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—
Chair

Mr. Norman Doyle

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• (1250)

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ)): On our agenda is consideration of Mr. Telegdi's motion.

[English]

Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): I think we're a month ahead on that motion.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Samy Agha): That's supposed to say February 27. That's an error.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): That should make it null and void, and maybe we should start again.

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, CPC): I don't mind dealing with it on March 27.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: I think we should deal with it on March 27.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): The motion reads as follows: That the committee invite Mr. Jean-Guy Fleury, Chairperson of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), to appear before the committee at the next scheduled meeting of the committee.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 20.

Are there any comments?

Mr. Siksay.

[English]

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Chair, I don't know if it would be a friendly amendment or not. If not, I'll propose it formally. May I suggest that we have it at a special meeting of the committee during the week of March 19, rather than taking the time we've dedicated to the things that are already on our agenda?

I'd rather call Monsieur Fleury to a special meeting of the committee to deal directly with that, so that we can continue the work on this report on detention at Kingston and the security certificates at the next meeting.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Madam Chair, since we don't have something in writing on that, unfortunately I will not give unanimous consent for a friendly amendment.

Mr. Bill Siksay: It doesn't need unanimous consent. It's an amendment.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): No, that's how it works. If the mover agrees, we can consider this amendment.

Mr. Telegdi.

[English]

Mr. Bill Siksay: It's also amendable at committee.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): Yes.

Are you in favour of the amendment, Mr. Telegdi?

[English]

Hon. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Yes. He wants to—

Mr. Omar Alhabra (Mississauga—Erindale, Lib.): I just want to clarify. March 19 is the week we come back, so are you asking for it during the week before?

Mr. Bill Siksay: No, during that week. During the week we return we will have a special meeting to hear from Mr. Fleury.

Mr. Omar Alhabra: Oh, it would be a special meeting, and not part of the regular meetings.

An hon. member: No, we want it next week, don't we?

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Next week.

Mr. Omar Alhabra: He's asking to come back.

An hon. member: I'd come back for it.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): A meeting on citizenship is already scheduled for the week of March 19. Regular meetings are scheduled for March 20 and March 22.

[English]

Mr. Rahim Jaffer: He's not voting. He wants to see how our committee business works, because you're such an inspiration.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): Is everyone in favour of the amendment?

(Amendment agreed to)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): The motion can now be read again.

•(1255)

[English]

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Madam Chair, I'd also like to add that we should also be bringing in other individuals who are appropriate to testify, like the Council for Refugees, should the evidence that we hear from Mr. Fleury require that we also bring in other individuals.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): Agreed.

Are you in favour of this amendment, Mr. Telegdi?

[English]

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Yes, I do.

[Translation]

(Amendment agreed to)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): If there are no further comments on the motion, I will call the question.

[English]

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Can we have the motion read, please?

Mr. Rahim Jaffer: I thought we were still dealing with an amendment.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): We have the motion as amended now.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: We do? Let's hear it.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): One moment, please.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: No problem.

Mr. Blair Wilson (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): On a point of order, Madam Chair, while he's writing that out, I think we have some other people here at the table. Should we take this opportunity to question them as to whether or not they have leaked the information that was—

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): Members are here to finish what they started at the beginning of the week.

Can the motion be read again?

[English]

The Clerk: The motion as amended reads:

That the committee invite Mr. Jean-Guy Fleury, Chairperson of the Immigration and Refugee Board, to appear before the committee at an extra meeting of the committee in the week of March 19, and that the committee receive testimony from other witnesses, should it be necessary.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: As arisen by the testimony of Mr. Jean-Guy Fleury.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): It's all the same.

[English]

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: That is acceptable to the mover. Can I speak to...?

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): Debate on the motion will now begin.

Go ahead, Mr. Telegdi.

[English]

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Madam Chair, in speaking to the motion, the Immigration and Refugee Board is not that old. I think we really rejoiced when we finally had a board where the people appointed to make very difficult decisions—life and death decisions—were as free from political influence as possible in the appointment of members. As a member of the Liberal caucus, I lobbied hard for that to happen. We finally came to a point where we were going to be able to deal with the cases in a reasonable timeframe and we were going to make sure that our backlogs came down. While I'm still disappointed that the RAD is not in, I think we have gone a long way.

