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## Standing Committee on Finance

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**Tuesday, June 7, 2005**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti**

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## Standing Committee on Finance

Tuesday, June 7, 2005

•(1855)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.)):** *Bonsoir, tout le monde.* Perhaps we can begin.

I have some good news. Based on the fact that we defeated clause 98, we don't have to vote on clauses 99 and 100. So we're going to go directly to clause 101.

(On clause 101)

**The Chair:** If we can carry clause 101 to—

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Could we please have a recorded vote on clause 101?

**The Chair:** All right.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Don't worry about it and follow me.

[English]

**The Chair:** We'll have a recorded vote on clause 101.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC):** We've got an amendment to this. You've got that?

**The Chair:** No, the next amendment I have is C-14.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Okay, sorry.

Mr. Chair, if I might, I'd like to address this one. We're pretty concerned about pushing ahead with the amendments to the CEPA legislation, which effectively declare carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases to be toxic substances. As others have noted when this was first included in Bill C-43, this really does not belong in this bill; this should be addressed more properly through the review of CEPA, which is coming up in the fall. We've had the chair of the environment committee say as much. We've even had the government convinced to the point where the government House leader was saying, well, if it's pushed through, we would.... If it were defeated—

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Amendment C-14 concerns clause 155; however, we've gotten to clause 101.

**The Chair:** Indeed.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** According to the version I have here, Amendment C-14, which is moved by the Conservatives, concerns clause 155.

**The Chair:** Yes, but we're debating clause 101.

[English]

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Yes, we're on clause 101?

**The Chair:** There are no amendments.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** No, but I'm actually speaking to the clause.

The point I was making is that the government House leader is saying that if it is actually taken out of here they will not bring it back, because he recognizes that it should be part of the CEPA review. There's widespread concern about taking a step like this without really understanding the implications; I think we should be conscious of that. This does need to be addressed, but it's better addressed in a different forum like the review of CEPA, which is coming up this fall.

**The Chair:** Mr. McKay, would you like to...?

**Hon. John McKay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance):** This remains a significant part of the government's overall Kyoto package, giving us some regulatory authority in this particular area.

I just wanted to give Ms. Wright an opportunity to expand on the reasons for this section being included in the budget bill and in the overall Kyoto package.

**The Chair:** Mr. Mills, perhaps Ms. Wright can respond to both.

**Hon. John McKay:** She's just taking my time, in fact, so she's still part....

**The Chair:** Yes, but maybe she can answer both members.

**Hon. John McKay:** Well, let her speak first, and then I'm sure Mr. Mills will have a few questions.

**Ms. Cynthia Wright (Director General, Strategic Priorities, Department of the Environment):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is part of the Kyoto package because of the government's decision to move on regulating large final emitters, which produce, as people know, 50% of the greenhouse gas emissions. There's a need to move quickly to regulation with a consistent national approach.

CEPA is the only legislative authority we have right now for doing this, but the shorthand phrase "toxic substance", which we use for substances that we determine do need action under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, has caused us concern and trouble in the past. It's led to confusion, particularly for those substances that are not toxic to human health, like greenhouse gases.

What we've been proposing to do with this amendment is to remove the shorthand expression "toxic substance". It wouldn't result in any other changes to the policy, procedures, or practice. It simply eliminates that shorthand expression to avoid the confusing and protracted debate and the pejorative terminology that we've had in the past over the word "toxic". Then we can focus the debate on whether or not the greenhouse gases meet the criteria of the act and, particularly, on whether or not they cause "danger to the environment on which life depends". This will also enable the government to move more quickly to regulations without the long, protracted debate.

The issue of waiting for the five-year review has been considered, but while the review itself starts this fall, it would go on for at least a year, and then there'd be the parliamentary process for amendment. Our best estimate is that it would be 2008 before you'd actually have this issue dealt with.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Wright.

Mr. Mills.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, CPC):** There are a number of issues here. The first one is that this was not included in the original budget. There was a vague reference in one of the annexes that some other mechanism could be used, but there was nothing in the budget about using CEPA. So it was a late add-on, and no one should indicate that it was part of the original plan.

Second, of course, there is a full review, a five-year review, of CEPA coming up in the fall. The environment committee has already set aside time for that. Witnesses are already being arranged.

