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

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, October 5, 2017**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski**



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• (1100)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC)):** Colleagues, I call the meeting to order.

Welcome to the 99th meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. Today's meeting will continue our study of Bill C-24. I would like to welcome our minister with us today, the Honourable Bardish Chagger.

Welcome, Minister, thank you for being here.

Colleagues, we will have the minister with us for approximately one hour. Following that, the PCO officials will remain until 12:45, if needed. I will need at least 15 minutes at the end of the meeting to deal with committee business so our analysts can discuss with you the drafting of our report on government advertising. If, however, questions have been exhausted prior to that, we will suspend, excuse the witnesses, and go directly in camera to talk about the draft report.

Minister, I understand you have some opening remarks. We'll try to keep your remarks to about 10 minutes. If it looks like you're going over time, I'll try to catch your attention and ask you to wrap it up so we have more time for questions from our colleagues around the table.

With that, Minister, the floor is yours.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Thank you, Mr. Chair and colleagues.

I bring with me today my deputy, as well as Martha, a privy council officer.

[Translation]

Today, it is my pleasure to speak with you on how the government is equalizing the status of all members of the Prime Minister's ministerial team and ensuring that the government continues to have the flexibility to deliver on its commitments to Canadians.

[English]

The Salaries Act authorizes the payment, out of the consolidated revenue fund, of a ministerial salary to individuals who have been appointed to ministerial positions listed in that act. There are currently 35 ministerial positions listed in the Salaries Act, including the position of prime minister. From time to time, the list of ministers in the Salaries Act changes to align with the priorities of the government of the day and the prime minister's preference with respect to the composition of the ministry. This is not new.

Legislation amending the list of ministers in the Salaries Act was enacted in 2005, 2012, and 2013.

[Translation]

Canada needs a modern, agile, and flexible government that's organized in a way that is suited to delivering on its priorities and commitments. These amendments help us to do precisely that.

[English]

The legislation does away with administrative distinctions and makes equal the status of all ministers in the current ministry by adding to the Salaries Act five ministerial positions that will replace five current minister of state appointments. Conventionally, ministers of state have been considered junior ministers because they have most often been appointed to assist other ministers with their portfolio responsibilities. This way of thinking and operating is not suited to the current content, as it fails to address both the importance of the subject matters at issue and the value of equality to this Prime Minister and our government more broadly.

[Translation]

The five new ministerial positions to be added to the act are the Minister of La Francophonie; the Minister of Small Business and Tourism; the Minister of Science; the Minister of Status of Women; and the Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities.

[English]

These are important positions, with roles and responsibilities becoming of full ministers.

The Minister of International Development and La Francophonie pursues Canada's strong and sustained commitment to the 80 member states and governments of the Francophonie. Together these constitute more than one-third of the United Nations' membership, and they account for a population of more than 890 million people worldwide, including 220 million French speakers.

The Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development contributes to the competitiveness of Canada in a global, knowledge-based economy through supporting scientific research and the integration of scientific considerations in the government's investment and policy choices. The Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development is the lead minister for a number of science-related funding programs, including the Canada research chairs and several portfolio agencies, such as the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, NSERC. Innovation is a key priority for our government, and science will help us continue to build an economy that is both environmentally sustainable and prosperous.

The Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities promotes healthier Canadians through sport and recreation and works to ensure greater accessibility and opportunities for Canadians with disabilities. The minister has been tasked with developing legislation to transform how the Government of Canada addresses accessibility and leads on a number of important funding programs, including the enabling accessibility fund.

The Minister of Status of Women champions equality, addresses issues of gender-based violence, advances the prosperity and economic security of women, and works to increase the representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles.

In my role as Minister of Small Business and Tourism, I support Canada's small businesses, the backbone of our economy, by helping them grow through trade and innovation in order to create jobs, support communities, and launch world-class companies. I am also working to grow Canada's tourism industries by promoting Canada as a world-class destination for international tourists.

As you can see, these portfolios are important to our economy, to Canadians, and to the government. Formalizing the status of these five appointments as ministers in full standing will reflect the importance of these five positions and the expectations placed on the people who occupy them. Once these positions are added to the Salaries Act, with the adoption of Bill C-24, the orders in council that assign these ministers to assist other ministers will be repealed, and these ministers will be in law what they already are in practice: full ministers.

I would like to take a moment to address the issue of cost. The cost of the current ministry will not change with the enactment of Bill C-24. Only the payment mechanism will change. Let me explain. Ministers whose positions are listed in the Salaries Act receive their ministerial salaries under that authority and from the consolidated revenue fund. Ministers appointed under the Ministries and Ministers of State Act receive salaries determined by the Prime Minister, and they are paid from the applicable departmental vote, as provided for in annual appropriation acts. That has been the legislative framework for over two decades. Once Bill C-24 is passed, the former ministers of state will be appointed to the new Salaries Act positions and will be paid under the authority of that act.

All 30 members of the Prime Minister's ministerial team already receive the same ministerial salary. That has been the case since our first day in office, and it will not change with the enactment of this bill.

Bill C-24 will create a framework that will allow these ministers to continue to be supported by existing departments in carrying out their responsibilities. No new departments will need to be created as a result of this legislation.

Bill C-24 will increase the number of ministers that could be paid a ministerial salary under the Salaries Act from 35 to 37, including the Prime Minister, which represents an increase of two ministerial positions that could be paid from the consolidated revenue fund. Let me point out, however, that the Prime Minister currently has 34 ministerial positions available to him under the Salaries Act, but he has appointed only 30 individuals to the ministry. This bill is not fundamentally aimed at growing the ministry. Its goal is simply to

formalize in legislation the equal status of the current ministry and to modernize the act to enable more flexible and adaptable ministries in the future.

● (1105)

[*Translation*]

Bill C-24 amendments are not just about addressing government priorities in the immediate term. We also want to ensure that future ministries can be structured in ways that meet emerging priorities.

[*English*]

To enhance the flexibility of government, Bill C-24 would add three untitled ministerial positions to the Salaries Act. These positions can be titled at the discretion of the Prime Minister to reflect the priorities of the time. In this way, the Prime Minister can adjust his or her cabinet and its positions to respond to changing priorities or challenges facing the country.

The alignment of all regional development agencies under one portfolio, especially under the minister responsible for national economic development, is another example of this. We now have regional and national expertise all working together. This creates better synergy and opportunities for greater progress, and provides the flexibility needed to make a real impact in communities across Canada.

The regional development agencies will all continue to fulfill their mandates of supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in becoming more innovative, productive, and export oriented. They will continue to work with communities and economic development organizations to identify and generate opportunities for local economic growth. They will also continue to provide programs and services to entrepreneurs and communities that build on the distinct competitive regional advantage. All the regional agencies working together will ensure cohesion between them, help grow the economy, and deliver results to Canadians in all regions of the country.

Having them all report to Parliament, to the minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, serves to highlight the important role economic development plays across Canada's regions.

● (1110)

[*Translation*]

Finally, the legislation also changes the legal title of the Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities to reflect the fact that the Prime Minister has taken on the role of Intergovernmental Affairs Minister.

[*English*]

To conclude, these changes formalize what has already been in practice since day one of this government. The Prime Minister's cabinet is a group of equals, and non-legislative steps have already been taken to recognize the equal status of its members. These amendments address an administrative constraint in current legislation and catch it up with the structure of the ministry as it operates today.

We are resolute in our belief that a modern ministry that prioritizes equality, fairness, and flexibility will provide better outcomes for all Canadians.

I would like to thank the honourable members of this committee for their time and for inviting me to share my views. I look forward to your questions and your comments.

With that, Mr. Chair, thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, and thank you for being so concise with your remarks.

We'll now go to our round of questions. It will be a seven-minute round to begin with.

Madame Shanahan, you're first up.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Chair.

[*Translation*]

Minister, thank you for being with us this morning.

This is an interesting discussion in a way. Bill C-24 is administrative legislation, given that it amends an existing act. It does, however, make fundamental changes to our system and the way in which government ministries are organized.

One of the amendments proposed in Bill C-24 is the removal of references to a certain number of ministries that would no longer exist, that is, the regional development agencies, which would be consolidated under the Department of Infrastructure and Communities.

How will that affect economic development in regions of the country whose needs are different?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Thank you for your question.

I believe the change will be positive for the regions because they will all be able to work together. Currently, some regions can't share best practices they are using effectively with other regions. When all regional development organizations have the capacity to work together, under a single portfolio, it is easier to share best practices.

