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—
Chair

Mr. Guy Lauzon

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•(0940)

[Translation]

The Chair (Mr. Guy Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC)): The meeting will now resume in public.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

We would like to welcome some special guests this morning.

[English]

I'd like to introduce our invited guests this morning. We have Brad Pascal, Bob Nicholson, René Marcil, Jacques Paquette, and Tom Scrimger.

[Translation]

Welcome to all of you.

[English]

We are going to be dealing, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), with a study of the explanation of the decision to name Shane Doan captain of Team Canada at the world championships.

[Translation]

We will begin with 10-minute presentations. Then we will have a few rounds of questions, with the first being a seven-minute round.

[English]

We're going to be very, very strict with the seven minutes when questions are being answered, because we want to make sure all members get their allotted time.

[Translation]

We will begin with Mr. Paquette.

Mr. Jacques Paquette (Associate Deputy Minister, International and Intergovernmental Affairs and Sports, Department of Canadian Heritage): Good morning.

Thank you for inviting me to this important meeting. I will just say a few words, if I may.

To begin with, I would like to correct some information that appeared in the newspapers. Sport Canada, as such, is a branch within the International and Intergovernmental Affairs and Sport sector of the Department of Canadian Heritage. The employees in that branch report to me. So I am accompanied this morning by Tom Scrimger, Director General of the Sport Canada branch.

Sport Canada's main role is to support high-level sports excellence and the development of the sporting system as a way to strengthen the unique contribution that sports bring to our identity, culture and society as Canadians.

The Canadian government supports the Canadian sports policy, which has been adopted by the federal, provincial and territorial governments. Through a set of agreements, we contribute to independent non-governmental organizations such as national sports associations, including Hockey Canada.

The contribution agreement with Sport Canada stipulates the activities for which sports organizations receive support and the conditions that apply. This funding enables organizations to promote the development of athletes, coaches and referees, as well as the development of sport within Canada and at the international level. National sports organizations administer the development of their sport.

I will be pleased to answer any questions you have, including questions about our approach to official languages and other aspects. That is the introduction that I wanted to give you this morning.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Paquette.

Before moving to questions, I will give the floor to the Hockey Canada representatives.

[English]

Who will be speaking on behalf of Hockey Canada? Will it be Mr. Nicholson?

Mr. Bob Nicholson (President and Chief Executive Officer, Hockey Canada): It will be me, along with the chairman of our board, René Marcil.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Whoever wants to go first can proceed.

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I'm here representing Hockey Canada and the 4.2 million people who are involved in the game of hockey in our country. I respect the process here. We want to make sure that we give you the role of Hockey Canada.

When you look at hockey in this country, coast to coast, there are many youngsters who play it, from the initiation program up to the Olympic team. Shane Doan is a person who has represented our country eight times. I know there is going to be a lot of discussion about Shane Doan and how he was named to the team and named captain, but I just want to take a moment to talk about the speak-out program that we work with from coast to coast in this country. We're very proud of it. We've spent over \$2 million on this program to make sure we have an environment that is safe for all our young players, coaches, and officials to participate in this game, and to make sure that we're looking at the harassment side, so that, if it's there, we have a process to deal with it on a day-to-day basis. This is something that I, as a staff person, and our board are proud of.

Also, it was an allegation that was made about Shane Doan, and we want to make sure that we understand that it was an allegation. We have done our research on this and feel very comfortable with the information we have today. We hope we are here to show you why we are 100% behind the naming of Shane Doan to the team, and as the captain of this team. It's very important for our team now playing in Russia. I really feel it is very important for our country.

• (0945)

[Translation]

Mr. René Marcil (Chairman of the Board, Hockey Canada): On behalf of the Hockey Canada board, I am going to briefly outline everybody's role so that you can better understand our organization's decision-making process.

Personally, I have been involved with hockey, as a volunteer, for 38 years. I was the president of Hockey Quebec for eight years and I was one of the people who advocated for French to be given its rightful place within Hockey Canada. I think it is important that you fully appreciate our situation.

This morning, we would like to explain to members of the Standing Committee on Official Languages all that we have done to ensure that French speakers have full access to Hockey Canada. We have made a tremendous effort over the past few years. If you check with Sport Canada, you will see that we have invested a lot of time, energy and money to ensure that French speakers have access to the services they need.

Since 1992, our organization has provided simultaneous interpretation for French speakers attending Hockey Canada's annual and bi-annual general meetings. A few years ago, we had problems with regard to our documentation. We therefore decided to employ a full-time translator to ensure that French speakers had access to the documents at the same time as English speakers. We also instigated a selection mechanism for trainers and other key people. Bob is responsible for ensuring that it operates as it should. Our priority is to have French speakers to support our French-speaking players.

In addition, a large number of jobs in Calgary and Ottawa have been advertised from coast-to-coast, and we try to employ francophones to ensure the success of our succession planning. Furthermore, some 15 months ago, Mr. Nicholson gave Calgary employees the opportunity to take French lessons. I wanted to be clear that we have implemented nation-wide measures to ensure that the French language is respected. There has been good cooperation on this issue.

I myself did not speak English five years ago, but I was still allowed to sit on the executive committee. I took English classes and today, even if my English is not perfect, I am proud to be your Canadian representative. Luckily, my colleagues trusted me and supported me in my work. That is the spirit that we are trying to foster in Hockey Canada.

The matter we are here to discuss today is very close to our hearts. I would like to draw your attention to an important point. A few months ago, before the Olympic Games, allegations were laid that made us not defend ourselves, but answer questions. As Canadians, we base our selection on building the best teams possible so that we can win championships for all Canadians. Having the team distracted by other issues does not help our cause. And that is a shame.

We are delighted to be here with you today and we want to answer your questions. However, once again, our teams are being distracted by this issue. I just wanted to underscore that it is bad timing, although I recognize that it is important for us to talk. It is unfortunate, because we invest time and money in our players, teams and volunteers. I think that we should all be proud of our teams and support them. Regardless of what else is said today, as the chair of the board, that is what I believe to be the key message.

