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## **Standing Committee on the Status of Women**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, February 5, 2009**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Hedy Fry**

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## Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Thursday, February 5, 2009

•(1110)

[Translation]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Danielle Bélisle):** Members of the committee, I see a quorum. The first item of business is to elect a chair.

I am ready to receive motions to that effect.

Mrs. Davidson.

[English]

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** I nominate Dr. Hedy Fry, please, for the chair.

**The Clerk:** Mrs. Davidson has nominated—

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** I second.

**The Clerk:** —Ms. Fry for chair of this committee.

Are there any other motions?

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

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried and Dr. Hedy Fry duly elected chair of the committee.

Before inviting the chair to take the chair, if the committee wishes, we can proceed to the election of the vice-chairs.

In the election of the vice-chairs, you will see that we are looking for a first vice-chair who will be from the government.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Limoulu, CPC):** I would like to nominate Mrs. Davidson for vice-chair.

**The Clerk:** Moved by Mrs. Sylvie Boucher that Mrs. Patricia Davidson be elected first vice-chair of this committee.

[English]

Are there any other motions to that effect?

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

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** I declare Mrs. Davidson the duly elected first vice-chair.

Our last one is the election of the second vice-chair, who must be from an opposition party other than the official opposition.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** I would like to nominate Ms. Irene Mathysen.

**The Clerk:** Moved by Ms. Demers that Ms. Mathysen be elected second vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

[English]

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

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** So I declare Mrs. Mathysen duly elected second vice-chair of this committee.

With that, our new chair could come and be seated with pleasure.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I am going to make a motion because I know that Minister Guergis would like to appear before us as quickly as possible. This is the wording of the motion:

That the Standing Committee on the Status of Women welcome the Honourable Helena Guergis to speak to the committee members on Thursday, February 12, to introduce herself to the committee as the new Minister of the Status of Women, to share with the committee the work she has undertaken since becoming the Minister of the Status of Women and to discuss the future business of the committee.

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.)):** Thank you.

What is the pleasure of the committee?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I would like to add something. She will be here for one hour. I have just received information that she will have to leave the meeting after an hour because she has to appear before another P and P committee.

[English]

**The Clerk:** So would it be from 11 to 12?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** That would be from 11:00 a.m. to noon.

[English]

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Madam Chair, I look forward to the minister coming to the committee and would welcome an opportunity to meet with her, but I have two questions. We need to do the estimates, and I am concerned about the timing. I know that my colleagues here, or some anyhow, are concerned about dealing with the estimates quickly, and I think it's important that the minister be here for the estimates.

My other concern in this motion is the clause to discuss future business of the committee. The committee is the master of its own fate in terms of determining what business it will or will not discuss, so I'm not anxious to have the minister direct the activity of this committee. That gives me a little bit of concern in this motion, but I am really concerned in regard to her being here for the estimates process.

• (1115)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Is there anyone else?

Ms. Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would concur with my colleague. I look forward to the minister's attendance at the committee, but I think it's very, very important that she come and discuss the estimates. I'd like to see her as early as Tuesday, simply because time is getting away from us and I know that the estimates will be coming before the House very soon. I would like that opportunity on Tuesday. I look forward to perhaps another visit at another time from the minister, in which she could outline the work she's done and the efforts she's made on behalf of women, but certainly that first visit should be on the estimates.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Madam Davidson?

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I understood that it is perhaps going to be difficult for the minister to be here on Tuesday and that Thursday is the day when it is possible for her to be here. I understand what the members across are saying about the estimates, and we do need to do the estimates, so I think we need to ask the minister to go through the estimates for that one hour on Thursday. Was it from 11 to 12?

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** It's 11 to 12:30.

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion on this?

**Hon. Anita Neville:** I have not consulted with colleagues, Madam Chair, but if the minister is prepared to come and discuss the estimates on Thursday, I would concur with Madam Davidson.

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion? If not, I'll call for a vote on the motion.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Is it this motion or an amended motion?

**The Chair:** If you want to propose an amendment, go ahead.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** I would amend it and, after "Thursday, February 12", simply eliminate what's here, and have that she

introduce herself to the committee as a new minister and after that discuss the estimates.

**The Chair:** What I have is the amendment, which would read: "That the Standing Committee on the Status of Women welcome the Honourable Helena Guergis to speak to the committee members on Thursday, February 12, from 11 to 12, to introduce herself to the committee as the new Minister of State for the Status of Women and to discuss the estimates".