[*English*]

I believe that we have to always support the regional diversity of our country, so regional development agencies will continue to do the work that they do. They will continue to be present in the regions, but they will not only have regional expertise; they will also now have national expertise by being able to work under one minister.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** Thank you very much for that.

[*Translation*]

I'd like to stay on this topic.

Under the current structure, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development is responsible for the administration of the regional development agencies.

Do you think the potential exists for disputes to arise during decision-making, owing to different portfolio priorities?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** During the election campaign, we talked to Canadians and they told us that the government needed to do a better job of working together in a united way.

Having different perspectives and views is a good thing, but working together and contributing to discussions in order to move the greater interests of Canadians forward must always be key.

•(1115)

[*English*]

Yes, there may be times when there is disagreement, but if we can work better together and have those real conversations, I believe we will better serve the needs of Canadians and the diversity of this country.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** Without getting into cabinet confidentiality, do you have an example you can speak to us about, where it was beneficial to have the regional development agencies under one ministry?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** The other hat I wear is as Minister of Small Business and Tourism. We came out with a tourism strategy by working with provinces, territories, and municipalities. What we were able to see was that there were certain regions that had an approach that other regions were not using. By being able to work better together and communicate with each other, they were able to share those best practices.

Let's take ACOA as an example. The tourism industry is essential in the Atlantic region. They support their small and medium-sized businesses in a different way than, let's say, WD. Right now, they are able to say what they are doing and exchange ideas.

When it comes to the tourism vision, we were able to see that there are better opportunities for small businesses across the country now to work together because they have things in common. Without that conversation coming together, it was not the case. Now that they're working together and have a reason to come together, it's about strengthening our country as one country, but we will never forget the diversity of our regions.

When the Prime Minister talks about diversity as our strength, he is not only talking about the shells that we occupy; he's talking about our experiences, our regional diversity, and so forth. We will always promote that, because that is what strengthens Canada.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** I thank you very much for that, because you're here in your function, of course, Minister, as House Leader, but you also wear that other hat as the Minister of Small Business and Tourism.

Do I have time for another question?

**The Chair:** You have about two and a half minutes.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** This is for Mr. McCowan. This would be around the numbers, the salary costs that we're looking at. Apparently, we're looking at an additional cost of approximately \$20,000 per minister of state that will be retrieved entirely from the consolidated revenue fund of Canada.

Have all the ministers who are affected already accepted the increased salary? Is it retroactive? What is the total financial impact of this initiative, which is five times \$20,000, or \$100,000, that is going to be paid out of the consolidated revenue fund?

**Mr. Ian McCowan (Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet, Governance Secretariat, Privy Council Office):** All of the ministers have been paid the same salary since day one. What is going to change is the funding mechanism, if you will. For ministers who are appointed under the Salaries Act, those funds flow from the consolidated revenue fund.

For ministers of state, funds flow under appropriations. If the changes to the Salaries Act were to become law, the salaries of all of the ministers and cabinet would flow from the consolidated revenue fund. It's just a question of which stream the funding comes through, but all of the ministers have been paid the same amount since day one.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** Okay, thank you very much.

That's all for me, Chair.

**The Chair:** We'll go to Mr. McCauley, for seven minutes, please.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Minister, welcome.

Welcome, Mr. McCowan, and Ms. Boyle, as well.

Mr. McCowan, I will just go back to your comment, "from day one". I understand that. Was it not back paid from day one? I recall—and perhaps my memory is foggy—that this all came about when our previous leader commented that despite this gender equity, the ministers of state, the lower paid junior ministers, were all women. That's when we said, "Oh, no. We're going to go back and fix this."

Was it in their original letters of offer from the very second they came aboard, or was it back-dated a week or two weeks later?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I'm going to have to go back and check on that. My understanding, and perhaps Ms. Boyle can—

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** The minister, I assume, would know.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** My understanding is that it has been the same since day one, but Minister, I...

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** It has been the same since day one.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Perfect.

Do you believe that Bill C-24 is all about making the pay equal, or do you believe it also makes the responsibilities equal?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** I really believe it's about the decisions at the cabinet table and having the voices represented, because opinions matter and diversity of opinion matters. We know that these portfolios are essential to the growth of the economy and, I would say, to the betterment of Canadians. I think that's what it is; equal ministers with equal opportunity.

• (1120)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** But the bill doesn't actually change any of their powers or authorities. Am I correct in that?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** It comes down to how you want to view that. For me and the vision of this government, it's really about the whole-of-government approach, and working together. We know

that when it comes to departments as well, there are many things in common.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I'll tell you what I'm getting at. Ministers' authority and power are granted and derived from the Financial Administration Act. Bill C-24 doesn't appear to make changes to that act that grant such powers to the old ministers of state.

For example, the Minister of Status of Women is still not able to deliver a memorandum to cabinet without it being co-signed by the Minister of Heritage. That's what I'm getting at: this bill doesn't address their actual authorities. It's optics. We're changing the salaries, but the Minister of Status of Women, for example, to deliver a memorandum to our cabinet, still has to have another minister who is technically part of her department co-sign.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** In my opening comments I gave examples of where ministers in these positions will have the authority to do the work they need to do. Wearing my other hat as Minister of Small Business and Tourism, I am responsible to make sure the voice of small businesses and the tourism industry is represented. I work hard on their behalf, and on numerous occasions I have reminded colleagues that small business and tourism is the thread that connects all departments. When people are making decisions, it's essential that they consider the benefit of all Canadians to ensure we have opportunities for Canadians to succeed.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** Mr. McCauley, if I could just come back to the first question you raised, if I understood correctly, you indicated that there was some issue in the first couple of weeks. We can certainly undertake to look into that. My understanding is ministers were paid the same from day one, but if there is some issue about a

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Well, the minister said from day one, so I'll accept that.

I just want to get back again to the ministers. We've heard so much about their being equal. We had a very learned professor here on Tuesday whose comment about what your government is doing was, "I would say it's dishonest", that's the word I would use. She was talking about the equality of the cabinet.

You kind of confirmed what I have been asking, which is does the Minister of Status of Women not have the same authority as another minister, such as the Minister of Heritage? We also see it in the responsibilities and in the budgets. Our friends at public accounts were here just before us, and we were looking at the spending. Minister Bains, who signs reports too, has \$2 million spent. Minister Duncan spent \$885,000 in her budget, you spent \$837,000, and heritage \$1.9 million. Sports was \$770,000 under Minister Qualtrough; Ministers Monsef and Hajdu spent \$900,000. It seems that a very specific set of responsibilities is given, not only power and authority.

I just want to move over now to the changes under the economic development. Your comment was, "It's better for the regions", but I just want to read a couple of comments from stakeholders. *La Presse*, for example, says that Quebec manufacturers and exporters in the chamber of commerce are happy. Montreal ministers, however, are worried about what will happen with the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the regions of Quebec, which seem to have dropped off the radar. Business leaders used to have an attentive ear in Ottawa under previous systems.

Here's a quote from the *Cape Breton Post*:

How much attention will the minister pay to Cape Breton based on his political influence? Not much, according to White. The more you push those (agencies) out to big centres like Toronto, Ottawa, or maybe, Montreal, as the base of decision-making for those organizations, the less they are in tune with the regions that they're trying to help the most.

We have limited time but I have nine pages of quotes from various stakeholders, including stakeholders that your east coast MPs heard at various round tables. I am just trying to figure out how you can say it's better for the regions, when you're actually taking away direct input from the stakeholders in the regions.

• (1125)

**The Chair:** We've only got about 30 seconds for your response.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Hence, I only read two quotes.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** The RDAs will continue to fulfill their mandates in the regions. The voices of the regions will always be heard. The work being done in the regions will remain in the regions. What they do is essential. That's how economic development takes place. That's why the regional diversity of the country is essential. We will always take that as—

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** So, you're saying that moving it to Toronto is better for Newfoundland, better for the region.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Nothing is moving. The regional development agencies will continue to fulfill their mandates in—

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** But the ministerial—

**The Chair:** Mr. McCauley, we have limited time here, so I'd like to hear the completion of the minister's comments.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The regional development agencies will continue to fulfill their mandates in the regions. The RDAs are not moving, and we should not ever give that impression because we want them to have confidence in the system.

