



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 085

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

Chair: Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg



Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

• (1715)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 85 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Today is supposed to be our last meeting on the study of transition to civilian life. I know that we're going to have more votes, so first of all, because it's 5:15, I would like to know if I have unanimous consent to go until 7:15.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): I can't stay until 7:15 p.m.

The Chair: All right.

How long can you stay?

Mr. Luc Desilets: I have to attend an event at the French embassy.

The Chair: All right.

Before we hear from the witnesses, then, I have a suggestion. Given the time, I suggest we go right to the first panel.

[*English*]

After the opening remarks, we're going to have six minutes each to ask questions. After that, we're going to go to the second panel until 6:30.

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Chair, before we go to witnesses, I'd move that we resume debate on my motion regarding the mission in Afghanistan.

When I say that, I mean it so that hopefully we can just go right to a vote on that motion, deal with it and then go to the witnesses.

The Chair: Please let me finish the introduction and I'll give you the mic right away.

Mr. Blake Richards: I just moved it.

The Chair: As I said, there is procedure, as you know. I have to go to a vote right away, but let me open the meeting and you're going to do it again.

Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format pursuant to the Standing Orders.

When you are speaking, please do not get too close to the mike while wearing your earpiece. This creates feedback, and can be detrimental to the interpreters. Please keep this in mind when you are speaking.

Quickly, I want to welcome Vance Badawey, who is filling in for Sean Casey today.

[*English*]

Also, members of the committee, I would like to tell you that today is the last day with our assistant clerk, Madam Geneviève Desjardins. I would like to say thank you to Ms. Desjardins for being with us.

Mr. Malachie Azémar is going to stay with us at the committee.

Now, before I introduce the witnesses, Mr. Richards, please go ahead.

Mr. Blake Richards: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

I want to make this quick. I move that we resume debate on my motion regarding the national monument to the mission in Afghanistan.

I want to be clear that my hope is that we don't have to have any debate at all. We can move right to a vote, deal with it and go straight to our witnesses.

The Chair: Great.

Let me make sure that I have to go right to a vote.

[*Translation*]

This is a dilatory motion.

[*English*]

I'm sorry, Ms. Blaney, I have to go to a vote right away because of this.

First of all, do I have unanimous consent?

We would like to go to a vote. The clerk will take the vote.

Mr. Blake Richards: Just to be clear, are we now voting on the motion?

The Chair: No, we are now voting to resume debate.

Mr. Blake Richards: I understood you had unanimous consent to resume debate and you were going to move right to the motion.

The Chair: No, I don't have unanimous consent.

Let's have a vote on resuming debate, please.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

We have to resume debate on Mr. Richards' motion.

[*English*]

However, I have to tell you that in the last meeting, Ms. Blaney only tabled a motion. That motion was on notice. After reviewing the tape—

Mr. Blake Richards: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

The Chair: Excuse me. Please let me finish.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

After watching the video, I realized that Mr. Richards' point of order isn't a valid point of order because Ms. Blaney merely read out her motion. It was not debated. She just gave notice of her motion.

[*English*]

As I understand it, we just voted to resume debate, but we can't have debate on something we don't have on the table, because—

Mr. Blake Richards: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

The Chair: Yes, I'm going to give you the mic—

Mr. Blake Richards: We're resuming debate on my motion.

The Chair: Yes. However, let me say something.

Ms. Blaney came with a notice of motion.

[*Translation*]

You raised a point of order, but you can't do so because the motion had not been moved.

[*English*]

That's why—

Mr. Blake Richards: It's understood.

The Chair: You understand. Okay.

Now you have the mic. Yes, I will listen to you.

Mr. Blake Richards: I would ask that we call the question, because I have nothing more to say, and—

Mr. Bryan May (Cambridge, Lib.): You can't do that on a point of order, Chair.

Mr. Blake Richards: I'm not on a point of order. I'm recognized by the chair. Thank you, though.

The Chair: Excuse me—

Mr. Blake Richards: My hand was up first. I'm asking you to call the question.

The Chair: We'll go to Mr. Sarai right afterward.

Yes, Mr. Richards, you have the floor.

Mr. Blake Richards: I don't understand what they're so scared of in these documents. I'm asking that we call the question, because

I want our witnesses to have a chance to speak. We've debated this many times and I'd like us to move to a vote on that motion, please.

Mr. Bryan May: This is not proper, Mr. Chair. You cannot do that on a point of order. I'm sorry.

An hon. member: Yes.

Mr. Bryan May: No, you cannot.

Mr. Blake Richards: I'm well aware of the rules.

I hope you guys will not choose to waste time so that we can go to a vote. That's all I'm saying.

Mr. Bryan May: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. I have Mr. Sarai and Mr. May, but in consultation, I am told that first of all we have an amendment by Mr. Desilets. We have to go back to his amendment instead of discussing your debate, because that was on the table. If we resume debate, we have to go back to the motion by Mr. Desilets.

Mr. Bryan May: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: First of all, Mr. Sarai—

Mr. Bryan May: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. Go ahead on a point of order.

Mr. Bryan May: Thank you.

Mr. Chair, we've had this happen before when we've come back to debate. I was next on the list. You said it was a whole new list and it was whoever had their hands up on that day. I believe my colleague had his hand up. I had my hand up, and you went to Mr. Richards on a point of order. I think that if you consult the clerk, he will say that a dilatory motion cannot be moved on a point of order.

My suggestion is that we go to my colleague, who had his hand up first.

Thank you.

The Chair: I understand that, Mr. May, but we're not discussing any points of order now. The point of order was accepted. We had a vote on that, but it's to resume debate. To resume debate, we have to go back to Mr. Desilets' motion.

I understand that you said you had your name on the list the last time we discussed it. I'm going to verify whether we have such a list so that we can use it.

Excuse me.

Because the debate on that amendment was adjourned, we have to start a new list. That's why I ask this.