Madam Davidson.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I think probably everybody's aware that we're hoping to have the estimates before the House on Thursday afternoon, so we need to make sure that we have the minister here for Thursday morning to go over them.

**The Chair:** So you're agreeing with the motion, then?

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** Yes, I am.

• (1120)

**The Chair:** Is there any other discussion on the amendment? No.

I will read the motion as amended:

That the Standing Committee on the Status of Women welcome the Honourable Helena Guergis to speak to the committee members on Thursday, February 12, from 11 a.m. to noon, to introduce herself to the committee as the new Minister of State for the Status of Women and to discuss the estimates.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** I want there to be absolutely no misunderstanding. The word "discuss" does not necessarily require the minister to answer questions, and I want her to answer questions. I don't want there to be any ambivalence about what we want from her.

**The Chair:** Will you propose an amendment?

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** I would like to change the word "discuss" to "answer questions" on the estimates.

**The Chair:** Is there discussion on that amendment? No. Then I will read the amended motion:

That the Standing Committee on the Status of Women welcome the Honourable Helena Guergis to speak to the committee members on Thursday, February 12, from 11 to 12 noon, to introduce herself to the committee as the new Minister of State for the Status of Women and to answer questions regarding the estimates.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Chair, I would like to make a special request to the committee. As we will be sitting on Tuesday and Thursday every week, and as we will also be sitting in the morning or the afternoon, the meeting from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. does not give us time to eat because, at 1:00 p.m., we have to get ready for Question Period with our caucuses, or go into the House.

So I am asking the committee if we can have soup and sandwiches here. That is what we did at the Committee on Health. We have never spent any money at this committee, and I feel it would make sense to have soup, sandwiches and juice for members.

Since my colleagues seem to agree completely, Madam Chair, we could add wine and port.

**Some hon. members:** Ah! Ah!

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Deschamps.

[Translation]

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ):** Along the same lines as Mrs. Boucher's motion, can I give notice of a motion that I have submitted to the clerk?

[English]

**The Chair:** Do you want to distribute the motion before I read it?

[Translation]

Ms. Deschamps' motion reads as follows:

That the Standing Committee on the Status of Women call on the federal government to take real action to support women and denounce their abuse, both in Canada and abroad.

• (1125)

[English]

Is there any discussion on that motion?

Madame Deschamps.

[Translation]

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** Should I speak to this motion, Madam Chair?

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Deschamps, there is an amendment from the clerk, who says that the committee cannot make something happen. The clerk would like it to say in the French version—it's now different from the English version—the word *recommande* instead of *exige*.

Is that okay with you?

[Translation]

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** I see no problem with “recommande” instead of “exige”.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay. Go ahead, Madame Deschamps.

[Translation]

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** We talked about this yesterday, at a meeting with the Minister of the Status of Women. Sylvie was there too. Both in our committees and on the Hill, most of us have been told about the mistreatment of women in conflicts such as the ones now raging in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Women are often the victims of conflicts and wars. A number of Canadian women overseas have demanded that the government intervene because they are in danger. The Parliament of Canada, the Government of Canada, has the duty and the moral responsibility to intervene when situations like this are brought to its attention. I find it unacceptable that no action is being taken, nothing is being done, to protect these women.

[English]

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion?

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** One moment; it loses something in French. In English it's not the same. Sometimes the translation is....

**The Chair:** Madam Neville.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Madam Chair, I have no objection to this motion at all. It's really an overarching motion of principle calling upon the government to take action. I would support it. I would hope that at some time in the future this committee will come up with concrete measures and recommendations to call upon the government to take specific action to follow up from the principles of this motion.

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion?

Madame Deschamps, you can speak, and then we'll call the vote.

[Translation]

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** I just want to add one piece of information because I would like this motion to be reported to the House.

**The Clerk:** In that case, you have to add that.

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** I forgot that I had to add it in writing for it to be debated.

[English]

**The Clerk:** She wants to amend it.

**The Chair:** So you want to add that the motion be tabled in the House.

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Madam Davidson.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I just want a bit of clarification—I feel like I'm yelling here—on whether this is a notice of motion or a motion.

• (1130)

**The Chair:** It's a motion.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** Okay. So motions can be introduced at any time, then, can they?

**The Clerk:** Well, we haven't passed our routine motions.

**The Chair:** We haven't passed our routine motions yet. In theory, what we should do is pass our routine motions first.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** I don't have a problem with the motion, but we could get wound up here with....

