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# Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

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**Tuesday, November 13, 2007**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz**

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## Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

• (1535)

[English]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Roger Préfontaine):** Honourable members, I see a quorum.

We can now proceed to the election of the chair. I'm ready to receive motions to that effect.

Mr. MacKenzie.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC):** I nominate Mr. Breitkreuz.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Mr. MacKenzie that Mr. Breitkreuz be elected as chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare Mr. Breitkreuz duly elected chair of the committee.

Before inviting Mr. Breitkreuz to take the chair, if the committee wishes we will now proceed to the election of the vice-chairs.

I am ready to receive motions to this effect.

Mr. Dosanjh.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Vancouver South, Lib.):** I will nominate the Honourable Roy Cullen for vice-chair.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC):** I'll second it.

**The Clerk:** It has been moved by Mr. Dosanjh that the Honourable Roy Cullen be elected as vice-chair.

Are there any further motions for the first vice-chair?

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare Mr. Cullen duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

The second vice-chair must be a member of an opposition party other than the official opposition.

[Translation]

Mr. Ménard.

**Mr. Serge Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, BQ):** I move that Ms. Priddy be elected second vice-chair.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Ménard moves that Ms. Priddy be elected second vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any other motions?

[English]

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare Ms. Priddy duly elected second vice-chair of the committee.

I will now invite the chair, Mr. Breitkreuz, to take the chair.

**The Chair (Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC)):** Thank you very much.

I would like to express my appreciation to the committee for the confidence you've displayed in allowing me again to chair this committee. I've enjoyed working with all of you.

I welcome those who are new to the committee. I think you'll find this is a committee that really focuses on the issues. We get a lot of work done, and I've appreciated chairing this committee. Again, thank you very much.

Some of you have suggested, although it's not on the agenda, that you would like to discuss.... It's not on the agenda, is it? No, it's not on the agenda; it's something we could do, if the committee so wishes.

Is it your pleasure to postpone the discussion of the routine motions and the passing of the same, or would you like to do it now? What is the feeling of the committee?

Mr. MacKenzie.

• (1540)

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** We'd be prepared to move ahead, but we have some changes we would like to discuss with the committee. I'd be more than happy to hand out what those issues are. We could take a few minutes now, if you would like, or do it later. They're not significant changes, but they are changes that we would like to suggest to the committee.

**The Chair:** At the same time as Mr. MacKenzie is putting out his, could we give a copy of what we had previously agreed on to all the committee, so you can compare the two?

**Hon. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Good idea.

**The Chair:** Could I get a copy of the ones from Mr. MacKenzie?

**Hon. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.):** How much are you changing, Dave?

**The Chair:** I'm just looking at it. Are you going to point out where the changes are, to save us—

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Are you doing this in every committee, or only ours?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I think it's a suggestion with all of them, simply for consistency.

**The Chair:** Ms. Priddy, go ahead, please.

**Ms. Penny Priddy (Surrey North, NDP):** Thank you.

While we're waiting for the others to be copied, might I ask a question? There were a number of items that I at least thought I could read from former minutes that were left not quite finished at the end of the last session, and I'm wondering if you could give me guidance as to the appropriate time to raise them.

● (1545)

**The Chair:** At the end of this meeting we can decide when we're going to discuss future business of the committee—

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** And that would include unfinished business from the last session.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Thank you.

Perhaps pictures of grandchildren could be shared, or storytelling, or...

**The Chair:** We're going to enjoy having you on this committee—very creative suggestions.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Mr. Chairman, maybe Dave could take us through the major changes. Does everyone have the documents—

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** We're still missing some copies.

**The Chair:** Who does not have a copy?

**Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville, Lib.):** I don't have the original, and Sue doesn't have the revised.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** I don't have the original.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** If the motion is being abandoned, that's against the rules. If you table a motion—

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** May I make a suggestion? I understand that similar proposals were introduced at other meetings, and the committees adjourned because obviously these are.... They may be minor, but you have to compare and analyze what the significance might be. I think it would be pretty difficult for me to do it. There are brighter minds here than mine that might be able to do it much sooner. I can't. I don't think it's—

**The Chair:** The suggestion before the committee is that we do this at a subsequent time. Is Thursday long enough, or do you want to leave it until Tuesday?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Tuesday would be the right time.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Mr. Chair, that's fine, but in the meantime why couldn't Dave walk us through the main changes he's proposing ?

**The Chair:** Let's decide on one thing at a time.

The suggestion is that we have until next Tuesday to look at these. Would you all like to agree with that?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Okay, we're going to deal with this next Tuesday.

The second suggestion we can now entertain is from Mr. MacKenzie. Are you prepared to do this, Mr. MacKenzie?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Sure. I certainly agree with Mr. Dosanjh. My initial comment was that you should have a chance to go through it.

I'm not sure I can give a huge background to it, but I can certainly point out where the changes are. I think for the most part it was an attempt to bring consistency, and if you like, Mr. Chair, I can point out where—

**The Chair:** Okay. Go ahead.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** The first one would be with respect to the subcommittee on agenda and procedure. The existing one is the chair, the two vice-chairs, who would be Mr. Cullen and Ms. Priddy, and then a member from the Bloc. We're suggesting increasing that, which would also include the parliamentary secretary. But a quorum would go back to being three people.

**The Chair:** I'll add my two cents' worth at this point.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** And a second member from the Liberal party. I'm sorry.

