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Chair

Mr. Gordon Brown

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• (0905)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC)): Good morning, everyone. We are of course going to spend some quality time together over the next little while and we are here today pursuant to the order of reference of November 5, 2010, referring Bill C-32, An Act to amend the Copyright Act, to this legislative committee.

What I suggest is that we deal with the following items. Now, a special legislative committee is somewhat different from a standing committee, so I think the first order of business would be for our clerk to give us a little presentation on exactly what the differences are.

Madam Clerk.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Michelle Tittley): Good morning.

Each of you should have received a package with a title page reading “Procedural information about legislative committees”. It provides some photocopied pages of procedural texts and some other references to Standing Orders, all of which are relevant to the functioning of a legislative committee. Should you have any questions about procedure or functioning, feel free to contact me in the office. In the meantime, I’m going to read a short text that will summarize some of the main points.

In terms of the role of the chair, the chair of a legislative committee is not elected by members of the committee, but rather appointed by the Speaker of the House, to emphasize that the role of the chair is that of a neutral arbitrator of proceedings. The chair of a legislative committee is responsible for ensuring the orderly conduct of business of the committee and careful attention to the clause-by-clause study of the bill. Like the Speaker, the chair of a legislative committee does not participate in debate in a committee.

Unlike chairs of standing committees, the chair of a legislative committee is not considered a member of the committee and is not counted as part of the quorum. The chair of a legislative committee votes only when there’s an equality of voices. As in standing committees, all decisions of the chair may be appealed to the committee.

Unlike standing committees, legislative committees do not elect vice-chairs. If the chair cannot be present, an acting chair may be designated by the chair from among the membership of the committee. The clerk cannot elect an acting chair in a chair’s absence.

For substitutions, all membership changes are made using the regular whip’s substitution forms. Changes to the membership are permanent and are effective as soon as the appropriate form is received by the clerk. Chairs cannot be substituted, as they are appointed by the Speaker.

In terms of reports, legislative committees can only report a bill back to the House with or without amendment and cannot report observations or recommendations on a bill.

In terms of the budget, legislative committees are allocated an interim budget of \$50,000. Should the committee need to increase its budget, it must seek the approval of the Board of Internal Economy.

The Chair: Are there any questions?

Thank you, Madam Clerk.

Moving along, you have in front of you a list of potential routine motions. I would be prepared to entertain motions to that effect. Did everybody find that?

Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, CPC): Mr. Chair, I think that on this committee there are about five of us who are on the industry committee, and I think we find that our industry committee routine motions work very well for us. I don’t know if we could just put forward the idea of adopting the routine motions we have in the industry committee and save some time here, if that’s—

The Chair: Well... The clerk will read those out, then.

Meanwhile, we’ll carry on.

Mr. Rodriguez.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): I just wanted to know, what were the rules?

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague (Pickering—Scarborough East, Lib.): Chair, it’s a bit of a red herring, the rules of the industry committee, and I will take some responsibility for having changed them several years ago. In fact, this was done in 2006 to permit at the time an independent member of the committee to ask questions. This is all part of the consensus building my party attempted certainly in the first minority government of the Conservative Party. Those may not work, depending on the timing, and might not give additional time rightfully to opposition questions.

But they are certainly different. They are a different creature and animal. The change, which was done for very specific reasons in 2006, has now since changed. My understanding is that they were adopted. I sit on the current industry committee and it has the same rules that applied before. We may want to have a look at them, because we don't really have an idea of the timing when the witnesses will be allowed to appear. If we're talking an hour, it may advantage the opposition; if it's an hour and a half, it advantages the government.

I know that we want to achieve consensus here if we can, but we also want to make sure that we operate by rules that are relatively similar to those of most committees. That probably would not include the industry committee.

The Chair: Well, in terms of the industry committee, the first round is a seven-minute round. So it would be up to the committee members if they wanted to have five-minute rounds, possibly.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Chair, I think it's subsequent rounds that tend to be the problem, so just be aware of it. A cursory look at those will demonstrate that after the first round the way it breaks down by party is substantially different on the industry committee and it does not tend to favour opposition.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Lavallée.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): There is a problem with regard to the rounds of questions. I am okay with a first round of 10 minutes. I do not know how things are usually done at the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. I would suggest we disregard the rules of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology as well as those of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, and make our own. I would think that 10 minutes would be appropriate for the first round, and then five for the second. However, I do hope that we follow the normal order for the following round, i.e., Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, NDP and Conservative Party. I would hope that the same order will apply to the second round and subsequent ones. That to me would be better.

I have other comments regarding the routine motions. I do not know how you want to go about this, but if you tell me, I will follow your instructions.

• (0910)

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay.

All right. In terms of proceeding, maybe we can start with this. You have the potential list of routine motions in front of you. Then we could get to the rounds and how long they're going to be.

Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: Actually, it's interesting, because I was talking more about the rest of the routine motions. In questioning rounds, this is going to be a little bit of a different creature in terms of how many witnesses we have to hear from. In terms of the meetings and the questioning rounds, we might change the timing a little bit anyway. Who knows?

But I was thinking more about the rest of the routine motions. Of course, routine motions are more than just rounds of questioning. There are a lot more routine motions in there.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Lake.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Yes, I think we have to go through a few steps here. I think we do need to go through these routine motions. I think the issue of questioning rounds is very important, but that's going to really be tied into how we structure the witness lists.

On the heritage committee, and I've been there for many, many years.... The five-minute round I think would be very ineffective for a legislative committee because we're going to be dealing with specific questions. If we're reduced to five minutes, where we have to throw in a generalization and there are three different viewpoints that might all be technical, I'd prefer an initial round of seven minutes. Because I want to be able to really understand what the witness is saying, because we're not in generalizations here. We're going to need to have very specific recommendations coming out of that.

But I do believe the issue of how we deal with the rounds in questions is going to really be tied to how we structure our witness list, so I'd prefer to go through the routine motions first and then deal with that.

The Chair: Okay. We'll proceed on that basis.

You have the sheets in front of you. I'll be happy to entertain motions, and potentially on the services of analysts from the Library of Parliament, to maybe get the ball rolling here.

The floor is open.

Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: Maybe we could just have the clerk read what we use in the industry committee for this.

The Clerk: I have in front of me here routine motions as adopted by the—

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Lavallée.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Mr. Lake has just said that the clerk could perhaps inform us on how things work at the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. I, for one, would not base our roles on those of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage nor of those of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. We have struck a new legislative committee and so let's make our own rules.

Mr. Chair, I would suggest that we begin with the motions that are on the table, starting with the first item, i.e., services of analysts from the Library of Parliament. If we agree on that, we can adopt it. We can comment and vote on each motion, one by one. That is how I suggest we proceed.

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Chair, I agree. I should add that the routine motions before us are in fact just that—routine motions. I don't know of any committee that doesn't have these.

Rather than reading through every one of them, I would simply move adoption of the one, two, three, four, and five points that are made here, and then we can get on with the decision as to the timing and what model we adopt.

A voice: Those are...?

Hon. Dan McTeague: I'm sorry. Those are on staff, witnesses, televising, questioning of witnesses, and the last one. The last one is the only area that I think we would have a debate on.

The Chair: Okay. There are nine points there.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I would generally agree with my dear cousin at the other end of the table—

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Charlie Angus: —but I'm not willing to support the reduced quorum motion. I find that very problematic. If we are going to have a committee that thoroughly examines things, there has to be a sense that the public would trust that. We're going to do this as the committee and people have to show up for it. I don't like the idea that as long as three members show up, they can hold the meeting. That's not acceptable to me in a committee like this.

The Chair: Let me suggest that we proceed on the proposed routine motions, minus the reduced quorum and the questioning of witnesses. Then, if there is general consensus on all those points, we would go back and visit number 3 and number 9. Is there a general consensus?

Madame Lavallée.

● (0915)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: The seventh motion deals with the presence of staff at in camera meetings. We would have to add the words "and a member of the party" so that a member from our whips' offices can attend. That is a customary add-on in various committees, so you will easily find wording for that.

[*English*]

The Chair: All right. What I was going to say is that I mis-numbered them in terms of... We don't have consensus on 3, or 7, or 10. Is that correct?

A voice: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. So why don't we have a motion to approve 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9?

An hon. member: I so move.

The Chair: Okay. That's moved by Mr. McTeague and seconded by Mr. Del Mastro.

Is there any discussion? All in favour?

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

The Chair: That's carried, so we'll go back to number 3, on reduced quorum. Can we have a motion to that effect?

Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough, CPC): Well, I don't know what number Mr. Angus would see as appropriate in this instance. That said, I won't have the committee held up because some folks can't fit it into their schedules. I would suggest if it's not three members, perhaps.... The total membership of this committee is what, 10, 11? So I'd entertain a motion at six, so that we'd greater than a half of the committee here. If folks can't fit it into their schedule, I'm not going to have the committee held hostage for that.

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro, you're moving a reduced quorum of six?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: To six.

The Chair: Do we have a seconder? I want to get the motion on the floor. Then we'll have comments.

The Clerk: We don't need a seconder.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: I have a question for Mr. Del Mastro. You're suggesting that there would be six members present?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: At least six.

Hon. Dan McTeague: At least? Then how do we break up in "including one member of the opposition"?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: There would have to be at least one member from the opposition.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Would you not want to increase that as well?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Sure, if you like. I would anticipate that Conservative members would be present at all times and—

Hon. Dan McTeague: All right. I would suggest then that perhaps that number would at least be consistent here. If you're going to double the number, you also would double the number of members of the opposition to two.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Okay. That's fine. So it's six and two.

Mr. Mike Lake: What's the regular quorum right now?

