



House of Commons  
CANADA

## **Standing Committee on Natural Resources**

---

RNNR • NUMBER 001 • 2nd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

---

**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, February 5, 2009**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. Leon Benoit**

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address:

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

## Standing Committee on Natural Resources

Thursday, February 5, 2009

• (1535)

[Translation]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mrs. Marie-France Renaud):** Good afternoon, honourable members. My name is Marie-France Renaud and I am the clerk of this committee.

[English]

I see a quorum.

[Translation]

We can now proceed to the election of a chair.

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the chair must be a member of the government party. I am ready to receive motions to that effect.

Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC):** I'd like to nominate Mr. Benoit.

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** I second the nomination.

**The Clerk:** Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried and Mr. Benoit duly elected chair of the committee.

[English]

Before inviting Mr. Benoit to the chair, if the committee wishes we can proceed to elect the two vice-chairs.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** I nominate Mr. Alan Tonks to be vice-chair.

**The Clerk:** Are there any further motions for the first vice-chair?

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried and Mr. Tonks duly elected vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

I am now prepared to receive motions for the second vice-chair.

[Translation]

**Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** I nominate Mr. Nathan Cullen.

**The Clerk:** Moved by Ms. Brunelle that Mr. Nathan Cullen be elected second vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

[English]

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** Does he not need to consent?

**The Clerk:** No, he doesn't need to be here.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** He can always refuse later.

[Translation]

**The Clerk:** Are there any further motions?

[English]

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

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**The Clerk:** I declare the motion carried and Mr. Cullen duly elected vice-chair of this committee.

[English]

I now invite Mr. Benoit to take the chair.

**The Chair (Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC)):** I'd first like to thank you all for electing me as chair. I appreciate the stronger support from the opposition than I got from my colleagues on the government side, but I guess that's to be expected.

Before we get to the routine motions, which I assume you'll want to deal with today, I want to say that I am delighted to be chair of this committee. In the past this committee has functioned quite well, even when others have had their problems. Of course, there's always a partisan nature to committees to some extent; that's the way our system works. But I believe we can—and I certainly hope we will—work together to make this committee work for the benefit of Canadians. I'm certain that's the intent of all of us. I look forward to that.

On a point of order, Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** In that spirit of cooperation, we have the supplementary estimates to deal with, and the minister has offered to come on Tuesday if the committee is ready to hear her. She'll be here for an hour and the bureaucrats will be here for another hour, if the committee is interested in that.

**The Chair:** You've heard the proposal by the parliamentary secretary that the minister come this Tuesday to deal with the supplementary estimates.

Mr. Regan.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** I didn't quite hear what Mr. Anderson said about how long she would come for.

**Mr. David Anderson:** She'll make herself available for one hour and the bureaucrats for the two hours.

**The Chair:** Mr. Bains.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.):** I appreciate the offer made by Mr. Anderson. If we can just go over the routine proceedings first to make sure we get them set up properly, then I will have no objection to dealing with the work plan going forward, if that's okay.

**The Chair:** So you don't want to deal with that now.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Yes, not now.

**The Chair:** Okay, let's start with routine motions.

We'll hand some material out here so you can see the routine motions committees normally start with at least.

Does everybody have a copy? Let's start with the services of analysts from the Library of Parliament.

Would someone like to move that?

● (1540)

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** So moved.

**The Chair:** So moved by Mr. Tonks.

Is there approval from the committee to support that motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** The second motion is on the subcommittee on agenda and procedure. As you will notice, this committee hasn't had a subcommittee on agenda and procedure previously.

What is the will of the committee on that? Should we just go on with the whole committee determining the agenda?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Next is the matter of reduced quorum. Are there any proposals on reduced quorum?

Mr. Allen.

**Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Mr. Chair, the routine motion regarding reduced quorum, which was adopted in the second session of the 39th Parliament, said:

...provided that at least four (4) members are present, including two members of the opposition.

I have no problem with including two members of the opposition so long as we have at least one member from the government, and that could be the chair.

**The Chair:** You've heard the proposal from Mr. Allen. Is there any discussion on the proposal?

Madam Brunelle.

[Translation]

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The motion as it was in the last Parliament seems very reasonable to me. It is not very difficult to have two members of the opposition and at least four members present. With all the members that the Conservative Party has, I do not see why we want this amendment.

[English]

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

Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Chair, I believe Mr. Allen's proposal was to say that there should be one member of the government present, and I am nervous about that. I believe that when we designate one individual in that way, it allows that party to in fact control when that committee meets or not. The opposition is not designated by party, but in the sense that the government member is designated, it would allow that person to refuse to show up and therefore make it impossible to hold that meeting.

So I would oppose that. If we need an amendment, I would like to move what was decided on by the committee in the last Parliament.

**The Chair:** I would just remind the members of what we're talking about here. This is only for the purposes of hearing witnesses. Of course, you need a full quorum to deal with any business of the committee. You're aware of that?

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Yes.

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

Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** I just want some clarity, Mr. Chair. Ms. Brunelle made a suggestion that sounded reasonable. Could you just clarify what her suggestion was?

**The Chair:** I believe it was to go to the same quorum that we had last time, as in the second column.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** I see.

The one thing that does come to mind is that when the committee is travelling I think it would be appropriate for witnesses to have an opportunity to speak to members of the government during that time. So including a requirement to have at least one member of the government, which would normally be you, I think is just reasonable.

● (1545)

**The Chair:** Mr. Regan.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Chairman, considering the fact that the committee doesn't travel unless it's authorized by the House leaders to do so, and also that the committee would have to decide on such travel, it would seem to me rather unlikely that you'd have a situation like that described by Mr. Hiebert, unless in fact someone decided they wanted to try to shut things down by not appearing. That's not satisfactory, in my view. In this regard, I think the motion that existed last time is quite satisfactory.

**The Chair:** Mr. Tonks.

**Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.):** Mr. Chairman, I think we should start off on the same foot that we did last session, which worked very, very well, as you've said.

**An hon. member:** I agree.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Let's stay with what we had last time unless there is some glaring reason why we should change that. I would highly recommend to the committee that we go with the reduced quorum we had last session.

**The Chair:** Monsieur Bigras.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am going to oppose Mr. Allen's amendment. There is one important factor: respect for our witnesses. Very often, witnesses come from the West and go to the trouble of travelling for many hours to come to the committee. They are quite disappointed when they see a meeting cancelled because the committee cannot come up with a reduced quorum. That is the first point.

Mr. Hiebert's argument does not work because you, as chair, can call committee meetings. It could be that some meetings are chaired by the vice-chair. So the argument that the chair is a member of the party may not apply with a reduced quorum if a vice-chair chairs a meeting.

[*English*]

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

Mr. Allen.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** Mr. Chair, going back to the point you made, this is for evidence, not for motions or anything of that nature. The opposition is arguing against themselves now, because they're saying "provided that at least four members are present, including two members of the opposition". So if we don't have two, they can hold up committee evidence as well.

It is for evidence. I just don't understand why one member of the government being there to hear the evidence being presented by people who come in is such a big deal. I understand the other side of it, which is that government members could hold something up if it were a motion at a regular meeting, but this is evidence only, and reduced quorum. I just don't understand the position. It just doesn't make any sense to me.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Allen.

Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** Do we have any motions on the table right now?

**The Chair:** Yes. We have a motion to accept the motion under column two, which is what the committee was governed by in the last Parliament.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** I'd like to make an amendment to that motion. Again, this is in a spirit of cooperation. Let's treat everybody equally. Let's move, after the words "provided that", that at least one member from each recognized party is present. That way, all parties are treated the same, and on the concerns that the opposition has about an MP not being available, that applies equally to everybody.

**The Chair:** Mr. Hiebert, could you hold that? I wasn't actually aware that Mr. Allen made an amendment, but I'm told that he in fact made an amendment to the motion.

Is that correct, Mr. Allen? I'm sorry. I missed that.

So we can't accept your motion, Mr. Hiebert, until we vote on Mr. Allen's.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** It could be a subamendment.

**The Chair:** We can go back to another amendment if Mr. Allen's amendment is defeated.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** That's fine.

**The Chair:** Mr. Anderson, we're speaking now to Mr. Allen's amendment.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Okay, so Mr. Allen has made an amendment, but Ms. Brunelle's does not come into play.

