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Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

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Tuesday, December 14, 2021

Chair: Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg



Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

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• (1835)

[English]

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Cédric Taquet): Honourable members of the committee, I see a quorum.

I must inform members that the clerk of the committee can only receive motions for the election of the chair. The clerk cannot receive other types of motions, entertain points of order or participate in debate.

We can now proceed to the election of the chair. Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the chair must be a member of the government party.

I am ready to receive motions for the chair.

Go ahead, Madam Valdez.

Mrs. Rechie Valdez (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): I would like to nominate Emmanuel.

The Clerk: Thank you.

It has been moved by Ms. Valdez that Mr. Dubourg be elected as chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Mr. Dubourg duly elected chair of the committee.

I invite Mr. Dubourg to take the chair.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Clerk: I will now proceed to the election of vice-chairs.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the first vice-chair must be a member of the official opposition. I am now prepared to receive motions for the first vice-chair.

• (1840)

Mrs. Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): I'd like to nominate Frank Caputo.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Madam Roberts that Mr. Caputo be elected as first vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Mr. Caputo duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the second vice-chair must be a member of the opposition, from a party other than the official opposition.

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

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): I nominate Luc Desilets, from the Bloc Québécois, for the position of second vice-chair of the committee.

The Clerk: Moved by Mr. Samson that Mr. Desilets be elected second vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and that Mr. Desilets is duly elected second vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.)): Let's continue.

Thank you to the clerk for doing these elections. This is now the introductions.

[Translation]

I would like to ask the vice-chairs to please say a few words in a moment. I am very pleased that the members of the committee have elected me to the position of Chair. My thanks to you.

I was previously the Chair of the Standing Committee on Official Languages. Today, here I am as Chair of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs. This is a pleasure for me.

I am going to continue with an opening statement. Before that, I will give the floor to Mr. Caputo

[English]

It's your turn as vice-chair to say a few words, if you like.

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

It's a pleasure and honour to be here. I have a great deal of passion for veterans and hope to work on my *français* as time goes on. Hopefully I can practise in the coming months and years with you.

It's a real pleasure and honour to be here, and I hope that we can work together collaboratively for the benefit of veterans and all Canadians.

Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Caputo.

Mr. Desilets, the floor is yours.

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): I will be looking after Mr. Caputo's French. We spoke about it this afternoon. I will be his private teacher.

Some hon. members: Ha, ha!

Mr. Desilets: It really is an honour for me to sit on this committee once more. I was a member in the last Parliament and I believe in its effectiveness. I learned a lot and I hope to continue to learn.

I would like to tell the new members of the committee that our work generally rolls along very well, in a climate of some harmony. There were no major debates as in other committees. We get work done effectively.

That's it.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Desilets.

I am going to put on my headset because I have to practise my English, just like you.

[*English*]

Welcome, once again.

I also want to welcome one of our members online, Mr. Sean Casey.

Welcome to the committee.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: The floor is yours, Mr. Casey.

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you very much.

I have some routine motions to bring forward.

First of all, Mr. Dubourg, allow me to congratulate you for your election as Chair of the committee. It really is a pleasure to be able to work with you in this session of Parliament. I have great confidence in your leadership.

• (1845)

The Chair: Thank you.

Excuse me, Mr. Casey, I have to give an opening statement so that everyone is on the same wavelength. Then I'll hand the floor to you.

So here is the opening statement.

[*English*]

Welcome to meeting number one of the Standing Committee on Veteran Affairs.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of November 25, 2021. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application. Regarding the speaking list, the committee clerk and I will do the best we can to maintain a consolidated order of speaking for all members, whether participating virtually or in person.

[*Translation*]

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all participants to this meeting that screenshots or photos of your screen are not permitted. The proceedings will be made available via the House of Commons website.

Given the ongoing pandemic situation and in light of the recommendations from public health authorities, as well as the directive of the Board of Internal Economy on October 19, 2021, we have the following recommendations to keep all those attending the meeting in person healthy and safe.

[*English*]

Everyone must maintain a two-metre physical distancing, whether seated or standing. Everyone must wear a non-medical mask when circulating in the room. It is recommended in the strongest possible terms that members wear their masks at all times, including when seated. Everyone present must maintain proper hand hygiene by using the hand sanitizer at the room entrance. Committee rooms are cleaned before and after each meeting. To maintain this, everyone is encouraged to clean surfaces such as the desk, chair and microphone when vacating a seat. Last, anyone with symptoms should participate by Zoom and not attend the meeting in person.

