



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

## **Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

---

PACP • NUMBER 039 • 1st SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

---

**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, April 24, 2012**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. David Christopherson**



## Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

• (0850)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP)):** I now—

Why did we know that was going to happen? All right, I see you all have your hands up. We'll deal with it later.

I now declare this 39th meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts open. Now in order, the purpose of the meeting today is to follow up on the previous meeting and the order of that meeting, that we convene today for the purposes of discussing next steps vis-à-vis chapter 2 of the 2012 report of the Auditor General.

Here's the dilemma I mentioned to you before, which we have still not resolved, and that is that there's no particular order of preference as to who gets the floor, and that has a lot to do with how this meeting will unfold.

I've raised this kind of thing before. My concern has been that it becomes a physical contest of who can get my attention first, which can be totally arbitrary and not necessarily fair if I'm looking the wrong way when somebody else's hand is up.

I have to tell you, I was pretty much looking straight ahead when I banged the gavel to call the meeting to order, and instantly, all hands went up. So I'm left with a huge dilemma in terms of where I go first because you all virtually got my attention at the same time. Everybody has the same strategy, and it's unfortunate that a determination of how a meeting will unfold is based on who can get their hand up the quickest or get the eye of the chair the quickest, and yet, that is where we are.

I think the record will show that consistently Mr. Saxton has been very good at being the first off the mark, to the point where I have noticed he was first and felt comfortable giving him the floor. That's not possible right now. Virtually, you were all at the same time. Like I said, everybody knows what we're doing here, and you managed to all do it simultaneously.

Therefore, what I'm going to do is, again, I'm going to ask each of the caucuses to please consider joining with me, even if it's just an informal start over a coffee, to come to some determination on how we do this in a way that's fair to everyone. I'm reiterating that the current process is not fair. It has a built-in unfairness to it. I don't have an obvious answer or I would have brought a recommendation. But I've done this from the beginning of my term as chair. I reach out again and ask colleagues from each of the caucuses if we could sit down and find a way where we can deal with this in an equitable fashion.

Having said that, I'm in an impossible situation in that I can only go to one person and virtually all of you put your hands up instantly at the same time. Mr. Saxton continues to put his hand up so that he knows I see him there.

As I said, I have consistently seen Mr. Saxton first, as a member of the government. Given you were all at the same time, given this is an oversight committee, I'm going to recognize Mr. Allen from the official opposition. But again, I ask colleagues to please join with me to find a process that is fairer than this, because this just doesn't work.

I am not comfortable doing this, but I have to, in order to get the meeting going.

Having said all of that, I recognize Mr. Allen first, Mr. Byrne, Mr. Saxton, in that order.

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

Go ahead, Mr. Allen.

• (0855)

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and it—

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

**The Chair:** Wait a minute. Is there an allegation to be made here? I heard somebody say something about “predetermined”.

Mr. Kramp.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC):** Yes, I just felt that, so I said it, Chair.

**The Chair:** I appreciate you said it. I assume that it was just an emotional remark and that you're not challenging the chair, or are you?

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** I'm not challenging the chair. I just believe that was the strategy overall, from all of the opposition, and I think it's unfortunate for the chair. He knows that this meeting will very shortly get out of hand and he'll have to bear responsibility for it.

**The Chair:** All right. I'll take that as your comments.

All right, folks. Let's not get too twisted up in process. People are watching.

Madame Bateman.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC):** Just on a point of clarification, sir, I did note that Mr. Allen's and Monsieur Ravnat's hands were up. I noticed our hands were up. I didn't notice Mr. Byrne's, and yet you're—

**The Chair:** I virtually saw a sea of hands. If Mr. Byrne's hand didn't actually... I don't know, but that's what happens with this process. Again, I come back to—

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Yet you've given him preferential treatment.

**The Chair:** I just saw a sea of hands, so I'm trying to find a process that's as fair as possible.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.):** Do you mind if I clarify that, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** Sure, Mr. Byrne, jump in. Let's just show Canadians just how little this committee wants to actually focus on the job at hand.

Mr. Byrne, you take the floor and just start talking.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I can assure you that my hand was up.

**The Chair:** Very well. Unless someone wants to formally challenge the chair, which I will accept, Mr. Allen has the floor and this meeting will now proceed.

Mr. Allen, take the floor.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Thank you very much, Chair.

I think you've hit the nail on the head. One doesn't feel compelled every meeting to rush to shoot one's hand up. It hasn't been my practice in the past. Clearly we need to find a formula.

If Mr. Saxton feels that he needs to get his hand in and speak first, that's fair. Perhaps I don't put my hand up because I don't feel the need to speak first. But somehow we do need to balance this committee so that we actually have input and so that folks are being heard and we're not simply acquiescing to the fact that someone shoots their hand up.

You illustrated that someone might have an arthritic arm and might not be able to get it up. I, like many others who played sports as a boy, actually have had two shoulder surgeries, and actually my right arm doesn't work all that well sometimes, and I can't get it up that fast.

I actually envision myself trying to do “the Horshack” from Kottler and going, “Ooh, ooh, ooh!” to get the attention, which I think would be silly, to be honest. It seems that we're kind of stuck in that mode, but I'm hopeful that we can find a way to resolve it.

It would be in everyone's interest, I think, and it would be helpful to the chair to do that. And I would hope that folks on the other side would take the opportunity to know that there may be preordained things in life, and I'm not at liberty to suggest what those preordinations are, because I just live my life the way it comes, and I leave that to those who are more spiritual than I.

I can tell you unequivocally—and I say this to my colleagues across the way—that I have never taken advantage, nor will I ever take advantage of the fact that the chair is in my caucus by going to him ahead of a meeting and asking for him to recognize me. I have never done it. I did not do it for this particular meeting. Nor would I do it at any future meeting.

My colleagues across need to understand that.

Now that I've said that, let's move forward to the business at hand, which is to, hopefully, find a way to talk about a witness list. That's

what I'd like to see us do today. Obviously, I'd like to see us do it openly, in a public meeting, so that we can actually get a sense of who we should bring. I think we're in agreement.

I believe, Mr. Saxton said here last week and has said publicly that he's happy to bring the AG, which I think is appropriate. I would expect that would be a standard witness for us.

He also has said here and publicly in the press that he would be happy to bring Kevin Page, the Parliamentary Budget Officer. He's also said here and in public in the press that he'd be happy to bring the deputy ministers. I don't believe he's actually said from which departments yet, but I think we can work on which ones those are.

If we are accepting of all of those—and I think this side certainly is accepting of those in a general format—then I'd like to see us move to the ones that are perhaps not in that generic format.

I'd like to see folks like Alan Williams, Tom Ring, and Mr. Lessard. The reason I mention folks who are not in the departments is that here is what's in play here—and I've said this before to my colleagues, and I made sure it was on the record when the AG was here the first time. The fall report of 2010 around the helicopters looks very similar to this one. In fact, I've called it the twin.

My view is that we need to actually talk to folks beyond the department, simply because they are not just anyone but are experts in the field of procurement, because the departments have gotten it wrong twice within the span of 18 months, and they haven't learned any lessons they said they would learn.

In 2010, they agreed with the Auditor General's report. There was no disagreement. Then, in the subsequent report around the F-35s, the department disagrees with the Auditor General's report, even though it's very similar—if not identical—to the one from 2010.

● (0900)

We have them agreeing on the one hand, and disagreeing on the other hand. So I think it's time for us, as a committee, to take a look at what the defence department is doing and how this procurement happens. We need to make some recommendations to them that are beyond, not our mandate, but the normal things we hear from the AG, because clearly this is a department that isn't listening well.

In fact the government has decided, in my view, to take procurement away from them and set up another process. If I were in that department that would mean they didn't trust me to do it.

That being the case, I think this committee needs to do the due diligence it has always done in the past, as well as continue to look at how we can help this system get better.

So I would move a motion that we continue the planning phase—and I know my colleagues didn't want to amend their motion last week, but I'm assuming it was just because they didn't want to amend the motion. I would move that we continue the meeting and look at our respective witness lists. I'm not going to put on the table my specific list. I'll put it on the table once we've debated the motion. I'm not suggesting my motion has to be simply "Here's the list and let's do that". I agree with the government that there should be a back and forth, and a give and take. As Mr. Kramp said last week, perhaps Mr. Allen has a name that he can put out and explain why, and he said he might agree.

