



House of Commons  
CANADA

## Standing Committee on Official Languages

---

LANG • NUMBER 023 • 3rd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

---

EVIDENCE

**Tuesday, June 15, 2010**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. Steven Blaney**



## Standing Committee on Official Languages

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

• (0905)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC)):** We'll gently start this twenty-third meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

Today on our orders of the day we have committee business, the first part being public, and then we'll go in camera. We also have a report on the schedule; actually, it's the analysis of our draft report, which will be in camera.

[Translation]

Mr. Weston, I hope that you are feeling better soon given the problems with your hamstring. We wish you a speedy recovery so you can resume your activities.

Without further ado, we will get right down to committee business, starting with Ms. Glover's motion, which she put forward at our last meeting and which we were getting ready to discuss. Since there were only a few minutes left in the meeting, we decided to discuss it in our first hour this morning.

Ms. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover (Saint Boniface, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to start by saying what an honour it is to be a member. And it was in keeping with that spirit of privilege that I wrote this motion regarding the right of every member of the Standing Committee on Official Languages to speak. First I will read the motion, and then I will explain the thinking behind it.

It reads as follows:

That the actual Committee's routine motion regarding the questioning of the witnesses be rescinded and that the Standing Committee on Official Languages, based on the principle that each committee member should have a full opportunity to question the witnesses, replace it with the following:

That witnesses shall be allowed up to ten (10) minutes to make their opening statement;

And that during the questioning of witnesses, at the Chair's discretion:

For the first round, seven (7) minutes be allocated to the first questioner of each party in the following order: Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party, Conservative Party;

And thereafter, five (5) minutes shall be allocated to each questioner, alternating between the Opposition members and Government members, in the following order: Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, and Conservative Party.

If time permits, further rounds shall be at the discretion of the Chair.

I want to take a few minutes to explain why I decided to move such a motion before this committee. First of all, the Subcommittee

on Agenda and Procedure had a discussion about changing the first round—it was an official opposition motion—to seven minutes, instead of starting with a round of five minutes, as we do now.

Of course, I was concerned. I have long been concerned by the fact that a number of committee members, on the Conservative side, never get a chance to speak when we meet with witnesses. I would just like to read committee practice to illustrate what happens in committee.

Committee practice is the body of unwritten rules governing committee proceedings. It consists of procedures that have developed over time and are viewed as standard operating practice. For example, while there is no Standing Order to that effect, the normal practice is to have government members sit to the right of a committee chair and opposition members sit to the left.

In the absence of written rules, a committee can refer to practice when the members are uncertain as to how to proceed on a particular issue. Practice may also be used as a factor to be taken into consideration by a committee chair who is required to make a ruling. The starting point in these circumstances is to examine how the committee proceeded in the past. If the analysis must be carried further, the committee can then examine the practice of other committees of the House and the practice of the House itself, if it can be applied to the committee's proceedings.

During their proceedings, committees follow established practice. By decision of the majority of their members, they can, however, deviate from or adapt practice depending on their needs. If a situation guided by practice arises frequently and becomes a source of concern and interest for the members of a committee, the committee can decide to adopt a written rule to deal with the situation, which would have to be observed.

Now I want to speak to a few of the points from that excerpt. First of all, it talks about established practice. I have been a member for a year and a half now, and I was told when I came here that the practice of this committee was to proceed by rounds, as is traditionally the case, where opposition members speak a lot more than members on this side do.

• (0910)

More and more, I see how this affects the very spirit of those who are not given a chance to speak. Those who really want to participate but who do not have the right to do so feel that they have no influence, that their enthusiasm is being stifled and that the committee's is as well. I find that partisanship is playing an ever-expanding role in the practices of this committee, given how the rounds are organized. Every member of this committee is not given the chance to contribute.

The excerpt also talks about the way in which the other committees operate. In the case of the subcommittee, a comparison with the other committees was requested. I will read some quotes describing the procedures of the other committees, for the benefit of all the members here today, to show that our committee's system is the absolute worst. Whether you consider justice, fairness, balance, equal participation or a sense of value, we are the absolute worst of any committee on Parliament Hill.

