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—
Chair

Mr. Norman Doyle

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•(1535)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, CPC)): The meeting will come to order.

I want to welcome the witnesses here today in consideration of Bill C-37.

As you can see from the agenda, we have two panels. We have the departmental officials first...

Mr. Telegdi, you have a point of order?

Hon. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Yes. I'm wondering if we could hear from the veterans first, if they're all here.

The Chair: Sure.

Are the veterans prepared to go first? Okay.

On behalf of the committee, I would invite you to come to the table, please.

I want to welcome the two members from the Royal Canadian Legion: Mr. Pierre Allard, service bureau director, dominion command; and Mr. Erl Kish, dominion vice-president.

Welcome, gentlemen. I don't know if you've been here before, but generally we try to give the presenters about 10 minutes for their comments. Then the individuals from the committee make comments or ask questions of the presenters.

Mr. Dave Batters (Palliser, CPC): So they would split the 10 minutes, correct?

The Chair: Sure. Well, it's however they want to do it.

I would invite you, when you are ready, to make your comments. Then we'll hear from committee members. But do take your time.

You'll present first, Mr. Kish? Okay, thank you.

Mr. Erl Kish (Dominion Vice-President, Royal Canadian Legion): Thank you so much, Comrade Chairman. It's a pleasure to be here.

On behalf of our dominion president, Comrade Jack Frost, first I would like to thank you very much for inviting the Legion to appear before you today on this very important issue of lost Canadians. This is indeed our second opportunity to appear at your committee, as we were here previously on March 19, 2007. It is always a pleasure to work on a common cause.

I must admit that we are wondering why this issue has not yet been resolved and why timely action seems to be so difficult to

orchestrate. To continue to deny citizenship to war brides and offspring of Canadian Forces veterans is objectionable. To be as constructive as we can be in what appears to be a highly politicized environment, we see two issues as obstacles to a quick resolution. These are concerns related to second-generation offspring born abroad to Canadian citizens and concerns on actual numbers that may be affected. We think both these issues can be addressed without delay in the passing of Bill C-37 on an urgent basis.

The Legion often appears at parliamentary and Senate committees responsible for the veterans portfolio. We remain truly impressed with the non-partisan approach that is evident in these committees. We remain convinced that this same non-partisan approach can resolve the issue at hand.

We were very pleased with the recommendations contained in your report. Allow me to refer to some of these recommendations: (a) rules for determining who is a citizen should be few, and citizenship should be permanent status; (b) people need to be able to rely on the certainty of their citizenship; (c) anyone who was born in Canada at any time should be deemed a Canadian citizen retroactive to birth; (d) anyone who was born abroad at any time to a Canadian mother or to a Canadian father, if he/she is first generation born abroad, should also be deemed a Canadian citizen; and (e) Citizenship and Immigration should reassess whether there is any pressing or substantial reason for continuing not to recognize the DND 419 as proof of Canadian citizenship. The registration of birth abroad should be recognized as proof of Canadian citizenship.

The committee also recommended that the minister use his discretionary power under the present Citizenship Act to implement the above recommendations before the bill is drafted.

When we did our review of Bill C-37 and looked at the proposed backgrounder and Qs and As, we were confident that resolution was around the corner, yet here we are today. This brings us to what we see as simple but timely solutions that require no modification to Bill C-37 but a strong resolve to move forward in a non-partisan approach.

On the issue of second-generation Canadians born abroad, one of the previous witnesses alluded to what we think is a bona fide requirement to give proof of attachment to Canada. There is a simple measure already in place that allows an immigrant born abroad to serve in the Canadian Forces and be fast-tracked in his or her application for Canadian citizenship. That is a simple but meaningful proof of attachment and willingness to serve one's country. This process requires no amendment to Bill C-37.

As for the numbers, this issue may be an important factor; however, it is not a showstopper. Surely it should not be seen as an impediment to timely passage of Bill C-37.

Once again, the Royal Canadian Legion feels very strongly that passage of Bill C-37 is an urgent priority that should be embraced by all the members of this committee. As one of the members of this committee has said so eloquently, there have been enough studies and reports on this issue. What is needed is a cooperative approach that will bring resolution once and for all before those affected simply pass away.

I thank you, Comrade Chairman, for your time.

• (1540)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kish.

Mr. Allard.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Allard (Service Bureau Director, Dominion Command, Royal Canadian Legion): On behalf of our Dominion President, Comrade Jack Frost, I would like to thank you very much for inviting the Legion to appear before you today on this very important issue of the "Lost Canadians". This is, indeed, our second opportunity to appear at your committee, as we were here previously on March 19, 2007. It is always a pleasure to work on a common cause.

I must admit that we are wondering why this issue has not yet been resolved, and why timely action seems to be so difficult to orchestrate. To continue to deny citizenship to war brides and the offspring of Canadian Forces veterans is objectionable. In order to be as constructive as we can be, in what appears to be a highly politicized environment, there appear to be two issues that are seen as obstacles to a quick resolution. These are: concerns related to the second generation born abroad to a Canadian mother or father; and, concerns on actual numbers that may be affected.

We think that both of these issues can be addressed on an urgent basis, without delaying the passage of Bill C-37. The Legion often appears at parliamentary and Senate committees responsible for the Veterans portfolio. We remain truly impressed with the non-partisan approach that is evident in those committees. We remain convinced that this same non-partisan approach can resolve the issue at hand.

We were very pleased with the recommendation contained in your report. Allow me to refer to some of those recommendations.

Rules for determining who is a citizen should be few and citizenship should be a permanent status. People need to be able to rely on the certainty of their citizenship. Anyone who was born in Canada at any time, retroactive to birth, should be deemed a Canadian citizen. Anyone who was born abroad at any time to a Canadian mother or to a Canadian father, is he/she is a first generation born abroad, should also be deemed a Canadian citizen. Citizenship and Immigration should reassess whether there is any pressing or substantial reason for continuing not to recognize the DND 419 form as proof of Canadian citizenship. The registration of birth abroad should be recognized as proof of Canadian citizenship.

The Committee also recommended that the Minister use her discretionary power under the present Citizenship Act to implement the above recommendations before the bill is drafted.

When we did our review of Bill C-37, and looked at the proposed backgrounder and Q&As, we were confident that a resolution was around the corner. Yet, here we are today. Which brings us to what we see as simple but timely solutions that require no modification to Bill C-37, but a strong resolve to move forward based on a non-partisan approach.

On the issue of the second generation born abroad, one of the previous witnesses alluded to what we think is a bona fide requirement to give proof of one's attachment to Canada. There is a simple measure already in place that allows an immigrant born abroad to serve in the Canadian Forces and have his or her application for Canadian citizenship fasttracked. That is a simple but meaningful proof of attachment and a willingness to serve one's country. This process requires no amendment to Bill C-37.

As for the numbers, this may be an important factor. However, it is not a showstopper. Surely it should not be seen as an impediment to timely passage of Bill C-37.

Once again, the Royal Canadian Legion feels very strongly that passage of Bill C-37 is an urgent priority that should be embraced by all the members of this Committee. As one of the members of this Committee has said so eloquently, there have been enough studies and enough reports on this issue. What is needed now is a cooperative approach that will bring resolution, once and for all, before those that are affected simply pass away.

Thank you.

• (1545)

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now go to committee members for questions.

I will go to Mr. Karygiannis first, and then to Mr. St-Cyr.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): I want to thank you both for coming here, and all of your members. And I also want to acknowledge the work that you've done in order for us to be able to be here today. If it weren't for the vets and for the sacrifices you made, and your wives and children, we wouldn't have a democracy today and we wouldn't be here.

I'm going to give you some figures that I want you to please consider and also take back to your membership. The department finally gave us some figures on the weekend. It reads as follows: between 1947 and 1977, 114,000 registrations of birth abroad certificates were issued. So between 1947 and 1977, we have 114,000—in 30 years.

And then the department gave us the figures from 1982 to 2007, although we asked for 1977 onwards, and they didn't come up with some numbers. What they've given us is that between 1982 and today, 368,520 Canadians were born abroad. When they were asked for second generation, they only gave us 2006, and that was 2,412 people, Canadian citizens, born abroad.

I also want to thank you for having this in your statements. It says, "Anyone who was born abroad at any time to a Canadian mother or to a Canadian father, if he/she is a first generation born abroad, should also be deemed a Canadian citizen". I'm not sure if you mean the second generation or not, but I want to thank you.

Now, what happens if you take the numbers of second generation between 1977 and today, 1982 to 1989, is that there were 56,000 people born abroad. From 1990 to 1999, 121,144 were born aboard. And here's the real kicker, folks, from 2000 to 2007, 187,260. And if you were to extrapolate and take the mean—because in my former life as an industrial engineer, I did statistics coming out of the ears—per year, from 1982 to 1989, 7,000 Canadians were born abroad; from 1990 to 1999, per year, 10,095 born abroad; from 2000 to 2007, 26,751 born abroad. If you forecast that into 2010, that will hit about 56,000 first-generation Canadians born abroad.