[*Translation*]

As the Chair, I will be enforcing these measures for the duration of the meeting and I thank members in advance for their cooperation.

We are now on routine motions.

With the committee's agreement, I propose that we move to the consideration of the routine motions.

Before I give the floor to Mr. Casey, I would also like to take this opportunity, on behalf of all members of the committee, to offer our regards to the clerk, who will be helping us during our meetings, and also the analysts, the desk staff, and the whole team that will be with us to make sure that our meetings run well.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Casey, the floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The first routine motion has the heading Analyst Services. I move:

That the committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the Chair, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

The Chair: Before we go any further, my dear committee members, I would like to say one thing.

As you know, the routine motions that Sean Casey is presently reading have been discussed by the whips of all parties. After each motion is read, I will ask if anyone is opposed to it. If no one is opposed, Mr. Casey will move to the next motion. However, if committee members wish, each motion could be passed by a recorded vote.

The last motion that Mr. Casey read dealt with the services of analysts.

Is any member of the committee opposed to the motion being carried?

Seeing no one opposed, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Mr. Casey, you can continue reading the motions.

• (1850)

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The second motion is on the subcommittee on agenda and procedure. I move:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be established and be composed of five members; the Chair, one member from each recognized party; and that the subcommittee work in a spirit of collaboration.

The Chair: Are there any objections to adopting the subcommittee motion?

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sean Casey: The next motion has the heading Meeting without a Quorum. I move:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence published when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four members are present, including two members of the opposition parties and two members of the government party, but when travelling outside the Parliamentary Precinct, that the meeting begin after 15 minutes, regardless of members present.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Casey.

Is anyone opposed to the motion being carried?

Seeing no one opposed, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Mr. Casey, you can continue.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The next motion is related to the time for opening remarks and questioning of witnesses. I move:

That witnesses be given five minutes for their opening statement; that whenever possible, witnesses provide the committee with their opening statement 72 hours in advance; that at the discretion of the Chair, during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated six minutes for the first questioner of each party as follows

for the first round: Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party.

For the second and subsequent rounds, the order and time for questioning be as follows: Conservative Party, five minutes; Liberal Party, five minutes; Bloc Québécois, two and a half minutes; New Democratic Party, two and a half minutes; Conservative Party, five minutes; Liberal Party, five minutes.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Casey.

Are there any objections to this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Casey, you can continue.

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The next motion has the heading Document Distribution. I move:

That only the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute documents to members of the committee provided the documents are in both official languages, and that the witnesses be advised accordingly.

The Chair: Is anyone opposed to the motion being carried?

Seeing no one opposed, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Mr. Casey, you can continue.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is my favourite one.

Be it resolved:

That the clerk of the committee, at the discretion of the Chair, be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working meals for the committee and its subcommittees.

The Chair: Are there any objections to that motion?

Sean, if you like that motion you have to be here instead of attending virtually.

Mr. Sean Casey: Mr. Chair, you will note that this should weigh very heavily on you, because it's at the discretion of the chair with respect to working meals. You don't get to vote. No pressure.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1855)

The Chair: Okay, please send me your address at home.

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Casey, you can continue.

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Under the heading Travel, Accommodation and Living Expenses of Witnesses, I move:

That, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses not exceeding two representatives per organization; and that in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be made at the discretion of the Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Casey.

Is anyone opposed to the motion being carried? Seeing no one opposed, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: You can continue, Mr. Casey.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Casey: The next motion is with respect to access to in camera meetings. Be it resolved:

That, unless otherwise ordered, each committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one staff member at in camera meetings and that one additional person from each House officer's office be allowed to be present.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Is anyone opposed to the motion being carried? Seeing no one opposed, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Let's move on.

Mr. Sean Casey: Under the heading Transcripts of In Camera Meetings, I move:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee or by their staff; and that the analysts assigned to the committee also have access to the in camera transcripts.

The Chair: Is anyone opposed to the motion being carried?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: I declare the motion carried.

[*English*]

We have more routine motions.

On the notice of motion, please go ahead.

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Be it resolved:

That a 48-hour notice, interpreted as two nights, be required for any substantive motion to be moved in committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration, provided that:

(a) the notice be filed with the clerk of the committee no later than 4:00 p.m. (ET) from Monday to Friday;

(b) the motion be distributed to Members and the offices of the whips of each recognized party in both official languages by the clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour; and

(c) notices received after the deadline hour or on non-business days be deemed to have been received during the next business day; and that when the committee is holding meetings outside the Parliamentary Precinct, no substantive motion may be moved.