I will tell you how the other committees operate. This is what the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs does:

That witnesses be given ten (10) minutes to make their opening statement; That during the questioning of witnesses the time allocated to each questioner be as follows: The first round of questioning in the following order: Liberal, seven (7) minutes, Bloc Québécois, seven (7) minutes, NDP, five (5) minutes and Conservative, seven (7) minutes;

Every party speaks once. Then each party gets five minutes in the following order: Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party, Conservative Party and New Democratic Party. It is clear that even the system of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs is more balanced and that four members of the Conservative Party are given the chance to speak. In contrast, the Liberal Party speaks twice, and the same goes for the Bloc Québécois and the New Democratic Party, which is much fairer than our system.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food uses the following system:

That witnesses shall be allowed up to ten (10) minutes to make their opening statement. During the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated seven (7) minutes for the first round of questioning, and that thereafter five (5) minutes shall be allocated to each questioner in the second and subsequent rounds of questioning at the discretion of the Chair.

That the Order of questions for the first round of questioning shall be as follows: Liberal, Bloc Québécois, NDP and Conservative (CPC). Questioning during the second round shall alternate between the Opposition members and Government members, in the following fashion: Liberal, Conservative, Bloc, Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, based on the principle that each committee member should have a full opportunity to question the witnesses.

And further rounds shall be at the discretion of the chair.

I think the principle whereby each committee member must have a full opportunity to question the witnesses is really very important. That is fairness in a committee. My motion is not based on the ideal model, which would be to allow every committee member to ask questions once before any member had the chance to ask questions in the second round. In my opinion, that would be the best system. A number of committees follow that model.

I knew that members on the other side had some concerns. With my motion, everyone has an opportunity to speak once, except one member of the Conservative Party. That shows I am open to the idea of giving those on the other side a bit more. I am also open to the idea of seven minutes, put forward by the opposition.

● (0915)

I believe that my motion is very fair and balanced, despite the fact that other committees use the fairest system of all, where everyone has a chance to speak once before the second round begins.

In the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, witnesses have ten minutes to make their statement.

During the questioning of witnesses, seven minutes are allocated to a questioner from the official opposition, and seven minutes are allocated to a questioner from the other parties, starting with the Bloc Québécois, followed by the New Democratic Party and finally the Conservative Party. Thereafter, five minutes are allocated to each subsequent questioner until each member has had the chance to question the witness, alternating between the opposition and government parties. This is an example where more members have a chance to speak and to feel as though they are members of a committee that works well together and that values all of them equally.

The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage starts by allocating ten minutes to the witnesses for their opening statement. Then, during the questioning of witnesses, five minutes are allocated to the first questioner of each party. In the second round, five minutes are allocated to the Liberal Party, the Bloc Québécois and the Conservative Party. In the third round, five minutes are allocated to the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party. This system gives many people a chance to speak. It is not like that in our committee, where someone can speak three or four times before someone else has even had a chance to speak once. It may not be the best approach, but it is still fairer than ours.

The Standing Committee on International Trade allocates ten minutes to the witnesses to make their opening statement. Then seven minutes are allocated for the first round of questioning, and five minutes for the second. The order of questions is the same as usual. During the first round of seven minutes, a questioner from each party has a chance to speak. In the second round, questioning alternates between opposition and government members, as follows: Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Conservative Party and Conservative Party again. It is based on the principle that every committee member should have a full opportunity to question the witnesses. There again, this system is fairer and allows every member to feel valued.

The Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration allocates ten minutes to the witnesses to make their opening statement. During the first round of questioning, seven minutes are allocated to a questioner from each party. In the second round, five minutes are allocated in the following order: Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party, Conservative Party again, Liberal Party, Conservative Party and once again Conservative Party. Everyone has a chance to ask questions once before a member of any party asks questions a second time. The Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration's system is the best.

The Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development works exactly the same way. No member is allowed to ask questions a second time until every member has had a chance to ask questions. That is so everyone feels valued and appreciated.

● (0920)

I hope that the members of the opposition will realize that this has nothing to do with parties but with the value attached to committee members. That is important, it downplays partisanship and gives every member the right to speak, as should be the case.

Now let us take a look at the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics. It gives witnesses ten minutes and then seven minutes to a questioner from each party. In the second round, five minutes are allocated to the committee members in the following order: Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party, New Democratic Party, Liberal Party and Conservative Party.