**The Chair:** Perhaps, then, before we consider this motion we could move to the agenda and deal with the routine motions.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Chair, we have just passed a motion that the government proposed with no problem. So why can we not pass this one?

[English]

**The Chair:** Sure. I mean, realizing that we had done that, I felt that if no one had complained about it we could do it.

Madame Boucher.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I have just come from a committee where there was a bit of turmoil and I do not want that to be the case here. We have always got along. We should not pass this before dealing with the motions. It was my mistake, I apologize. Sorry for that, I am a little bit mixed up. It is important for us to pass all those. I will put mine aside and bring it back on Tuesday. Is that OK with everyone?

Right, we just passed it with its amendments. My mistake.

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Boucher, I think we have already set a precedent at this meeting for the first motion that you presented having been adopted. This is already under way. It's been discussed. I get a feeling from the committee that they wish this to continue, so I will call the question on Madame Deschamps' motion.

The motion, as amended, reads:

The Standing Committee on the Status of Women recommend to the federal government to take real action to support women and denounce their abuse, both in Canada and abroad, and that the committee report this motion to the House of Commons.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Chair, in the French version, it should say: “recommande au gouvernement fédéral de prendre de véritables mesures et actions”.

[English]

**Hon. Hedy Fry:** I shall re-read that friendly amendment.

[Translation]

Que le Comité permanent de la condition féminine recommande au gouvernement fédéral de prendre de véritables mesures et actions visant à soutenir les femmes et à dénoncer les mauvais traitements dont elles sont victimes et ce tant pour les citoyennes canadiennes que pour les autres femmes à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de nos frontières et que le comité fasse rapport de cette motion à la Chambre.

[English]

In English, it reads:

That the Standing Committee on the Status of Women recommend to the federal government to take real action to support women and denounce their abuse, both in Canada and abroad, and that the committee report this motion to the House of Commons.

I'll call the question.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Madam Chair, there are a certain number of people sitting around this table. I think that's where the discussion should be, not with the row behind.

**The Chair:** I call the question.

The motion is carried unanimously.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now, I would recommend that we move to routine motions, please. The first one regards the service of analysts from the Library of Parliament.

The motion reads:

That the committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the chair, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

●(1135)

**Hon. Anita Neville:** So moved.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Can the researcher come forward, please?

**Mme. Nicole Demers:** Bravo, Madame Morgan.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Could you just clarify something for me, Madam Chair? I'm new and I'm just learning the process. When we were discussing this motion that we just carried, I did have an amendment that I wanted to make. So my understanding was that we discussed the initial amendment, voted on that, but then I had an additional amendment that I wanted to recommend, but the motion was carried, and I did have my hand up.

**The Chair:** I don't think we saw you putting your hand up until after the vote was taken.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** It was actually just—

**The Chair:** It was while it was being taken. But the vote had been called.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Can I just make a sort of...? The vote had been called?

**The Chair:** Yes, the vote had been called when you raised your hand.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** No, actually you were discussing the amendment that had been provided.

**The Chair:** Then I didn't see your hand. I'm sorry, Madam Hoepfner. I only saw it after the vote was called.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Yes, I did have my hand up. You were discussing the amendment to that motion and then you—

**The Chair:** We are actually dealing with routine motions at the moment. And let's finish with that please.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Yes, I realize that. I just had a point of order and I wanted to bring that to your attention, because I had put my hand up and I had wished to propose an amendment to the motion.

**The Chair:** Fine.

So we should continue with the orders here, the motions on the routine motions.

The third motion is a reduced quorum:

That the chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive and publish evidence when a quorum is not present, provided that at least three members are present, including a member of the opposition.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** I would like to see this motion amended. I think that because we have an opposition chair, we need to say if it's going to be three members, that's fine, including a member of the official government. Because we do have an opposition chair, this committee is a little bit different, and if you wanted to put “including four” so every party is represented, that's fine with me too.

**The Chair:** Any discussion on this?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Chair, this amendment presents a real problem.

If we agreed that we could hold discussions and receive witnesses even with a reduced quorum, it was because we wanted to be sure that we could hear the witnesses whose evidence costs us a lot of money and who use their own time to come before the committee.

If we now agree that there is to be a government member in the reduced quorum...we could have three people, but if one of them has to be a government member and the government is not in agreement with the meeting we are holding, the member will not show up and the meeting will not be held. I am completely against that.