[*Translation*]

That is why I'm asking Mr. Desilets whether he wishes to resume debate on his amendment.

If so, I will ask Mr. Desilets to read the amendment for committee members.

Mr. Luc Desilets: Mr. Chair, the whole motion and amendment process has been rather complicated.

Basically, if I'm not mistaken, the Conservatives proposed the motion we're about to discuss on December 20. Do I have that right?

The Chair: Okay.

Now, though, Mr. Desilets, we are talking about the motion you moved on February 12.

• (1725)

Mr. Luc Desilets: Yes, but it wasn't a motion. It was an amendment.

The Chair: Sorry, you're right. It was an amendment, yes.

Mr. Luc Desilets: That's why I was just trying to clarify things for the record.

I had put forward a motion previously that we are disregarding. I'm trying to make things clear for the purposes of the discussion.

That is why we are going to debate the amendment that was moved on February 12.

I will now read the amendment I was just referring to, which seeks to amend the motion put forward by the Conservatives on December 20. It reads as follows:

That the motion be amended by adding the following after paragraph b): “c) And that the Department of Veterans Affairs Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage provide the official report of the jury established for the selection of the firm responsible for the design of the National Monument to Canada’s Mission in Afghanistan.

That is the amendment I am proposing to the Conservative motion.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Desilets.

Please raise your hand if you want to be on the speaking list.

[*English*]

Let me just say something to Mr. Bury: These are our procedural functions, so please excuse us. We have to deal with that. We're going to come back to you.

I'm sorry not only to you, but we also have, by video conference, Mark Meincke, retired corporal, and I'd like to apologize to him too.

Are there any interventions on that amendment?

Go ahead, Mr. Sarai.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I also want to apologize to Mr. Bury and Mr. Meincke, who have taken time out of their day to do this. Unfortunately, this motion keeps coming back and interrupting witnesses who are testifying, whether it's about violence perpetrated on them, harassment perpetrated on them, etc., or those like you yourself, who are trying to tell us about transition and how that transition should be possible.

I understand that some members have concerns and want to get more information on this decision on the monument to Afghanistan. I think most people want the monument to be done. I think we've had exhaustive discussions on this matter. We've brought in the ministers—ministers in plural—multiple times for this. We've had

record requests. From the press, we've even heard from people on the jury who have come out and said that they actually support the decision. The veterans on that jury have come out and said that they support this decision.

I think that to go back and ask for an amendment to include the jury decision would be something that they have to check with their lawyers. I don't know the legalities, the disclosure requirements or what NDAs were signed. I think those would have to be checked. I think our Privy Council or others would have to vet those, to see those, and I don't think it would come out with anything more than what was done.

I think that when a jury makes a decision, it's a principle of a jury to keep the internal jury deliberations confidential. I come from a legal background. That's a paramount principle that allows the jury to keep the discussions and deliberations private—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

An hon. member: We have a motion—

The Chair: I'm sorry, guys. It's only MP Randeep Sarai who has the floor.

Mr. Sarai, please go ahead.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: I'll say that again. I think the deliberations of a jury are always confidential, whatever type of jury that is. For us to go back and ask them what the jury has done, how they deliberated, what they looked at, what they didn't look at and what the opinions were.... They may have had candid comments and they may have had frustrations, but they were under the understanding, when they were doing this, that their deliberations and decisions were confidential and should be kept that way, so I think this amendment, or the actual motion itself, is a rather moot point when it's been exhaustively studied.

On June 2, 2020, the original decision was to have this Afghanistan monument tucked away under a bridge. The previous government was not doing anything with it. It's something that was, for that reason, buried for much too long.

We've been working to have a veterans monument to commemorate those who have fought for this country and for others, and to have it commemorated in the correct way, after a jury's opinion, which was not even unanimous. In fact, the veteran on that jury was actually very relieved at the decision that came out afterwards.

A very thorough and robust survey was conducted with over 10,000 people, the majority of whom were veterans, veterans' families and those associated with them. They took very strong opinions on it. They looked at both.

We wanted a monument that best reflects those veterans. I think that the decision, overwhelmingly, as the input came in, was very strong and meaningful. If you actually look at it even now, criticism might come from the proponents who might not have been successful at this, but you don't hear the veterans community coming out.

We had a veteran here just the other day. His frustration was about why it's taking so long, but his comment was not about one design over the other design. Veterans, overwhelmingly, have been supportive of this.

I think that as members of a veterans affairs committee and as parliamentarians, we have a duty to ensure that our commemorations, which are a big part of veterans affairs.... In fact, I think one of the pillars of veterans affairs is commemoration, so when we use that budget and that funding, we should commemorate veterans in the best way possible, and the best way possible is what the veterans themselves—those who have served, those women and men—find suitable.

I think the indigenous designer and the Stimson group put a lot of passion into the design. What I've seen in my short stint as parliamentary secretary to veterans, as well as someone with a veterans centre, a legion and a very robust veterans presence in my community, has been overwhelmingly positive, and veterans want us to move forward.

I think that as we keep doing this for longer and longer, what's happening is that we're frustrating the system. I think people want to see shovels in the ground and a monument being erected, commemorating veterans in the best way possible.

I urge that we stop debating this and stop dealing with this over and over again, just because of perhaps partisan positions, and actually get to the point, which is to commemorate the veterans and get on with it.

We've had more than ample time. I've been on various committees—citizenship and immigration, foreign affairs and audit—and I've never had multiple ministers come this many times to speak so candidly about the process and all the comments.

I think we should continue in a way that commemorates veterans, rather than bringing this back and losing a lot of time among witnesses who are here giving their precious time and energy to help us study this matter.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1730)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Sarai.

Now I'm going to go to Ms. Blaney. You have the floor.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Thank you.

