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Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

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EVIDENCE

Wednesday, March 3, 2010

—
Chair

Mr. Joe Preston

Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

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• (1805)

[*Translation*]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Angela Crandall): Honourable members, I see that we have a quorum.

[*English*]

I will now proceed to the election of the chair.

[*Translation*]

I am now ready to receive motions for the position of chair.

Mr. Lukiwski.

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Clerk.

I would nominate Mr. Joe Preston for chair.

The Clerk: Are there any other nominations?

The motion is that Mr. Preston be elected chair of the committee. All in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: The motion is carried. Mr. Preston is elected chair of the committee.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Clerk: Is it the will of the committee to proceed to the election of vice-chairs?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Clerk: I will now accept nominations.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): I'd like to nominate my friend and colleague, Marcel Proulx.

The Clerk: Are there any other motions?

The motion before the committee is that Mr. Proulx be the first vice-chair, for the official opposition. All in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: The motion is carried.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

The Clerk: I am now ready to receive motions for the position of second vice-chair.

Mrs. DeBellefeuille.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): I nominate Mr. Michel Guimond.

The Clerk: Are there any other motions?

It has been moved that Mr. Guimond be elected second vice-chair.

(Motion agreed to)

[*English*]

The Clerk: Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): I'd like to thank all my friends. Now that I have you all here, we will do just a little bit more work.

Ladies and gentlemen, earlier in the House today, the House of Commons made the following order:

That, for all standing committees, routine motions in effect at the time of prorogation of the previous session be deemed to have been adopted in the current session, provided that committees be empowered to alter or rescind such motions as they deem appropriate.

Accordingly, the routine motions that were in effect at the time of prorogation are reinstated for this committee. The clerk will reflect the order in the minutes of this meeting. The committee can, if it chooses, amend any of these motions. Finally, for information purposes, the clerk has distributed a copy of those motions to you.

Are there questions?

Mr. Reid.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): I'm just assuming that this means, for example, that Harold Albrecht will be appointed chair of the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business—that personnel considerations are also part of this as well.

The Chair: Yes. That's my understanding.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: I have a clarification, Mr. Chair. That is unless, of course, the committee as a whole determines that it wishes to change the composition of subcommittees or steering committees or whatever. But if the committee agrees, then we will go back to the configuration we had previous to prorogation.

The Chair: Madam Jennings.

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): I have a slight correction. The standing orders that we adopted in the House today say that it's for the motions that were before the committee, the routine motions. That means this is what it is now. If the committee wishes to change it, we can, but—

An hon. member: I thought I said that.

Hon. Marlene Jennings: No. No, that is not exactly what you said.

An hon. member: That's exactly what he was saying.

Hon. Marlene Jennings: No. Go back and check the transcript. There was a slight error.

The Chair: Okay. So we can at any time go forward, but right now we've accepted the routine motions as they were when we left.

If I could ask the indulgence of the group, we were maybe going to do just a little bit of committee business today on the membership of other committees. We can't do that until we present that report, and it couldn't be presented until there was a chair. There is now, but we will have to move in camera in order to discuss that committee business, the membership of other committees.

Monsieur Guimond.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ): On that note, Mr. Chair, I have a suggestion to make.

Since the lists contain many names and must be verified, I would suggest...Our list is ready. We are prepared to share it with colleagues from the other parties. I expect that they will do the same. Can we agree to exchange these lists immediately, if we have them?

A meeting is scheduled for tomorrow morning. You know that this exercise is subject to the whips approval. The four whips need to sign the report that will be formally tabled in the House. That report won't be tabled this evening, because the House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow. The whips are scheduled to meet at 9:30 a.m. If the clerk were to come by and see the whips at the office of the Chief Government Whip, we could then approve the report and review the lists of names submitted by the other parties—after all, we do want to take a look at these lists. Then we would not have to sit in camera, unless you really want to do so in order to discuss other business.

That is what I would like to suggest to my colleagues in attendance.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Lukiwski, on the same topic.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: I just want to make sure I understood the interpretation correctly.

Do we need a motion to give the authority to the whips to approve all this, and then, automatically, as chair you would not have to report?

The Chair: Mr. Guimond is asking for an alternative way of doing it. As it is, we already have a routine motion under which the whips can do membership reports. So if we'd like to go that route, we won't do it as the whole committee today. The whips will do it tomorrow morning at their whips' meeting. The clerk will attend at some point, get signatures from all four whips, give me a report to present in the House during routine proceedings tomorrow, and life

will carry on that way. That would work fine if that's the way we'd like to do it. That saves us having—

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: My question is whether we need a motion here to authorize them to do that.

The Chair: No, the whips are already authorized to do so.

At this moment, Monsieur Guimond has asked for copies for the four whips for tomorrow morning.

Is that what you were asking for? It's not a problem. We don't need to give it to all members. As long as all parties are giving copies to all whips for tomorrow morning's meeting, then life is fine.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay, let's go that way then.

All right, that has been distributed.

Monsieur Proulx.

• (1810)

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): On a point of clarification, I want to come back one step. With regard to the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business and the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, can the clerk confirm that the composition of these two subcommittees is exactly that which we had prior to prorogation?

The Chair: The clerk suggests to me that they were taken from the minutes of the meeting at which they were adopted.

A voice: They should be exactly the same.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Marcel Proulx: I was under the impression—and correct me if I'm wrong, and we can check—that the private members' business subcommittee was composed of one member from each party, therefore four members, and that Harold was the representative of the Conservative Party.

We had another one—

The Chair: We had a subcommittee on forms, under ethics, where that was the case, but the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business had the makeup that is stated here.

Mr. Reid.

Mr. Scott Reid: Everybody on this committee knows that I have very decided opinions on the subject of four-person committees or subcommittees. It would be very sad to see the membership of this one change from what is listed here, but even if we wanted to do so, we would be unable to because this subcommittee's membership is actually spelled out in the standing orders, and it does include two different members, one of which is me.

The Chair: That's correct.

Is there further committee business?

I would suggest that we move forward by having a meeting of the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure on Tuesday during the time slot in which our committee would normally meet.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay, we will have that meeting then, and we will move forward from there. This meeting is adjourned.

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