As chairman of the board, I am responsible for strategic planning and direction, as well as our financial results. As for Mr. Nicholson, he is responsible for the day-to-day running of Hockey Canada. I can assure you that the Hockey Canada board is 100% behind the decisions Mr. Nicholson has made.

This morning, he is going to clearly explain to you the decision that Hockey Canada made and the process used to reach that decision.

Thank you.

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

I also wish to emphasize that I too am very proud of our hockey team as it heads into the World Ice Hockey Championship. I am francophone as well. You have learned English; I, for one, am trying to learn French.

We are going to move on to our first round of questions asked by members. Each member has seven minutes. I'm going to be very strict on the time; I may even have to interrupt in mid-sentence.

Ms. Folco.

Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for having come and for responding so quickly to our call. We appreciate it, and we know that this is an important time not only for yourselves, but for all Canadians.

Personally, I recognize that hockey is a sport that brings all Canadians together, whether they speak French or English. It is our national sport, and perhaps even more than that. Hockey is one aspect of our national identity. We all recognize this, and it is important to us.

• (0950)

[English]

I would like to add that the members of this committee had a long discussion earlier on the pros and cons of inviting you to come here, on the one hand, and the kinds of questions we would ask you, on the other hand.

I would like to remark that the decision to invite you to come here and talk to us this morning was a unanimous decision on the part of all the members present. That includes all the political parties in the House of Commons. I want to make that remark.

I would like to add, also, that this parliamentary committee on official languages, and this particular meeting of the parliamentary committee, is not a Star Chamber. It is not Parliament telling a non-governmental agency or a non-governmental association how to operate. It is not our role to do this. It is not our role to tell Hockey Canada specifically who they should name as captain of Team Canada. It is not our role to do this at all.

Because Sport Canada receives a substantial amount of money from the Canadian government, and I know last year alone you received \$3.2 million—that's a substantial amount of money—it is our role as a government, as a Parliament, to ask you how this money is spent as an oversight by the government, and how you come to certain decisions. This is well within our role to ask you. This is what I would like to say in the beginning.

The recent controversy over Mr. Shane Doan—we are all very much aware of it. We are not a tribunal; it is not in our power. It is not our intention. We are a standing committee of Parliament.

[Translation]

But I would nonetheless like to ask you a question. I am delighted that your presentation is in both official languages. I thank you for that.

How many French speakers make up Team Canada? Can you tell me how team members are chosen, as well as how the captain of Team Canada is chosen?

It is a basic question which will allow us to then continue this discussion.

Thank you.

[English]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Thank you very much for those comments. That is certainly why we are here today. We respect this process and we certainly want to give all the information from Hockey Canada's point of view.

First of all, with regard to the funding that is given from the federal government to Hockey Canada, \$3.2 million is correct. This is a large amount of money in a \$53 million operation, and that's what our operation is now in Hockey Canada. We're proud that we've

been able to grow that with help from the federal government, as well as having a strong business model.

When you look, first of all, at how we name the players to the team, it's a very lengthy process. The very first step in that process is to name the management of the team. When we name the management of this team, we have many great resources. It's a very difficult decision to name the general manager and his assistant general manager.

When you look at the National Hockey League and other areas of hockey, we have so many people to choose from. In this situation, we chose a person who we felt was an excellent role model and an excellent leader in the game of hockey, Steve Yzerman. It was a choice made by me, along with other senior staff people, to name Steve Yzerman.

Then, through discussions with Steve Yzerman, who was going to be his assistant? Steve had many conversations with a lot of people in the National Hockey League, and the decision was to name Jacques Martin as the assistant general manager of the team.

From there, the process is then to name the coaches. Again, we went through a lengthy process to find out which coaches were available. As we know, there are many great coaches who are still playing in the NHL playoffs, as well as players who can't be involved in Team Canada at this time. So Steve Yzerman worked through that process to name the three coaches.

We then start to name the team. Naming this world championship team is a very difficult process, in that we have so many players playing in the National Hockey League, and the ones who are available to us are players who have not made the playoffs. This is a disappointment to them. Many of them have gone through a long season. They have played 80 games. We've had a number of players who have said no to Team Canada for good reasons: personal reasons, family reasons, they're injured.

I can tell you that we had nine French-speaking players who said no.

• (0955)

The Chair: Mr. Nicholson, I have to stop you there, although I'm sure you'll have a chance to carry on after the next question. I'm sorry for the interruption, but those are the rules.

[Translation]

I will ask Mr. Malo to put the next question.

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Nicholson, during your presentation, you said that following the allegations that were made against Mr. Doan, you made a certain number of inquiries. I'm simply wondering why you did not believe the linesman, Mr. Cormier, who in his written report said that Mr. Doan said, and I quote, "Fucking Frenchman, did a good job". I ask this question because in the Canadian Strategy for Ethical Conduct in Sport published on May 24, 2002, to which Sport Canada vigorously subscribes, it says that by 2012, "sport officials shall not be interfered with in the execution of their duties..." and even more importantly, "...respected for their decisions by athletes..."

Do you not believe that this statement should have been put into practice as of 2002?

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Nicholson.

Mr. Bob Nicholson: From the information that I received on this case through the National Hockey League and through players who were playing in that game of hockey, there is no question those words were said on the ice. I don't think anyone is denying that, and that is what the referee reported back to the National Hockey League.

The National Hockey League's investigation clearly shows that was stated, but it also clearly shows that they felt it wasn't Shane Doan, and that's why we are here today to protect Shane Doan. He is a Canadian who, from all the information to date that we've heard, did not say this. We're taking Shane Doan, his wife, his mom and dad, his four kids, through an allegation of something that could have been stated by someone else, and this is not right.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Malo: Pardon me, but if I understand correctly, it is important to respect officials sometimes, but not all of the time.