I have every intention of putting some names forward and explaining why I hope the government will agree. I hope the government will not take the opportunity to say, "Let the deputy ministers make decisions as to who they should bring." If indeed I've asked for someone else, I'm not looking for a deputy minister to give me the nod that it's okay and he's happy with my choice. I'm not interested in whether the deputy minister agrees with me or not, quite frankly. I'm only interested in getting to the bottom of the situation so that we can indeed assure Canadians that when we spend their money we're doing it wisely, and when it goes awry, as it has in this case and in others, we will help get it right.

Mr. Shipley said last week that we're all in this boat together. All of us collectively, as 308 members of Parliament, are trying to make sure the public purse is spent appropriately. We need to continue to do that, and on this side we're willing to help make that happen as a public accounts committee.

So I move, Mr. Chair, that we continue this meeting as a planning meeting to look at all available witnesses that all members want to bring forward, debate, determine a witness list, determine the number of meetings and how those meetings might be formatted—we may want to have one hour and then another hour, or two-hour segments, depending on witnesses—and that we continue the meeting in open public. That is my motion, sir.

Thank you.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnagat (Pontiac, NDP):** Mr. Chair, can I speak to that motion?

**The Chair:** Hang on.

The first part of the motion sounded to me like the call of this meeting. The substantive motion I heard was the public part.

• (0905)

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** That's correct.

**The Chair:** So unless you wish to defend all of your motion I will accept a motion on the remaining in public part. I think the rest of it is covered by the orders of the day, but I'm open to an intervention from you on that. In the absence of that, you have a motion to stay in public and it's in order.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** I accept the chair's help, in the sense that you're absolutely right. The order of the day is quite clear. I will allow that to stand as a separate item altogether and simply allow the second part of my discussion, which was the motion to stay in public.

**The Chair:** Very good.

I have a speakers list. Let me also welcome Mathieu Ravnagat to the committee.

You're a new member of the committee, as a result of the changes in the official opposition.

Mr. Thibeault will also be joining us from the opposition whip.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnagat:** That's correct.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen is substituting for him and will be staying with us for the balance of this chapter. That's my understanding.

So welcome, sir. You have the floor and you know the motion.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Is this a debatable motion? Are we now discussing the motion by Mr. Allen?

**The Chair:** I think so, because it's not an actual motion to go in camera, which clearly is not debatable. This is a motion to stay in public. We discussed it last time. I think it's in order.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Does that interfere with the previous speakers list that was established?

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnagat:** If the motion is in order, I'd like to speak to it.

**The Chair:** I have a motion from Mr. Allen. I'm going to deal with that motion and then I will get to you. I didn't state earlier that we were doing the two-minute, because we did that for the special meeting. I'm just following where things take us.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I understood that you have a speakers rotation that you have established.

**The Chair:** I do, but in accepting his speaking spot, Mr. Allen availed himself of the right to move a motion during his comments, which he did, and which I've accepted. Therefore, I'm going to take a separate speakers list on that motion. When that motion is dealt with, if it's still in order, then I'll continue the rotation that I had outlined at the beginning.

Mr. Ravnagat, you have the floor. Mr. Byrne, you are next on the list.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnagat:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, for your welcome to the committee. It's a pleasure to be here, but I can't say it's a pleasure to see how the committee functions at the beginning of it. I've sat on some committees with my dear colleague on the other side, Mr. Shipley. This throwing up of hands at the beginning to determine pecking order is definitely not pervasive, at least in the committees that I've been in. I regret that's the situation.

I'd like to speak to the motion to stay in public. Frankly, this is the largest military procurement contract in Canadian history. It's clear that there are issues with the procurement process between Public Works, Treasury Board, and National Defence. It's crucial for us as parliamentarians and crucial for Canadians to know what went on and who will be called to this committee and for what reasons. I might add that I think it is the responsibility of the committee and it's the privilege of parliamentarians to call the witnesses that they would like to hear, not assistant deputy ministers or other members of the public service.

I'd like to support the motion of my colleague. There are people we could hear from, such as Colonel Dave Burt, Craig Morris, Winslow Wheeler, and of course, Philippe Lagassé. These are people who I think would be very helpful in looking at the procurement process and cleaning it up, so we can go forward with a clean procurement process in the future that respects the taxpayer.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Is there any further discussion?

Mr. Byrne, you have the floor.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I believe it is absolutely essential that this committee stay in public for the determination of our forward business, our witness list and other matters of agenda related to our study of chapter 2, "Replacing Canada's Fighter Jets", from the 2012 Spring Report of the Auditor General of Canada.

It's said that the sausage that comes out of a grinder is determined by the quality of the meat that is put in it. If you want to grind sausages here, you have to have the best quality cuts of beef. I think that if we deny certain witnesses an opportunity to appear, then we do a grave injustice. If we are seen to deny certain witnesses the capacity to appear, then we have done a grave injustice and that is apparently what is at hand here. There is an attempt to prevent the sausage from being viewed as it's made.

I believe there was a British parliamentarian who said that laws and sausages should never be seen while they're being made, but this is an example where I think that axiom does not hold true. If we're going to get to a proper result here then the public needs to know that this process was transparent, that it was done openly, and there were no hidden agendas.

We had a meeting last Thursday where we had an opportunity to hash through all this. That opportunity was, however, denied, and we're back to square one.

The resulting perception here may very easily be that there is something serious to cover up if the government feels the need to hold these sessions in private. I think that perception is very valid because quite frankly if the selection of witnesses needs to be done in private and if there is an objective or a motivation to prevent certain witnesses from appearing, and that could only be achieved through holding the meeting in secret because having it in public would be too embarrassing and damaging to the government, then quite frankly I think the government already has something to explain. It already requires an explanation to the public, to Canadian

taxpayers, and to Parliament as to why there is the need to hold these meetings in secret.

We proposed a witness list that was available to all committee members last week, and in actual fact was available to all committee members as of April 3, the day the Auditor General of Canada tabled his report on the F-35. Those witnesses include not only senior officials within the government, such as the chief of the air staff and deputy ministers of Industry Canada and Public Works, but also others, because as I highlighted, the committee was not to be limited to this particular list but to include them with the understanding that others would be added to the list by other parties and other members of the committee.

But what came forward on Thursday was two statements by the government. One is that members of Parliament should never, ever, feel as though they have a right to predetermine which witnesses should appear before a committee, because that is not in good form, that shows a contempt for other committee members by actually suggesting other witnesses to appear before us in a motion, and is completely contrary to the conduct of this committee and others, when in fact we already know that it is normal practice for the government to include witnesses in their motions for studies. They did so at finance just some time ago regarding the F-35. They actually included specific witnesses in the motion to study the F-35 at the finance committee.

● (0910)

The second thing the government referred to on Thursday, which I found quite compelling, is that deputy ministers should decide which officials accompany them at the table. It's outrageous for members of the committee to suggest who should appear before the committee. We're just elected officials. We're just members. We're just the 13-odd who make up this committee. However, according to the government, deputy ministers have the full right to decide on behalf of our parliamentary committee who will sit before us as witnesses, who will testify before us as witnesses. That's contempt.

Quite frankly, I think that, given the fact that deputy ministers have a vested interest in the outcome of our hearings and what's said at our hearings, I don't think we can necessarily rely on them to act in Parliament's best interest when it comes to hearing about this particular issue. I think the committee should have the latitude to be able to decide this for ourselves. I think that individual members should have the right to be able to bring forward witnesses today. The Liberal Party of Canada has put together a very comprehensive list, but it is not a complete list, and we did so knowing that other members would want to have additional names put on this list.