I was personally very excited to hear Mr. Richards say that he just wanted to get to the vote. I'm now in the unusual position of having to listen to other people, so I'm going to move—and I hope it's a proper motion—that we vote on the amendment.

The Chair: Yes, but we still have people on the list, so I have to complete that.

I have Ms. Hepfner.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): I just want add that I'm new to this committee, but I think I've been frankly stunned at the extent to which we've been debating this—and from the perspective of the artists, where it seems like the concern is coming from, rather than from the perspective of the veterans. If you look at the two pieces of art and if you talk directly to the veterans, you can see why they feel the one design....

I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. The members across are yelling at me while I'm trying to speak. It's a little distracting.

• (1735)

The Chair: Just one person has the floor. Please....

Go ahead, Ms. Hepfner.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: Thank you.

As an outsider without the experience of the members across, when I look at the renderings from the two artists, I can see why veterans tend to prefer one over the other. One is more abstract. It's very artistic; it's beautiful also. The other one actually shows soldiers. It's tangible. You can tell what it's commemorating.

I don't know if the committee has already discussed this or not, but I don't know why we can't build two monuments. Afghanistan was a huge mission for Canada. Why not build both monuments, one on either side of the country? I don't know if that's something that this committee has discussed or contemplated, but I don't think it would cost that much or be beyond the pale to go ahead and do both artists' renderings. The stories from both artists are great. They're both good ways to commemorate that mission in Afghanistan.

I don't know why we're more concerned about what the artists think than what the veterans think. From what I understand, more than 12,000 Canadian veterans have responded to have their say about this monument. Our government is listening to them, unlike the previous government, which made them angry because it didn't consult with them at all.

I'm frankly kind of stunned that we're still talking about this. This is such a big issue. I think I want to hear from the witnesses. I want to hear more about the transition to civilian life, and I don't understand why we're having these debates on and on. It makes sense to me that we choose the monument that the veterans feel most represents their time in Afghanistan.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

On the speaking list I have Mr. Bryan May.

Mr. Bryan May: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

If we go back to when we were first looking at this issue, we will see that we agreed to have one meeting on it. That was what we were supposed to do. Then it turned into two. Then we wanted the minister. Back then, I used the term “mission creep”, and that's exactly what is happening.

We recognize why we're doing this the way that we're doing it. We have offered to have committee business time. We've even offered to have a subcommittee deal with this. We recognize that every other motion that.... When I was the chair of this committee, we always would do committee business in the proper way. This has become a political stunt. It has become a political stunt by the opposition. It's a fishing exercise. There's no other way to describe it.

I'm sorry that once again the opposition has decided to do this when we have witnesses on important studies. I said when this came up at the beginning that we were in the middle of an incredibly important study on women veterans and that this was what veterans want us to focus on. They're watching this and they're shaking their heads. They want us to be studying the important aspects of what their challenges are, what their barriers are.

We agreed to bring in the minister. We agreed to bring in Daoust and to hear the story, and we've done all of this.

What are we doing? What is this? This just seems to be one more.... Every time we expand this, it becomes something else. Every time that we agree, it's like, "Well, okay; now we want to do this." This is wasting the time of this committee. It is now wasting the time of veterans in this study.

We are seeing such disrespect for veterans that we had to collectively do sensitivity training because of this—

Voices: Oh, oh!

• (1740)

The Chair: Excuse me, Mr. May, but we have a vote—

Mr. Bryan May: You think it's funny, guys, that because of your actions they had to do sensitivity training? Come on.

The Chair: Excuse me. Please listen. I'm sorry, guys.

Members of the committee, we now have a vote. Therefore I have to ask members of the committee if I have unanimous consent to continue.

Mr. Blake Richards: No.

The Chair: No. We don't have unanimous consent.

Mr. Paul Bury and Mr. Mark Meincke, I am so sorry, but I have to suspend the meeting until the vote is over.

The meeting is suspended.

• (1740)

(Pause)

• (1830)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: We are now resuming.

Members of the committee, it is now 6:31 p.m. As you will recall, at the beginning of the meeting, I had asked for unanimous consent to meet past six o'clock. I had suspended the meeting, and we are now resuming. This time, I'm going to ask whether it is the pleasure of the committee to adjourn the meeting.

We will now vote to see whether the committee wishes to keep meeting.

[*English*]

Mr. Bryan May: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, you don't have unanimous consent to continue the meeting.

Mr. Blake Richards: Chair, I ask that we continue. I think it's really important that we get to the bottom of this cover-up.

The Chair: I consulted the table earlier, and they said that if the vote says that we're not going to adjourn, then we have to continue.

Mr. Bryan May: Mr. Chair, every other time we've been in this situation, the convention has always been that you've asked for unanimous consent.

The Chair: That's right.

Mr. Blake Richards: I just don't understand why they're so scared of continuing. What are they hiding?

The Chair: Just a second.

Yes, Mr. May, I agree, because at the end of the meeting I always ask for the consent of the committee members. However, today, and not only because it's today, we need a majority to adjourn the meeting. If some members still say no, we have to take the vote.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. I'm just asking what's different between today and every other committee meeting.

The Chair: Well, the other times I always had unanimous consent to adjourn....

Mr. Randeep Sarai: We actually haven't given....

The Chair: No. Those members said no to adjournment. The first time I asked for unanimous consent to adjourn, some people said no, so if it was no to that, I would ask the clerk to take the vote to make sure which ones said no, which ones said yes. That's the reality.

Right now I'll ask the clerk to take the vote to see if we're going to adjourn the meeting or not. Please go ahead.

• (1835)

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Malachie Azémar): Mr. Badawey.

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): I really have to give it some thought—no.

Let me rephrase that—yes.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blake Richards: Go with our first answer, your first instinct. Stick with that.

The Chair: Is it yes or no to adjourn?