Mr. Marcil, you said earlier that what we are doing here is disturbing. Let me simply remind you that this entire disturbance can be attributed to the fact that Hockey Canada made a decision that was unacceptable to Quebecers. We had to take a stand in order for equality rights to be respected. Unfortunately, some Canadians were shocked, and as a result, a desperate hockey player has had to explain himself. All of this because Hockey Canada was unable, from its offices located in Calgary, to understand how Quebecers experience hockey, admire its players, and the importance it places on it. If Hockey Canada had understood that the Bell Centre incident that occurred in December 2005 was not a closed issue for sports fans, then to my mind, we would have never appointed Shane Doan as captain. In light of this entire affair, why don't you heed the very lucid suggestion made by Mr. Doan himself and hand the "C" over to somebody else?

•(1000)

Mr. René Marcil: Let us clarify a few things. An incident occurred during a match of the National Hockey League, which is our most important partner. Since the NHL launched an inquiry and clearly stated that Mr. Doan did not utter that famous sentence, I do not see why we would not continue working with Shane Doan. These are allegations. The case is before the court, and nothing has been proven. Hockey Canada played its administrative role, and has checked to see if there have been any new developments. When

Shane Doan was appointed captain, Mr. Nicholson and myself spoke to one another, went over all the facts to make sure that we were on the right track in order to protect this player. It is important. You're saying that Hockey Canada should have... We, as administrators, try to make the best decisions in order to assemble the best team possible and move in the right direction. All of the debates which have been ongoing for the last 17 months should have ended earlier.

Mr. Luc Malo: Since this matter is not yet resolved in the minds of sports fans, setting it aside this time wouldn't have done you, nor the team any harm. Why didn't you respect the fans?

Mr. René Marcil: You're talking about sports fans, but I come from Quebec and we only received two or three phone calls from journalists asking why he had been appointed captain. I did not receive any comments from the people at Hockey Quebec, which is a partner of Hockey Canada. I never received any negative comments. Volunteer organizations, which are capable of organizing, understand the mechanisms.

Mr. Luc Malo: Would you like me to send you all of the comments that I have received at my office? At this time, taxpayers want to be able to identify with this team, and if I understand you correctly, you do not at all regret what you have done. If you had to start all over, you would make exactly the same decisions.

Mr. René Marcil: If we had to start all over, I would hope that we would have been able to stop the debate sooner. I think people are trying to stir up controversy. It was only one single incident, and not 15. It happened in the heat of the moment. These comments were not made outside of the ice rink.

Mr. Luc Malo: You are saying then, that in some cases it is normal to make racist slurs, and at other times, it is not so normal.

Mr. René Marcil: You are putting words in my mouth.

Mr. Luc Malo: You are saying that the words were spoken in the heat of the moment and—

The Chair: Mr. Malo—

Mr. René Marcil: I would like to answer you, Mr. Malo, but I wish to share a personal anecdote. Last week, I was attacked, as a Quebecer, by some journalist, and my own daughter's reputation was also attacked on the radio because of this situation. Do you think it's normal that Quebecers would be doing that to fellow Quebecers? I did not like that situation any better. I believe that the Shane Doan situation should be resolved and that we should await the court decision.

Mr. Luc Malo: Mr. Marcil, you were saying yourself that the situation has not been resolved. Since the situation has not been resolved, why did you not choose to appoint someone else as captain? All of this could have been avoided; this is your fault.

Mr. René Marcil: Mr. Malo, those concerned are before the court. But for the organizations in question, that is Hockey Canada and the National Hockey League, the matter is settled. Usually, even when trials are underway and certain matters are being resolved, people continue with their lives. Lawsuits were launched, and we are waiting for the decisions, and we are getting on with business.

Mr. Luc Malo: Exactly, you did not wait for the decision.

The Chair: Mr. Malo, your time is up.

Thank you, Mr. Marcil.

Mr. Godin will ask the next question.

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

I would like to welcome the members of Hockey Canada and Sport Canada. Thank you for being here today.

In today's papers, we can read views stating that politicians should not interfere in hockey. It's becoming an interesting debate, which is leading to a great deal of discussion. It's as if you're on the ice with the puck, and don't know where to pass it. But the issue has engendered uncertainty. We are seeing the debate develop in a regrettable direction.

I would like to ask you a few questions. I genuinely believe that, as human beings, we should have respect for one another's communities, not only among francophones and anglophones, but among all communities of the world. That is how we will succeed in living in peace, instead of making war. Sometimes, it is minor incidents like these that take up our time and degrade the general atmosphere. I would like to congratulate you for the speed with which you appeared before our committee, to tell us how important these measures are. We can say we must

• (1005)

[English]

try to clean the air.

[Translation]

I think this is a very important discussion. In my capacity as a parliamentarian, I don't agree with the view that politicians should simply deal with Canada's problems and leave hockey players alone. Hockey is part of our heritage and our image. When I was elected as a member of the House of Commons, it was not so I could deal only with some issues and ignore others. Anything that affects the business of Parliament affects everyone, and we must answer people's questions. When there is \$3.2 million of taxpayers' money involved, I think we have the right to ask questions and I don't intend to apologize to anyone for it.

That said, I do have a question. Have you read the deposition made by Michel Cormier, the National Hockey League linesman? Did you read the deposition he made under oath?

[English]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: I have looked at all of the information that went to the National Hockey League. I certainly did read his statement, and I also had a briefing from the National Hockey League on all of their findings. I don't have all the dealings of the National Hockey League, but I certainly have a good majority of their investigation. And again, respect, the word you used, is so important—respect in this room, respect on the ice—and it's what we try to instill in every program that we run in Hockey Canada with coaches, players, and referees. And we should respect the rights of Shane Doan.

I can't emphasize that enough. A lot of you may not know him. I've known Shane Doan since he was 17 years old—that's 14 years. He has represented our country eight times. He's a Christian. He said some words; he's said "fudge" quite a few times in his life. But talk to every player who has ever put on a jersey with Shane Doan.

Please do that. I ask you, when you start to criticize an individual who is a proud Canadian, who goes over there and represents every youngster in this game of hockey in our country, and we put him through what we did, just before the Olympics, and now....

I get very emotional. He is a person we should not be talking about in this way.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: Have you spoken to Michel Cormier or to other referees involved, such as Stéphane Auger or François St-Laurent, or linesman Pierre Champoux? Have you spoken to them?

