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Chair

Mr. Merv Tweed

Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

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•(0915)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC)): Thank you, and good morning, everyone. Welcome to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, meeting 21. Orders of the day are pursuant to the order of reference of Wednesday, March 3, 2010, Bill C-442, National Holocaust Monument Act.

When we last left committee, we had dealt with the first Liberal amendment on clause 7, and we are now entertaining amendment LIB-3 on clause 7.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC): I'm not sure if everybody has received a copy of the latest amendments from the government, but I think they have, and I would like to table those at this time, just to make sure they're all in order and that we can deal with them as we come up to the clause.

The Chair: Okay.

Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): I haven't received any amendments.

The Chair: That's good then. That was my next question.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I haven't received any amendments. I don't know what you're referring to.

The Chair: Okay. Then we have them to distribute to you.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: A point of order. Are we going to entertain amendments that some of us haven't received and haven't reviewed?

The Chair: We can entertain amendments in any fashion, whether they are presented previously or at the table during the discussion, Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Is there not a procedure for tabling amendments the way you have to table a motion, with 48 hours' notice at a minimum?

The Chair: No. When we're doing amendments, they can actually be drafted as we're having dialogue. They can happen instantaneously.

So does everyone have a copy now, just to be sure?

I think everyone has the information in front of them now. So we will now move to clause 7, the Liberal amendment 3.

(On clause 7—*Public land and maintenance of Monument*)

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Mr. Chairman, might I be permitted a moment to review everything?

[Translation]

This is for all the members who were not present last time.

•(0920)

[English]

We left off on clause 7. Our Liberal amendment, amendment L-2, which you will find on page 8.1 of our documentation, says that Bill C-442, in clause 7, be amended by replacing lines 8 to 10 on page 3 with the following:

7. The Minister shall be responsible for the construction and maintenance of the Monument.

That particular amendment passed.

Then, because some members noted that we hadn't dealt with subclause 7(2) as we were voting for clause 7 as amended, some discussion began to circulate regarding the fundraising campaign to cover the cost of the construction of the monument.

It was our contention then that all that happened, as far as we were concerned, was that when we were preparing our amendment, we had inadvertently eliminated the portion that would have said... Instead of lines 8 to 10, it should have been lines 8 to 13. Accepting clause 7, i.e. amendment L-2, would have made that subclause redundant.

What we've done to remedy that confusion is introduce our amendment L-3, which states that we delete lines 11 to 13 on page 3. It was, at the time, the suggestion of the Bloc member present that we could handle it in one of two ways: either make clause 8 as it exists part of clause 7 or just go on to clause 8 afterwards and move along.

It is still our contention that what we wanted, and what we thought was the intent of the mover of this bill, is for the Government of Canada to establish a location in the National Capital Commission for a national Holocaust memorial on behalf of all Canadians. I stress the words "all Canadians"; so that all Canadians would have an opportunity to commemorate the tragedy visited upon so many victims of the evil that was perpetrated by one ideological faction in the world. And we wanted to do that.

All of us accepted the idea that it would be Canadians and their government recognizing the importance of a Holocaust memorial, not a special group, not a particular group, and not anywhere else in the country except in the national capital region to indicate the commitment of the Canadian public to this. So we had accepted that principle through all the clauses leading up to clause 7. We feel that the elimination of subclause 7(2) of clause 7 is consistent with everything else the committee has accepted so far.

Moreover, nothing ever precludes a fundraising campaign by interested citizens from taking place—nothing. But it doesn't have to be prescribed in law. So if a council were not to come forward, and if a council were not to be a part of the spearheading of a fundraising campaign, and God forbid, if that fundraising campaign weren't able to bring forward sufficient funds to erect such a monument in the national capital region, what would then happen?

It was our contention that we shouldn't leave that to the vagaries of chance, when we already have at our disposal the mechanisms necessary for erecting such a monument. We have a bill that was unanimously accepted by the House. And we have, as we saw last week in a discussion of the estimates, the funds already available in the national capital region to be able to erect such a monument, to eliminate all of the potential mitigating vagaries of such a fundraising campaign, or in fact, if the government wanted to back away from something, it need not happen.