**The Chair:** She made the original motion that we accept what is stated in column two, across from number three, which is the way the committee was governed last time. The amendment is from Mr. Allen.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I thought Mike spoke first and made a suggestion. I assumed that was the amendment. Ms. Brunelle spoke later and made an amendment. Now Mr. Allen wants to make an amendment.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** He made a motion.

• (1550)

**Mr. David Anderson:** We have a motion.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** No, she just spoke on it.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen, apparently you were first—my apologies. You made a motion to provide that there are at least four members present, including two opposition members and one government member.

Madam Brunelle, you have to give me an amendment to accomplish what you want to accomplish here.

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** Excuse me.

[*Translation*]

I did not move an amendment. I just gave my opinion. I said that I did not agree with the gentleman's motion and that I wanted to have the same motion as previously.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay, so we're still working with the motion by Mr. Allen.

Is there any other discussion on that motion?

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Can we call a vote on that?

**The Chair:** We will vote on Mr. Allen's motion if you will read it.

**The Clerk:** The motion reads:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least 4 members are present, including 2 members of the opposition and 1 from the government.

(Motion negated)

**The Chair:** Now we will go to other proposals.

Mr. Siksay is next, and then Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** I'd like to make a motion that it be as it was in the last Parliament:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence printed when a quorum is not present, provided that at least 4 members are present, including 2 members of the opposition.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** I'd like to amend that to read exactly as it was read, except that after "4 members are present" it would read, "1 from each recognized party".

**The Chair:** You've heard the amendment, and now the debate is on the amendment.

Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** As the lone New Democrat on the committee, I don't think I should have the ability to block the work of that committee by deciding not to show up, so I think that's inappropriate. The amendment could potentially bog down the work of the committee, even for the limited purpose of hearing evidence. So I will not support the amendment.

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** We will now go back to discussion on the motion.

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I'm going to make another amendment—and maybe we can come to some consensus here—to put a period after the word "present", so it reads: "provided that at least 4 members are present." It wouldn't name the opposition or the government; it would just say that four members are present and can hear evidence. So it would open it up.

**The Chair:** The amendment is that the motion as presented end with a period after the word "present".

You have heard the proposed amendment. Is there any further discussion on the amendment?

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I think, Mr. Chair, we're treating each other equally if we do this, because obviously the opposition is saying that they want the ability to call meetings without our being there necessarily. We're saying we're not going to be doing that anyway. We think that having four members present is good enough to hear witnesses. Whatever the mixture is, there will be four members here. I think we're operating in good faith, not in bad faith. Hopefully we can do that. I think this is reasonable. Provided that at least four members are present, we can hear the witnesses and then go from there.

• (1555)

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

Madame Brunelle.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** Out of respect for the witnesses who appear, I think that it is important that they see that all points of view are represented in Canada, and therefore that members of opposition parties are present. To me, that seems crucial. I would not look kindly on one party only being represented at the committee and

witnesses not being able to testify before people for whom they have voted and who represent them.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** We have already defeated a proposed amendment that would have ensured that there would be one member from each recognized party here. We're now dealing with the amendment by Mr. Anderson, which ends with a period after "at least 4 members present."

Mr. Bains.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** I'd like to call the vote, please.

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion? We'll go to the vote, then, on the amendment.

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** We now go back to the motion as proposed, which is as written.

Mr. Bains.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** I'd like to call a vote on the original motion.

**The Chair:** Is there any discussion on the motion?

Mr. Tonks.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Mr. Anderson made an interesting point, and I'm trying to mull it over, but I think what is implicit in our system, whether it's clear or not, is that the government will be represented. In terms of natural justice, it's important that there be opposition. I infer from this that the onus is on the opposition to be there. I hope you'll look at it that way. We have much more confidence in the government being present. We just want to make sure there's a balanced reception for the committees that count.

**The Chair:** You've heard the motion. Is there any further discussion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Number four, distribution of documents. Are there any proposals there?

Mr. Regan.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** I propose that you adopt the motion adopted in the last session:

That the Clerk of the Committee be authorized to distribute to the members of the Committee only documents that are available in both official languages.

**The Chair:** You have heard the motion. Is there any discussion on the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** This one could take a while.

**The Chair:** Next is the motion on working meals. Are there any proposals? We're not going to get into the menu.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** I hope the chairman isn't going to be stingy about this and prevent this from happening when members are starving sitting through long sessions. If it's at the discretion of the chair, I don't know. I hope we can be confident.

**The Chair:** Take a look at the chair and then decide.

We need somebody to make a motion there.

Mr. Trost, what is your motion?

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** I move that we adopt the motion as it was adopted in the previous Parliament.

**The Chair:** You've heard the motion.

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

**The Chair:** Number six is witnesses' expenses.

Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Mr. Chair, I'd move the routine motion that's in the first column, but with one addition: that, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation, child care, and living expenses be reimbursed. I would add the words "child care" after "accommodation", but otherwise the motion would remain the same.

**The Chair:** You've heard the proposal.

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** This is actually one that the NDP made last time as well. It was turned down by the committee. We didn't feel it was our obligation to be paying those expenses. We were willing to pay the travel, accommodation, and living expenses while they were here as witnesses, but beyond that, we weren't willing to do this.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Anderson.

Is there any further discussion? Shall we go to the vote? Do you want a little time?

Mr. Bains.

• (1600)

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** I just want clarification on the proposed change suggested by the NDP. It says, "if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation", etc. Under that definition of reasonable travel and accommodation, would child care be included?

**A voice:** No.

**The Chair:** I've never heard of a situation where that was the case.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Has there been, at any time in the past, an instance where a witness needed to travel or come here and, under the premise of reasonable travel and accommodation, was allowed to bring their child or children along as well?

**The Chair:** I don't think we're certain about that. I know that in my 15 years I've never heard of it, that's all I can say, and the clerk...

We can check, but if we're going to vote now, that makes it a little bit difficult.

We'll go first to Mr. Shory and then to Mr. Trost.

**Mr. Devinder Shory (Calgary Northeast, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I suggest that when they talk about the witness, they are talking about the witness, not their extended family.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Shory.

Mr. Trost.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** I was going to make a similar point. This is just sort of odd. We don't need to pay for every little bit of toothpaste

or things that a witness may claim. We're just opening this up for all sorts of charges and all sorts of stuff. This is a disgrace.

**The Chair:** Madame Brunelle.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** The idea of covering child care expenses does not seem excessive to me, especially since it is not going to be a large expense because it is not often requested. It would send women the clear message that we are interested in the light they have to shed. The government is rich enough to pay that.

The reality in the rest of Canada is clearly not the same as in Quebec; not everywhere has affordable daycare. It could be quite expensive for a witness to come here for several days.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Regan.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Chairman, you'll note, of course, that the first line of the motion as proposed by Mr. Siksay already says "if requested, reasonable travel", etc. So even the child care expenses, of course, would have to be "reasonable". Obviously if it doesn't incur any change to someone's child care arrangements, one would think that would not necessarily involve additional child care costs to that person, and therefore you wouldn't be reimbursing them.

My guess is that this is not going to be availed of all that often, but hopefully it may permit someone who otherwise might not be able to attend to do so. It may permit some valuable witness to come here who otherwise couldn't. That's an important consideration.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Regan.

Monsieur Bigras.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** I am in favour of Mr. Siksay's motion too. In my opinion, it is a simple desire on the committee's part to reconcile work and family. It is an excellent message to send to witnesses, especially since these committee meetings are held during the day. We do not want it to be impossible for them to appear because they have children and family obligations. That must not be a reason for them to be unable to come and testify before the committee.

In the spirit of reconciling work and family, it seems reasonable to me to pay child care expenses. Unlike my colleague Mr. Trost, I do not think we can compare children and toothpaste.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Tonks.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Again, Mr. Chairman, I'm just recalling the time when we had representatives from first nations groups before us. We were encouraged to have women make presentations. If the link is that it is necessary to have day care or child care for them to appear, then we should encourage that. But obviously, if they already have those day-to-day expenses and it's not necessary to their appearance, then that would have to be determined by the clerk in terms of the clerk's discretion.

I think there's a principle involved here. The principle is one of equity and treating people with the view that we want them to appear before the committee. If there's any encumbrance that exists and it happens to be child care, then that would be one of the reasonable costs associated with their appearance. I don't think that's out of order.

• (1605)

**The Chair:** What are you proposing in terms of the motion?

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** I think the amendment has been made. I think that's supportable. But the onus will be on the clerk.