[English]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: No, I didn't. I talked through the National Hockey League and through the people who did the investigation for the National Hockey League.

The reason that I have talked directly to Shane Doan in this case is because he's a member of Team Canada. He's the captain of Team Canada, and he has been criticized by the Government of Canada.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: There was a question earlier, to which I believe we have not heard an answer.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Nicholson, Shane Doan has not been criticized by the Government of Canada. That's just a point of clarification.

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: Earlier, a question was asked, and I believe we have not heard an answer to it. What is the percentage of francophones in Team Canada right now?

Mr. René Marcil: In terms of players right now, out of the number of people participating, two players who have agreed to be on the team speak French.

Mr. Yvon Godin: I mean francophones.

Mr. René Marcil: There are no francophone players.

Mr. Yvon Godin: There are no francophone players on the team right now?

Mr. René Marcil: Well, there's Lombardi, who is from Montreal, but he's Italian. So we have Mr. Lombardi. Mr. Martin is also on the team. What happened this year—as Bob explained earlier—is that at the end of the season we asked francophone players whether they wanted to join us. But players refused, either for personal reasons or because of injuries. If they had not refused, the team would have francophone players.

• (1010)

Mr. Yvon Godin: How many people did you ask to join the team?

Mr. René Marcil: We asked 9 or 10 francophone players to join.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Nine or ten francophone players for all of Canada?

Mr. René Marcil: These are National Hockey League players whose teams were eliminated. When the first—

Mr. Yvon Godin: [Editor's Note: Inaudible] francophones?

Mr. René Marcil: The players refused to join.

Mr. Yvon Godin: They all refused?

Mr. René Marcil: They refused for a variety of reasons. Mr. Crosby was injured. Patrice Bergeron and other players said no, some for personal or family reasons, and others because of injuries. At the World Championship last year, we had six, seven or eight francophones on the team. At the Olympics, we had francophones on the team. I don't think we should spend too much time on worrying about the make-up of the current team, but rather look at a wider range of data. This is a long-term process. We are preparing for the 2010 Olympic Games. It is important for us to have experienced players.

Anglophone players also refused to be on the team. What we want is to go there, be proud to be Canadian, and have the best players available, who want to compete. It's true that, this year, there may perhaps be no francophones on the team. Next year, there could be five or six. It also depends on what teams are eliminated.

The Chair: Excuse me for interrupting, Mr. Marcil.

Mr. Godin, your seven minutes are up.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Mr. Chairman, I hope that those seven minutes do not include the time taken up with your point of order? No? Good.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you very much, but no, we didn't use that time.

I would just like to remind the members of the committee before we ask the next question to please direct your comments and questions through the chair. I would ask our guests as well to direct your comments through the chair.

Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

The next question will come from Ms. Boucher.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to thank each of you for being here today, to help us gain a better understanding of the issue.

Before I give the floor to my colleague, I would like to explain some ideas that should be put forward here. First of all, I would like to reiterate our government's unwavering commitment to promoting linguistic duality in Canada and internationally. Our government believes it has an obligation to promote both official languages within the Canadian sport system, and within all aspects of Canadians' lives.

We supported this motion because we wanted to hear your version of the facts, and understand the process you used to select the captain of the Canadian hockey team at the World Ice Hockey Championships. We have absolutely no intention of politicizing our national sport here. So for that reason, I would again thank you for being here today.

I would like to point out that our government joins all Canadians from coast to coast in wishing Team Canada the very best of luck, with a single voice. We are all proud of our team, and we hope they come back to us with a gold medal.

I will let my colleague Michael Chong have the floor.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Boucher.

Mr. Chong.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would also like to stress that our government joins all Canadians from coast to coast to wish our national team, our Team Canada, the very best of luck, with a single voice. We are proud of the entire team, and we hope that they will win gold on behalf of all Canadians.

[*English*]

So we're proud to support you financially because we believe in a strong national hockey team, a strong Team Canada, so that we can compete with the best in the world and win gold. While we in part support you financially, you are also an arm's-length body, an independent organization of the federal government. So the hockey team selection and the selection of team captain is the responsibility of Hockey Canada and is not something the Government of Canada has any say in. We're here today because we have been criticized for not interfering in the selection of captain to Team Canada's hockey team. That's why we supported the motion to have you appear in front of committee, to provide you with an opportunity on the parliamentary record to tell us what the case is.

So thank you very much for taking time out of your very busy schedule. I know it has taken you away from Russia to testify in front of this committee.

●(1015)

[*Translation*]

I have a question. Our government believes in the promotion of linguistic duality in Canada, and promotes both official languages within the Canadian sport system.

[*English*]

I know that as a national sport organization you've been a big supporter of our policy of official bilingualism and of ensuring access to services in French. I also know that you've been big supporter of diversity and of encouraging persons with a disability.

Could you tell us a little bit about the programs and initiatives in this regard? I know you mentioned the program Speak Out, but maybe you could tell us about other initiatives you have with regard to bilingualism, diversity, and the promotion of sport for persons with a disability.

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Thank you very much.

We do have the same goals when I look around this table, and hopefully we can all be on the same team. We do look at promoting both languages in this country. We're proud that we're one of the few sports with a full-time translator. We have an office in Montreal. We have a great partner in Hockey Québec, and we want to make sure that any time we develop what we feel are the best programs in the world in hockey, they come out in both official languages. That's a mandate within our board. It's a mandate within our day-to-day operations, and any time there is any type of comment on it, we feel we have a great partnership with Sport Canada. I think if you looked at their report card on how we deal with both official languages, it would be very good. I could let them speak to that.

The other thing is about winning. It is very difficult to win on the international stage. As every Canadian knows, we won the gold in the Olympics in 1952. It took us 50 years to stand on that podium again.

Over the last ten years, we've won more gold medals than this country has ever seen, looking at the women's world championships. Now we're at the three-peat in the world juniors. We've won two gold medals at the men's world championships in the last number of years. It's a difficult process, and I'm happy to hear the comments around this table that you support our team. We're going to be in for one heck of a ride here in Russia, but we want to be up to the challenge and we want our team to grow together. You don't win when people are trying to rip teammates away from that group. The leader of that group is so important.