Mr. Bryan May: Excuse me; with all due respect, you've asked several times to extend this. We are at the end of this meeting. You need unanimous consent to extend the meeting, do you not?

I think we're following the wrong procedure here. You're asking for consent to adjourn, but the meeting time is over, so you need unanimous consent to extend the meeting beyond that time, do you not?

Mr. Blake Richards: You can't have a point of order in the middle of a vote.

Mr. Bryan May: We're in the middle of a vote that we shouldn't be having.

The Chair: Mr. May, I'm going to come back to you, but first of all we have a vote to see if we're going to adjourn or not. I have to ask members, and if we come back, it's a new day.

The Clerk: Mr. May.

Mr. Bryan May: I move to adjourn.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets: Mr. Chair, sorry to interrupt the vote. Am I allowed to raise a point of order? I'm not sure.

The Chair: No, you are not allowed to raise a point of order while the committee is voting.

(Motion negatived: nays: 6; yeas 5 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: The meeting is resuming.

Before we go any further, I want to ask the committee for unanimous consent to keep meeting until 7:30 p.m. If there isn't unanimous consent, we still have to vote in order to continue.

Do I have unanimous consent for the committee to meet until 7 p.m. or 7:30 p.m.?

Mr. Luc Desilets: No, Mr. Chair. I have to leave at five to seven.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. Luc Desilets: I'm very sorry.

The Chair: Do the committee members wish to accommodate Mr. Desilets? Can we meet until 6:55 p.m.?

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Yes.

[*English*]

Mr. Fraser Tolmie (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): We'll just vote. Call the vote.

The Chair: Now we are back. We're going to go until 6:55.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desilets: Someone will be filling in for me, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Chair: We have a full two hours for the meeting, so we're going until 7:30 unless....

An hon. member: Let's go to a vote.

The Chair: No, I had to suspend. I can't go to a vote right now because when I suspended the meeting, Mr. May had the floor. We are discussing the amendment of Mr. Desilets.

I'm coming back to you, Mr. May. You have the floor.

• (1840)

Mr. Bryan May: I'm confused. We didn't have a vote. You asked for unanimous consent. You do not have it. You do not have unanimous consent to continue this meeting.

I will continue to speak if that's what we're doing here, Mr. Chair, but this has not been the way this committee has been operating. In every other circumstance, we have been asked—

An hon. member: On a point of order—

Mr. Bryan May: You've asked for unanimous consent. If I have the floor, I will continue to speak.

The Chair: I'll let you continue. As I said, I just consulted the table and they said that unanimous consent to continue is not a formal thing.

If we see that people are willing to continue to discuss.... That's why I gave you the floor. It's to continue to discuss it.

Mr. Blake Richards: If Mr. May doesn't want to continue the meeting, he can just stop talking and we can have a vote and we can deal with it.

The Chair: That's not a point of order. I'm sorry.

Go ahead, Mr. May.

Mr. Bryan May: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will go back to what I was speaking about before the votes began and will remind this committee that when this issue came to us for the first time, I said that we have a number of motions in front of this committee. We were in the middle of the women's study at the time, which I think should have taken precedence, but we stopped. We paused that study in order to address Mr. Desilets' original motion, which I believe was for one meeting. Am I correct that it was one meeting?

Then it became that we wanted to bring in Daoust and we wanted to bring in the minister. I addressed this committee back then and said that this felt like mission creep and that we were going to continue to dig and dig. This has now become a deep-sea fishing exercise, as far as I can tell.

This is not the proper way to debate these motions. We have amendments to this motion, which we have not had an opportunity to get to, because we're not dealing with this in committee business the way that it should be. We have committed to hosting a subcommittee meeting to be able to deal with this and to move forward properly. That's been rejected. This has been something that, clearly, the opposition wants to do in open committee so that they can make a spectacle of it.

We had a number of times when witnesses were interrupted, Mr. Chair, to the point that we had to, as was advised to us, take even more time to do sensitivity training on when we have witnesses who have lived experience in front of us. I think that was a very valuable experience, and I thank MP Blaney for suggesting we go through that. This happened at the last meeting. The witness even spoke to the disrespect she was shown, and it has happened again today with witnesses we did not get a chance to hear from.

There is a process for these motions. All the other motions we've done have been done through that process. The push-back they're seeing from us is a result of that process being broken and of the spectacle this is attempting to create.

With regard to the amendment in front of us, again, I'm not fundamentally against the amendment from Monsieur Desilets at all. I think this is just the wrong time and place to be doing these sorts of things. We absolutely need to reset this committee and get back to a subcommittee scenario so that we're dealing with these motions appropriately.

Mr. Chair, may I ask quickly, because I don't have it readily in front of me, how many motions we already have on the docket right now. Is it seven or eight?

• (1845)

The Chair: I don't know.

Mr. Bryan May: We are spending time on something we've already spent a significant amount of time studying, yet we have these other motions prepared, including one of my own, that I would very much like to get to, Mr. Chair. I don't see us getting to these things if we continue to interrupt witnesses with this kind of behaviour from the opposition.

I think we have to address—

A voice: Just vote.

Mr. Bryan May: The opposition is saying, "Just vote." That's breaching my privilege to bring an amendment forward. That's breaching my privilege to discuss this appropriately.

There are amendments that I think would be reasonable amendments that the opposition may want to hear, but they don't want to hear them, Mr. Chair. This is a deep-sea fishing exercise. They want to create a spectacle and to politicize this. They think there must be something to hide because we're not supporting this. That's nonsense. We have seen the minister already come to this committee to discuss this.

Mr. Fraser Tolmie: I could listen to this guy all day.

Mr. Bryan May: I'm glad, because you might have to. I'm glad that I'm amusing—

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Order, please. Mr. May, you have the floor.