The Chair: Do you want to explain that, Michelle?

The Clerk: A committee's regular quorum is a simple majority, meaning 50% of the members plus one.

Mr. Mike Lake: So—

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: That's what I've just proposed.

Mr. Mike Lake: Yes, so we don't need to have a reduced quorum routine motion, do we? Let's just not—

An hon. member: Okay.

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro, you're withdrawing that motion?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: No, I'm not. The motion is six members present and at least two members of the opposition. That's the motion on the floor.

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I would accept it if it says "a member from at least two opposition parties". My concern is that I don't want to have a situation where a deal is made on the side, the meetings go ahead, and two members from one party sit in. Then that's an issue of us hijacking.... If a member from two opposition parties...I'm the only representative from the New Democrats and perhaps I'm caught in a snowstorm. I wouldn't want to hold up the meeting, but I certainly wouldn't want....

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Lavallée.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I am totally against a reduced quorum. I do not see the point of that motion. This is a legislative committee that will last a few months. We are all very motivated to attend each and every meeting. I cannot imagine that parties would not send their members to attend the meetings, especially when witnesses are present.

I am completely against any backroom deals between political parties to exclude another party. That does not make sense. Everyone must attend for there to be a quorum. That is how things work. There is no reason for there to be a reduced quorum.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Rodriguez.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: I do not understand why this motion should be so contentious. We do not mind if there is no reduced quorum.

• (0920)

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro.

An hon. member: A simple majority.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: A simple majority? Is there agreement?

An hon. member: A simple majority.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Okay. That's fine.

The Chair: Okay. So there's no motion on reduced quorum.

Moving along to number 7: "Staff at in camera meetings". That was one issue. Do we have a motion?

Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: I just move that we adopt Madame Lavallée's suggestion that a representative of each party's respective whip's office be allowed to attend.

An hon. member: Agreed.

The Chair: All right.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: It would not necessarily have to be an official member of a whip's office, but rather a member designated by the party. I believe that is the usual wording.

[*English*]

The Chair: Madame Lavallée is moving that. Is there any discussion? All in favour?

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

The Chair: We'll move along to number 10: "Questioning of witnesses".

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I'm going blind here based on...I'm not exactly sure about our witness list, but I believe that if we're going to keep up our level of production, we're probably going to need to have one-hour sessions. I think this is a fair set-up. I think seven minutes, as I said earlier, where we actually have to get a lot of technical details down, is going to give us a much better opportunity than five minutes in an initial round. I would accept this.

The Chair: Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: The difficulty, however, presented by that—and I hate to disagree with my cousin—is that 10 minutes for witnesses, followed, then, by seven, seven, and seven may leave us with very little time on one-hour rounds. I wonder if the committee could first make a decision on its own as to how long these sessions should be: 60 minutes, 90 minutes, or two hours, although I've not heard of many being two hours. But I think that would certainly change and get a better illustration of how we're going to share the time in terms of questioning.

Also, I, for one, believe that 10 minutes for opening statements by witnesses may be too long. I think it should be reduced to no more than seven minutes, and probably more like five minutes.

The Chair: Before we move to Mr. Lake and Mr. Del Mastro, maybe we could hear from Madam Clerk about how many people she has heard from who would like to make presentations. That might give the committee a better sense of where we're going.

The Clerk: You have all received in your package of information a list entitled "Potential Participants (Wish to appear)".

In this list, you will see that there are approximately 35 or so groups that have contacted the clerk's office to request that they appear. This is up to the committee for its consideration, no more and no less.

In terms of "Questioning of witnesses", the only thing I would highlight for the committee is to keep in mind that if there are one-hour panels and 10 minutes for presentations, we can simply do the math to account for how many rounds of questions there would be.

The other thing I would highlight is that in the routine motion you have before you, "Questioning of witnesses", it does say on the first line "That, at the discretion of the chair, witnesses be given then (10) minutes...". So if the committee wanted to have more witnesses for one meeting, as opposed to fewer, the committee may be willing to let the chair have the discretion to judge whether or not witnesses should have five, seven, or ten minutes depending on the weight of the panel.

The Chair: Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: You have to think of these things all together, right? It all depends on how long the meetings are and how many witnesses there are, as the clerk was just mentioning. We have a significant number of witnesses to hear from. We've all heard from many of these witnesses already. They have asked for meetings. They've submitted documents. They'll submit documents at the hearings themselves.

I suggest that, number one, we limit opening statements to five minutes. I don't think we need to have ten-minute opening statements from every single witness. We could encourage them to submit information further to that.

My second suggestion would be that we hold 90-minute meetings, which would allow us to have ample time for questioning, and that we consider having five witnesses per meeting. If you do the math on that, you get 25 minutes for the opening statements from five witnesses. I'm amenable to the seven-minute opening round, which would take us to 53 minutes in total, and then we'd get a second round of five minutes per question. We'd be able to properly question witnesses. Those are my thoughts right off the bat.

• (0925)

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Thank you.

To support what my colleague has just indicated, I'll fall over, drop dead, and require CPR if anybody who comes before this committee has anything to say that I haven't already heard or that people on all sides of this committee table haven't already heard from the witnesses. I want the opportunity to question them. I think that's more important.

A significant number of witnesses have indicated that they want to speak. I would like the opportunity to bounce some things off all of the groups coming forward. I think questions are more important in this case, because I do think that they've outlined their positions well on this matter. We should have five-minute opening rounds and five witnesses in an hour and a half. Then I'm fine with the way it's set out, with the seven and the five for questions and answers.

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you.

I support moving the opening round of statements down from 10 minutes, because we'll be asking for specifics at that point. I'm not comfortable with having five witnesses in a round of an hour and a half. Looking at our schedule blocks here, I think it's going to be difficult.

I don't know what other people think, but I'm looking at two one-hour rounds with three witnesses. I'm worried about having five

witnesses. At a certain point in the committee, we might start to move to five witnesses once we've laid out a lot of the issues. A number of artists who have similar messages might want to speak on the same day, so maybe we can move to five at that point.

I've sat on many committees where we've had five witnesses, and there's always one witness who might have something really important to say but doesn't end up getting asked any questions. Having three will allow us to make sure that we've gone through it. I suggest having three witnesses with five-minute opening statements, with a seven-minute first round of questions, in two one-hour blocks.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Rodriguez.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Angus took the words right out of my mouth. This is an extremely important issue for many people. It is also quite complex. I understand that we have already met with people, but there is still a lot to be said. I fail to see how we could hear from five witnesses at the same time. For each question we will ask, the five witnesses will want to answer, thus taking up all of the five or seven minutes at my disposal to ask questions.

Therefore, I support the proposal that provides for two two-hour meetings split into one-hour blocks, with a maximum of three witnesses, depending on the circumstances. There would be a first round of seven minutes followed by rounds of five minutes, in addition to the five minutes allotted to witnesses for their opening remarks, all of which would allow us to ask more questions.

The Chair: Ms. Lavallée.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I quite agree with what my colleague Pablo has just said.

The idea behind that is that we want to do serious work and have the time to listen to what witnesses have to tell us in public. I know that we have all done our homework and met with many people in our offices, but those people have to be able to state publicly what they told us. Our questions and their answers need to be given in public.

There will also be groups that we have not yet heard from that will present briefs; we have to have time to read them. As for holding two two-hour meetings a week, it is indeed a good idea to split those meetings into two one-hour periods and not hear from more than three witnesses at a time. If not, things will become incomprehensible.

Mr. Chair, Madam Clerk, it is important that the witnesses who will appear come from the same sector or have a common interest, which would allow our questions and their answers to be more in-depth. This is not only about getting them to say publicly what they told us in private, this is about doing serious work so that we can receive explanations and properly understand such a complex bill, which contains a lot of ramifications, in order to then take an informed decision.

[English]

The Chair: *Merci.*

Mr. Garneau.

[Translation]

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I support the comments of my colleagues Mr. Rodriguez, Ms. Lavallée and Mr. Angus, i.e., holding two two-hour meetings a week, with each meeting split into two one-hour periods during which we will hear from a maximum of three witnesses.

We have been waiting a very long time to deal with this bill, which is extremely important and complex. We cannot simply rubber stamp the legislation. We have to do things properly and take the time to listen. Hearing from three witnesses at once is already quite complex, because they will probably be covering a number of components of the bill.

I also support the proposal that they receive five minutes for their opening remarks. There should be a first round of questions of seven minutes.

Thank you.

● (0930)

[English]

The Chair: Okay. We'll hear from Mr. Del Mastro and Mr. Lake and then I think we should get to the specifics in terms of the minutes.

We'll get to the number of meetings when we deal with the actual work plan, but right now I'm trying to get us through the question of the number of minutes for witnesses to speak. Does it remain at the discretion of the chair or is it going to be locked in stone? There is also the matter of the number of minutes for questioning.

We'll hear from Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Mr. Chairman, I do think it's germane. We need to deal with the issue that's currently on the floor, or that has been mentioned by members of the opposition, with respect to the number of times this committee is going to meet. It's very difficult for me to agree to how many witnesses we're going to have in an hour, or how much they're going to speak, or how much people are going to question, when, frankly, it sounds like the urgency being placed on moving this bill forward doesn't seem to be apparent.

I'm really concerned about that. We have artists who aren't being paid for their work that's being copied in Canada, at a rate that eclipses that of any other country. We have software companies that are not protected in Canada right now. We have the number two video game industry in the world, and it's not adequately protected, and they're telling us that. We have the Chamber of Commerce, which has long been lobbying to get this done. And I have people who want to meet for four hours a week? This is not acceptable.

It's not acceptable. We need to meet a lot more than that, and there is ample precedent for special legislative committees. Since 2006, since we've been government, and since I've been here, they have worked intensive schedules.