**The Chair:** Yes. But what has been happening at this committee is that in reality the subcommittee on agenda and procedure has very rarely met. We generally took a few minutes at the end of our meetings....

You would have to decide if you would like to continue with the usual practice of having the whole committee decide.

**Some hon members:** Yes.

**The Chair:** We found it was a waste of time to hash it out at one committee and then have it come to the main committee, where we did it again. Those members who had just sat for two hours and hashed it out felt frustrated.

My parliamentary secretary may be a little bit peeved with me.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** No. You have the majority on that side. Maybe some committees have not worked as well in the past as this one has. I think they may have been trying to quantify the whole thing a bit better. At the end of the day you have the votes and you will make that decision.

● (1550)

**The Chair:** Okay.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Mr. Chairman.

[English]

**The Chair:** Yes, Mr. Ménard.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** I think that we can indeed continue to proceed as we did during the previous session. However, I think that at some point, with unanimous consent, we could entrust a complicated question precisely to the type of subcommittee you were suggesting. If we feel that a question merits in-depth discussion but do not have enough time to examine it ourselves, we could certainly strike a temporary subcommittee. That is why I would be in agreement with the chairman's suggestion that we keep the same rule as during the previous session.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Monsieur Ménard.

Did somebody else have their hand up?

Mr. Cullen.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Mr. Chair, in the last session we dealt with things in the committee as a whole, and I think it worked well. In fact, I don't recall a steering committee meeting. If there was one, I obviously missed it.

The problem is that if you leave it in, when does it meet and when does it not meet? If you don't have any subcommittee, then it's clear. If the chair wants to bring people in to discuss some feature or proposal, the chair can do that. Once you leave it in, it is in never-never land as to when the committee meets and on what issues.

I don't think we need one. We didn't have one in the past. We might have had one formally, but informally I don't think we ever used it.

**The Chair:** Ms. Priddy.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

To the member, I just wonder if there is a rationale you can give to me very quickly, in 30 seconds, for why you've brought this forward.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** All I know is that it's being put before all the committees, and I think it simply quantifies some of these things to try to make for consistency amongst committees.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Thank you.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** And at the end of the day, I'm certain that each committee will make its own rules.

But I think that was the intent.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Right. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Cullen.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Just to make another brief comment—and nothing of this is against Dave and the parliamentary secretary—I've been a parliamentary secretary and know that in some committees there's an objection to having the parliamentary secretary on the steering committee, because they're privy to a lot of information. The feeling is they could try to drive the agenda in a certain way the committee members as a whole may not appreciate. I know I've been excluded in the past from steering committees when I was a parliamentary secretary. So I just think it's that way.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Maybe you were partisan.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** Okay, we won't comment on your past experiences. But on this committee we've often included the parliamentary secretary because he had insights as to what legislation would be coming down—approximately when—and it helped the committee to decide. That's why he was part of the committee that decided.

Go ahead.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** If we move to the next one on the reduced quorum, I think the addition there was to add that at least one member of the government be present, but also to limit the time that the committee had to wait for the meeting to be able to move ahead—because I don't think we've ever had that time in there. So for those people...

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** But why is it outside the parliamentary precinct?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Because I think we're going to be moving the committee.

Perhaps the clerk can tell us, but I think we're going to be moving to different places, aren't we?

**The Clerk:** Not to my knowledge.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** No?

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I don't think we should be meeting outside the parliamentary precinct unless we have an order to travel.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I thought we were going back to 131 Queen Street, as we'd heard.

**The Clerk:** That's a new building, but it's considered part of the parliamentary precinct, sir, for the purposes of committee meetings.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** What if we had any consultations and we travelled? Is that what you're meaning?

**The Chair:** Yes, I think it would apply to that.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** And that might very well be.

**The Chair:** Yes, it would include that.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** But why would you need different rules for within the precinct and outside the precinct? What's the logic there?

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I was concerned that people don't get there. I really like things to take place in the parliamentary precinct. I know that one building is quite a ways away and I would hate business to be get done really fast on the basis of this.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I'll have to get more of a response to you on that, but I think Mr. Dosanjh might be right, and Mr. Cullen, but it's for when we're out.

● (1555)

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** I think the one thing, Mr. Chair, that is quite embarrassing is having witnesses who have come from far and wide and they sit there and wait and wait and wait. That's very embarrassing, I find.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I'll get more information on that.

And on the distribution of documents, I think it's only to make clear that it's only the clerk....

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Only the clerk could do what?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** It's only the clerk who can distribute the....

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Documents?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Yes. If you look at the existing number 4.

**The Chair:** That's always been the case, has it not?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I think, though, they've just added "only", so that it's....

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** So if one of the members of the committee brought an article they thought was really interesting and germane to what we're discussing, they couldn't just flash it around? Normally I'd probably go to the clerk anyway, but....

**The Chair:** Yes, but it would have to be distributed in both official languages for the clerk to distribute it.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** That's true.

**The Chair:** With the permission of members of the committee, you could probably distribute it.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** That's what he said: only with regard to the committee.

**The Chair:** The clerk has also made a good point, that if we have a witness who comes in and wishes to distribute information in only one language to the whole committee, it would have to go through the clerk. You just can't come in here and distribute whatever you want—and this has always been the case.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** But we can if we say—

**The Chair:** As members of the committee, if you—

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Yes.

**An hon. member:** With the consent of the committee.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** And it's in here too: with the consent of the committee.