Mr. Bryan May: Mr. Chair, I think the opposition is going to continue to heckle over what I think is a pertinent point regarding the process with which we deal with these types of motions. They're going to laugh and they're going to make light of this, but this is the reality that we're facing right now: The rules and the process are being swept away because they want to make this into a political spectacle. They want to bog down the different departments with the production of documents. They want to bog down this committee when we have motions in front of us, like the one that I put forward. I would challenge this committee to argue that this is not something that we should be addressing.

I'll read it into the record, because maybe it's been so long that they've forgotten:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee undertake a study on the experience of Indigenous Veterans and Black Veterans with regard to: (a) physical health, mental health, and safety concerns, (b) supports for their transition to civilian life, (c) sexual trauma during service, (d) housing and homelessness, (e) Veterans Affairs Canada programs and supports for them, and (f) difficulties encountered during calls to participate in a foreign mission.

That the Committee invite the Minister of Veterans Affairs and department officials; that the committee hold no fewer than 6 meetings to hear from witnesses; that the Committee report its findings and recommendations to the House; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

That's one of, I think, seven or eight very good motions that we have in front of us. I think that if you were to poll veterans about what they think we should be looking at, this would rank significantly higher.

I can go through all of the motions we have from our side, from Mr. Desilets, from MP Blaney and even a number put forward by Mr. Richards.

I would think that this committee should be seized with real, fundamental work instead of the grandstanding and the politicking that has been happening in the last number of months. I think that we have to recognize that when people are watching and when veterans are here, we need to respect their time. We need to respect their efforts to come here and inform this committee instead of using this time to grandstand and to go on these fishing expeditions.

Mr. Chair, I think that it's important for us to look at all of this and ask ourselves how we're being perceived across the country and if we're producing recommendations for the government to move on.

I'm given to believe that the opposition believes that this fishing expedition is more important than all of those other motions. We have Mr. Tolmie here pretending he's fishing, and he thinks that this is funny. I don't think this is funny. I think that we have to recognize that we are here to do a very serious job.

The behaviour from the opposition has been called out by our witnesses. It's been called out by veterans online as disrespectful and with other words that I will not use in this place.

• (1850)

That should embarrass the members opposite, but instead they're pantomiming and trying to make fun of this intervention that I'm making right now.

I will wrap up, Mr. Chair, because I know there are others who want to speak to this issue.

I think Monsieur Desilets' amendment is a reasonable one, but I have amendments that I think are reasonable as well that I think Monsieur Desilets would hopefully consider.

It's not as simple as just saying, as Mr. Richards was saying, "Let's just vote on it. Let's just get this out of the way and vote on it." I think that shows such a lack of respect for this process and a lack of respect for our parliamentary rights and privileges, and it shows, Mr. Chair, that this is exactly what I said it is: It is a political stunt and a fishing expedition.

Look, I think we have to recognize that this process is being subverted right now. Instead of dealing with this in the proper fashion, instead of dealing with this in an in camera session, which is what we have suggested we would agree to, they want to bring this out into the light and in public and make hay with it instead of actually doing the work that represents and supports veterans.

I'll close there, Mr. Chair, but I do have motions that I would like to bring forward. I'm speaking to Monsieur Desilets' motion.

I did have my hand up previously, so I hope that list is still solid and that once we get through this amendment, we come back to that original list and I'll be recognized as having an amendment to speak to.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. May.

I have on my list Ms. Blaney, Mr. Miao, Mr. Desilets, Mr. Sarai and Ms. Hepfner.

Ms. Blaney, the floor is yours.

• (1855)

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you so much, Chair.

I want to put out there, first of all, that I do have to leave by 7:30. I do have another commitment that I also am committed to. I just want the committee to know that.

Mr. Blake Richards: You could get a substitute.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I can't get a sub, but thank you so much for offering that to me, Blake. I am a whip. I know how that works.

I'm happy to support this amendment.

I was excited to hear Mr. Richards say that we were just going to get on with it, because I was getting frustrated by how political this has become.

In December, when I moved to adjourn, we had time in the last sitting week, on the Thursday, and I would have been happy to sit.

I don't get a vacation. I'm sure most of us don't. I was trying to spend time with my constituents. I had obligations to them. I really believe that constituency time matters, because our constituents matter, so I'm hoping we can get to a vote at least on the amendment that we have.

I keep hearing from the Liberals that they have amendments they would like to propose. If they have amendments that have a good rationale, I'm happy to consider them. I'm happy to have that discussion. I would like a clear rationale to them, as Mr. Desilets has given as well.

It feels as if this is just getting held up. I've been very clear from the beginning. I have said publicly that I would support Mr. Richards' motion. I know that I've interrupted him a few times to try to get him to move the motion. I want to say that he moved it and I appreciated that he didn't have a big speech in front of it. It's unfortunate that we can't even vote on an amendment that everybody has said they're comfortable with. It would be good to at least take one step so that we can get one step closer. I want this done. I

think I've been very clear with this committee that I just want this done.

The reality is that I don't know the right answer for this. I really do believe that veterans should be making the final decision, but how that decision is made matters. How that process is made matters. We have not had clarity.

I really feel sad, because this is now blemished, and that service in Afghanistan should not be blemished with this. I'm just trying to get to a place where we can figure out what happened, because I'm sorry, but what we were hearing from the minister was not enough for me. I was clear during that meeting that it was not clear enough for me. The process was not clear, and there was no way to prove it was veterans. Maybe it was, but again it creates this cloudiness that I don't think is fair.

I encourage this committee to please just get at least to the amendment and then hear what the Liberals have to offer. Then maybe in the next few minutes we can actually get this done.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

I have Mr. Wilson Miao on the list. It's your turn.

Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm glad I won't be flying back to my riding of Richmond Centre tonight. I have plenty of time to get into this.