I think it's a pipe dream over there to think that it's responsible to meet four hours a week on this. I would personally propose that we meet for three hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the morning. We could look at shutting down the heritage committee in the afternoons on Tuesdays and Thursdays. That would give us at least another two hours. We could look at a Wednesday afternoon schedule as well.

We've all talked to these witnesses. We all understand this bill. I understand that it's a complex bill, but the members who have been put on this committee are here because they already have an understanding of it. It is important—it is imperative—that we move this bill forward, not only for the good of the Canadian economy and Canadian artists, but also for our international relations. I hope that people on the opposite side of the bench are going to take this seriously and undertake due diligence to get this bill moved forward and through this committee.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Lake is up next. What I'm trying to get us to right now is to deal specifically with the number of minutes that witnesses are going to have and how many minutes each questioner is going to have, so I'd prefer to move the work plan to the next stage. Unless the committee sees it differently, if members could stick to that at this point, I think we could move it along faster.

I have a growing list of those who wish to speak. I think they want to address the work plan. I'm at the will of the committee, but I think we could move this faster by doing it that way.

Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: I'll touch on the work plan a little bit, but again, you have to take it all together. It doesn't even sound like a work plan. At four hours a week, it sounds like the opposition parties are on Christmas vacation already.

Quite honestly, when we dealt with the auto sector study in our committee, we sat until 11 o'clock at night, I think, every night, night after night. We were able to get our work done. We were able to hear from witnesses and come up with a good report from that.

It seems to me that there is, as my colleague said, an urgency in regard to getting this passed. We're in a minority Parliament. We don't know what's going to happen with the opposition parties come February, depending on where the polls are or whatever might happen. We have to get legislation passed here. We can't come to another election without passing some legislation on copyright. It's too important. We have pages and pages of quotes from virtually every organization, from every creator group, saying that we need legislation here in Canada. We can't take a chance on this legislation not passing.

Quite honestly, I'm astounded we're talking about four hours a week for studying this. We struck a special legislative committee. I can't remember a legislative committee that met for four hours a week. I know that there's even been talk of cancelling heritage committee meetings, and maybe industry committee meetings, so that people won't even be working any more than they would have previously.

My suggestion is that we meet for 16 to 20 hours a week and hear from witnesses. I have no problem clearing my schedule in the evening. That's what I'm here to do; I'm here to work. I have no problem with that. There are many, many witnesses who want to be heard on this, and I think we have to hear them. I think we have to work through this in a systematic way. I don't want to rush through it, but surely over the course of three weeks of intensive hearings of witnesses, we as a committee can hear enough to move through this legislation.

I would hope that for most members of the committee, this isn't the first time they've looked at the legislation. I would assume that you're on this committee because you have an interest in this. I would assume that over the last several years you've been looking at this information and meeting with people. It's incumbent on us, it's our job, to actually get this legislation through committee. It's our job to give it a good study, a thorough study, and hear from as many witnesses as we can. But you know what? We have to roll up our sleeves here. Again, four hours a week...I can't even believe what I'm hearing.

In regard to the rounds of questions, we can talk about them. I think that as we move through this, if we schedule enough time to hear from people, we can do hour-and-a-half meetings. We can do three-hour blocks, so that we'll have two meetings of an hour and a half, back to back. That gives us the opportunity to hear from 10 witnesses over the course of three hours.

We must have sufficient time to actually question the witnesses. If we have a 90-minute meeting, we will get sufficient time to actually ask a substantial number of questions. Obviously, as with any committee, we'll choose the witnesses we want to question. We'll encourage witnesses to submit their documents to outline their positions even further, including any amendments they want to put forward.

Again, I urge the committee to take this really seriously. We need to work our way through this and get it through. This legislation has died time and time again because of elections. We need to actually pass something this time.

● (0935)

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you.

I think it going to be very important, if we're going to continue to move forward, that we speak to each other with the recognition that we all take this very seriously. If in the first 40 minutes we are going to be accusing each other of being irresponsible and going on vacation, to me that is not very helpful.

I think what we're dealing with here us that we've waited five years for this legislation. We've talked to many, many, many groups. And we are going to do this right.

If they want to use their time to accuse us of trying to obstruct, they can, but I think it will end up with us putting on the record what we're hearing from artists' groups and what we're hearing from consumers, and then they can, and then we end up wasting a lot of time.

So if we go back to the original issue, which is our witness list and our times, I would suggest that I'm amenable to having three witnesses at a time. I see two blocks per week. I'm not willing to shut down the heritage committee, because there are other studies being undertaken at the same time. We can do this. It will take the time that's necessary.

It's not up to me to decide when the government is going to pull the plug and call an election; it's up to them. So if they have copyright and they want to get it through, then we'll get copyright through, but this might take us a number of months. If it does, it will be a well-deserved bill. But if they think they're going to get this done with a rubber stamp, I don't see that happening. So I'd say, let's look at the realities here and let's just move on.

The Chair: Mr. Rodriguez.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: In fact, Mr. Chair, there are two ways to discuss this: there is the partisan approach, as we saw just a little earlier, and the professional, objective approach, which will ensure that the bill moves forward.

I would like to make one last comment before I conclude. Mr. Lake, two years have passed since the last election. Your government has been in power for five years, and you were the ones who prorogued. You cannot blame the opposition for the delays up until now. On our side, we are ready to do serious work and to hear from up to two witnesses an hour so that our work can be constructive. But there are other obligations. We have to proceed in a responsible manner; there are many potential witnesses. By the way, I have already sent in a list of 42 witnesses, which you have probably also received. Did you receive it? Very well.

I would ask you to tone down the rhetoric somewhat. I suggest that we stick to the facts, determine our mode of operation and move on from there. But the opposition will not accept to be blamed for the government's shortcomings.

● (0940)

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Garneau.

Mr. Marc Garneau: I was pretty well going to say the same thing. I think that if this legislative committee is going to be a success, we need to work together, and we need to do things the proper way.

One of the things this committee must do is also take the time to listen to the witnesses. It's not a question of us making up our minds and going through the motions. We must receive witnesses and we must listen to them and give them a chance to express themselves. We all know—we've had them in our offices in the last year and a half or several years—that this is the moment. This is the time when we will make a very important decision for all Canadians on copyright. I think it behooves us to work together in a constructive manner. We will need all of us to work together; otherwise, this bill will not be the best bill for Canadians.

I would urge my colleagues across the table not to rush this process. I'll not start talking about delays that have occurred in the past. That's not a constructive way to look at things. But I think that we do honestly need to take the time to do this properly, and I think that members of the opposition, who don't have a small army of people to help us in our deliberations—we are in the opposition and pretty thin on the ground—need to take the time to do this thing properly.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Cardin.

Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ): I will not go back over Mr. Lake's comments but I do want to touch on an important element. Many witnesses will probably have already submitted documents to many MPs, but there may be others who have not. We might also be receiving voluminous and fact-filled briefs. We must take the time to read them through and through and do our own analysis and work correctly in order to ask the right questions of our witnesses.

Therefore, I will reiterate some of the positions that have already been taken and which appear to have unanimous support on this side: three witnesses, five minutes per witness, a first round of questions of seven minutes and a second of five. But I would like to add that, for the five-minute rounds, the order of questions by members be the same as that in the seven-minute round: opposition parties before the government.

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Well, the first round and the second round are never in the same order, so.... I mean, that's representative—

An hon. member: There's no way—

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: —of the number of people who are—

An hon. member: There's no way...[*Inaudible—Editor*]

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Well, what you're proposing would be an extra round for the NDP over and above government members, which would be outrageous, because within an hour the government would get one round of questions and the opposition would get the balance. That's outrageous.

Look if you want three witnesses an hour and five-minute opening statements, Mr. Chairman, we're fine with that. Seven minutes, five minutes: it follows the normal order. But we have to come back to this issue of scheduling for the committee because this is a big issue.

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro, I'm trying to get us to the point at which we can get to that work plan. There is a proposal in front of you that would give some discretion to the chair, based on the number of witnesses: that there be up to 10 minutes for opening statements, then seven minutes and five minutes for the rounds.

Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that you put it in writing that it's five minutes because if you use "discretion of the chair", you yourself are going to yourself up to all kinds of widespread criticism, because there's not going to be a person who appears before this committee who doesn't feel that they're worthy of ten minutes and others are worthy of five.

I think the committee has made it very clear that we want five-minute opening statements, and we're okay with seven minutes and five minutes and following the normal routine, and if it's established in stone, then that's the way it works.

The Chair: So that's the proposal on the table, as moved by Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. McTeague?

• (0945)

Hon. Dan McTeague: How long? One hour or one and a half hours?

An hon. member: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Hon. Dan McTeague: Sorry? I just need to know—

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Three witnesses, a maximum of three, then an hour is fine.

Hon. Dan McTeague: It's fine in the context of an hour. Then I have no difficulty with that.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Mike Lake: We need to know what—

The Chair: Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: That accounts for about 43 minutes of the committee time in that first round. It's 28 minutes for the first round and 15 minutes for the witnesses. What do we do with the next three? We need to be clear on who is getting the other three rounds as we move forward. Again, we have five Conservative members on the committee right now, and there are six opposition members. We need to make sure that three-quarters of the first 28 minutes is going to the opposition. I would suggest that it goes Conservative-Liberal-Conservative for the last three rounds, for the last 15 minutes.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Lavallée.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: That proposal is not clear. If I understood correctly, five minutes would be allotted to witnesses; the first round of questions would be of seven minutes; and the second round would last five.