CEPA works pretty well right now. We expect it to be fine-tuned. It does go after toxic substances like arsenic and PCBs and so on. Certainly CO<sub>2</sub> doesn't fit in the realm of the toxic substances it's going after.

The other point is that this really allows the government to use CEPA regulations to go after large final emitters. What we really need is large final emitter legislation, so this is a backdoor approach to going after them. They've been working on this for three or four years, negotiating with large final emitters. Now they're coming in the back door with this legislation.

Third, as Ms. Wright says, I find it extremely offensive that it would take so long to get this through. My God, we recognized that climate change was a problem in 1992, at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The Government of Canada said it was a problem. In 1997 we signed on to the Kyoto Protocol, and here we are now, in 2005, saying, well, we don't have time to come up with legislation; we have to use some backdoor approach, using the regulations under CEPA, to go after large final emitters. This is a pretty poor excuse for anybody from Environment Canada to use, that they didn't have time to come up with some kind of legislation. I find it pretty offensive that this would even be used as an excuse by a member of our bureaucracy.

This just doesn't fit. It shouldn't be there. It's a bad piece of legislation, and obviously the whole thing should be omitted, which the environment chairman has said as well as, in fact, the government House leader, as has been mentioned.

• (1900)

**The Chair:** Mr. McKay.

**Hon. John McKay:** I'll take the first two points, and then Ms. Wright will take the next three.

First of all, with respect to whether it is or isn't mentioned in the budget, I direct your attention to page 191 of the budget, which says "In the coming months, the Government will set out the details of a mandatory emissions reduction regime and emissions trading system"—both of which are contained in the budget—"including the related legal framework"—which is what this is deemed to be—"for LFEs to support further improvement in the performance of this sector in addressing the challenge of climate change."

If your argument is based on whether "toxic" made it into the budget, the answer is that obviously it wasn't in the budget; it wasn't appropriate for it to be in the budget. But if the question is whether or not this was part of the legal framework, the answer is that it was referenced in the budget, and this is the proposal.

With respect to the five-year review, I don't see anything in this particular proposal that would be in any way detrimental to the five-year review.

**Ms. Cynthia Wright:** To elaborate a bit more, some of the large final emitters are already regulated under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Indeed, the act does have the tools necessary for the regime the government's proposing, including the trading regime. In fact, it has all the broad regulatory authorities and the trading regime and it allows for us to work with provinces, it allows equivalency agreements with provinces, those that want to have their enforcement of the regulations as opposed to the CEPA regulations.

We find it has all of the tools that the government has been considering for the large final emitters, and in fact the possibility of using CEPA has been discussed for many years, even prior to 1992. So CEPA has been viewed as an act that can deal with substances beyond those that are toxic to human health. It is designed to deal with substances that also cause harm to the environment, and the environment on which life depends. That's one of the confusions, that people perceive it to be able to deal just with those that are toxic to human health, as opposed to those that cause harm to the environment, and the environment on which life depends.

In terms of the timeline, it does take time to create new legislation or amend legislation and to develop regulations, and we find ourselves running into the end of the Kyoto period. I think that's one of the reasons, with CEPA being talked about for several years as one alternative. Given that it has the authorities the government needs, it appears to make the most sense to use it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Wright.

Can we go to a vote? We're voting on clause 101.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Mr. Chairman, I'm not completely clear. If I could just check this with my colleagues, if we vote on clauses 101 to 126, that is basically all of part 15. Correct?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Do we want to vote on it all at once?

•(1905)

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** No, I want to have a nominal vote only for clause 101—

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** I see.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** —and after that on division.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** On division?

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Against, for us.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Against. All right.

So we can group them into two? So we would have clause 101, and then the remainder?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** All right.

**The Chair:** Clause 101.

[*Translation*]

We'll now put clause 101 to a vote.

Mr. Bell.

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Bell (North Vancouver, Lib.):** I want to clarify, then.

Do I understand that clause 101 is removing the “toxic” definition? To vote yes for it is to remove the term “toxic” from it? I want to clarify, because that's how I understood the point that you had raised originally, Mr. Solberg.

**Hon. John McKay:** That's correct.

**Mr. Don Bell:** That's correct.

**The Chair:** The vote, Mr. Dupuis.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Richard Dupuis):** This is on clause 101—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Pardon me, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps I misunderstood Mr. Solberg's motion. Is the idea to vote on clauses 101 to 126 all together and to have a recorded vote?