**The Chair:** Yes, you can do anything with consent.

I believe you can do anything with consent, if you get unanimous consent?

**The Clerk:** Yes, sir. Anything legal.

**The Chair:** Right.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Is the intent of this to ensure that the material given to members is in both languages, or is the intent to control who can give the material? If it's the latter, I have serious problems with it. If it's the former, I understand why it's being done, but what we're then doing by imposing this obligation is saying to witnesses who may be just ordinary Joe Blows like myself from the other end of the country, and who may have material they want to distribute, that we are prescribing limits on how they can do it. It's all right for us to be limited, but I think it's difficult for us to place a limit on witnesses who come from far and wide to tell us what they feel.

**The Chair:** I think that's a point well taken—and maybe the clerk can clarify this—but usually before those witnesses come, they are told what the procedures are at the committee, and that if they have anything they want distributed, they have to give it to the clerk so he can ensure it's in both official languages. Am I correct?

**The Clerk:** That's right, sir.

If I could just add to Mr. Dosanjh's comment. that's very pertinent. It's been addressed in the past. In your situation, sir, I think the witness would have to give out his document in the hallway. The committee has no jurisdiction outside of this room. If that witness brings documents in only one language, he could stand outside and do this. Anyway, this is what the motion leads to.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** On that point—and we all know witnesses are told it should be in both official languages, but we all know that witnesses arrive and the document is in one language—it's unfair for francophone members not to have the same document.

I have been in committees where the committee as a whole—even the francophone members, if we're talking about a document that is only in English, but it could be the other way—have said they're prepared to accept the documents in English only. The committee can do that, presumably, but if it's just in one official language, the committee has to agree to accept the document in only one language, because it's unfair. It would be similar if a francophone witness came to the committee. I can read a bit of French, but I would like to see the document in English and French.

•(1600)

**The Chair:** Point well taken.

You can continue, Mr. MacKenzie.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** The other one was staff at in camera meetings. What we're asking is that the committee agree that one party staff member—

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Why? When we have in camera meetings, it's because we know, and our personal staff know, that we have to hold that secure. I don't understand why all of a sudden our in camera meetings have to have party staff at them. I'm not keen on that at all.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** We're just asking you to consider that.

**The Chair:** On that point, we have always in the past allowed one staff member to be here. This is not a change.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I'm not talking about our personal staff, but I don't need members of the party. But that's not what the motion says. He's adding somebody else. He says "personal and party staff member".

There are enough places leaking information on reports without—

**The Chair:** Yes, Mr. MacKenzie.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I think the current rules are that it's one of our staff members. You might have a party—

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** We're not having problems with that.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** No, but right now we have a coordinator from our whip's office with us, and you might have a coordinator from your whip's office who is not—

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I don't mind the whip.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** And that's what it's intended to be.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Well, say that, because it sounds like it's a political party.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Specify it ,and we'll move on with that.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** You're fine with that, if we put in that it's a member of the whip's office?

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** That's fine, yes.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Usually parties like to keep track of what's happening.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** That's something different from reading the word "party".

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** Ms. Brown.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** I understand that the original version said "each party's whip staff", and it was changed to "party staff" at some point earlier this morning at the defence committee—

**The Chair:** Okay, I wasn't aware of that.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** I think people are comfortable with "whip's staff", but not with "party staff".

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** It got added into it. This is the way the original document is, but it got added in at the other committee.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Because they agreed with "whip" as opposed to "party".

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Yes.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** "Party" is too loose.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Sure.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** The next one was that the in camera meetings be transcribed and they be kept with the clerk for later consultation by members of Parliament, and that the transcripts be destroyed at the end of the session.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** That's normal.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I think half of this is maybe practice that's already being done, but trying to put it into a—

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** What happens? We had the subcommittee on anti-terrorism. We had all the witnesses in the previous Parliament, and then we came back and brought back all that testimony and we basically just kept trucking, and then we drafted the report. If you destroy all that information, how do you deal with that? That saved us a heck of a lot of time.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I think there's a difference here, Roy. This is the in camera meetings.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** In camera, yes, I know.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Those weren't in camera. Those were witness meetings that you brought back. That was just regular testimony.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** But wouldn't we have also had the benefit of the in camera discussions?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I don't think we did.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** My sense is that the in camera discussions range far and wide, and people say things in those that you don't want printed ultimately anywhere.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** But they might be valuable to the committee, right, as long as they're destroyed at the end of the session?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Absolutely. Or—

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Yes.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Or you could have in camera meetings with witnesses. We've had witnesses, because they've felt personally threatened—

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Yes, but that's different.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** That's a witness meeting in camera, and I think you'd want to have access to those beyond one session.

**The Chair:** The clerk has some valuable information. And then I have another comment too. The clerk is going to make a comment on what the practice has been in the past.

**The Clerk:** If you specify "destroy", that means destroy. Here, in this one, there's no specification to that effect. What will happen with the documents is that they're archived and not accessible for 30 years, which is the usual practice.

**The Chair:** Okay.

I have a question for you, sir. We had a witness who was willing to come to the committee and appear in camera only. And if that witness had felt that at some point that could then become public, it would have made it seem that the witness had not appeared, if we didn't have this kind of protection.

• (1605)

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Thirty years' protection.

