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—
Chair

Mr. Gary Schellenberger

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•(0905)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC)): Good morning, everyone.

Welcome to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, meeting 66. The orders of the day, pursuant to Standing Orders 108 (2), 110, and 111, are to do with the order in council appointment of Timothy Wilson Casgrain to the position of chairperson of the board of directors of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, referred to the committee on Thursday, May 10, 2007.

Welcome, Mr. Casgrain. Would you please make your presentation, sir? Thank you.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain (Chairperson designate of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, As an Individual): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chair, members of the committee, I'm honoured to be here with you today as the new chair of the board of CBC/Radio-Canada. This is my first time before a parliamentary committee.

This committee's interest in Canada's public broadcaster is well known, and I look forward to meeting with you often during my term. Your ongoing study into the role and mandate of CBC/Radio-Canada is triggering an important discussion about what Canadians want from their public broadcaster for the future and the resources needed to provide it.

I would like to give you my view of the purpose of a public broadcaster, enunciated so eloquently in an article about the former chairman of the BBC, Sir John Birt. It reads:

But more important than the technological innovations was the sense that Sir John Birt believes in the BBC as a civilizing and democratic force. 'We encourage the power of reason and rationality. We bring pressure to go beyond prejudice or the needs of an immediate moment. We move with the power of our reporting. We provide illumination. We promote insight. We offer moral perspectives. We produce programs that make you care about other people, and understand them better, and perhaps act on that understanding. The BBC fosters a rambunctious, vigorous and informed democracy. We strain to ensure that all voices are heard, however uncomfortable; that they are given a fair hearing, and tested.'

What emerged from Sir John's speech was his sense of vision and purpose and his pride in the BBC as a magnet for young creative talent, and as a beacon, a great cause, a big adventure of the mind. I think CBC/Radio-Canada should be guided by a similar vision, and I look forward to reading your findings and recommendations.

You've had the opportunity to look at my resumé. You will see that my background in business lacks any broadcasting experience, but like you, I have a great love for the CBC. I have grown up with

it. I have learned so much about my country and the world from CBC/Radio-Canada. I want to ensure that this great organization and its people continue to serve an important role in the lives of all Canadians. I believe my experience can help both in leading the board of directors and working with the president and the senior management team as they reposition CBC/Radio-Canada in the changing environment.

Since being sworn in on May 5, I've attended my first board meeting in Vancouver and met all of the corporation's senior management. I have also met a number of other CBC people on my visits to various cities. I'm extremely proud to tell you that it is a very dedicated and passionate group of people who bring CBC/Radio-Canada to Canadians.

[Translation]

You individually, and as a committee have heard in your travels across the country that Canadians want a public broadcaster that is more relevant to them; more relevant to their lives at a time when Canadians and their interests are more diverse than ever before, and they are feeling the impact of continuous change.

Some Canadians worry that their public broadcaster risks becoming too commercial, but few believe taxpayers alone can provide it with the resources it needs to provide the service Canadians want.

Like all organizations, for CBC/Radio-Canada to succeed it must have stable, long-term funding in order to be able to run its operations effectively and to plan for the future.

•(0910)

[English]

Stable funding ensures that the people at CBC/ Radio-Canada can work to provide the programming that will inform, educate, and entertain Canadians. We have the talent with the creative minds to do that and more. In this fast-changing environment, our job is to empower the people at Canada's national public broadcaster to rise to this enormous challenge of making every Canadian embrace CBC/ Radio-Canada as the most relevant source of information and entertainment that links us together as one country all the time.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts with you. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

The Chair: Thank you for that presentation. For the first question we'll move to Mr. Scott, please.

Hon. Andy Scott (Fredericton, Lib.): Thank you very much.

I look forward to the opportunity to have this discussion. I'm pleased with your commitment to the CBC, your background with it.

Do you have a similar background in terms of all of the CBC? Is it radio, television? Is it Radio-Canada, French, English? Could you elaborate on that point?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I'm sorry, I'm having trouble hearing you when you say I have a background.

Hon. Andy Scott: You pointed out your love for the CBC.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Right.

Hon. Andy Scott: I was trying to get at what parts of the CBC, or if it's all of the CBC. Do you have experience with radio and television?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: We could be here a long time. There are many aspects of CBC that I follow. Of course, everyone has a great love for the radio, whether you're in your car or on the road. It's one of the great institutions that we have across this country.

My familiarity with Radio-Canada is less profound, but I'm certainly aware of it. My knowledge of CBC television is well known, just because it's been part of our upbringing for as long as I've been in this country.

One of the things I would say, as I've been getting more into this position in the last month, is that I realize the profound depth of services that CBC offers to Canadians across this country. One of the issues at hand is to get the message out to Canadians about the various services we have.

As you know, we're a country and a corporation that provides services in two official languages, across five and a half time zones, and in eight aboriginal languages. We have RCI, Radio Canada International, and RCI Viva. When you compare this with an institution like the BBC, which operates in one time zone and one language, it's quite a profound organization that's reaching out to all Canadians.

When I was in Vancouver, I had the occasion to be introduced to CBC Radio 3, the Internet radio that is also on the Sirius satellite radio network on channel 94. If you could have seen the enthusiasm of the announcers, it was quite something.

Hon. Andy Scott: Regarding the relationship between the CBC and other public cultural institutions, such as the National Film Board, Telefilm, you've been looking at some of the transcripts, and there's reference to that here.

What do you see as the corporation's relationship with those other public cultural institutions? Also, what do you see as its relationship with private broadcasters? How does this all fit together? Can you speak to that?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I enunciated the role of the public broadcaster quite clearly in my speech. We have to work in a framework of a situation where you have strong private broadcasters. We've seen three consolidations take place in the last year in this country, so that's what public broadcasting in the world of television is up against.

But more than that, you have the whole area of the various technologies that are coming at all broadcasters, as we all know: the Internet, iPod downloads, and satellite radio. The CBC is starting to look at itself more as a content provider, and you, the users, determine how you want to access that.