**The Chair:** No. We're now going to vote on clause 101. That's what's been decided.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** All right.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** (Clause 101 negatived)

**The Chair:** Now we go to clauses 102 to 172.

**Some hon. members:** No, no!

**The Chair:** Right, it's to clause 154.

[*Translation*]

Yes, Mr. Loubier.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Mr. Chairman, I'd prefer us to vote on clauses 102 to 126 all at once.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** *D'accord*, clauses 102 to 126.

On division?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** No. Mr. Chairman, I think what we want here is to actually vote against it.

I don't know if it has to be reported, but let's just make it clear who's voting which way.

**The Chair:** Okay.

(Clauses 102 to 126 inclusive negatived)

**The Chair:** We're at clause 127. Now, can we do clauses 127 to 172 or not?

No.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Mr. Chairman, I think everyone would agree to vote on clauses 127 to 138 all together.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** That's to clauses 127 to 138.

Basically, those are the amendments to the Canada Deposit Insurance Act.

(Clauses 127 to 138 inclusive agreed to)

**The Chair:** Fine, nobody is opposed.

Next are clauses 139 to 154.

•(1910)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Mr. Chairman, I think everyone would agree to vote on clauses 139 to 141 all together.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay, I have clauses 139 to 151.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** No, clauses 139 to 141.

**The Chair:** To 141?

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Okay, you could.... Clauses 139 to 148.

**The Chair:** To clause 148? *C'est beau*.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Is there an amendment?

**The Chair:** No, just a vote *en bloc*.

**Ms. Susan Baldwin (Procedural Clerk):** That would cover the Canada student assistance and the Currency Act.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Oh, I see. Okay.

**The Chair:** Again, the vote is on clauses 139 to 148.

(Clauses 139 to 148 agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** We're on clause 149.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** I think everyone around the table would agree to vote *en bloc* once again, this time on clauses 149 to 154.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay. We're on clauses 149 to 154.

(Clauses 149 to 154 inclusive agreed to on division)

(On clause 155)

**The Chair:** We have amendment C-14 for the Conservatives.

On your sheet, we're going to go to BQ-8 and BQ-13. I've been told these are inadmissible, because BQ-8 refers to the amended schedule I, which is BQ-13, and BQ-13 goes beyond the scope of the bill.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Mr. Chairman...

[English]

**The Chair:** We're looking at amendments BQ-8 and BQ-13.

[Translation]

Yes, Mr. Loubier.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** We really have no luck, Mr. Chairman. Of all the amendments, that was the one we preferred, because it was the one that would have made it possible to improve the Employment Insurance Fund. That disappoints me, but I understand the committee has its limits. I'm nevertheless disappointed that the NDP didn't negotiate an improvement to the employment insurance system with the Liberal government. We get the impression the NDP has abandoned unemployed workers. In any case, we haven't.

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

[English]

Can we go to amendment C-14, reference number 1797331.

Mr. Solberg, do you want to speak to this?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

This is consistent with the approach we're taking, of course, right now in committee, where we're having long-range forecasters coming in to provide independent advice with respect to surpluses and that sort of thing. We're simply extending this to the employment insurance fund.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, when we accepted the throne speech in the fall, we accepted it with an amendment that called for an independent commission. This is really just in the spirit of that. The idea is to provide independent advice to the actuary and to an independent commission that would determine the rates for the employment insurance fund.

•(1915)

**The Chair:** Can I just say something here?

We're looking at amendment C-14. Just to bring everybody up to speed, when we vote on amendment C-14, we're going to be voting on amendments C-16, C-18, C-20, and C-23. They're all related, so if we want to discuss amendment C-14, we might as well discuss amendments C-16, C-18, C-20, and C-23.

Mr. McKay.

**Hon. John McKay:** Mr. Chair, the government is opposed to this amendment for a number of reasons.

The first reason has to do with the fact that this again mixes up core administrative responsibilities and interferes with how the government discharges its responsibilities. It is not a legislative process; it is an administrative process, and I think any time legislators decide to become administrators, there are frequently some difficulties.