Once again, we see that the Conservatives have a chance to speak. The Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics does not have the best system, but it is much better than what we have here in the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development allocates ten minutes to witnesses and seven minutes to each party. In the second round, five minutes are again allocated to each questioner, alternating between government members and opposition members. By the end of the second round, once again, everyone will have had the chance to speak and some will have had the chance to speak twice, such as Mr. Godin.

The Standing Committee on the Status of Women allocates ten minutes to witnesses to make their opening statement. During the first round of questioning, seven minutes are allocated to a representative of each party. In the second round, five minutes are allocated in the following order: Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party, followed by the Conservative Party. There again, by the end of the second round, at least three members on this side of the table will have had the chance to say something.

The system used by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women is not ideal by any stretch, but its members have shown that they are slightly more accommodating than the members of this committee, which has the absolute worst system. In my opinion, that committee does not have as balanced a system as most of the other committees, but it is still better than ours. That is why I did not opt for their system; it is not balanced enough in my opinion. In any case, it is still better than what we have here.

The Standing Committee on Finance allocates ten minutes to witnesses. During the first round, questioners are allocated seven minutes in the following order: Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party. In the second round, a questioner from each party is allocated five minutes in the following order: Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Conservative Party and New Democratic Party. That means that by the end of the second round, the Liberals and the Conservatives will have had the chance to speak four times, and the Bloc Québécois and the NDP, twice.

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Sorry?

• (0925)

**Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** We should move an adjournment motion.

**The Chair:** Order, please.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I did not hear that.

**An hon. member:** You can't do what you want.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Should I carry on?

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Does she think we do not know how to read? We are not stupid.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Excuse me, Mr. Chair, but when I started speaking, I asked whether everyone was familiar with my motion. I did that for the sake of efficiency. All the committee members did not read the document, so I am trying to help them by explaining the effective manner in which other committees operate. It is clear that members on both sides of the table are concerned about this issue. Therefore, I will continue so that everyone understands the importance of justice in the committee. We want to dispose of those concerns, which are shared by the opposition members as well as our own.

I would say the Standing Committee on Finance has a pretty balanced approach. The Conservatives did not have the right to speak once, but a questioner from the Liberal Party spoke twice, one of the NDP members spoke twice and the other, once. So theirs is a more balanced system than ours.

The system of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans is based more on the speaking time than the number of rounds. So their practice is to allocate ten minutes....

[English]

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC):** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Excuse me. Mr. Weston has a point of order.

[English]

**Mr. John Weston:** Excuse me for interrupting.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** No, no, *ça va*.

**Mr. John Weston:** Is there an opportunity in the rules for a five-minute adjournment or some thing like that?

**The Chair:** The committee can work its own way. Indeed, the committee is, I would say, sovereign somehow.

**Mr. John Weston:** For the benefit of everybody here, I'm just suggesting a five-minute adjournment. I think a conversation over coffee might resolve things.

**The Chair:** We've only begun. The committee has just started its work.

**Mr. John Weston:** We all know where this is going. It's just my suggestion for everybody's sake. This is not a partisan suggestion. This is a—

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** There's only one person talking right now.

**An hon. member:** That's the way the committee works.

**Mr. John Weston:** Well, if you want to continue—

**The Chair:** Mr. Weston, I won't take this point of order at this time. We've just begun this meeting. Ms. Glover is only making her point.

We've been over this in many committees so far, so I won't take this point of order.

Ms. Glover.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Thank you.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin, you have a point of order?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Weston asked that we take a five-minute coffee break.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Supposedly, this committee has always had an open mind and has always enjoyed working together, even though it is apparently the worst committee in Parliament. Normally, Mr. Chair, you would ask whether the members agreed. Otherwise, do not ever ask us in the future to break for five minutes.

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin, since the meeting has just begun, I find that...

**Ms. Monique Guay:** No, it has been a half-hour.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** When it involves remarks as ridiculous as these, we should be given the chance to settle the issue of speaking time.

**The Chair:** That is a value judgment. I would remind you that, as chair, I am the one who is supposed to make such determinations. So far, I find that Ms. Glover's remarks are pretty well in keeping with her motion.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Fine, go ahead.

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

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Do not ever ask us for a five-minute break again. You will not get it.

**The Chair:** Ms. Glover, you may continue. You are entirely free to do so.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Weston:** There was method to my madness.