What's happening here is that you have regional expertise as well as national expertise, and it's essential that regions be able to work together, that they be provided the supports. Nothing is changing for the RDAs in the sense that they will continue to have the economic impact within the regions to best respond to the challenges and opportunities in the regions.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Blaikie, you have seven minutes, please.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** We heard today that the ministers appointed as ministers of state under the current legal framework already have the same salary and the same title, and presumably they're already taken just as seriously around

the cabinet table. There won't be any new departments created, so they'll continue to be supported by departments, as they are now. Ministers of states for whom a department is designated will be effectively served in the same way as ministers of state are now. In what sense does this bill make ministers more equal in a way that they are not already?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** That's a great question. It formalizes what's taking place already. It also provides opportunities to be able to respond to new challenges that might come. We want a government that's able to respond, ideally to be proactive, and this provides—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** So, strictly speaking, this legislation isn't actually necessary in order to accomplish the equality of cabinet ministers.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** It's true that we have already put into practice what this legislation is asking, but I believe it is essential to formalize it to also provide future governments the opportunity to recognize the importance of these portfolios as equal ministers.

The work that the public service does is essential work. I will tell you that, with respect to my other hat as Minister of Small Business and Tourism, it's not just Innovation, Science and Economic Development that provides me with support. I—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** The kind of equality that might be addressed in this legislation would be administrative, let's call it. Right now you have ministers. For the most part, all those ministers are responsible for a department. Usually, the language in the legislation says that they preside over or have the management and direction of a department. Will the new kind of minister have those same powers and authorities?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Every minister is provided with the resources necessary to accomplish—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** But, strictly speaking, they won't preside over or have the management and direction of a department.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** I'll give you Innovation, Science and Economic Development as an example. Minister Bains, Minister Duncan, and myself work closely together. We work as a team.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** But if the inequality under the law right now is that we have ministers—and that's what we call ministers—who preside over and have the management and direction of a department, and ministers of state don't, is it the case that the new type of minister will preside over or have the management and direction of a department? If that's not the case, then doesn't the same administrative inequality continue to exist under this legislation, just under a new name?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** What's clear is that this government is taking a whole-of-government approach in doing government differently to better respond—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** I know, but we're here talking about a law, a law that's supposed to address some kind of inequality. The press release about the law talks about recognizing the equality of all cabinet ministers. It's not just about the pay because the pay is already done. It's not just about the title because, obviously, you can style ministers of state as ministers, so presumably it's meant to address some kind of other inequality. The remaining type of inequality seems to be that they don't have the same administrative function as other ministers, but this legal change doesn't actually give them those powers because it creates two types of minister. There is the minister in the traditional sense, let's say, and then there is the minister for whom a department is designated and whose administrative responsibilities are clearly less than those of the other kind of minister, otherwise we would just have one kind of minister in the act.

How is it that this act actually addresses what the only kind of standing form of inequality is: a difference in their administrative roles and responsibilities? Can you just explain that for us? The one thing about this debate that I've found very elusive is just kind of pinpointing the relevant sense of equality that's being addressed by the bill. If not, it seems to me that this is, quite frankly, just a colossal waste of parliamentarians' time. If they're already being called ministers, if they're already being paid the same as ministers, if after this legislation is in effect they're essentially going to be supported in the same way as ministers of state who are being called ministers and are paid the same currently, then it's not clear to me that the time we're spending on this is warranted.

• (1130)

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I have a couple of thoughts in response. First, I think, in terms of the broad strokes of the bill, the intent is to formalize in legislation the ministry, as has been done a number of times over the past few ministries. In terms of the link between a minister and a department, I'd just point out that there are a number of situations—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** It just seems to me that it's a lot of time to spend to formalize a name change. If the issue is one of being called ministers, everyone at the table gets to be called minister because that helps, I guess, in terms of their status.

What's odd is that it seems to me that the implicit claim is that somehow sitting around the cabinet table, our Prime Minister would be less inclined to take their views and ideas seriously if they're called minister of state than if they're called minister. This is more a question for the minister, frankly. Did he decide to call them ministers to help him take them more seriously around the cabinet table?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** What I was just going to point out, if I could, is that there are other examples of ministries, for example ESDC, where you have two ministers within the confines of one department. There are existing examples of what you're talking about.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** There are, but the minister for whom departments are designated is nevertheless a new classification, and presumably the ministers we have now who aren't those kinds of ministers would nevertheless not become ministers for whom departments are designated.

Is it foreseen that only the five ministers that we were originally talking about are going to become ministers for whom departments are designated? The new minister of state, who is the Minister of Indigenous Services, is presumably going to eventually get her own department. I think that's the idea, or at least that was the stated intention of the government. It's not yet the case because her resources are just carved out of the larger ministry of indigenous affairs.

I'm just wondering. Is this really just about a title change? Granted, there are some other things having to do with salary, but those things are already done, and the legislation still maintains two different kinds of ministers. It's just clouded over by the fact that we're going to call them all ministers. What is really changing in this legislation? Why do we spend the time?

When your government was trying to get other legislation through the House and complaining you didn't have the time, we spent time on this at second reading. Now we're spending time on this in committee, and we're going to spend more House time on it in third reading, and largely things will remain the same after it's done. Why is this a legislative priority for your government?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** What's important to note, as I've said before, is that this formalizes what's already been taking place.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Indeed. I think that's part and parcel of my question.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** That's essential. When it comes to these five ministers you're referring to, I believe that they are essential voices that need to be at the cabinet table.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** They are at the cabinet table, and they would be at the cabinet table as ministers of state. Is it the case that, if you were called minister of state for business and tourism, when you have a good idea at the cabinet table, the Prime Minister wouldn't take that good idea seriously because you're called a minister of state instead of minister?

**The Chair:** Mr. Blaikie, while I enjoy this debate, we're going to have to move on just because of time constraints.

I would perhaps ask Mr. McCowan and the minister one thing, and perhaps this can be answered in subsequent questions as a question from the chair. I think what Mr. Blaikie is getting at is that, now that the former ministers of state are becoming full-blown ministers, have their authority and/or responsibilities increased as well, commensurate with their salary increases?

I think that's a reasonable question to ask because, if they haven't, then it's merely just, as Mr. Blaikie suggested, an increase in salary and a change of title. Have their responsibilities and authorities increased? That's what I think Mr. Blaikie was trying to get at. That's my extraneous comment.

We'll now move on to Madam Ratansi for seven minutes, please.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair. You took the words out of my mouth because I was going to ask the minister the same question. Thank you for pre-empting it.

• (1135)

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



**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Minister, thank you for being here. I will just clarify that Professor Margot Young, who came here, was really not suited to come here because she knew nothing about the Salaries Act. She was here to discuss gender equality, and I asked her which section of the press release even talked about gender equality.

That aside, the question was asked by the chair. Why has the Prime Minister chosen to elevate these ministers of state to full ministers? Are there examples from other, say, Commonwealth countries or other democracies that do that?

I'm going to put my question so that you can answer it, and then Karen will take over. This is a one-tier ministry. I can understand equalization. I can understand that you're trying to go with a streamlined, agile, flexible government, and that is so that everybody is on equal footing, and you're trying to reduce an administrative burden as well because all ministers are working together in a whole-of-government approach.

So give me some of the ideas behind the changes. Has there been any research?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Basically, the responsibilities have been shared with Canadians in mandate letters. We have committed to doing government differently by taking a whole-of-government approach. All ministers need to work better together, because when we are making decisions, we impact other areas by default. By bringing us to the table and having equal voices at one table, the single-tier ministry, as you referred to it, better serves the approach that I believe is in the best interest of Canadians.

When it comes to other Westminster jurisdictions, the prime minister decides on the organization of his or her cabinet and what the challenges and needs are at the time, as the prime minister has the discretion to do, similar to what this prime minister has done and what previous prime ministers in Canada have done.

It's important to have flexibility when it comes to changing times so that we can serve the purpose of government. It's people who elect us and send us here, and we need to have all members of Parliament empowered to do that good work. We need ministers who are listening to colleagues on both sides of the House and to Canadians. That is an approach we wholeheartedly believe in. That is why we have consulted. That is why we believe it's important that we formalize what we have put into practice through Bill C-24. It's important that these voices be recognized, not only in practice but in legislation, as equal.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Perhaps what would help clarify this is if we had an idea of what previous ministries or ministers used to do. The mandate letter is the basis of what a minister's responsibility is. Perhaps you've already increased their responsibilities, in answer to what Mr. Blaikie was asking. Maybe you have, but if you could give us a comparison of what others used to do before, that would give us some idea. If you don't have it now, you can give it to us later. It could really answer the question of whether they have more responsibility. I believe that they do, because of the mandate letters. There were no mandate letters before, if I am correct. These letters may give them responsibilities that are very much different from what they previously had.