The second point is that in some respects the proposal is an inferior process to that which is already occurring. At the current time, the Government of Canada surveys the 20 available forecasters who actually do this sort of thing, as opposed to the finance committee, which currently only retains four people to do this. So the survey that is done by the Government of Canada in order to be able to establish the numbers on which the premiums are set is in fact a far more extensive process than would be normally contemplated by this amendment.

So it seems to me to fail on two grounds: one, it mixes the legislative and administrative; and two, it's an inferior process to what the government engages in currently.

**The Chair:** Mr. Solberg.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** If I can answer that, with respect to the administration, the committee is not getting involved now, other than to make the recommendation that the experts, who already provide the information to the House, the experts we designate, would provide information to the EI Commission and to the actuary and those involved with setting the premium rates.

The reason for this should be fairly obvious, Mr. Chairman. The reason is that what we don't want is for the employment insurance fund to become a political slush fund that can be used by the government, for instance, to spend in general revenues, as they've done for the last number of years. We've seen \$46 billion siphoned away from workers and employers to use in general revenues. This ties the hands of the government to keep them from doing that, and I appreciate that it's not very convenient, but clearly it's the fairest thing for workers and employers. It's the most transparent thing for all taxpayers, who have to pay this and who are outraged at the current situation.

**The Chair:** Mr. McKay.

**Hon. John McKay:** Mr. Solberg is mixing his apples and his oranges. His latter comments have nothing to do with the amendment at hand; this has to do with the rate-setting for the year coming forward. As I say, the process that he's proposing is actually an inferior process to what the Department of Finance currently does. Two of the four people currently engaged by the committee are also engaged by the department, and the other two don't do economic forecasts. So I don't know why the committee would be attracted to a process that is actually inferior.

Maybe I could ask Mr. DeVries to make further comments such as he may think are appropriate.

**Mr. Peter DeVries (General Director, Deputy Minister's Office, Department of Finance):** The process used in this would be that the Department of Finance would survey the economists who do forecasts on a regular basis. They would take the average of that survey and then provide that to the commission or the chief actuary in order to derive a rate. Those forecasts would be published in the fall update, so it is a transparent process that we are using in this case.

**The Chair:** Are we ready for the vote?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** The vote is on amendment C-14?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Are you grouping them?

**The Chair:** We can group them, but basically we'll vote on amendment C-14, and then it'll just apply to amendment C-16, amendment C-18, amendment C-20, and amendment C-23.

• (1920)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Mr. Chairman, I didn't think the debate was over. I'm looking at the Conservatives' amendments, and, grouping them together, I find it hard to see that they make for an independent employment insurance fund or an independent commission. Instead I see a kind of process like what's done for the estimates, for example.

If they want an independent commission and an independent fund, I invite them to support the amendments we'll be moving in a few minutes. That's really well described. We've clearly set out the Conservatives' objective in our next three amendments.

[*English*]

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** I think that sounds like a capital idea. Some of the things we're certainly in favour of.

**Hon. John McKay:** I have a point of order, Chair. You mentioned amendment C-23. I don't have an amendment C-23.

I do now.

**The Chair:** Maybe in the translation you caught it, but in French, [*Translation*]

I didn't understand a word of what you said, Mr. Loubier.

[*English*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** It is 10, 11 and 12.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Loubier, I didn't understand a word of what you said. I didn't listen to the interpretation. Perhaps those who listened to the interpretation understood it, but, in French, I understood nothing.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** I listened to Mr. Solberg's arguments earlier. He was talking about a kind of independent employment insurance commission. When I look at all the motions, they're not leading us to that. This looks like an independent process for establishing premium rates and things like that.

I invite the Conservatives to wait until the Bloc introduces its amendments 10, 11 and 12, which create a very specific independent entity.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay, so there was no question. We still have to vote.

We're voting on amendment C-14. Again, it's reference number 1797331.

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** That defeats amendment C-14, amendment C-16, amendment C-18, amendment C-20, and amendment C-23.

We are now on amendment C-15.

Mr. Solberg.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** These are all the ones that were lumped together, right?

Okay, pardon me, amendment C-15 is a little different. The reference number on that is 1797343.

**The Chair:** We're at amendment CPC-15.

Do you want to speak to that?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** If I remember correctly, the idea here was that if we had an earlier date it would be beneficial to business. I'm struggling here, and I have to consult with somebody.