**The Chair:** It's 30 years, yes, but in this case she felt personally threatened by someone and 30 years may not have been enough. I don't know. But this is something we have to consider if we don't destroy in camera evidence, that some witnesses would be greatly disturbed by that.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I can tell you that one of my objections to this, the way it's drafted, is about later consultation by members of Parliament. Quite frankly, members of Parliament, unless they're members of the committee, are not able to go. It's members of the committee who have access, not any members of Parliament.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** The existing one says "for consultation by members of the committee".

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Yes, and it's changed so that any member of Parliament can go and read stuff, and that's not right. What's the whole point of having in camera?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Yes, "by members of the committee" would specify it, make it narrow.

**The Chair:** That's something we can hash out and think about until next Tuesday.

Yes, Monsieur Ménard.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** While we are making corrections, we should also consider the fact that in French, the term is broader. Oh no, I see. When we say "members of Parliament", I suppose that includes senators. Alright, but the term *parlementaires* is very broad.

[English]

**The Chair:** Senators are members of Parliament, yes.

**The Clerk:** They're not members of the House, but they're members of Parliament.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** It is very broad. In French it is broader because it includes provincial MLAs, whereas when you say "members of Parliament", there is only one Parliament in Canada.

In any case, you should revise the French translation as well, to make sure that it says the same thing as the English version.

[English]

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Mr. Chair, in looking at this item I'd like to know a little bit more about these documents once they're archived. You know, things are sometimes archived and historians use them, and writers later, very much later. Thirty years hence, if someone wants to write a book and they go to the archives, the in camera meetings might be useful. I'd like to know a little bit more of the background to the archiving process, who accesses it, what sort of history is behind that, what the incidence is of accessing these kinds of documents through archives.

**The Chair:** Are you asking for that to be answered on Tuesday?

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Yes, if the clerk could come back with some information about that, I would appreciate it.

**The Chair:** Okay, let's clarify this. Are you asking who can access the archives? What's your question?

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** I am not asking who can access it. I'm interested to know who accesses these materials subsequently, what has been the history, what has been the precedent. What kinds of people access them, or are they accessed at all?

If they're just archived and then no one goes to them, what's the point of archiving these things if no one is interested in them? Are there historians or writers who eventually access this material? It might be useful to them.

**The Chair:** I don't know if we have a study on it. I don't know if we can answer your question, Mr. Cullen, because I don't know if anybody has kept track of who goes into the archives and what they look at.

Ms. Barnes.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Perhaps the clerk can clarify. I remember from before, charring committees, that as a chair you had the option of doing an in camera meeting with transcription or without transcription. If you had it with transcription, the transcription was kept at the office of the clerk, and only members of the committee could access that. The idea was for members who had to work on reports who had missed a meeting could catch up—or, potentially, researchers. I always thought researchers could also access it to get the correct information if they were given instructions during those sessions, especially during the drafting of reports.

But it was always at the chair's discretion to figure out whether it was in camera with transcript or without, and I always understood that they were destroyed. So it is news to me that anything was archived, if it was other than what Mr. Cullen was talking about, with a witness with transcription.

**The Clerk:** When the committee gives no directives as to the disposition of the documents, then they're archived. But they're kept in camera, kept not accessible because they are in camera.

• (1610)

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** But they're accessible after 30 years.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Mr. Mayes, I didn't see your hand.

**Mr. Colin Mayes (Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** I wonder if we could solve this by simply putting these words in: "and that these transcripts may be destroyed at the end of the session by a motion of the committee".

If the committee decides they're sensitive and wants to protect a witness, then it can make a motion to do so. Is that reasonable?

**The Chair:** Ms. Priddy.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Thank you.

I don't know whether we're debating this or not, because I heard you say we're going to wait till next Tuesday. I'm not sure what is appropriate at this stage in terms of comment, but it seems to me that an in camera transcript that can be accessed by any member of Parliament is a bit of an oxymoron, because it's no longer in camera. It's there for anybody, 308 people, and senators, etc., to paw through.

That worries me—quite a lot actually, given some of the things that I expect are spoken about at this committee. I guess I'm less concerned about how they get destroyed or archived than I am about the fact that you would go to the trouble of having an in camera meeting that is then open to 400 people.

**The Chair:** I don't know how much longer we want to discuss this.

Ms. Brown.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** I'm wondering if you, as the chair, or if the parliamentary secretary or the clerk knows where all this rewritten set of rules comes from. It seems to me that the defence committee wasted time on it this morning. We're going to waste two meetings on it, and it seemed to me after 13 years that these rules, the simpler rules, worked pretty well. So under whose direction or whose pen did these come to be?

I'd like to know that before I vote on them next Tuesday.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** And we don't have to use them.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** We don't have to use them. No, we're masters of our own fate. But perhaps you could find out, Mr. Chair, unless you know right now.

**The Chair:** I can't answer your question. I didn't distribute them.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Maybe Mr. MacKenzie can tell us where he got them from.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** The same place as everyone else—

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Which is...?



**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** —who's going to be going to the committees; they've come from the whip's office.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Your whip's office? Okay.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Yes. We brought them here to discuss them, not to try to force them on anybody. My suggestion is that we would want to look at them and then come back. There may be things in here, obviously.

This has turned into an interesting discussion. I haven't been here that many years, but Ms. Barnes and Mr. Cullen have, and obviously in their discussions about the transcripts of the in camera meeting, I think we've all learned something as a result of having the discussion here, whether we adopt this or not. I think we will go away with a better understanding of what the process is.