So if you take those numbers—and I'm certainly going to pass this graph around to you—by 2020 we might have close to a million first generation born abroad. Gentlemen, that's 10 times as many Canadians as born abroad between 1947 to 1977.

If you take the number of second generation born abroad in 2006, that was 2,412. And if you extrapolate that to the same degree, you're

going to have about 5,000-plus in 2010 to 2020 of second generation born abroad.

If my daughter, first generation born abroad, were to get married to somebody who's not a Canadian citizen and they're stationed in the gulf.... In the gulf, as you pretty well know, if you are somebody who was born there, you're stateless. So my grandchild, this baby, will be stateless if he/she is born abroad. This child, that baby, has nowhere to go if we have an emergency. And if you, the forces, today's people, go in to take us out, you will say to the mother, "Yes, you're a Canadian citizen, please come with us". You will say to her, "I'm sorry, your baby can't come". But let's say that by mistake you do take the baby and there's something wrong with the baby, the baby is not born perfect, and the baby comes to Canada, that child, my grandchild, the person you fought so hard for, will have absolutely no coverage of health care or anything in Canada.

Yes, I've known people say to me, "But your daughter can sponsor her child into Canada and she can do this until that child is 22 years old." So I ask you, who have fought so hard for this country and with all the fights that you have done, why should my daughter, who has lived all her life in this country, have to sponsor her child into Canada?

Please, I want you to consider those numbers, and if you have something to enlighten me, something to tell me, as a father, and possibly a grandfather of the grandkid who will be born abroad tomorrow, if my daughter is working out there, if you can convince me that the fight you fought for this country....

• (1550)

Mr. Pierre Allard: My head is spinning listening to the numbers, I must admit, so I will have to sit down and look at these numbers. If I understand correctly, you're saying that projecting the number of second generation born aboard, we can anticipate—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: First generation born abroad in the—

Mr. Pierre Allard: I'm saying second generation, about 10,000 or so, by 2010.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: That's per year, sir, 2010 to 2020.

Mr. Pierre Allard: Per year?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Per year.

Mr. Pierre Allard: Okay. Well, you've had 2,412 since 2006—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Right now, the number for 2007, first generation born abroad, is 26,000.

Mr. Pierre Allard: That said, what we are really concerned about is indeed first generation born abroad, in the context that there are options for people who are second generation born abroad. I would look at it from a contextual approach in terms of what is done in other countries, what is done in France, what is done in the U.K., the U.S., and these other countries. Do they recognize second generation born abroad?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I've heard that they don't, but I can tell you of one country that I know of, probably the cradle of democracy, Greece—

Mr. Pierre Allard: Greece does.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Fifth and sixth generation born abroad.

Mr. Pierre Allard: I see.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: After everything falls in shit in the Soviet Union, they are able to go back to Greece. With everything fallen apart in the Soviet Union, the people who had left are able to go back and have security.

Mr. Pierre Allard: I think there are options for people who are second generation born abroad. I personally think we have to adopt a standard that is common to other measures that are taken in other countries, and I would like to have time to consider the numbers.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I have one final question, Mr. Chair.

If this amendment were to be dropped off, the first generation, and Bill C-37 were to continue, would you support that? If we take that paragraph out, the first generation that the minister is trying to bamboozle and put forward, do you have any problem with the rest of the bill?

The Chair: Mr. Allard, a brief response, because time is up.

Mr. Pierre Allard: Actually, I can't give you an answer right now. I'd like to look at the numbers and understand what it is that I'm agreeing with.

• (1555)

The Chair: Thank you.

And I'll remind the honourable member to watch the language. That wasn't parliamentary.

We'll go to Mr. St-Cyr, please.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being with us today. You seem to have closely followed the Committee's work in recent weeks. You are hoping that solutions can be found. The Committee did produce a unanimous report entitled "Reclaiming Citizenship for Canadians: A Report on the Loss of Canadian Citizenship". I was wondering whether you had had a chance to read the report and the 13 recommendations it contains.

Mr. Pierre Allard: Yes, we have read the report, and the recommendations are in front of us. We even quoted some of them in our presentation. In short, I would say that the approach taken in the report was appropriate in terms of resolving the problem.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: The Government is telling us that the wording in the bill under review is in keeping with the spirit of the

unanimous report and its 13 recommendations. I realize that you are not legal experts, but I would like you to tell me whether, based on your understanding of the bill and the unanimous report, you believe there is some consistency between the two. Does the bill reflect the Committee's recommendations?

Mr. Pierre Allard: We have a copy of the bill as debated at first reading. I am not a lawyer and the approach is fairly complex, but it does seem to me to be consistent with your recommendations.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Your brief contains four recommendations.

Mr. Pierre Allard: Those recommendations are taken from your report.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Yes, exactly, and those are the ones you deem to be most important.

Mr. Pierre Allard: Absolutely.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: In terms of the recommendations, are you satisfied with the content of the bill, as currently worded?

Mr. Pierre Allard: Yes.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Thank you, that's great.

As regards the following recommendation, which reads: "The Committee recommends that Citizenship and Immigration Canada reassess whether there is any pressing and substantial reason for continuing not to recognize the DND 419 as proof of Canadian citizenship", could you perhaps give us your thoughts on this particular matter?

Mr. Pierre Allard: I believe that Bill C-37 deals with this matter in sub-section 2(1) of the legislation, which proposes a new paragraph (g), which reads as follows:

(g) the person was born outside Canada before February 15, 1977 to a parent who was a citizen at the time of the birth and the person did not, before the coming into force of this paragraph, become a citizen;

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: You are saying that this would open the door to use of the DND 419 form?

Mr. Pierre Allard: Well, it would mean that the form would no longer be necessary.

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman.

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Chow.

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): We know there are lots of stories of women who fell in love with soldiers abroad and left their families, their homes, and their countries to follow their husbands to Canada. It was a sacrifice, and it's tremendously unfair for them to discover they are not Canadian citizens. So I share your passion to get this bill done as quickly as possible.

Also, there is a section saying that persons born prior to 1977 can get Canadian citizenship from their Canadian father if they were born in wedlock, and from the Canadian mother if they were born out of wedlock. It's a strange rule and has caused lots of problems.

Hopefully, this bill will fix everything. My intention is to try to get this bill passed as quickly as possible, because I've seen the history of this bill. These issues have gone through, my gosh, six or seven studies and different types of bills, with one even going to the Senate and nothing then happening, and I fear this could happen again.

Because of that, I am going to ask you about the following. You talk about non-partisan work, and it seems that the Liberals want to make sure that second-generation children born abroad are Canadian citizens, which I think makes sense, but right now the issue is locked here. We could get this bill done very quickly and accommodate this element by doing something very simple, by just amending subclause 2(2), or actually taking it out of the bill, because right now it limits citizenship to the first generation born to, or adopted by, Canadian parents.

It would then deal with what Mr. Karygiannis was talking about, being a proud grandfather, and all of those problems arising from his daughter being abroad. If that would actually bring peace, so to speak, to this committee and help us to deal quickly with this issue, I would hope we could do clause-by-clause by Wednesday—with that amendment that I'm sure my Liberal colleagues will move. Then I hope the bill can be sent back to the House of Commons and hopefully all parties will say yea, and it will go to the Senate and they will say yea, and we'll get it done before the looming election call that I'm hearing in the background reaches us, because I certainly don't want to go through this two years from now.

• (1600)

Mr. Pierre Allard: If that is the solution to get this bill through, I think you will certainly have our support, no doubt.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I don't know how people feel about it, but let's work together.

But your prime priority is just to get it done?

Mr. Pierre Allard: Get the bill passed. I think it's been on the back burner a long time.

Ms. Olivia Chow: A long time, yes.

Mr. Pierre Allard: Maybe the honourable Mr. Karygiannis is quite correct, that being able to embrace his grandchildren as Canadians is an important factor. And if we're only talking about 10,000 people—and I can't really say what the number is, because I can't twist them that fast in my mind—then maybe that's the simple solution.

Mr. Erl Kish: We'd have no problem with that whatsoever. I could have the same problem with my grandchildren, because I had two children born abroad in 1958 and 1959.

The worry is to get this through and to get it passed. If it takes the amendment, and the other ones will go along with the amendment, we'd be fully in agreement. It's not a problem.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Thank you very much for taking the time to come here. Let's work together and get this bill done.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Komarnicki.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to the Legion members for coming. Mr. Kish and Mr. Allard, we certainly appreciate what you're saying.

I can tell you that last week when we left off we said that if we had all-party agreement to pass Bill C-37 without any amendments we would do everything within our power to bring it before this committee. As I understand it, we had agreement by at least a majority of the parties here.