Before I speak on the amendment—we are going to support that, of course—I understand that today is a very important day. I'd like to convey my gratitude and thank our veterans, especially those who served in the Persian Gulf region from 1990 to 1991. On this day in 1991, the Gulf War ended. More than 4,000 Canadians served in the Persian Gulf region for over a year. Even in the aftermath of this conflict, Canadians continue to serve in a peacekeeping role around the world and in an embargo enforcement role there. I sincerely regret that I couldn't make it. I understand most members here today were at the memorial, laying down wreaths for our Gulf War veterans to commemorate this occasion, which is also the 33rd anniversary of the ceasefire in the Gulf War.

I'd like to encourage all members of the committee, especially those across from us, to prioritize my motion, which was passed and tabled a couple of weeks ago. We agreed to a study right after the study we're doing on transition to civilian life. It's unfortunate that we couldn't hear from the witnesses who had arranged to speak to us today because of this. I want to encourage us to get on with the studies we have on the list.

It's especially surprising that today we received over 14 motions from the Conservative members. As a newly elected member without too much experience compared with most of you seated around the table here today, I don't understand why we have to put out so many motions. It is taking away from the important work we're doing. I was very glad that we finished our women veterans study, because that was a very important study, one that I feel has not been done in the history of Canada. I really appreciate Rachel Blaney putting that motion forward. We're also looking forward to the report. I thank the analysts, especially, for putting together the report.

Going back to the national monument to Canada's mission in Afghanistan, I recall that last year, in June, all of us—except for those who are new to this committee—attended the opening ceremony at the war museum. Really, this monument recognizes the commitment and sacrifice of Canadians—not just men, but also women—who served in Afghanistan and supported those who provide safety to Canadians here at home. I find it quite strange that we're still discussing the artists instead of the veterans who are going to be honoured with this monument.

I think there's a reason we're hearing the opposition members talking only about the artist community. The reason is that most veterans are actually content with the choice for the monument. They weren't happy with the location chosen by the previous government, and rightly so, because veterans weren't even consulted on a monument in their honour in the first place. From my understanding, that location was not as ideal as the location being picked here right now.

You know, I believe our government is here to listen to veterans and to support them. In a previous study on this, ministers appeared and said many times that Veterans Affairs Canada heard from more than 12,000 Canadians about the monument design. The majority of those who responded were veterans, their families and those who served in the mission.

• (1900)

Team Stimson's design best reflects their input, and when it comes to honouring the sacrifice of our veterans, I truly believe that we must listen to them. That is why I feel it's very important for us to acknowledge that this design has been set and we should really respect the voices of our veterans and their families, because the monument that is being designed and built is for them.

I understand that we are all here serving our veterans, and that's why we're here discussing this. It's important to continue hearing from our veterans and their families, who really want us to do the work we should be doing, especially in supporting them with the transition to civilian life, which we're currently studying, and at the same time supporting—

Mr. Blake Richards: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Excuse me, Mr. Miao. I have a point of order.

Go ahead, Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards: I noted that the member was indicating that he wanted to be able to get to other business and I know that many of us have been calling for a vote.

I'm just curious. On the speakers list, are there any Conservatives or NDP or Bloc members on the speakers list at present, or is it only Liberals?

• (1905)

The Chair: No. We have different members on the list now.

Mr. Blake Richards: I know there are no Conservatives on the list. I just want to point out that we could get to a vote if they wanted us to do that, and we could move on to other things.

The Chair: The floor is Mr. Miao's.

Mr. Wilson Miao: Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity again to speak. In representing the riding of Richmond Centre, I know that there are several veterans in my riding who have been living there and encountering difficulties, especially with the world we live in right now.

The thing I'm hearing from them is that they want to know how we will be able to provide the support to them so that they can have the dignity to continue after their service to Canada and sacrificing their time and effort and all of this to serve the country. It's important for us to really acknowledge that, and it continues to give us a responsibility as a government to support the veterans who have served the country. Really, we should put our focus on talking about the possible studies that could be useful for the government. Our role as parliamentarians is to represent not just the people from our ridings but Canadians across this country.

I have had the privilege of hearing stories from some of the veterans and some of those who served in Afghanistan, and what I'm hearing from them is, "Let's get this going." Since we have broken ground, we did the opening ceremony and we acknowledged the design from Team Stimson, we should continue. Not to speak more about this, I think it's important for us to move on and vote on that amendment and then, hopefully, we can consider some of the amendments that are being brought forward by our caucus.

That's it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

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

On my list is Monsieur Desilets.

[*Translation*]

Go ahead, Mr. Desilets.

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

It's only appropriate to point out that we are using up a lot of time that could be used to discuss veterans' issues. That's what the Liberals say they want, but they are doing the exact opposite.

Mr. Miao, I want to correct something you said a moment ago. Yes, we did meet with two ministers, but we didn't get the answers we were looking for. We also tried to invite both of their predecessors, but they refused to appear.

Mr. Sarai, a jury's decision doesn't have to be unanimous. It simply has to have the support of the majority, and that was absolutely the case. You brought up the much-talked-about survey. How many times do we have to say it? Ten thousand people supposedly responded, but that's nothing. It's nothing from a statistical and scientific standpoint. Léger, Canada's biggest polling firm, made that clear in writing in a fine report that you received.

You are defending the indefensible under the pretense of standing up for veterans. A four-letter word comes to mind.

I appreciated Mr. May's point about following the rules, but he, himself, is not following the process. Does he know why we are fighting for this? The reason is that his government set up a process with clear rules, which I completely agree with. The government has to either accept the jury's choice or hold another competition. The government randomly went with door number three, opting to reject the design and choose another one, as all my fellow committee members know.

Ms. Hepfner came up with a solution: building two monuments. What a great idea. Canada is big enough to accommodate two monuments. In fact, the idea is being floated quite a bit on the Liberal side.

Good heavens, take responsibility and sit down with the Minister of Finance to find the money for a second monument. You'll make veterans happy, and they will no longer come before the committee to say that the monument has been tarnished in their eyes.

