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# **Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Wednesday, June 16, 2010**

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**Chair**

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi**



## Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates

Wednesday, June 16, 2010

• (1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.)):** Order.

Members of the committee, we were supposed to have a witness before us on our renewable energy project funding. Mr. Jaffer has been invited to appear twice. He has been summoned, but he has not appeared. This is a serious offence. We have lots of inconsistencies that we need him to clarify. His continued attempts to mislead the committee are not acceptable, and I'm sure that we, as the members of the government operations and estimates committee, need to ensure that we take the right decision.

I know, Mr. Warkentin, you have some issues you would like to air. If people would like to speak for just one minute to express their views....

Mr. Warkentin.

**Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

It's pretty disturbing to see that we don't have, yet again, Mr. Jaffer here to give testimony today. As a committee we have given every opportunity for Mr. Jaffer to come, to be prepared. We've provided documentation and we've provided several invitations. Now it's been elevated to a summons.

I believe, number one, Madam Chair, we should continue to demand that he show up. I am prepared to come here whenever this committee can come together to see that this happens.

I'm not sure we're going to get anywhere with that, quite frankly, Madam Chair. I see this letter that was circulated to our clerk; it was then circulated to the media. This is for Mr. Jaffer. It's with regard to the different issues that I guess he has some concern about, issues that this committee has looked into. What we see in this letter is yet another compilation of inconsistencies, not only with the testimony at this committee from other people, but from his own testimony. I'm not sure we're well served to even have him here. Now we have what has become quite systemic. The man has been inconsistent every time he has submitted something to this committee.

I'm prepared to come. But I think as a committee we have to decide if this committee is well served to go through the motions or if we're prepared to now move on to write a report.

If we're going to wait, and maybe I—

**The Chair:** We'll discuss things that we want to do in camera, if you could keep that—

**Mr. Chris Warkentin:** I will reserve the rest of my comments for in camera, then.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Ms. Coady.

**Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I sense the frustration in the room, and I think all of us are very frustrated with this. We have offered every opportunity for Mr. Jaffer to come before us and I think we should continue down that path. My honourable colleague is absolutely right. We should be prepared to make ourselves available to make sure that he sits before this committee and is held accountable for the inconsistencies, the downright lies that he's told this committee, to be quite frank with you.

He's actually ignored as well the committee's motion to produce documentation. If you recall from his lawyer's letters and from other letters presented to this committee, he has additional documents. We called for those additional documents and we still don't have them, as far as I'm aware.

I think he should appear tomorrow. He says he's available tomorrow. I think we should try to make ourselves available for that. I'm not satisfied to let him off the hook, quite frankly. I think he has to be held accountable to us.

**The Chair:** We'll discuss those strategies in camera, please.

Mr. Cullen.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I echo the sentiments of frustration of committee members. This has gone beyond disrespect to belligerence. It's not just the disrespect for this committee and the institution of Parliament; it's gone to another place. The excuses for Mr. Jaffer have been exhausted. There is nowhere left for him to hide. In fact, the time is up for Mr. Jaffer. He has to know that this committee and this Parliament are taking this issue seriously. You can't simply ignore a summons. You can't come in front of the committee and lie, as we saw with the case of the business card distribution and the letter that Mr. Warkentin referred to as being inappropriate, incorrect, and flat out wrong. When anybody lies to a committee of Parliament, there ought to be consequences.

Madam Chair, I know we are going to talk about those consequences next. We need to get to that. This is unacceptable to all members of this place and the people we represent. When someone misrepresents themselves in front of a committee, consequences must follow. Simply ignoring a summons and making up excuses is not good enough anymore.

• (1535)

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

Monsieur Nadeau.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I concur with my colleagues from the other three parties. We really have done a huge amount of work on this matter, and it has enabled us to shed light on the lobbying implicit in the work of Mr. Jaffer, Mr. Glémaud and their company. Their denials from the first meeting

and our subsequent work show that the committee was being misled. Mr. Jaffer's presence is essential; we must use all legal means at our disposal to persuade Rahim Jaffer to come here like any other citizen.

Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I concur. Parliament is regarded by many as the top court, and by extension the committees are and they have to be respected. Mr. Jaffer, whatever he communicates, seems to communicate to us through the media. I think we need to go in camera to discuss strategies and what we will do next.

I will suspend for 30 seconds and ask the media and those who are not supposed to be in this room to please leave the room.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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