I can also tell you—and I'm somewhat surprised by our member for the New Democratic Party, Olivia Chow—that the recommendation that went to the minister under the report specifically concluded that the extension would stop after the first generation born abroad, and there would be options for those beyond that. It was a policy decision. A unanimous report by every member of this committee, upon which the legislation was drafted, went to the minister. I appreciate that you can do anything you want, but the bill as prepared is limited to the first generation born abroad. On that basis, the bill was brought here, with our effort, to get speedy passage. To open it up again would certainly not be an option at this time.

On the two things that matter to the Legion—the DND 419 and births registered abroad—we'll certainly direct questions to the ministerial people. But the big question has been the second generation born abroad. As I said, there has been a decision that they must have some connection to Canada, or they must use some other means if you want to incorporate those.

The numbers that Mr. Karygiannis has been espousing are not that large. There are some assumptions he's making on those, and they're not something you can easily record. Although we know they're there, we also know there's a way of dealing with a good number of them.

Given the present state of the House, do we want a bill that's maybe not perfect but goes perhaps 95% toward what everybody wants? Would you agree with the passage of the bill as is in order to accomplish that in an expedited fashion, as opposed to yet another wrangling that didn't exist before?

• (1605)

Mr. Erl Kish: We totally agree with the bill as is, and we did when we looked at it. We see no problem with it.

What we're worried about is another slowdown. As the honourable member Olivia Chow has mentioned, before we hit something like a looming election that throws this into next year or the year after, let's get it done. Let's work together and get this bill passed, whether it's first generation or second. Let's just get it done.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: We did everything in our power since last Wednesday to get the bill before the committee today. That has happened, which in itself is somewhat miraculous.

I also put to each of the members that we go forward, do clause-by-clause today, and report the bill as is to the House today.

The Chair: On a point of order, we have Mr. Karygiannis.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I could be out of order, but I think the clerk has a list of witnesses who need to come forward to speak. Until we hear all those witnesses, the parliamentary secretary should realize we're not doing due diligence to this legislation.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: On the point of order, as Ms. Chow has indicated, this matter has been dealt with time and time again—many reports, many studies, and many witnesses. It's time to either get on or get off, move forward or not. I challenge the members to do the right thing.

With the time I have, I think Mr. Batters has a question.

The Chair: Mr. St-Cyr.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to point out that committee business is also on the agenda. We can deal with Mr. Komarnicki's motion with respect to clause-by-clause consideration. However, we should finish our session with the witnesses first, because that is on the agenda. We should not be debating these issues in front of them. I think they deserve better than that.

[*English*]

The Chair: Are you speaking to this, Mr. Batters?

Mr. Dave Batters: I'm going to speak on this round.

The Chair: Is it a point of order?

Mr. Dave Batters: It's not a point of order.

The Chair: Okay.

The point of order is that we should hear from the witnesses before we—

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: I haven't put a motion on the floor, so I'm not sure what the point of order is. There's no motion. It's a question and comment, and I'm making a comment. There is no motion on the floor to deal with, so that time should—

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: It's politicking.

The Chair: We'll move on, because I don't think we have a point of order there. We have a difference of opinion between two honourable gentlemen. I think I will go to—

Are you finished, Mr. Komarnicki?

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: Right, and I'm sharing the rest of my time with Mr. Batters.

The Chair: Mr. Batters.

Mr. Dave Batters: Thank you very much.

Gentlemen, first of all, I think I can speak for everyone in this room and everyone in this country when I say thank you very much for your sacrifices and for your service to this country. You're to be commended, as are all members of the Legion.

When you came here today, your remarks were dead-on; they were very specific. You'd like to see this bill passed as is, unamended, because you believe in this bill. Certain realities are upon us, gentlemen, whether certain people in this room like that or not. I started out in the last committee commending every member of this committee for working so hard and caring so much on this issue.

Mr. Karygiannis would like one further change, but the reality is that politically this government and this Parliament could very well fall at the end of February, and there is simply not enough time to have an amendment and go back through the wheels of government and through cabinet and back to this committee for it to pass. This is the opinion of the people above my pay scale, gentlemen. You, being in the military, can understand this. This is how it's been communicated to me: there's simply not the time for any amendments to be made to this bill. If an election is called before this bill is passed as is, which is the only option before us....

There are two options: we pass it as is, or it dies when an election comes and all this work goes out the window and we start all over again. Those are the only realistic choices before this committee. As much as my friend Mr. Karygiannis, and perhaps—

• (1610)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I believe my colleague is singling me out as to my concerns. He keeps repeating my name, so I would ask you to ask him to speak more in general versus singling me out.

Mr. Dave Batters: I will do that, as much as—

The Chair: That's not a point of order, to begin with, and I would ask you to try to wrap up here in the next few seconds.

Mr. Dave Batters: I'll wrap this up very quickly.

As much as one member of this committee would like this to be different, and he comes at this issue with great passion—I have a great amount of respect for that member—the reality is that we either get this bill in as is, with no amendments, or the government could very well fall. We're all aware of that. We all watch the news. We'll get absolutely nothing. So those are the two choices.

Gentlemen, the question is quite simple: given those two choices, which one would you take?

The Chair: A brief response, please.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: You can drop the passage about—

The Chair: Order, please.

A brief response, Mr. Kish.

Mr. Erl Kish: I would hope the honourable member would agree to get this bill passed as is. If we need to work on a second generation, let's get something on the ground first—the bill the way it is—and work on the second generation later, please.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: We're talking about—

The Chair: Order, please.

Thank you.

We will go to our next round, and Mr. Telegdi.

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Thank you very much.

Gentlemen, welcome. It's great seeing you here. I think all members of Parliament, honouring what you have done, should join one of the branches of the Legion, because they are looking for members, and we have to keep things alive.

Mr. Erl Kish: I have applications here, sir.

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Good, and hand them out to all the members who aren't members. I'm a member of 530 in Waterloo.

Let me just say we're really having a false argument. For the government to stand up and say we have to pass this bill, that it's too difficult to change.... Look, we had two ministers who didn't even produce a bill. It was the combined efforts of the opposition that made this happen. The irresponsibility of the government not bringing it forward before is inexcusable. We could have dealt with it; this could have been legislation. So let's not play politics around it.

There's a fairly simple fix to the whole thing. The Citizenship Act is such a horrific mess. It is just a horrific mess. It's like pick-up sticks. You pull one, and if you're not careful the whole thing comes tumbling down. Mr. Davidson will deal with that. We could very quickly say that those Canadians who are born abroad, fulfilling the residency requirements of the present second generation born abroad requirements, are deemed to be born in Canada, and then we don't have to go beyond first generation.

The Council of Refugees, from whom we're going to have to hear, came out and made a submission. Essentially what they said was this, and this is an example outside of Mr. Karygiannis's.... Suppose, for example, a Canadian couple are spending a few years working abroad and give birth outside Canada to a baby. Let's call her Anna. It could actually be a soldier. She is a Canadian citizen through her parents. The family returns to Canada when Anna is six months old and she grows up in Canada. And we heard from Mr. Teichroeb, who had a similar situation. As a young adult, she chooses to study abroad and finds herself pregnant. If she gives birth to her child outside Canada, the child is not a Canadian citizen under the terms of Bill C-37.

If the baby—let's call her Mary Ann—happens to be not entitled to any other citizenship, she will be stateless. Bill C-37 does have provisions to allow Mary Ann, and others like her, to apply for Canadian citizenship if they are stateless; however, there are a number of conditions that must be met, including the requirement that the stateless child of a Canadian citizen should have resided for three or four years preceding their application. This means the child will have to remain stateless for at least three years.

This bill also fails to explain on what basis Mary Ann would be allowed to enter Canada in order to meet the three-year residency requirement. Even if Anna attempts to sponsor her child as an immigrant under family class, she will face a challenge in finding travel documents for Mary Ann so she can travel to Canada as a stateless person. She is not entitled to a passport.

We, Canada, to our shame, made the United Nations High Commission for Refugees magazine on statelessness and we're featured for some of the miserable conditions that now exist. Now, in fixing this, which is important, we do not want to create another whole class of stateless people. There is a relatively simple amendment—and I'm going to be asking Mr. Davidson when he comes forward—that can be done very quickly and that will eliminate all those problems. We can have a bill that goes through and addresses the needs of Canadians and stops us being featured in magazines like the magazine on statelessness. It's not a difficult fix, but we would be looking for it.

Again, just for the record, it has been the opposition that has consistently pushed this government. We had two ministers, both of whom said they had absolutely no interest in citizenship. I remind you of Roméo Dallaire, who appeared at a press conference, and the question was asked of him, why is this happening? And he referred to bureaucratic terrorism in the department. That's Senator Dallaire, who himself was a lost Canadian.