Mr. Chair, in addition to that, the Liberal Party of Canada has also, as you are aware, tabled a motion for the production of documents. This is another motion that we should be hearing today. My motion, which was submitted on April 17, I believe, reads:

That, pursuant to Standing Orders 108(1)(a) and 108(3)(g) and Chapter 2, Replacing Canada's Fighter Jets, of the Spring 2012 Report of the Auditor General of Canada, the Committee send for the following documents, in electronic form, from the Department of National Defence and the Department of Public Works and Government Services:

- The document that confirms the validity of the Statement of Operational Requirement.
- The actual statement of Operational Requirement.
- The full life-cycle cost analysis.
- The Statement of Work and Performance Specification (Acquisition and in-service support).
- The Bid Evaluation criteria.
- The Treasury Board submission for the F-35.
- The requisition form for goods and services sent to Public Works and Government Services Canada from National Defence.
- The questionnaires explaining the decision to proceed with a sole-source process for this acquisition.
- The cost analysis for the infrastructure modification to operate the F-35.
- The risk analysis produced by National Defence and Public Works and Government Services for the acquisition of the F-35.
- The cost analysis to keep the actual CF-18 operational until 2023.
- The cost analysis for the phasing out of the CF-18.
- The option analysis for the replacement of the CF-18; and

That these documents be submitted to the Committee within the five calendar days following the adoption of this motion.

That's another motion that I hope we'll be able to deal with today, and that the government responds favourably to, because what everyone needs to know, including the media who may be assembled in this room, is in the sausage maker.

If we do go in camera, what everyone needs to understand, including the government, is that whatever goes into the sausage maker, and we know what's going into it—the Liberal Party of Canada has produced a list of witnesses, we produced a set of documents that we wish to have made for reference to the committee—even if we go in camera, if that is not the result at the end of the in camera meeting, everyone needs to know that it's by order of the Conservative government and their use and abuse of their majority status on this government oversight committee that prevented that from happening. So the result is already known.

• (0915)

The value of going in camera is quite limited at this time because it has already been decided and understood that if you prevent any of those results from being achieved, you will be the cause of preventing that from happening. So whether it's in camera or out of camera, I won't say it doesn't matter because it does, but there's no confusion here as to what happened. Quite frankly, Mr. Chair, that is something the government will have to deal with itself.

I hope everyone is playing a banjo that's in tune. We had an opportunity on Thursday to do this. We still seem to be in conflict. Sometimes democracy is not a gentle sport and it takes a little bit of pushing and shoving. It's the way our democracy works sometimes. It has been effective. You don't have to get hostile. I don't think anyone on Thursday was getting hostile. But I had a point I needed to make and I think I made it. At the end of the day, because we did

not resolve the issues on Thursday, we're back here again. I guess our banjos collectively are still very much out of tune.

I hope we won't forfeit the rest of the morning. Let's get this done. Let's get it done in public. For a public accounts committee to do anything less is quite frankly contemptuous. The nature of the decision here has already been established, and if there's a change in the agenda or end product it will be the Conservatives that cause that change. So there's no mystery here as to what's about to occur.

I hope the government will concede that it's far more valuable to them to do this in public. If they have made a decision that the testimony of the witnesses who have been proposed by the Liberal Party of Canada will be far more embarrassing to the government than the humiliation they're causing themselves right now by forcing this process to go in private, in secret, I think Canadians will make up their minds that there's a scandal brewing here, and there's serious potential for corruption to occur and continue to occur. At this time the cover-up seems just as bad as the crime itself.

So I hope the government will simply have these meetings in public where they belong, so that Canadians can judge whether or not there is indeed a cover-up going on.

Thanks, Mr. Chair.

• (0920)

**The Chair:** Merci.

Madam Blanchette-Lamothe, you have the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP):** Thank you very much.

I would like to join you in welcoming my colleague Mr. Ravignat. I am very much looking forward to working with him on this committee.

I would like to add something to the motion tabled by Mr. Allen. The Conservatives have clearly indicated their intention to call witnesses, such as the Auditor General, the Parliamentary Budget Officer and deputy ministers, but we have heard nothing more. On this side of the room, we think it is relevant to invite officials who are involved in the F-35 file at various levels and to have non-partisan experts appear.

I think the deputy ministers and the ministers tend not to provide very clear answers to the questions that are put to them. Instead, they provide rather neutral or impartial answers, which is why it is also important to invite people who would be non-partisan.

If anyone on this committee does not see the point of inviting experts or officials to study the F-35 file, I hope they will say so publicly and explain why they feel it wouldn't be a good idea to invite these kinds of witness.

I think it is important that this be done publicly. People have the right to know why certain witnesses are invited to appear and to know who is opposed to the appearance of certain witnesses. This is a sensitive issue that is raising a lot of questions and generating a lot of interest. Canadians have the right to know why the file is being studied the way it is. I think we need to win back the trust of Canadians.

We are talking about a file where there has been a lack of transparency. In fact, information has not been given to the right people at the right time. This is a process that is repeated every year. If we want to regain the public's trust, I think the least we can do is to show that we are studying the matter seriously and doing it transparently. That is why I want to adopt the motion so that we can discuss it publicly and determine who we will invite to study this file.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

**The Chair:** *Merci.*

The floor is open for further debate. Last call. Hearing none, I'll put the matter to a vote.

May I point out to those who are watching that this is why who gets the floor first matters. It's not a question of your getting the first chance to make a quote that the media will pick up on, it's that once you have the floor, you have the right to move motions that are in order. That way, you can control the floor and control the debate. Whoever gets the floor first has the opportunity to put that forward, and that member has control while his or her motion is on the floor. That's why it matters. It's not pecking order; it's that political dynamic.

That was a minor uncalled for civics lesson. I will now move us to the vote. Let's do a recorded vote so that these things aren't in doubt.

(Motion negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** I declare the motion defeated by a vote of seven to four.

Moving back to our speakers list, Mr. Byrne, you have the floor.

● (0925)

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

We're talking about planning now. I proposed earlier that the following witness list be included in our study of chapter 2, "Replacing Canada's Fighter Jets", of the spring 2012 report of the Auditor General of Canada, and:

that the witness list include, but not be limited to:

- Michael Ferguson, Auditor General of Canada;
- Kevin Page, Parliamentary Budget Officer;
- Dan Ross, Assistant Deputy Minister (Materiel), National Defence;
- LGen J.P.A. Deschamps, Chief of the Air Staff, National Defence;
- Michael J. Slack, F-35 Project Manager, Director of Continental Materiel Cooperation, National Defence;
- Col D.C. Burt, Director, New Generation Fighter Capability, National Defence;
- Tom Ring, Assistant Deputy Minister, Acquisitions Branch, Public Works and Government Services Canada;
- Johanne Provencher, Director General, Defence and Major Projects Directorate, Public Works and Government Services Canada;
- Richard Dicerni, Deputy Minister, Industry Canada;
- Craig Morris, Deputy Director, F-35 Industrial Participation, Industry Canada....

Also, Mr. Chair, more recently I added François Guimont, deputy minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

Mr. Chair, could I make a motion, please, to ratify these witnesses to appear before our committee?

**The Chair:** This involves a notice of motion, so let me check.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Mr. Chair, may I...

**The Chair:** Okay, that's what I thought. I'm glad I checked.

Colleagues, if you recall at the last meeting, we had a situation where at one point there were two motions on the floor at the same time, which of course can't be, but that was where we found ourselves. I'm raising that because it's relevant as to whether or not this motion is in order on its own, or whether it requires a separate motion to be brought forward.

We dealt with Mr. Saxton's motion when we had those duelling motions at the last meeting. My advice from the clerk is that the motion by Mr. Byrne was actually moved. I accept that this is a bit unorthodox and I don't expect most people to follow what we're talking about because we're into the minutia of procedure, but procedure is a key element of democracy. But all of that is to say that I deem the motion to be in order and before the committee.

Mr. Byrne, your motion is now in front of us, and you have the floor and may speak to your motion.

● (0930)

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just for a point of clarity, the original motion that I had tabled on April 3, 2012, does represent a significant portion of my current motion. However, this is a motion for a witness list, which I'm trying to get to the business of, rather than repeating ourselves. Mr. Saxton, through use of his own procedural tactics and through other cooperation, has enabled himself by using the Conservative majority. The Saxton motion, which was tabled on April 5, with amendments from Mr. Shipley, was indeed passed on Thursday, if I remember correctly.