**The Chair:** It gets more complicated as we go.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** This is to give small business a chance to adjust. A number of these amendments that refer to earlier dates give business a chance to adjust. It is possible, I gather, for the government to make these judgments based on the numbers coming in by that point in the year. So that's what we want to do. We want to give business a bit more of a chance to adjust to these things.

• (1925)

**The Chair:** Before I allow Mr. McKay to speak, I want to clear up an item here. If we vote in favour of amendment CPC-15, then amendment CPC-17 will automatically apply. If we don't vote for amendment CPC-15, then we cannot vote for CPC-19 and CPC-21. We'll get to that when we get there.

Mr. McKay.

**Hon. John McKay:** The choice of the government's dates is not arbitrary by any means. It's true that small businesses, indeed all businesses that pay EI premiums, would appreciate as much notice as possible. I'm sure they would also appreciate the most accurate information possible.

The second-quarter numbers end on June 30. Those numbers are not released until August 15. Hence the date of September 30, which is the date at which the Minister of Finance in effect signs off on the national account numbers. Once those numbers are achieved, then the chief actuary does his review and provides his report by October 14. That report is then sent to the commissioners, who have one month in which to recommend the rate to the government. This has to be done by November 14. The government then retains two weeks in which to do an override, if it feels it's necessary.

So your numbers end on June 30. You know by August 15 what those numbers are. The government has six weeks in which to digest those numbers and sign off on them. You then get the chief actuary to verify the numbers. The chief actuary then gives those numbers to the commission. The commission then sets the rate, and the government chooses by November 30 whether or not to override.

So that's why the dates are what they are. If we moved everything up by what this series of amendments proposes, we would be working with inferior sets of numbers. We would, in effect, be moving ourselves back to the first-quarter numbers rather than the second-quarter numbers, and that would achieve little or nothing. It would make your information almost stale-dated, and that would in turn lead to frustration among employers and employees, because of the indecisiveness of government in premium setting.

Réal, Peter, do either of you want to add to my comments on why we think these are not appropriate amendments?

**Mr. Peter DeVries:** The real issue is to get the most up-to-date information and still allow sufficient time to publish the new rates. Business must be able to react in time for these rates to come into effect for the new year. This information, for all the private sector economists, would be the second-quarter national accounts, which are released at the end of August. Everything flows from that.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

(Amendment negated)

**The Chair:** Owing to the fact that amendment C-15 was defeated, we no longer have to address C-19 and C-21.

So we have C-17 to address?

**Hon. John McKay:** We're on C-22.

**The Chair:** Oh, because C-15 and C-17 were together.

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Did you say C-17 and C-19 are finitio, Mr. Chairman?

**The Chair:** Yes, all of them, C-17, C-19 and C-21.

[Translation]

Now we'll move on to Amendment C-22, reference number 797347.

• (1930)

[English]

Mr. Solberg.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** What we're doing here is amending to September 30 the date that the Governor in Council can substitute a premium rate different from the one set by the commission.

**Hon. John McKay:** Once you defeat one, you defeat the whole thing.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Sorry, this could only work in conjunction with the other one, so I withdraw this one.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

(Clause 155 agreed to on division)

(On clause 156)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** We'll now move on to clause 156.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** I have three amendments concerning clause 156: BQ-10, BQ-11 and BQ-12. If BQ-10 is negated, BQ-11 and BQ-12 will be moot. The purpose of BQ-10 is to create the independent employment insurance fund, that is to say a commission independent of government, with the terms and conditions you see in BQ-11 and BQ-12.

**The Chair:** Are you introducing BQ-9 or BQ-10?

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** I'm introducing BQ-10, BQ-11 and BQ-12.

**The Chair:** We haven't yet dealt with BQ-9.

BQ-9 was negated; that's true.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** So we've gotten to BQ-10, BQ-11 and BQ-12. While the Clerk distributes those three amendments, I'm going to take the time to explain them.

As I mentioned, BQ-10 creates the Canada Employment Insurance Commission, an independent commission to manage an independent employment insurance fund. All the terms and conditions of appointment of employer and employee representatives are set out BQ-11, while the terms and conditions of operation are contained in BQ-12.