In the programs we do, we try not just to lead in hockey; we want to lead in sport in this country in all of our programs. In our diversity program, our recruitment program, we have started to do more of that; we just had a very successful one in Toronto this last week.

When you look at the demographics of this country and who is entering this country, it has changed. It's not like it was a number of years ago, when every two-year-old got a pair of skates. We understand that. We want all Canadians to participate in the game of hockey and we're looking at different ways to recruit young boys and girls to the game so that they can have a positive experience and grow their individual lives from the sport—all sports, and in our case, hockey.

You can look at sledge hockey. I remember talking to my good friend Tom Scrimger, who said, "Bob, please; we need you to take the lead role with sledge hockey to show—"

The Chair: Mr. Nicholson, unfortunately I seem to always interject at mid-sentence. However, I'm trying to be equally fair to all members.

[*Translation*]

The next question will be from Mr. Rodriguez. This is a five-minute round.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning and welcome to our witnesses. Thank you for being here. I would like to say that we are all rooting for Team Canada, not only government members but everyone around this table. Each and every one of us would like the team to win gold.

I would just like some details. I completely agree that we're talking about allegations only. No one is trying to play judge or

anything of the sort. We are talking about allegations, but nonetheless we need some clarification. Mr. Nicholson, I believe that earlier you said:

[*English*]

"those words were said on the ice"

[*Translation*]

but not by Mr. Doan.

Is that what you said?

[*English*]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Could you say that again, please?

• (1020)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: You said:

[*English*]

"those words were said on the ice", but not by Mr. Doan.

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Yes. That is the information I got through the investigation by the National Hockey League. That's why there was no further suspension of Shane Doan. They definitely could not prove that those statements were from Shane Doan.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: You see, that is the aspect I am interested in. We are talking about allegations, we are hearing what such and such a person might have said.

For example, in the case of the linesman, Mr. Cormier, he was asked if he had clearly seen Mr. Doan say that. He was under oath and he said yes. He was asked if he reported that fact to the head referee or to the person in the penalty box. Mr. Cormier answered that the two referees were there. When he was asked if he was facing Mr. Doan when Mr. Doan said that, he replied that he was right beside him. Finally, when he was asked how far he was away from him, he replied with a gesture like this.

The Chair: Mr. Rodriguez, I do not think you should talk about a specific case. Mr. Nicholson did not look after that case.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Chairman, I simply want to explain that for Mr. Cormier, it is clear that things occurred in the way that he reported them. I am not saying that Mr. Doan said what he is being accused of saying. What I am trying to say is that these are allegations coming from two people whose versions are contradictory. So this allegation is lingering and it could have encouraged you to take a step back, and, perhaps, avoid appointing him captain, since the allegations existed. You could have done that without necessarily concluding that they were well-founded. Do you see what I mean?

[English]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: First of all, it's very difficult to comment on some of these things because of the legal situation that sits there. But I can tell you that the information we got was that Shane Doan very clearly did not say this. The other thing we should be clear about is that there were people on the ice who may have said this who weren't Canadians.

We're criticizing a Canadian player and a Canadian team, and when all of this comes out later it might not have been a Canadian.

[Translation]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: I understand that the person responsible may not be Mr. Doan. However, Mr. Cormier, in his official report to the league—and he repeated it under oath—said that Mr. Doan was the one who said that. Mr. Nagy had used the same words earlier. The linesman then went to the team's bench to tell Mr. Tockett that he would no longer tolerate those comments. Mr. Tockett apparently informed his players to stop making comments like that, and it was after that that Mr. Doan apparently used those words.

Here again, it is simply an issue of this cloud, this perception that comments like those might have been made and the impact that that can have on our hockey team's image.

Mr. René Marcil: If I may, Mr. Chairman, I would like to add something.

Mr. Rodriguez, I think that what is important is that we too have a procedure to follow. Bear in mind that the incident occurred within the National Hockey League. The National Hockey League is our partner. We do not investigate on behalf of the National Hockey League. It is like saying that the league is not doing its job properly and that we do not believe the outcome of its investigation. I think that consideration is important, because it is our main partner, with the government of course, and everyone else. We told the National Hockey League to provide us with its version of the facts, to share its decision with us. That is what Bob did. Mr. Doan did not make those remarks. As far as we are concerned, it is important to work with the National Hockey League and to accept its report. We cannot ask the National Hockey League to rehear the case. That is not within our purview. At Hockey Canada, we make our decision based on the reports. We have confidence in the commission and in the National Hockey League. We go by what they tell us.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: But can we see the report? Has it been tabled?

The Chair: Mr. Rodriguez, your time is up. The next question will be asked by Mr. Poilievre.

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC): Thank you for your testimony.

[English]

Well, Canadians in my riding are telling me that at this point they'd like to put the politicians in the penalty box and let Team Canada put the puck in the net.

[Translation]

The constituents of my riding support Team Canada, we want our team to win, and bring home victory for all Canadians, English and French speakers alike. I believe that as a team, you are entitled to focus entirely on victory. The reason why we agreed to invite you to appear before this committee is to give you the opportunity to explain your point of view, and not to try and appoint members to your team. That is not our role.

● (1025)

[English]

And I'll say it again: it's not our role. It's not the role of politicians or government to pick the team captain. It's not our job. We trust the hockey experts to do that.

[Translation]

I do, however, wish to ask you a question regarding process. If I understand correctly, Sport Canada is not involved in the process of naming a team's captain.

Is this correct, Mr. Paquette?

Mr. Jacques Paquette: That is correct.

Mr. Pierre Poilievre: Therefore, neither the government nor a government organization has the power to appoint the team captain. Is that correct?

Mr. Jacques Paquette: Exactly. You are describing the situation very clearly.

Under the terms of a contribution agreement, we provide funds on certain conditions, but it is the independent and non-governmental organization, which in this case happens to be Hockey Canada, which oversees management.

[English]

Mr. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Nicholson, I wonder if you might do us all a favour here and take back to the entire team that we are 100% behind them. We want them to win. We believe in each and every single one of them.