● (0925)

So significant is the erection of this monument that we need not put it at the chance of a council that may or may not come up with the funds in the prescribed period of time. The minister's answer to my question about whether the government was prepared to provide royal recommendation, i.e., to pay for it, was yes, no doubt.

So cost is no longer an issue. Implication on the finances of the government is no longer an issue. The legislative authority to act is already vested in the National Capital Commission, which is responsible to the minister we interviewed on the estimates a few days ago.

Mr. Chairman, the last time we went through a whole series of scenarios regarding amendments, etc., it took us all by surprise on this side of the House that the government would introduce an amendment to every single clause in the bill that their backbencher presented and that all opposition parties supported. For the government to come forward with amendments that would completely gut the bill, completely change the intention of the bill, and try to tactically buy into some other agenda is just absolutely unacceptable to us.

We regret the fact that for whatever reason we did not clarify subclause 7(2). We thought we did, and this amendment is there to ensure there is no confusion about the way the committee had already accepted all the amendments up to and including subclause 7 (1).

I'm hoping that all members around the table will accept the third Liberal amendment, which reinforces the fact that the government must allocate the land and provide the funds for erecting and maintaining this monument. This monument will be a Canadian public testament to the horrors of the Holocaust and to the suffering

of those who survived and those who didn't, and also a testament to mankind's need to stay ever vigilant against evils that find their way into government and perpetuate and perpetrate genocidal and other types of atrocities.

Mr. Chairman, I know all members around the table agree with that. That's why I'm sure everybody will support the Liberal amendment to clarify clause 7, subclauses (1) and (2) by eliminating subclause (2) of clause 7. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Jean, on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Just a point of clarification, not a point of order. The first government amendment, G-6.1, obviously deals with that clause as well. I just wanted to point that out, that it is in the same....

The Chair: I'll rule on that, yes.

For the information of all members, the LIB-3 amendment is admissible, but if it is accepted and adopted, then G-6.1, G-8.1, and a section of G-10 wouldn't be allowed to be moved.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, Mr. Chair. I think we've heard from Mr. Volpe, and certainly I would suggest that all of us at this table are very interested in making sure this happens. It's just how we get there, but certainly I think our proposal in relation to this particular amendment.... Do you want me to deal with it now or are we going to deal with...?

The Chair: We'll deal with the LIB-3 amendment first.

Mr. Brian Jean: All right. I have nothing further to say. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. Any other comment?

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Just a point of clarification on what you said, Mr. Chairman, and that is if members around the table accept our amendment to subclause 7(2), all the others, G-6.1, G-7.1, and G-8.1 will not be receivable.

I'm wondering whether it would be better, before you take the vote on the acceptance or not of our amendment, that you rule on whether these proposed amendments by the government are receivable anyway. I think you might want to do that, because members of the government side will probably condition their vote on our amendment on the basis of whether they can propose another amendment.

You haven't entertained a discussion on these yet, but I think you need to be able to clarify for us whether these amendments are receivable and in order, given all the decisions the committee has already made on the bill.

● (0930)

The Chair: Before I recognize Mr. Watson on a point of order, to make sure the record is clear, if Liberal-3 is adopted, G-6.1, G-8.1, and a section of G-10.... You had included G-7.1 and it's not....

It wouldn't be fair for me to rule on an amendment that hasn't been presented. We are dealing with LIB-3, and that's what I want the committee to focus on.

Mr. Watson, on the point of order.

Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC): You actually corrected it, Mr. Chair.

I thought Mr. Volpe had said the wrong potential amendments would be affected, but you did clarify that it's G-6.1, G-8.1, and part of G-10.

The Chair: Thank you.

Is there any other comment?

(Amendment negatived)

The Chair: We will now move to government amendment 6.1.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, Mr. Chair. This follows through with the government's commitment in relation to the planning, designing, construction, installing, and maintaining the monument, and other costs incurred, that Canadians can actually participate in this. The council itself will spearhead a fundraising campaign to cover these costs, and all Canadians and other people throughout the world can participate in this monument.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe, on a point of order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I think now is the appropriate time for you to make a declaration on whether this amendment is receivable and in order.