There is an easy fix, and it can be out of this committee this week, fixed, and it could go through the House. All we need is the political will. I don't want to create any more problems than we now have created. It can be first generation.

• (1615)

The Chair: A point of order?

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: No, it's not a point of order. I just want to speak.

The Chair: Okay, does anyone have a response at the table?

Mr. Pierre Allard: The only thing we can state, I guess, unequivocally is that when we came here and prepared for our appearance, we looked at the bill, we looked at your unanimous report, and we looked at the recommendations in the unanimous report, which said certain things. We quoted them to you and we urged you to pass Bill C-37. If a compromise is possible to amend, so be it. If a compromise is not possible, then we ask that you pass the bill. It's simple.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Allard.

Mr. Carrier is next.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Carrier (Alfred-Pellan, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon, gentlemen, and thank you for being with us today and giving us the benefit of your experience and all the knowledge you have gleaned from our veterans.

Like my colleague, I want to state that we intend to support this bill. We believe it is important. I have relatively little experience on the Committee, but I understand that this issue has been under review for several years now and that it has been unable to complete the different steps leading up to passage of the bill. So, we will be supporting it. This has nothing to do with politics. We believe it is important to do that for all concerned.

I read your presentation, and I have one question. We are always learning things here; that is what is great about being a Member of Parliament. As regards the second generation, you gave an example of authentic proof of attachment to Canada. An immigrant can be a member of the Canadian Forces and thus be entitled to preferential treatment. I was surprised to read that. The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act may well contain provisions I am unaware of and that I will now know more about.

In fact, the expression "preferential treatment" is rather strong, it seems to me. There may be other forms of social engagement that constitute proof of one's attachment to Canada. Some may want to enroll in the Armed Forces, but that does not necessarily suit everyone. There are people out there who are honest, highly skilled and strongly engaged in their community that can provide proof of that. I'd be interested in hearing your thoughts on that.

• (1620)

Mr. Pierre Allard: The expression "preferential treatment" may not be appropriate, but what we are saying to Citizenship and Immigration Canada is that if someone is born abroad and voluntarily serves in the Canadian military, he should simply be able to apply for Canadian citizenship without going through the normal administrative processes. We think that is appropriate because the legislation is already in place. You must understand that, because we are veterans, it is natural for us to believe that this is a good way of demonstrating one's loyalty to one's new country.

Mr. Robert Carrier: To your knowledge, is that still in effect?

Mr. Pierre Allard: Yes. In fact, it's new.

Mr. Robert Carrier: I am going to find out more about that.

Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Are you finished, Mr. Carrier?

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Carrier: Yes.

[English]

The Chair: Okay. Go ahead, Mr. Batters.

Mr. Dave Batters: Mr. Komarnicki has a quick comment first, and then I'll take his time.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: I just want to drive one point home very clearly. We sat around this committee and struggled to get a unanimous report, and we gave and took. When we all agreed—100%, unanimously—that we would limit it to first-generation Canadians, we realized that would cut some people off. That was part of the give and take. Something was given and something was taken, but we came to an unanimous report.

Mr. Telegdi said, if the minister mirrors that report, or essentially follows that report, we will ensure a quick passage to the House. Today they're trying to say, let's now do an amendment to enlarge that, or change that, or do something different.

We've said we'd bring this bill before this committee for a quick passage based on that unanimous report. To change it at this stage and try to manoeuvre it around with another amendment is not on.

I just want to make that specific point, that Mr. Telegdi was first to say, let's have a unanimous report and let's move in line with it. Now he wants to change it in a substantial way, and that's not the way to do business.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Excuse me, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Is this a point of order?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: It's to what Mr. Komarnicki was saying.

The Chair: No, it's not a point of order.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: It is a point of order, Mr. Chair. I think what Mr. Komarnicki said is completely—

The Chair: It's not a point of order.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I'll withdraw.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Batters is next.

Mr. Dave Batters: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to reiterate that Mr. Komarnicki and I are on the exact same wavelength.

Mr. Allard, I think you summed it up better than I can. This is not an issue that should be political. It's not an issue that should be partisan at all. I don't think we should engage in discussions as to who dragged whom along.

In the last meeting, I gave each member opposite: Mr. Telegdi, Mr. Karygiannis—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Are we going back at this again?

The Chair: Order.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: The member is certainly—

The Chair: Order, please. Order.

Mr. Dave Batters: Mr. Chair, I would ask for a little bit of respect from Mr. Karygiannis. This regularly happens at every meeting. He interrupts people during their time.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Karygiannis, I'll hear you on a point of order.

Mr. Dave Batters: This is ridiculous.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Order. I'll hear you on a point of order—but this time make it a point of order.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: I'm making it a point of order, Mr. Chair.

If we're following the same rules that we're following inside the House, I don't think the member can refer to somebody else by name.

The Chair: Exactly—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Should he want to refer by the riding, by all means. If not, don't refer to us at all.

Mr. Dave Batters: I'd like to check with the clerk on that, because within committee you can refer to people by name.

The Chair: I think in committee, as I was about to say to that point of order, you can refer to honourable members by their last names—preceded by Mr., Ms., what have you.

But that is not a point of order.

Mr. Batters, please continue.

Mr. Dave Batters: I guess that just proves my point, Mr. Chair, that what started as a non-partisan exercise is rapidly deteriorating here into asking who dragged whom along, and who led the process first.

I will give these gentlemen their due for caring so much about this issue and working so hard on it, but the main issue here—for everyone in this room, for the press that's covering this, for Canadians who will read this in the transcripts—is that we had our kick at the can in a unanimous report. Whatever ideas could have been put forward to better this bill were all considered, or should have all been considered, then.

Once this committee delivered what was a unanimous report...and Mr. Telegdi was here. He went along with it. It was a unanimous report. This gentleman, who spent a lot of work on this file, much more work than I have, agreed to this unanimous report.

After that, gentlemen, because of our time constraints now in this Parliament, the horse had left the barn. Our government then delivered a bill that is exactly a reflection of that unanimous report. And I don't know what else can be expected of a government than to deliver what is in a unanimous report, agreed to by all parties.

Gentlemen, whatever amendments could have been made are already out the window. The horse has already left the barn. We have the bill before us. Now we either pass it as is or it will not happen in this Parliament, and all this work will be for naught.

I know there are people who will shed tears over that. There are people who have worked so hard over this, and there continue to be people, as we heard last meeting, who pass away while waiting for this to be rectified, and they continue to pass away. There will be a lot of tears shed over this if it's not done.

I agree with Ms. Chow. What a wonderful Valentine's Day present to war brides to have this passed. But it must be passed unamended to get this done before this Parliament ends. We can talk about pie in the sky, we can talk about eight, ten, twelve different amendments that might make this bill better, but that horse has already left the barn, gentlemen.

Thank you.

• (1625)

The Chair: On a point of order, Mr. Carrier.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Carrier: Mr. Chairman, we should limit ourselves to questioning the witnesses who have come to meet with us. Later on, we, as Committee members, can discuss what the process should be for passing the bill. If people have questions for our witnesses, they should ask them now, but if there are no further questions, let's have that discussion on our own subsequently. Discussing these issues in front of the witnesses is embarrassing.

[*English*]

The Chair: Actually, there's no point of order there. If a member is allotted five minutes, he can use his time to make a statement. He doesn't need to leave time for answers.

Mr. Dave Batters: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: So it's not a point of order.

How much time do we have left for this panel, Mr. Clerk?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Andrew Chaplin): Two and a half minutes.

The Chair: All right. Do we wish to start another round, or will we dismiss our witnesses?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Another round, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Another round?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Sure.

An hon. member: Jimmy, Jimmy, let's go to the officials.

An hon. member: Come on.

The Chair: Okay. Is it agreed that we let our witnesses go and bring all the officials to the table?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay.

On behalf of the committee, I want to say thank you to the Canadian Legion for all the information you've provided. It's been a very worthwhile session. Thank you.

We'll call our departmental officials to the table.

Members, we'll suspend while the officials are given a chance to set up. Thank you.

- _____ (Pause) _____
-
- (1630)

The Chair: Order, please.

We will resume our consideration of Bill C-37. We will go to our departmental officials here today.

Thank you for coming: Mr. Mark Davidson, director of the legislation and program policy division of citizenship branch; Ms. Ann Heathcote, senior policy adviser; and Lori Beckerman, acting team leader, senior counsel.

Welcome.

I think you know the procedure, Mr. Davidson, and I think you have a statement that you want to make.

Mr. Mark Davidson (Director, Legislation and Program Policy, Citizenship Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and honourable members. I do have an opening statement.

[*Translation*]

My name is Mark Davidson and I work in the Citizenship Branch at Citizenship and Immigration Canada. I am accompanied by Ann Heathcote and Lori Beckerman, and together, we will be able to answer your questions.