We all might have had an opinion, but I think we're going to find out from the clerk what the real answer is about the transcripts and so on. So I think from that perspective....

This, for the most part, was to quantify a lot of stuff we're already doing.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Mr. Chair, could you tell us what you did? What did you do when we had in camera meetings when we were preparing reports? Did you transcribe?

**The Chair:** No. As far I know, they were not transcribed. The committee did not.... Usually I did whatever the committee decided it wanted to do.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** So it would be a change for this committee, then.

**The Chair:** I believe so, yes.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** We're talking public safety and security issues, and we're going to transcribe them.

Thank you. I just wanted that information.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Just so there's no misunderstanding, we're not asking for this as public safety.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** You're asking for everywhere.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** This is in all the committees, yes. The committees will make up their minds about what they wish to do.

**The Chair:** Are you ready to continue, Mr. MacKenzie?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Yes. The next one was on working meals. I think the only addition we put in there is to authorize the clerk, in consultation with the chair, to make the necessary arrangements.

**The Chair:** Maybe the clerk can help on this one, on the meals. I understand there was a limit to how many working meals you could have in a session. Was there? I don't know.

• (1615)

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I think it was just to get them all similar across the board.

The next one was on witness expenses. I think all we did was ask that the committee, if requested, would reimburse the reasonable child care expenses of the witnesses. I don't think it exists today. So if we had someone here who had need for child care while they're attending here, this would authorize the payment of those expenses.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I think it would be better if the clerk clarified how many witnesses from each organization would come. That's more relevant to us. Sometimes it's two, right? Do we not offer witnesses reimbursement? Would they have to ask for it?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** If it's even there today, they would have to ask.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** This is like a reverse onus: you have to know enough to ask.

**The Chair:** Ms. Priddy.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** I'm wondering if the folks who put this forward would consider family care as opposed to child care, because many people may have to have somebody look after an ailing spouse or parent; it's not necessarily only children. Perhaps that would be satisfactory.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Going back, I think the other one says one member from an organization, right, the existing one?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** It says "not exceeding two".

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** This is for travel and accommodation, number 7, witnesses' expenses.

**The Chair:** That travel, accommodation, and living expenses be reimbursed.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** Why would we offer reimbursement for those?

**The Chair:** Okay, that is a change.

Mr. Norlock brought this forward last time, and it was agreed to: that if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation, and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses, not exceeding one representative per organization, and that in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be made at the discretion of the chair. So we only allowed one, but we offered travel, accommodation, and living expenses.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Mr. Chair, motion number 5 in the existing rules says: "That...reasonable travel, accommodation, and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses, not exceeding two per organization, and that in exceptional circumstances" more could be allowed.

**The Chair:** Yes. I don't think that what you're reading was the practice at the committee. This is just a suggestion made by....

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** These are standard?

**The Chair:** Yes. They were not—

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** You had amended them?

**The Clerk:** The committee had adopted them. The one I just read is what the practice was at this committee.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Okay. But my sense is that two would be fine. I don't have a problem with going back to two. There are some organizations that—

**The Chair:** Well, you could have two. But if you get a request from every organization for two, your budget will be shot very quickly. If you limit it to one, then in exceptional circumstances, which is what is said, we could have two. So it's protection for the budget that we have to work under.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** That's fine. Anyway, these are all coming back on Tuesday, I'm assuming, so that we can talk about them.

**The Chair:** We'll go back to Mr. MacKenzie.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I've just been informed that these have all come from other committees and Marleau and Montpetit. It's not just that somebody came up with the idea; they are a collection of best practices, if you will, from other committees in the House.

**The Chair:** Ms. Priddy.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Could someone make note of the fact that I really would like to see it say "family care" and not just "child care" for discussion next time, please?

Thank you.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** The next one is on priority of legislation, which is a new one for this committee. It's to speed up the process with private members' or government bills.

• (1620)

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Look, I think that—

**The Chair:** You need to be recognized by the chair, Mr. Dosanjh.

Go ahead.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Thank you.

I think this is going a bit far, trying to control what a committee can or can't do. Committees are essentially their own bosses, as is Parliament collectively, and from time to time a committee may decide to do something. If Parliament wants to limit the terms of reference of the committee to certain things, then Parliament can do that collectively.

I don't believe this should be a rule. We can visit this issue from time to time if some members feel that some bill should take priority over everything else.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** It would be easy to ignore private members' bills.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** They have a six-month rule.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Yes, but they get put off.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Yes. It's a six-month rule for a reason.

**The Chair:** Mr. Mayes.

**Mr. Colin Mayes:** Mr. Chair, I always thought that committees were at the pleasure of the House and that we were responsible to the House to make sure that we do the business of the House in a timely fashion.

I ran into this issue when I chaired the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. I checked to see whether there was a policy.

There wasn't a policy, but the bill that was sent to us was definitely something the committee wanted to deal with.

My interpretation is that the committee is at the pleasure of the House, and so we should do the business of the House, as the House sets that priority. If it's forwarded by the House as a bill, I think it's a priority.

**The Chair:** Ms. Brown.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** The convention, as I understand it, is about government bills. Prior to the government of 2004 to 2006, a lot of private members' business was not votable. In other words, it was to create discussion around a new subject and get Parliament thinking about it. If you were lucky, you would put a bill forward, it would be debated, and in the next session the government might pick it up and make it a government bill.