Without prejudice I say that I would have anticipated that would have made my April 3 motion no longer in order. I say that without prejudice. I'm just offering an opinion. So now what I'm trying to do, Mr. Chair, is simply establish the witness list, and I'd like to do that immediately.

**The Chair:** Is that different from the motion you moved earlier?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Well....

**The Chair:** I'm allowing you the opportunity to have your motion in front. If you want to do something other than what was circulated, you can do that too. You have the floor and you're in order.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Absolutely. My objective, sir, is not to have my motion win out. My objective is to establish a witness list. I'll accept Mr. Saxton's motion per se, which we adopted on Thursday, but now what I would like to do is get to the business of getting witnesses in place. So my motion would simply be that the following witnesses be called to testify at the committee—

**The Chair:** Sorry, is that not your April 3 motion?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Yes, it is.

**The Chair:** Okay. Is that not now what's before us?



**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Yes, it is, but I'm not interested in simply replacing Mr. Saxton's motion, because that would seem like...I wouldn't want to have anyone accuse me of having my banjo out of tune.

The motion that I presented also included that witnesses appear as panels, with no more than two witnesses per panel, and each panel appear for a minimum of one hour, and that the committee report its findings to the House of Commons.

So if you like, Mr. Chair, this is the motion. So that there's no confusion—

**The Chair:** Well, you just made confusion, because we dealt with the issue of panels at the previous meeting. Not that it's hard to do, but you're now confusing me.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Okay. Why don't we just stick to it at this point?

**The Chair:** Why don't you just give me a motion that you would like, regardless of anything you've done in the past? If you want to make reference to lists and spelling and titles, fine, but please give me a motion, sir, so I can continue the business of the committee.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** No problem.

**The Chair:** Or just keep talking. You don't have to move a motion, but do one or the other.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Well, I was attempting to streamline this to get to the business at hand, but to ensure that everything is in order, and to ensure that progress is made, I move as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Standing Committee on Public Accounts begin a study of the spring 2012 report of the Auditor General, beginning with Chapter 2, "Replacing Canada's Fighter Jets", and that the witness list include, but not be limited to:

- François Guimont, Deputy Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada;
- Craig Morris, Deputy Director, F-35 Industrial Participation, Industry Canada;
- Richard Dicerni, Deputy Minister, Industry Canada;
- Johanne Provencher, Director General, Defence and Major Projects Directorate, Public Works and Government Services Canada;
- Tom Ring, Assistant Deputy Minister, Acquisitions Branch, Public Works and Government Services Canada;
- Col D.C. Burt, Director, New Generation Fighter Capability, National Defence;
- Michael J. Slack, F-35 Project Manager, Director of Continental Materiel Cooperation, National Defence;
- LGen J.P.A. Deschamps, Chief of the Air Staff, National Defence;
- Dan Ross, Assistant Deputy Minister (Materiel), National Defence;
- Kevin Page, Parliamentary Budget Officer;
- Michael Ferguson, Auditor General of Canada; and

That witnesses appear as panels with no more than two witnesses per panel and that each panel appear for a minimum of one hour, and that the committee report its findings to the House of Commons.

Mr. Chair, that's my motion.

• (0935)

**The Chair:** Very good, thank you. I have a question concerning a detail.

At the beginning of your motion you made reference to Standing Order 108. Was it (3)(g) or (2)(g)?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** It was Standing Order 108(2).

**The Chair:** That's what I thought. Standing Order 108(3)(g) would be more appropriate.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I will accept your advice, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Very good. The motion's in order and it's accepted. You may speak to it.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I had an opportunity to speak on this at length on Thursday, so I won't be long. I'll ask others to provide their input as to whether they feel it's appropriate that witnesses appear as panels, with no more than two witnesses per panel, and that each panel appear for a minimum of one hour.

I was pleased that Mr. Kramp agreed with this notion. At Thursday's meeting he said, if I paraphrase correctly, that it would be disrespectful to the witnesses and counterproductive to have a large group appear before us, with the consequence that committee members could not pose questions to each and every individual witness. And of those who were indeed questioned, there would be limited time for each witness to provide answers. This is an important point.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** I have a point of order.

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Mr. Byrne, there's a point of order.

Mr. Kramp.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Chair, my concern, of course, is Mr. Byrne's paraphrasing.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** That's a point of debate, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** He is absolutely incorrectly stating how I interpreted the witness list. We don't want 20 people all at the table at the one time, but to suggest that I was favourably disposed to going in the manner he has suggested is absolutely incorrect.

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

I think you'll appreciate that this was a point of debate as opposed to a point of order, however.... Well, there's no "however"; you're out of order.

You have the floor, Mr. Byrne.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. For those who may be interested—

**The Chair:** Sorry, Mr. Byrne.

Madam Bateman has a point of order.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** I just have to understand this, because I've seen this happen at another committee. Someone takes the words of a colleague, a parliamentarian, and changes them, and then the parliamentarian whose words have been artfully rearranged has no recourse. I don't understand that.

If this committee is going to function.... I would like to understand the process and how we respect each other, because this is the second occasion when I have seen someone impugn the intent of the words that were used by a colleague, and I want to understand.

**The Chair:** Sure. I appreciate the point of order.

Quite frankly, and I know it's hard to believe, but sometimes members say things that other members may not necessarily agree is exactly accurate. You can correct that in debate, but it's not a point of order to stop someone from talking, even if they are, as you say, artfully changing things. There are lines, and that's why there's great discretion on the part of the chair.

If someone has twisted someone's quote to the point that they were then accused of saying something unparliamentary, in the past tense, that would be stopped, because you can't do it at the time and you can't do it going backwards. You cannot speak in an unparliamentary fashion.

However, you, and all of us, have the right to be wrong when we have the floor. That can include facts that could be wrong and quotes that could be wrong. That is why everyone is given an opportunity to have their say, so that you can take the floor and then say, "I disagree with that, and I want to set the record straight". You have that opportunity in debate. But it is not for me to be ruling on the accuracy of members' comments. It is only if they step out of line.

At this point, I have heard nothing from Mr. Byrne that would suggest that Mr. Kramp was being unparliamentary. Mr. Kramp disagrees with the way it's being characterized. Mr. Kramp, like you, will be given an opportunity to have the floor to refute that, if you wish. But it is a point of debate, not a point of order.

Does that help?

• (0940)

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Yes. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** You're very welcome.

Mr. Byrne, you may continue, sir.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

What aids us in this discussion, this debate, is the transcript of Thursday's meeting—it was held in public—as well as the video of Thursday's meeting. Those who may be interested can simply reference Mr. Kramp's comments generally supporting the concept of limiting panels with the rationale that it is important to hear from all witnesses. Let the transcript and the video speak for itself in that regard, Mr. Chair.

With regard to the witnesses, it is very important. I am disturbed by the government's assertion by the parliamentary secretary to the minister responsible for the Treasury Board that deputy ministers should decide who accompanies them at the table. In other words, the discretion of the committee to conduct an inquiry into this matter would be limited by the best interests of the deputy ministers of the department. Quite frankly, Mr. Chair, that is not in keeping with a public accounts committee's conduct of business.

We should have the capacity, and it should not be overruled by the majority—the Conservative majority, in this case—to limit witnesses and to have those witnesses appear at a parliamentary inquiry. Those witnesses should not be limited by the deputy minister who has a vested interest in what is said and recorded in testimony at this committee, which then may become the substance of our report.

Obviously, a deputy minister would not necessarily want a subordinate appearing before a committee who may contradict the

minister, or himself as deputy minister, or anyone else in the department. I think it would be fair to assume that if any subordinate of a deputy minister has the capacity to contradict anybody within the chain of command, and the deputy minister has the right to prevent them from appearing—as has been suggested by the parliamentary secretary—they won't be appearing and we won't hear their testimony.

Mr. Chair, I hope we can get on with this and that this will be the first rung of witnesses we can hear from.

It has been reported in some media sources that Thursday's meeting was not all that productive. I think it was, because it was in public and we discovered some very important points throughout the entire exercise about the way the government is going to handle this.

There was great value achieved simply by knowing the government intends to prevent subordinates of deputy ministers from appearing before this committee unless they endorse and support the position of the deputy minister and the minister.