As it relates to the cultural organizations in this country, there are many areas where CBC reaches out to the cultural organizations of this country.

But we're a big country, and the cultural organizations are really quite region specific: the National Arts Centre, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. So you have to go into the regions and look at what CBC and Radio-Canada are doing there.

● (0915)

Hon. Andy Scott: We had some witnesses say that they believe that perhaps the CBC could do a better job of engaging, let's say, Telefilm or the National Film Board.

The National Film Board sends members of Parliament a lot of their work from time to time, but I have to wonder why I've never seen it on television. I'm trying to get to that kind of relationship.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I will take that under advisement and get more information for you for our next meeting.

Hon. Andy Scott: You mentioned long-term stable funding. What are your thoughts in terms of quantitative observations about such things?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Our efforts should be focused on programming. Our efforts should be focused on expanding into the regions. That is difficult when you have to concern yourself with the uncertainty of funding from parliamentary allocations from one year to the next, in an environment where you do have ongoing inflation, and you have ongoing demands for upgrading your technologies and also attracting good people. In this country, and particularly at CBC, we have an aging workforce that needs to be replaced. People are going to be moving into retirement. We have to groom people to come along to fill those roles. We have a shortage of engineering specialists that we need to bring into CBC.

So you need to have some financial bench strength to be able to bring these people in, train them, and then move them into positions as people move out of the workforce.

Hon. Andy Scott: What would you say is...?

Will I have more time?

The Chair: Mr. Scott, yes, hopefully we can get another opportunity for you.

Mr. Kotto, please.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maka Kotto (Saint-Lambert, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Casgrain.

Have you ever been associated, directly or indirectly, with the government currently in power?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Have I—

Mr. Maka Kotto: In the past, have you been associated, directly or indirectly, with the government currently in power, or have you been part of the government currently in power?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I'm not currently close to the government.

Mr. Maka Kotto: Have you been close in the past?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I haven't been in the past either.

Mr. Maka Kotto: Did you work for the Conservative Party in the last federal election, in the Toronto region?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: In the region of—

Mr. Maka Kotto: In the Toronto region.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: No, I have done nothing with the Conservatives. However, I must tell you that, in April, I became a member of the Conservative Party in the riding of Eglinton-Lawrence in order to support Joseph Oliver, who was nominated in that riding.

Mr. Maka Kotto: All right.

What expertise do you have that would be decisive, in your opinion, in your appointment and that would be useful to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: In fact, my expertise is not in the broadcasting field, but rather in business, that is to say that I can work with operations advisors and managers and in corporate management.

Mr. Maka Kotto: All right.

I listened carefully to your presentation. You talked about the vision and role of a public television network. Has this question often been a concern to you or have you only recently considered the ideal role that a public broadcaster, like the CBC, could play in our society in the century in which we are living?

● (0920)

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: As I said earlier, the role of a public broadcaster is profound. With everything that's going on in the world right now, we must attract young people so that they understand that discussions in favour of democracy do not merely exist, but that they must continue, and it is the role of CBC/Radio-Canada to raise the level of that discussion across the country.

Mr. Maka Kotto: All right.

Knowing that the challenges facing the CBC and Radio-Canada are very different, what do you intend to do to ensure the development of the French network's radio and television?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: You know that CBC and Radio-Canada are a corporation and that the current strategy is to integrate all initiatives. For example, here in Ottawa, there are platforms for news in English and in French, on television and on radio. With technology, we can put everything together.

I went to Montreal last week and to Vancouver in early May. In both places, there are very distinct initiatives to support CBC in the west and Radio-Canada in Quebec. I believe that each one has a role to play in moving things forward.

Mr. Maka Kotto: My question was more concerned with content, rather than structure. Witnesses have told us about the major

differences between Radio-Canada and the CBC. In view of the fact that the CBC is not doing as well as Radio-Canada, what are you considering doing?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: That's a very good question, but I'm not in a very good position to give you an exact answer at this time. All I can tell you is that the team responsible for CBC/Radio-Canada is solving the problems, in particular on English-language television, as was the case with French-language television five years ago.

Mr. Maka Kotto: All right. Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll move on now to Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Casgrain, it's very good to get a chance to meet with you this morning. I look forward to our discussion. As the old television commercial used to say, it's our job to squeeze the Charmin so that people back home will know that a good decision was made.

Whether I'm asking technical questions or not I don't think is relevant. I'm only interested in getting a reflection of what you think are possibilities and where we need to go. One of the big issues we've dealt with in our study is the issue of governance. It has come up again and again that CBC seems to stand alone in the world of public broadcasting for not having a clear system of electing people to the board, a headhunting process to ensure that we have independence. I'm wondering now, as our new chair, where you stand in terms of overhauling governance structure, in particular having the ability to hire and fire the CEO, and ensuring that the best of the best are put to overseeing this corporation.

● (0925)

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: As you know, the government in power has the final decision on the appointments of chairman, the president and CEO, and also the directors of the board. I would say that my job is to present them with candidates that the board is satisfied with, and then on that basis, the decisions will be made. I don't think it's any broader than that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Do you think it's a good idea to have an overhaul of governance structure in general?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I don't think I'm in a position to give you that answer. I've only been in the position a few weeks.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Okay.

I took the time to look into your background, to find out what you did in grade five, grade eight, and grade twelve. It's a very extensive and very interesting background. Of course, as you've stated, you have no broadcast experience. Can you explain to the committee how you would have come to be chosen? What process happened? Did you get a call from the minister? Was there a headhunting firm?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I was approached by the PMO's appointments office.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Okay.

How would they come to know you, as opposed to someone else?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I was asked to provide a resumé and submitted to an interview. I think it was no broader than that in the approach.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Who did the interview, then?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: A group of people from government, and it was, as I understand it, part of the process. It's all fairly new to me.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm asking because we don't have a clear sense, and governance has come up, so would it have been an interview with people in the PMO, people in the bureaucracy, people at the CBC?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: No, it was not the CBC; it was the government.

Mr. Charlie Angus: In the PMO?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I believe so.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Okay, thank you.