I'll say to Monsieur Marcil,

[Translation]

can you also convey to the members of the team that we are all behind them? We want them to win, and we are all proud of the team that we have.

Do I have any time remaining?

The Chair: You have two minutes remaining.

Mr. Pierre Poilievre: We have before us a panel of sports experts, and we want to build the next generation of hockey players.

Are you familiar with the policy established by our government to grant tax credits to parents allowing them to defray some of the costs of putting their children in sporting activities, since these activities are very expensive?

If so, do you support the policy? Do you believe that this policy will help parents cover some of the huge costs?

[*English*]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Thank you very much.

On having this opportunity to speak, I can tell you that I was supposed to be in Russia with the team and having other international meetings today. I respect being here, and I also feel good that we get to lay out our case. As I've said many times here today, Shane Doan is a person who is our captain and has been doing a great job.

That you're 100% behind the team will mean a lot, because right now they're not sure. They're not supposed to play for the names on the back of their jerseys; they're supposed to play for the logo on the front of their jerseys. Through some of this, some of them are questioning why. That message will be very well received.

The tax credit for kids is huge, and I'm not talking about hockey; I'm talking about sports and recreation. That was a huge initiative by this government, and I thank all of you for that. It shows that you care about kids and that they get to participate in recreation and sports. We need that.

The Chair: We'll stop you there, unfortunately, Mr. Nicholson. Thank you very much for your comments.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Nadeau will ask the next question.

Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, gentlemen.

Since five minutes goes very quickly, I will get right to the point.

The year 1972 was a very important milestone in my young life; I remember watching the series of the century, those eight famous hockey games, as a teenager, and I could probably give you the play-by-play account today. I remember all the notes I made and everything to do with that momentous event.

Hockey is a sport that brings together Quebecers and Canadians in a shared mesmerizing experience. Whether we are talking about olympic, professional or amateur hockey, huge numbers of young people played it when I was young, and that is still the case today. So it is an extremely powerful symbol. We can all agree on that.

There is another very important aspect, which is that we would like to see the Canadian team come out on top. We can agree on that as well, and that is not our issue today. We are talking here about respect, basic respect, in the context of this powerful symbol that is hockey. We see ourselves in this sport and we identify with it. When we watch hockey, it becomes as if we actually have the puck on our stick or in our glove, depending on which position we imagine ourselves playing and what is taking place.

What I find extremely hurtful is to hear you say that the National Hockey League is more important than the courts. A situation that was brought up earlier is currently before the courts. To show a minimum of respect for human rights in Quebec and Canada—and in this case, in view of the allegations that were made—Team Canada and its executives, the coaches and so on should have shown some sensitivity so as not to pour oil on the fire.

This player wears a "C" on his jersey. Phil Esposito in 1972 was a role model. Over the years, there have been other elite players that people have identified with. Even though I am a Quebecker, I was very proud. But now something has broken because there has not been a decision. The National Hockey League is not a god. Do you remember Bobby Hull and where he was in 1972? Mr. Trudeau got down on his knees and begged the NHL authorities, but they refused to let Bobby Hull be on the team. Imagine what that team would have been like if he had been there.

In the context of the respect that has to come into this debate, there is the issue of conduct and ethics. This is a sport. We teach our boys and girls to be respectful of other people in this sport and every other sport. What message do our children get when they know that this captain is caught up in this kind of situation? It seems that you really don't get it. There is something missing. It is not for nothing that the problem has ended up here in the committee.

When Colin Campbell comes here and tells us, as politicians, to go back to our corner, to go back to our penalty box and let the players play, the fact is that there is something at stake. There is a basic issue here that seems to me to be beyond you. There is a lack of respect towards the courts that are dealing with this case. We are not saying that Mr. Doan should pack his bags and go home. We are saying that the symbol that has been conferred on him is much greater than what he deserves, given the current situation.

Now what do you do if players are accused of racial discrimination in the context of their sport?

Thank you.

• (1030)

The Chair: Unfortunately, Mr. Marcil or
[*English*]

Mr. Nicholson, you only have about 30 seconds to respond.

Mr. Bob Nicholson: I've talked about respect today, and it is something we want. We want everyone to respect all the players, including Shane Doan.

Shane Doan has played in 46 international matches, and all the other 22 players on this team have only played a total of 116. If he wasn't named captain there would be a huge question in the minds of those other 22 players as they skated onto the ice. Talk to the other 22 players and there's only one person who should be captain of this team, because he represents our country, Canada.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Nicholson.
[*Translation*]

Mr. Godin, you may ask the next question.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I do not agree that members of Parliament should be in the penalty box. We are not playing hockey; we are here to represent our country, and we will do it the best we can. You want the National Hockey League to represent our country, and we must respect your wishes. However, no one will send me to the penalty box.

If the Conservatives think that way, there should be an election, and they would be the ones who would be in the penalty box. When the members from the governing party say that they respect official languages, we really have to wonder. They have just appointed a Canadian ombudsman who does not speak French and will be dealing with victims of crime. Then they say that they support our official languages. I am sorry, but why is there a Standing Committee on Official Languages? Why is there a Commissioner of Official Languages? It is because there are problems with official languages in Canada. That is the answer.

I think that this is the question, and it is what I am trying to tell you. He is a good player, but did the NHL put pressure on Hockey Canada to have him lose his captaincy? Do you think that this was the right decision to make, knowing that there was controversy?

In closing, the Conservatives claim that they support our team over there, when in fact all Canadians support our teams. It is the same thing as when they say that if people do not support our soldiers in Afghanistan, it means that they are against them. That is small-minded talk, and we do not want to go there. We support our team, and that has nothing to do with the issue here. If there are questions that need to be asked, we will assume our responsibilities and do it.

• (1035)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Nicholson, would you like to reply?

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Thank you for supporting Team Canada.

There was no pressure from the National Hockey League to name Shane Doan to Team Canada or name him captain. That's the responsibility of Team Canada. We went through the same process with naming this captain as we have through our women's world championships, our men's world championships, our world juniors. It's something we talk a lot about, and I can tell you that we respect both the French and English languages. We want to make sure that as we educate all of our young boys and girls, we do it in both languages. I truly mean that, and I'll do everything in my power to make that happen in hockey in this country.