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion on the motion?

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** Next is the motion on staff at in camera meetings. Does anybody want to make a motion there?

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Mr. Chair, I'd like to make a motion. It's a little bit different from the one last time:

Each committee member in attendance shall be permitted to have one staff member attend any in camera meeting. In addition, each party shall be permitted to have one party staff member attend in camera meetings.

That's to allow the whip's office or any other House leader to send someone if they want to. That opens it up a little from what we had last time.

**The Chair:** You've heard the proposed motion.

Mr. Bains.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** This is a point of clarification. Do you mean one per MP?

**Mr. David Anderson:** I mean one per MP who's there plus one member from the party.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Perfect.

**The Chair:** Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Chair, as I hear Mr. Anderson's suggestion, it is more restrictive than the one that was passed, if you're adding the "in attendance" phrase to that. I don't know if there was ever a situation in which a member of the committee who was absent from that meeting, for instance, could send a staff person or who had to leave the room temporarily would have to require their staff person to leave at the same time. So I do have some trouble with the phrase "in attendance", and I would like to move an amendment to remove that phrase from the motion.

**Mr. David Anderson:** May I make a point?

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

**Mr. David Anderson:** Before, it said that they be allowed to be accompanied, which means they have to be at the meeting. Previously, that's what it meant.

**The Chair:** Yes, it means—

**Mr. David Anderson:** You can't send somebody when you're not at an in camera meeting. If we want to allow that, I guess we can, but we've never done that previously.

**The Chair:** So Mr. Siksay, you were proposing what amendment exactly, so we have it correct?

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Actually, could I hear Mr. Anderson's motion again, Chair?

**The Chair:** Yes.

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** That each committee member—and if you want to reword it so they'd be allowed to be accompanied—in attendance shall be permitted to have one staff member attend any in camera meeting. In addition, each party shall be permitted to have one party staff member attend in camera meetings.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** I'll withdraw my amendment, Chair.

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

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** [*Inaudible—Editor*]...party can send one as well, but you have to be here.

**The Chair:** Mr. Regan.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Chairman, I suppose if one were looking strictly at the wording of that, it would mean an employee of your party as opposed to your research bureau, your leader's office, etc.

I guess if we're accepting that the intent of that is that it include the research bureau, the House leader's office, and the whip's office as the party per se, we can live with that if we're agreed that's what we mean by it.

**Mr. David Anderson:** They can be employed by the whip's office or whatever. If you want to change that...

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** No, that's fine. That's the intent.

**The Chair:** Is there agreement to Mr. Anderson's motion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Next is the motion on in camera meeting transcripts. Does anybody want to make a motion on that?

Mr. Shory.

**Mr. Devinder Shory:** I propose that it be kept as is.

**The Chair:** He's proposing the motion be as it is and was last time.

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

**The Chair:** Next is the motion on notice of motions. Is there any proposal for notice of motions?

Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** I propose that we adopt the motion as it was written last time.

**The Chair:** The proposal is that it be as it was last time.

Is there any discussion on the motion?

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

**The Chair:** Next is the motion on time allocation. This is for the questioning of witnesses. Are there proposals on that?

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Mr. Chair, I'd like to make a proposal.



The order of questions for the first round shall be as follows: Liberal, Bloc, NDP, Conservative.

Questioning during the second round shall alternate—

• (1610)

**The Chair:** How many minutes will there be for the first round?

**Mr. David Anderson:** I don't have that here.

**The Chair:** Would it be seven minutes?

**Mr. David Anderson:** We're just doing rounds of questioning. We'll come to the speaking order later, I guess. so it would read:

That witnesses from any one organization shall be allowed 10 minutes to make their opening statement. During the questioning of witnesses, there shall be allocated 7 minutes for the first round and thereafter 5 minutes shall be allocated to each questioner in the second and subsequent rounds.

That's what we had before.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. David Anderson:** So it's ten minutes for the guest, seven minutes, and then five minutes.

**The Chair:** Did you get the order he proposed for the second round of questioning?

**The Clerk:** No.

**The Chair:** Can we get the order for the second round?

**Mr. David Anderson:** Do you want to do this separately, or do you want to do the speaking order now as well? I haven't changed anything on the rounds of questioning.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** The question is, why not adopt the same one you had last time? How is this different?

**Mr. David Anderson:** It isn't. I'm wondering if you want that in the same motion or in a separate motion. I made the mistake of starting on the speaking order when we were talking about rounds of questioning.

**The Chair:** I think we can handle them together. Just put a motion out there that includes them.

**Mr. David Anderson:** So the order of questions would be: Liberal, Bloc, NDP, and Conservative for the first round. Questioning during the second round would alternate between opposition members and government members in the following fashion: Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, and Conservative.

That is based on the principle that each committee member should have a full opportunity to question witnesses before anyone gets a chance to repeat their questioning. Everyone would get a chance to speak before anyone spoke twice.

**The Chair:** So it respects the way the numbers on committees have been allocated by the House leaders and the whips of the parties.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Yes.

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

Monsieur Bigras.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** I do not know what the New Democratic Party thinks about it, but if, on the second round, each member has

not asked a question, it naturally gives a definite advantage to the Conservatives. The NDP is inevitably disadvantaged because, according to this list, it does not get back in until the fourth round of questions. I am not sure that we will necessarily have the time to get to a fourth round during a committee meeting. So it seems to me that we are giving a clear advantage to the Conservative Party.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Trost is next, and then Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** I would just point out that Mr. Anderson added up five Conservatives, three Liberals, two Bloc, and one NDP, with the Conservatives being clustered at the end of the final round. That means every member of the committee is being treated equally. But the odds are that if we have a longer committee, the Conservative members will get cut off because they're the ones at the end. While every member is being treated equally, if we go through the entire round the advantage will be to the opposition members, in that they will more likely be guaranteed their positions than a Conservative member. I think that should be noted.

There are 11 slots here because there are 11 members, excluding the chair. There are five Conservative slots, three Liberal, two Bloc, and one NDP. If we go late, the Conservatives are the ones most likely to be cut off. That's why I think it is a fair proposal.

**The Chair:** Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Thank you.

I would be hard pressed to accept an amendment to cut down on the time available to a member of the NDP to question witnesses and participate in the discussion at the committee. Allocations have traditionally been made to parties and not to individual members. That can account for a long tradition in committees in how time is allocated for the questioning of witnesses. I don't necessarily buy the argument that it needs to be balanced according to individual members, but I think it needs to be balanced or related to party participation in Parliament.

I'd like to make an amendment that the proposal for round two be replaced in Mr. Anderson's motion to go to round two, round three, and round four, as the committee adopted in the last Parliament. Further, I think that arrangement served the committee well in the last Parliament, so I recommend sticking with the status quo and getting on with the work of the committee in that fashion.

• (1615)

**The Chair:** You've heard the proposed amendment, which in effect puts in place the time allocation as stated here on the sheet.

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I don't see how that's acceptable. We've had a considerable change in seating allocations in the House of Commons since the election, and this would completely put it out of whack.

On what I've suggested, the opposition ends up with 40 minutes of questioning compared to 27 minutes for the government. It's generous to the opposition. The NDP gets almost half as much as each of the other parties, the way we've set it up here. If you're talking about party allocation, the NDP is already being treated generously, if Mr. Siksay wants to look at it that way.

The previous time allocation was based on a completely different House of Commons. I don't think we can seriously look at leaving things the way they were.

**The Chair:** Mr. Hiebert is next, and then Mr. Bains.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** I agree with the principle behind what Mr. Bigras said. He was appealing to this committee to look for fairness, and I think that is something we should try to adopt.

The concept of every member having an opportunity to speak once, before any member is given a second opportunity, is what we're striving for. Unfortunately, Mr. Siksay's amendment would actually give a disproportionate voice to all the opposition members. Under his proposal, three Liberals would have the opportunity to speak five times in total, yet five Conservatives would only have the opportunity to speak four times. That's what's really changing here.

What Mr. Anderson is proposing gives even more weight to what the opposition has to say, because under his proposal the opposition would have six slots to speak before everything repeats itself, versus only five slots for the government. So if you look at what is being proposed, the opposition would be given more time than the government.

If the point Mr. Bains is trying to make is that we would never get to the fourth round, that's all the more evidence that Conservative members would be shortchanged and prevented from having the opportunity to speak, while an NDP member would have the opportunity to speak twice.