As the motion is worded, it can be two government members and one opposition member. We ask that at least one opposition member be there, and that is very good. There could be two government members and then you would have the upper hand. There is no way I can agree to requiring a government member.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Any further discussion on this amendment as proposed by Madam Davidson?

Before you speak to this, any further discussion from anyone else? No?

Madam Davidson.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I still stick with my amendment. I think it's extremely important when there is an opposition chair, and certainly if it were a government chair I would think that the way it's written here would be the only fair way to have it. So it's not an attempt at all, as far as I'm concerned, to have a government member not show up. I think the same comments can be said about any party, and I don't think that any of us sitting at this table have that intent anywhere here.

•(1140)

**The Chair:** Ms. Mathyssen, in theory, when the mover of the amendment speaks we should close the debate, but I'll let you speak this time.

**Ms. Irene Mathyssen:** I would simply like to say that I support Madame Demers because I have absolutely great faith in the fairness of the chair.

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** We are now voting on motion three as it stands.

Madam McLeod.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Can I suggest a subamendment, that a quorum consist of one member from each recognized party?

**The Chair:** You may propose any amendment you like.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** I propose a subamendment.

**The Chair:** You have an amendment moved by Madam McLeod that a quorum be made up of four members, with at least one member from each party.

Is there any discussion on the amendment?

**Hon. Anita Neville:** I understand the efforts behind it to accommodate, but I think the same issue that Madame Demers raised comes into play.

I realize we're discussing another amendment, but my colleague beside me has recommended that we simply say "three members are present".

**The Chair:** You can't say that. At the moment we are discussing the amendment on the table, so let us discuss that one first.

Madam Hoepfner, is it with regard to this amendment?

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Yes. I think we want to begin this committee with a mandate of working together as a team. If we have one person from each party, one person can't dominate. As a matter of fairness, it would be good if we had one person from each party for quorum.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madam Hoepfner.

Madame Demers.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Chair, we have had this provision for the last four years and we have always managed. It has always worked. Why are we trying to change something that has always worked well? I do not understand.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** The amendment reads "that there be four members present, including at least one member from each party".

(Amendment negated)

•(1145)

**The Chair:** Let us move to the motion on the table on reduced quorum.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** I would like to move to item four, distribution of documents. It is moved by Madam Neville:

That the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute to the members of the committee documents only when they exist in both official languages, and that no document provided by a witness be distributed without the authorization of the clerk of the committee.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I would like to move an amendment. We have already seen that documents we have received have not been in both official languages. The motion as amended would read as follows:

That only the Clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute to the members of the committee any documents, including motions, and that all documents which are to be distributed amongst the committee members must be in both official languages. The Clerk shall advise all witnesses appearing before committee of this requirement.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** The amendment would therefore read that only the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute....

Is there any discussion on this amendment?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Chair, we completely agree with Mrs. Boucher.

[English]

**The Chair:** Shall I call the vote, or do we just take it that there is full accord on this?

(Amendment agreed to)

**The Chair:** Everyone has agreed, so I will read the new motion as amended: “That only the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute to the members of the committee any documents, including motions, and that all documents which are to be distributed among the committee members must be in both official languages. The clerk shall advise all witnesses appearing before committee of this requirement”.

Okay?

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now, we already have a proposal from Madame Demers about lunch, to which everyone agreed.

**A voice:** Sometimes something could happen if we have a delegation, so we should adopt this.

**The Chair:** Yes, this is in addition to that: whatever their working needs on special occasions, that the clerk be authorized to provide for working meals for the committee. This is further to that first motion by Madame Demers.

Would anyone like to move this motion?

Madame Mendes.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Could you read Ms. Deschamps' motion again, please?

• (1150)

[English]

**The Chair:** It was moved by Madam Demers that the committee order soup and sandwiches at committee meetings—

**The Clerk:** Since the committee is sitting between—

**The Chair:** —since the committee is sitting during lunch.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Yes?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I would like to suggest an amendment to Nicole:

That the committee hereby authorize the Clerk of the committee, in consultation with the Chair, to make the necessary arrangements to provide for working meals as may be required and that the cost of these meals be charged to the committee budget.

That way, we do not just have to have sandwiches.

[English]

**The Chair:** I think the sandwiches were meant for every meeting. This one is meant that if—

**The Clerk:** A delegation or—

**The Chair:** —there were another circumstance, the clerk be authorized to provide, I would suppose, the appropriate meal. So let us consider your amendment, which I suppose is on the table.