You spoke about the civilizing and democratic force for public television, and that's something that's certainly near and dear to our heart. We see the issue of English television in particular being trapped in the rating cycle, because in order to prove relevance it has to have ratings, yet in order to chase ratings there's a question of relevance of programming. Much of this appeared, from our study, to come from the financial pressures that are being exerted on English television. How do you see your role in terms of dealing with a budget that has been seriously cut, since 10 years, and a static budget with growing needs? Do you see yourself as advocating for a stronger financial envelope or making do with what you have?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: My view is that I'll be working with senior management. In a perfect world, we'd love to come back to the federal government and take the allocation of \$60 million up to a higher level, because it would give us more flexibility to do more programming in both English and French. I think realistically, though, that has to be subject to the mandate review you are working on right now. I think our role is to provide you with as much information as we can to help you determine the best way to fund CBC/Radio-Canada on a going-forward basis.

I like the model they've established in the U.K., with a royal charter with a 10-year mandate. The issue of how that structure works has to fit within the Canadian context.

As you know, right now, the focus at CBC/Radio-Canada is to source revenue from commercial sources. We have surfed a lot of value from the real estate portfolio we have. When I was in Vancouver in early May, I had the opportunity to visit the CBC facility that was built in the early 1970s. I don't know if any of you have had a chance to go there, but we would be honoured to show you what's going on in preparation for 2010. Even though we're not the lead broadcaster, we hope to be working with CTV. They've sold the air rights and the parking lot, and they're reinvesting \$60 million in that facility. It will be a great facility when all is said and done because it will be reaching out to the community far better than it is right now. People, I have to tell you, are very excited about what's going on there.

• (0930)

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll go to Mr. Warkentin.

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Casgrain, for coming in this morning. We appreciate the time you've taken. Congratulations on your appointment as well.

Everyone on the committee has had the opportunity to look at your resumé. But I just thought, for the benefit of those people watching, you might.... You talked a bit about your lack of broadcasting experience, but there are many more things, many more components, that will come into your responsibilities as chairman of the board. I'm wondering if you could talk about the experience you have that makes you the right person to oversee the budget of nearly \$1 billion, and then also about your experience in terms of dealing with the board. What is some of your past experience that makes you the right person and the right fit for this position?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Why don't I try to answer the second question first and then go back to the first one?

I've spent the better part of my life working in public companies. The governance level, as you know, in public companies continues to get refined and refined more and more. We've seen the Sarbanes-Oxley Act in the United States spill over into Canada. Governance is a big part of a public company, and I've had a lot of experience with public companies.

Whether it's for a public company or a public broadcaster, the role of the board is very similar. You have a whole mandate for a chairman and a mandate for the directors. Their role is to interface with the senior management, and ultimately, in our case at CBC, to also interface with the government and the Department of Canadian Heritage. Our role is not, as chairman and the board, to manage the company. It is to respond to the business plan, the budgets, and the strategic direction senior management has tabled and to get the approval of the board. If there's a problem, we have to challenge the senior management and ask them to go back and revisit their presentation.

I don't expect it to get to a point where a presentation would come to a board level and be turned down by the board, because the way the chairman and the president of the senior management team interface is that there's constant dialogue going back and forth.

As it relates to the budget, I had the occasion to sit with Madame Charbonneau, our CFO, yesterday. All I would tell you is that the accounting is a little different for the Government of Canada compared to private sector accounting. But ultimately, we have to give the citizens of Canada value for money for every dollar that's spent. I believe the work that's been done....

I was listening to the Auditor General's presentation here last week. A lot of progress has been made in the last five years in this organization, and with the work on internal controls and the like, I'm very confident that you can be assured that no money is being wasted.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Thank you. We know that your expertise will be relevant in your position in terms of your past experience with large budgets and with working with corporations that do deal with that as well.

The relevance question is something that we as a committee have seen go around the table many times. We have tried to discuss what will ensure that the CBC will be and remain relevant going forward. I'm wondering about your thoughts on the issue of relevance; you talked a little bit about the importance of being relevant as they move forward in your submission this morning as well. In terms of CBC/Radio-Canada, could you speak a little bit to your vision or your thoughts as CBC/Radio-Canada struggles to be relevant as it moves forward in the coming decades?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: That's a good question.

We have 32 million people in this country, and I think 32 million people have an opinion about the CBC. In the less than one month I've been in the position, I've already had letters come to my house from passionate listeners of the CBC who have concerns about the changing format of Radio 2.

This is a big organization that reaches across into many regions and provides many services. What I'm excited about is the integration of the platforms, which will allow you as the users to find what you want from the CBC on your own terms, whether it's watching something on television or going to the Internet and watching last night's Senators game on the Internet, as opposed to having to stay in front of the TV. You can download it or watch it in real time.

The whole industry is struggling with this evolution. You'd have to say it's not an evolution; it's a revolution that is taking place. I think working in an integrated manner so that you can have radio, television, Internet, Sirius satellite radio, and everything out there at the disposal of Canadian citizens will help to make that offer available all the time to Canadians.

What is my vision? I keep coming back to what I said earlier. I really believe that the way you make the CBC relevant to Canadians is to get CBC listeners engaged, CBC viewers engaged, viewers of Radio-Canada engaged. That is not an easy task, because we are a very regional country. What unites us day in and day out is maybe that we're at peace day in and day out and we take things for granted. We have to tell Canadians about what goes on in the rest of the world—as we're doing—and tell Canadians what's going on in other parts of the country, and it's a daunting task.

I'm hoping that when the next president comes in to replace Mr. Rabinovitch in November, he or she and their management team and the board can really rise to that challenge.

● (0935)

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll move on to Mr. Scarpaleggia.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Thank you, and welcome to the committee.

Mr. Casgrain, you must have an opinion about...