So let's pursue the principle of fairness that Mr. Bigras is proposing and try to find a solution that treats people equally, as opposed to providing a disproportionate voice to some members or some parties.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Hiebert.

Mr. Bains.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** I'd like to call for the vote.

**The Chair:** As long as there are people who want to speak, I'm certainly going to hear them.

Madame Brunelle.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** I would like to come back to the work that the committee has to do. We have to understand that our work is not Question Period. In a non-partisan way, the committee is supposed to bring up new topics and to explore them in more depth. The same goes for bills that the government itself has submitted to the committee so that amendments can be made and different ways of presenting things can be tried.

The governing party has every opportunity to express its point of view outside committee work, because its point of view prevails from the outset. So we must, absolutely, have the opinion of all

parties. That is why I will vote against Mr. Anderson's amendment; the way in which time was allocated previously suits me perfectly, it worked well. It allowed us to do things better, to have interesting committee reports and to improve bills.

• (1620)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Anderson actually made a motion; he didn't move an amendment. Mr. Siksay moved an amendment, which is what we're discussing now.

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I will make a suggested amendment if Mr. Siksay will consider it. If not, I think we'll be here quite a while discussing our possibilities.

It is that we add the NDP to the end of the list I presented before we start the rounds again. That would put them ahead of where they were previously.

**The Chair:** We have a subamendment that would add the NDP to the end of the list, as proposed by Mr. Anderson in his motion.

Mr. Anderson, is that correct?

**Mr. David Anderson:** Yes, and that would move Mr. Siksay up two positions from where he'd be in his own proposal.

**The Chair:** You've heard Mr. Anderson's comments and his debate. We'll have to go to a vote on the amendment first. Then if he would like to propose another amendment he can do that, because it just doesn't work the way it's been laid out here.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I'm not sure if I'm going to be able to make the amendment if this one passes, because mine goes back to what I had to say before.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** That's true.

**Mr. David Anderson:** If this passes, you have an order. I'm interested in doing what we did and putting the NDP at the end of it. If the opposition votes down Mr. Siksay's amendment, he will benefit from this himself. He'll gain two spots on the round. He can come over here to take a look if he wants.

• (1625)

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** What Mr. Siksay is proposing would give you guys 10 speaking spots and would give Conservatives four speaking spots. So automatically one of our guys would always—

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** If you want to switch sides, I'm okay with that.

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

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Sorry, Russ.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** You're being unreasonable.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** I'm following the lead of my fearless leader here, Mr. Geoff. You negotiate with Geoff here. Geoff's the lead for us. When Geoff says jump, I ask how high.

**The Chair:** After discussion with the clerks, I have decided that we have to deal with the amendment first. Is there any further discussion on the amendment?

Mr. Trost, Mr. Bains, and Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** I'd like to make a very blunt point here in regard to Mr. Siksay's remark. If this is all about parties, then the Bloc Québécois and the Liberals should be giving up some of their time, because the Liberals have lost 26 seats from the previous Parliament. The Bloc Québécois lost 2 seats. The New Democrats, with byelection gains and the general election, picked up 8. The Conservatives picked up 19. Also, it should be noted that Mr. Arthur, for committee purposes, sits as a Conservative as well.

If that's true, then the NDP and the Conservatives should get more time from the Bloc Québécois time and particularly from the Liberal time. So if this is all about parties, that should be noted.

The second thing is that there is a bit of leeway here to give to parties, because, as we note in our proposal, as previously, the first New Democrat gets a full seven minutes. The first New Democrat to speak is given the five minutes for being a member, as it were, and a two-minute bonus for being the representative of the party, for a total of seven minutes. Other members farther down the list don't get seven-minute rounds, so the New Democrats are already advantaged because of their party's position, rather than being treated merely as individual members.

So to look at the points, we already have given some advantage to the party and we should give some consideration to members individually. Members from the same caucus do not always ask the same questions or have the same interests. There's a purpose to representing constituencies here. In the previous Parliament, we had Mr. Harris and Mr. Allen from ridings with a lot of forestry. I have a mining background. Mr. Anderson comes from an oil and gas riding. We have more members here. There are actually different interests that involve constituents.

When we did a forestry report and an oil sands report, there were different interests involving constituents in those reports. It was not merely the party interest in those reports. I take great umbrage at those who think the only thing we are here for is as tools of parties.

I do not know about other members of the committee, but I don't always agree with where my party goes. I don't check my brain in at the door and just forget to do it. Perhaps other members from other parties do. They apparently do that, but there's absolutely no way that I'm going to go that way.

**An hon. member:** That's what your Prime Minister tells you to do.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** The members from the Bloc appear interested in heckling my committee remarks, and I suppose that's their privilege, but we had a very productive committee last time. We worked very well. We worked very well with Ms. Duncan, Madam DeBellefeuille, Mr. Ouellet, Mr. Lloyd St. Amand from Brant, and the other members, and it was because we had some give and take.

Apparently not all members of the opposition are interested in give and take and in treating members with equal respect. If we don't move to that point, we are not going to have near the productivity that we had in previous committees. The productivity we had in previous committees was that of delivering things to constituents. Mr. Boshcoff, the former member from one of the Thunder Bay ridings, needed to deliver forestry reports because forestry was important to his riding. There were things of that nature. It wasn't

just for government members that we delivered productivity from this committee.

I think those things should be given consideration as we go ahead.

•(1630)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Trost.

Mr. Bains, then Mr. Siksay.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** I just wanted to call the vote, but if Mr. Siksay wants to speak, that's fine.

**The Chair:** Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Chair, I have a suggestion that may help us. I want to take Mr. Anderson's suggestion seriously. Now that I've had a chance to look at it, I think it is a helpful one. What I would propose is that I'd be willing to withdraw my amendment and go with an amendment like he proposed, with one change.

Just so I'm clear, I think what he was proposing is there'd be only two rounds. There'd be the first round, as is shown on our paper, and a second round. The second round would be five minutes each and would go like this: Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, and Conservative. That's what he was proposing. Then he suggested putting the NDP at the end of that list. I'd be all right with that order as long as we put the NDP between those two last Conservatives, so that it would go as follows: Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, NDP, and Conservative. We'd have that as the second round speaking order.

**The Chair:** Okay. We are still debating Mr. Siksay's amendment.

If you wish to withdraw it, we'll have to put that to the committee.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Are you folks okay with it?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Yes, the Conservatives are okay with that, so I will withdraw it, Chair. That's done.

**The Chair:** Okay. Is there agreement for Mr. Siksay to withdraw his amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** That is done. You've heard the proposal. Is the proposal clear?

The only change to Mr. Anderson's proposal, because it wasn't accepted as a subamendment, is that instead of having Conservative, Conservative, NDP at the end, it would be Conservative, NDP, Conservative at the end. So is—

**Mr. David Anderson:** For the sake of unity, I will give up my spot for Mr. Siksay. So I'll welcome a friendly amendment to do that.

**The Chair:** You've heard the proposal. Is there any further discussion? It sounds as though there is a certain amount of agreement, at least from a couple of members on the government side.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** I'm hearing concerns from opposition members about that, so I'm going to leave the amendment as it is. Sorry, Chair.

**The Chair:** Mr. Siksay, your amendment has been withdrawn, so—

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** No, I hadn't agreed to that finally. I said I was prepared to do that if members of the committee were interested in it, and I hear concerns from opposition members.

**The Chair:** The committee did agree to the withdrawal.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** I didn't agree.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** There were concerns here, Chair.

**The Chair:** On a point of order, Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** I think if you check with your clerk, I was on the speaking order before Mr. David Anderson spoke last time, so I've been missed. I'd like that opportunity.

**The Chair:** That is correct.

We'll go to Mr. Hiebert and then to Madame Brunelle.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I actually agree with Mr. Siksay that the amendment he discussed just a moment ago is the fairest way to go. I'm going to move as an amendment that it be Conservative, NDP, and Conservative. Let me explain why.

What we're effectively talking about here is time allocation. We're talking about how much time each member or each party has to speak, or, if you want to look at it on a macro scale, how many opposition minutes versus Conservative minutes there are.