We now know the general opinion of members expressed on Thursday is that we should have witnesses appearing in panels, but the numbers within those panels be limited so that we can get fair access and a fair opportunity to hear from and question each and every witness. Now it appears that the government's position is changing on that.

When the director of communications in the Prime Minister's Office said to the Canadian public on behalf of the Prime Minister of Canada that these meetings will be held in public and that officials will be allowed to attend, we now know that was a lie. The government's position is, "Let's put these meetings in secret and let's deny the opportunity for officials to attend." That is, quite frankly, contemptible.

Mr. Chair, I've said all I need to say. I hope the government will live up to its word. The spokesperson for the Prime Minister of Canada said these meetings will be held in public and that officials will be allowed to attend, and that there will be no effort on the part of the government to stifle or stymie these officials or the work of the committee by forcing it to be in secret.

Hold to those statements. Allow this committee to be held in public and for committee members, not deputy ministers, to decide who the witnesses will be and for the majority of the committee to allow witnesses who were nominated by the opposition.

• (0945)

This is a government oversight committee, after all.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Allen, you have the floor, sir.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think we all want to get a witness list done, and I know the other side does as well. Mr. Byrne has stated that he is amenable to additions to his list. So I move an amendment to add the following to his list: Mr. Robert Fonberg, Mr. Alan Williams, Mr. P. Lessard—

**The Chair:** Do you have titles, Mr. Allen? You don't have to.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Mr. Robert Fonberg is the Deputy Minister of National Defence. He was appointed on October 1, 2007. Mr. Alan Williams is the former assistant deputy minister for materiel. Mr. P. Lessard was a core member of the senior review board of the next generation fighter capability project. Mr. Tom Ring is the assistant deputy minister, acquisitions branch, Public Works and Government Services Canada.

If there's an overlap I'll simply strike the name.

Josée Touchette is the assistant deputy minister at the Department of National Defence. Winslow Wheeler is from the Center for Defense Information in Washington. Philippe Lagassé is a University of Ottawa military procurement expert.

I will leave it at that.

**The Chair:** Mr. Tom Ring is already contained in the main motion, so are you willing to pull that out and clean it up?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Sure.

**The Chair:** That amendment is in order. I will accept it.

You have the floor and may speak to it further, if you wish.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** No. I said I would be brief and I intend to be. Those are my suggestions to add to the list. They are folks that we would call. If the government wants me to explain why, I would be happy to. But I think we want to get this list done and start moving forward with the actual hearings, so we can get work done.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I advise members that technically we are debating the amendment.

With that in mind, Monsieur Ravnagat, you have the floor.

[Translation]

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnagat:** Okay.

I am obviously in favour of this amendment. I think it is important that witnesses help us carry out a study that focuses on all angles of this issue. It is not just a question of the government's official history, presented by senior officials, but also of hearing from independent experts, who have a voice, who may provide suggestions, recommendations and, as a result, contribute significantly to improving the procurement process for military contracts.

Clearly, there's a problem. Whether we're talking about tanks, which was a recent issue, or, of course, F-35s, the entire process needs to be reviewed. So it's absolutely necessary to find witnesses who are not necessarily part of the upper echelons of the public service, who have an independent voice and who also have experience in procurement.

That's why I think the list as amended by my colleague Mr. Allen creates this balance between officials and experts. For example, Mr. Lagassé from the University of Ottawa will add a scientific angle to the issue. My Liberal colleague suggested Colonel David Burke, who is directly connected with this idea of fighter jets. Also mentioned was Mr. Fonberg, who was Deputy Minister of National

Defence last October. I think it's clear that this list improves on Mr. Byrne's list. It would enable us to do a more thorough study.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (0950)

[English]

**The Chair:** *Merci.* I have no further speakers.

The floor is open for debate. This is the third and final call for debate. Hearing none, I'll put the matter to the committee. Let's again keep it nice and clean. We'll do a roll call vote on the amendment. Does anybody need it read out or are we good? I see we're nodding that we're good.

(Amendment negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** Thank you. I declare the motion defeated on a vote of seven to four. The motion to amend is defeated.

We are now on the main motion as originally put unamended.

Mr. Ravnagat, you have the floor again. I have you on my speakers list. You don't have to speak, you're just on my list.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnagat:** I'll pass.

**The Chair:** Very good.

Is there further debate on the main motion? It's the last call for debate on the main motion. Hearing none, we'll put the motion to the committee and again we'll do a formal roll call vote.

(Motion negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** Thank you. I declare the motion defeated on a vote of seven to four.

Moving on to our speakers list, Mr. Saxton, you have the floor, sir.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton (North Vancouver, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to speak today. Thank you again.

First of all, I want to remind colleagues that we passed a motion last Thursday to have witnesses come this Thursday. If we're going to make that happen, we have to get going.

I would now like to move a motion of my own, and it is that the committee invite the deputy ministers from Public Works, National Defence, and Industry Canada, and the secretary to the Treasury Board, and that they bring any necessary officials with them to appear this Thursday. I certainly hope that the opposition will now get down to business and put the political games behind them, so that we can get going and actually have a productive meeting this Thursday, and so we can have this study continue.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Do you have that by any chance in writing?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Yes, I do.

**The Chair:** Okay, that's helpful. I'm assuming that the Auditor General is part of that.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** We're just talking about this Thursday, Mr. Chair.

• (0955)

**The Chair:** I know, but answer my question. Was that an oversight, or did you deliberately not include the Auditor General?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** It's fully our intention to have the Auditor General come to committee to testify. This is simply for this Thursday so that we have enough people to begin the study as soon as possible this Thursday.

**The Chair:** May I ask you to confirm that it is your intent that the Auditor General would be coming?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Absolutely.

**The Chair:** Could I ask why you wouldn't follow tradition and start with the Auditor General?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Mr. Chair, this is my motion and you have it in front of you and we have the full intention to have the Auditor General come to committee. Absolutely.

**The Chair:** Do you know when?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** That's what the planning session is for.

**The Chair:** Okay. The motion is in order, it's before the committee, and I will take a speakers list.

Did you wish to speak any further, Mr. Saxton?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** No, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** I hear a point of order.

Mr. Allen.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Since I didn't get an opportunity to write exactly the list Mr. Saxton put forward, could the clerk read it back to us slowly? Actually, I'd like the whole motion.

**The Chair:** Sure, that's always in order.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** There's only one copy. That way we can actually see what it says. I think I got most of it, but I may have missed some of it.

**The Chair:** No, that's fine. It's always in order to be sure you know exactly what details you're debating and voting on. I'll ask the clerk to read it. Mr. Saxton, pay close attention to make sure we're in sync.

Go ahead, Madam Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Joann Garbig):** That the committee invite deputy ministers from Public Works, National Defence, Industry Canada, and the Secretary to the Treasury Board, and that they bring any necessary officials with them to appear on Thursday, April 26.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen, does that meet your needs?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Thank you, Chair.

I'm just finishing scribbling it down. I believe what I heard was that this Thursday coming, April 26, we'll have the deputy ministers of Public Works, DND, and Industry Canada, and the secretary from the Treasury Board, and that they will be allowed to bring who they deem necessary.

I would look to my colleague Mr. Saxton to tell me if I'm correct in that. If I'm incorrect, if you would help me understand it better, I would really appreciate it.

**The Chair:** We're still on clarification of the motion.

Mr. Saxton, would you respond, please?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** That is correct. These deputy ministers may wish to bring other officials with them, so it makes perfect sense that we would allow them to bring other officials with them. We don't want to limit the deputy ministers in who they bring.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen, did you get the information you're looking for?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Yes, thank you, Chair.

**The Chair:** You're good. All right.

Where are we? We're about to start debating.

Mr. Saxton, are you good?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** I'm good.

**The Chair:** Do I have a speakers list?

The floor is open.

Go ahead, Mr. Byrne.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I'd like to amend the motion, if I may, Mr. Chair.

