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Thursday, October 1, 2009

—
Chair

Mr. Lee Richardson

Standing Committee on International Trade

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•(1110)

[English]

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Jean-Marie David): Honourable members of the committee, I see a quorum. We can now proceed to the election of the chair. I am ready to receive motions to that effect.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Clerk, I move that Mr. Lee Richardson be elected chair of the committee.

[English]

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Silva that Mr. Richardson be elected as chair of the committee. Are there any further motions?

Mr. Julian.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): I would like to second the motion for Lee Richardson. He has been an admirable chair.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Clerk: Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: Mr. Richardson is duly elected chair of the committee.

[Applause]

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

Mr. Ed Holder (London West, CPC): It's my privilege, Mr. Clerk, to put forward for nomination the name of the great member of Parliament, John Cannis, as vice-chair.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Holder that Mr. Cannis be elected first vice-chair. Are there any further motions?

Does it please the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: We will now move to the election of the second vice-chair. Are there any motions to that effect?

Mr. Julian.

[Translation]

Mr. Peter Julian: I would like to nominate Mr. Serge Cardin for the position of second vice-chair.

[English]

The Clerk: Are there any further motions?

[Translation]

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

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Mr. Cardin duly elected.

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Centre, CPC)): Speech? Please, no.

Thank you, everyone. We will continue on with the same rules and order of proceedings as the previous committee. We don't have to do that? Perfect.

We really don't have a lot of business today. I just wanted to touch briefly on the roll-out for the next couple of weeks. On Tuesday, we will have Mr. Stephenson, the chief negotiator at the WTO, and Mr. Gauthier, chief agriculture negotiator, to appear for two hours before the committee. I'm sure there will be questions of supply management coming up during that time.

Then on Thursday, Minister Day will appear before the committee from 11 o'clock to 12 o'clock. We'll probably finish that day with witnesses on the subject. We have to have some further discussion about that, Mr. Clerk. The Bloc has some witnesses they're still talking with, so we're going to have to find time to fit them in. It may be that we have to go over one more day into the following week to accommodate everybody, but there seems to be general agreement that that's okay.

That's it for now. We'll obviously be looking at Colombia a little bit down the road, but we're not ready for that yet.

We've got some people who want to comment. Monsieur Guimond.

[Translation]

Mr. Claude Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): I would simply like to clear up something about one of our witnesses. It hasn't been confirmed yet, but apparently he is not available before Thursday, October 22. All of our witnesses are in Geneva this week attending WTO meetings.

[English]

The Chair: Yes.

So not October 20, *peut-être?*

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Guimond: Unfortunately, it won't be possible before the 22nd.

[*English*]

The Chair: I don't think it's a big deal one way or the other if we can go the extra day. We'll be into that week with this discussion in any event, so we may just finish it off that week.

We'll have two extra days, and if there's other business, we can discuss that as well that week. I just don't think we're going to be ready for Colombia by that point.

I think what we will do is talk about future business in terms of committee travel. Interest has been expressed in pursuing some of the upcoming trade negotiation sites, and we're going to have to talk about that.

Fair enough. Between the clerk or Jeff in my office, let's get those witnesses in. Let's confirm this as quickly as we can and set it up.

Mr. Julian, perhaps you could follow up with Mr. Davidson, from the Wheat Board, on what the concern is there. If we can accommodate them, we will; other than that, we'll just go with the National Farmers Union.

• (1115)

Mr. Peter Julian: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Cannan has some business to discuss. We'll probably go in camera for that portion of the meeting, unless there's any further business before we go in camera.

Mr. Silva.

Mr. Mario Silva: I have a comment, Mr. Chairman. I realize it's too late, but I just want to get it on the record.

Unfortunately, I was not able to make it when you were reviewing the report on Brazil, but I'd seen it numerous times in the past. I thought at least the research analyst would have actually put something down about the issue of the visa restrictions. It was talked about in our mission as well, the problem of getting visas even for business people who want to come to Canada, and looking at possibly Canada reviewing that decision and eliminating the visas, that it's an impediment to doing business between Canada and Brazil.

I just want to get that on the record, because I was a bit surprised that it was not referenced in the report.

The Chair: Mr. Keddy.

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's, CPC): Just for our own information, what's the visa restriction now? How long?

Mr. Mario Silva: There is a visa imposed. You require a visa. It becomes a problem because of the fact that if you're—

Mr. Gerald Keddy: I understand that. My question should have been, how long does it take to get it? Is it facilitated? Is it simply a matter of—

Mr. Mario Silva: There's only one place you can get it right now, and I think that's in São Paulo. So that becomes another problem.

The Chair: I'm sorry that wasn't included in the report, but I think you've made your point.

Mr. Keddy, I take it you'll take that up with the department.

Mr. Mario Silva: I should mention the fact that the process is actually fast. The problem as well is where you have to get it.

The Chair: Okay. That's all I have for now. We'll move in camera for Mr. Cannan's discussion.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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