**An hon. member:** The method was how to destroy a committee, John.

**Mr. John Weston:** I'm trying to—

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Thank you kindly, Mr. Chair.

I will try to condense what I had to say.

[*English*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** You know what? I agree with you.

You're trying to destroy the committee. We're not on the right road, I tell you this much. It's going to be a long fall.

**An hon. member:** She's on the right road.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I'm trying to....

This is why we're trying to fix the committee. And I never said the committee is the worst of the committees.

**An hon. member:** [*Inaudible—Editor*].

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I think I have the *parole*. I have the *parole*.

This is why the committee is not working: we cannot find a way to be fair.

I'm trying my best to share all of the information with you, to be transparent and open. Some of you have said you weren't able to see it. I'm trying to share that with you.

I never once said that we are the worst committee of the worst. I said that we have the worst system of asking questions of all committees in the House of Commons...

Shall I proceed?

**An hon. member:** No.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Well, I think it's my right.

• (0930)

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** And I think you're filibustering, which is very anti-democratic.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** It's not filibustering. I'm providing information that some have not had a chance to read.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** You're filibustering.

**The Chair:** Order.

Just hold on a second.

I invite you to make your point, but if you have to intervene, please do so through me.

This applies to every member, so that we can proceed with this meeting in an orderly way.

Ms. Glover, I invite you to keep on making your point. If you have any comments to address to any member of the committee, you can do so through me.

This applies to every member.

Is it a point of order, Mr. Godin?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, I want to apologize. I have a lot of respect for filibustering. Carry on, then.

**The Chair:** So, it is not...

[*English*]

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Always abusing the point of order.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** So then it is not a point of order.

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** Exactly, once again.

**The Chair:** Ms. Glover, you may continue.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I will try my best to shorten it. I thought this was informational for those who hadn't read it.

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** I find it interesting.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** The Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans uses a time-based approach. It allocates ten minutes to the witnesses. Then the procedure is as follows: ten minutes for the first questioner of the Liberal Party, seven minutes for the first questioner of the Bloc Québécois, five minutes for the questioner of the New Democratic Party and ten minutes for the first questioner of the Conservative Party. As you can see, the speaking time is adjusted to let...

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

**The Chair:** If the committee members want to break for a few minutes, we can, but I think it would be worthwhile to hear all of Ms. Glover's remarks. Afterwards, the members could decide what comes next. It has barely been a half-hour.

Forgive me, Ms. Glover.

[English]

Please, I would invite all members to speak one at a time.

**An hon. member:** *On n'est pas obligés de l'écouter.*

**The Chair:** No, you're not obliged to listen to her, but if you have anything to say I would invite you to move outside of the room, because I want to listen to what's going on at this committee.

[Translation]

Ms. Glover, you were at the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Thank you very much.

And if there is a subsequent round, the rotation is the same, but each questioner receives five minutes.

In the Standing Committee on Health, there again, everyone asks questions once, except the NDP, which receives two rounds of questioning.

The same goes for the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities. By the end of the second round, everyone has had a chance to ask questions, except the NDP, which is allowed to ask questions twice.

In the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, by the end of the third round, things are more balanced. By the end of the second round, the Liberals have spoken three times, the Conservatives, three times, the Bloc Québécois, twice, and the NDP, twice. The third round of questioning begins with the Conservative Party, followed by the Bloc Québécois, the Liberal Party and finally the NDP. That split is not quite as balanced as in other committees, but it is still better than ours in the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights also uses a system that is based on the participation of every member. The first questioner of each party receives seven minutes to question witnesses, and then five minutes are allocated to each subsequent questioner, alternating between government and opposition members, until all members have had a chance to participate. Once again, everyone participates.

And we all know how the Standing Committee on Official Languages works, but I will go over it anyway. Witnesses are given ten minutes for their opening statement, then five minutes are allocated to the first questioner of each party. In the second round, the Standing Committee on Official Languages gives speaking time to the Liberal Party, followed by the Bloc Québécois, the Conservative Party and finally the New Democratic Party. So, by the end of the second round, Mr. Godin of the NDP has already had two opportunities to ask questions, even before every committee member has had a chance to speak. In the third round, five minutes are allocated in the following order: Liberal Party, Conservative Party and Bloc Québécois. At that point, every member of the Liberal Party has had a chance to speak once, and one Bloc Québécois member has had a chance to speak twice. Only three members of the Conservative Party have had a chance to ask questions once, while the NDP member has had a chance to speak twice. In the fourth round, the following order applies: Conservative Party, Liberal Party, NDP again and Bloc Québécois again. At that point, one member of the Liberal Party has spoken twice, some Conservative members have yet to speak, the NDP member has had the chance to speak three times, and two Bloc Québécois members have already spoken twice, all the while, some members on this side have still not had the chance to speak. This system tramples upon the right of every elected member to be valued and to participate.