Do other democracies, such as the U.K. and Australia, have similar ministers of state? Could Mr. McCowan or Ms. Boyle answer that? Do you have any idea if they have ministers of state, and are there any best practices we could share?

**Ms. Martha Boyle (Privy Council Officer, Governance Secretariat, Privy Council Office):** A common feature in other Westminster jurisdictions is that the salaries of ministers have to be authorized by law. In the U.K., there are opportunities for two-tier ministries. In fact, currently there are about 21 ministers and up to 100 ministers of state and parliamentary under secretaries.

The flexibility exists for two-tier, but the option also exists to have just one tier, and that's the structure in Canada. Every prime minister, as the minister noted, has the responsibility to structure the cabinet in a way that responds to citizens' needs.

**The Chair:** Ms. Ludwig.

**Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.):** In terms of formalizing this in legislation, I first want to give you an example from the Atlantic region. As a member representing New Brunswick Southwest, one of the comments I have heard about this different style, certainly in the ACOA mandate, is that businesses are very pleased with the quick responsiveness and the involvement of members of Parliament in working with ACOA on a regional basis. Last night the president of ACOA was here working directly with MPs. I just wanted to give that as an example.

Looking at formalizing this in legislation, why is it important to Canadians? You talked, Madam Minister, about flexibility and adaptability. Why is it now important for Canadians to understand why we're going to formalize this in legislation? What would be the outcome for them?

• (1140)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** That's an excellent example of being able to work with the RDAs and their feeling that they have a role here in Ottawa.

It's important to Canadians because the diversity of opinions matters. Having an equal voice at the cabinet table matters. When decisions are being made, for us to not recognize the economic importance of these portfolios would be unfortunate. What is good is that the Prime Minister recognizes economic potential and growth opportunities for the betterment of Canadians.

What it comes down to is that these ministers are not seen as assisting. They are seen as equal ministers making decisions, being part of the conversation, and speaking equally. It's essential that we be able to do that.

**The Chair:** We'll have to stop there.

We'll go to Mr. Shipley for five minutes, please.

**Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Thank you very much.

It's an interesting question or scenario that you put forward.

What you are saying now is that the minister who lives in Mississauga.... What you are saying to those MPs who represent their regions, whether it's the west, the north, or ACOA in the Atlantic, is "We're sorry. You folks who live in this area and carry that responsibility aren't capable of taking that message and being a national representative at the table." That's what you're saying.

How does that make it better, having someone from Mississauga be the national voice on the diversity of this country, and understanding that when he comes to the cabinet table?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Chair, respectfully, regional development agencies will continue to do the work they do in their regions.

I will speak for myself. My country has 10 provinces and three territories. Regardless of which part of the country celebrates or hurts, it impacts me the same. It's important that we recognize that we cannot be pitting regions against each other any longer. We need regions to work better together, and that's what it comes down to. The voice, for me.... Once again, we have 10 provinces, three territories. When Canadians succeed, I believe the country succeeds. That's what it comes down to.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** We'll remember that. What we are finding is that, quite honestly, this is not the case.

What I am also interested in is this. This is what your Prime Minister, our Prime Minister, said, referring to the appointment of the Mississauga MP as the Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency: "reducing the kind of politics that we've always seen".

Could you elaborate and tell me what that means?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** The minister you are referring to is responsible for economic development, and economic development is essential for the country.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** No, no.... What kind of politics is it, when he said, "reducing the kind of politics that we've always seen"? I would say that this is sort of bad politics, but maybe it's something different.

Could you explain what he meant by that?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Chair, I am here to talk about Bill C-24 and the context of Bill C-24. I welcome any questions in regard to what Bill C-24 stands for.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** But we are...Chair, quite honestly.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** I don't believe I have been called here to explain what other people's comments are.

**The Chair:** Please, colleagues.

Minister, with respect, the door has been opened to speaking about a variety of ministerial responsibilities.

You may not choose to answer, or you may not have a good answer, but Mr. Shipley is just asking you to respond to a direct quote from the Prime Minister. It was about getting politics out of the

process, whereas now you have a minister from Mississauga who is responsible for the Atlantic regional development authority.

He is just asking a quick question. I'll ask Mr. Shipley to perhaps rephrase it, and then move on. I don't think we need to spend a long time debating this.

Yes, go ahead, Mr. Drouin.

• (1145)

**Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

Asking a minister to comment on somebody else's.... It's like asking me to comment on what you said. It doesn't make any sense.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Drouin. With respect, I believe Mr. Shipley was quoting the Prime Minister and asking for the minister's comment on that quote.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** If the Prime Minister.... I don't know why it wouldn't be clarified. He has obviously talked about a number of quotes. We've had this discussion about equality around the table, and responsibility. No one is talking about the change of responsibility in terms of budgets, in terms of deputy ministers, and in terms of authority, but about a voice.

What you are telling us is that, without taking those responsibilities, the voice is just a voice, that he would not accept the voice of a junior minister, because it was a junior minister. Quite honestly, it sort of flies in the face of.... If I were a junior minister, and he wouldn't listen to me because I was just a junior minister.... So what I'm going to do is give you more money and change your name. That makes all the difference, and now you have input.

Isn't that really what this is saying?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** That's not at all what it's saying.

At the same time, it's essential that we recognize that the regional development agencies will continue to do the essential work they do in the regions. They are also able to work together and share best practices. I believe this is a better model. It's important that we allow the country to function as one country.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** So, do the responsibilities change—

**The Chair:** Mr. Shipley, I think we're going to have to cut it off there. We've expired our time.

Mr. Peterson, you're up for five minutes, please.

**Mr. Kyle Peterson (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister, Mr. McCowan, and Ms. Boyle, for being with us here this morning. We appreciate it.

I just want to maybe get an elaboration on.... We know this act obviously formalizes the salary increase and formalizes the change of title, but what it also does is provide departmental support to these ministries.

I'm wondering if you, Minister, or one of your colleagues, can elaborate on the importance of that and why this legislation is necessary to empower or give authority to that operational role.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** There is a series of rearrangements of powers, duties, and functions you can do in terms of ministers of state.

You're quite correct in saying that this legislation actually allows for the same thing to happen in terms of the listed ministers in terms of the act. It allows for those appropriate transfers to happen so that the mandate letters that each minister has been given can be pursued. The only other additional piece in terms of the shift to functions, to go to one of the earlier questions, is that there are the three new positions that are created in terms of possible assignments for future ministries that some future prime minister, or the current one sometime in the future, might choose to make.

**Mr. Kyle Peterson:** Thank you for that elaboration.

Do you have anything else to add, Minister?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** I would say that with regard to my other hat, I am provided with all the supports necessary for me to carry out my mandate letter, to ensure that I can succeed in the mandates the Prime Minister has given me.

**Mr. Kyle Peterson:** Thank you.

Maybe we can take a step back and look at the new full ministries: Minister of La Francophonie, Minister of Science, Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, and Minister of Status of Women. I don't think any of us—at least, I hope none of us—sitting around this table wouldn't agree that those ministries deserve the full support of departments. They deserve the full resources of any other ministry. Without this Bill C-24, that support, those resources, that empowerment, that authority to do these important jobs for Canadians under these important topics simply would not exist.

Therefore, to say Bill C-24 is unnecessary is to almost say, “La Francophonie is not important.” It's to almost say, “Science doesn't matter.” It's to almost say, “We don't care about small business and tourism. We don't care about sport and persons with disabilities, or the status of women.” I know nobody around here thinks that, or would ever say that, so I just think we want to make sure that we appreciate that legislation is necessary under the Westminster model to authorize and to allocate resources as the government of the day sees fit. That's why we're here today: as part of the legislative process.

I don't think it's a waste of time. I don't think it's an unnecessary use of parliamentary resources. In fact, I think it's an essential use of those resources. Without having a committee to do it, without having first, second, and third readings in the House, these things wouldn't get done. You can't just wave a magic wand and make some presidential order like some governments can do, and make things happen. The legislative process, my friend, is tedious, takes resources, takes time, and takes effort, but it's important, it's necessary and, in fact, it's fundamental to our democracy.

Mr. Chair, I just wanted to make sure that everyone around the table is aware of what we're doing here and what this process is.

I don't know, Minister, if you have any thoughts on the process itself.

• (1150)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** I would entirely agree.

It's really about formalizing what's already been put into practice, and it's important that we do that. That is why we are brought to this place. I totally appreciate that you understand the value of this legislation and how important it is.