First of all, I'd like to go to the distinction between radio and television. We've heard from many witnesses during the ongoing study this committee is doing on the mandate of the CBC, and we've heard a lot of them wish that CBC television were like CBC radio. They seem to apply the radio model to television and suggest there should be no advertising on television—if CBC radio can do it and

be distinctive, then why can't CBC television do it and be distinctive? I'd like your opinion on that, because there are many people who suggest we should take advertising off television. I'm not sure the two models are comparable, and I'm not sure we're comparing apples and apples.

Just last night on TV, I believe, Lorna Jackson was retiring, and she made a statement that gave voice to what I felt but couldn't put words to: that radio is different, that the relationship between the listener and the medium is more intimate. She said it was like a friend. I'm not sure television has the same rapport with the viewer, and I'm not sure you can apply one model to the other. I would like your thoughts on that generally, but also and more specifically on whether you think the CBC should push to become totally advertising-free over the medium term.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Let me begin by saying that I think Lorna Jackson is right. They are two completely different mediums.

I wish it was so easy that everything that goes on CBC radio could be transposed, and we'd get the great following on CBC TV.

Let me just speak to that one point. CBC radio does not compete with the likes of Hollywood and *CSI* and *Lost*. You, the viewers, make that choice. And remember, what goes on on CTV and Global is really a rebroadcasting of a U.S. show with different commercials. That is what CBC TV is up against.

The question is, should we go away from that model and not compete? Should we try to come to the House and ask for a huge increase in funding? That is a discussion that's going on, as you know, in your committee. It's a constant discussion that goes on at the senior management level and at the board level.

And I would say that the model we've got right now, when you look around the world, is similar to that of many public broadcasters, in which there is commercial advertising sold. If I can digress, if you have the rights to *Hockey Night in Canada*, why wouldn't you sell the commercial time? Why would we ask the Canadian taxpayer to underwrite that and just show it without advertising when someone is more than willing to pay for that? So there might be segments you could modify, to some extent, but that's certainly not in my mandate.

● (0940)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Just to be the devil's advocate a little bit, because we had some witnesses come to us and say, "Well, when you have advertising, you're going for the big markets". What's going to happen and what has happened long term—and I don't know if they were correct or not, but the theory is that if you go for the big viewership in the big markets, you're going to sort of, by attrition, leave regional programming behind. That's just some food for thought.

We were in Montreal on Friday with the committee, and we visited Radio-Canada and CBC in Montreal. The senior management—who seem to be an extraordinarily talented and vibrant team, and I hope you get to meet them soon, if you haven't already—put up the mission statement for Société Radio-Canada. There was something in that mission statement that I'd never seen before and that I thought was very bold and very visionary. They said that Société Radio-Canada is an instrument of democracy and culture. I've never seen those terms. Maybe they're there, but I've never seen them in the mission statement of CBC.

I'm wondering what you think about those two words. The CBC, when you really get down to it, is an instrument of culture and democracy. And I'm wondering if you would be in favour of including those two words in the CBC mandate overall.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Well, I go back to what I said at the outset. “The BBC”—but let me substitute CBC—“fosters a rambunctious, vigorous and informed democracy”. If we can make CBC come alive in that way, then we will have accomplished what the mandate of CBC is.

To incorporate it into our mandate or mission statement at this point in time really is a question that the board and senior management have to take under advisement.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: One more point. I would encourage you to bring that up to the board and look at that mission statement of SRC, because I think it's very inspiring.

The Chair: Thank you.

Madame Bourgeois.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Casgrain, good morning and welcome to the committee. I want to ask you certain minor questions that have come to my mind following your answers.

You say you were interviewed by a group of individuals from the Prime Minister's office. Would it be possible to have the names of those persons? Did you know them beforehand?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I don't know them.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: That—

[English]

The Chair: I think we're getting a little off base here.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Not at all, Mr. Chairman. I simply want to know the connection that can be made between the Prime Minister's office and Mr. Casgrain's appointment. I think that has to be clear, unless I'm mistaken.

[English]

The Chair: I think the questioning should stay a little closer to Mr. Casgrain's position that he's to take forward.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: All right.

[English]

The Chair: I don't think a list has to be supplied. That line of questioning is a little out of bounds. Please stay closer to the mandate.

[Translation]

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Mr. Casgrain, it is very, very important that we know where you come from, what your mandate is and who appointed you to this position. It has often been said, and rightly so, that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has played a fundamental role in defending the interests of national unity, particularly in Quebec. As you'll understand, this question is extremely important for Quebecers, because they don't want to have this done to them twice.

That said, what do you think about the neutrality and professional ethics that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation should show, through both its journalists and its function across Canada?

• (0945)

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I haven't yet met the Montreal journalists. However, last Wednesday, I met the senior management in Montreal. It's impossible for me to give you my opinion at this time. I met Patrice Roy—

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Pardon me for interrupting you, but I'm not talking about Quebec. We want to know to what extent, in your capacity as chair of the board of directors, you are going to ensure that CBC/Radio-Canada plays a neutral role across Canada, that is to say that it does not represent the interests of a Conservative government or a Liberal government. That's what we want to know.

In your opinion, are ethics and neutrality important?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I accept your opinion, but, for us, this is a Canadian identity issue. We have to represent Canadians from all regions. I met a lot of Francophones in Vancouver. And they love Radio-Canada and the services it provides them.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: I'm going to make a brief comment, which will be followed by a final question. When you say Canadian identity, recognition of the Quebec nation should not be forgotten.

Earlier you said that your mandate was to mobilize listeners and viewers and to tell them what was going on elsewhere. In all the cities where the members of this committee have travelled, the Canadian public has told them two things. First, we've been told that not everyone is connected to high definition television, to the new products or new platforms. What people want is service. Second, they don't necessarily want to know what is going on elsewhere: they want the network to talk about them, their town and their region.

How important are these two elements for you?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: You are right; that's fundamental. The CBC/Radio-Canada people are currently investing time and effort to improve local resources in order to enhance what is offered to and the connection with the regions.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois: Thank you, Mr. Casgrain.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll move now to Mr. Fast.