[*English*]

I am here today to address Bill C-37, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act. Because of the demonstrated need for stability, simplicity, and consistency in citizenship status, what follows is the basic outline of the proposals CIC considered when drafting Bill C-37, which was tabled by Minister Finley on December 10.

First, nothing in these proposals will take away citizenship from anyone who is now a citizen of Canada. Those who are Canadian citizens when the amendments come into force will remain Canadian citizens.

[*Translation*]

Second, anyone who became a citizen under the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1947, and subsequently lost his or her citizenship, will have it restored.

[*English*]

Third, anyone who was born in Canada on or after January 1, 1947, and who subsequently lost his or her citizenship will have it restored.

[*Translation*]

Fourth, anyone naturalized as a citizen of Canada on or after January 1, 1947, who subsequently lost his or her citizenship, will have it restored.

[*English*]

Finally, those born abroad to a Canadian citizen on or after January 1, 1947, who are not already citizens will now be Canadian citizens if they are the first generation born abroad.

The only exceptions would be those who, as adults, have personally renounced their citizenship to the Government of Canada, or those whose citizenship was revoked by the government because it was obtained by fraud.

These proposed amendments would give Canadian citizenship to various categories of individuals. They might have lost their citizenship by becoming citizens of another country, either as adults or as minors. They might have lost citizenship when they took an oath of citizenship in another country, which included a clause that renounced Canadian citizenship. They might have been born abroad and lost their Canadian citizenship under the 1947 act because they failed to take the required steps before their 24th birthday to retain it. So-called border babies, or indeed those DND babies who were born abroad under the 1947 Citizenship Act, also had to take steps to register as Canadian citizens. If they failed to do so, they never became Canadian citizens.

[*Translation*]

Bill C37 will address past problems and protect citizenship for the future by limiting citizenship by descent to the first generation born abroad. Subsequent generations born abroad would no longer be given Canadian citizenship automatically.

[*English*]

Bill C-37 would also eliminate onerous and confusing retention requirements and confer citizenship by force of law, otherwise known as automatically. There is no application process and no deadline for people to come forward to apply for proof of citizenship or a passport.

Those who are interested in their Canadian citizenship and do not have proof of it can contact our department. We will deal with them as they come forward.

[*Translation*]

Those rare cases that concern people born outside of Canada prior to January 1, 1947, would not be affected by this legislation. That is to say, their status would not be changed by Bill C-37. The proposal respects the significance of the year 1947, because Canadian citizenship, as we now know it, did not exist before January 1, 1947.

•(1635)

[English]

As warranted, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration will still have the authority, with the approval of the Governor in Council, to grant citizenship under subsection 5(4) of the Citizenship Act in special cases. This would also be the case for unforeseen circumstances that CIC has not yet dealt with.

We believe that Bill C-37 will resolve the issue of citizenship for most of those people whose status is currently in question.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Before moving to questions, I'd like to highlight for members the binder we made available to them today. The binder includes a number of documents. There is the bill itself; an overview of the bill; a detailed summary clause by clause, which can be found at tab 3 of the binder; and a key highlights document at tab 4. Tab 5 includes the communication products that were released at the time the bill was tabled on December 10, which includes both the news release and two backgrounders.

I'll highlight that the backgrounder that is found at tab 5(c) is a list of fictional cases or examples of cases and a description of how these would be dealt with by the bill.

As well, there's a deck at tab 6, which provides an overview of Bill C-37, and then eight issue papers that we've prepared, which go into more detail talking about the issues of the 1947 limit, citizenship by descent, the statelessness provisions, the simplified citizenship rules, prohibitions, family class immigration, and the exception for Canadians serving abroad, and finally an issue paper dealing with retroactive citizenship.

With that, Mr. Chair, we're quite happy to answer questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Davidson.

I'll go to Mr. Telegdi for a seven-minute round.

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I note that we have made some progress over the years. No longer are we having the minister tell us that they will handle everything by subsection 5(4). We're talking about having some legislation.

Mr. Davidson, à propos the "fictional cases" you were talking about, you probably have heard the submission of the Canadian Council for Refugees, have you? What is your comment on the fictional case that relates to the person she outlines?

Mr. Mark Davidson: Is this the case that you read out before, Mr. Telegdi?

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Yes.

Mr. Mark Davidson: I don't have it right in front of me.

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: As you heard that situation, was it correct, the way she outlined it?

Mr. Mark Davidson: The first point I'd like to make is that there are a number of mechanisms that individuals born outside of Canada in the second generation would be able to use to obtain their citizenship—primarily the expedited family class process that's available for all individuals.

The Canadian Council for Refugees have made a point that these individuals would not have access to national passports if they're stateless. That's true; however, they would have access to other forms of travel documents that are recognized for travel to Canada. There are other forms of travel—

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Maybe we'll stop there, because you're going to be coming back to us on Wednesday, when we're probably dealing with clause-by-clause consideration.

The question I'll put to you right now is this. Under the current Citizenship Act, we really have a problem, haven't we? The citizenship of a second-generation person born abroad expires at age 28. But if that person, before their citizenship has expired at the age of 28, happens to have a child, then that child is now a citizen until the age of 28. Is that correct? That's the third generation. And if that child has a child before turning 28, that child is a Canadian citizen until the age of 28. So under the current act, the generations just go on forever.

I mention this because I never heard it from officials, and having been around the committee for 10 years, I think I should have heard from officials about a problem of that magnitude, which I have not.

My question to you is you probably—

Mr. Mark Davidson: May I reply to that, Mr. Telegdi?

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Yes.

Mr. Mark Davidson: That provision, the present section 8, as we see it, has two main concerns. One is, as you say, that citizenship can be passed on to endless generations because of the provisions; however, that individual stops being a citizen on their 28th birthday unless they take certain action.

The difficulty with this is that it's not always possible for us to know they exist and for them to know what action they have to take. So the present provision of section 8 has two fairly significant problems, which is why the minister said, when she appeared before the committee on May 29 this past year, it was important for the provision to stop at the first generation: in order to stop the passing on of citizenship to endless generations.

•(1640)

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: I understand the problem that exists.

My next question to you is one I really haven't received a satisfactory answer to.

Taking that into consideration—and we don't know how to keep records of all these people going on and on—what I suggested was that any time a first-generation Canadian born abroad satisfies the requirements that we presently have for a second-generation Canadian born abroad, or different requirements, if you simply deem those people to be born in Canada, then it would solve the problem that presently exists. It would address the problem Mr. Karygiannis talks about, and it would also mean we'd need a lot fewer subsection 5(4) grants of citizenship.

The onus on showing that situation is on the individual and not the department. Whereas right now you don't know what you're dealing with, in the other case you would know what you're dealing with. I think it's a fairly simple fix.

Obviously you have considered that. I would like you to tell me why you didn't do that. What was the problem with doing that?

Mr. Mark Davidson: As the minister outlined in the spring, and as was in the bill tabled in December, there are a number of overarching principles. One of the overarching principles I'd like to highlight in answer to that question is the principle of simplicity and of not forcing individuals to apply to have their citizenship confirmed. Bill C-37 says that citizenship should be provided by force of law to individuals and that they don't have to actually apply, fill in a document, and meet a test—a test that may be disputed—in order to maintain their citizenship.

One of the other problems with the present provision, as I said, is that it does require an application process. It requires individuals to meet a number of requirements, a number of standards in the act and in the regulations. The result of that is complexity and difficulty for the individual in understanding what the test is that they have to satisfy.

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: I'm having trouble with that, because right now if you want to retain citizenship, and you are second generation abroad, you must do so before you're 28 years old. There are very clear rules as to what you have to do. You have to have been in the country for a year prior to your 28th birthday.

I don't see what the problem would be with saying, okay, we're going to change your requirement to three years, or whatever we want to do for landed immigrants. Once that is done, it's simple. It is not difficult. The difficulty comes if the onus is on the government to chase people around versus having people take the initiative to be entitled to consideration as first generation born abroad.

I would like to know if there is any way you can get us some numbers so we can know what the balance is. I know if we pass this bill, we're going to solve a big problem right now, but we're also going to be creating another problem, and it's going to be a trade-off. It's almost like cutting the baby in half. I can see the wisdom of passing the bill because it has to be passed, but I'm also very cognizant of the fact that we are now creating another problem. I want to know what those numbers are, because I'm hoping that once we get rid of this government, we'll get in a government that is actually going to fix it.

Mr. Mark Davidson: To go back to your previous points about section 8, if I understood correctly, you're suggesting that section 8 could simply be replicated in Bill C-37. We know a number of witnesses have appeared before the committee over the past year

who have highlighted all of the problems that exist with section 8. What the bill is trying to do is resolve that by eliminating those requirements, by stopping people having to jump through those particular hoops and stopping the government from trying to find them, by making it simpler so that we don't have to try to search for people we don't know about.