I do not know if this is something I can do now, but I would like to amend the part concerning the five-minute round, i.e., "alternating between opposition parties and government"—you will choose the appropriate wording—so that the order of the second round be the same as the first, and despite the fact that less time will be allotted to the Conservative Party, which forms a minority government in the House.

[English]

The Chair: Madame Lavallée, we have a point of order.

Mr. Del Mastro—

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: I have the floor, Mr. Chair. He can speak afterward. This better be a valid point of order.

[English]

It must be a good one.

The Chair: Madame Lavallée, I'm—

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: It is. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, the point of order—

The Chair: If you have a point of order, Mr. Del Mastro—

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Mr. Chair, if I'm not mistaken, I put a motion on the floor to adopt what had been discussed previously. I'm not sure what we're talking about right now. Are we debating the motion? Are we talking about an amendment to the motion? Can we call a vote on the motion? I thought it was fairly well established that this was where the committee was going to go with this. It seemed like we're meandering—

The Chair: The motion was—and you can clarify, Mr. Del Mastro—that we have five-minute opening statements, followed by a seven-minute first round of questioning, and then, if there is a second round, that it be five minutes—

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Following the normal committee procedure for—

The Chair: —which in this case would be Liberal—

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: [Editor's Note: Inaudible]

[English]

The Chair: Just a second.

Madame Lavallée, *un moment*.

Okay. So the first round would be Liberal, then Bloc, then Conservative, and then Liberal, NDP, Conservative. Is that what the proposal is?

An hon. member: [Inaudible—Editor]

The Chair: No, no. I'm looking for clarification here.

An hon. member: On the first one—

The Chair: The first round.

Mr. Del Mastro, what are you proposing? The first round of questions is seven minutes.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: I've actually seen the order work in two different ways at different committees. At the finance committee, for example, it typically would be Liberal, Bloc, Conservative, and NDP. That would be your first round. At the heritage committee, we go straight down the line: Liberal, Bloc, NDP, and Conservative. In the second round, it's Liberal, Bloc, and Conservative. That's how it works.

The Chair: Is that what you propose?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: That's what I would propose.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: We have a long road ahead of us. I support the seven-minute rounds; I thought that was what we were voting on. I support going with the way it is done at the heritage committee, which is Liberal, Bloc, NDP, and Conservative. For the second round, I think we should go with the standard orders. I don't think that at this point we should start trying to write in new forms. If it goes longer, we'll have more sessions. I know that in an hour's session I won't be getting my second round. I can live with that.

That's the way committees are set up. I don't think we need to create new forms of how committees are set. This is a standard process. Let's vote on the motion.

The Chair: All right.

Just so we're clear, we have five-minute opening rounds, a seven-minute first round of questioning, and a second round of five-minute questioning. The first round will be Liberal, Bloc, NDP, and Conservative. The second round will be Liberal, Bloc, and Conservative. Do we have agreement?

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

The Chair: That's carried. Thank you.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: We agree. That's the first time. That's great.

The Chair: All right. Wonderful.

We're moving along to the work plan.

Mr. Angus.

● (0950)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Before we get off track completely, I was looking at one of the proposals raised in the last round, about two sessions a week. I would prefer to define the sessions rather than define the length. It might be easier at that point, because there are going to be some days when we are going to be constrained by votes, if we choose afternoon or morning or whatever. If we perhaps, at least to begin with, pick two blocks, we could then pick whether they're two- or three-hour sessions. I'm open to that. I think Monday and Wednesday afternoons will probably put less pressure on us and will give us the time we need.

The Chair: Okay. The floor is open.

Go ahead, Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: I just want to be clear. You are proposing that we work four hours a week on this.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I said to take our block of time at this point. I'm suggesting two sessions. Monday afternoon and Wednesday afternoon seem to be open, except for Madam Block.

Mr. Mike Lake: I'm just curious about how many months you want to study this for. I just want to get clarification on that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: I want to study this until it's done right. I think that is fairly obvious.

Mr. Mike Lake: We agree with that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: So we will study it and get it done right.

The Chair: Okay. In front of you, you have a sheet, a members' committee schedule. Just to open up the periods that are possible right now, there is Monday afternoon, 3:30 to 5:30, and Tuesday morning, starting at 9, as we did today. Industry meets from 11 to 1; there is potential for some change there. There's Wednesday afternoon and there is Thursday morning as well. Those are the proposed blocks that are most likely to be available. There is also the potential, if we wish, to do evening meetings.

We heard from Mr. Angus that he's interested in Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Mr. Lake had the floor, and then I think Mr. Del Mastro.

Okay, Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I'm wholeheartedly supportive of Monday and Wednesday afternoons. It looks like we could probably get 3:30 to 6:30. I'm also wholeheartedly supportive of Tuesday and Thursday mornings, between 8 and 11. We could get at least two hours in there—maybe three.

I'm open to any other time people might put forward, but I think we could get in three hours on Monday, three hours on Tuesday, three hours on Wednesday, and three hours on Thursday. I think that's easily achievable. We can get in the people who want to come forward and speak to this bill and we can get our work done. That's what Canadians expect.

The Chair: Okay.

We'll have Madame Lavallée.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: If I understood correctly, there is a motion on the table for Mondays and Wednesdays. Is that correct?

[*English*]

The Chair: Well, Mr. Angus suggested that those would be a starting point.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Can I move a motion?

The Chair: You may. We don't have a motion on the floor right now.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Can I move a motion? Yes. I will therefore make Mr. Angus's recommendation into a motion in order to formally propose that our meetings be held on Mondays and Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m., for a duration of two hours each.

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay. Is there discussion on that motion?

Go ahead, Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: Can you just read that motion again quickly for me?

The Chair: The motion is to have 3:30 to 5:30, Mondays and Wednesdays, for two hours each time.

Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: I'd like to amend that motion.

I would like to strike 5:30 and change that to 6:30, if I could.

The Chair: Mr. Lake, I might.... Well, on Monday it's unlikely that there would be votes, but definitely on the Wednesday at 5:30 we would expect to have bells for six o'clock votes.

• (0955)

Mr. Mike Lake: That's fair enough. We can amend our schedule, as need be, if we have votes. If you're concerned about votes, that's fair enough. Maybe we can just then add at the end of it, "with a one-hour break and then continue to meet from 6:30 to 10:30 on Monday and Wednesday".

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Mike Lake: I'd like to add Tuesday and Thursday to that as well.

The Chair: The amendment is that the meetings continue on Monday, in addition to 3:30 to 5:30, with a one-hour break, and then commencing again at 6:30 until 10:30 on both Monday and Wednesday, and in addition to that, Tuesday....

Mr. Lake, help me here.

Mr. Mike Lake: Tuesday and Thursday, the same schedule, so that would give us—

The Chair: Sorry. What times are you suggesting, then?

Mr. Mike Lake: No, sorry. My colleague is helping me with this. They'd prefer to meet from 8:45 to 10:45 in the morning, so that would be two hours on Tuesday and two hours on Thursday.

I know it's getting difficult here, because we're looking at the heritage committee and the INDU committee. Six of our members are on INDU committee, but certainly we could take a look at the possibility of meeting during our INDU committee time as well. But we would obviously have to check with our INDU committee to see if that would be a possibility.

I know that those of us on this side of the table would be willing to make amendments to our INDU committee schedule to make sure we place a priority on the copyright bill, if we could. I would hope there would be a similar willingness on the part of heritage committee members to recognize that there is a priority to the copyright legislation for most of the stakeholders we listen to on a regular basis.

The Chair: Okay. We're now dealing with the amendment.

Mr. Rodriguez.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: I don't think I asked to speak on this, but if you want me to, I can.

The Chair: Oh, you want to speak on the main motion. We're dealing with the amendment at this point.

On the amendment to the motion, Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: I'd like to speak to the amendment a bit. With what Mr. Lake has put forward, while it's an intensive work schedule, it behooves the committee to approach the bill in this way. Whenever legislative committees are struck, they're struck so that a bill can be focused on, worked through, and done in an expedient manner. It's an open process. We can work on the legislation. We're prepared to look at the bill and we're prepared to listen to witnesses. Ultimately, we want to report this bill back to the House so that we can get it passed.

As I said, there is an imperative on us from beyond these walls, beyond this place, to update Canada's copyright legislation, and from many different perspectives of many different people. It is so important that we get this done. This has been ongoing for more than a decade.

I would like to see the members of this committee take a serious approach to working through this, listening to the witnesses, and getting this bill reported back to the House. I think that's the responsible thing to do. I am very happy to clear my schedule to make sure that happens. I'd like to see that kind of commitment from all sides. In doing so, there's no reason why that's not working together, why that's not being responsible, and why that's not taking the time to contemplate the bill. I think we've all contemplated it for some time. As I said, there isn't too much untilled soil on this issue.

I think we should look at this compressed schedule that Mr. Lake has put forward. It's very intensive, but I think it demonstrates sincerity, importance, and priority that all parties are placing on updating Canada's copyright.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'm going to call the question on the amendment. We'll proceed to the vote on the amendment.

Mr. Garneau?

Mr. Marc Garneau: Yes, Mr. Chair, I would like to reiterate the fact that we are approaching this extremely seriously. According to the proposal that has been put forward, we're going to be receiving 12 witnesses per week—three, three, three, and three, in a four-hour period. That's a lot of witnesses. That's a lot of content and that's a lot of opinion being expressed.

We believe that's a very serious approach to this, rather than trying to stuff everything into marathon sessions at the very last minute for no really strong reason. We have waited a long time to get to this. Let's do it properly, with the proposal that's on the table, without the amendment.

• (1000)

The Chair: Okay. We'll hear from Mr. Lake and then we'll move to the vote on the amendment.