Mr. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd first like to clarify a comment Ms. Bourgeois made. Our government, with the support of two other parties, confirmed the Québécois as a nation within a united Canada—just for clarification and on the record.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I concur.

Mr. Ed Fast: I think you understood that.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Yes, I did.

Mr. Ed Fast: I want to first of all refer to what's been probably the most defining report on broadcasting in recent years, and that's the Lincoln report. Have you had a chance to familiarize yourself with it?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: No, I have not.

Mr. Ed Fast: Would you be prepared to do that, at least to read the executive summary?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I shall.

Mr. Ed Fast: Although it may be a little bit out of date, it's still for the most part very relevant to the conversations we're having around this table right now regarding CBC's role within the broadcasting industry.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: The point is well taken.

Mr. Ed Fast: The other thing is, have you had a chance to review some of the transcripts from our CBC mandate review?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I've reviewed documents by Mr. Rabinovitch before the committee. I was listening to the interview of the Auditor General from last week. I've reviewed the documents of Mr. Fournier's appointment. Most of my focus has been on information being provided to me by the senior management and the board at this point in time.

• (0950)

Mr. Ed Fast: I was pleased to hear you put an emphasis on youth. I think one of the things that's come out very clearly in the mandate review and from the witnesses who have appeared before us is that we need to find better ways of reaching out to the new generation, which is being bombarded by new media, new technology.

Do you have some strategies in mind to reach out to the youth of our country and to make sure CBC is relevant to them?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Do I have the strategies? No, but I believe our senior management are working on them right now. In my trip to Vancouver at the beginning of May and my trip to Montreal last week, having seen what is going on in Vancouver with CBC Radio 3, where it's run, and in Montreal, where *Bande à part* is run.... You would do well to come and see the enthusiasm these young people have for CBC and CBC Radio 3 and *Bande à part*.

One of the fascinating discussions I had with a young announcer in Vancouver was about his absolute delight at the number of e-mails that were coming in from all parts of the world. He said they got one from Easter Island and one from Iceland. He said the next lady who came on, Lorna, who's on from 6 until 10, has a following on Sirius satellite radio in the States among truckers, who listen to her fervently.

I'm very proud of the outreach that's going on; that we are reaching out, not just to Canadians who are living in other parts of the world, but in telling our story to the rest of the world. We have a lot to be proud of in this country.

Mr. Ed Fast: I was also pleased to hear in your remarks that you're not committed to turning back the clock on commercialization. As you probably know, divergent views have been presented at this table regarding CBC's commercialization. There are some who believe that CBC should be free of any advertising and others who believe that advertising is a reality today, and that if we remove it, government is then simply replacing commercial dollars with government dollars and isn't actually moving CBC ahead in any way.

I was pleased to hear that, but it's always a matter of balance. I agree with some of the comments around this table that there's truly a distinction between CBC radio and CBC television. I agree with the comment from Mr. Scarpaleggia that in fact CBC radio is more like a friend. When I'm driving back from hiking, as I did just last week, pretty well the only station I could get was CBC radio. Listening to *Vinyl Cafe* was just a wonderful experience. Again, it's like having a friend next door and having a chat over some of these cultural issues, including music.

How do you find a balance? Do you have any idea how you're going to provide a balance between the commercial aspect of CBC and its role as a public broadcaster, which should not be subsumed under this weight of commercialization?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: You've probably posed the most profound question that CBC wrestles with on how to find that balance.

There are so many components to what I call this jigsaw puzzle that makes up CBC and its financing. When you uncouple one, a case in point being *Hockey Night in Canada*, to see what it means to the commercial revenues of CBC and the implications for the rest of the organization, it's a fundamental issue that can't be looked at in isolation.

On part of this mandate you and your group are doing, we need to provide you with more input, and you need to challenge us. If we presented you with three models to work with on complete commercialization, where we are today, or the complete non-commercialization of CBC television, what are the implications? What would you ask the government for by way of funding? What does it mean for CBC in going forward?

This whole idea of the mandate review must be done in the context of the broadcasting industry per se. If you look at CBC, particularly with the consolidation of CTV and CHUM, Astral and Standard, and CanWest Global and Alliance Atlantis, we are a very small piece of that, and yet we are a profound piece of it because we're the only public broadcaster in Canada. We need to make sure we can protect our flank and are not overwhelmed by becoming too commercialized.

For senior management, it's a constant balance. When Mr. Rabinovitch took on the challenge of being president in 1999, he didn't come to the House asking for more money. He asked for more time, and he would find funding from within the organization, which he has done.

The problem I would caution all of the members about is this. It is finite. There are finite real estate resources. There are finite sources of funding. At some point, we are going to need to get absolute affirmation from this committee and the House that the funding from government is solid. We have to deal with issues like inflation.

But as I said earlier, I really believe the biggest issue, which was presented to me yesterday by our vice-president of finance, Madam Charbonneau, applies to many organizations in Canada. We have a very senior workforce moving on to the possibility of retirement in the next 10 to 15 years.

We have to be able to replace them with qualified technical people. You cannot bring in technical people and tell them to do the work. You have to bring them in, train them, and get them through an apprentice program. We have a lot of expertise that we must not lose.

• (0955)

Mr. Ed Fast: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you for that.

We'll move now to Mr. Bell.

Mr. Don Bell (North Vancouver, Lib.): Thank you.

Welcome.

I have a series of questions.

One relates to American public broadcasters, PBS and KCTS, and the difference in the CBC. In the States, they are basically competing with commercial American networks, but it's the same culture, if you want to call it that. In Canada, as a public broadcaster, you're competing with Canadian commercial networks and American commercial networks in terms of programming content.

You talked about the programs. What challenge do you see? How do you see addressing that challenge?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Are you asking me to compare the model of PBS funding with Canadian funding?

Mr. Don Bell: I know a good portion of PBS funding is spent in order to beg for money.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: That's right.

Mr. Don Bell: It interrupts their very excellent programming, from time to time, for them to have phone-ins.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: They get a substantial amount of funding from government agencies, be it state governments or the federal government in the United States.