At one point, people began referring to the monument as the monument to shame—strong language, indeed. I'm looking at the Conservatives, but I, myself, said it. Something very shameful happened here, and veterans shouldn't be associated with that. You heard what they said last week. The process is tainted. They aren't crazy. They saw how this went down.

Yet again, you are trying to defend the indefensible. Defend it to your government. You have an excellent Minister of Veterans Affairs, very sensible. I don't think she would have ever made a decision like this, but she got stuck with the hot potato.

As I see it, your government's reputation is plenty tainted as it is by countless questionable episodes, so don't make it worse. Let's do what you say you want and talk about veteran's issues. Let's discuss your motions. You have great motions, honourable members. I look forward to debating them.

Is there anyone else on the list after me, Mr. Chair?

• (1910)

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Luc Desilets: That means I can't ask for the vote.

Let's say everyone around the table is in favour of the amendment, I request a vote and the committee gives unanimous consent to hold the vote. Would we have a vote in that case?

The Chair: No, because I still have people on the list.

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

The Chair: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Desilets.

I have two more people on the list.

[English]

I have Mr. Sarai and Ms. Hepfner.

Go ahead, Mr. Sarai.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Thank you, Chair.

Actually, I will agree to putting it to a vote, if we want to move on Monsieur Desilets' amendment. We're in favour of voting on it.

The Chair: First I have to give the floor to Ms. Hepfner, if she wants to intervene on that discussion.

Go ahead, Ms. Hepfner.

[Translation]

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: I think it's a good amendment, and I will support it. It's important to respect the jury's decision.

The government didn't make the decision; veterans did.

The Chair: Thank you.

I don't think I have anyone else on the speaking list.

We will now vote on Mr. Desilets's amendment.

Do I have unanimous consent to adopt Mr. Desilets's amendment?

Thank you.

(Amendment agreed to)

[English]

The Chair: Great.

Go ahead, Randeep.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Thank you, Chair.

I'm grateful we got past that and Mr. Desilets' amendment, though I had some reservations that it was a jury decision—sometimes, I still believe that—but in concert with my colleagues, I've agreed to it.

I would like to propose an amendment to Mr. Richards' motion. I propose that in paragraph b), we remove “November 8th, 2021” and replace it with “May 1st, 2014”.

The reasoning is that we're doing a study on the national monument to Canada's mission in Afghanistan, and I believe that to fully understand all the elements, we need to go back in time. We have to go back to the process that was originally run to select the monument site back in 2014. The national monument to Canada's mission in Afghanistan was announced in May 2014. That's why I think it would be relevant to have the documents since that date. This would allow us not only to compare the consultations that were made with the veterans then but also to understand the whole process in its entirety, how it has unfolded and how we have got to this point.

When I look back—obviously, I've had to look at this—I see that it's been a very interesting journey. There seemed to be a rush to have the memorial for those who fought against the Communists put up ahead of the monument for those who sacrificed their lives in the Afghan mission. This was not prioritized at the time, so I think that we need to understand what that process was and how it got to where it is.

I would ask that we discuss that amendment or we move on that amendment.

• (1915)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Sarai, but on the list, I have Mr. May and Mr. Richards.

Before I go to Mr. May, because we don't have a copy of the amendment, could you please read it again slowly so that the interpreters will have it?

Mr. Randeep Sarai: No problem. I will read it again.

In paragraph b), remove “November 8th, 2021” and replace it with “May 1st, 2014”. We're replacing “November 8th, 2021” with “May 1st, 2014”. It's a very simple amendment.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Very good.

Thank you, Mr. Sarai.

We now go to Bryan May.

[*English*]

Mr. Bryan May: Thank you. I'll be brief.

I think this is an important amendment. If we are going to pursue this study, I think we should do it right and start from the beginning of this process. I imagine there will be significantly more information on how we got to where we are if we expand the date, but I think it's important to recognize that and understand it.

I promised I would be brief, Mr. Chair. I know there are further amendments that we would like to bring forward and I want to make sure that we make time for those. I believe Mr. Richards wants to speak specifically to this amendment. I will admit that when I put my hand up, I was just hoping to make sure that you recognized me once this amendment has been determined.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you so much.

Now, Mr. Richards, the floor is yours.

Mr. Blake Richards: Certainly from my perspective, there's never any issue with more transparency and disclosure.

I do want to point out two things for the committee members. First of all, the date of November 8, 2021, is actually quite significant to what we're talking about. We're talking about trying to determine....

The decision of the jury was initially communicated on November 8, 2021. That's why that date was chosen. That decision of the jury was communicated to the two ministers involved, and from that date forward, there was interference by the Prime Minister's Office. We've seen enough evidence. We know that this has happened. That's what we're trying to find out about. Why was there interference to change the decision?

The only documents that matter are the documents from the date the decision was first communicated and afterward. They're the only ones that matter, because what's at question here is why the government tried to change the decision of the jury. Any document before November 8, 2021, is completely irrelevant to what we're trying to learn as a committee. That's why that date was chosen. It was chosen for a very specific reason.

What I would not want to see is.... Now we're talking about seven and a half more years' worth of documents that we're asking to be provided to the committee. Obviously, when you go back seven and a half more years, you're going to have a significant delay for documents that will clearly produce nothing that will help us to determine what happened here after November 8, 2021, which is what we're trying to determine. You can't determine anything about what happened after November 8, 2021, when the decision was communicated, by looking at events before that.

I will say frankly that I think the motive is to try to deliberately delay this, because clearly what we've seen over the course of a number of months now is an effort—not only that, but over two years prior to the Prime Minister's announcement of the decision to change this—by this government to try to hide whatever caused them to change this. They've gone to fairly significant lengths here.

I will say frankly that I think the motive behind this amendment is to further cover up and hide from that by delaying getting the documents that will actually get to the answers here.