This goes just before the final period:

and that following these witnesses, at a later date, Mr. Craig Morris, Deputy Director, F-35 Industrial Participation, Industry Canada; Johanne Provencher, Director General, Defence and Major Projects Directorate, Public Works and Government Services Canada; Mr. Tom Ring, Assistant Deputy Minister, Acquisitions Branch, Public Works and Government Services Canada; Col D. C. Burt, Director, New Generation Fighter Capability, National Defence; Michael J. Slack, F-35 Project Manager, Director of Continental Materiel Cooperation, National Defence; LGen J.P.A. Deschamps, Chief of the Air Staff, National Defence; and Dan Ross, Assistant Deputy Minister (Materiel), National Defence, be called to appear before our committee;

that before any of the above witnesses appear, Mr. Michael Ferguson, Auditor General of Canada, be asked to appear as the first witness; and

that witnesses appear as panels, with no more than two witnesses per panel, and each panel appear for a minimum of one hour.

**The Chair:** Sorry, would you read the last part about the panels again, Mr. Byrne?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** That witnesses appear as panels, with no more than two witnesses per panel, and each panel appear for a minimum of one hour.

• (1000)

**The Chair:** I'll accept the amendment as being in order.

The floor is open.

Did you wish to speak any further, Mr. Byrne?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** No, I'm good. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** I see Mr. Ravignat.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** I am in favour this amendment, particularly because, and Canadians watching may be interested in knowing this, it is a strategy to fill sessions with witnesses, with too many members, so that we have very little time to actually ask them in-depth questions.

I think clarity on the main motion with regard to how long we'll be able to question these witnesses is a helpful amendment. It will provide Canadians with more information. It will allow us to ask more important questions.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Is there further debate on the amendment? Then we will put the amendment to the committee.

(Amendment negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** The main motion, unamended, as originally put, is now before us and the floor is open for speakers.

Mr. Byrne is next, and then Mr. Allen.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The normal process of selecting witnesses—from my 16 years of experience in this place—is to submit a witness list to the clerk so that all committee members can be advised exactly what is being proposed in terms of witnesses. The Liberal Party of Canada has submitted a list. The list is quite well known and has been read out a few times over the last number of days.

Can the Conservatives tell us if they have prepared a list that they would like to share with the committee that includes the complete scope of witnesses they are proposing?

**The Chair:** Are you asking rhetorically, or are you asking a question and seeking a response?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I'm asking a rhetorical question that maybe if the government members, while they're—

**The Chair:** I'm not going to look for an answer to a rhetorical question. If you mean it as a question I'll see if there's an answer.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** If you can do that, Mr. Chair, it would be very helpful.

**The Chair:** Sure.

Mr. Byrne has asked the question. Does any member of the government wish to respond? No.

Go ahead. You have the floor.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

That's very unfortunate, because now we are left wondering where the government is going to take this. Well, I don't know if we're left wondering at all. We know where the government is going to take this. They are going to stifle and stymie and keep this as closed as possible.

Having all three deputy ministers appear before us at one time, before the Auditor General, is not in keeping with the traditions of this committee, nor is it helpful in finding the truth about this very serious multi-billion dollar issue involving taxpayers' funds.

I wish the government had come a little more prepared, or at least more prepared to inform the committee what their intentions are. They have not.

The Liberal Party of Canada has been extremely transparent and forthcoming about exactly where we would like to take this and who we would like to hear from. We're still cloaked in mystery as to what exactly the government intends with regard to these hearings. The only thing that is not in doubt is that the government wants to hold them in secret, control the witness list, and prevent the truth from being told. Quite frankly, Mr. Chair, the cover-up is now becoming worse than the crime.

• (1005)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Is there further debate on the motion?

Mr. Allen.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Thank you, Chair.

I think my colleague, Mr. Ravignat, articulated quite clearly what happens when we have what could be a place where members find it difficult to find seats. I've been at committees where witnesses literally come up to the first few tables because there are that many of them, and we have a two-hour meeting where they get to have perhaps a 10-minute opening. If there are four of them, they've just burned up 40 minutes. That leaves us with an hour and 20 minutes to do rounds of about five minutes each, which doesn't allow most of us to get to the individual deputy ministers.

It means we might get to speak to one, but not the other two. In fact, there are four of them here when we look at the secretary of the Treasury Board. They are all important people to have come before the committee, all important people that we want to see.

That being the case, and the government obviously believes they're important to bring because they've made the motion to bring them, I would look to the government to say that since you agree that we want to speak to them, now the secondary piece has to be how we intend to speak to them all.

There is no point in having them here so I can look at the deputy minister for Public Works and say he's a handsome chap. The chair says his time is up, and I no longer have an opportunity to speak to him because the meeting is over, unless of course the government is willing to say they're willing to bring them all back again and put them back down there so all 12 of us—11 of us and then the chair can take liberties to ask a question, if he needs some clarification—would get the opportunity to speak to all four, if indeed we chose to.

If my decision is that I don't wish to ask the deputy minister of department X a question, I'm at liberty not to do that.

If I wish to focus on only one deputy minister, then that would be my prerogative.

Let the record show that my prerogative is such that I want to speak to every single one of them. Under this time limitation, I will not be able to do that unless I'm simply asking them to state their name and their title, because inside five minutes I will not get to all four, never mind the group that they might bring with them, because I hear the government saying they'll allow them to bring folks according to what the deputy ministers' wishes are.

They may indeed have a full house. The rows of chairs may be filled up back there with all the folks they think they should bring with them, and Mr. Chair, if I were to ask the person in the third row back there to come to the table, I don't know how I'd get that question in by the time they got there.

So in spite of all that, I agree we need to bring them. The format is skewed, which leaves me with the dilemma that I agree that we need to talk to them. I agree with the government's motion that we should talk to them. I don't necessarily like the timing. I think the Auditor General should come first because that's what we've normally done. It's the AG's report, but I'll take the government at its word because I heard them say they would call the Auditor General, and I would hope very quickly because that's what I heard last week.

I find myself looking for help, but I'm reluctant to ask for it because I'm afraid I won't necessarily get the help I'm seeking.

I will move an amendment to the motion, which requires the deputy ministers to be available to the committee for a minimum of three sessions, complete with two hours procession, so that each member gets at least one round to ask one round of questioning—which is five minutes—of each deputy minister if they choose to do that.

If a member chooses not to exercise that opportunity, then that's fine.

At a minimum, each member should be allowed one round of five-minute questioning with each individual deputy minister and the secretary of the Treasury Board.

I would move that amendment.

•(1010)

**The Chair:** Thank you. I have an amendment to direct the committee that there will be three two-hour meetings to deal with this chapter. That amendment—

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Mr. Chair, if I could, not this chapter, but to deal with these specific witnesses that the government has made as their motion.

**The Chair:** Okay, thank you for the clarification.

Let's repeat again, then, that there be three two-hour meetings to deal with the witness list that is currently before us.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Correct.

**The Chair:** Three after the 26th or inclusive of?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Inclusive of.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

That amendment is in order. You've given your remarks, Mr. Allen? You're good?

Further on the amendment, the floor is open. Very well, we'll put the vote. Last call, if anybody wants to jump in, you're welcome to. All right, I think we're good.

On the amendment then, Madam Clerk, a roll call vote, please.

(Amendment negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** Thank you. I declare the motion defeated on a vote of seven to four.

The floor is still open on the main motion.

Monsieur Ravnat, you have the floor, sir.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnat:** I think the question here with what the government side has presented—they know it and we know it—is essentially what version of this story are we going to get and how much time we're going to have to discuss this extremely important issue for Canadians.

I find it peculiar that the Auditor General is not being invited first, for it is the Auditor General who sets the tone. Will we have a chance, for example, to bring back the deputy ministers to discuss things after we see the Auditor General? I think this is a very incomplete motion. The Auditor General has the details with regard to this issue and it will allow us to then pose more pointed questions and more detailed questions to the other witnesses.

So I would like to move an amendment to the motion that the Auditor General be the first witness heard by this committee followed by the other witnesses as proposed by the government side.

**The Chair:** Okay, I can accept that as an amendment, therefore, that motion is now duly before us.

Are any further comments, Monsieur, or you're good?

**Mr. Mathieu Ravnat:** No, I'm good. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Very good, thank you.

On the amendment, are there any speakers? Second call for debate on the amendment?

Hearing none, we'll put the motion to the committee then. Madam Clerk, a roll call vote, please.