• (1645)

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: If it's done by application, then you don't have to search.

Mr. Mark Davidson: That is exactly how section 8 works. Section 8 works by application. Individuals must come forward. They must identify to us that they exist and that they meet the requirements. Section 8 is, to be honest, part of the problem—not that I'm not always honest.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Get rid of section 8.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Telegdi.

Mr. St-Cyr.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to extend my thanks to you who drafted this bill which, according to the government, is consistent with the Committee's unanimous recommendations. I would like to review with you the 13 recommendations the report contains. Since this is a seven-minute round, that means I can devote 30 seconds to each recommendation.

The first recommendation is that the Citizenship Act be amended. That is the bill we are currently reviewing.

The second recommendation deals with the following fundamental principles, proposing that they be included in the Act: citizenship should be a permanent status; the rules should be clear and easy to apply; the government should not be able to revoke the certificate except in cases of fraud; these principles should apply to all people, whatever the date; and, background checks are not appropriate for those for whom citizenship is a birthright.

Are all those principles reflected in the bill currently under review?

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Davidson: Bill C-37 is as outlined by the minister in May, and certainly it is following almost all the recommendations of the committee's report. The committee report does include a number of recommendations that don't deal specifically with the legislation, so I can't say that it is satisfying every one of the committee's recommendations. Some of those—

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: The second recommendation lays out the following fundamental principles: citizenship should be a permanent status; the rules should be clear and easy to apply; the government should not be able to revoke a certificate on the ground that it was issued in error, except in cases of false representation; these principles should apply to all people, whatever the date that they acquired citizenship; and, background checks are not appropriate for those for whom citizenship is a birthright.

Are all of those principles reflected in the bill currently under review?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: Absolutely.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Thank you.

Recommendation 3 stipulates that: “Anyone who lost citizenship is once again a citizen, retroactive to the date that citizenship was lost”.

Is that reflected in the bill currently under review?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: Bill C-37 gives individuals back their citizenship if they were considered citizens of Canada and lost it for any reason other than revocation for fraud, renunciation as an adult, or failure to retain it in the second or subsequent generation...in the 1977 act.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Okay.

Recommendation 4 states that amendments to the Act provide that the following people are Canadian citizens: anyone who was born in Canada, anyone who was born abroad to a Canadian mother or a Canadian father, if they are the first generation born abroad, and anyone who was naturalized to Canada.

Is the bill consistent with those principles?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: The bill is generally in keeping with those principles.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: You say “generally”. Are there differences?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: The recommendation does not make it clear, so let me be clear.

The bill deals with individuals who became citizens, or who would have become citizens, on January 1, 1947, and subsequent to that. That date is significant in the history of Canadian citizenship because that was when the first Citizenship Act came into effect. Individuals who became citizens on that date and then lost their citizenship, or individuals born outside of Canada after that date, whether to a mother or a Canadian father, will either get citizenship for the first time or have their citizenship resumed.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I see.

Recommendation 5 is that a bill be introduced before February 15. We are currently reviewing it.

Following that are a number of recommendations that do not deal with the bill, but rather with departmental activities. Recommendation 6 states that “the Minister consider using the discretionary power”, particularly in relation to persons who are stateless.

Has the Department implemented that recommendation?

• (1650)

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: The minister and the Governor in Council continue to use the only discretionary power that exists in the act. That's subsection 5(4), the special grant of citizenship. And that's used both for stateless persons and for persons who are not stateless.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Recommendations 7, 8 and 9 relate to information to be provided to members of the public who may have been a victim of these considerations, for the purposes of both correcting and preventing errors.

Has that been done by the Department?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: When the committee tabled its report in December, it asked for a formal response from the government on the report. And in the normal course of events, the government will be responding to all the recommendations in the bill. I'm here today to give you information about Bill C-37, which certainly is an element. The government will be tabling a response to the provisions not related to C-37 in the normal course of events.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: From what I understand, steps have not yet been taken to act on recommendations 7, 8 and 9.

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: You should not, sir, interpret it that way. What I'm saying to you is that we are working on a formal response to these recommendations. As I understand it, the rules of Parliament give the government 120 days to provide a formal response, and I think it would be premature for me to give you that response today. It will be coming within the parameters of parliamentary rules.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I realize that the Committee will receive an answer and the government has some time to respond to the recommendations. However, recommendation 7 reads as follows:

The Committee recommends that Citizenship and Immigration Canada put together an information package for all Members of Parliament and their constituency offices to assist them in helping members of the public get the right answers to their citizenship queries.

This is not a state secret. Has it been done? Don't worry; this is not a criticism.

[English]

The Chair: You have 30 seconds. Give a brief response, please.

Mr. Mark Davidson: Honestly, I don't know the answer to that question.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: According to recommendation 10, Canada should "take steps to address repeated complaints received concerning any specific CIC agent".

Has that been done, or is it under review?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: My understanding is that when the assistant deputy minister, Janet Siddall, appeared before this committee in early June, I believe, she made an undertaking. She spoke about this. Certainly we understand, when we're passing on significant information to our clients, either citizens or non-citizens, the importance of being sensitive to that message and, where appropriate, of providing them with avenues of resolution.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. St-Cyr.

We'll go to Madam Chow for seven minutes.

Ms. Olivia Chow: On recommendations 7, 8, and 9, on which my Bloc colleagues just questioned, are there any funds put aside in the immigration department's budget to do the notification and promotion to let people know what could be changed and to do general education?

Mr. Mark Davidson: I can't answer that question. I'm not prepared for an answer to that question.

Ms. Olivia Chow: I know that a lot of figures were quoted earlier at the meeting. My question is in regard to the children who are born of citizens in another territory, the second generation, who we're talking about right now. If we say that citizenship would be granted at birth by operation of law for that second generation, why is it a problem for your department to do so, if such an amendment has been moved? What impact would it have? It seems to impact on a good number of people. I can't tell precisely how many.

Mr. Mark Davidson: My department is here to implement the policy that has been set either by the government or by Parliament. So I wouldn't say we would have a problem with that policy or another policy. We are here to implement the policy that has been set.

• (1655)

Ms. Olivia Chow: Okay.

I haven't seen the figures that were released over the weekend. In your estimation, how many of that second generation would be from Asia or Hong Kong or China, for example? I've heard different figures being bandied about.

Mr. Mark Davidson: I think it's important for me to reiterate a comment that has been made many times to this committee. That is, we do not know the number of either first-generation Canadians born outside of Canada, second generation, third generation, fourth generation, or fifth generation. One way of putting it is that we know the individuals that we know about. We don't know about all the others. And there are first generation, second, third, fourth, and fifth

generation that are being born, as we speak, outside of Canada who have never come forward, of whom we have no record.

The way the present act works, those individuals are citizens, and because of the provisions of section 8, as Mr. Telegdi has indicated, they can continue for sixth, seventh, eighth, or ninth generation without any ties to Canada. So it's important to understand that the figures that were shared with you were those of individuals who have come forward who we know about. But we're not suggesting that's the total population, because we don't know those people who have not come forward. There's no requirement under either the 1947 act or the present act for Canadian citizens who are having children born outside of Canada to report those births to the Canadian government. If they want citizenship for those children, or if they wanted citizenship for those children, they might have had to take action, but there's no law that says they must report their foreign births.

So we simply do not have a total number of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, or twenty-fifth generation.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Earlier on you said that the citizen can come back to Canada and then sponsor their young daughter. As long as she's under 23, I guess, they can bring the daughter over. How would that daughter, who might be stateless, then travel to Canada?

Mr. Mark Davidson: Let me just add that actually that sponsorship can take place overseas as well.

Ms. Olivia Chow: So a Canadian citizen can—

Mr. Mark Davidson: A Canadian citizen who is resident outside of Canada can complete a sponsorship for a dependent child. A dependent child includes children up to 22 years of age, so they have at least a 22-year window to do that sponsorship.

Ms. Olivia Chow: Don't you have to be in Canada for three to five years, or three out of four?

Mr. Mark Davidson: No, the sponsors in the context of sponsorship of a dependent child do not have to be resident in Canada. So they can do the sponsorship, the processing can take place, and in fact these cases are expedited.

In the rare event that an individual may be stateless, as I indicated in answer to Mr. Telegdi's question, there are other kinds of travel documents that can be issued. There's something called a certificate of identity, for example, that can be issued to these individuals. Likewise, the International Committee of the Red Cross has a travel document that can be issued for stateless persons. Either of these kinds of documents can be used for the individuals to return to Canada, and those documents are certainly recognized by Canada to permit them to come back to Canada.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Chow.

Mr. Batters, for seven minutes, please.

Mr. Dave Batters: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the departmental officials for appearing before us today on this important topic.

I'm not sure who to identify this to—Mr. Davidson, probably to you, but I'll let you determine who's best to answer these questions.