I also feel very strongly that we should all support Shane Doan as our captain of Team Canada. I can't say it enough. I know him as an individual. I know what he means to the other 22 players. I just hope that sometime along the way, you'll get to meet Shane Doan. I truly do, because he is a special Canadian who puts on the Canadian jersey for all of us. I think the courts will show in the future what's going to happen, and I hope Shane Doan will be talked about again by this government after the court proceedings.

[Translation]

The Chair: You have one minute left.

Mr. Yvon Godin: You said that Mr. Doan did not say these things, that it may have been someone else. If he has evidence that it was

someone else who said these things, why does he not name that person? That would exonerate him, I think.

If I was the one who had said something, I would not like to see you accused of it. I would be honest enough to come forward. So if it was someone else, since we are talking about a conversation between two people, why is that person hiding? Have you asked the NHL people that question? You are smiling a little bit. Did you ask that question?

[English]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: I can't speak for every individual who plays the game of hockey. You always try to teach your kids as they're growing up to be upfront and take on responsibility. We'll see through the court process if someone does and who that is. I certainly hope the person who did say those words will stand up at that time.

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

I believe we have time for another quick round of five minutes each. We'll just get right into it, and I'll ask Mr. Murphy to start that third round.

[Translation]

Mr. Brian Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To begin with, I would like to say that we fully support our national hockey team, we hope that you will win the gold medal. We also have a great deal of respect for the members of Parliament who are asking questions. Once again, I would like to thank you for appearing here today, since you have shown a great deal of respect for the process.

I come from Acadia. I am an anglophone who has learned French, unfortunately, while playing hockey in the Moncton region. Our community of Moncton, New Brunswick, is bilingual. Perhaps it is too bad that the whole country is not like Moncton, since we live together and we are sensitive to questions of bilingualism.

• (1040)

[English]

Having said that, the great Acadian hockey stars that I know of—Gordie Dwyer, Oscar Gaudet, and Charlie Bourgeois—certainly didn't need a committee of Parliament to protect their rights on the ice. But it's good that structure has been put in place for tolerance.

I'm leading to a question in this regard to you, Mr. Nicholson, about tolerance on the ice at all levels.

When I think of Parliament, I don't think it's our role to choose the team. The best thing that's happened today is that members of the government have said they don't want a role in choosing the team. I fear that if they did, they'd all be Conservatives first and lousy hockey players second, so I'm glad we got that admission.

But seriously, you have suggested that there are programs in place to show greater sensibilization and greater respect on the ice. I think every community is grappling with the tendency towards emotion, which I think this whole spectacle is about, frankly. The facts will be borne out in another place at another time, but this is very emotional; you can see that. We have to have respect for the emotion that this brings, the division.

It's coincidental that I just came from the national prayer breakfast. Perhaps we all should have said a prayer for the healing of this rupture in our support for the national game.

Having said that, assure us, please, again and in more detail, how respect for girls and for female amateur hockey, respect for the authorities, the referees and linesmen, respect for racist comments that might be made or racist attitudes, and finally—what's germane to this issue—for linguistic harmony is being taken seriously by your group and how it trickles down to our community, Canada.

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Thank you very much.

First of all, everyone here from Hockey Canada respects this government and respects this process. We want to bring this country together as one, and hockey does that in so many cases. As I said, Brian, we are very proud of what we've done to ensure that the atmosphere is a positive atmosphere in small-town Canada. It is something that is a very difficult task, with our hundreds and hundreds of thousands of players, coaches, and parents.

We have spent a lot of time in our parent program. We've had some great role models there with Mike Bossy, Cassie Campbell, Bobby Orr going coast to coast with Hockey Canada on these programs that touch parents, young players, and coaches.

We have a PSA program that really got to the heart of an issue in our game, and that's abusive parents. They're a small part—it's 2% of the parents—but that 2% can disrupt the atmosphere in the rink. We're going to probably continue to work on this for many years, but we're going to stay on it because it's important. The one negative situation for a young boy or girl in the game can remove him or her from the game we want them to stay in.

We have a program for all officials. We certify 40,000 officials a year coast to coast in our officiating program. With it we have an abuse program that they all get. We have it within our coaching program. We have it within our parenting program. We have hundreds of thousands of people we try to deliver it through. We're working on it and will continue to work on it in both languages.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Nicholson. I finally didn't interrupt you in mid-sentence, so maybe our timing is getting a little better.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Malo will have the next question.

• (1045)

Mr. Luc Malo: My question is for Sport Canada. In the Canadian Strategy for Ethical Conduct in Sport, it says that one of the priorities is to promote ethical conduct in amateur and professional sport. As you know, language-related issues often come up in the context of various sports. I asked Mr. Nicholson earlier about one of the aspects

of that policy statement, but I would like to hear what you have to say about it.

The strategy states: “[...]sport officials are respected for their decisions by athletes, [...] and are not interfered with in the execution of their duties.”

Did you really believe that when you wrote it, or was it simply something interesting to say that would be more in line with an ethical position?

Mr. Jacques Paquette: I would answer that in a number of ways. First of all, if you are referring to the NHL, it is clear that we have absolutely nothing to do with them.

Mr. Luc Malo: It says that one of the priorities is to promote ethical conduct in professional sport.

Mr. Jacques Paquette: The policy that we have developed is mainly centred on athletes, and it basically aims to provide athletes with a safe environment so that they can fully develop their potential. We have defined standards, among other things, in our contribution agreements. We want to make sure, if there are any deficiencies with respect to the promotion of official languages, for example, that we have specific expectations. If there are problems, we expect—and this is a condition set out in the contribution agreements—that sports organizations will have developed codes of conduct and, in particular, mechanisms that give athletes, coaches and others access if a problem arises.

Mr. Luc Malo: That seems like wishful thinking.