In the Standing Committee on National Defence, there again, everyone has had a chance to speak by the end of the second round. That is a fair and balanced approach.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates...

● (0935)

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Ms. Glover.

Ms. Sgro, if you would like to carry on a conversation, I would invite you to take it outside the committee. I am having trouble hearing the member.

[English]

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Ms. Glover, go right ahead. Please continue.

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** We certainly would not want to disturb her. Go ahead.

**The Chair:** Actually, if you are going to attend a committee meeting, the least you can do is listen to the member who is speaking. Out of respect for myself, the interpreters and the other committee members, I would ask that you please...

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I was the one speaking, not her.

**The Chair:** That also goes for you, Mr. Bélanger.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I get your point. Stop interrupting Ms. Glover, please. Let her continue to enlighten us.

[English]

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** Oh, cheeky... That's cheeky—

**An hon. member:** We have an hour and 20 minutes to go.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** I am trying to take notes, but I am having a bit of trouble because of all the background noise. Out of basic respect for...

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Send him your Christmas cards!

**The Chair:** Thank you for your cooperation.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Point of order, Mr. Chair. Would it be possible for Ms. Glover to give you her notes. That way, you would not have as much to write down this morning.

**Some hon. members:** Aha!

**The Chair:** Yes, perhaps. Aha! That is a good idea, Mr. Godin. I will ask Ms. Glover to do so when she is done speaking. Thank you.

Welcome to the committee, Mr. Asselin.

**Mr. Gérard Asselin (Manicouagan, BQ):** It is a pleasure to be here as the meeting gets under way. I do not think I have missed much.

Mr. Chair, I would like you to tell me the goals and objectives of the member who is trying to explain to us how the other committees operate, including the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

What I understand from Ms. Glover's comments is that one party supposedly has more speaking time than another or that the speaking time was not allocated in accordance with the order predetermined by the committee. If that is the case, the issue lies with the chair, who would not have managed the committee's proceedings properly.

**The Chair:** Mr. Asselin, welcome to the committee. As you know, Ms. Glover moved a motion on June 8 having to do with the questioning of witnesses and our routine motion rule. It is therefore a routine motion.

If you would like to contribute to the discussion on the routine motion, I would be more than happy to hear what you have to say. Right now, Ms. Glover is explaining the motion and telling us what goes on in the other committees.

**Mr. Gérard Asselin:** Mr. Chair, if I had received the documents, I would not have asked the question.

**The Chair:** Good, excellent. Okay then.

Ms. Glover now has the floor to speak to her motion.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I am totally open to the idea of giving you my notes when I am done speaking, Mr. Chair. Good suggestion, Mr. Godin.

In any case, I will continue with my explanation.

[English]

You know, I have to say it's disappointing to see the committee act like this, particularly when Monsieur Bélanger talks about...

Think about those children we appeared before. How do you think they would feel about the conversations going on and the lack of respect in the room and the lack of respect for each member? It's not about parties here. It's about the value that every member feels in this

committee. I think everyone is owed a chance to speak so that they do feel the same value as every other member of this committee.

At any rate, let's continue.

[Translation]

The Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates works a bit differently. It gives witnesses five to ten minutes for their opening statement. Then the first questioner of each party is given eight minutes to question witnesses. Thereafter, each party receives five minutes, including the responses of witnesses, in the following order: Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party, Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Conservative Party, Liberal Party and Conservative Party. There again, this committee makes an effort to give as many people as possible a chance to speak.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts also gives everyone a chance to speak once, except the NDP, which speaks twice.

As for the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, by the third round, everyone has had a chance to speak once, except the NDP, which has spoken twice. It is a lot more fair and balanced. Mr. Godin should be very happy because he would have two opportunities to speak in those committees.

The Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security takes an approach where every member of the party speaks once. No one gets to speak a second time until everyone has had a chance to speak once. In my opinion, that system is the most balanced of all of them, and a number of committees work that way.

The Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, there again...

● (0940)

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Ms. Glover.

Mr. Bélanger.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Yes, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** If you want to carry on a lengthy conversation with one of your colleagues, I would ask you, for the third time, to please take your conversation out to the hall.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I get your point, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

**The Chair:** ...out of respect for the other committee members.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Mr. Chair, when I am shown respect, I will show it to others. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**An hon. member:** Oh, my God!

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

[English]

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** This is so cheeky of you. Just move away from the table, Mauril.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Give us something interesting to listen to. This repetition is filibustering. She doesn't want to deal with an important report. Shame.

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** Just move back and sit in the back row.



[Translation]

**The Chair:** Allow me to explain. I like to be able to hear what is being said. When there is constant buzzing in the back, it is hard for me to concentrate. With all due respect, Mr. Bélanger, I would ask you....

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I understand.

**The Chair:** ...to show the committee members some respect so that our proceedings can run smoothly.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** It is interesting that you mention the committee's proceedings running smoothly, Mr. Chair.

[English]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I'm embarrassed right at this moment to be a parliamentarian in a committee that acts this way.

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

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** If my children were watching this, I'd be completely embarrassed.

I'm almost finished, because there's one more committee left, and it is

[Translation]

the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

[English]

And you can see how frustrating it is to be in committee when there is no fairness and there is no equity.

[Translation]

That committee gives witnesses ten minutes and allocates seven minutes to the first questioner of each party. It then gives five minutes to the members of each party who have not yet spoken, starting with the official opposition. Once again, we can see that this system is based on fairness. I wanted to share that with you because certain members of this committee did not read the document that was prepared for us. That includes Mr. Bélanger, who should care about what happens in this committee, but who, for some reason or another, is interested only when it involves his party's interests. That is the kind of partisanship that is destroying our committee. I want to remedy that with a fair and just solution.

You have the floor, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Point of order.

**The Chair:** Yes, Mr. Godin? I hope I will be able to hear you. There is a lot of noise.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Weston and Mr. Wallace have not stopped talking, and I want to hear Ms. Glover. You did not say anything, and I would like you to apply the rule to both sides of the table, please.

**The Chair:** Absolutely, Mr. Godin.

[English]

**Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC):** Mr. Chair, I will my withdraw my statements to my colleague Mr. Weston. Thank you.

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

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Godin, for making sure that everyone is respectful of one another.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** That is what you call fairness.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I am done telling you about the other committees. I hope that all the members here today will see the importance of changing the way this committee operates, so we can do a good job. I propose that we adopt this motion so as to increase the participation of all the members of our committee, as well as the value attached to each one.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Glover.

Mr. Bélanger, I believe you have something to say. You have the floor.

● (0945)

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Mr. Chair, I move that we proceed to the consideration of the report.

**The Chair:** Yes. We can probably do that, but you obviously know that...

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I move that we proceed immediately to the consideration of the report.

[English]

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** A point of order, Chair.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** As you know, we are discussing the motion right now.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Mr. Chair, you are supposed to put the motion to a vote immediately. Please check with your clerk. Those are the committee rules.

[English]

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** No. There's debate on that. It's just a motion.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** There's no debate.

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** It's just a motion.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** I will check with my clerk on that.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** In fact, I think we will do what someone suggested earlier and take a five-minute coffee break.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** No, we do not agree with that.

**The Chair:** If I understood you correctly, Mr. Bélanger, you are referring to what is known as a dilatory motion. Is that right?

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I move that we proceed to the consideration of the report.

**The Chair:** This is what the House of Commons procedure and practice says on the subject:

A dilatory motion is a motion designed to dispose of the original question before the committee, either for the time being or permanently. Dilatory motions do not require notice, nor can they be amended or debated. They are therefore put to a vote immediately. If a dilatory motion is accompanied by a condition, it becomes a substantive motion. It is then subject to the rules on the admissibility of such motions. It becomes debatable and amendable. The main dilatory motions deemed admissible in committee include: "...That the Committee proceed [to another order of business]"...

In the case before us, you are proposing that we proceed to...

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I propose that we proceed to the study of the report.