Mr. Mike Lake: I actually agree with Mr. Garneau that we need to take it seriously. We believe we are taking it seriously.

Now, I would point out that at 12 witnesses a week, as Mr. Garneau pointed out, let's look at the actual schedule, the practical

schedule that this would give us. Mr. Rodriguez mentioned that he alone has 40-some witnesses. We have 11 members of the committee. One guy has 40-some witnesses. That takes us to early February for just Mr. Rodriguez's witnesses.

To times that by 11 members of the committee...I don't know what we're talking about here in terms of timeframe, but it seems like it will be sometime in 2012 by the time we get done. I think we need to take this a little bit more seriously. Certainly I propose 16 hours of meetings a week and certainly that's not too heavy a schedule for members of the committee.

The Chair: Okay. We'll have—

Mr. Marc Garneau: Mr. Chair—

The Chair: Okay, Mr. Garneau, and then I'll ask for—

Mr. Marc Garneau: Sorry. I just want to correct the extrapolation there.

Mr. Lake, if you're suggesting that we have 440 witnesses to listen to—40 times 11—I think you're indulging in a little hyperbole. There has been some consolidation. It's not the final list, but there has been some talk, at least amongst the Liberals, about our witnesses.

The Chair: Mr. Angus, you have the last word, and then we are going to vote.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Please, Mr. Chair, call the question.

The Chair: Okay. We are going to have a recorded vote on the amendment by Mr. Lake.

(Amendment negatived: nays 6; yeas 5)

The Chair: The amendment is defeated, so we will now go back to the main motion, which is to meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:30.

Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: I'd like to move an amendment to that motion, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to propose that the committee meet Mondays and Wednesdays, in addition, between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m., and Tuesdays and Thursdays between 8:45 and 10:45.

The Chair: Just one second.

On a point of order, Madame Lavallée.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: There is already a motion on the table. The amendment has been defeated. Normally, according to the rules, we should now vote on the main motion. That is what the rules say. I know it does not suit you, but those are the rules.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro, what you're proposing is going to be different from the previous amendment.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Yes, because Mr. Lake proposed 6:30 to 9:30. I'm proposing 7 to 10 p.m.

The Chair: Mr. Rodriguez, a point of clarification...?

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Actually, it's a question. Can they go on like this, change the hours and table an amendment every time—instead of 9, 9:30, and instead of 10, 10:30—and we'll be here for hours?

The Chair: If there are to be additional meetings that are supported by the committee, maybe we can try to find some sort of compromise there rather than throwing multiple amendments up. I'm trying to find some middle ground if we can move this ahead.

Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In speaking to the amendment that I put forward to the motion, if someone in the opposition would like to propose a subamendment to the motion that's more than four hours a week, we might be amenable to listening to this.

I can tell you that you don't strike a special legislative committee to sit for four hours a week. It's irresponsible. It's reprehensible. And it does not speak to the urgency from the Chamber of Commerce, industry, job creators, investors, and creators across this country—the people who write songs, take pictures, all the sorts of things this bill seeks to protect and reinstate, and recreate a market.... Our international partners have all underscored, highlighted, and put a star beside the urgency of this legislation and the opposition wants to meet for four hours a week.

Can we talk about intensive meetings in January? I'll tell you what, after New Year's Day, let's meet every day. I'm in. Let's put the kind of seriousness behind this bill—and the type of commitment that's required—that people expect this Parliament and their elected officials to put behind the bill.

I cannot believe that we're discussing meeting for four hours a week. There is a serious amendment to the motion on the table, that I've put there, and if somebody would like to propose a subamendment to it that is about meeting quite a bit more than four hours a week, we're prepared to entertain that.

•(1005)

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro, can you repeat your amendment, please?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Yes, I'd be happy to. I believe the current motion says “Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.”, and I would add “Mondays and Wednesdays between 7 and 10 p.m., and Tuesdays and Thursdays between 8:45 and 10:45 a.m.”

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Mr. Chair, it is needless to say that I will be voting against that because I think my motion is reasonable. The Conservatives might move all the motions they want and for as long as they want, but that will not change my mind. Bill C-32 was introduced at first reading in the House on June 2. It took them five months to introduce the bill at second reading. Out of those five months, there were three months when Parliament was sitting and when they could have introduced it. They could have come back to the House with Bill C-32 at any time. Everyone was expecting it. And yet, we did not see anything resembling Bill C-32 until November 2, about two weeks ago.

And now they are off and running like crazy. They want to stuff C-32 down our throats and do not want to hear from witnesses, probably because they do not want to hear a number of truths. They are disregarding the rules of the game. We absolutely must take the time to do serious work and listen to what witnesses have to say. We need time between meetings to read the serious briefs that witnesses will have prepared. Some will place all their hopes in those briefs; others will infuse theirs with their articulated analyses. As parliamentarians, we must listen to them and respect what they have to say by taking the time to read what they will have written before presenting their summaries to us.

They can move amendments until the cows come home—it appears that is their right—but people on Twitter are listening and are realizing that the Conservatives only want to buy time. That is dumb because they are wasting both their time and our own today by moving amendment upon amendment, when all they want is to buy time. That does not make sense, but I for one am fed up and hope that this will be the last amendment we will have to defeat.

Thank you.

[*English*]

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: I'm actually disappointed to hear Madame Lavallée talk about the urgency with which the bill was brought to the floor, because she knows very well the bill was delayed for two weeks coming to the floor for an accommodation to Madame Lavallée. I was fine with that and I thought that was the right thing to do, but it certainly didn't speak to the urgency of the bill.

We had an agreement among all the parties that the bill would move to a legislative committee. We assumed that when we had that agreement it would allow for intensive committee hearings so that we could deal with this bill in a manner that reflects the urgency that people feel across this country, and that our international partners feel, in regard to the fact that we need to deal with this bill.

I cannot believe that opposition members feel that it is suitable that we meet four hours a week on this legislation—four hours a week. Why would we strike a special legislative committee to meet four hours a week? Why wouldn't we just send it to a regular committee where it could be kicked around?

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: It's your decision—

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: No, it's not our decision, Madame Lavallée. It was a decision agreed to by all parties: that we would come together, work on this in an intensive fashion, and give this bill the respect it deserves. It is reprehensible that opposition parties are lining up behind four hours a week.

You know what? There is an amendment on the floor. I encourage members of the opposition who want to work and who actually respect this legislation, respect creators, respect job creators, and respect our international obligations—if you respect those things at all—to propose a subamendment to the amendment I've already made, a subamendment that includes a work schedule that's more than four hours a week.

•(1010)

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you.

Well, again, I do not want us to go off the rails on this. I mean, now we're reprehensible. Before, we were lazy. Before we become the axis of evil over here, I'd like to get back to the issue.

We have taken our issue seriously. It has taken us five years to get here. I'm not going to be railroaded in being told that I'm lazy and irresponsible for sitting down and reviewing this legislation. That's the way I'm going to vote.

So we can yell and shout and bang the table all we want, but it's not going to change my vote. I want to sit down and get to this legislation. I'd like to vote on the amendment and move on.

The Chair: Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: Again, maybe I was so surprised by the four-hour proposal that I responded in a way that.... Maybe I could have been more careful in choosing my words, but it is frustrating. Four hours a week for this legislation, I mean....

Charlie, you've had time to study it. I think it has been out there. That was kind of the whole point. It has been out there. We had consultations a year and a half ago. The legislation has been there for people to study, to look at, to come to positions and to present ideas on, and to be ready for this committee. You've had a lot of time to study it.

As for coming forward with four hours, quite honestly, that proposal was entirely unexpected, at least by me. I did not expect to come here today and have all three parties line up and present four hours a week as a schedule for studying this. Quite honestly, when we put it to a legislative committee, I expected that we would actually roll up our sleeves and work at this.

Yes, we want to hear from witnesses. We want to take the time to carefully consider everything, but as amended right now, we're talking about 14 hours a week. That's not a lot of time to hear from witnesses. We've all done that before. Should we need to move meetings around once or twice during the course of the schedule to accommodate one of the four parties' Christmas parties or something like that, surely we can do that if we need to and still meet the 14 hours a week that we have in this amended schedule.

It gives us a lot of time to do the reading we need to do and to follow up on the things we need to follow up on. It's a three-week period. We're not talking about doing this for months and months on end. It's a three-week period. Again, I think this is eminently reasonable. It's for five hours a couple of days a week and for only two hours on the other two days a week. It's not that difficult.

There is a reality to our circumstance right now in a minority Parliament. Let's face it. There is a real chance—we're beyond two years now—that Parliament may end and we may go to another election before this legislation passes. I think it's incumbent on all of us in all four parties to make sure that doesn't happen, to make sure we give this legislation every chance to actually pass and move through before that happens. There are a lot of realities to minority parliaments. It's the world we live in right now and I think we have to adapt ourselves to ensure that we're responsible in passing legislation that we all know is important.

Again, you have the same list of stakeholders that we have, and you've heard from those stakeholders how important this is. We have

to get down to work on it. This 14 hours is not too heavy a schedule. We've all done it before.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Boucher.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): I totally agree. When I was asked to sit on a legislative committee, I knew that I would have to roll up my sleeves and work. I was really astonished to see that we would meet four hours a week. It would have been just as well to send this bill to any other committee; but we are here to work together. I think that this bill has major consequences for all artists and stakeholders. They have been waiting for a long time. I am quite disappointed by the opposition's attitude. We could have stayed in our own committees instead of coming here for four hours. On this committee, we want to work together in order to come up with something that is consistent, so that those people, who have been waiting for so long, can benefit from the bill. I think it would benefit us to at least work to show that we are working for them. I will be working for them.