Mr. Jacques Paquette: No, I am sorry, but this is real. Take, for example, the promotion of official languages. In our view, Hockey Canada meets the requirements with respect to official languages and has exemplary practices in this area. There are dispute resolution mechanisms and mechanisms that enable athletes, in particular, to seek recourse when they have difficulties or find themselves in problem situations.

Mr. Luc Malo: Mr. Nicholson, you told us a little earlier that if we knew Shane Doan, we would see that he was a wonderful young man with fine values. Unfortunately, that has not been proven, even though you say it is so. For that reason, some people still think that Mr. Doan should not be the team captain because the captain is the leader, the rallier, the motivator, besides the athletic abilities that he or she may have. Until he has done that, I feel that he does not deserve the privilege and honour of being the team captain. You seem to forget that and you have put him in a very uncomfortable situation. He is living through something quite difficult and has to lean on his family and his teammates. Unfortunately, you did not understand that when you appointed him captain.

[English]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: I certainly respect your comments, but I'm not sure if you have a real feel for the other 22 players on the team. A real captain isn't only named by the coach or by the general manager or the assistant general manager back through to the president of Hockey Canada. A true leader is one who is respected by his 22 teammates. I can tell you very clearly that the other 22 players who are putting on the Canadian jersey feel there is only one captain for Team Canada, and that is what a leader is in a game of hockey.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Malo: But...

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Nicholson.

Your time has expired, unfortunately, Mr. Malo.

The next question will be from Ms. Boucher.

• (1050)

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: My question is for Mr. Nicholson. With respect to the appointment of Mr. Doan as captain, have you heard any negative comments from other members of the team? Or were they in agreement with your decision and did they feel, as you have explained to us, that he was the best leader for the team?

[English]

Mr. Bob Nicholson: The comments coming out of Russia are very, very clear. If any of you have been watching the games—and Canada is 3-0 at this time, which we're proud of, though it's only a first step, and there are many more difficult games ahead of us—all of the comments have been positive. But it's not just that he's leading this team, it's also his character, and what he does in the communities where he plays, the children he touches, the Christian school that he works in during the summertime when he's not involved in the game of hockey. Hockey is a way Shane Doan has used to touch people, to make people better as individuals, and that's why you have to get to know Shane Doan. We have special people in this country, and I can honestly tell you that for the 14 years I've known Shane Doan, I've never heard him say a negative word about anyone, and that's very unusual—very unusual—but he is one of those people. And for his teammates over there, if he wasn't their captain, I'm not sure we'd have a team.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

[English]

Thank you very much, Mr. Nicholson.

[Translation]

You still have three minutes, if you want them.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: I will share my time with Mr. Chong. Do you have anything to say, Mr. Chong?

The Chair: Mr. Chong, you have the floor.

[English]

Hon. Michael Chong: *Merci, monsieur le président.*

I want to focus a little bit on the fact you've done so much as a national sport organization to really be at the forefront of encouraging diversity, of encouraging persons with a disability.

For example, you took on sledge hockey a number of years ago, with the encouragement of Sport Canada, which has turned out to be a huge international success and put us at the forefront of the Paralympics and sport for persons with a disability. I think you're to be commended for that. You've also been a leader in women's hockey, in promoting girls' and women's participation throughout Canada in our national game. Also, I know that when it comes to the ranking of the 60 or so national sport organizations, Hockey Canada ranks near the top in terms of conformity with the policy on official languages.

Maybe you could tell a little bit about the initiatives you've undertaken in this regard.

Mr. Bob Nicholson: Again, thank you.

We are very proud, as I stated. Tom Scrimger came to Hockey Canada and said to me, will you take sledge under your wing? We had to work through our members, because of the dollars that would be spent on it. The proudest moment in my life, as president of Hockey Canada, wasn't in Salt Lake City when we won back to back gold medals, but in Torino, in the dressing room with the sledge hockey team. And I can say, with the commitment they have made, they've gone through some very tough times in their lives. When I went into the room, it was special. It was special when we had Wayne Gretzky call them just before they went onto the ice for the gold medal game. Pat Quinn talked to their coach. We used every possible person to make sure they, in sledge hockey, felt they were equal. When we gave out the rings that summer to our junior team, to our women's Olympic team, the sledge team got the same rings and felt they were equal in the sport of hockey.

Tom, I thank you for bringing that to us. We're going to continue to do that. We're going to try to win three gold medals in Vancouver, and sledge hockey will be a big, big part of it.

The one issue that sits in front of us—and I have to take a couple of seconds to get this out—please put on all of your agendas that the biggest obstacle in the game of hockey is rinks and facilities. We need to upgrade our rinks; we need new facilities. If we don't, kids aren't going to be able to play this game of hockey. I know you have so many important things on your agenda, but please make sure that's part of them as you go forward here. We all need them.

• (1055)

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

[Translation]

The last question will be from Mr. Godin.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to end off by thanking the representatives from Hockey Canada and Sport Canada for appearing before our committee. I want you to know that we are not and do not want to be in the penalty box. We are taking our responsibility as parliamentarians. Questions have been asked; we will see what comes out of it. Let us hope that Canada comes back with a gold medal and that you, Mr. Nicholson, go back with all the courage possible to get this team to the top of the podium.

Thank you very much.

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

[*English*]

I should say to all the officials who came to our committee on such short notice, I have the utmost respect for you—especially you, Mr. Nicholson, when you should be in Russia—and the fact that you are here with us. The whole reason—

Mr. Pierre Poilievre: Point of order.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Pierre Poilievre: Point of order, Mr. Chair. I have a motion in this regard. Yes, I'm sure it will have unanimous consent. It should not be a problem.

Just so the message is clear, going back to the team, I'd like to put forward the following motion:

That this Committee supports Team Canada, is proud of the Team's 3-0 record and hopes they bring home the World Championship.

The Chair: May I have a seconder for that motion?

Hon. Michael Chong: Yes, I'll second that.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

On a personal note, I must tell you all—to Mr. Nicholson, especially—I started playing hockey at four years of age, and I continue to play hockey to this day. I derive an enormous amount of...

Please keep up the good work you're doing, and go, Canada, go.

Thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned.

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