But I sure hate having the committee strangled by private members' bills. I call it everybody's private hobby horse coming forward in a bill, and to set aside an important study you're doing for a private member's bill.... I don't want to do that. I don't mind a government bill.

**Mr. Colin Mayes:** I should clarify that. It's only government bills.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Only government bills, yes. But don't forget, the House now sends us these private members' bills, because they're all votable, which is another hare-brained scheme that happened in the last few years.

**The Chair:** Let's have order here.

Mr. Cullen.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** I was going to make the same point, that by convention, by operation of this committee, I think we work things out. Even with government bills, if we were seized with an important issue and a study, to think that if suddenly a bill were presented we'd have to drop everything.... Being reasonable people, we'll work through that, but to put it into the rules of the committee, I think, would be wrong. In a worst-case scenario, the government could manipulate that agenda. I'm sure they wouldn't, but it's something we need to be cautious about.

**The Chair:** I guess you're getting some feedback.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** That's fine. That's what we wanted to do.

**The Chair:** Monsieur Ménard.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Mr. Chairman, I share the opinion of Mr. Dosanjh. We would not like to see that added to the rules.

[English]

**The Chair:** All right.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** We'll decide as a committee next Tuesday, and we'll live with that.

The next one was the 48 hours' notice on motions.

**The Chair:** This seems to have been the practice of the committee anyway.

•(1625)

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** No, it hasn't.

**The Chair:** Except for amendments to bills, 48 hours' notice be given before any substantive motion be considered by the committee.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Yes, but the time period has changed.

**The Chair:** It's always been 48 hours.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** It's that a period of notice be calculated from the time the motion has been distributed by the clerk. It used to be from the time it was filed.

**The Chair:** I haven't read this, but I'll read it out loud:

That 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the Committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to the business under consideration; and that the notice of motion be filed with the Clerk of the Committee and distributed to members in both official languages.

That's what we have been doing, Ms. Barnes.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** No, there's a difference here. It used to be that people would drop motions into the clerk's office, and it was from when the motion got dropped that the time period ran. This is saying that it's now from the clerk's distribution of the motion. That's the thing I wanted to clarify. It's when the notice goes out from the office, because it depends on how they do it.

**The Chair:** We have it that way because when the members of the committee get it, that would have to be—

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Let's make it a practical thing. So if it goes out on Friday at four o'clock, are we dealing with it on Monday?

**The Chair:** No, 48 hours is usually calculated on working days, business days. It wouldn't be Saturday and Sunday.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** That's not what this says.

**The Chair:** We can add "sitting days".

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Mr. Chair, I have a humble suggestion. If it has not really interfered with the work of the committee, if in the past it's always been that the notice is deemed to have been given the moment the motion is dropped with the clerk, why change it?

**The Chair:** Because you need time.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** Absolutely, the committee in its wisdom can say, all right, we haven't been able to prepare, and we're going to postpone the discussion another 24 hours.

**The Chair:** You do need to have time for translation. Just because it's dropped at the clerk's office on Friday.... You should have it in the hands of the members of the committee. It's protection for you and for everybody.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** I am given to understand that quite often the motions are actually in both languages when they're dropped by the members.

**The Chair:** But not always, and if you don't have some protection you could have something dropped off.... I think Ms. Barnes' question on how this translates practically is a good one, because if you drop something off on Friday and then all of a sudden Monday we have to deal with it, boy, I'll tell you, members of the committee would be up.

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh:** So be it. It has been thus for a long time and it has not presented a problem. Why are we changing it? Give me some rationale as to why this change is being sought.

**The Chair:** Ms. Priddy.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My challenge with this is that there then is no real timeframe around the motion, because it is 48 hours after the clerk distributes it. The clerk could distribute it the next day, four days later, a week later. I'm sure it wouldn't go that long, but potentially there's nothing to keep that from happening. So when you say 48 hours from filing, which is a fairly standard committee process I've seen, then there is some guarantee around time and expectation. If people aren't ready to deal with it, then so be it; they can put it off until the next meeting. I am concerned that there will then be no timeframe in which the clerk must do it, so it's 48 hours after the clerk distributes it. Maybe that's a week after I put it in, so I worry about the looseness of that.

**The Chair:** I still think the practice of this committee has been 48 hours, and that was just the sitting days of Parliament. If you have it otherwise, it's not included in here, but that's been our usual practice—the sitting days of Parliament. Hasn't it?

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I think we were interpreting the rule as "two sleeps", so the Friday-Monday stuff was legitimate.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Not in my committee.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** It varied from committee to committee.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** If you had it in on Friday at 3:30, the first meeting it could appear at would be Tuesday at 3:30.

•(1630)

**The Chair:** That's right. I'm sure it's been sitting days. I agree with you, Ms. Brown. I'm sure it's been sitting days.

Anyway, go ahead.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I would just offer to you that I don't think this is intended to do anything other than to simply put it into a format. It's like the debate we're having here—everybody has a different interpretation. If we have it written, it becomes pretty clear to everyone.

I think what we're saying there is that there are some different interpretations of what's gone on in other committees, so if we get some of these things in a more uniform format, then everybody understands.