**Mr. Kyle Peterson:** Thank you, Minister.

How's my time, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** We have either Mr. McCauley or Mr. Shipley, unless you give your time to Mr. Blaikie.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I'll hand it to you, Mr. Blaikie.

**The Chair:** Mr. Blaikie, you'll have five minutes.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Thank you very much, Mr. McCauley, for your time. I appreciate that greatly.

I know because you're reforming these acts, you're familiar with them. Currently, there are two types of minister of state. I'm just wondering if you could name them for us.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Do you want to name them?

**Ms. Martha Boyle:** There's minister of state and there's minister of state with a portfolio.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** With a ministry of state.

**Ms. Martha Boyle:** Ministry of state, thank you very much, pardon me.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** A ministry of state is effectively like a small department, with all the resources of a department accorded to it by the government.

**Ms. Martha Boyle:** That's right.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** They're completely responsible for it in the way that full ministers are responsible for a department.

**Ms. Martha Boyle:** That's true.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** That's interesting. So it's not the case that you need to make these reforms to have all the resources of a department at your disposal, because you could create a ministry of state for a minister of state, which brings me back to my main theme, why it's important to allocate the time that we have already and will yet to this bill, both here and in the other place.

One of the things I found interesting in the debate around the ministers for regional economic development is that under the current model, you have choices as a prime minister. You could have a different minister for each regional economic development agency or you could consolidate them into one, as this government has chosen to do. Removing them from the act limits that possibility, because then a future government would have to change the act to then have the separate ministers, and the rationale that we've heard today from the minister is that she wants to change the act to reflect the current practices of the government.

Why is it that Bill C-24 doesn't eliminate ministers of state to assist and ministers of state with a ministry of state, if the goal of Bill C-24 is to update legislation to reflect the current practices of government and the one-tier ministry model?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** A number of questions have been asked that go to the raw question of what this does. I think the best I could do in summing that up is it comes down to three things, first of all, formalizing the cabinet in—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** I'm just wondering if you're answering because the minister doesn't know the answer. Because there's a political dimension to this as well, I'm just wondering if maybe she wants it particularly for the regional economic development ministries. There has been some discussion of the politics of regional representation, so I'm just wondering if the minister would like to answer to ensure that those political dimensions are adequately represented in the government's answer.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** The regional development agencies will continue to do the work of the RDAs in the regions.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Yes, and they're being removed from the legislation.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** The Prime Minister had a vision—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Why are ministers of state to assist and ministers of state with the ministry of state not being removed from the act to represent the current practices of government?

• (1155)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Let's come down to why we are here for Bill C-24. The Prime Minister spoke about the decentralization—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Is it not the case that we're here for Bill C-24 to make the legislation cohere with the current practices of government? Is it not the case that the government says they won't use ministers of state, both kinds, because that creates a two-tier ministry, and if so, why does Bill C-24 not remove ministers of state from the legislation?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** You're asking why ministers of state aren't removed as a possibility for future governments? Is that—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** That's correct. If there's an objection to ministers of state on the basis that they create a two-tier ministry, which this government thinks is wrong because it means that voices are not equal at the cabinet table, why wouldn't the government remove them from the legislation?

I'm asking the government House leader.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Future governments should be able to do what future governments need to do, even other—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Well then, why get rid of the six separate ministries for regional economic development ministers? You've already consolidated them under one. Why are you getting rid of them in the legislation to not tie the hands of future governments?

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Mr. Drouin.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** I'm trying to listen to the answers, but the member keeps interrupting. I'm just wondering if you can referee this a little better.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** I'm not sure about refereeing it, but I will advise all members that, just as a general operating principle, regardless of whether our witnesses are part of the government or independent

witnesses, the practice of every committee is of course to treat them with respect.

I'm not suggesting that you're being disrespectful, Mr. Blaikie, and I'm not suggesting that you're badgering the witness, but I am suggesting that perhaps we could give her some time to give a direct answer to a question, which I think is legitimate.

Minister.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Respectfully, Mr. Chair, I'm not sure that the member's looking for an answer. I think the member wants to make a statement, so I think it's important that I also make a statement to remind members that this is about formalizing legislation. It's about regional development agencies being able to do the important work that they do in the regions. They know their regions better than any minister or any member of Parliament will, and we have to give them that regard.

Regional expertise with national expertise is a way for it to work better together to create a synergy, to take a whole-of-government approach. Talking about quotes, during the campaign, the Prime Minister said it was about decentralizing the Prime Minister's Office, empowering ministers to be able to do the important work they do, working with members, making ourselves available, to ensure that we achieve the end goal, which is I'm sure every member's goal, to serve their constituents and to have a better country.

**The Chair:** Unfortunately, we're out of time.

Mr. Drouin, you have five minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

I have to touch on the regional development agencies. I have to say a few comments because I remember—I wasn't in Parliament—working with the previous government on behalf of clients. I recall when the member for Calgary Nose Hill was the minister of western economic diversification, but she was not the one we went to, to get things done out west. We were going to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, who was the Honourable James Moore. To say that somehow eliminating regional ministers is going to take away those voices, I disagree with that premise. I believe that we've now empowered members of Parliament to advocate on behalf of their regions.

That brings me to this point. How important is this to having a whole-of-government approach to decision-making, and how important is it for the MPs' voices to be reflected in that?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** We were all elected to be members of Parliament to be the voice of our constituents. That's really when we are able to shine. It's also when we're able to see that there is regional diversity, but our ridings have so much in common, and we can work better together by having tough conversations in our interest. I believe the voice of a member of Parliament, regardless of where they sit, is essential because Canadians need to be heard and reflected in the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Thank you, Minister.

Something else I find a bit offensive is that the number of people who work for a minister and the powers they have or don't have are the criteria being used to determine their value.

I represent a riding where 70% of the population is French-speaking, and I can assure you that if we didn't have a Minister of La Francophonie, people would be protesting all over the country. I just want to say that the Minister of La Francophonie and all the ministers affected by this bill are important to each of the populations they represent.

I'd like you to explain something to us, without revealing exactly what's going on in cabinet. Clearly, there are cabinet confidences. Immediately after the election, the Prime Minister indicated that the decisions made by cabinet would carry significant weight in the government's eyes.

• (1200)

[English]

Decisions by cabinet will be an important way forward for us. You mentioned the team. I'd like you to elaborate a bit on this and how you're working with your other colleagues to make decisions.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Taking a whole-of-government approach and having people represented from across the country has, I believe, resulted in better decision-making. Regardless of the cabinet table, members of Parliament in the House are able to debate legislation. We've noticed on numerous occasions that this government has listened to amendments and debated them to ensure the legislation was going to achieve the ultimate goal of benefiting Canadians. In that view, we've also worked better with the Senate to ensure that they are able to do the important work they do, once again, for the betterment of Canadians. Diversity of opinions matters. Having yourself represented and reflected matters to Canadians. It is a new way of doing things.

Something I believe most of us have heard is that Canadians expect members of Parliament to work better together. Canadians expect a government that listens, and not only listens, but hears and is able to respond. That is the purpose of government. I really believe the approach of this Prime Minister and this government is the right one. The whole-of-government approach is something that previous governments have spoken to but never delivered on. This Prime Minister and Bill C-24 formalize what we've already put into practice. I believe it modernizes the way government needs to work, and it also provides greater flexibility to ensure that any opportunities or challenges can also be considered as time advances.

**Mr. Francis Drouin:** Thank you.

There's one last point that I want to touch on. This act allows for 35 ministerial positions, but we obviously don't have a cabinet of 35. It's important to have voices at cabinet, but it's also important to be mindful of taxpayers. I recall the previous government had one of the biggest ministries, 40 ministers. Forty ministers is an embarrassment. I think they were tied for the largest cabinet in history.

I want to thank you, Minister, for coming to this committee. I appreciate your time.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** I will respond really quickly.

The Prime Minister's cabinet today is the same size as it was, but it continues to be able to respond.

On your earlier comment on bilingualism and the two official languages of Canada, it's something that this government will continue to fight for.

[Translation]

We are very proud of the fact that Canada has two official languages. It is essential to make sure the voices of both language communities are represented.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Minister, you are now excused. Thank you for your appearance.

I understand Mr. McCowan and Madam Boyle will be staying with us for the next foreseeable amount of time.

Thank you.

We will suspend for a couple of moments while the minister leaves.

• (1200)

(Pause)

• (1205)

**The Chair:** Colleagues, we will reconvene.

I'm not sure who we have on the government side, but we will go into our normal rounds.