I have made a quick calculation. If we look at that number, it's apparent that under Mr. Siksay's proposal the opposition would still have nearly twice as much time to speak. They would have 41 minutes to ask questions versus the 27 minutes the Conservatives would have to ask questions. So they maintain the advantage they are seeking, but at least it's a little bit more proportional or more reasonable than what we were discussing prior to this.

In a spirit of compromise, I think under the circumstances if we adopt the amendment that Mr. Siksay proposed and was considering—for 41 minutes to the opposition and 27 minutes to the Conservative side—everybody would get a chance to speak. The NDP would get a chance to speak twice. I think we would be resolving the concern. I think there are very good reasons to do this.

•(1635)

**The Chair:** You've heard the proposed amendment. Is there any discussion on that amendment?

Madame Brunelle, do you want to speak on the amendment?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** I would like someone to read the amendment to me slowly. I cannot understand the translation at all. I understand that the order in the first round of questions stays the same. I have no idea what is supposed to happen in the second round. Can you tell me that nice and quietly?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Merci.

We'll have the clerk read the order of the second round.

[*Translation*]

**The Clerk:** In the second round, it will be five minutes per questioner. The order will be: Liberal Party, Conservative Party,

Bloc, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Conservative Party, New Democratic Party, Conservative Party.

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** And do we drop the other rounds of questions?

**The Clerk:** There would be two rounds only.

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** Two rounds only.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** You've heard the proposed amendment. Is there any further discussion on the proposed amendment?

Let's go to the vote.

(Amendment negatived)

**The Chair:** Is there another proposal?

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Chairman, I propose that witnesses be given 10 minutes for their opening statement, and that at the discretion of the chair during the questioning of witnesses, the following times be allocated: round one, seven minutes, Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party, Conservative Party; round two, five minutes, Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party; round three, five minutes, Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Conservative Party; round four, five minutes, Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party, Conservative Party.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** What an excellent idea. I love it.

**The Chair:** I just need a minute.

The amendment is acceptable for debate. The other one that ended up with the same result was not voted on; it was withdrawn.

**Mr. David Anderson:** This is an amendment to my original motion, is that correct?

**The Chair:** This is an amendment to your original motion, that is correct.

Any discussion on the amendment?

Mr. Trost.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Again, we're going back to what was in the previous Parliament. Maybe people haven't noticed, but the seat count has actually changed.

I realize that the other three parties aren't quite sure whether they are in a coalition or are running attack ads against each other's leaders—or whatever it is they're up to—but the Liberals lost 26 seats and still want to have the same time allocation they had before. That I find amazing. I'm perfectly fine with the New Democrats getting more of a time allocation than they did in the previous Parliament, because they actually have more seats. But this just doesn't make sense to me, how you can do it.

I mean, if the whole objective of the opposition party is that we don't care about reality or fairness or how this reflects the House or the membership of the committee, why don't they just put all the Conservative members in the fourth round, have all the rounds loaded up for themselves, and basically exclude Conservative members to do it?

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Is that a proposal to do it?

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** No, that's not a proposal to do it. That's just a remark saying that this is the intent—

• (1640)

**The Chair:** Order, please. Let's respect the speaker.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** The honourable members couldn't quite get away with that in the press, because they would be shamed for it, but they're essentially doing a modification of that.

Look, you can do all the political grandstanding you need to do for the press, and do the stuff that opposition parties do, in one round. You can do that. It's in the later rounds that you start to get serious business. We could actually do serious work on serious issues and come up with serious recommendations. There are a lot of times when members, not from my caucus, or not my party, have asked good questions to elicit good information. To do that, you actually need to have a variety of people with a variety of backgrounds asking questions.

I realize that the House leaders, the whips, and the more partisan members always are interested in getting the clip for the news and moving on. But the purpose of committee should be to actually learn something so that we can do better policy for our constituents. This seems to have been lost on certain elements of the House and apparently on certain new members of this committee.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Trost.

Any further discussion or debate on the proposed amendment?

Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think if anybody were to read the transcripts, or if there were anybody watching if this were televised, they would look at the situation and they'd say to themselves, "Hmm, there are six opposition MPs from different parties and there are five government MPs. Why wouldn't they allocate the time appropriately?" Six on one side would get 55% of the time and five on the other side would get 45% of the time. That would be a reasonable way of approaching this.

What the opposition is now proposing is that they get 67% of the time and the government get one-third of the time. That's two-thirds to one-third. That doesn't make common sense.

Things have changed. It may have been more appropriate under the last Parliament when the numbers sitting around the table were a little bit different, but to pretend that hasn't changed and that you want to keep the same amount of time you had before now.... It's not the same thing over again. It's dramatically different. It's giving a significant increase to the amount of time that opposition members have to ask questions of witnesses, to be a part of the discussion.

On our side we're trying to be reasonable. We're proposing solutions. We're proposing compromises that even still favour the opposition members. The earlier amendment that was put forward by Mr. Siksay, which was perfectly reasonable, still gave them 41 minutes to 27 minutes, which is by my calculations still about 60% versus 40% of the time. They're still getting much more than they would normally be due, simply based on their numbers sitting at the

table. It's almost as though they're at the table and they're trying to grab more than they deserve, and I think that's not reasonable.

We're back in Parliament. We're trying to work together. We're trying to show Canadians that we're able to cooperate and to do so in a reasonable fashion. I think if you brought this question to a class of elementary students, they would do the math that they have been taught and they would come to the same conclusion that we're proposing or that has been proposed, even though it's more generous to the opposition.

Instead of—dare I say the word—being a little bit greedy, and trying to have it all or increase their influence, why don't we all put a little bit of water in our wine and come to a compromise that reflects reality a little bit more than what's being proposed?

Even if you were to look at the numbers in the House of Commons and look outside of the current numbers at the committee here, there are 143 government members and there are 164, minus the Speaker, opposition members. What's the proportion there? Well, it's 47% to the government and 53% to the opposition—nearly 50-50. That's not what they're asking for. They're asking for two-thirds to one-third. If you add up the time, they're talking about 56 minutes versus 27 minutes, twice as much time versus half the amount of time. It's simply unfair and unreasonable.

What was proposed in the motion put forward by Mr. Siksay of 41 minutes to the opposition and 27 minutes to the government gave everybody a chance to speak. It treated all members equally, and it gave the opposition members an advantage. We're willing to do that. We're willing to set aside our rightful allocation in favour of the spirit of cooperation. I genuinely hope that some reasonable heads can prevail in this discussion; otherwise it's going to perpetuate a great deal of dissatisfaction and discomfort at this committee because certain people will be marginalized.

• (1645)

Canadians have given us a mandate and said, "This is the allocation of seats we want. This is the amount of time and influence people should have. People should not be marginalized. People should have a chance to have their voices heard."

The opposition parties love to speak for the minority. Well, this is the case here.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Did you do the math?

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** You love to speak for—

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** But the majority of Canadians are right here.

**The Chair:** Order, please. Let Mr. Hiebert finish.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** The point that I think Mr. Bains is not catching is that they are often the ones who boast about how they champion the rights of the minority. That's what I'm talking about here.

Let's take that principle of fairness and distribute it equally, putting aside partisanship and saying fine, we recognize.... Any sense of compromise on their part would be appreciated, because right now they're saying, "We're going to push this through and...."

Frankly, I don't like participating in committees where there's that hardness. I think we've come to a place where Canadians expect us to compromise and work together. I'm certainly prepared to do that with my colleagues, and I hope we can start things off with that sense of collegiality that Canadians expect.

So members opposite, please think about this.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen is next, and then Mr. Tonks.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** Thank you very much.

I have a question and then two comments.

One amendment has been proposed by Mr. Regan. Is that where we are right now?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** It is essentially the routine motion adopted from RNNR 39-2. Is that right?

**The Chair:** That's correct.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** I think it's more fundamental than that. It boils down to parliamentary privilege.

Everyone in this room, in September and October 2008, went out and knocked on doors in their constituencies. Almost every person here has industry in their riding, whether it is forestry, mining, other resources, or oil and gas. Every one of us went out there. We haven't always been successful, but we've fought three elections in four years. I remember knocking on doors in 2004, in December 2005, and January 2006. We've all worked hard to get elected, and we all have a right to represent our constituents.

In June, through a lot of hard work and compromise across all parties, this committee was able to publish a unanimous report on the forestry industry. Everybody will agree, considering where our Parliament was last spring, that was not an easy thing to do, yet we got it done.