Can you share with the committee the reasoning behind the bill with respect to the pre-1947 cases, the Joe Taylor types of cases, which cover the people who did not automatically become Canadian citizens on January 1, 1947, when the first Canadian Citizenship Act took effect? Can you tell us why the bill does not cover these cases?

Mr. Mark Davidson: Thank you, Mr. Batters. This issue is covered, actually, in the first issue paper that I spoke about.

Citizenship in Canada was created by Parliament on January 1, 1947. Before that date, individuals in Canada had the status of British subjects with Canadian domicile. So the significance of January 1, 1947, is historical fact. The significance of that date has also been confirmed both by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Benner decision and also more recently by the Federal Court of Appeal in its decision in the Joe Taylor case. So Bill C-37 is continuing that, to recognize that significant historical event that took place on January 1, 1947.

I think it's important to understand, though, that there will be individuals born before 1947, either in Canada or outside of Canada, who will benefit from this bill. These are individuals who did become citizens on January 1, 1947, under that first act, and then subsequently lost their citizenship either because they failed to retain their citizenship or they took out another citizenship and suffered because of the dual citizenship provisions of that 1947 act.

So Bill C-37 will actually assist a number of individuals who became citizens on that day, January 1, 1947.

• (1700)

Mr. Dave Batters: Thank you, sir.

For the cases the bill does not address, it's my understanding—and I'm relatively new to this committee—that the minister has, under subsection 5(4), I believe it is, of the Citizenship Act, a provision for people who are not covered, and that's a remedy available to the minister. Is that correct?

Mr. Mark Davidson: That's correct. It's a remedy by which the minister may make a recommendation to the Governor in Council or to the federal cabinet, and they can decide to direct the minister to grant citizenship in deserving cases. In fact, that provision has been used a number of times, particularly in the last year, to resolve some of these anomaly cases, the most notable being that of Mr. Taylor himself, who became a citizen a few weeks ago in Vancouver. In fact, a number of members of this committee were present for that ceremony.

Mr. Dave Batters: Excellent.

Mr. Mark Davidson: Can I just add that this provision will continue under Bill C-37. There's nothing in the bill that alters in any way the provisions of subsection 5(4) of the Citizenship Act.

Mr. Dave Batters: Excellent.

I have one more question. Some criticisms of the bill argue that some citizens will have more rights than others to pass along

Canadian citizenship to their children born abroad. One example that I've heard compares an immigrant, a foreign-born but naturalized Canadian, and a border baby—a Canadian born in the U.S., for example—who will be considered first generation born abroad. This is not a legitimate concern, is it?

Mr. Mark Davidson: I think this is based on a misunderstanding of what happens with naturalized Canadians, or what happens when immigrants choose to come to Canada and become citizens. It's at that moment that their citizenship is sort of set in stone, and it's from that period on that we would look at their children born abroad.

I've heard this described as these immigrants being the first generation born outside of Canada, and in fact, that's the fallacy. Their action of becoming a citizen, of choosing Canada once they come to Canada, eliminates their prior birth outside of Canada. So in that sense they are treated the same as individuals born in Canada, who become citizens from that action in Canada.

Mr. Dave Batters: Excellent.

I have no further questions. For my remaining time, I'd like to pass to Mr. Khan. I know he has—

The Chair: Madam Grewal has her name down here.

Mr. Dave Batters: I'm sorry, Mrs. Grewal.

The Chair: You have two minutes.

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all for your time and your presentations.

According to Minister Finley, Bill C-37 will deal with about 95% of those people who either lost their citizenship and shouldn't have, or who never had it in the first place but should have. So what about the other 5%? Could you please let us know about that?

Mr. Mark Davidson: As I said in response to the previous question, there may be individuals who have a deserving claim to citizenship that can be resolved through this provision of subsection 5(4), the special grant of citizenship from the Governor in Council.

• (1705)

Mrs. Nina Grewal: I see.

Please, can you also address the issue of the DND 419, and the RBA—registration of birth abroad—cards, and how Bill C-37 deals with these issues?

Mr. Mark Davidson: Thank you.

Yes, this is a matter that has come up a number of times in the past, and actually is a point that the Royal Canadian Legion had asked us to consider. In fact, there's also a reference to the issue in the standing committee's recent report.

Bill C-37 will in effect wipe the slate clean from this issue by making it so that these individuals will be treated as citizens, not only going forward but also retroactively to their birth outside of Canada, in such a way that the nuance around the DND document, or the registration of birth abroad document, becomes moot. So in the vast majority of these cases, they have an RBA—they have a registration of birth abroad—but in the few cases where they do not, Bill C-37 will, as I said, make the issue moot.

The Chair: Thank you.

Thank you, Mrs. Grewal.

Mr. Karygiannis, five minutes, please.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Thank you.

I will be tabling a letter from Mr. Taylor for the record. It shows that he is not very pleased with what is happening with Bill C-37. If that could be dealt with, it would be fine.

The Chair: We will distribute it. Since it is not yet in French, we will have to wait.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Do you stand by the numbers you gave us last Friday?

Mr. Mark Davidson: Yes.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: So between 1977 and 2007, there were 368,000 first generation born abroad.

Mr. Mark Davidson: Which figure are you referring to?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Second page, at the bottom, 368,520.

Mr. Mark Davidson: As I've said, these are the individuals we are aware of. I am not suggesting that it covers the total population.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Okay, it covers the ones who have come forward.

I've sent over to you a first-generation analysis. Between 1982 and 1989, there were 56,000; between 1990 and 1999, 121,000 and change; between 2000 to 2007, 187,000. This was derived from your figures.

Mr. Mark Davidson: Yes, but it's based on—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Those who have come forward.

Mr. Mark Davidson: If you asked if this is a certain percentage of the total population, my answer would be that I don't know.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Davidson, you supplied us the figures. I've put them in the context of a decade. I've come up with a median of 7,000 from 1982 to 1989, 10,000 in 1990, then 26,751 from 2000 to 2007. These are derived by using your numbers. Then there's the graph at the bottom that gives figures for the 1980s, the 1990s, 2000, and 2010. That graph points to over 50,000 children per year born abroad to Canadian citizens between 2010 and 2020. By extrapolating from your numbers, we will have close to 500,000 born abroad between 2010 and 2020. To judge by the number of people born between 1982 and 2007, by the year 2020 we could be looking at a million Canadians born abroad.

Do you have any other projections you might want to share with us?

Mr. Mark Davidson: To start with, as is explained here, there will almost certainly be duplications in these numbers. Individuals can apply more than once for a certificate.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Three percent?

Mr. Mark Davidson: I don't know. They may have lost the certificate. As I understand these numbers, they are not necessarily births in this particular year. The graph might go in a slightly different direction. Certainly, looking at the numbers, it is true that there appear to have been more certificates issued in 2007 than in 1982.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Davidson, from the numbers you're providing, after 2000 nothing except one year has hit below 20,000—nothing.

Mr. Mark Davidson: What I am explaining to you, sir, is that this does not necessarily relate to births in that year. Those 20,000 could include births in 1980.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: What do you think the discrepancy is, plus or give, 5%?

Mr. Mark Davidson: I wouldn't categorize it as a discrepancy. I would categorize it as a fact. These are not births—

• (1710)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: So what you're telling me is that the numbers you supplied to us, sir, are not accurate.

The Chair: On a point of order, Mr. Batters.

Mr. Dave Batters: I am just wondering if Mr. Karygiannis could sometimes wait until Mr. Davidson is finished his response. Mr. Davidson is often in the middle of his response and Mr. Karygiannis breaks in with his monologue. If there's a question, I'd like hear the answer. I'm waiting to hear Mr. Davidson's response.

The Chair: It's a good point that you're making, Mr. Batters. However, it is not a point of order. I would ask Mr. Karygiannis to give Mr. Davidson time to speak.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Chair, I want to thank you and our colleague. However, we all have different styles of asking questions.

The Chair: It's not a point of order.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: It's not a point of order.

Mr. Davidson, the numbers you're giving us, sir, were specifically asked for people in those years. Are you trying to tell me today that these numbers are not what was asked for?

Mr. Mark Davidson: I'm trying to explain to you, sir, that the year here is the year the certificate was issued. There is nothing in the text that indicates the births took place in that year. So if I could finish—

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: In my original question, you were asked for the year of birth. You haven't answered it.

The Chair: Mr. Davidson, a brief response, please.

Mr. Mark Davidson: I am looking at the response that was given. When I look at the issue, if you look at the first page, it says, "That the Committee send for a report from the department detailing statistics related to the registration of Canadians born abroad and to the registration of births of second-generation Canadians abroad since 1977."