● (1015)

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: I've had a lot of discussion with members around the table—not all of them, but many of them—and I'm not going to engage in the baiting of the opposition or the government. But I will simply point out that a serious attempt to try to deal with this issue could have occurred back in June when the legislation was proposed. It's now well into November. The decision by the PMO or whoever to rush this and to get it done by tomorrow or within 14-hours-a-week marathon runs.... I don't even think we had that much intensity when it came to NAFTA negotiations.

I'm willing to put it this way to the government members: that as we go forward with the proposal made by my colleagues in the opposition, there may be occasion to allow more time. But that will become a question of necessity as we see and compare the number of witnesses. The issue here for us is to stay to the norm. If we want to suspend the industry committee and the heritage committee at the same time, that could perhaps provide opportunities, but it would appear that your whip has been very insistent that it not happen. So we're going to stick with the hours that are provided to us. We will not rush this. We will be reasonable—

The Chair: Mr. Lake has a point of order.

Mr. Mike Lake: Let me be clear on this side of the table that if that's a proposal from Mr. McTeague, it'll happen, okay, as far as we're concerned, as far as our INDU members are concerned.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Why not call the question, then, Mr. Lake?

The Chair: Okay. We are now voting on the amendment. All in favour?

(Amendment negatived)

The Chair: Okay. We're back to the main motion.

Mr. Rodriguez.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Chair, I want to make a clarification. I heard Ms. Boucher say that we would be working four hours. That is not so: The committee will be holding hearing four hours a week. But that may represent 20 or 30 hours of personal work, depending on what you will be doing. I can assure you that we will be reading all the briefs. We have scheduled four hours of meetings for questions, but there will also be hours and hours of additional work. Out of respect for our witnesses, we need to be able to read their briefs.

I will not accumulate a stack of briefs and pretend that I have read them. I will read them. If we have to have team meetings, we will hold them. If we have to organize other meetings elsewhere, we will do so. We must deal with this in an extremely serious manner. Quite likely, when witnesses appear here before us, they will not be able to get all their message across and ask all of their questions. As a result, we will have to refer to their briefs, and we have already received quite a number. I simply want to make the following clarification: the committee as a whole will be working four hours a week, but each and every one of us will be spending hours and hours on this issue. I hope that you understand my point.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Braid.

Mr. Peter Braid (Kitchener—Waterloo, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As a relatively new member of Parliament, this is my first special legislative committee experience. As a footnote, I might add that I'm not overly impressed so far.

I wonder if either the chair or the clerk could shed some light on what the typical meeting schedule is for a special legislative committee—what the average has been in last session or two of Parliament—to give us some guiding points here. Surely the experience must be greater than two two-hour meetings per week with serious substantive issues like this. I wonder if we could shed some light on this.

The Chair: Mr. Braid, I did serve on a special legislative committee in the 38th Parliament. I was sitting in the opposition at that time. I can't remember the exact number of days we sat per week, but I know that we had a fairly intense schedule to get through that legislation the government of the day wished to move forward. It did happen in a very short period of time.

The clerk says there really is no standard and it's really up to the committee. We can do some additional research to see what kinds of timeframes other special legislative committees have had. Our analyst is prepared to give us some background on that—not at this moment, but we could do the research on that.

Mr. Del Mastro.

• (1020)

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I understand that we are back dealing with the original motion that calls for committee meetings between 3:30 and 5:30 on Mondays and Wednesdays. If members aren't prepared to meet beyond 5:30, there is no reason why we can't also meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays in addition.

For goodness' sake, folks, this is not an intensive schedule to tack on Tuesday and Thursday mornings to Monday and Wednesday afternoons. I'd like to propose an amendment that we also meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings between 8:45 and 10:45.

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro, we have already voted on that. We did vote on an additional part, but...

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: This is a different amendment.

The Chair: Well, okay.

So we will proceed with this amendment.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Chair: I think we can't continue to throw up multiple amendments if there is clearly no interest by the committee to proceed for additional hours. But you are proposing different hours in this one, so we could proceed on this one.

Your amendment to the motion is that we sit from 8:45 to 10:45—in addition to the Monday and Wednesday sittings, from 8:45 to 10:45. Is that correct, Mr. Del Mastro?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: That's correct.

The Chair: Okay. Debate?

Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: I'd like to hear some thoughts from some of the opposition members on this. We're talking about two hours a day now.

If I had walked into this room today and the opposition had suggested that we meet for eight hours a week, I would have thought that was still ridiculously low, given the urgency of the legislation. Obviously, we're trying to come to some accommodation or reasonable balance here, reaching out to someone over there to hopefully recognize that maybe there's some cooperation we can come to here.

I don't know... Mr. McTeague isn't really listening. Is anybody listening over there? No?

Yes? Okay. Thanks.

Madame Lavallée is listening, but I don't think she's going to go for it.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mike Lake: Really, you guys, for two hours a day, four days a week—eight hours a week—surely accommodation can be made here. Then we can address at the industry committee today the possibility of at least tentatively freeing up our industry time to meet as well. But we can kind of cross that bridge down the road. The heritage committee, I assume, can kind of do the same thing when it comes to it.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Lavallée.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Mr. Chairman, I would like to reiterate that this is the third amendment and that all three amendments introduced to date have been rejected by members sitting on this side of the table. Clearly, on this side, we have verbally expressed what we would like to see happen. We have made our arguments and will make others. We have clearly expressed why we only wanted to sit two days a week. We wish to have the public part of our meeting held on Monday afternoons and Wednesday afternoons. A legislative committee is not a committee for expediting business, even though that was the impression Mr. Braid was under earlier on.

A legislative committee is struck because when ministers table bills they may choose to have them studied by a legislative committee. Why would the spirit of a bill be referred to a legislative committee? Because the minister in question wants a dedicated committee to study the bill. If the bill were to be sent to the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, there may be other motions on the table, as you know. The same thing may occur if the bill is sent to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

The idea of creating a legislative committee is not to expedite the work, expedite the procedures, even though, in the past, a number of these committees have worked in this way. In 2006, for C-2, the Accountability Act, it was hell, it made no sense. Members sat six days a week on this committee; in fact I think they sat 40 hours per week. It made no sense, it was not desirable. In any event, we saw later on how the things that had been written into that bill were not consistent with what the government ended up doing. Perhaps government members should have taken more time to read the bill and then to apply its principles.

The Bloc Québécois will be voting against this amendment and hopes there will be no further amendments, so we may vote on the main motion.

Thank you.

• (1025)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: My hope is that Mr. Lake won't interrupt me this time with a point of order.

But I want to put this on the record again, so that he is in fact listening as opposed to trying to make snide remarks about opposition members and impugn motive. Perhaps he'd like to listen to the following.

His whip has made it abundantly clear that they will not allow the suspension of the industry and heritage committees, for a variety of reasons, while this committee is going on. If this issue is so

important to the government, they would certainly have taken the position that this committee takes precedence over the work of the other committees. This is not to slight those committees and the good work they're doing. A bit of preparation on behalf of the government would have been awfully helpful. If this is so urgent, then the government ought to have prepared itself in advance of this, as opposed to waiting for six months.

That being said, if the government or its members want to propose successive times at which we're going to meet "over and above", I suggest that this would be futile, simply because we have a huge schedule ahead of us. I think we want to take the time to understand and legitimately take the opportunity to look at each and every case and at each and every witness and digest this appropriately. It has been suggested here that our level of preparation is high, while our resources are not what they are on the government side.

But if we want to strike a cooperative note, this is a terrible way to start, Mr. Lake. I would suggest that in order to get around this, we take a bit of time to deal with our respective whips to see whether there could be opportunity down the road for more time by appropriating more time for this committee versus the other two committees, the standing committees on heritage and on industry.

That being said, I believe, notwithstanding anything else here, that we should proceed to the vote. There is opportunity for cooperation, but if you guys are going to keep coming back and trying to make this some kind of spectacle in which you're blaming the opposition for everything under the sun, probably including next the sinking of the *Titanic*, I'd suggest that we start on a very different pace.

Thank you.

The Chair: All right. So we'll move to the—

Mr. Lake?

Mr. Mike Lake: I'm sorry. I have to address that.

Just to be clear, Mr. Chair, what we're studying right now in the industry committee is a private member's bill dealing with Nortel pensioners. We have two more meetings still—today and Thursday—to deal with it. Yes, it's important to the government. It's an NDP private member's bill. And yes, it is important to the government that we finish studying that bill. I'm not sure whether Mr. McTeague has a problem with our continuing and finishing studying that bill, but I'm surprised to hear him suggest that somehow it's not important to him.

What I've made clear to him is that, beyond the study of that bill, in industry committee—and we're about to go over there right after this meeting—we'll be supporting cancelling what's on the agenda or moving forward what's on the agenda so that we can clear our schedule for the following meetings of the industry committee. But again, to be clear, right now we're studying a bill on Nortel pensioners, a private member's bill from the NDP, and we think it's important that we finish that study.

Second, in regard to all the commentary around timelines here, you can say what you want about the parliamentary schedule and the way things happen in the House of Commons. There are all sorts of reasons that things take a little while to work their way through the House of Commons. On some bills, certain parties insist on putting up virtually every member of their party to speak on the bill, and that eats up a significant amount of time. From time to time, a party will move a concurrence motion and eat up three hours in a day. There are all sorts of reasons why things take time to go through the parliamentary schedule. Of course, there is negotiation among the House leaders of the parties to determine what actually goes through.

But let's be clear. We did a consultation in 2009 over the course of the summer, intensive consultation in which we heard from stakeholders on this. The bill was introduced several months ago, obviously, and that has allowed time to have various stakeholders study the bill themselves to come to positions, so that when we get to this point, at committee, we can do a proper study of the legislation. There are more stakeholders on this piece of legislation than any piece of legislation I've seen, and I think we're all aware of that.