The amendment reads: “That the committee hereby authorize the clerk of the committee, in consultation with the chair, to make the necessary arrangements to provide for working meals, as may be required, and that the cost of these meals be charged to the committee's budget”.

**A voice:** Which they already—

**The Chair:** Which they already are. Let's read it as it is here:

[Translation]

Que le Comité autorise, par la présente, le greffier du Comité, en consultation avec le président du Comité, à prendre les dispositions nécessaires pour assurer des repas de travail au besoin et que le coût de ces repas puisse être imputé au budget du comité.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** We can take out the words “au besoin”.

[English]

**The Chair:** Is there any discussion on that amendment?

Madam Davidson.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** I just wanted to agree.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** The next one has to do with witnesses' expenses. Would someone move it?

Madam Neville moves it:

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 at the discretion of the chair and that, if requested, reasonable child care expenses of witnesses be reimbursed.

Madam Neville.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Madam Chair, I moved this motion because it's a formed motion that comes with every committee, but my concern in moving it—and perhaps I should take it out—is with the words “that, if requested”. Many witnesses do not know that the option is there for them to have their expenses covered, and I think it's important, particularly with some of the groups we deal with, that they be advised that these are available. It's not open for unlimited numbers to come, but I do think that people should know that these resources are available.

**The Chair:** So your amendment will be that the words “if requested”, *en font la demande*, be removed.

• (1155)

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Is there any discussion on that amendment? No? Agreed? Then I'll call the question.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now we have a motion on time limits for witnesses' statements and questioning. Does someone want to move this?

Madam Mathyssen moves it.



That witnesses be given ten minutes to make their opening statement; that during the questioning of witnesses, the time allocated to each questioner be as follows: on the first round of questioning, seven minutes to a representative of each party in the following order: Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party, New Democratic Party. On the following rounds of questioning, five minutes per party in the following order: Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party, Conservative Party.

This is the one that was adopted the last time.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** Madam Chair, I'd like to propose an amendment to this one, to have the second round alternate between the opposition members and the government members; so it would be Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative, Conservative, so everybody would have an opportunity to speak. With the proposed motion, everyone will never get the opportunity to speak. This way, with the amendment, everyone will have the same opportunity at the table.

**The Chair:** So your amendment proposes, for the following rounds of questioning, five minutes per party, in this order: Liberal, Conservative, Bloc Québécois, Conservative, New Democratic Party, Conservative.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** No. In the first round, it's Liberal, Bloc, Conservative, NDP. In the second round, it's Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative, Conservative.

That gives everybody at the table an opportunity to speak.

**The Chair:** All right.

Is there any discussion on the amendment?

Madam Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** I cannot concur in this amendment, because obviously in the second round "everybody" doesn't include the New Democratic Party. I can't accept that, simply because I very often have many questions and many subsequent questions that I need to ask.

**The Chair:** I think, Madam Mathysen, the second round does include the New Democratic Party.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** No, not according to the amendment.

**The Chair:** Oh, you removed the New Democratic Party.

**Mrs. Patricia Davidson:** I did, but I would be willing to put that back in there.

So it would be Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative, NDP, Conservative. Yes; that would include the NDP.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Well, it seems to me that the Conservative Party in that last round has two opportunities, and they have the final word. I think that's quite sufficient. I like the motion as it stands.

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion on this amendment?

Madam Hoepfner.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I think what we're trying to achieve is to let every person in the committee have an opportunity to speak. If we adopt the motion as it is, there is a chance that this wouldn't happen, whereas if, in the second round, we do alternate it that way, then we are ensuring that every single person here has a chance to speak. And that really would be our goal.

**The Chair:** Madam McLeod, did you wish to speak? I noticed you nodding at Madam Hoepfner's statement.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Madam Chair, I would concur with my colleague.

Madam Mathysen indicated that she often has questions. I think all the people on this side of the table might also have questions. Again, it's about fairness of opportunity.

**The Chair:** Madame Demers.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Once again, I find myself wondering why we would change something that has worked well for a long time.

We have worked with this motion for the last few years and it was very good. Sometimes, we have no more questions and the Conservative party can use more time. We have to remember that, at the moment, the Conservative party is still a minority. So the opposition still has more time. Perhaps things will be different next time, unfortunately, but as long as the opposition is in the majority, we are going to use all our rights so that all our members have full use of their time on the floor. I feel that is fair. In the past, we have seen people sharing their time. Five minutes can be split between two people, if necessary.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

• (1200)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Demers.

Madam Neville, did you have your hand up?