(Amendment negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** Thank you. I declare the motion defeated on a vote of seven to four.

The main motion is now before us. Is there any further debate?

Mr. Allen.

•(1015)

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** I have a question to the government side on the motion and hopefully they'll feel they wish to answer it. The motion says Thursday for the witnesses, and I'm not disputing that. My question simply is this: is that the one and only meeting at which you intend to call those particular witnesses?

**The Chair:** Does Mr. Saxton or anybody else from the government benches wish to respond?

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** I think it's too early to determine that, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen, you have the floor.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Then the supplementary question would be that if there's a need by the committee, would you be in favour of recalling those witnesses?

**The Chair:** Mr. Saxton.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Mr. Chair, that's something to be determined in a future planning meeting.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen, you're good?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** No, but that's an answer.

**The Chair:** Are you finished? Okay, thank you.

Mr. Byrne, you have the floor.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to raise and renew my objection to the process the government is suggesting.

I believe out of respect and courtesy for the author of this chapter we should be hearing first from the Auditor General of Canada and his team of principal auditors on this audit. Calling the deputy ministers as a group with officials in tow provides a bit of a circus format where no one can ask in-depth questions. As was rightfully pointed out, the majority of the time of our two-hour session will be consumed by pre-speeches. We really should be calling the Auditor General of Canada first.

This whole situation reminds me very much of the G-8 legacy chapter, where the Auditor General was never asked to appear before us. In a startling and very concerning change of process, for the very first time in what the interim Auditor General himself said in his 33 years had never happened before, the Auditor General of Canada was not invited to the public accounts committee while we engaged in a study. That was the G-8 legacy fund study.

We have a situation where the government will not pronounce itself as to whom they are proposing as witnesses for this study. The Liberal Party of Canada has brought forward a witness list, made it very publicly known, argued for it to the best of our ability, but has had it rejected time and time again by the government.

This is a cover-up in the making, Mr. Chair. If we simply allow this to go on in this way, I think Canadians can be assured they will never ever learn the truth about this particular initiative, about this F-35 fiasco.

It's not the first time. We've had an Auditor General report on the procurement of helicopters that provided very specific recommendations, very specific findings, as to how business should be done within the Government of Canada. Then we have the F-35 acquisition where the government rejected every conclusion of the Auditor General and said so to the Auditor General—we'll agree with your recommendation that we should do better in the future, but we disagree with every conclusion you came to.

That's written right in the Auditor General's report, so for the government to simply say that's not true.... Well, let me read what the Auditor General's report actually says. There are other quotes as well that reference the exact same issue, but on page 3 it says, "Both National Defence and Public Works and Government Services Canada disagree with the conclusions...". You can't make it any more clear than that.

Now we have a situation where a new scandal has come to light with the medium-weight personnel carriers. I'm not sure what Minister Fantino actually does for a living anymore. He probably won't be asked to appear before this committee because the junior

minister in charge of military procurement doesn't have a job. It's all going to the Department of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

I fail to see what shifting this to the Department of Public Works is going to provide by way of resolution because Public Works doesn't agree they did anything wrong in the acquisition of the F-35.

Mr. Chair, I think we have a very serious issue here. I think the normal course of business would be to call the Auditor General as the first witness, not have a circus at the end of the table where as many officials and deputy ministers as possible can be crammed in with nothing really coming from it, simply as a tactical exercise by the government.

It would be very simple. The Auditor General and his team are available to us.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1020)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The floor is open for further debate.

Mr. Byrne.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I'd like to read out the minutes from the last meeting if I can find them. If you'll give me a few minutes I'll have them.

**The Chair:** I don't know about a few minutes; I'll give you a few moments.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Mr. Chair, perhaps you can move to the next speaker.

**The Chair:** There is no other speaker.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** If someone else would like to speak I'll be able to read out the minutes as soon as I can find them.

No.

Fair enough. No problem, Mr. Chair, go ahead.

**The Chair:** I'm willing to give you a little latitude here, but I can't suspend the whole meeting while you do your research.

I'll leave you to hunt through it.

I do this quite reluctantly, but I feel the need to speak out as the chair of this committee. This is my fourth Parliament on public accounts, and I've served longer on public accounts than any other member of Parliament sitting right now. This is now the second time that a chapter has begun and the Auditor General has not been brought in to present their report.

It didn't happen at all on the previous one, but I said nothing. It was so loaded with politics and the politics of the previous Parliament and this Parliament I let it go as a one-off, but now it's becoming more than a one-off. This trend is dangerous in terms of the critical importance of oversight.

Never before has this committee attempted to deal with a chapter without bringing in the author, the Auditor General, to clarify questions, present their findings, and set the stage. The report is the basis of everything. Not having the author of the report makes no sense and is politically dangerous. I understand the government says they're going to bring the Auditor General back later, but I'm finding that insufficient. I don't get a vote unless there's a tie, and members will know that I do not do this lightly, but this is wrong.

There is a reason why we have historically started with the Auditor General. It will probably show itself if this motion carries at the next meeting when people give interpretation to the Auditor General's report, but we haven't had the interpretation from the Auditor General himself. That will create confusion.

One of my predecessors was Mr. John Williams. He was one of the longest, if not *the* longest-serving of previous chairs of this committee. I consider Mr. Williams to be a mentor of mine on public accounts. Mr. Williams had a saying that I thought was so apropos to the business of this committee—that we must remember we are unique in that we are an oversight committee. It's not supposed to make the government feel comfortable and good, because usually there are criticisms contained in these reports. That's why we have procedures to give the opposition some ability to give some attention to those issues.

Mr. Williams used to say—and I agree whole-heartedly—that when a deputy minister finds out they've been invited to appear before the public accounts committee, it should ruin their entire week.

I am concerned that it's beginning to look like the process—I'm not talking about the specifics of the chapter—is being manipulated. There are lots of politics that go on around here. We talked about some of it at the beginning of the meeting, but I consider it to be at a whole other level to start manipulating when and if the Auditor General will be allowed to come before this committee to present his report.

I want colleagues to know that this will not continue with me in the chair. One way or another something has to give. This will not continue, at least with me as a member of this committee, because it's wrong. I urge the government to reconsider this approach to how they do business at public accounts, given that our mandate is oversight.

We'll now call the vote.

Mr. Kramp.

• (1025)

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** I'm making a point of debate, then to the chair's comments.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Mr. Chair, I'm sorry, but my hand was up first.

**The Chair:** You're right.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** You did say there was no vote.

I would like to bring up an issue that relates to parliamentary privilege. I think that another slippery slope that this motion creates—and this is a concern that I have for all future committees—is to

abdicate our oversight privilege by allowing witnesses to be decided not by the committee and not by elected parliamentarians, but by the public service. This creates a slippery slope. It blurs the lines between our functions and the functions of the public service.

I'd like it to be on record that, frankly, as a member of this committee and as a parliamentarian, I think this is a dangerous trend with regard to our privileges as parliamentarians.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Kramp, you have the floor.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Thank you, Chair.

Certainly, I understand the chair's frustration and I think we all share it. I do believe that the chair is in error when he suggests that this is the second time that the Auditor General.... The government has made no such suggestion whatsoever. As a matter of fact, the government has suggested very strongly that the Auditor General would be a most welcome witness and we look forward to that happening very soon.

The unfortunate reality is that 95% of this meeting has been occupied by opposition grandstanding, and that's fine. That's part of their role too, but we have business to do in planning. We could certainly plan for Thursday. We could certainly plan for the following Tuesday and/or Thursday. There are a number of things. We can bring in witnesses. We can bring in the Auditor General. We can bring in the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Those things will happen in the course of this committee.

But to suggest right now that this is not the case.... With the greatest respect, I understand the chair's frustration, but he is dead wrong in that assumption. I would take the chair to task on that assumption, because that has not happened. Certainly as a member of the government I would not tolerate that happening, quite frankly, from my personal perspective. I assure the chair this is not the case.

I hope we can get back to planning this meeting and then take a look at the witnesses the government has suggested at this particular point, vote on that, and then if we have time to move on to future planning, then the committee would find itself most surprised at the government's willingness to bring in the Auditor General and other witnesses.