So that's where we are in terms of timeframe. I think most Canadians who looked at that timeframe would think it's reasonable. Now it's time to get to work studying the legislation. What we're saying at this point is that four hours a week is not enough. It's plain and simple: four hours a week is not enough. I'll be careful in the way I word this, because there's some sensitivity on the other side, but it's quite clear that the opposition parties had discussions prior to this meeting, because they all came in with the exact same position—four hours a week.

We were surprised by that. Up until 15 minutes before this meeting, I hadn't had a conversation with somebody from the other side who had suggested that to me. We had conversations, but no one had suggested four hours a week until fifteen minutes before the meeting. Yes, it did surprise us, thus the reaction on this side. It sounds like it's a done deal. It was decided long ago by the other three parties. There's apparently not much that we can do about that, and we're going to move forward on it, but I hope that as we move forward we'll have the opportunity to take a look at our schedules within the industry committee and the heritage committee to try to clear up some time.

Certainly it sounds from what Mr. McTeague is saying as though, once we finish hearing from witnesses—hearing from the people affected by the Nortel situation—and get through the study of Bill C-501, there will be some cooperation among parties to clear the schedule. If this committee wishes to take up that time, that would give us four more hours a week, moving forward after this week. Perhaps we can see the same thing happen in the heritage committee.

My hope is that moving forward we'll see some increased level of cooperation among the parties to place a higher priority on this particular issue. Again, I implore the members of the committee, whatever your position is or whatever it is you might want to change about this legislation, hopefully there's a commitment to try to ensure that the legislation passes before we wind up coming to election, whatever it might be that precipitates that election at some point in a minority Parliament. Otherwise, we're just going to be doing this over and over again, and that's not in the interests of any of the stakeholders.

● (1030)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Lake.

Mr. Del Mastro is next, and then we're going to move to the vote on the amendment.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I would support what Mr. Lake just indicated. I did check just briefly with the whip's office. The whip's office is giving us no direction on committees. It's up to the committees to determine if they choose to meet or not.

I would place a higher priority on this than what we are currently undertaking at the heritage committee. I will bring a motion to the heritage committee and I hope to find support to suspend, just while we are reviewing this bill, and apply that time to this committee, which would open up an opportunity for us to meet a little bit more here. It's maybe not as much as we'd like, but it may be better to get part of a pie than the whole pie. I'll take what I can get. We'll try to increase that a little bit and try to demonstrate the priority that should be placed on this committee.

Mr. Chairman, members of the opposition should know that both ministers, from Canadian Heritage and from Industry, are prepared to meet with the committee and to appear before the committee on Thursday. I think the members of the committee should allow that to occur.

I'd like to see support for this amendment that we meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings. It seems like the fix may be in a bit and we're not going to get it, but if members are not going to support that we meet on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, in addition to the 3:30 to 5:30 that they're proposing for Mondays and Wednesdays, I would ask that they allow the ministers to appear this Thursday morning. They are prepared to do that.

The Chair: Okay. We have to deal with the amendment as presented.

Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: We're jumping the gun on both fronts.

Mr. Del Mastro, I understand that Mr. Lake has proposed his response to obviously not listening to my interests on the industry committee to make sure we hear witnesses in terms of its ongoing business, but this is stuff that could have taken place well before this day. We're asked to resolve something that should have taken...which demonstrates the government's lack of preparedness in advance of what they consider to be such an important issue. We think it's an important issue, but not to the detriment of all others.

Mr. Del Mastro, this is a request on top of a request.

Can we deal with the motion first, Chair, and then determine what we can do in terms of future accommodation? We're already getting off on the wrong foot here.

•(1035)

The Chair: Okay. We're going to proceed to the vote on the amendment, which is to add, in addition to the Monday and Wednesday meetings, Tuesday and Thursday meetings from 8:45 to 10:45. I'm calling the question on that.

We have a request for a recorded vote on that, Madam Clerk.

An hon. member: Can you tell us what the motion is?

The Chair: We're voting on the amendment, which would add Tuesday and Thursday sittings from 8:45 to 10:45.

(Amendment negatived: nays 6; yeas 5)

The Chair: The amendment is defeated. We're returning to the main motion, which is to sit from 3:30 to 5:30 Mondays and Wednesdays.

Is there any further discussion on the main motion?

We will proceed to a vote on the main motion.

Monsieur Cardin.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: That was what I was going to propose, Mr. Chairman. Let us vote on the main motion immediately.

[English]

The Chair: All right. All in favour of the motion to meet Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:30?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: I'd like to seek an accommodation from the opposition to meet this Thursday to hear from the Ministers of Industry and Heritage between the hours of 8:45 and 10:45, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: You're moving that as a—

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: As a motion before the committee.

The Chair: As a new motion.

Is there discussion?

Mr. Rodriguez.

[Translation]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Even though I look forward to hearing from the ministers, Thursday is impossible for me. I do not know my colleague's schedule, he is not here, but one would expect a minimum heads up if we are to meet two ministers at the same time. As much as I would like to meet with them soon, I cannot do this within 36 hours.

[English]

The Chair: Madame Lavallée.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: The same thing can be said for the Bloc Québécois. I have spoken to my colleague and we too are quite anxious to meet with them, but if a government is sincere in wanting

to do this work, it must provide us with time to prepare for the ministers' appearance on the bill. So, Thursday morning is too early.

[English]

The Chair: Is there further discussion on the motion?

Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: I'm finding it really hard to believe that we have two ministers who actually want to come before the committee at a specific time. It's two days from now. It happens on a fairly regular basis that we schedule meetings and people aren't willing to adjust their schedules.

At the very worst, Mr. Rodriguez can certainly find a substitute for that if he has to. He can tell the substitute what questions he wants asked and then he can review the testimony, as happens on a regular basis here.

This is just a further indication... It is completely clear to me that none of these parties has any interest whatsoever in moving this legislation forward. I'm very surprised, particularly with the Liberal position.

I'm shocked, I really am, that Mr. Rodriguez can't alter his schedule or find a substitute to show up for him and then review the testimony of the ministers.

The Chair: Is there any further discussion?

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes. It seems that we're going off really badly this morning and I think it's very unfortunate.

I don't have a problem meeting with the ministers. I guess I'm sort of surprised that it wasn't part of a discussion that we would have had about laying out our work schedule. I found that unusual. I don't mind meeting on Thursday morning. I don't have a problem with that. What I don't want is for us to get into this constant confrontation about it.

I thought we were going to lay out our witness schedule, talk about our plan, and then bring the ministers in. That is why I am reluctant to just move in on this Thursday, but I don't have a problem with it.

•(1040)

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: First of all, I would like to thank Charlie for his support on that.

To Charlie's point, and with due respect to all members, I never saw an opportunity to insert it before; I just did because I was thinking that we would have a Thursday morning schedule, and I would suggest that they could kick things off as the first witnesses on Thursday.

I do apologize if there was no heads-up on it, but we do appreciate your support.

You can call the question, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. I see no further discussion. We'll move to a vote on the motion to hear from the ministers this coming Thursday, November 25, from 8:45 to 10:45. All in favour? Opposed?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: The motion is carried.

Okay. Moving along, you have in front of you lists of potential witnesses. We should also hear from our analysts. Maybe we could just have a little introduction from our analysts, since we're going to be spending some time with them.

Ms. Dara Lithwick (Committee Researcher): My name is Dara Lithwick and I'm an analyst at the Library of Parliament.

Our information will be available to you.

With me is my colleague, Maxime-Olivier Thibodeau.

We very much look forward to working with you on this bill and providing background materials as necessary. That's about it.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Hello. We've met once. You're very well apprised of the bill.

Are you our legal counsel or are you parliamentary counsel? Will we have legal counsel on this committee?

Ms. Dara Lithwick: We're not here as legal counsel. We do not provide legal advice. We are here as Library of Parliament analysts to provide background briefing materials and that sort of thing.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Will there be legal counsel for the committee?

The Chair: Yes, there will be. You'll be hearing more about that.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Okay.

The Chair: Madame Lavallée, did you have your hand up?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Out of curiosity, I would like to know if you sat on the industry committee. I know that you were not a member of the heritage committee. Did you use to sit on the industry committee?

[*English*]

Ms. Dara Lithwick: No.

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Lavallée.

We are running out of time, so what I'm going to propose is that on Wednesday, tomorrow at 3:30, we meet and hear from our analysts and then spend the rest of the time working on our plan to move forward in terms of witnesses. So for this week, tomorrow we will hear from the analysts and work on the work plan and on Thursday we will hear from the ministers. Tomorrow we will figure out the plan for going forward.

Mr. Garneau.

Mr. Marc Garneau: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. What timing was this tomorrow?

The Chair: Tomorrow, Wednesday, we will meet at 3:30, and we will hear from our analysts. In the second part of that meeting, we will work on the work plan. On Thursday, we'll meet with the

ministers. That will be the plan for this week. Out of tomorrow's meeting, we will have a plan going forward for next week

Mr. Marc Garneau: If I may, Mr. Chair, the only thing is that the three of us are meeting with our leader at 4 o'clock tomorrow.

The Chair: Well, the committee already decided and voted that we were going to have meetings at 3:30 to 5:30 on Wednesdays. So —

● (1045)

Mr. Marc Garneau: Okay. So this is the first regular meeting.

The Chair: That is correct.

Mr. Marc Garneau: Okay. I'm sorry.

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Yes, in terms of going forward, I'm ready to bring a witness list tomorrow. I haven't provided the committee with a witness list because we hadn't met, so I thought I would wait.