In attempting to respond to that, sir, what we have done is give you some pieces of data that may or may not relate to what you were looking for but that relate to what we can give you. What I'm saying to you is that those 2000, 2005, and 2007 figures do not necessarily relate to births in those years; in fact, I would be surprised. So your extrapolation may not be accurate.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: May not be 5%?

Mr. Mark Davidson: I wouldn't categorize that.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Davidson.

Mr. Carrier, five minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Carrier: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to continue the same line of questioning as my colleague as regards the important recommendations set out in the unanimous report. I believe we were at recommendation 11, which relates to the infamous DND 419 form, asking your Department to reassess whether there is any pressing and substantial reason for continuing not to recognize it as proof of Canadian citizenship.

Have you given that any thought? What is your position on that document?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: The DND 419 is a document that DND never intended to be used as a proof of citizenship. They only issued it for a limited period of time. They only used that document between 1963 and 1979. It doesn't cover the whole period of the 1947 act.

The provision in Bill C-37, in proposed paragraph 3(1)(g), is intended to resolve the problem of the 419 and the confusion that had arisen as a result. If Bill C-37 is passed, the distinction between a 419 and a registration of birth abroad will be eliminated.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Carrier: That seems to address recommendation 12, which follows, relating to production of a straightforward information sheet about DND 419. You have just said that it will be replaced by another form, which is provided for in the bill.

Is that correct?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: The department has already come forward with an information sheet on the significance of the 419. We've been working very closely with the Department of National Defence as well. Their website also contains clarification of the documentation.

But yes, to be as clear as possible, Bill C-37 will resolve this issue in its entirety.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Carrier: Which form did you say will replace it?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: Individuals who want to obtain proof of citizenship would apply for a certificate of Canadian citizenship. Whether or not they had a 419, whether or not their parent had registered their birth in that period of time, whether or not that parent was a father or a mother, the individual would be able to obtain that certificate of Canadian citizenship.

● (1715)

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Carrier: I am writing down your answers.

I was in attendance for the final drafting of the unanimous report. Recommendation 13 relates to the case of Mr. Taylor, who made several applications to your Department to be granted citizenship. We asked that he be granted citizenship as soon as possible, irrespective of the bill. The process can be quite lengthy before a bill goes into effect.

Do you intend to act on that recommendation?

[English]

Mr. Mark Davidson: Mr. Taylor is today a citizen of Canada. He received a subsection 5(4) grant of citizenship in the fall and he obtained his citizenship a few weeks ago in Vancouver. A number of the members of the committee were present, including Madame Faillie.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Carrier: Fine, thank you. That answers my question.

If I have any time remaining, I would like to share it.

[English]

The Chair: You have approximately a minute.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: I just want to add one thing.

The purpose of reviewing the recommendations was to receive your feedback and find out whether they have been implemented. At the same time, this is a message to the government. They are saying that we have to abide by the unanimous report, but it works both ways. We cannot rely on a single recommendation of the unanimous report to claim that it is unanimous and that it is being acted on; it has to be the same thing for all the recommendations.

I understand that you don't want to get involved in politics, but we want it to be noted that when we reach a unanimous agreement, it works both ways, whether it is in the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration or another committee.

[English]

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Komarnicki is next for five minutes, please.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have a couple of points. One of the more notable aspects of Bill C-37 is the first generation born abroad cut-off for citizens to be passed on by descent. That is a big issue.

This cut-off was supported by this committee in a unanimous report. The minister, in her remarks to this committee, stated that she would be guided by a number of principles in drafting this bill. Two of them are that citizenship status should be clear, stable, and not require an application; and that Canadian citizens should have a demonstrated attachment to Canada. This attachment to Canada should apply not only to parents of a child before the child's birth, but also by both parent and child after the child's birth.

There is a process, I understand, that is easily used if the Canadian parent wishes their second-generation child born abroad to have citizenship. The process maintains the principle that an attachment to Canada should be demonstrated by both the parent and the child.

Can you clarify for the committee what this process is and how it respects these principles?

Mr. Mark Davidson: Thank you, Mr. Komarnicki.

The process is one that we've previously spoken about, and it was raised at your meeting last week with other witnesses. It's the process by which Canadian citizen parents can sponsor their dependent children to come to Canada as permanent residents under the family class in IRPA.

They have a window of 22 years while the child is a dependant—and that window can be even longer than 22 years—to sponsor them. As I've said earlier, that sponsorship can be done overseas while the family is living outside of Canada. The sponsors do not have to meet any minimum income requirements, and the child would be exempt from the requirements to meet the excessive demand medical test. That's an exception to the rule that applies to dependent children of individuals sponsored by Canadian citizens.

Once they arrive in Canada as a permanent resident, they would also have an expedited path to citizenship. There's an expedited mechanism for citizenship for minor children contained in paragraph 5(2)(a) of the Citizenship Act. It allows them to become a Canadian citizen almost as soon as they arrive in Canada. They have to fill in an application, but they do not have to meet any residency tests.

Again, this was raised last week in your discussion with other members.

• (1720)

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: Thank you, Mr. Davidson.

I know there may be some other questions, but I think this would be an appropriate time for me to propose a motion.

I propose that on Wednesday, February 13, at 3:30, the witnesses here from Citizenship and Immigration appear before this committee, and that we immediately proceed to clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-37 until consideration is completed.

The Chair: Is there any debate on the motion?

Ms. Chow.

Ms. Olivia Chow: No, I'm fine. I thought I was voting.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Doesn't the parliamentary secretary have to give notice of 48 hours?

The Chair: No. That motion can be proposed.

Is there further debate on the motion? Do you want to hear the motion?

Mr. Robert Carrier: In French.

The Chair: In French? I think I'll forgo that.

The proposed motion is that on Wednesday, February 13, at 3:30, the witnesses from Citizenship and Immigration appear before the committee, and that the committee then go into consideration of clause-by-clause until the bill is completed.

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: You missed the last words.

The Chair: Okay, well, you can see why I've missed it. I'll have the member—

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: Until consideration is completed.

The Chair: Until consideration is completed.

All in favour of the motion?

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Hold it. I have just one question. Are we going to hear the other witnesses who show up on Wednesday?

The Chair: Well, all of the witness list has been exhausted, except one—

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Mr. Chair, the other one I was going to raise is the Canadian Council for Refugees. They couldn't come, because they couldn't get enough notice. So when I talked to them today, I asked them if they could show up here if we had them on Wednesday, and they said they could.

It seems to me they definitely are a—

Mr. Dave Batters: First, let's vote on the motion.

The Chair: Well, the motion, first of all, has to be dealt with, and then we can deal with that.

All in favour of—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: What does the motion say about witnesses? Does it say there will be no more witnesses?

[*English*]

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: This motion requests that we proceed to clause-by-clause consideration of this bill on Wednesday at 3:30 and we continue until consideration of the clause-by-clause is complete. That's the essence of the motion, and you can read it more specifically, but it means we get to where we need to go, no further witnesses. We've had many witnesses.

We could vote on this thing. I call the question. Vote on it and let's deal with it—end of story. Call the question.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: On a point of order and clarification, can the—

The Chair: I'll hear the point of clarification if you want something clarified.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: —clerk tell us how many witnesses are still on the list that we had submitted to come in front of us? Can we have that number, please, how many witnesses we still have on this issue?

The Chair: Just one.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: And who would that be?

The Clerk: That would be your daughter.

The Chair: So we didn't.... I have to call the question.

Okay, debate, Mr. Telegdi.

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Mr. Chair, the parliamentary secretary wants to shut down any further witnesses appearing before this committee. I certainly have no problem going clause-by-clause on Wednesday, but we will do so after the witnesses are heard. The Canadian Council for Refugees wanted to be here, but they could—

Mr. Dave Batters: It's going to be put to a vote. It's not going to be a proclamation by Andrew Telegdi. You're not going to declare what's going to happen.

The Chair: Order, please.

Hon. Andrew Telegdi: Mr. Chair, those people wanted to be here, and they're an important group to hear from. I understand the government side wants to limit witnesses, but what I'm saying is that I'm going to vote against this motion, and then I propose that what we do is hear the witnesses and then go on with the clause-by-clause, because we have to do a level of due diligence.

If the parliamentary secretary wanted to be cooperative, he would have said that we're going to hear the witnesses and then go clause-by-clause.

● (1725)

The Chair: As for whether the witnesses come forward, that's something that I think we will have to decide as a committee. But I have the motion before me right now and I'm going to deal with that.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We have approximately five minutes left to talk about new business—

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: Is my time up?

The Chair: Your time is now up.

We did have a second item on the agenda, which was the committee budget, and I'm hoping we'll get....

Thank you, first of all, to the witnesses for being here today.

There are two budgets, actually, that we have to deal with. I would ask the clerk to tell me what we are looking for here in terms of budgetary allocations.

The Clerk: We should be going in camera.

The Chair: Okay, we will go in camera to do that.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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