**Hon. Anita Neville:** You can go over there first, that's fine.

**The Chair:** All right.

Madame Boucher.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** We never had a problem, but I think that, with new members here, it is important for everyone to be able to speak. Yes, we are still in a minority, that is quite true, but we have always wanted a non-political committee, if possible. We all have our ideals, but, out of respect for all members of the committee, we should at least make sure that everyone has the opportunity to speak.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Madam Neville.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would argue for maintaining it as it is. I know you well, and I think you too would like an opportunity to speak.

This practice has worked well in the past when we've had the opportunity. It's not always an easy one to share our time with colleagues in the course of it. The opening round is seven minutes. Members can divide that up, three and four.

My experience on this committee—as you are undoubtedly aware, I chaired it for a number of years—is that over time there has developed an esprit de corps, I guess, a flexibility. If somebody is really burning to get on the agenda, that kind of flexibility by the chair is built in.

So I am inclined to leave it alone. It has worked in the past.

**The Chair:** Madam Neville, the chair is happy to choose the meals, because you're going to get nutritious meals.

Madam Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Madam Chair, I'd like to point out we are five on each side, and this would require that there be this evenness of time division and opportunity, and that even at that, the Conservatives do have one extra round. So despite the fact that there are only five, they have the extra round. So I would say it's quite fair and I would like to leave the motion as is.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We are going to vote on the amendment as moved by Madam Davidson.

I see a tie. Gee, this is going to be fun. As chair, I vote against the amendment.

(Amendment negatived)

**The Chair:** Now we will go back to the motion as it stands.

(Motion agreed to) [See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

**The Chair:** The next one, number eight, is staff at in camera meetings. Will someone move this, please?

Ms. Mendes moves that each committee member in attendance shall be permitted to have one staff member attend at any in camera meetings. In addition, each party shall be permitted to have one party staff member attend in camera meetings.

Are there any amendments? No?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now, on notice of motions, would someone move this, please?

Madame Deschamps moves that except for amendments of bills—

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes:** We went over number nine, the transcripts.

• (1205)

**The Chair:** Oh, the transcripts. I am sorry. Thank you. I stand corrected. Somebody's got to keep me on track. Thank you.

In camera meeting transcripts: that one copy of the transcript of all in camera meetings be kept in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee.

Any amendments?

Madame Boucher.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I wrote it as follows: “Que les séances à huis clos soient transcrites et que le greffier du comité conserve cette transcription pour une consultation ultérieure par les députés.”

[*English*]

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes:** Members of the committee.

[*Translation*]

There is a difference between members of the committee and members of Parliament in general. These are in camera sessions.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Madame Boucher, your amendment amendment changes it from “members of the committee” to “members of Parliament”.

Speaking to the amendment, Madame Demers.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Chair, two years ago, we on this committee heard a witness in camera. Even though the clerk kept the notes, there were leaks and the person who came to testify in camera had problems as a result. To avoid a repetition of that, I want us to make sure that all documents and notes used in an in camera meeting are collected by the clerk and that nothing remains in the hands of committee members. I found that situation very upsetting and I found it very sad that the person suffered consequences as the result of testifying before us.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** It is true that she was in a real state.

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** I do not know how we could draft it. The text does not say “all notes”. Do we really mean that the clerk has to make sure to collect notes from all committee members?

**The Clerk:** They are your personal property.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I think the only change to this motion is that it is for later consultation by members of Parliament, and not just members of the committee. It has been expanded to members of Parliament. I think the rest of it is just as it was before.

Madame Mendes, you wanted to speak.

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes:** I'll just leave it at “members of the committee”, not “members of Parliament”.

**The Chair:** Yes, “members of the committee”.

Madame Mendes is speaking against.

Madame Boucher.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** No. I just want to say that I really understand what Nicole means, even if I do not know how to put it into words. We have to make sure that there are no leaks when things go on in camera here. Our committee hears extraordinary things involving women. I was thinking about that situation too, but I do not know how to express it. Sometimes, it is not about our personal notes, it is about the fact that she came here and said things that appeared in the papers the next day. She had a number of problems as a result.

[English]

**The Chair:** I don't understand what Madame Boucher...

**The Clerk:** There are leaks, and all we can do is—

**The Chair:** Yes, I know, but Madame Boucher is opening it up to a larger group. That's all her amendment is saying.

Are you withdrawing the amendment?

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay, great.

I shall call the question on the motion as written here.