Madam Ratansi.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Questions of a technical nature would help the process move forward. We don't have too many questions for the department. From an administrative perspective, will these people who are going to be elevated to ministerial levels, for example, the secretaries of states, experience any monetary impact? Will they create more departments for them? If they don't, that's fine by me, but how will they work? Do you see any conflict in the way that they intertwine—the minister for science, the minister for small businesses, and the minister for innovation?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** This legislation doesn't create any new departments. As for the cost of the ministers themselves, it's just a question of the same amount of money being paid through a different vehicle. It will come through the Salaries Act rather than coming through appropriations for the group of ministers in question. There's no change, however, in the number of departments that come as a result of—

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** So you're making it more efficient. I guess what people don't seem to understand is this whole-of-government approach.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** There are basically three things the legislation does.

First, it puts into legislation what's in practice in the ministry. This is something earlier governments have done; it's not an unusual thing. It also solidifies the one-tier ministry approach where everyone is on the same footing, and it resolves the issue of federal, provincial, and territorial relations in that ministerial title.

Second, it creates three new positions. If at some point in the future a prime minister were to decide to make a change, there would be a little more flexibility in those three spots.

Third, it allows the ministers in question, when they become full ministers, to get the support and the services to make the delegations required for them to do what's in their mandate letter. We have other mechanisms when they're ministers of state, and it allows for some flexibility there.

**Ms. Karen Ludwig:** In formalizing this legislation, what would be the impact on other jurisdictions such as the provinces and the municipalities? We recently had our fourth first ministers meeting. What type of impact will this have on discussions and collaboration at that level?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** You may be thinking of a dimension I'm not aware of. It will solidify the existing practice of how ministries are structured, but I don't see a significant change in the area you're describing. Perhaps if you could direct me to a specific point I'm missing, I'd be able to respond.

**Ms. Karen Ludwig:** I was listening to the discussions this morning—the testimonies and the questions. There's equality across the board, certainly at the cabinet level, for conversations, for investment, for listening, and for output. If any of those five new ministers now taking a whole-of-government approach was working with the provinces, the municipalities, or the chambers of commerce, how might this change the whole-of-government or Canadian approach?

● (1210)

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** It formalizes the Prime Minister's idea of a one-tier government and solidifies the structure of the ministry, which was stood up with the available legislative frameworks on day one. This formalizes the foundation and the structure.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** We're done, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** You have about three minutes left.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** I've asked. From my side, I don't think there are any more questions for the departments.

**Mr. Kyle Peterson:** I have a quick one.

Ms. Boyle, maybe for my own interest, you compared the U.K. model a little bit. You alluded to the fact that they have a two-tier... It had 21 ministers, I believe, and up to 100 junior ministers or ministers of state. Is that a legislative reality in the U.K. or is that some sort of convention they use? How do we compare to other Westminster jurisdictions on the one-tier/two-tier analysis?

**Ms. Martha Boyle:** As I said, the U.K. does have a two-tier system. In every Westminster system, the salaries have to be set by law. That's a statutory requirement. In Australia, I think it is one tier, also in statute. However, again in every jurisdiction, the Prime Minister has the responsibility and the opportunity to structure the cabinet in the way that he wants. There may be statutory amendments, as are presented here, that happen in those jurisdictions as well.

**Mr. Kyle Peterson:** Okay, thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. McCauley.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** Thank you very much for taking the time to come out.

As a privy councillor, what responsibility do you have to the Prime Minister?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** First of all, I'm not a privy councillor. I'm a public servant who works in the Privy Council Office. I do a number of functions within the PCO. Did you want me to run through those?

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** No, it was just in general.

In terms of advice, I want to go back and follow up. Mr. Drouin made some comments about a previous government and the numbers. In fact, on the efficiency with which the government operated, he missed that point. The minister talked about the whole-of-government approval and the whole-of-government approach, but we forgot to talk about or I didn't hear her talk about responsibilities and also I didn't hear her talk about the efficiencies.

This comes from an excerpt from the federal Liberal Atlantic caucus subcommittee on innovation, in May of this year, concerned about how “processing times dilute business growth, and create inefficiency and uncertainty. Some businesses have had to obtain bridge funding while waiting for ACOA funds.” It says, “These circumstances are disruptive to business development.”

Then the concerning part to any government should be that the “... perception among some that standard processing times”—because this is now centralized—“at ACOA have increased approximately threefold over the past year and a half, and that requiring Ministerial approval unnecessarily delays the process. For example, a 30-day processing time is now taking 90 days.”

It then says, “...centralized decision-making is viewed unfavourably as impeding the agility of programs.”

Knowing that, in your position, what would you suggest to the minister regarding centralization, in terms of making these improvements, so that we get back on track and the regionals actually have some influence nationally?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** As a public servant, I'm not sure how far I can go commenting on a caucus statement. In answer to your question, I think the minister laid out the rationale for the integration of the RDAs earlier, which I think is what you're getting at, about them having one minister. On that front, I think her rationale was around a coordination of national economic development. I'm not sure I can add to that. I think the minister gave you her rationale, regarding why that change was included in the legislation.

● (1215)

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** Also, in the mandate letters that went out, we didn't find anything about change of responsibility, only the monetary change.

Does anything in the current law prohibit the Prime Minister from appointing a gender-equal cabinet?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I'm not familiar with any such limit, no.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** Does anything in Bill C-24 add new responsibilities or power to the current ministers of state who are to be listed by this legislation as full ministers with full salaries?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** As I tried to explain a minute ago, it does a couple of things. We have a certain set of legal arrangements by which you can make adjustments in terms of powers, duties, functions, and delegations if you're a minister of state. What this statute does is it allows for similar powers, duties, and functions to be transferred to this group of ministers in terms of responsibilities, use of services of department facilities, appropriate delegations, etc. It basically allows for a series of shifts to this group of ministers, which we would otherwise have to do in a different way if they were ministers of state. The only other change is for the other two points I raised, but that's the major thing in terms of powers, duties, and functions.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** In the act it allows it, but it doesn't say that they will. Is that correct?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I apologize—

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** They will have the responsibility. It allows for them to have that, but it doesn't say that they will, so right until they do, they don't have those responsibilities of budgeting, or as deputy ministers, they don't have the responsibilities in terms of legislative authority.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** There are a lot of good questions in there, so let me try to answer them all.

In terms of the way it's structured with respect to ministers, first of all they get a mandate letter that sets out the things that the Prime Minister expects them to do. In the current structure of the ministry, where we have a number of individuals who are ministers of state, there was a series of internal administrative adjustments made, orders in council in a few instances, in terms of trying to attempt to empower and give life to what ministers needed to do, what was in their mandate letter. With the passing of this legislation, because they're now full ministers, it will be necessary to do a similar series of considerations in the areas that I just went through to make sure that people have the necessary services, facilities, delegations, etc., so they can continue to do what's in their mandate letter. Is that clear?

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** In a way. When I looked at one of the mandate letters, it doesn't spell out their increased responsibilities in terms of the deputy minister or in terms of carrying the budget for a given department. I didn't see that in the mandate letter.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** The mandate letters are the central articulation of the expectations of the Prime Minister in terms of the responsibilities for each minister, and certainly there's nothing in this statute that touches on what's in the mandate letters.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** That's right. As you said, it allows, but it doesn't direct.

**The Chair:** We're out of time.

Mr. Blaikie, you have seven minutes.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Thank you very much.

Part of the project around Bill C-24 has been to try to narrow down why it is that this legislation is necessary and why it's important for Parliament to spend time on it. We heard earlier that one of those reasons is to bring legislation into harmony with the current practice of government.

An earlier line of questioning I was pursuing was why we're doing that in the case of regional economic development ministers but not in the case of the different kinds of ministers. The government is not using ministers of state, so presumably, if you wanted the legislation to go here, you would get rid of it, particularly so if there's a principled objection to having ministers of state. This seems to be the case in the debate about whether you have a one-tier ministry or a two-tier ministry.

That's not clear, but I don't expect you to answer that. It's more of a comment than a question.

The other aspect of the legislation seems to be creating equality of ministers, and I've been trying to hone in on what the relevant sense of equality is because it's not exactly clear to me, if I'm being generous. I think there is a superficial answer, which is that it's nice to be called "minister" as opposed to "minister of state", and maybe get taken more seriously.

In any event, what we did hear from the government House leader was that, with this legislation, the five ministries that we've been concerned about largely in the debate—although there's a sixth now because the Minister of Indigenous Services is currently a minister of state—are ministers to assist. One of the things that Bill C-24 will accomplish is that there will no longer be ministers who assist other ministers. Is that true? Is that one of the goals of Bill C-24, to eliminate scenarios where other ministers are characterized as assisting full ministers?