There has to be fairness in this, and it really boils down to the privilege issue that each member should have the utmost opportunity to ask questions. Nobody's any less than anybody else in this committee, and there should be a fair time allocation to each member to be able to ask those questions. Before someone else gets a second round, everybody should have had that fair opportunity, because we all represent our constituents. That's our job.

So I'm going to propose a subamendment to Mr. Regan's amendment: round one would be seven minutes, Liberal, Bloc, NDP, and Conservative; round two would be Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, and Conservative; round three would be Liberal, Conservative, Conservative, and NDP; and because everybody would have had a chance to ask a question, round four would be Liberal, Bloc, NDP, and Conservative.

In fairness, that would reflect the four rounds we had. Everybody would get an opportunity to ask a question. It would reflect the NDP's additional time, because of the additional votes and seats they received. It would also reflect a prorated share, in fairness to all the committee members, who I believe have worked hard. I think it's fair to everybody to get that opportunity.

•(1650)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Allen.

You've heard the subamendment. Is it clear to everyone what was proposed here, or do you want to hear it repeated? Everybody has it?

Discussion on the subamendment, Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I just fail to understand why Mr. Siksay wouldn't support this. It gives their party clear advantage over what they've had in the past and clear advantage over the previous listings. I'm not sure why he would not be in favour of supporting this.

It seems to me that if Mr. Cullen were here, I would think—in his own interest, because he could have those two rounds—he would accept this. I think Mr. Siksay needs to take a look at it. It gives the NDP an advantage over what they had previously. It allows the Bloc to keep what they have. Nothing changes for the Bloc. And the Liberals, as Mr. Trost so clearly pointed out, do not have the same number of seats they had in the past.

Now, Mr. Chair, I want to go through this, because I think it's important that we talk about this order for a little while. Actually, let's take a look at what should happen here. I think the opposition might be interested in this.

If we have a two-hour meeting with two presentations, we're down to an hour and 40 minutes. The way the questioning should be split, according to the numbers in the House, is that the government should have 46 minutes of that 100 minutes, the Liberals should have 25 minutes, the Bloc should have 16 minutes, and the NDP should have 12. If you take a look at what we're offering here, the NDP is clearly ahead of that. The benefit for them in this situation... and the Bloc keeps what they have.

The Liberals realistically have to take a cut in the time they would expect to have, because they've taken that cut at the poll. The people of Canada made the decision that they did not want Liberals to be dominating committees when they made the decision to vote out....

How many were voted out, Mr. Trost, 25 or 26?

So the people of Canada have spoken, and as I think Mr. Allen pointed out earlier, this is an issue of parliamentary privilege. Those of us who have been given additional seats should be able to—

**The Chair:** Would you mind waiting just a minute? There's a lot of discussion here. I don't want to actually discourage the discussion amongst the parties—I think it's not a bad thing—but could you just hold off on the rest of your comments for a minute? We'll come right back to you.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I have lots of things to say, so I'll hold off for a few minutes.

**The Chair:** I just want to make sure that people are actually listening to you.

Okay, Mr. Anderson, go ahead. Now I think we'll hear you okay.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I actually kind of forgot where I was, so I'd just like to go over some of the things I've mentioned already to the opposition. I think they're listening a little bit more now than they were previously, so hopefully they'll be able to catch some of this information.

I think, Mr. Chair, it's certainly good to resolve this, because we've gone through these other routine motions today and we've been able to agree on things like the service of analysts from the Library of Parliament, and that didn't take us any time at all. It was interesting to me that we came to an immediate agreement on whether we should have a subcommittee in terms of the agenda or not, so right off the bat we've shown that we can work together. I think we need to find some solution on this one. I wish people would come forward with a solution here that's realistic.

You know yourself, Mr. Chair, that we had quite a discussion on reduced quorum, and we were willing to go along with the decision that was made by the opposition. We certainly felt that we would have liked to have something a little bit different in that area, but we wanted to work with the opposition, so we were willing to find ourselves in a situation where opposition members could hear witnesses without a government member present. That seems to be a strange thing to me, but we believe the committee should work well together. We'll certainly be there, I would think, to hear witnesses if witnesses are coming and evidence is being presented. We want to work with the opposition on that.

We were able to reach agreement, obviously, on the distribution of the documents, and we talked a little bit about the staff at the in camera meetings and who we wanted there and how we wanted to do that. We were able to make an agreement on that.

Everyone was actually very enthused, Mr. Chair, when you brought up the issue of working meals, and we heard lots of collaboration there and lots of discussion among the members about what they would like to see there. They were giving you a little bit of a hard time about whether you'd be a generous chair or whether you'd be a tightwad. We believe that, as has been the case in the past, you're going to be very generous with us. I think Mr. Regan made the point very well that he wanted you to be generous with the committee.

Again, we work with the opposition in terms of those kinds of things, and we don't believe you're a tightwad. We think you're very competent, Chair. That's one of the reasons Mr. Hiebert put forward your nomination and felt so enthusiastic about it, as you heard earlier.

Obviously, we had a discussion about the witnesses' expenses, and we were willing to go along with the changes that had been made there in order to accommodate witnesses when they come.

We can go down further than that and talk about some of the other things—the motions that require 48 hours' notice but allow people to make substantive motions if they want to, as long as they pertain to the discussion we're having.

Mr. Chair, it's been a pleasure to work together on those issues to this point with the opposition. I'm not sure why we're running into such a roadblock here when clearly we want to come back to the idea that we want to see some fairness in the way this is laid out. I know

that Mr. Allen or Mr. Trost or Mr. Shory or Mr. Hiebert would be willing to go and talk to any of the opposition members right now. We could try to come to some sort of conclusion to this. We certainly want to work with them. We would love to get this resolved really quickly here so we can go on to some other things. It would be a shame not to have this resolved quickly.

I just want to come back to what I was saying earlier about this specifically. If you take a look at the breakdown in the House of Commons—I think I have my numbers right here, and I guess some of the opposition members could correct me later if they're wrong—it's about 143 for the Conservative Party, 77 for the Liberals, 49 for the Bloc, and 37 for the NDP. That's off the top of my head, so if I'm missing a couple of numbers, Mr. Chair, you can certainly let me know.

As I said, we normally have two-hour committee meetings. If we have two presentations, they'll likely take up the full 10 minutes each, and we'd get down to about an hour and forty minutes. If you break it down according to the way the seats are distributed in the House of Commons, that would break down for the Conservative Party to about 46 minutes of questioning. That would be a reasonable share for us to have. That would give 25 minutes to the Liberals for their questioning, and it would allocate about 16 minutes to the Bloc Québécois in order for them to conduct their questioning and inquiry, and it would give the NDP 12 minutes.

Mr. Chair, I want to point out that in this amendment by Mr. Allen the NDP would actually have more than that, so I think they can be fairly happy with what they're getting here.

I'm a little bit concerned because we did make a suggestion earlier. We wanted to try to accommodate the changes that are taking place in the House of Commons, so we came forward with suggestions and actually offered the NDP the seventh slot in the second round.

• (1655)

I think they're sitting somewhere around 10, 11 or 12 if we go to the proposal that's been made by the opposition. I'm not sure why Mr. Siksay, in the absence of Mr. Cullen, would accept something like that when we're offering him something much better than that. We want to move them up and actually offered to give up one of our slots in order to slide them in. We're willing to take the delay for our own member.

It's interesting, because when I look at this, those are not at the end of the two hours. Those are somewhere in the middle of that second hour, and certainly they're going to get that opportunity. Mr. Siksay has said he's not interested in that, apparently because he'd like to be further down the list. Actually, for the NDP, being further down the list last time meant that most days they did not get that second round. There were some occasions on which Ms. Bell had the second round, but there were a lot of times when she was not allowed to ask questions in the second round just because we ran out of time. It's a puzzle to me, and perhaps Mr. Siksay can tell us a little later why he would be willing to put his colleague in a situation in which he probably won't get that second round when we've offered up, I think more than generously, that position for them to take.

Mr. Chair, I see some other people who want to speak. I have a little bit of math to do here on how the numbers would add up for each of these proposals. I would like to give my other colleagues here a chance to speak to this issue, and maybe we can come to some resolution. I really would like to come back with the numbers and the minutes that everybody would have under the various scenarios. I think we can spend some time on that and probably come to a reasonable compromise on that as well.