I'm not sure if we're going to get all of it through tomorrow. I'd prefer that we actually take a bit of time. I can see getting a witness list ready for next week so that we hit the ground running on Monday, and I'm perfectly fine with that. I'm amenable to whatever witnesses come first, but I would actually prefer to take a bit of time, and I think Monday would probably be better for us.

But if we circulate the list amongst each other, we probably have many similar names, and we might be able to come forward and talk about grouping them. Because what I'm worried about is bouncing all over the place. We might focus this committee better if we could sit down and say, "Let's take the two hours needed".

Once we've all seen each other's lists, we can talk about them. We can ask each other questions. We can say, okay, are these going to be necessarily on fair dealing? We'll start to put people into that general group. Are they generally going to be on digital locks? Are they going to be just generalists? That's fine. I don't have a problem with that. But I think if we have people who are going to be specific on issues, we might want to try to get a committee scheduled.

I think that might take a little bit more than just being able to pull that off tomorrow, because I have my witness list, but nobody else has seen it, and I haven't seen yours. I'd say let's take the time between Wednesday and Monday to do that, and then I think we're ready to start getting down to business.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Lavallée.

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Mr. Chairman, why the rush to hold a meeting tomorrow? When I arrived this morning at 9:00 a.m. I assumed that was the opening they had found in the agenda, and I assumed that from now on, we will meet on Tuesday and Thursday. When our colleague Charlie Angus said earlier that he would suggest we meet Monday afternoons and Wednesday afternoons, I thought that is all the better, as it suits me rather well. But not this week. This week, when I received the notice of meeting, I assumed we would be meeting on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. So, I set up my meetings and all other work-related business based on having meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Now, there is a suggestion that these meetings be held Mondays and Wednesdays. Give me a week, in other words until next Monday, for me to reorganize my schedule.

A meeting tomorrow afternoon would be too complicated for me. I do not see what we could get done then that we cannot do next Monday. Then again, we could spend Thursday morning meeting, working on future business, as suggested by my colleague. That is a joke, I wanted to see you smile.

[English]

The Chair: Madame Lavallée, the committee has already voted that we're going to meet with the ministers Thursday and that we're going to have meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays, so we'll go in that direction.

Mr. McTeague.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Chair, as the critic for industry, Mr. Garneau, has quite rightly pointed out, we have a bit of a conflict tomorrow for the 5:30 p.m. time slot. Although we have agreed to it, I'm just wondering if the committee might allow 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. as opposed to 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The Chair: Mr. McTeague, we do have votes scheduled right now, with a 5:30 bell and a six o'clock vote.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Good point, then, Chair. Thank you for that.

Sorry. Is there a point of order?

[Translation]

Excuse me, Ms. Boucher.

I share Mr. Angus' view to the effect that we should study the issue by sector. Nevertheless, I believe it is important for us to have witnesses for the various sectors. So if the issue revolves around the film, music or writing industry, we should invite relevant witnesses. It is very important because we would hear the pros and cons of some positions, obviously, which would be of great help in our decision-making. So, I fully agree with Mr. Angus' proposals.

[English]

The Chair: Okay.

Hon. Dan McTeague: I just want to make sure that you have that on the record.

The Chair: Thank you. We can deal with that when we work on our work plan.

Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Thank you.

We were just mindful of the appointments that our colleagues in the Liberal Party had set up. We're happy to work with them on that and suggest that we could meet after the votes on Wednesday. That would allow you to still have your meetings.

We can discuss our witness lists and set the time schedule so we can start to move forward on Monday.

If that's agreeable to you, we could meet Wednesday after votes.

• (1050)

The Chair: That's problematic for the chair.

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Mr. Angus.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Thank you.

We don't have a subcommittee, as far as I'm aware. Or do we have a subcommittee? Because I would suggest that.... We have agreed to meet, so I'm ready to meet, but I understand that our colleagues are surprised that we're going to meet, and it's a problem.

I think we need to start building some trust here. I think one of my concerns would be trying to blow through a witness list before we're ready, but if we can start the discussion and start talking about how we're going to do next week so that we aren't lost.... If we meet Monday, that's my only concern. If we meet Monday and start doing our witness lists then, we're going to be really lost on Wednesday. If we could have even a partial meeting tomorrow, just to ask what we need to do and on Wednesday start getting some of this stuff done.... Otherwise, it's going to take us a while to get out of the gate.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. Garneau.

Mr. Marc Garneau: Launching special committees like this, or any committee at the beginning of a session, is always problematic in the sense that we're all planning ahead. We have an extremely important meeting with our leader, planned quite some time ago for tomorrow, to talk specifically about Bill C-32. His availability of course is much tighter than our own availabilities, which are quite tight.

Given the comments from the Bloc and from Mr. Angus as well, if the committee is amenable, we're ready to take off like a bat out of hell on Monday, and to be there Thursday morning, but tomorrow a bunch of things complicate our lives, because we did not know, coming into this today, where the slots were going to be. I'd ask for a little bit of—how shall I put it?—compassion on the part of the committee with respect to tomorrow's time slot.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Lake.

Mr. Mike Lake: What I'd maybe like to hear from the Liberals is an alternative time, because I think we need to get our witness... We have an opportunity to start hearing witnesses. Obviously we're hearing our first witnesses on Thursday morning. It would seem to make sense that we would continue hearing from witnesses, starting Monday, as we move forward. It just seems kind of funny to set a schedule and then cancel the first meeting. I don't know. It just seems a little bit odd, especially given that the schedule we have is pretty late to begin with.

Certainly, we all have commitments. I assume that the leader is going to be in town on Thursday as well and perhaps can accommodate if need be, if this is at all even the remotest of priorities in the Liberal Party. It sounds like it, because the leader is wanting to meet with you. But I'm just trying to find a way to accommodate this somehow and still accommodate the chair.

Mr. Chair, is there any time on Wednesday evening so that we could kind of work things out around the vote? Could we meet at 5 or 4:30 and go till 7 or 7:30, but leave for the vote and come back?

The Chair: Mr. McTeague, do you have something?

Hon. Dan McTeague: We're meeting on Wednesday essentially to discuss witnesses and how to break this down. It would be kind of difficult for me to propose, then, the Tuesday morning when we've already started meeting witnesses ostensibly and presumably on Monday. It would be putting the cart before the horse.

Mr. Del Mastro may have had the right approach, I think, in terms of trying to find an hour before and an hour after. I'm not sure if that works. I appreciate the goodwill around the table. We want to get this started as soon as possible, and that may be the only way to do it, considering the meeting we have. I would suggest perhaps 4:30 to 5:30.

The votes, Mr. Chair, are at what time?

The Chair: The bells are at 5:30, but the votes are not actually until 6 o'clock.

So if we're actually in here—

Hon. Dan McTeague: If it's going to be in this room, why don't we just run for the hour and a half? If we need more time, we'll come back after the vote. I mean, that's the best I can do consistent with Mr. Del Mastro's offer.

The Chair: Could we attempt to start at 3:15 if we are in this room?

• (1055)

Hon. Dan McTeague: Our problem is the time before 4:30 p.m. From 3 till 4:30 p.m. is a problem for us.

The Chair: But your meeting is not until four o'clock and it's probably in this building. We could get started.

Hon. Dan McTeague: Obviously there's a need for a steering committee before this. Chair, I would suggest 4:30 right up to the time in which it's imperative we be in our seats, and if we need time afterwards.... That's really just a friendly offering, building on what Mr. Del Mastro kindly has offered to the committee.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Boucher.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: When we committed to sitting on the legislative committee, we undertook to work. Everyone has to get involved, and if we can do this tomorrow, I think it would be important to start tomorrow.

[English]

Mr. Charlie Angus: I support 4:30 p.m. up to the bell. I'm concerned about how much we're actually going to be able to get done if we go after that.

My desire here is to make sure that we develop a good witness list and that it's a coherent witness list. I'm not fully committed to having a witness list completely filled in by tomorrow because people have been waiting. I know there are many people out there who have told me in the past that they want to speak, but until the legislative committee was struck.... I have most of my witness list, but I'm thinking that by Monday it's going to be fully complete.

But I'd like to get started tomorrow, so that at least by mid-week next week we are actually starting to call witnesses. I'm willing to do that hour. I think that would be good. But like I said, I think there's going to be spillover time and that we're going to need time, and I'm expecting that on Monday.

The Chair: Okay. We really are out of time. I have a number of potential speakers here. We were supposed to wind up at 10:45. Many of the members here are members of the industry committee, which is obviously going to be starting very late today.

We have a proposal to meet from 4:30 till 5:30, or possibly go on till 5:45 after the members have their other meeting. With the consent of the committee, that's what we'll do, and we'll do our best to hear from the analysts and at least have a plan for the following week, so that we can notify some witnesses. If that can be our goal tomorrow, between 4:30 and 5:45, with the consent of the committee, shall we proceed on that basis?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Mr. Rodriguez.

[Translation]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: The problem, Mr. Chairman, is that if we postpone the committee because on our side we would like to have a meeting, nothing guarantees that our meeting will begin at 4:00 p.m. and end by 4:30. That is the problem. It is up to us to know whether we should postpone this meeting or change something else. We cannot say that we will be here at 4:30 p.m. knowing full well the type of meetings that take place earlier. We should not mislead the committee. So, we do not know. That is all.

[English]

The Chair: We'll call the meeting for 4:30 and we'll proceed on that basis.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: No, but—

The Chair: I see some compromise from one side to have some flexibility and not have the meeting start at the time that was actually proposed by a motion passed by the committee, so the compromise is to start at 4:30. We'll go from there.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Okay.

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.

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