Mr. Don Bell: Do you know what percentage it is?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I believe it is more than we proportionally get here in Canada, but I'd like to get that answer for you and come back.

When we watch the shows where they do their funding on TV, there's the effort and the cost, and the net they get back is very small relative to the amount of money they take in. So it's an extremely expensive way to raise money.

I'd like to give you an idea of per capita costs. CBC costs the Canadian taxpayer \$30 a year per person. In the U.K. it's probably

about \$80 a year per person. So what if you sat down and asked Canadians, "How much do you pay for your Internet connection? How much do you pay for your telephone? How much do you pay if you have Sirius satellite radio? Do you have trouble with the thought of paying \$30 for CBC and all it offers?"

I believe it's incumbent upon us as CBC to really tell Canadians what we provide for them. It's not just being able to turn on the radio and drive from A to B listening to CBC radio or to watch *Hockey Night in Canada*. There is so much in our stable of services that part of the challenge for my board and senior management is to really let Canadians know what we're all about. Then they might be willing to pay \$35 or \$40 per person instead of \$30 per person.

Mr. Don Bell: When you were interviewed—I'm jumping around now—was anybody from Heritage Canada involved in that?

• (1000)

Mr. Ed Fast: A point of order.

The Chair: Let's stay on the mandate of the CBC. I'd like to see the questioning go that way to Mr. Casgrain.

Mr. Don Bell: I understand that the heritage committee is the body responsible for ensuring part of the concern about the role the CBC plays. I'm curious whether there was any connection at all with either the administrative staff or the minister's staff in selecting the position for this board.

Mr. Ed Fast: Mr. Chair, I would just point out that section 111 of the Standing Orders says that the focus of this review should be the qualifications and competence of the appointee—end of story. I think we need to limit this discussion to that.

Mr. Don Bell: On reaching out to the community, when cable TV first had the right to sell their services they had to make a commitment to provide localized programming. I say that as a former municipal politician. We had very localized programming in which council meetings were covered. There were interviews with local community people. I realize to some degree that's easier when you're dealing with a cable system.

On your commitment here, to what degree do you want to make sure that CBC is relevant? You made the comment that Canadians want a public broadcaster that's more relevant. Is there any effort being made to have more localized broadcasting that reflects the different geographic regions and sub-regions of northern B.C. and the Lower Mainland—the communities within those areas?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: I can't speak to that with great knowledge, but I can tell you that the—

Mr. Don Bell: I'm talking about radio primarily, as opposed to television.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: All I know is that the big effort right now—and there's a paper that has been tabled by senior management with the Ministry of Heritage—is to consider providing local radio. There are about six million Canadians in this country who don't get their local radio. It comes as a feed from either Toronto or Ottawa. They have tabled a paper to ask Heritage to consider a \$25 million investment, which would be annual, to get this programming up and running. That doesn't reach out to places like northern Manitoba or the far north, but I think we're covering off those areas quite well.

If I can digress for one moment, I was talking to Jane Chalmers when I first met her, and she was telling me about one of the announcers in northern Canada when 9/11 took place. He was trying to tell the Inuit what was going on in New York and Washington. He was literally translating what he saw on the television to Inuktitut, or the language he was speaking in. They don't know what terrorism is about, so he was having to come up with words. When you think of us reaching out that way to fellow citizens in the north, who are blessed with no understanding of terror, it must be very difficult. But it was being done as a literal translation. He was seeing something on the screen and then he was trying to broadcast it over the radio in their native language.

The effort is to reach out as far as possible. We broadcast, I believe in eight aboriginal languages. On RCI Viva, which is an Internet radio, we have nine languages for new Canadians coming to this country.

The Chair: Thank you.

We move now to Mr. Brown, please.

Mr. Gord Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations, Mr. Casgrain, on your appointment.

Really, I only have one question. It has to do with your business background. I have a business background. Obviously you would have had some challenges and successes in your business career that might be relevant to what you're doing now.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: From a challenge in business perspective, my background has been involved with lots of what I call "turnaround situations".

•(1005)

Mr. Gord Brown: That's what I'm trying to get at. I'm interested in hearing some examples of things you might have done in your business career that you may see as things to address as the chair of the CBC.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Let me say that my first involvement with CBC was my first board meeting in Vancouver at the beginning of May. This is a very fine group of people who are representing this country and who are giving of their time, at the board level, to provide the direction to senior management. We have representation all across the country right now. I was very pleased to see how everybody worked together. We also had all the senior management team at that meeting.

There's a very open dialogue going on right now within CBC. The senior management is talking very comfortably with each other. As you know, there has been a history of fragmentation within CBC. The effort by senior management is to work as one organization, very cohesively, sharing resources and sharing ideas.

The interface between CBC English language radio with CBC English language TV is very, very exciting. We have a huge source of creativity. Why do we have to limit that expertise to the radio domain when it can trickle over and be available to our people in English language television?

Similarly, you have Radio-Canada, which, as you know, has been integrated under one individual, Mr. Sylvain Lafrance. He has

moved Radio-Canada into one integrated organization. But again, they talk very cooperatively with the English language TV service and the English language radio service.

I think a lot of progress has been made. The problem, as I see it, is getting down to the coal face, which are the announcers, the technical people, and making sure that everybody buys into CBC/Radio-Canada as one organization moving in one direction to fulfill the mandate, which is to create this rambunctious democracy and get people to really feel passionate about what's going on in this country.

Mr. Gord Brown: Right, but let's get back to some examples of things that you might have—

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: As you know, I have no background in broadcasting. Presently, I'm involved in the aviation services group. It's a company called Skyservice, started by my partner, Russell Payson, 21 years ago in Montreal. He's grown it from 11 employees to about 1,500 employees today. My involvement started 10 years ago when I became his partner. My expertise is not aviation. I have a background in finance and the like.

Previous to that I was with the Brookfield Brascan Edper group—all the same group, different names—for 26 years. I joined them, very fortunately, in Montreal in 1976. At that time they owned the Montreal Canadiens and the Montreal Forum. It was the summer of the Summer Olympics in Montreal, so the Forum was hosting a number of activities. I was working there as an accountant to start, and then I moved with them to the West Indies for two years to run a small trading house on the island of Antigua, and then I moved back to Toronto in 1978 to open up the office.