(Motion agreed to) [See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

**The Chair:** Would someone move motion ten, please, on notice of motions?

**Hon. Anita Neville:** So moved.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madam Neville.

It reads that except for amendments to bills, 48 hours' notice be given before any substantive motion is considered by the committee; and that the motion be filed with the clerk of the committee and circulated to members in both official languages. Upon receipt of notice, the clerk shall put the motion on the agenda of the committee's next meeting.

• (1210)

[Translation]

Ms. Deschamps

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** Madam Chair, I have an amendment to suggest to the committee, so that the motion would read as follows:

Que sauf pour les amendements au projet de loi, un avis de 48 heures soit donné avant que le Comité ne soit saisi de toute motion de fond ne portant pas sur l'affaire étudiée à ce moment...

The rest is fine. Let me explain. This allows us to make an emergency motion on the topic or the study under discussion without having to give 48 hours' advance notice. Sometimes, in our work, members of the committee from any party may want the possibility of making a motion on the matter under discussion or of having it dealt with as quickly as possible. Sometimes, 48 hours' notice can affect our work. It is done in other committees.

[English]

**The Chair:** Shall we discuss this amendment?

The amendment will read that except for amendments to bills, 48 hours' notice be given before any substantive motion with no bearing on the matter before the committee at the time is considered by the committee.

Is that right, Madame Deschamps?

**The Clerk:** No, that's not really what she's saying.

**The Chair:** Madame Deschamps, would you please repeat your motion? You did say “with no bearing”.

[Translation]

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** Yes.

[English]

**The Chair:** Perhaps, Madame Deschamps, before we discuss it, there is a motion that says what you want to say and that other committees have adopted. It reads: “unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration”. It's the same thing that you're saying, but I guess it's said in more “committee-ese” language.

Is that okay?

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Good.

Is there any discussion on that amendment?

The amendment says that 48 hours' notice be required for any substantive motion to be considered by the committee unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration, and that the motion be filed with the clerk of the committee.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I would like to ask a question so that I fully understand the issue before I vote.

Explain it to me again because it is not at all what I understood earlier. I understood that, if we were studying the trafficking of women and we decided to make a motion right away, the 48 hours' notice would not apply. Is that right?

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** Yes, I am talking about times when there is some urgency and when 48 hours' notice can cause a problem. For example, with the motion that you made this morning, if we were really running out of time and wanted to meet the minister, 48 hours' notice would be too long.

• (1215)

**Mme Nicole Demers:** May I, Madam Chair?

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Demers.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** I am trying to help my colleague understand the idea. I think that it is very important and, if she understands, she will be in favour of the amendment.

Let us say, for example, that the committee was studying a situation of human trafficking. The committee meets on Tuesday and Thursday, but, on Wednesday, 40 women, victims of trafficking, are found somewhere in Montreal. At the Thursday committee meeting, we might well want to have a motion asking that the situation of those women be dealt with immediately. With the requirement for 48 hours' notice, we could not do that. It would be impossible for us to wait 48 hours before making the motion. Even if everyone understood how urgent the situation was, those women could take no comfort from any committee action denouncing the fact that they had been abused.

**Ms. Johanne Deschamps:** And it only affects the study in progress.

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Boucher, would you like to speak?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Yes. I would just like us to clarify that it would only be for emergencies. Then no one on any side could make a motion complaining that some lady has pink lipstick when we think it should be red. If we just put "in case of emergency" and a national emergency happens, I have no objection.

[English]

**The Chair:** Madam Hoepfner.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Maybe you can explain this. Is it actually on the paper? How do we decide what we are dealing with so that we can say we've already been dealing with this issue, and therefore we are going to forgo the 48-hour clause? That's my question.

How do we know, as members, that this is something we are officially dealing with so that we would apply this clause?

**The Chair:** I'd like to suggest that the chair and the clerk would look at the motion and decide that it is what you were talking about.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Right, that we have been discussing, for example.... I'm concerned, because I find it very general. I do understand what you're speaking about, but I just find it a very general concept. There are many, many things that we're discussing, and we could apply this to pretty well everything that we're doing.

**The Chair:** Does anyone else wish to speak to this?

Madam Neville.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** I seek a clarification.

I understand what my colleague is presenting. I want to know that in the course of a discussion on a Tuesday morning, a substantive motion cannot be put forward. I see it as problematic, if somebody is away, if a substantive motion is put forward in the course of the discussion. I just raise that as a red flag.