The Chair: Thank you. Are there any objections?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Perfect. Let's continue.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Under the orders of reference from the House respecting bills, I move:

That in relation to orders of reference from the House respecting Bills:

(a) The clerk of the committee shall, upon the committee receiving such an order of reference, write to each member who is not a member of a caucus represented on the committee to invite those members to file with the clerk of the committee, in both official languages, any amendments to the bill, which is the subject of the said Order, which they would suggest that the committee consider;

(b) Suggested amendments filed, pursuant to paragraph (a), at least 48 hours prior to the start of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill to which the amendments relate shall be deemed to be proposed during the said consideration, provided that the committee may, by motion, vary this deadline in respect of a given bill; and

(c) During the clause-by-clause consideration of a bill, the Chair shall allow a member who filed suggested amendments, pursuant to paragraph (a), an opportunity to make brief representations in support of them.

● (1900)

The Chair: That's excellent.

Thank you, Mr. Casey.

Are there any objections to that motion? There being no objections, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Let's continue.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

On linguistic review, be it resolved:

That all documents submitted for committee business that do not come from a federal department, member's offices, the office of the clerk of the committee and the office of the analyst or that have not been translated by the Translation Bureau be sent for prior linguistic review by the Translation Bureau before being distributed to members.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

Are there any objections?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Sean, I think you missed one of them. The motion on technical tests for witnesses was just before the motion on linguistic review.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Okay. That will be the next motion.

[*English*]

The Chair: Excuse me. I'm sorry. The order was mixed up a little bit.

Sean, let's go to the technical tests for witnesses.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Absolutely, Mr. Chair.

Under technical tests for witnesses, I move:

That the clerk inform each witness who is to appear before the committee that the House Administration support team must conduct technical tests to check the connectivity and the equipment used to ensure the best possible sound quality; and that the Chair advises the committee, at the start of each meeting, of any witness who did not perform the required technical tests.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Are there any objections to that motion? There being no objections, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

[*English*]

The Chair: The next motion is on the headset requirement.

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Be it resolved:

That House of Commons approved headsets be required for all witnesses appearing before the committee at the Chair's discretion.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Are there any objections to that motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The routine motions are therefore all carried.

Let me take this opportunity to thank Sean Casey and congratulate him as well. As you can see, his French is excellent. I am aware of all the effort he has put into it. He came to Quebec during the summer to take courses.

That's very good, Mr. Casey. Keep up the good work.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Mr. Chair, I have a question.

The Chair: Mr. Desilets, you have the floor.

Mr. Luc Desilets: I would like to introduce two motions since we have a few hours to go, but I will just introduce them. Both motions are translated and we have hard copies for everyone.

Is that okay with you?

The Chair: We are at that stage. So this is the time to introduce motions for the studies we want to conduct during the session.

Mr. Luc Desilets: I will read them.

The first motion reads as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee undertake a study on uneven service delivery for anglophone and francophone veterans as well as for male and female and members of LGBTQ+ by the Department of Veterans Affairs; that the Committee invite the Minister of Veterans Affairs, the Minister of National Defence and government officials to follow up on this issue, and that the Committee hold a minimum of three (3) meetings to do so; and that the Committee report its findings and recommendations to the House.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Shall I continue with the second motion, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: The floor is yours, Mr. Desilets.

Mr. Luc Desilets: The second motion reads as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee undertake a study on the benefits and services offered to veterans who were victims of sexual misconduct during their military service; that the Committee invite the Minister of Veterans Affairs and government officials to follow up on this issue, and that the Committee hold a minimum of three (3) meetings to do so; and that the Committee report its findings and recommendations to the House.

That is all, Mr. Chair.

• (1905)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Desilets.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Thank you.

The Chair: As Mr. Desilets said, he provided the notices of motion, so we don't need to debate them right away.

I also want to clarify that, since members of the committee are going to be participating virtually, I would ask the members, when they introduce motions, not only to distribute copies in both official languages, but also to send a copy to the clerk so that those participating virtually can also see the motions or notices of motion in both official languages.

Mr. Luc Desilets: A copy has just been sent, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: That's great, thank you.

I see that Sean Casey raised his hand.

You have the floor, Mr. Casey.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Desilets, thank you for those notices of motion.