**The Chair:** —the study of immigration as a development tool in official language minority communities.

If the motion is passed, the committee will proceed immediately to study the matter mentioned in the motion.

I rule that this is a dilatory motion admissible under the procedures. We are going to vote on the motion in question. Those in favour of the motion?

Before voting on the motion, we have a point of order.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** This is a point of order.

So you're ruling that a motion that's on the order paper as the first item of business....

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** I am sorry. Mr. Wallace is an associate member of the committee.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** I'm asking a point of order. Am I not recognized, or what's the scoop?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Why is he asking for a vote?

**The Chair:** He is not talking about a vote, he is raising a point of order. So he has the right to speak.

[*English*]

Mr. Wallace, I can hear you.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. You're doing a fine job as chair, by the way. It's the first time I've experienced you as the chairman of a committee, and you're doing an excellent job.

From a point of order perspective, I just want to be clear that I understand. The agenda items were presented here on the agenda. We went to the first item on the agenda, and you started the debate on that first item. Now you're allowing another committee member to overrule the order that's presented in the orders of the day and to move another item to be before that.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Lise Zarac (LaSalle—Émard, Lib.):** That is not a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** I think I still have the floor.

So you're allowing that to happen. If that is your ruling and they move that, when will the motion on which debate was previously started move back on to the order paper?

**An hon. member:** He's not debating. He's asking a question about a point of order.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** It's an actual point of order, not some of the stuff you guys have been doing. It's actually about procedure. Points of order are about the procedure of a committee. This is about the procedure of the agenda. This is an actual point of order based on the nice green book that all of us have read, I'm assuming.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** A point of order, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** OK, listen.

[*English*]

if I want to give an opinion on his point, I have to listen to his point.

[*Translation*]

I am on the point of order raised by Mr. Wallace. Earlier, I heard a point of order from Mr. Asselin. Then I made my ruling. I am going to do the same with Mr. Wallace.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, I just want to know what is happening. You said just now that you are not required to take points of order on this matter. We cannot debate it. He said that it was a point of information.

• (0950)

[*English*]

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** I asked an initial question, Yvon.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Absolutely. We will not debate the motion. But there is a point of order. At the moment, I am listening to the matter raised by Mr. Wallace as a point of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Wallace, please make your—

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** My point was that you're making a ruling to change the order after we've already started the debate. When does the motion from Madam Glover come back onto the order paper? When do we start that up again? Does it just drop by one? Where does that go? That's what I want to know.

**The Chair:** Actually, I consider your point of order as a question on how we will proceed. What Mr. Bélanger suggested is a motion that is not debatable, and now we have to vote. That's why we are about to proceed to the vote, and indeed the committee can go the way it wishes to go, as long as a decision is made. Your point is—

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** So Mr. Bélanger has put forward a non-debatable motion. Let's assume, for argument's sake, it passes. When does her item come back onto the agenda as the item we're dealing with?

**The Chair:** It's up to the members of the committee to decide the agenda of the committee.

**Mr. Mike Wallace:** But we're in the middle of the debate on it. How does it all of a sudden end without starting up again?

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** This is a dilatory motion. It is aptly named. Mr. Wallace, it is a motion that, in a way, enables us to talk about another issue, if that is the will of the committee.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** A point of order.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** For the love of...

**The Chair:** Ms. Glover, you have a point of order?

[*English*]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I haven't had a single point of order, and as soon as I ask for one, you want to deny me my right, Monsieur Godin. You've had four already. Please allow me to have the right to speak.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Chair, I hope she addresses you if she wants to be respectful to this committee, instead of addressing me.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I'm trying my best to be respectful, Monsieur le Président, but they're making it very, very difficult.

In any event, what I'd like to know is.... I'm not quite understanding the decision that has been made, because after the motion that we were discussing—

**Voices:** [*Inaudible—Editor*].

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** I can't even hear.

After the motion that was brought forward, which was on the orders of the day, there are other things on the orders of the day. In fact, in camera, there's a motion to address the report that he wants to study.

So how is it that we can circumvent a motion that's already in process with a brand-new motion that also cuts off the motion to adjust that very topic? Because the motion of Monsieur Généreux addresses the report: that we want to extend the report and we want to continue to study immigration because it's not finished.