As I said earlier, we've been working for years to create this independent employment insurance fund to prevent the federal government from doing in future what it's done in the past seven years, which is to steal the surpluses resulting from employer and employee premiums. It hasn't been contributing to the fund for a number of years now.

We're creating this independent commission and giving it the necessary independence to evaluate premium levels and perhaps to propose to the government how the system can be improved.

**The Chair:** I'm going to make things easy for you.

[English]

BQ-10 is beyond the scope of the bill.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** It's beyond its scope, but it's not because we have more imagination than the government that you should prevent us from being creative.

**The Chair:** It amends a clause that isn't even in the bill. Even I understood that.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** That means that BQ-10, BQ-11 and BQ-12 are irrelevant.

[English]

**The Chair:** Irrelevant, no.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** I tried.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay, let's go over it.

Amendments BQ-10, BQ-11, and BQ-12 have just been ruled inadmissible.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Mr. Chairman, if we're more creative than the government, that means there's no room for us in a standing committee of the House.

[English]

**The Chair:** Amendment BQ-9 was ruled out of order because it referred to BQ-13, which was a schedule that tied into BQ-9. That was just an oversight on my part.

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, CPC):** So BQ-9 is out of order as well, as a result?

(Clauses 156 and 157 agreed to on division)

• (1935)

**The Chair:** We're at clause 158. We have amendment C-23.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** That was already ruled out.

**The Chair:** Was that the one that was taken out?



**Mr. Monte Solberg:** We've already dealt with it, I believe, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** That's the one that was withdrawn?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy Côté (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Chairman, C-17 has been withdrawn; C-23 hasn't.

[*English*]

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** We withdrew a different one. It was C-22.

**The Chair:** Yes, we withdrew C-22.

Does anybody have C-23?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** I have C-23, and I would like to say—

**The Chair:** I do not have C-23.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Well, it's part of the package.

**The Chair:** One second, please. If I don't have C-23, I don't think anybody else has it.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** We need some support on this to make it happen.

**The Chair:** Amendment C-23 was defeated on vote 14, which affected amendments C-16, 18, 20, and 23. That's why I don't have it, because I have it in my defeated pile.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** All right.

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

We are back on track. We are now on clause 158.

Yvan.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Mr. Chairman, I believe you'll find that my colleagues will agree unanimously to vote on clauses 159 to 171 all together.

**The Chair:** We haven't yet voted on clause 158.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** I thought you had already called the vote.

I'll introduce my motion later.

**The Chair:** Mr. Loubier, 158 to...

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Clauses 159 to 171.

I thought we had disposed of clause 158.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is everyone in favour of clause 158?

(Clause 158 agreed to on division)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Pardon me, Mr. Loubier: it's 159 to...

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Clauses 159 to 171.

**The Chair:** So, clauses 159 to 171.

[*English*]

Agreed? All right, clauses 159 to 171 are agreed to on division.

**Hon. John McKay:** Is there a reason why we left out clause 172?

**The Chair:** I'm following the orders of the committee. I'm not sure why we left it out.

**Hon. John McKay:** We don't like Nunavut, for some reason or another?

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Is there any reason not to include clause 172 in this vote?

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** We can include clause 172, Mr. Chairman. I told you 171? It was 172 instead.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Solberg, are you ready?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Sorry, where are we at? Which group are we voting on?

**The Chair:** We're going from clause 159 to clause 172.

● (1940)

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** I'm okay with that, Mr. Chairman, on division.

(Clause 159 to 172 inclusive agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** Shall the short title carry? I don't know why it should carry.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** I don't like it, actually.

**An hon. member:** Could it be shortened a little?

**The Chair:** Okay, shall the short title carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Well, we've changed it enough.

**The Chair:** There is no schedule 1.

[*Translation*]

What are we talking about?

**Mr. Guy Côté:** About BQ-13.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** No, that's over with.

[*English*]

**Mr. Guy Côté:** So we need to speak in the House.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Are you calling a vote on the bill as amended?

**The Chair:** No. We were on the short title, which was carried. There's no Schedule 1.

[*English*]

Is there an schedule 2? No, that's gone.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** No.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Shall the title carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Shall the bill as amended carry?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** I request a recorded vote on the amended bill, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** All right.

[English]

(Bill C-43 as amended agreed to: yeas 9; nays 2)

**The Chair:** Shall the chair report the bill as amended to the House?

[Translation]

Shall the Chair report the bill to the House?