[*English*]

May I suggest, given that one of the routine motions that we just passed was the establishment of the subcommittee on agenda and procedure, that the notices of motion presented by Mr. Desilets and any other ideas that members have for future business be referred to that subcommittee for a discussion and recommendations back to the main committee in terms of priority and allocation of time for each?

My experience has been that the use of the subcommittee tends to make the work a bit more efficient. That's what I would suggest with these motions and with any others that might be forthcoming in terms of the early work of the committee.

The Chair: Thank you, Sean.

Let's take a quick look at that subcommittee. In the routine motion they say that the subcommittee is supposed to have two vice-chairs, the chair...

Is that all? Is it three people?

Mr. Sean Casey: It's five with the chair and one from each party.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: I have consulted with the clerk about the subcommittee, and I'm advised that, instead of the chair and vice-chairs, the party whips will determine which other members will be on the subcommittee.

We have agreed to set up a subcommittee to receive the notices of motion or motions that we will eventually bring forward so that we can organize our future business without wasting time and so that the committee can function efficiently and smoothly.

Thank you, Mr. Casey.

• (1910)

[*English*]

Right now Ms. Blaney has the floor.

Go ahead.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Thank you so much, Chair. Congratulations for being put in this important role. I really appreciate your leadership during this time and into the future.

I agree, of course, with Mr. Casey that the appropriate steps going forward are to have the subcommittee meet and have these discussions.

I would put forward—I know I have had conversations with some members around this table already—that I think all of us want to be getting straight to work when we're here in February, since I don't think we're meeting on January 31.

My thought is that maybe we could submit our notices of motion. I have several studies that I'm really eager to put on the table and have discussions about.

Perhaps what we could do, Mr. Chair, is to ask the minister and some of his officials to come and have a visit with us on the first day back. I know that the minister is incredibly busy, so if we get that request out soon, it might give us an opportunity to ask some questions. It will also give our subcommittee a little bit of time to meet to look at all the notices of motion and hopefully have some recommendations for the larger committee.

I would love to hear from other members, and I totally respect that Mr. Samson and I had a conversation about this earlier. I don't want to take any credit for conversations that we've already had.

I think that would be a great way for this committee to start. I would love to hear from others.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Blaney.

Go ahead, Mr. Samson, please.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Darrell Samson: With respect to the information that my colleague just provided, we will also be moving motions, but not this evening. We do agree on the subcommittee and that the minister and his staff should come to the first meeting or two so that our work is off to a good start. Then, of course, the subcommittee can meet and we can get to work right away.

[*English*]

The only other thing I would add is a discussion around the table either tonight or another night. The next meeting is on the two reports that we worked on and received testimony on in the last Parliament. They are now not moving forward unless we put a motion that we would inherit the testimony and then move forward to report. I will leave that with the committee to take decisions around that discussion.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Samson.

Because we have a lot of new members on the committee, including me, I would like to mention those two studies that were completed in the last Parliament.

The first one was on a strategy for commemorations in the 21st century. The last meeting was on May 2021, and they had 21 witnesses over four meetings. The draft record could be ready for committee review. That's the first one. For the second one, it was service dogs for veterans. The last meeting was in June 2021, with 16 witnesses over four meetings. The draft report would be ready for the committee's consideration. These are the two studies you're talking about.

Are there any other suggestions or motions?

Mr. Samson and Ms. Blaney, you proposed a motion to invite the minister. What kind of discussion would you like him to have? Is it an update on what's going on?

Please, the floor is yours.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

That's a very important question. I appreciate your bringing it up.

I think, for me, it would be a basic briefing. I recognize that I've been on the committee for a while, but there are many members who are new to the committee. I think it would be good for us to have a bit of a briefing and an update on what's happening. Of course, I believe all members in this place really want to make sure that we're serving veterans well, so it's an opportunity for us to ask some good questions of the minister.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Darrell, do you have nothing to add? Okay. Perfect.

The clerk is a little concerned by that motion too. Do you know how we are going to do this? Are we going to send an invitation to the minister for the next meeting or...?

• (1915)

[*Translation*]

Because of the way Ms. Blaney introduced her motion, we do not have a copy of it. I have just consulted with the clerk and from what he has told me, the subcommittee will be established first. Then the subcommittee will prepare that meeting and come back to us with suggestions for the duration and the questions for the minister.

If we had a proper motion, the committee could then decide to vote on it.

Ms. Blaney, you have the floor.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you so much, Chair, and thank you for your patience as we try to figure out the process and procedure.