• (1700)

**The Chair:** I have a list here. Mr. Tonks is next.

I would like to remind members of the committee that many of us have flights to catch, and it would be nice to be able to do that. On the other hand, I am not going to cut off discussion. This is a fundamental discussion on the future of the committee and how we operate.

Mr. Tonks.

**Mr. Alan Tonks:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I hope this isn't trite, but there was a mayor in Toronto who always used to use the expression "If it ain't broke, why fix it?"

He was probably one of the most popular mayors because he didn't base his approach on the fundamentalist assertion that we equate the service and the rule simply on the basis of numbers. We base it on our willingness to get to the truth and to have good representation. That principle worked extremely well for this committee during the last session.

Mr. Chairman, I'll remind you that when we got to a point where issues were very complex, we actually passed motions by consensus giving additional opportunities out of sequence for members to ask questions. It was never denied, and it worked very well.

There are some issues that are implicit in representative government. One is that in a minority government, there is an opposition and there's a government. It is much easier for the government to stay together, and for whatever motive you apply to the opposition, the opposition is several entities. The tactic of dividing and conquering at specific times is just that, a tactic. It's not a strategy, thank God. Tactics win battles, but strategies win wars.

We could commence with the way we approached it last sitting. We had the same discussion, and there were those who put forward

suggestions on the basis of representation just as have been put forward now.

Mr. Chairman, in order for us to get on with things, why not try it by consensus? We can always come back and change the order if it isn't working, or if we feel it isn't reasonable based on the way we want to represent in front of our witnesses and extract from our witnesses. Let's try, and hopefully it will be as successful as it was last term under your chairmanship.

**The Chair:** We'll have Mr. Bains, followed by Mr. Shory, Mr. Hiebert, and Mr. Trost.

Mr. Bains.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** I think Mr. Tonks summarized it very well and clearly. It was exactly what I wanted to say.

**The Chair:** Mr. Shory.

**Mr. Devinder Shory:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would just like to make some comments regarding the natural resources committee. This is my first term as an MP, and when I was assigned to this committee, I spoke to a few members and was given the impression that this was one of the committees that worked very well, one where all the committee members were cooperative. But seeing all this mess today, I don't know how well this committee did work in the past.

As far as allocation of time is concerned, if we go with the voice of the Canadian people, I guess that voice clearly granted, on October 14, the seats for each party. If we go with all fairness, then we should allocate all this time in accordance with those seats.

I was surprised to see that when Mr. Siksay, an NDP member, proposed a subamendment, and this side of the committee agreed to the amendment, he did not simply withdraw but actually voted against that. I just want to know, are all the opposition members here just to oppose, or is there any intention to cooperate?

Thank you.

• (1705)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Shory.

Mr. Hiebert.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I listened to Mr. Tonks, and listened to his suggestion that we adopt the principle of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". But that only applies if you're dealing with the same whatever. If we're talking about a car, yes, that might be the case. But what happened between the last Parliament and this Parliament is that we have a different car. It's a completely different automobile. It doesn't apply to the circumstances the way it used to. So that idea doesn't fit the situation at all, unfortunately.



Looking at the proposal that my colleague Mr. Allen put forward, I think it's important to know that the opposition still gets 60% of the time. They're 53% of the chamber but they get 60% of the time. We're 47% of the chamber and we get 40% of the time.

There's still a spirit of compromise on our part. Mr. Regan told me in private earlier that he felt it was the opposition's obligation to hold the government to account, and they needed the time to do that. Well, this proposal gives them the time to do that. They still get 60% of the time.

In terms of the numbers, in the last Parliament the Liberals had four. Now they have three. But they still want to keep the same number of speaking slots, effectively giving themselves preferential treatment. Maybe we shouldn't be surprised at that, but let's hope we can move beyond that. We've gained a number, yet we're losing a spot to speak, under this scenario. That doesn't make sense either.

The proposal of 41 minutes for the opposition, so 60% of the time, versus 27 minutes for the government, or 40% of the time, I think is a compromise that, frankly, even Mr. Siksay thought was reasonable until other considerations came to mind. I'm hoping we can come back to that and resolve this and move on to the other business the committee has to address.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Hiebert.

We have Mr. Trost, and then Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** I would just like to point out that when committees were setting up, I talked with my staff and checked to see when we were originally to set up. I found out that it was Thursday, the end of the week, and I thought, "Good, everything will be worked out in the other committees". If there was any friction, I thought, it would be solved because other committees would have gone through the same procedures and would have been through it.

I checked to see what other committees had done. Mr. Allen's proposal currently on the table is more generous to the opposition than Mr. Anderson's original one, so remember that. Mr. Anderson's original proposal for the same time allocation was adopted by the justice committee and the international trade committee. So it was adopted by at least two committees and very possibly more. I know of at least two that adopted Mr. Anderson's original proposal. So the Liberal members on the justice and international trade committees, and the Bloc members and the NDP members on both those committees, both of which are historically more controversial than this committee, thought that was fine. On those two committees, the opposition parties, all three of them, thought it was fine. That was Mr. Anderson's original proposal.

The human resources and immigration committees evidently took the slightly amended formula, whereby we moved the NDP, with the Conservatives, toward the end, and they were fine with it. So in at least four other committees, and possibly more, the opposition was willing to agree to a proposal less generous to themselves than what is currently on the table here.

What I do not understand is why it was acceptable for the parties in those situations to accept that, but here it is not. I doubt if I'll get an answer, but I would like an answer from each of the other three parties. It's their choice if they want to add comments on that. In those four committees, why was it fine for all of them to go there, but

here in this situation it is not? Also, this is even with a slightly more generous proposal now on the table here than the one that had been previously altered.

One of my concerns is the way this is going to be set up. Most weeks, I won't get to ask questions, or one member here or there won't get to, and there are things in which one is interested for one's constituency more than anything else. This actually has to be taken seriously.

The other thing that should be noted is that historically this is not a legislatively heavy committee. I doubt if this will change in this Parliament. There was not a lot of controversial stuff. As was noted earlier, we had a unanimous report on the forestry industry. It was unanimous. I don't think there was even a single recommendation where there was a minority report. That was amazing. It helped people in all ridings.

If we take on an issue like mining, all parties have constituencies with mining interests, and individual members will want to go back and say, "Look, this is what I've done". We need things for individual members to take back to their ridings to show what they've done. It's something that can work for members in all parties.

I urge the members across the aisle to look to the leadership shown in the human resources committee, the justice committee, the international trade committee, and the immigration committee. Our proposals are not objectionable to your party in those committees. I'm at a loss to understand why an even more generous offer here seems to be objectionable.

• (1710)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Trost.

Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Thank you, Chair.

I want to apologize for being one of the delaying factors in this debate this afternoon, but clearly I'm being courted by everyone around the table. It's often a difficult position when you have more than one suitor, but I revel in that position at the same time, Chair.

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

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Somebody's going to go away disappointed from this afternoon and, unfortunately, I'm the one who has to make the call, it appears. I'm prepared to do that.

Chair, I don't think the argument of direct correlation between number of seats and speaking time is a valid argument. We allocate speaking time and other opportunities for participation in very different kinds of processes around this institution in many different ways. We certainly don't, for instance, allocate questions in question period according to the number of seats. The Conservative Party doesn't get their full share of questions in question period in that kind of circumstance.

That being said, even our number of seats doesn't really represent the wishes of the Canadian people, because we know that the percentage of the popular vote doesn't represent the number of seats that parties win in Parliament.

I think all of those arguments are difficult ones and fail. However, there has to be a way out of the impasse, and I think the way to do that is to support Mr. Allen's amendment. That's a compromise I can certainly live with. Clearly, there is an advantage for the New Democrat even though that speaking position is the last one in the round and would often be difficult to get to, but I am persuaded that there should be an opportunity for each member of the committee to find time in the full rotation, in the first and second rounds. I am persuaded by that argument and will support Mr. Allen's subamendment.

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

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Could you read Mr. Allen's proposal for us again?

**The Chair:** Yes, let's make sure we have it. Let's hear Mr. Allen's subamendment, please.

**The Clerk:** First round, seven minutes, Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, NDP, Conservative Party; second round, Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative; third round, Liberal, Conservative, Conservative, NDP; fourth round, five minutes, Liberal, Bloc, NDP, Conservative.

• (1715)

**The Chair:** You've all heard the subamendment.

Shall we go to the vote on the subamendment?