[English]

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. John McKay:** Mr. Chair—

[Translation]

**The Chair:** That's not necessary. Why don't you need that?

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** You have to report to the House. I insist on it.

[English]

**Hon. John McKay:** Mr. Chair, I have two points.

Bismarck once said that there's two things you shouldn't watch in life: the making of sausages and the making of legislation. I think we've seen that today.

The second is that I want to thank the officials, on my behalf at least, and I'm sure on the honourable members' behalf. We may or may not always agree with what the finance department folks tell us, but I've never, ever met a more dedicated, hard-working group of people than those who work in the Department of Finance. I want to put that on the record because we are well served by these people.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**The Chair:** Monsieur Loubier, and Mr. Penson.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** Mr. Chairman, you started to ask us, "Shall the Chair report the bill as amended to the House?" and you interrupted yourself halfway through.

**The Chair:** The last question is: "Shall the committee order a reprint of the bill?" That's the one we don't carry. We won't reprint the bill.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** All right, but are you going to report to the House?

**The Chair:** Yes, I'm going to report to the House.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** All right, that's fine.

**The Chair:** Mr. Penson.

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that I echo what Mr. McKay just said. We had good cooperation from the department, and this bill has come out of this committee a much better bill than when it went in.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Hear, hear! Well said.

**The Chair:** I have a couple of cleanup items.

First of all, I want to thank the members for their cooperation. I had to cancel all my dates because I thought that we would go on

until tomorrow morning. I really want to thank you for the cooperation of all the members from both sides.

[Translation]

Tomorrow, at 3:30 p.m.

[English]

we have the Minister of Finance appearing on Bill C-48.

• (1945)

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** There's no time to waste, Mr. Chairman.

[English]

**The Chair:** We have witnesses all day on Thursday.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Mr. Chairman, are you going ahead and arbitrarily setting a schedule now? That's what it looks like, and I think we should have a discussion about that.

**The Chair:** No. We said that we're doing Bill C-48 once we're done with Bill C-43.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Yes, we know that, but we have the schedule too.

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** We have other work besides this, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** We have to get these out. What else do we have to do?

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Mr. Chairman, you can't go ahead and do this, seriously.

**The Chair:** Well, we said that we were going to schedule all the witnesses on Thursday.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** No, Mr. Chairman, you can't do that. I'm sorry. We're not going to abide by that.

We have a plan to deal with this. We've got a schedule. It has already been determined that it's on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The NDP member withdrew her motion to go ahead and have the committee sit every day.

**The Chair:** Fine. What we'll do is have—

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** We'll meet on Thursday.

**The Chair:** I have witnesses lined up all day on Thursday.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** We can have the minister on Thursday.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** That's 3:30 tomorrow?

**The Chair:** Yes, 3:30.

[English]

We have witnesses all day, Mr. Solberg.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** You can't switch to Wednesday on a whim.

**The Chair:** Yes, we already did this on future business.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** We know that it's an agreement with the NDP.

**The Chair:** I'm fine. I'm doing it for you guys. I thought that you'd want to see the minister.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Well, bring him here on Thursday.

I know that you want to stampede this through, but we don't want to stampede it through. We have a schedule.

**The Chair:** You sent us an e-mail on Friday to bring the witnesses.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** We sent you an e-mail on what?

**The Chair:** You gave us the list. The Minister of Finance was on the list, was he not? We figured that you'd want more time with the Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** What I don't like is this whole thing where you're going ahead and setting the schedule without consultation.

**The Chair:** We did. We had future business.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** No, you didn't. Come on, Massimo. That is not true.

**The Chair:** Yes, we did. We had a future business meeting on Monday.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** You did not....

**The Chair:** We said the list of witnesses for Bill C-48 would be in on Friday for them to come in for the Thursday.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Thursday is tomorrow after next.

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** If you're planning on going ahead, we'll have a motion to change it.

**The Chair:** Okay. What can I tell you? We said at the future business meeting that Thursday—

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Show us the courtesy of letting us know the next time. This a bunch of BS. It truly is.

**The Chair:** I didn't make it up.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** If you knew he was coming, why didn't you tell us before now? Why are you telling us now? Come on.

