do it during the weeks the House is not in session, because there are those two skip weeks in March.

The Chair: What about February 28 to March 5 or March 14 to 18? Certainly, our House leaders would probably appreciate that—as long as the members of the committee appreciate it.

Ms. Libby Davies: But what if there are other committees travelling? It might also coincide with other committees travelling; it would be almost like a pairing.

The Chair: Actually, they have a schedule of that already. We may have to fit the travel time into the schedule of committees that have already committed to travelling. We'll have to consider that as well. They mentioned that today at the meeting.

The Clerk: So the first trip within Canada would be in the week of February 28 and the trip to Amsterdam would be in the week of March 14?

The Chair: That's a possibility. I think we had better check the House travel schedule for who's travelling where and when.

The Clerk: I'll do that.

The Chair: Do we have a motion, then, to instruct the clerk to prepare a travel budget for Amsterdam? The finances involved

would depend on how many witnesses we would hear over there, how long we would be in that city, and whether there would be some business there as well.

Could you give some direction to our poor clerk in our absence over the Christmas recess? Was there any insight when this budget was presented back in the previous committee as to who you were going to be visiting and when?

Ms. Libby Davies: No, I don't remember. All I can tell you, again, is that for the drug committee, which covers a closely related issue, the visit to Amsterdam and the groups we met were hugely informative. We did do a couple of site visits to other places in Europe as well, and we learned so much.

Of course, a site visit in Amsterdam on this issue, like walking around the neighbourhood where in effect they have a red light district, would probably be very interesting for the committee.

The Chair: The clerk advises me that there was consideration given to two days for travelling there and back and two days for hearing witnesses in Amsterdam. Is that your recollection?

Ms. Libby Davies: So it's four days, basically. Yes.

The Chair: I don't know whether we had a vote on that or not. I don't think we did.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Merci.

Is there anything else?

Go ahead, Lyne.

Ms. Lyne Casavant: I'm just pointing out that the fifth document in the briefing book talks about all the different experiences in France, Sweden, and Nevada, so you can get some information about what they've done and what they're up to right now.

The Chair: I think we'll adjourn the meeting, and I wish you all a very merry Christmas.

Thank you for being here tonight, because I know, with the adjournment of the House this evening, people would perhaps rather be other places. I appreciate everyone's attendance, staff and members included.

Just one minute.

The Clerk: When we come back, how many meetings do you want per week? It's because I will probably begin to call witnesses.

The Chair: We have a little bit of difficulty. Dr. Fry has informed us she's not available on Tuesdays. Are most of us here on Mondays? We were thinking of switching the Tuesday meeting to Monday if people can be back. Sometimes people travel on Mondays.

Ms. Libby Davies: I'm always here on Monday.

The Chair: Madam Brunelle.

[Translation]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: When you talk about Monday, do you mean Monday morning?

[English]

The Chair: No, it would be in the evening, Monday night from 5:30 to 7:30.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: Yes, that's possible.

[*English*]

The Chair: Perhaps we'll canvass Mr. Hanger to see if that's a problem with him.

We'll start with the Department of Justice, and then perhaps for the second grouping have the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Canadian Professional Police Association, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities—if they'll come—and again the Elizabeth Fry Society, if that's agreeable to you as a panel.

Ms. Libby Davies: Wouldn't we want to have the historical view early on or even first? I don't know if you did this in a certain order, but....

The Chair: That's probably a good comment, Libby. Why don't we start with the Department of Justice legislative framework and have the historical view next?

The suggestion from our researcher is that we perhaps combine those groups. She was pointing out that Paul Fraser and John McLaren were both on the Fraser commission, so we wouldn't necessarily need both. It's a question of who we could get.

• (1820)

Ms. Libby Davies: He could probably ask one of them, like the chair, Mr. Fraser himself.

The Chair: He would come from British Columbia if it was important to be here.

Ms. Libby Davies: It is very important to hear John Lowman, I believe, and then if we could combine that with the justice

department, it would be a fairly good overview, I would think. It would set the stage.

The Chair: We have your direction, and we'll massage it a little if we need to, but we have the feelings on the direction you want to take.

The Clerk: So it would be on Mondays from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.?

The Chair: Yes, subject to my speaking with Mr. Hanger.

Ms. Libby Davies: Hedy was okay with Monday, was she?

The Chair: Yes.

Madam Brunelle.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: Is there a second evening?

[*English*]

The Chair: We had agreed on Tuesday and Wednesday, but now we're suggesting Monday and Wednesday of each week.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle: Monday and Wednesday. Fine.

[*English*]

The Chair: We're going to work, work, work—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: —but it's very interesting.

Again, thank you for your attendance. The meeting is adjourned.

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