Subsequent to that, I had various operational experiences with companies like Foodex, which owned all the Frank Vetere's and Ponderosas, and a company called National Business Systems, which was unfortunately the subject of a massive fraud in 1988. I was assigned to spend six months there, but I spent seven and a half years there straightening it out. Those are a few examples of my involvement.

I would like to say one thing about my experience. Everywhere I have been in the organizations, particularly troubled organizations—and I don't consider CBC/Radio-Canada troubled in any way. I think it's absolutely on track, moving in the right direction, with wonderful people. But I've always found in organizations that there is an excellence and there is a loyalty, and at the end of the day, it is people who make up the organization. So what has happened in certain cases is that they have not been listened to, and it's important that we get the communications going. It's a big initiative in any organization. In one like CBC, with 9,000-plus employees, it is a huge undertaking. So I am committed to improving the internal communications and the external communications.

•(1010)

Mr. Gord Brown: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

I'm very interested in the discussion of the integration of platforms that you talked about, because it seems to me that one of the issues with new media is that public television, public radio, has an opportunity to become an international broadcaster in a way that private broadcast in Canada I don't think can. We've seen the success that's already taking place with radio, but what has become very clear is that because television is a different ballgame, it's very expensive programming. Much of it is being done independently. There are various rights holders, and we don't seem to have a coherent plan for getting content online. We haven't got a coherent plan to monetize the value of what's online.

What are your gut feelings about what we need to do to ensure that we are putting our product online and that there is some kind of monetary value at the end of the day to the creators of that content?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: As you know, CBC and Radio-Canada are online right now. So the big challenge is how to turn that into a commercial revenue stream that is substantial. It's very small at this point in time. I think that's the challenge for all broadcasters. Rather than having to give it away, how do they turn it into a revenue stream?

At the same time, you have this rights issue. Who owns the rights to certain of the programming that's being broadcast over the Internet? That's a big discussion that's going on right now, and I hope it will get resolved shortly because it's in everybody's interest. If there's a revenue stream that can be enhanced and shared, it should be.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm very interested in this issue of governance, because it has come up again and again and again. I don't need to know who sat in the meeting with you, but how long was the interview? How long did you go through, as a process, in order to be acclaimed—

Mr. Ed Fast: A point of order. We're talking about process, and again, Mr. Casgrain is not responsible for creating the process. It's very clear that the standing order says folks should be competent and have qualifications.

Mr. Charlie Angus: A point of order, Mr. Chair. It's just a question.

He has referred to Standing Order 111. Mr. Casgrain was brought under Standing Order 108. Tina Keeper's motion was under 108. I have nothing against Mr. Casgrain. I think he's a fine man, and I'm hearing really interesting stuff. But my spidey sense tingles every time I try to find out something about the process. I need to know about the process and I don't think that's out of line. I think Mr. Casgrain is probably comfortable answering that and putting us to rest so that there is no concern around this table about whether or not it was a 10-minute process, a 5-minute process, or a 2-hour process.

The Chair: On how the process works, as long as we go that route. Was it a ten-minute interview? I know there was a procedure followed.

Mr. Charlie Angus: You know, but I just need to hear him tell me that. That's all I'm asking.

The Chair: I have no problem with that if we can stay with that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: That's what I'm interested in.

On the interview process, is it an involved process? Is it a short process? Is it a long process?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: It was a question and answer process, with a number of questions that I was asked to complete. It followed with an oral interview over the telephone. It went on for, I would say, the better part of 30 minutes.

Mr. Charlie Angus: A question and then a follow-up interview by phone.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: That's correct.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm interested in this issue of how we're going to maintain the skill sets at CBC, again, with the limited budget we have. We have lost a lot of bench strength in the last decade. What we have heard about across this country is the disappearance of capacity in the regions, not just from the programming dollars that were in the regions before but with the disappearance of editors, the people who could pitch stories, and the people who could support and develop really good programming in the regions. I'm concerned about that because what we've heard in terms of people's sense of relevance is that they want to see their region on the national scale.

From a corporate perspective, it's probably very simple to centralize production in Toronto and Montreal. If you have limited resources, you're going to move your money and talent into a centralized location. What do you see in terms of ensuring that we are starting to rebuild the bench strength of artistic and technical capacity in the various regional centres that CBC operates in?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: For me, it's very early on to answer that question, but I would say there's a concerted effort, particularly at the radio level, to really get out there and enhance the regional offer. There's no doubt when you have a consolidation, as CBC has experienced, that they have had to do some centralizing in places like Montreal and Toronto. Now I think they're reaching out again. Remember, ten years after the fact your technology is much more sophisticated and the ability to reach out is far less expensive. So I'm very hopeful in that respect.

• (1015)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Scott.

Hon. Andy Scott: Again on the governance issue, I think it is important for us. Mr. Fast referenced the question of credentials and qualifications, and I'm very impressed, frankly, for what it's worth. We're exploring new ways of doing these kinds of appointments. We're exploring them within the context of the CBC and we're exploring them as a government. I think it's a healthy thing. I don't think anyone should apologize for engaging in the political process, frankly, and for what it's worth, that's my view.

Having said that, one of the issues is the relationship between this committee and the government in terms of these appointments. We're here to talk about credentials and so on, but we're not the first blush at that. We have to know about the process so that we can understand how the decision was made.

For instance, again on process, when you were interviewed, was the Department of Heritage represented in that exercise?

The Chair: Mr. Scott, I think you have a pretty good idea of how some of these things go. We have diverged a little from the way the appointments have gone previously and tried to expand on a little more openness. I feel that Mr. Casgrain is here on a process that has been followed by governments as we have gone along. I would suggest that to micromanage how the process works right now is—

Hon. Andy Scott: This is a matter of policy. Frankly, he can inform us about the governance issues. We're talking about how we pick the board in the future. It's part of the mandate review. I'm just curious.