**The Chair:** Okay, so that difference has been clarified.

Go ahead.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** The next one was motions deemed to be abandoned, which is brand new.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** No, absolutely not.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** That's fair.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** It's silly. All you're doing is saying that if you don't deal with it, you have to start all over again. I like the tabling of motions that come up when people feel they need to come up.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** The other change here was the speaking order, and I'm sure that people will have opinions about the proposed speaking order that's here. It's somewhat different from what our practice was in the past.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Where's the counterpart to that in this one?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I didn't see it on the existing one. We did it—

**The Chair:** It's right here, in number 4. Yes, number 4 is what we used.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** Oh, that. I'm sorry.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** It's pretty well the same, as I see it.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** No, it isn't.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** What about the sequencing going back? Isn't that different?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I think what we did in the past is that we went down that side, then we had one, then it went down and the Bloc had one, and then we got one, right? It was you and the Bloc, and then us....

**The Chair:** Okay, I'll tell you how it worked, because I had this all memorized.

Every party had seven minutes. The opposition parties had three seven-minute rounds, and then it went to the government for seven minutes.

Then it went to the Liberals for five minutes, then it went over here for five minutes, then it went to the Bloc for five minutes, then it went to the government for five minutes, then it went back to the Liberals for five minutes, then back to the government, and then the final round for the Liberals because you have four on the committee, and then back to the government.

The reason we did it was so that every MP on the committee would get one turn before anybody got two turns. That's how I ran the committee before, and everybody agreed with that. It worked, and I don't want to change it, unless you agree.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** That's good. I like that.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** That one is okay, but you went through the other two a little quickly.

[English]

**The Chair:** Which one do you want to look at?

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** I am referring to the motion on the 48-hour notice. You want to add two sitting days. The 48-hour period would mean two sitting days rather than two calendar days? So what do we do if an emergency meeting is convened during the summer? If we submit a motion and two sitting days are needed as notice, what do we do?

[English]

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** It doesn't say two sitting days.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** The idea is to give people 48 hours to study the motion. So it has to be 48 hours, period.

[English]

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** That's what it says.

**The Chair:** I agree. I think it's protection for the members to have a chance to look at the motions. That's been the purpose of having 48 hours' notice.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** But if a meeting is convened while the House is not in session, which is possible, we cannot ask for a 48-hour sitting day notice, since we are not sitting.

[English]

**The Chair:** I see what you're saying.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I don't think this says anything about sitting days.

**The Chair:** That was our discussion.

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I'm just going back to what we have here. This doesn't say sitting days; it says 48 hours from the time the clerk distributes it.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** You might need to include that the clerk should immediately distribute it.

•(1635)

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** I'm just thinking about when you come back on Tuesday.

**The Chair:** The clerk has made a suggestion, which we can consider next Tuesday, that we put "working days" into the wording. Then if you have an emergency meeting you would have two normal working days, which would not include Saturday and Sunday. You could put that in the motion instead of "sitting days". That would address your concern.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Yes.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay, that's something to think about.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** Let's move on to the other one now. You went a bit fast, you skipped my favourite one.

[English]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Monsieur Ménard.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** There is the allocation of speaking time.

Will we be sitting Thursday, or next Tuesday?

[English]

**The Chair:** In one week, Tuesday.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** As you know, I feel that certain witnesses have perfected the art of dodging committee questions. They answer the first question at length, avoid the topic completely and come back later. Mr. Zaccardelli, if memory serves, had mastered the art.

I will be drafting my text accordingly. I simply want to warn you so that you will not be too surprised when I submit this to you, Mr. Chairman. We had already discussed it, but we were not in agreement with the majority. Nevertheless, I think that it is worth repeating the proposal. Rather than allocating seven minutes, we would allocate three and a half minutes during the first turn, and two and a half minutes subsequently. However, only the time used to ask questions would be taken into account. In that way, we would really have the time to ask them.

Here, two extremes are possible. Some members have a tendency to make speeches rather than ask questions. I think that if we ask witnesses to come, it is because we want to hear them. However, certain professional witnesses give answers that are completely off-topic and go on forever when they don't want to reply.

I can tell you that this method practiced by certain witnesses here has even been the subject of newspaper reports, at least in Quebec. When he was questioned in reference to the sponsorship scandal, Mr. Jean Pelletier, Jean Chrétien's former chief of staff, said openly to reporters that appearing before a committee was not complicated. In reply to the first question, one simply has to deliver the speech one has prepared, which fills up the seven minutes.

I note that there are two disadvantages; one is minor and the other one merits consideration. With this system, it is difficult to calculate the exact time needed to question witnesses. We won't have unlimited time. As for the second disadvantage, I think that technology may come to our assistance, otherwise I will give someone my watch. We could use chronometers. When we finished asking a question, the chair or the clerk could push the button, and the clock would stop. When the member asked a new question, the chair or clerk would push the button and the chronometer would start running again, and so on and so forth.

I would like us to try once more to find a way of countering the tactic certain witnesses use to avoid answering questions. Would calculating only the time used by the member to ask his question, rather than the time taken by the witness to answer it, not constitute an improvement over the current procedure?

[English]

**The Chair:** That's a very interesting suggestion.

I have one question before I go to Mr. Norlock and Ms. Priddy.

Mr. Ménard, would you at the same time suggest that we limit the answers of the witnesses? If you allow three and a half minutes for the questions on a seven-minute round, the witness would have to complete their answers within the seven minutes. Is that what you're suggesting? Otherwise they could still stonewall the committee, making a ten-minute....