• (1220)

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I'll ask Ms. Boyle to add to that.

I think historically the "minister of state" styling has been in the zone of assisting a minister. What the government tried to do when the ministry was stood up, though, right from the get-go, was establish, through the mandate letters, a specific series of responsibilities for each minister and minister of state, styled as a minister, and transfer some of the powers, duties, and authorities to those specific individuals. What we are basically seeing here is a formalization of what was done with the existing tool kit, if you will, similar to what other governments have done.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** So the goal is to have ministers not be ministers who are assisting other ministers. They would be ministers in their own right, with their own areas of responsibility, who would not have to defer to other ministers, because then there would be a hierarchy. If one minister had to go to another minister for sign-off, you'd have a hierarchy of ministers or a two-tiered ministry. Is that not true?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** My understanding is that the goal is to pursue the one-tier cabinet philosophy and to ensure that each minister is equipped with all the tools.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** What we want to avoid is a hierarchy of ministers, where some ministers would have to go to other ministers to get sign-off. Is that the case?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I'm not sure that I'm following your question. I think the objective is to ensure that each minister has whatever tools he or she needs to do what's in the mandate letter.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Say I'm a minister of X, but I'm in a position where I have to go to the minister of Y to get a sign-off for my initiative. I do the work with the resources allocated to me within a particular department, but before I can go ahead with something, there's another minister who if he or she says no, it's trumped. Then you would have a hierarchy of ministers, and it's the goal of the government to eliminate that hierarchy of ministers. Is that a right interpretation of the government's argument with respect to Bill C-24?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I'm not sure I can speak on behalf of the government as a whole in terms of the answer to your question.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** I would need someone from government to ask that question to, for instance the House leader.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** What I would say to you, and I'm doing my best to answer your question, is the—

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** I appreciate that. I don't mean any disrespect.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** Starting with the mandate letter, the objective is to try to give all the powers, duties, authorities, and delegations, you name it, to the individual. In terms of sign-offs, and it depends on what the sign-off is on, if somebody has something within his or her unique purview as a minister of state, he or she can sign off on that.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** What I'm trying to understand is this. In the structure of Global Affairs, you have the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is the minister who “holds office during pleasure and has the management and direction of the Department in Canada and abroad.”

Then there are additional ministers for Global Affairs.

“A Minister for International Trade is to be appointed by commission...to hold office during pleasure and to assist the Minister in carrying out his or her responsibilities relating to international trade.”

“A Minister for International Development...hold[s] office during pleasure”, and the job is “to assist the Minister in carrying out his or her responsibilities relating to international development, poverty reduction and humanitarian assistance.”

A further section says, “A minister appointed under section 3 or 4”, which is to say, those two sub-ministries, “is to act with the concurrence of the Minister”, who is the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

There is clearly a hierarchy within Global Affairs. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is the minister in charge. The other two ministers act to assist that minister but need the sign-off of that minister to go ahead with things. If the goal of Bill C-24 is to eliminate a hierarchy within cabinet, should Bill C-24 also not change the structure of Global Affairs so that the Minister of International Trade and the minister of international aid are independent ministers who don't require the sign-off of the Minister of Foreign affairs for the work they do?

**The Chair:** I'll let Mr. McCowan respond, but I'm not sure whether, being a dedicated public servant, he's in a position to answer a question about how the government and this cabinet want to operate.

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** I would note that the House leader was quite ready to have him answer similar questions earlier, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** I'm certain that Mr. McCowan can answer for himself. I'm just saying that I'm not sure whether he's in a position to comment on the Prime Minister's prerogative.

• (1225)

**Mr. Daniel Blaikie:** Fair enough.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** Thank you, Chair, I appreciate the comment. I'll do my best to answer within the scope of being a public servant.

What I would say to you is that there are a number of departments around town that are similar. ESDC has a similar structure. The machinery of government has been built up not by one builder but by a whole series of builders over time, and in the course of many people having had their hands on the mortar, the bricks, and the trowel, you have all sorts of variations in approach across government. This is an attempt to give a rationalization to one component of that. I can't speak on behalf of the government to other parts. What I can say is that this is an attempt to rationalize this corner of the structure and to give life to the objectives the minister articulated.

**The Chair:** I have Madam Shanahan down, but I'm not sure if anyone on the government side wants another intervention or not. Madam Ratansi suggested you had exhausted your questions, but please go ahead if you have some.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** Thank you, Chair, for this opportunity to explore a bit further.

It's sort of like a seminar on government organizational models. I find it very interesting, because we had a discussion about how other Westminster countries approach their government structures, to which I imagine they have made changes over time as well. I come from the private sector so forgive me, but it seems to be particular to government to be able to adopt an entirely new structure if it so desires when it enters government, which you wouldn't see necessarily in a public company.

Our government has chosen this whole-of-government approach. It's something we're all learning about, so I appreciate your explanation and comments about that.

Am I right in saying that in the previous government, there were positions called “secretary of state”? Were there three positions for secretary of state for small business, for multiculturalism and identity, and for the Asia-Pacific gateway? Is that something that...?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I'm going from memory here, which is always a dangerous thing to do. I believe there were a number of “ministers of state” in the previous government. I don't have the list in front of me, so I would be going from memory, which, as I say, is probably a dangerous thing to do, but how can I assist in...?

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** Then my question would be this. It seems that there was some flexibility there in naming different parliamentarians to different positions, so how would those secretary of state positions differ from a minister of state or a parliamentary secretary, for example?



**Ms. Martha Boyle:** This is a bit of a historic question, but I think that secretaries of state were the precursor of ministers of state. When the Ministries and Ministers of State Act came into place, secretaries of state were ended. I would say that the last secretary of state may have been in the 1970s.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** Very interesting.

**Ms. Martha Boyle:** You are quite right in saying that in the last government, for example, there was a minister of state for small business, a minister of state for multiculturalism, and a minister of state for ACOA.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** Okay, so the difference is that the title changes.

In previous administrations, was it the practice that each minister had a mandate letter?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I can't speak authoritatively for all of history, but what's unique about the current ministry is that they have mandate letters that were made public.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** So we don't know if previous ministers had any kind of mandate letter whatsoever. That wouldn't be a matter of record.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** It's beyond the scope of what I can speak to in terms of this particular appearance. What I can tell you is clearly for this ministry there are mandate letters and they're public.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** They are public. So clearly that's the first time that mandate letters for ministers have been made public.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** To my knowledge, that's correct.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan:** Certainly, as a parliamentarian, I find them very useful. I consult them regularly.

Maybe, Mr. Chair, we should have had a parliamentary historian here with us today.

**The Chair:** The chair is always open to suggestions. Just name that person.

If you have no more questions, I'll go across to our next intervenor.

Mr. Shipley or Mr. McCauley? You have five minutes between the two of you.

• (1230)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I'll do four minutes and Mr. Shipley will do one minute.

Ms. Shanahan, I always enjoy history lessons, so thanks for bringing it up.

Mr. McCowan and Ms. Boyle, I have a very simple question. As opposed to traditional ministers, do these new ministers have equal powers—not an equal voice, but equal statutory responsibilities in the cabinet?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** Every minister has unique powers, duties, and functions, depending on their responsibilities.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Do they have all the powers of a regular full minister? Does the minister of state for women have the same statutory powers as the Minister of Finance?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** As you know, there's a unique series of considerations that goes with each minister, and after the coming into force of this ministry there were also some orders in council that transferred some powers, duties, and functions to—

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** The minister of state for status of women wouldn't be able to deliver a memorandum to cabinet under these new rules.

**Ms. Martha Boyle:** The minister of state for status of women is responsible for the department that is called the Office of the Coordinator, Status of Women, and she can take forward MCs on her own with respect to that department.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** But does it have to be co-signed?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** No, it is the policy of this Prime Minister under this cabinet that ministers can take forward items, MCs, on their own. But it is also the expectation that if it crosses the mandates of other ministers they should be co-signed, and that's true for all ministers.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I thought such protocols were under the Financial Administration Act.

Let's go just back to the very beginning, Mr. McCowan, when I asked about when the cost started for the added cars for the old ministers of state, and the salaries. You were saying that.... I asked the minister, she said, literally, from day one, the day they were swearing in. My understanding is it came about a couple of weeks later when the whole thing blew up that it wasn't a true gender-equal cabinet because we have these five junior ministries that were occupied by women.