Mr. Fast was the one who pointed out that part of this is about how we assess someone's competence and credentials to do the job. I wondered about the involvement of the department, because I think they bring a particular lens to that issue. It's really policy I'm interested in, and he's here.

The Chair: Okay. We can go forward with what your feeling is on the policy.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Do you mean just the general policy of appointments?

Hon. Andy Scott: The question is whether the Department of Heritage was part of the process—that's all—just so that we can understand how they assess credentials. I don't challenge it. As I said, I'm very impressed.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: It was an interview process that I went through.

Hon. Andy Scott: Was the minister's department or office involved in that?

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: That's my understanding.

Hon. Andy Scott: Okay.

The Chair: Thank you for that. I appreciate your remarks this morning and the candid answers you've given to the questions.

Right now we'll recess for a few minutes. Again, thank you very much for being here.

Mr. Timothy Wilson Casgrain: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

• _____ (Pause) _____

•

• (1020)

The Chair: We'll get back to business.

I would like to go forward and see if I can seek a mover to move:

That the Committee present a report to the House, that it has examined the qualifications and competence of Timothy Wilson Casgrain to the position of Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and finds him competent to perform the duties of the position that he has been appointed.

Do I have a mover for that motion? It is moved by Mr. Fast. Do we have any comments or discussion?

All in favour of the motion? Against?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you.

I think the next motion has been distributed to everyone. This motion was submitted by Mr. Charlie Angus, MP, on Thursday, May

24, regarding the meeting with the BBC and others in London. The motion reads as follows:

That 6 members of this Committee travel to London, England during the second week of September in order to meet with the Management of the BBC, the members of the British Parliamentary Committee that recently conducted the review of the BBC mandate, and the UK Film Council in order to gather information with respect to its current study on the role of a public broadcaster in the 21st century.

Would you like to speak to the motion, Mr. Angus?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.

I brought this motion forward because I feel that a number of themes have emerged in our study. I think we are moving towards being able to put forward a study with recommendations that will actually address some of the things that haven't been addressed in previous studies, in particular the issue of new media and how we start to deal with that.

The BBC has been cited again and again as a model, as being out front in a number of areas. I feel we have focused on the study up to June to get as much of the work done as possible, and I think we're pretty much there in terms of any of the hearings, the witnesses we could ask. I don't think there's much more work to be done there, but I do believe that in order to make this study as valuable as it can be, we do need to, in the fall, look at certain areas, just to hone in.

I think we'll have some preliminary recommendations ready, but we do need to take the time. It's incumbent upon us to just make sure that we've done this right. We have everything we need, and this issue of the BBC has been outstanding.

I recognize that we might be in a situation in the next week or two weeks where the House might be prorogued, and the second week of September might not be possible. I'm not so much interested in the date, but I believe that in the fall this is something we should look at as a committee, even as we're getting on to other business.

• (1025)

The Chair: Okay, thanks.

Would anyone else like to speak to it?

Mr. Scott.

Hon. Andy Scott: Well, I think the test of reasonableness for a committee in these kinds of things—and I can tell you that in 14 years I've never left the country with a committee, so it's not as if this is any desire to travel—is two things: is the work that we're doing important enough to warrant it, and is the information that we will gather of sufficient value to that work? By interventions from practically everybody who has appeared, I think this clearly meets that test, so I would encourage members to support it.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Fast.

Mr. Ed Fast: Well, Mr. Chair, I'm strongly in favour of hearing from the BBC, as well as from PBS, and perhaps the Australian public broadcasting system. I do have concerns, personally, about having six members of this committee, together with all the accompanying staff, which typically exceeds the number of members of this committee when we're travelling...

The Chair: Just to explain that, there would be three staff.

Mr. Ed Fast: Three staff?

The Chair: Yes, because there are no public hearings.

Mr. Ed Fast: All right. So there is a total of nine individuals travelling. Quite frankly, we're also going to be, hopefully, bringing representatives of PBS and the Australian broadcasting association to Canada. It seems to me that the appropriate thing is to also bring representatives of the BBC to Canada, rather than doing the reverse. I'll be voting against this. And I will ask for a recorded vote.

The Chair: Okay.

Anyone else?

Well, we'll call for the vote, and it's going to be a recorded vote on the motion:

That 6 members of this Committee travel to London, England during the second week of September in order to meet with the Management of the BBC, the members of the British Parliamentary Committee that recently conducted the review of the BBC mandate, and the UK Film Council in order to gather information with respect to its current study on the role of a public broadcaster in the 21st Century.

So, we will....

Yes?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Chair, I have a question to Mr. Lahaie before we vote. If the House is prorogued until October 15 or something, does the wording of the motion mean that this travel is off, or do we have the flexibility to have this travel in the fall?

The Chair: It has to pass the Liaison Committee, number one. We have to be specific. If we say the second week in September that we're going to England, that's where we're going and it's in the second week; it can't be the second week in October.

We tried to do that through some of this other travelling, and we got in a little bit of a conflict when we tried to change some of that. So what we're going to be talking about here is, again, that it has to

be okayed by the Liaison Committee, but it would be the second week in September. And for how many days—those things would be worked out. But we have to be specific when we go to the Liaison Committee.

Mr. Lahaie.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Jacques Lahaie): If the House were to prorogue before the trip, we cannot leave Ottawa, but if the House were to prorogue after the trip, the trip would then take place in September. It depends on the date the House prorogues. If the House does not prorogue before then, we'd go as planned.

• (1030)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Okay.

The Chair: Thank you.

It's why I have a clerk. He explains it far better than I can.

We'll have a recorded vote on the motion.

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

The Chair: If you then look at the next page, we need to have a mover that the proposed travel budget in the amount of \$63,356 for the committee's trip to London, England, in relation to its current study on the role of the public broadcaster in the 21st century, be adopted.

Could I have a mover for that motion?

Mr. Charlie Angus: I so move.

The Chair: Mr. Angus has so moved.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.

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