• (1640)

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** I am not suggesting that we limit the replies. Most of the witnesses who come here are not professional witnesses, even if some of them are. In my opinion, some witnesses know how to use the procedure so as to avoid providing the committees with information. Be that as it may, I don't think that the witnesses would abuse the situation. If they did, the chair could always intervene and stop them. There is no doubt that that does lead to some uncertainty

when it comes to calculating the time, but I think that that disadvantage is insignificant when weighed against the possibility of being able to get real answers to our questions.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Norlock.

**Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC):** I don't know how that helps or hinders. Here's the way I see it. The person asking the question can take six and a half minutes of their seven minutes because they don't put much weight on the witness and want to get their point across.

I think this begins to limit the questioner and the answerer. If you really want an answer to your question you'll make it succinct. If the witness is obfuscating, you will interrupt that witness and direct them to answer the question—as you so ably did on several occasions, sir.

I really don't see the benefit of what you're suggesting. I think it depends on the quality of the questioner.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** I was making that suggestion in view of our discussing it the next time we meet. I submitted the idea so that you would not be too surprised. When it comes to making an important change, some people like to have a chance to think about it before making up their minds.

[English]

**The Chair:** Ms. Priddy.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to go back to something that you described just a moment ago, which is how you allocated the questions last time. I gather it was, as you described it, by representation. Therefore, the NDP gets one question, and I guess the Bloc gets two, and the Liberals get four, or whatever that was, which I would suggest I have a primary difficulty with.

What you just described, Mr. MacKenzie, or what is described in here actually expands that so that you would simply continue doing the rotation.

Am I understanding your change correctly that it would then potentially add the number of questions that, in this case, the smallest party, the NDP, would ask? I'm following along here with your example of Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, NDP, and then doing that same round again.

**The Chair:** Ms. Priddy, in a two-hour session, depending on how many other questions there were, the NDP usually got two questions.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Okay, so there was not a policy that they got only one?

**The Chair:** No, they could get two. What I just described was the first round of questioning, and after the first round we went back to the same rotation as before, and then the NDP got a second question usually—unless we had only a one-hour session.

In a one-hour session, though, the government suffered the most. They would get very few questions.

**Ms. Penny Priddy:** Just to go back, I'd be interested to see what Monsieur Ménard brings forward, but I recognize that people could use their whole seven minutes. I just don't think it's the function of this committee to produce householders for its members. I guess I've watched too many people just produce householders in their posing or posing of questions that really aren't questions; they're articles for householders. So it's not a particularly useful use of time when it's limited anyway and when we're trying to get in an extra question.

**The Chair:** Yes. Usually the attitude of all members at this committee has been that it's your seven minutes; do as you wish. For me to tell you what to do with your seven minutes usually doesn't play out very well.

So it's going to be an interesting discussion, Monsieur Ménard, because there will have to be a change in the usual practice of this committee.

Mr. Norlock.

**Mr. Rick Norlock:** I understand where Ms. Priddy is coming from, but let me just say, in some of the instances in the last committee, people gave up their time to the fourth party to have extra questions, because in that particular case they appreciated the direction. So there's nothing stopping someone from giving up their time to another person.

I think we did that. Mr. Ménard did that, I can recall, on several occasions. So I have to go back to the fact that sometimes, despite our partisanship, we do get things done and we do the right thing.

If a member wants to take seven minutes to get a point across, I think that's his or her business, and I don't see where we need to be chastised if we, in some people's eyes, waste our time with the witnesses.

•(1645)

**The Chair:** Are there any more points to make?

Mr. Cullen.

**Hon. Roy Cullen:** I'm concerned about trying to overregulate this. We have some members who will ask a question for six and a half minutes. If a witness is deviating in his or her answer from time to time, then frankly—I know it's a bit rude—we just try to get him or her back on track.

If you try to limit the time of the questioning, there are some times when you want a sequence of questions. You want to ask one question, you want to get an answer to that, and then you want to ask another as a follow-up and try to put the puzzle together. So what are

you going to have, the clerk with a stopwatch cumulatively adding all this? This is nuts.

**The Chair:** For those of you who are new at this committee, I have sometimes given Mr. Cullen 11 minutes. I think I gave Ms. Barnes over 10 minutes at the last meeting.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Never, never.

**The Chair:** I have not cut you off. So the practice here is that, as a chair, I use my discretion if I think the questions and the answers are good, but if I sense that everybody is just playing games, I usually limit it to seven minutes.

Ms. Barnes.

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** I think in general this committee has worked pretty well. I really do think that. We put out a report last spring that got kudos from a lot of centres.

I think, though, regarding a lot of the concerns Serge is bringing forward, that if you, as chair, at the beginning of every meeting just said pro forma that all our members will have a ten-minute round or a seven-minute round—including the answers—and that we appreciate the witnesses being here with their expertise and want them to be very succinct in their answers.... I think some of these people come here and get nervous and then they just go on.... I think a little bit of prodding by the chair might be positive.

**The Chair:** But some of them don't, Ms. Barnes. Some of them are masters at manipulation because they don't want to get—

**Hon. Sue Barnes:** Oh yes, we have those.

**The Chair:** Yes.

Monsieur Ménard.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Serge Ménard:** It is true that as chair, you managed to conciliate flexibility and impartiality. I hope that we will continue with you. I had thought up these rules with other chairmen in mind.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay, this is taking a lot longer than I thought.

Do you have anything else?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie:** That's all I had.

**The Chair:** Okay, are there any other comments?

Okay, we will meet again on Tuesday, November 13 and November 20.

This meeting stands adjourned.









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