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Tuesday, March 13, 2012

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Chair

Ms. Jean Crowder

Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics

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• (1100)

[English]

The Chair (Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP)): I call the meeting to order.

Good morning, committee members.

I would like to update the committee on the witness who was requested to appear before committee.

I think you are all aware that we received some correspondence from his lawyer, which I shared with committee members, indicating that Mr. Carroll was not able to attend the meeting today. I also want to make it clear, in communication with his lawyer, that Mr. Carroll has not indicated that he is not going to attend; he was just not able to attend today.

On that matter, we also sent out a request to members to not share the content of the letter that came from the lawyer. Apparently that has appeared in public. I would just remind committee members that there are some issues around its confidentiality.

Go ahead, Mr. Del Mastro.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

In light of what you've just indicated to the committee, I'd move:

That the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics issue a summons for the appearance of Mr. Adam Carroll, former employee of the Liberal parliamentary research bureau, to appear before the Committee on Thursday March 15, 2012, in relation to the study of the anonymous use of House of Commons resources against a Member of Parliament.

I would add, "If appearing before the committee would put him at serious risk should he attend, then he and his doctor should attest to the same to the committee in confidence."

The Chair: Mr. Del Mastro, we'll just get a copy of that from you. I would like to read it back into—

Go ahead on a point of order, Mr. Andrews.

Mr. Scott Andrews (Avalon, Lib.): The last time I tried to read out my motion, I was told that I had to wait until it was dealt with.

We've got an order of motions here this morning to deal with, so I think you should rule that the particular motion should be dealt with in the order in which we have been presented.

That was the rule that I was told when I tried to read out my motion four or five days ago. In order to be consistent in how we proceed with our business, I think it's best that we wait to deal with that motion.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Andrews.

The circumstances were slightly different. There was another motion on the floor, I believe, at that point in time.

Nothing prevents a member, when he or she has the floor, from moving a motion when we're not already on a motion. You're absolutely correct that in the normal course of events we would deal with the matters on the motions in the order in which they were received, but as Mr. Del Mastro had the floor and there was no motion on the floor, he has the ability to move his motion.

We now have that motion, and I'm going to ask the clerk to reread it.

Could I confirm, Mr. Calkins, that you speaking to this motion?

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC): When I get the floor, I have.... Yes.

The Chair: After that I have Mr. Andrews, and then Mr. Del Mastro again.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Chad Mariage): Thank you, Madam Chair.

The motion reads:

That the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics issue a summons for the appearance of Mr. Adam Carroll, former employee of the Liberal parliamentary research bureau, to appear before the Committee on Thursday March 15, 2012, in relation to the study of the anonymous use of House of Commons resources against a Member of Parliament. If appearing before the committee would put him at serious risk should he attend, then he and his doctor should attest to the same to the committee in confidence.

The Chair: We now have the motion before committee.

Go ahead, Mr. Calkins.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Madam Chair, as per usual when we're discussing matters of committee business, I move that this committee now move in camera.

The Chair: It's not debatable.

On a point of order, go ahead, Mr. Andrews.

Mr. Scott Andrews: Madam Chair, O'Brien and Bosc, on page 1076, where it talks about in camera meetings, says: "On occasion"—

The Chair: Sorry, Mr. Andrews; I'm going to interject there. It's not a point of order. The motion's not debatable—

Go ahead, Mr. Morin.

[Translation]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Madam Chair, I would like a recorded division please.

[English]

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Andrews.

Mr. Scott Andrews: It is a point of order when I'm actually going to refer to O'Brien and Bosc, and I will continue to refer to O'Brien and Bosc and this particular section every single time the Conservative Party tries to move in camera.

In O'Brien and Bosc, on page 1076, it says: On occasion, a committee may decide to hold an *in camera* meeting to deal with administrative matters, to consider a draft report or to receive a briefing.

This is another attempt to take motions in camera by this particular party, and this is out of order.

• (1105)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Andrews.

You've read the point. It's not debatable.

On a point of order, go ahead, Monsieur Dusseault.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Before we go any further, I would just like to remind everyone that our committee amicably agreed not to hold our meetings in camera. Mr. Del Mastro, himself, told us that. It is too bad that today...

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

Sorry, Monsieur Dusseault, but I'm going to interrupt.

A motion to move us in camera is not a debatable motion, and that is not a point of order.

I'm now going to go to a recorded vote on the motion to move us in camera. Would the clerk please take us through that?

The Clerk: The question is that the committee proceed to sit in camera.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4)

The Chair: We'll suspend to allow us to set up the room for an in camera meeting.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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