You said you were going to get back to us on it. You said it was something you would look into it and confirm, or was the minister correct that from day one they had the car allowance and everything else that came with the full ministry?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** First, I don't remember the news coverage in question that you're referring to. I thought your question, as I heard it the first time round, was in relation to salaries. I thought I heard you say that there was something in relation to back pay. We can certainly go back and I'd be happy to undertake to look into it if your understanding is that there is some issue about a back pay. My understanding is the salary was paid from day one, and it was the same for all of them.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Okay.

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** But if you'd like, we can go back and look and see if there is some issue where it took a couple of weeks for it to kick in or whatever.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** No, that's fine.

**The Chair:** I think what Mr. McCauley is getting at is were these ministers of state paid full ministerial salaries plus all of the perks, car allowance, driver, that type of thing from day one or was it a few weeks or a period of time after they became ministers of state that their salaries had been increased. Could you confirm that?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I'm happy to look into it. I hadn't understood the second part of the question. I thought it was related to salaries, but I'm happy to look into it and we can provide to the committee a summary of how that happened.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Are you familiar with the Senate finance committee's concerns about how the money was paid out of supplementary estimates?

**Mr. Ian McCowan:** I understood that there was a discussion around that, and if my memory serves me right I think there was actually a ruling from the Speaker in the House. What I can say to you is the method by which the money is flowing now in terms of the ministers of state and the ministers is the same as it's been for several decades. There's nothing unusual in terms of what's happening with this ministry as compared to earlier ministries.

The salaries of ministers are paid under the Salaries Act. In terms of ministers of state it flows under the appropriations.

**The Chair:** Mr. McCauley, you asked me to interrupt when you had about a minute left.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** I'm out of time, but, thank you.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to have the committee's attention. I would like to bring forward a notice of motion.

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee immediately undertake a study of no less than 4 meetings on the proposed changes to the tax system outlined in the government's consultations titled "Tax Planning Using Private Corporations" as publicly released on July 18, 2017, in order to assess the potential impact of the changes and the additional resources that will be needed by the Government of Canada in order to enforce the consultation paper's proposals;

That the Committee report its findings to the House;

And that the government provide a response to the recommendations made by the committee.

I put that on notice.

•(1235)

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

Just give me a moment to consult with our clerk. I believe your motion is in order, but just one moment.

Thank you, colleagues. The motion is in order. The motion was actually delivered and received by the clerk about a week ago, on September 25.

The motion is in order, Mr. Shipley. You can certainly speak to the motion and I will ask for a show of hands for a speakers list.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Mr. Chair, can we excuse the witnesses?

**The Chair:** Mr. Shipley, we have about 25 minutes left. Could you give us an indication...? I'd like to see a show of hands first. If it looks as if several people are going to be speaking, then I'll certainly excuse the witnesses.

It appears to me, and it's only a judgment call, that we'll probably be going until the top of the hour. In that case, Mr. McCowan and Madam Boyle, thank you for your appearance here today. You are excused.

We will suspend for about two minutes while we reset for the motion.

•(1235)

(Pause)

•(1235)

**The Chair:** Colleagues, I'll reconvene.

I have one quick update for the committee's consideration. At some point we have to get into the drafting instructions for the report on government advertising. From a procedural standpoint, Mr. Shipley can speak to his motion. We will continue speaking to the motion as long as there are people on the speakers list.

However, as chair, I will have the ability to interject at any time, just to be able to deal with matters. We will have to go in camera to deal with the drafting instructions. If that happens, we will resume again with the person who was last on the speakers list and continue in that fashion.

I want to make sure everyone is aware, procedurally, of what will happen. I want to make sure, particularly with the report on government advertising, that the drafting instructions have been given, and we can move on whenever this motion has been dispensed with.

In other words, I may be interrupting in about 10 minutes or so. Mr. Shipley, until then, the floor is yours.

•(1240)

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and all of my colleagues.

I don't suspect it would be an issue with wanting to actually look at this.

When tax reforms come in, they basically affect every jurisdiction, and certainly the majority of the job creators in my province and in every province across the nation. We know that for sure. Every MP, regardless of what position or what party we are in, has been receiving a multitude of calls, letters, and emails regarding concerns on these tax reforms.

One of the concerns is that in July, in the middle of summer, the government dropped this onto our businesses—as they have done with a couple of other things, actually. Another was in agriculture, in terms of a national strategy policy and Canada's food guide. That said, they dropped this in the middle of summer, when people are away, when families are engaged in what families want to do in the summer across Canada when we can spend some time with family, and they then put in a 75-day consultation time.

I think they forgot... I'm not sure why. But in agriculture that's huge. Summer is a busy time in agriculture, because they are in the midst of finishing the planting. The livestock people are in the midst of harvesting, and then obviously, through the summer we are into a number of crops that are being harvested. But then to stop it in October, which is sort of interesting, just after kids have gone back to school.... Small businesses are planning for the year. They're getting ready for the seasons that come up, and of course, agriculture is then into the main harvest.

Right now we have individuals from all businesses, and we've all heard their concerns in terms of these tax reforms, particularly about the targeting of small business owners. If I remember right, two-thirds of small business owners make something like \$63,000 or \$70,000 a year. The government has chosen to target these individuals, these family.... I would love to take the opposition to all the family-run small businesses that you're targeting that are anguished because they don't know what to do, whether they're in farming or they run a bicycle repair and sales store, or they're running their Tim Hortons or McDonald's franchise. And it's compounded in Ontario by a number of things the Liberal government in Ontario has put on.

The interesting part that really bothers me is that I get the question, "What about the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance? They are multi-millionaires and have all this money. What extra are they paying?" I say, "Right now, until they change it, there is no impact to them. It's all about you." That becomes another frustrating part for them, because they look at it and say, "But he talks about the middle class." I say, "Yes, pretty much every day, then turns around and sticks it to you at every opportunity—except he did give you more for child care, but actually if you go back, the cost extra to you, as the middle class"—as they call it; I call it the middle-income earners in our country—"you'll see you're now dinged about another \$800 more than you were before they took office." It is a concern.

That's part of the reason this has come forward.

The other part of it, Mr. Chair and colleagues, is that there is an incompetence that has happened within the governing Liberal Party, because they say they're going to raise the taxes to generate income.

• (1245)

What they aren't talking about is what the professional accountants and economists in my riding are saying. I think they're likely as wise as the ones giving the government their expertise and advice, but these guys—and these ladies, quite honestly, who are amazing at the public meetings—are raising huge issues about what this is going to do to impact our families. These are not the large multinationals that are in the public domain. They're not the offerings that we see in the TSX. No, no, these are the ones you see when you drive down the main street. I don't care if you're on the main street of Toronto, Hamilton, Fredericton, London, Strathroy-Caradoc, or Wallaceburg in my area, these are the folks on the street, folks. These are the guys who have the engineering or the manufacturing along the side....

To go back to the incompetence, they'll say, "But I was told...and we believed them. When they got elected, they promised..." Well, actually, they promised at every meeting that we would have this small deficit of \$10 million. Now that's going to double or triple, "But don't worry, because we're going to tax that top 1%. We're going to tax those rich people and give it to you."

They hoped to have raised a couple of billion dollars out of that, but in fact, when you start taxing people, things actually go in the reverse, so now, instead of gaining \$2 billion, they have lost revenues of \$1 billion. Instead of having a plus now, they're in the negative.

They promised our small business people that they were going to lower that business tax down to 9%. I'm waiting for the Minister of Finance to actually step up to the plate on that promise also, but he hasn't mentioned that. He hasn't mentioned it to our small business people. He just hasn't done that, but what he wants to do is bring forward these reforms that protect the elite and protect those who don't have to worry, so here we go.

I think that for everybody here, this is a concern. I think it's important for all of us, and I'm sure my friends on the other side will want to know what the potential impact is. I don't know how we can talk to these folks without giving them...because there are all kinds of stories out there right now, but nobody will give the details. This will help us.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Shipley.

**Mr. Bev Shipley:** So let's wrap it up. I suggest we go to a vote on it.

**Mr. Kyle Peterson:** Call a vote.

**The Chair:** If there are more speakers on the speakers list, I cannot call a vote.

If you have concluded your remarks, Mr. Shipley, I will go to the next person on our speakers list. Have you concluded your remarks?

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** To assist Mr. Shipley, I move that the debate be now adjourned.

**The Chair:** That is a non-debatable motion that calls for an immediate vote.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** The debate is adjourned. I will now suspend for a couple of moments while we go in camera and discuss the drafting of the government report on advertising.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*





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