Quite frankly, if you want to see abuses, moving backwards, I invite members of the committee to pick up a copy of *On the Take: Crime, Corruption and Greed in the Mulroney Years* and read the chapter, "Yes, Prime Minister", where it outlines the appointment of people to the IRB. I think everybody will find it shocking and I think everybody would be very much against it.

I'm really sad to see Mr. Fleury put in a position where he had to resign, because more than anyone else in this country, Mr. Fleury exemplified the reforms that were made that took politics out of appointing members to the IRB. I think that's a critical step backwards. I really hope the government will reconsider. But we will have to have Mr. Fleury in to let us know the circumstances surrounding his departure.

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): Thank you.

Do you wish to comment, Mr. Jaffer?

[English]

Mr. Rahim Jaffer: I'm going to vote against this motion for a couple of reasons.

First, I really like this committee and I think the personalities are great, but adding an extra meeting will be difficult on my part. We've had a whole bunch of extra meetings, especially during the week of the budget. Maybe other people are not so busy, but there's a lot happening.

I know Mr. Telegdi talks about the sudden departure. It seems to me Mr. Fleury had been around for 42 years. If a fellow decides he wants to retire after that sort of involvement in public service, it doesn't surprise me that he may want to retire. He served his government well and I think he deserves that judgment.

It wasn't that long ago, and maybe the clerk can refresh my memory on when Mr. Fleury last appeared in front of the committee. It was only about a month ago, if I'm not mistaken. We had the chance to hear pretty good testimony from Mr. Fleury on a host of issues relating to the IRB and what his feelings were. Even at that time, the appointments he had...he seemed to be quite happy about those particular appointments. I think we're premature in calling Mr. Fleury, who is going to be a private citizen. He's going to be retired by the time our committee next meets.

If my colleague has a problem with the process, then maybe he should wait to see who the new appointment will be before he starts saying there are all these problems and there's political interference. We don't even know who the appointment is going to be.

I'm going to vote against this.

• (1300)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Can you call the question?

[Translation]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): We know who will be replacing Mr. Fleury. It will be Mr. Goodman.

[English]

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I would like to call the question.

[Translation]

The Clerk: You cannot call the question until the motion has been fully debated.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): I understand.

The Clerk: If Mr. Komarnicki wants...

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): Any other comments about the motion?

The question cannot be called if people still wish to comment on the motion. I believe Mr. Komarnicki asked to be recognized.

[English]

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: I have a brief comment on this. Of course, Mr. Fleury resigned. He is no longer employed or working.

Mr. Telegdi's interest, I would say, is not a non-partisan one—there's no question. And I'll agree with him. During the previous Liberal government, it took to extreme heights the issue of political patronage.

Having said that, the report itself is one that Mr. Fleury or others may not accept, but it's one done by a private report that's independent of government and has made some recommendations. There wouldn't be any need to call Mr. Fleury here before us except for the fact that Mr. Telegdi would like to make some political hay, and for no other purpose.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Madam Chair, as the individual who made the friendly amendment that we all agreed upon, I would like to call the question, please, and freeze the clock at one o'clock.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): We'll freeze the clock at one o'clock.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5)

[Translation]

The Clerk: You can ask Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Dykstra and Mr. Allen whether they have contacted the media regarding the report.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): I have to leave. Mr. Telegdi will be chairing the meeting for whatever time remains.

[English]

There's another motion. It's just to call on Mr. Fletcher to see if he has—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Madam Chair, is the clock frozen at one o'clock or are we over one o'clock?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Meili Faille): It's frozen at one o'clock.

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): The motion reads:

That, at the beginning of the next meeting on Thursday, February 22, 2007, each member of the Committee be asked by the Chair whether he or she or his or her staff at his or her request released a confidential draft report on the study of Detention Centres-Security Certificates to the press.

• (1305)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, is that at the beginning of the first meeting?

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): Yes, that's what it says.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Well, since it's not the beginning...

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): It was decided last week that we would do it this week, because of the substitute.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Does it say at the beginning or at the end?

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): It's just for those people who haven't already said so.

Omar, we'll start with you.

Mr. Omar Alhabra: What's the question?

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): Omar wasn't here.

Mr. Omar Alhabra: I wasn't here last week, so I want to be on the record.

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): Did you leak that report?

Mr. Omar Alhabra: No.

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): Mr. Dykstra?

Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC): No.

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): Mr. Allen.

Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): No.

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): Mr. Fletcher.

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, CPC): No.

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Andrew Telegdi): That has dealt with everybody, I take it.

Thank you very much. The meeting is adjourned.

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