I haven't heard a single reason as to why anything before November 8 will help us get to the bottom of why the Prime Minister's Office interfered after November 8, when the decision was initially communicated to interfere. I don't see what this adds. I think it's deliberately designed to try to delay this committee from doing its work to get to the bottom of this.

• (1920)

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

Ms. Blaney is next.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I just feel like this is the kid's song from when my boys were little. This is the song that never ends. It just goes on and on, so here we are.

I'm hoping we can just vote on this amendment. I don't really care; I just want to get this done. Veterans deserve to know what happened. We need a better process. We need transparency.

Can we just get this moved? If you want to change the date to May 1, I'm sorry, but I don't see how it's going to leave out November 8. I believe both sides seem to be trying to delay.

Let's get it done. I'm happy to support it if it means we actually get this vote done. If we don't get this vote done soon, I'm going to be very frustrated, because we just need to get it done.

Obviously we need to look into this. Obviously there's something that we're going to find, hopefully, because it just seems like a lot of blocking at this point. That's how I'm feeling.

I'm happy to support it. Let's move forward.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Blaney.

I still have three people on the list. I have Mr. Miao, Ms. Hepfner and Mrs. Wagantall.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): No, I'll withdraw.

The Chair: There are two MPs on the list.

Mr. Miao, the floor is yours.

Mr. Wilson Miao: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think this amendment is valid. In the past 10 years when the opposition government was in power, there were a lot of cuts to the veterans, especially in closing many offices across the country. That really limited accessibility for our veterans to be able to find and inquire about the services they need. Understanding that there was a location decided before coming to this decision, which kind of took a long time back and forth as well, it's important for us, if we're to study whether or not this monument should be continued with the decision that veterans have made, to really go back to the start to look at where it happened and at how we can, at the same time, dig deeper.

If this is what the opposition member is proposing, then let's do that. Ultimately, I think there's nothing to hide. Our government is very transparent. There are ways, with the things that we have in place, that we can really go further in this study and see what is impacting our veterans right now.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Miao.

We'll go to Ms. Hepfner.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner: Thank you, Chair.

I agree that this is a good amendment. I think if we're going to study a monument to Afghanistan, we have to go back to when it was first conceived. That happened back in 2014. Lots of things happened with this monument before 2021. It is absolutely relevant to study the whole process of how we have come to where we are today.

That's it. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

If there are no more interventions, we'll go to a vote on Mr. Sarai's amendment.

Members, do I have unanimous consent on the amendment of Mr. Randeep Sarai?

Mr. Blake Richards: No. We're afraid they're just using it to delay further.

The Chair: I don't have unanimous consent.

[*Translation*]

I will ask the clerk to proceed to the taking of a recorded division on Mr. Sarai's amendment.

(Agreement agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5)

• (1925)

The Chair: I see three people with their hands up, Mr. Desilets, Mr. May and Mr. Miao.

Keep in mind that we have just two minutes left in the meeting.

Go ahead, Mr. Desilets.

Mr. Luc Desilets: I want to propose something, Mr. Chair, so we can end on a positive note. Since we've dealt with the two amendments, could we vote on the motion as is?

My suggestion would be that we vote, but I will leave the decision up to you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Desilets.

Over to you, Mr. Miao.

[*English*]

Mr. Wilson Miao: Actually, Mr. Chair, I would like to propose another friendly amendment. Perhaps I can share it with the committee.

This is at the end of paragraph (b)(vii). I would replace “and without redaction” with “using the principles of the access of information and privacy act”. The reasoning is that it's important to follow the principles of the access to information and privacy act and protect personal information. The long-standing approach taken by successive governments has been to reconcile the exercise by the House of Commons of its privilege with other fundamental constitutional principles, such as the rule of law, parliamentary sovereignty, responsible government and the separation of powers.

I hope our opposition members can also agree to move forward with this amendment.

Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Miao.

You moved your amendment, but it's time to adjourn the meeting, so we can't debate it.

On that note, is it the pleasure of the committee to adjourn the meeting?

[*English*]

Mr. Blake Richards: What's our plan for the week after the break?

The Chair: The question is, what is the plan—

Mr. Blake Richards: The reason I'm asking is to know if we can have the witnesses come back.

The Chair: The plan is.... Today we should have had at least five or six witnesses. The clerk is already in contact with them, and we are so sorry because they were supposed to be here but we didn't hear anything from them.

I'm afraid that if we call those witnesses to appear in front of us at the next meeting on Monday and they won't be able to say anything, like today, as a chair I wouldn't like to see that and I don't think you, as members of the committee, would like to see that. I think that it was supposed to be the last meeting on that study, the transition to civilian life, but I will do whatever you want. After two weeks, we're going to come back, and on that Monday we're going to try to have those witnesses with us. I'd like to know if I should invite them and try to get them again for when we come back on Monday on our study of transition to civilian life. That's the thing.

Also, I know that we have a lot of notices of motions, so maybe we should think about having committee business to discuss every-

thing and to discuss what we're going to do. Also, we have the report on women veterans. We have to look at that report, because it is an important study that we are doing.

Go ahead, Mr. Richards.

• (1930)

Mr. Blake Richards: Perhaps the best thing would be if the Liberals could indicate how many more amendments they have, because if there are not that many more amendments, we can get this dealt with quite quickly.

The Chair: You know that each member has the privilege of tabling amendments.

Mr. Blake Richards: I'm not arguing they shouldn't be able to; I'm just wondering if they could indicate how many more they have.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Okay, then. I will ask Mr. Desilets, Ms. Blaney, Mr. Richards and the parliamentary secretary to follow up with me in writing during the two break weeks, so that we can hold a proper meeting next time.

Send me your suggestions, and I will proceed as directed by the committee.

[*English*]

Is that okay with everyone?

Ladies and gentlemen, the meeting is adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>