(Subamendment agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now we'll go to the amendment as amended by the subamendment.

(Amendment agreed to)

**The Chair:** Now we go to the vote on the motion as amended.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** We have arrived at an agreement.

Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I have one more proposal for a routine motion. This is to give priority to legislation. It's a new motion.

**The Chair:** Mr. Anderson has the floor, and he is proposing another motion here.

**Mr. David Anderson:** This is another routine motion to deal with priority of legislation.

The motion reads as follows:

That the consideration and examination of any bill, government or private member's bill, which falls within the express mandate of the committee take precedence over any study or non-legislative examination other than questions of privilege. In such circumstances, the non-legislative study shall be deferred until such time as the bill is reported back to the House.

That's to give preference to legislation.

**The Chair:** You've heard the motion.

Mr. Regan, I think, was first.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Chairman, I think we should keep the hands of the committee free. This handcuffs the committee. It determines its choices. The committee is the master of its own house. It ought to remain the master of its own house. It ought to be able to

determine what it wants to study and when, unless, of course, there's a direct order from the House. But the fact of the matter is this is tying the hands of the committee in a way that's inappropriate.

**The Chair:** Mr. Bains.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** We just passed that motion on notice of motions requiring 48 hours.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** So if this is a motion, wouldn't it require 48 hours' notice, if there's no consensus?

**The Chair:** It is a routine motion, which is what we're dealing with.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** So this is being proposed as a routine motion, not as a motion?

**The Chair:** That's right.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** And what's the difference between a routine motion and—

**The Chair:** Well, that's the subject we're dealing with here today. So obviously if we had to have 48 hours' notice for motions today, we'd be in trouble.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** It doesn't sound very routine. It's an extraordinary motion, Mr. Chairman. It isn't part of the previous workings of the committee. It seems to me it's not a routine motion.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** That's why I didn't see it on the agenda for routine motions.

**The Chair:** Well, actually, neither was this. This wasn't on the agenda. The agenda is a two-item agenda to deal with routine motions.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** I'm just wondering if this is a routine motion. That's all.

**The Chair:** Is there any further discussion on the motion?

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Is there a ruling on whether or not...? It is an extraordinary motion.

**The Chair:** I'm ruling that it's in order. We're dealing with routine motions.

We'll have Mr. Siksay, and then Madam Brunelle.

A point of order, Mr. Bains.

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** Can I get clarification from the clerk whether, based on previous practices, this is deemed to be a routine motion or a motion that's been presented to the committee and should follow the guidelines of the notice of motion that we just passed?

**The Chair:** Mr. Bains, I ruled on that already. I would like to move ahead.

Madame Brunelle.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Paule Brunelle:** On this motion, I would like to remind Mr. Anderson that committees very much appreciate being able to control their agendas and the matters that appear there. Soon, I will have been a member of Parliament for five years and I remember great discussions in committees about what would be put on the agenda and which subjects were the most important to discuss.

Mr. Anderson's motion disrupts the committees' agenda and imposes the government's agenda and the topics it wants to support. That is why I will vote against this motion.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Siksay.

• (1720)

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm against the motion as well. I think Mr. Regan and Madame Brunelle have already spoken eloquently to the reasons why.

**The Chair:** Mr. Trost.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would just make the observation that if something gets here, then it will have to have had majority support in the House. This means that one of the opposition parties—one of you guys—will have to have voted for this, or at least abstained; we saw that in the previous Parliament, abstaining, so half support.

Nothing is going to get before this committee unless there is some opposition agreement to begin with, in the first place. So the opposition, at least one of the parties, still controls what comes here or not. If the opposition is agreeing to it in the House, I suspect in most cases—maybe not all, but in almost all cases—the same opposition party that agreed to it in the House would then instruct their members, or the members would generally behave in a similar fashion here, and let it come before the committee.

That's why I view this as a bit of a routine motion. One reason to do it is that we could get things done in an orderly fashion, and we could actually plan things in a much more efficient way.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Trost.

Mr. Anderson, are you indicating that you want to speak?

**Mr. David Anderson:** I was just going to point out to Mr. Bains that this was presented at other committees and was found to be in order. That was all.

But I also actually think the comment is worth making that legislation should be a priority of the committee. If we have a bill dealing specifically with things that are inside our mandate, I would expect that the committee would be willing to make that a priority. I don't know why we would object to passing a routine motion that supported that.

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

(Motion negated)

**The Chair:** We will now look at the issue that we had agreed to put off until the end of the meeting, the issue of the minister coming on Tuesday and the officials coming for either the first or the second hour, whatever order works for the minister.

Is it agreed by the committee that we have the minister and the officials coming for an hour each at Tuesday's meeting to deal with the supplementary estimates?

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Can you say that again, please?

**The Chair:** Just as we discussed before, is it agreed that we would have the minister for an hour and the officials for an hour on Tuesday?

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I would sooner ask the minister to come for two hours. What often happens in these things is that the minister makes a presentation and it can sometimes go on for quite a while. Now, I suppose if she only has 10 minutes, that's helpful, but it does not leave....

Just to have 50 minutes for questions and answers doesn't provide very much. When you look at the set-up we just created in terms of the time allocation, you don't get through very much of that with the minister in that period of time.

I would have thought that she would want to tell us more and to answer questions on a variety of subjects. I don't see how you could possibly cover them in an hour. If she's prepared to come at a different time, perhaps later in the month when she has two hours available, then I think we ought to make that option available to her.

**The Chair:** Mr. Regan, you know that a minister's time is quite difficult to schedule. You experienced that yourself.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Yes, and I can recall appearing at length before the fisheries committee.

**The Chair:** I will put it to Mr. Anderson. He knows—or might know, I'm not certain—the minister's schedule; I don't.

Mr. Anderson, as parliamentary secretary, do you have any comments on whether or not that would be something the minister could accommodate?

**Mr. David Anderson:** Mr. Chair, it was my opinion or my feeling that the opposition wanted to have the minister here as soon as possible. The supplementaries, if you look at them, are not that extensive. I don't think we need four or eight hours to study those.

The minister has been more than willing to come. She wants to come. She wants to come on Tuesday. She's made room in her schedule for that. If the committee would like to have her here, she's willing to come for that full hour.

Most of the time, actually, in the committees I've been in, the minister has come for one hour and the bureaucrats for the second hour.

So she wants to be here. If the committee wants her, she's more than happy to be here. If not, we can try to reschedule for some other time, but I have no idea when that would be.

**The Chair:** You've heard the parliamentary secretary's comments. The minister has agreed to be available for an hour, and that works. If we're going to be looking at two hours, we'll have to look at when that can be scheduled.

Mr. Siksay.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Mr. Chair, I think the proposal is a good start. If the minister needs to return, we can request that, but I think we should get on with it and meet the minister.

• (1725)

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

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** I'm surprised. It's not my impression that Mr. Anderson said he had her schedule.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I didn't say I had her schedule.

**The Chair:** I said this has been agreed to.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Sorry, let me rephrase that. I didn't say he had it; I said it's not my impression that he had it. I didn't suggest that you said he had it. I'm saying I don't think he has her schedule; therefore I'm a little surprised that he wouldn't ask whether she can come for two hours.

As Mr. Siksay said, I suppose we could agree to have her come, preferably for two hours. If she only has an hour, obviously we'll have to deal with that. But I hope he will agree to ask her to come for two hours and return later, because the committee is just starting.

**The Chair:** Mr. Anderson.

**Mr. David Anderson:** I think Mr. Regan was turned around when I finished my statement that if the committee doesn't want her to come, I will ask her when she can come and we'll try to work that out. So if you want her to come on Tuesday—

**Hon. Navdeep Bains:** We want her to come.

**Mr. David Anderson:** —she's more than happy to come. I don't have her schedule. You know how busy the ministers are. She's made time in the schedule for this and will be here if we want her. Mr. Siksay apparently does. I'm just wondering what the Bloc's position is on that.

**The Chair:** I've heard that there is agreement. You can ask if it's possible to change that. I think it was agreed that we'd have her for an hour. You can discuss it with her and see if she can stay longer.

Is that the understanding?

**Some hon. members:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay, that is agreed.

Our time for this meeting is finished. Thank you all very much. I'll see you on Tuesday with the minister.

The meeting is adjourned.

---







**Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons**

**Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes**

**Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address:  
Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à l'adresse suivante :  
<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

---

**The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.**

**Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.**