**The Chair:** Wait a second. I have the Minister of Finance. If we were going to continue with the clause-by-clause, we weren't going to have him appear. I mean, I can put him off.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** So he's pretty flexible.

**The Chair:** I can put him off. I don't know if he'll be available on Thursday, but I don't have to have him.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Okay. Well, he doesn't have to come on Thursday.

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** On Thursday he has the G-8.

**The Chair:** He can come next Tuesday, then.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** He can come next Tuesday.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** [*Inaudible —Editor*]

**The Chair:** No, we'll hear witnesses on Thursday.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** What will witnesses come and tell us?

**The Chair:** The Conservatives have requested a list...

[*English*]

**Mr. Brian Pallister:** Mr. Chairman, could I ask a question for clarification?

Earlier, we began to entertain a discussion concerning the member for Winnipeg North, suggesting that she might bring a motion that would cause us to sit on Wednesday. At that point in time, no one offered us any information that there was any contradictory or conflicting event in the mill. At the point in time when she withdrew her motion or her intention, and then offered a notice of a subsequent motion 48 hours hence, no one at that point in time offered this information up for the committee to examine.

Sir, it's a deceptive thing you've just done, to introduce information at the end of the committee meeting, which you did not offer in an earlier discussion, on the assumption that we would all acquiesce to it. That is deceptive.

**The Chair:** No.

**Mr. Brian Pallister:** It is not the way this committee is supposed to be run.

**The Chair:** No. If we weren't going to finish clause-by-clause today, we were going to meet tomorrow on clause-by-clause.

**Mr. Brian Pallister:** We had a motion earlier to discuss it, sir, and that was withdrawn. The motion was withdrawn.

**The Chair:** Because we're not going to go to clause-by-clause on Bill C-43.

**Mr. Brian Pallister:** Therefore, the possibility of sitting on Wednesday to discuss these motions was also not in the picture. It was gone. The notice of motion was withdrawn. There was no way we were going to meet on Wednesday to discuss anything.

In fact, you deliberately adopted a strategy of deception here today. That's very disappointing to me.

• (1950)

**The Chair:** You don't want to meet with the Minister of Finance, which your colleague requested. He's available to come tomorrow. If we had clause-by-clause we wouldn't have him.

**Mr. Brian Pallister:** What was the secret about waiting until now to introduce this to our attention, sir? I'm just curious why you're just raising it now.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Can we have an in camera meeting?

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** I think we need to resolve this.

**The Chair:** It wasn't a secret.

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** I have a motion to resolve this. I move that we not meet tomorrow, but we stick with our witness list on Thursday and call the Minister of Finance to our committee on Tuesday of next week if he's available .

**Hon. John McKay:** Then we'll go to clause-by-clause on Wednesday.

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** We'll see.

**The Chair:** We can go Tuesday right afterwards. I don't have a problem.

**Mr. Charlie Penson:** Let's resolve this. We're already to go. We'll take a vote on it.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** This has nothing to do with any kind of conspiracy, and Monte and Charlie will indicate that as well.

**Mr. Brian Pallister:** Are you speaking as the legislative clerk now, or as a member of the committee?

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** I am speaking in terms of our normal practice, because you're not usually here.

**The Chair:** Wait. We're on television right now—

**Mr. Brian Pallister:** It's partly true.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** You're not here as regularly as these two.

**Mr. Brian Pallister:** That's a horrible thing for you to say.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** All right. I take it back.

I thought we were adjourned. I didn't know it was on the record.

**The Chair:** We're still in public.

Can we just go over this? On Thursday we have the witnesses, on Tuesday we have the Minister of Finance, if he's available, and then we'll go to clause-by-clause.

We don't need the Minister of Finance for three hours.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** All right.

**The Chair:** Is that okay?

We will be asking for amendments to Bill C-48.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier:** We don't need the Minister of Finance.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** It was the Conservatives who requested it, not me.

[*English*]

The amendments for Bill C-48 are going to be due by Friday.

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** Hold it, hold it.

**The Chair:** I'm the chair. I have to ask for a certain date.

[*Translation*]

We have to get the amendments to Bill C-48 for Friday. The witnesses will be coming on Thursday. We'll have the entire day.

[*English*]

**Mr. Monte Solberg:** All right, thanks.

**The Chair:** The meeting is adjourned.

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