We don't know yet, but some of the witnesses who come with the deputy ministers could quite conceivably be witnesses that the opposition is looking for. So let's just take this step-by-step. The committee would be well served to do that and to try to minimize the politics of this as much as possible, while understanding the reality that both sides face on this.

I say that with the greatest respect. I think the chair knows that I'm not sitting here trying to play a game because we all recognize the responsibilities we have both to the government and to the opposition. I'm determined to have an answer out of this. The Auditor General voiced some serious concerns that we need to hear, and that we need to have dealt with.



I think this committee will do that, but let's not play the game of being presumptuous throughout the entire process without first hearing the testimony and seeing where that takes us down the road. I leave that with the chair, and I thank him for the opportunity to comment.

• (1030)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kramp. I will underscore the fact that as a vice-chair of this committee, you're a veteran in your own right. Let me clarify though, I was saying that this is the second time that we've started a chapter without the Auditor General coming. That is accurate, if this motion carries.

My point is that this is a trend that is not acceptable to me as the chair. Above the politics of this, that process—I don't care who the government is—while I'm in this chair, that's not the way we should be doing business, and I'm making it very clear, Mr. Kramp, something is going to give. This will be the last time that I chair a meeting where a chapter is considered and the Auditor General doesn't come in first and present that report.

That's my point. Either the government gives, or I give, but this will not happen again while I'm in the chair.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** The chair is the master of his own destiny.

I advise the chair that the chair does not dictate. The chair runs along, he operates the meeting, and he convenes the meeting in an impartial fashion. He's certainly entitled to his opinion, as is everyone else on this, and I can respect that. But I would also ask the chair to respect the principles of the rights of the committee as a whole as well.

**The Chair:** I do, and that's why this vote is being conducted while I'm the chair. The government has a majority, and if they use it, they will have decided that the AG will not be coming the first time.

And I'm not trying to engage myself in forcing that change. I'm expressing my opinion, not in a partisan way but from the point of view of the longest-serving parliamentarian on this committee. And I am making it clear that it will not happen again while I'm in the chair, which means that either the government changes their ways, or I step down in principle. But this will not happen again.

Mr. Saxton.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In the spirit of cooperation, the government would like to suggest that if the opposition wishes to make an amendment, a friendly amendment, to my motion, which would state that the Auditor General alone would come this Thursday, and that the witnesses that I mentioned in my motion would then come on Tuesday—that's the only amendment—then that would be acceptable to the government.

**The Chair:** Okay. Let's try the waters.

Mr. Allen, are you open to that?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Let me just say that I appreciate the government's overtures, and I'm willing to move that amendment to their motion in the spirit of getting this thing under way. I appreciate the Auditor General coming first.

I understand folks being frustrated, as we all are about this. Let me just say, as I've said in the past, that the way to avoid this frustration,

and I look to the government side, is to reconstitute a steering committee that actually could have done this in advance and hammered it out, whatever length it took. And we could have actually come here and ratified it. We could have avoided all of this, including last Thursday.

I leave it in your hands to reconstitute that committee so that perhaps we can move forward.

I will indeed move the amendment, as Mr. Saxton suggested, that the Auditor General come on Thursday, April 26, and that the other witnesses outlined in his main motion would then be called for Tuesday. And obviously, we'll have other planning parts, as the government suggested we might have. We might have a discussion. We have a few minutes left.

**The Chair:** Very good. If everybody is in agreement then, what we have is an amendment to Mr. Saxton's motion. I'll just keep it as an amendment at this point to keep it nice and clean and crisp.

The amendment is that the Auditor General would come in on Thursday, with appropriate staff, and the following Tuesday, the main motion witness list would appear.

Mr. Allen, are you satisfied that I have reflected your motion?

Very good.

Mr. Byrne, you have the floor on the amendment, sir.

• (1035)

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm sure it won't be lost on anyone that this was, in style and in substance, the motion I already presented to the committee, which the government voted down. I had asked for the Auditor General to appear first. Following that, we would hear from the government's witnesses. And following that, I would concede that I did add that we would then hear from the officials at a subsequent meeting. I also added that all witnesses would appear in panels.

To be clear here, that was, in essence, proposed already, and the government already voted it down. To have the Auditor General appear first appeared in my motion, which the government voted down.

I will also add, Mr. Chair, in support of the notion of panels to allow clear testimony to come forward and good questions—specific and targeted questions—in a timely way, and good answers, I will refer to the committee meeting transcript from last Thursday and Mr. Daryl Kramp.

It began with you, Mr. Chair, at 3:40 p.m. on Thursday, when you acknowledged Mr. Kramp. Mr. Kramp gave a quick statement, and he went on to say:

I will actually agree with Mr. Byrne on a few things. The last thing we need is a whole group of witnesses coming in, eight or nine witnesses at one point, and not be able to dig down and drill down when we should and when we need to.

That's the quote from Mr. Kramp from the transcript of this committee meeting.

The last thing we need is a whole group of witnesses coming in, eight or nine witnesses at one point, and not be able to dig down and drill down when we should and when we need to.

I would ask if we could amend the motion, Mr. Chair. I would propose a further amendment, which is that witnesses appear as panels, with no more than two witnesses per panel, and that each panel appear for a minimum of one hour.

I am delighted that Mr. Kramp agrees with that suggestion.

**The Chair:** That motion is in order so I will accept it. It's an amendment to the amendment, what we call a subamendment.

On the amendment to the amendment, do we have speakers? Hearing none, then I'll ask the clerk to put it to a roll call vote.

(Subamendment negated: nays 7; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** Thank you. By a vote of seven to four I declare the motion defeated.

The amendment is now before us.

Is there anyone further on the amendment? Last call. Hearing none, we'll put the vote.

• (1040)

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Chair, could I ask for clarification on the motion.

**The Chair:** We're in the middle of a vote. I'll conclude the vote and then I'll come to you before I declare.

Mr. Kramp, did you need some information before you cast your vote?

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Yes, I do.

Could I have the motion from Mr. Allen repeated so that I'm clear on it, if possible?

**The Chair:** Sure, I'll allow that.

He's asking for clarification on the amendment. I'll go the extra mile to make sure that everyone always understands what they're voting on. Otherwise, what's the point?

Madam Clerk, would you be kind enough to read it out, please, because we're at the official stage. We're voting. So let's have the wording as the clerk understands it.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Saxton had moved a motion to invite certain witnesses to appear before the committee on Thursday, April 26. Mr. Allen's amendment proposes that the motion be amended so as to have the Auditor General appear on Thursday, April 26 and the other witnesses named in Mr. Saxton's motion on Tuesday, May 1.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Thank you very much. I appreciate the clarification.

**The Chair:** Very good.

Mr. Kramp, you're casting your vote in the affirmative?

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Yes, I am, thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Please continue, Madam Clerk.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 10; nays 1)

**The Chair:** I declare the motion carried on a vote of ten to one.

Mr. Saxton.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd now like to move that we adjourn this meeting.

**The Chair:** Hang on. I still have the main motion. That was the amendment to the main motion. I now need your main motion.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** I'm sorry. I thought that was the main motion.

**The Chair:** As amended, actually.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Mr. Chair, then I'd like to move that we adjourn as soon as we vote, after we vote on the main motion.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Mr. Chair, on a point of order, he's actually out of order in that particular case. That is a point of order, I think.

**The Chair:** You're all out of order.

Colleagues, we're down to the last four minutes, and we're making some headway. If we don't do this, the moment is gone. Please be cognizant of the time. We have four minutes left.

Mr. Byrne.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Mr. Chair, I would like to put forward a motion that we meet tonight to complete the witness list.

**The Chair:** There is a motion in front of us right now that I have to deal with first. That's where we are. I can still take speakers on the motion as amended. That is in order. Anything else is out of order.

Is there any further discussion?

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4)

**The Chair:** May I just very sincerely express my appreciation to the government for the respect shown to Parliament and the Office of the Auditor General. I'm very appreciative, and I thank you for listening and taking that action.

Mr. Saxton, you have the floor.

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Seeing that the time is almost up, I move that we adjourn the meeting at this time.

**The Chair:** Thank you. It's not debatable. It's in order.

I declare that motion carried. This meeting stands adjourned.







**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>