**The Chair:** Does everyone understand? I think Madame Demers explained it pretty well. Does everyone understand the intent of this motion? Does everyone feel comfortable with that?

What we're saying is that you're not allowed, without 48 hours' notice, to introduce any motion, unless of course that motion pertains to what we're dealing with at the moment. In other words, if the motion is relevant to the discussion on the table, you don't need 48 hours' notice—which is common sense, in my book. It just clarifies it, instead of leaving it too general in saying you can't bring any motion at all without 48 hours.

All right, can we just call the vote on the amendment, please?

It's a tie vote. The chair will have to vote, and I vote in favour of the amendment, which is eminent common sense.

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to) [See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

• (1220)

**The Chair:** Now, number 11, Blackberries.

Yes, Madam Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Madam Chair, I'm concerned about people interfering with the clerk. I don't think it is respectful or appropriate for someone over there, behind those chairs, to be interfering with the clerk. The clerk knows what she's doing.

**The Chair:** I allowed it to pass, because I thought it was a question being asked of the clerk.

Could we please ensure that the people who are not members of the committee, but are serving the members of the committee as staffers, try to get their member to ask a question of the clerk, or if they need to, only do so on a question that must be answered, as opposed to trying to tell the clerk how to run her business.

Thank you very much.

Now, number 11, Blackberries. Would someone move this one, please?

Mrs. Demers, would you like to propose it?

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** I would be happy to, Madam Chair.

[English]

**The Chair:** The motion is that the Standing Committee on the Status of Women request all members of the committee not to use their Blackberries while witnesses are testifying, out of respect for the witnesses.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall I call for adjournment?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Chair:** Sorry.

Don't you usually decide on having some sort of steering committee to decide future business? No?

Then does anyone want to suggest what we will do at the next meeting? Does anyone want to suggest future business?

**Hon. Anita Neville:** You should discuss future business at the next meeting, in camera.

**The Chair:** Good, thank you.

So moved by Madam Neville.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Madam Chair, I just have a question.

Previously I had wanted to propose an amendment to the motion that my honourable colleague had brought forward, and unfortunately you didn't recognize me. You've done a wonderful job of recognizing people this entire meeting, but that one time I was not recognized. So I just wanted to ask you, for future clarification, what can I do to make sure that I'm recognized? It was an important motion. It was an important piece, a motion on which I really did have something to say, and I do feel somewhat disenfranchised that I was not able to contribute to that discussion.

**The Chair:** Agreed, Madam Hoepfner, but of course I have noticed you ever since.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** You have...and prior to that.

**The Chair:** Perhaps your hand was not up fast enough. I did not notice you. I swear, I did not notice you.

However, the committee can decide if they wish to reopen that motion. If Madame Deschamps wishes to reopen it, I will do so, but it is up to Madame Deschamps.

Madam Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Yes, Madam Chair. In keeping with the collegial manner we've always operated with, I wonder if we could ask for unanimous consent to re-table the report on gender budgeting and ask that the government respond.

**The Chair:** Perhaps that could be discussed on Tuesday at the in camera meeting. That would have to pertain to future business, wouldn't it?

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** In the past we had unanimous consent that a report we've completed be re-tabled. But certainly if I can't get unanimous consent, then this would be a notice of motion.

**The Chair:** Do we have unanimous consent on Madam Mathysen's motion?

Does that mean the recommendations or the full report, Madam Mathysen?

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** The full report.

**The Chair:** Hearing no dissent on this, I suppose that Madam Mathysen's motion has passed. I heard no dissent.

Good. It will be tabled at the next meeting.

Motion to adjourn, please.

● (1225)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** A point of order. On this side of the table anyway, we said that we would prefer to deal with that next week,

because everyone has had enough today. We can do it on Tuesday, but you are not listening to what we are saying. I have always worked cooperatively with everyone, but, if that means things like this happen, it is just too bad. People need to be respected, after all. I am speaking!

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Madame Boucher, I asked if anyone dissented, if there was unanimous agreement. I asked three times, and no one said anything.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Oh, I said something. Sorry about that. Please, everyone is tired this morning. I said that we could discuss it on Tuesday morning. We have always got along in this committee, but you were not listening to what I was saying.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** No, I didn't, because there's a lot of talking that goes on with other behind people you, Madame Boucher. I don't know if you're addressing the chair or someone else. Please try to address the chair in future.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

So now what do we do? Madame Boucher doesn't want to accept Madam Mathysen's motion. There is no unanimous consent. We will discuss this on Tuesday at the in camera meeting.

Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.





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