How does that happen? Please explain that to me so that I understand what I'm voting on. I cannot vote without being informed.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** Mr. Chair, you have just read the regulation. They should understand it, I feel. Please call the question.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I request a recorded vote.

**The Chair:** Ms. Glover, after Mr. Wallace's point, Mr. Bélanger moved a dilatory motion that requires a decision.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** What is a dilatory motion?

**The Chair:** As, I mentioned, it is a motion designed to dispose of the original question, your motion in the case before us, either for the time being or permanently. A dilatory motion does not require notice, nor can it be amended or debated; it must be put to a vote immediately.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Immediately!

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Right away!

**The Chair:** I am just clarifying that, in the case of the motion before us, which is admissible, the committee must move to another item of business, the study of the report in this case.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Don't we go to the next item in the orders of the day?

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Here is what I read: "This motion results in the matter then under consideration [your motion in this case] being replaced by the order of business proposed in the motion [the report, in our case]. If the motion is carried, the committee immediately to the order [studying the report] referred to in the motion."

I feel that describes the situation well, so I am going to call the question on Mr. Bélanger's dilatory motion.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Are we going to proceed to the next item on the agenda, as he proposed? That is my question.

**The Chair:** We are going to proceed to the study of the report.

● (0955)

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Which is the motion on the table.

**The Chair:** Yes, the dilatory motion moved by Mr. Bélanger.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Weston:** Point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Excuse me, are you raising a point of order, Mr. Godin?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I am talking to you, Mr. Chair. According to what you said, a vote must be taken immediately, and you are wasting 10 minutes here listening to other comments. It must be done immediately. Do you know what "immediately" means?

**The Chair:** Yes, I know what it means. I would point out to you that I have not...

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It is immediately, right away.

**The Chair:** Absolutely, Mr. Godin.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** So let's go!

**The Chair:** I allowed no one to speak on that debate. The motion is not debatable.

**Ms. Monique Guay:** Someone just asked you to.

**The Chair:** I am explaining to members what they are voting on at the moment. Because there are members, Mr. Godin, who do not have your experience in committee and it is important to understand clearly what a dilatory motion is.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Anyone who is a member of Parliament in Ottawa should know what "immediately" means.

**The Chair:** Mr. Lemieux, do you have a point of order?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Immediately!

**The Chair:** Oh, it is Mr. Weston.

**Mr. John Weston:** I am a new member of this committee, and I have the interests of all members of the committee at heart. I do not know when I will have the time to talk about the lack of justice that is evident here, and that really is going to make us less and less effective.

**The Chair:** That is not a point of order.

**Mr. John Weston:** I am not speaking from a partisan position, I am speaking from a desire to really make a point. If I understand correctly, I am not going to have the opportunity to do that. If that is the case, I do not want to be part of this committee. I think that most Canadians would be disgusted, and I think that it is really

*[English]*

a disgrace. So let's move on to this vote if we have to, but I'm telling you, informally or formally, inside or outside this committee, over coffee or otherwise, I want to speak to the other members, who are duly elected by Canadians, to fix something that is clearly broken. Because if it doesn't get fixed, I will not participate. I'll sit here and do my other work, other members will do so as well, and we will not contribute anything for what the taxpayers are paying us. So it's time that we do fix it.

*[Translation]*

**The Chair:** Thank you, but that is not a point of order.

I think we have all been clear. So I now call the question.

I think that a recorded vote was requested on Mr. Bélanger's dilatory motion.

(Motion agreed to by 6 votes to 5)

**The Chair:** We are going to suspend the session for a few moments in order to study the report in camera.

*[The session continued in camera.]*

---







**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste-lettre**

**1782711  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*  
Publishing and Depository Services  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5

*En cas de non-livraison,  
retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*  
Les Éditions et Services de dépôt  
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

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

### **SPEAKER'S PERMISSION**

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Additional copies may be obtained from: Publishing and  
Depository Services  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5  
Telephone: 613-941-5995 or 1-800-635-7943  
Fax: 613-954-5779 or 1-800-565-7757  
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca  
http://publications.gc.ca

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the  
following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

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

### **PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT**

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les  
Éditions et Services de dépôt  
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5  
Téléphone : 613-941-5995 ou 1-800-635-7943  
Télécopieur : 613-954-5779 ou 1-800-565-7757  
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca  
http://publications.gc.ca

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à  
l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>