My understanding—and I wait to hear from you—is that, if the committee has consensus and they agree that they would like to invite the minister, then we don't need an official motion. Hopefully, that's where we're at. If you do need an official motion, please tell me, and I will make something up in my head really quickly and you can all watch that with a great amount of entertainment.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: We are in complete agreement, Ms. Blaney. If the members of the committee are in agreement, we can do that. We could establish the number of meetings and the duration. It could be, for example, a two-hour meeting. As you said earlier, we would ask the minister to provide an update and briefing on the situation.

If the members of the committee agree, we can give instructions to the clerk so that we can proceed.

Ms. Blaney has the floor and Mr. Desilets will follow.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Yes, of course.

My recommendation—perhaps “motion” is the better way to say it—is that we invite the minister to come to the first sitting we have when we return to Parliament, or as soon as possible, and have a general briefing with him and his cohort of folks who follow him and do so much great work for him. Maybe what we can recommend as well is that the minister come for the first hour and his folks stay for the second hour.

That would be my recommendation.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

Is there any discussion?

I have Mr. Desilets.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets: Mr. Chair, I find this a little tricky, especially in terms of fairness.

Motions were distributed a little earlier. I agree that these are simply notices of motions, and I have no objection to that. However, a motion is introduced on the spot for us to vote on, and I find that a bit tricky.

Similarly, a motion should be introduced to follow up on the strategy for commemorations and the study on service dogs for veterans. It doesn't say that we all agree. We may not all be on the same page. Will we continue the study? Do we call for a report? Do we move on?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Desilets.

You are saying that we have to find a way to prioritize the studies we want to conduct and the meetings we want to have. You are talking about the two studies that were undertaken. There is Ms. Blaney's motion, and you also introduced a notice of motion.

So you are not prepared to have the minister at the next meeting.

We can discuss that. I would be interested in hearing the views of the other members of the committee on Ms. Blaney's motion to invite the minister to meet with us at the next meeting.

Mr. Caputo, you have the floor.

• (1920)

[*English*]

Mr. Frank Caputo: Thank you, Chair. Congratulations, as well, on being the head of the committee.

I'm happy to endorse Ms. Blaney's motion to have the minister appear at the first meeting back, when we reconvene in early February.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Caputo.

Go ahead, Monsieur Desilets.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Despite what I said, I completely agree with this motion.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Luc Desilets: I don't want to drag things out. You'll get to know me, I'm usually quite fast. I wouldn't want us to proceed in the same way for both studies. I would like us to have a motion so that we can have a discussion and express ourselves clearly on the topic.

The Chair: Okay, thank you.

Does anyone else wish to comment?

Mr. Miao, you have the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.): We're also endorsing Ms. Blaney's motion to have the minister join us.

The Chair: Thank you.

I think we have consensus, so I'm going to ask the clerk to take the necessary steps to invite the minister for the first hour, and his staff for the second hour of the next meeting.

We said that the subcommittee will take care of all of those notices of motions in order to say what our next study will be. Do we agree on that? Great.

Right now, I would like to know if there is any other business to discuss at committee.

Go ahead, Mr. Rogers.

Mr. Churence Rogers (Bonavista—Burin—Trinity, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I just want to raise the issue of the timing of our committee meetings, particularly on Friday afternoon. A lot of people sitting at this table travel across the country, me included. If these meetings stay in Friday afternoon slots, it will eliminate any weekend travel back to Newfoundland and Labrador for me. I would just be in an aircraft all day Saturday and Sunday, and I'd get nothing done.

I don't know if it's possible.... There could be a different timeslot from Monday to Thursday that we could use. I suggest we explore that.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Rogers. I can tell you that I endorse your endorsement. We have to discuss that with our whips, in order to see if we can have a room and if we can change to any other day during the week. That would be great, instead of meeting on a Friday afternoon.

I can ask, because the parties are there. I will ask Mr. Desilets, Ms. Blaney and Mr. Caputo to discuss that with their whips. I'm go-

ing to discuss it with my whip, too. Maybe Darrell Samson can do it. We will let you know....

An hon. member: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: I'm sorry. I should ask if you agreed to the proposal.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: No, I am the whip for the NDP. I was making a joke about it. I apologize.

● (1925)

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Casey's hand is raised. Go ahead, Mr. Casey.

Mr. Sean Casey: If there's no one else on the speakers list, Mr. Chair, I move that we adjourn.

The Chair: All right. I have no choice.

The meeting is adjourned.

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