The Chair: Thank you.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Before I make a comment on it.

The Chair: Yes, and that's what I am going to do.

The amendment is beyond the scope of the bill. But again, as we have throughout the entire process, it is the will of the committee that makes that decision; I just present the advice.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, I thought that might be the decision, and I'm hoping that some other people will—

Mr. Brian Jean: A point of order.

An hon. member: Mr. Volpe is on a point of order.

The Chair: No, he's on the—

Mr. Brian Jean: I'm challenging your ruling, Mr. Chair. With respect, we've had challenges overturned both ways, but in this particular case, I challenge your ruling with respect to that.

The Chair: The ruling of the chair has been challenged. It is not debatable.

An hon. member: He asked for a point of order.

The Chair: He challenged my ruling, so that's where I have to go on that.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. I was in the middle of my own point when you were reminded that there might

be a challenge. I think it's important for the chair and the committee to hear what our point would have been.

The Chair: The advice I'm given is that a challenge to the chair cannot be made on a point of order; it's made when you have the floor.

So Mr. Volpe had the floor.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: [*Inaudible—Editor*]...I appreciate the support of all my colleagues. We're going to try to get through this in a rational fashion.

Mr. Chairman and colleagues, one of the principles in the House and in committee is that we cannot do by the back door what will not be permitted through the front door. We've seen Speakers' decisions in the House repeat that basic principle over and over again.

What the committee has done with the amendments that it has presented over the course of the debate on this bill has established the principle that the government shall provide the land, i.e. the location in the national capital region, and the funds for the erection of a monument on that terrain and for the maintenance, as is consistent with everything else the National Capital Commission has done.

I had occasion to present to the minister an indication of various monuments that had already been erected and had already been covered by that basic principle. That was the intent of the legislation before the government tried to change it. We've re-established that principle. The government amendment—this one, G-6.1—and any others you mention are not receivable. They are not receivable because the government is now going into what one can identify as a user fee approach to erecting a monument. It says the council must go out there and raise the funds, not just in Canada but everywhere else. What that means is the Government of Canada doesn't have the money to do this, but anybody who's interested in this can go out and raise the money. Imagine that, Mr. Chairman and colleagues.

● (0935)

The Chair: Mr. Jean, on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Chair, I appreciate the member's persuasion on this issue, but I don't know if he's aware that we do have a letter here from the Canadian Jewish Congress, and I would like to read that into the record on the point of order, Mr. Chair, very quickly. It says:

I wish to acknowledge that Canadian Jewish Congress supports Bill C-442, An Act to establish a National Holocaust Monument, with the government's amendments.

That's quotable, Mr. Chair. I'll go on:

This is a very important initiative for all Canadians and we appreciate the commitment of Parliamentarians to see it to fruition.

They are supporting this bill with the government amendments, Mr. Volpe. I hope you will listen to the Canadian Jewish Congress. I've got a copy of that letter for you if you don't have a copy today. I did provide it to you last night. I'm certain that although we have different theories on how to get there, we're both interested in going forward for the same thing. We're listening to the Canadian Jewish Congress and their members, and that's what we'd like to do.

I don't know if I can table that letter, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: It can be tabled.

Is there any comment on the point of order?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: My colleagues from the Bloc will accept it and I will accept it. There's not a problem. I read the letter—he's interrupted my point of order, but that's okay—but for a point of clarification, what it does say is “with the government's amendments”. We got these amendments last night at 7 o'clock, or whenever it was. I had a copy of this letter at 6 o'clock. I'm wondering whether there has been a breach of privilege of members of Parliament to consider amendments that have already been shared with other people.

At any rate, it doesn't say which amendments. It just says “government's amendments”. I don't know whether those amendments were the ones that had already been ruled out of order or the ones that are now being currently ruled out of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: I must interrupt the member. These amendments are exactly the same in substance as the first amendments.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: And they've already been turned down by the committee.

Mr. Jean, thank you for clarifying that. It's important that you did that, and I thank you for doing that.

The Chair: If I may, we have a point of order that's been raised. A document has been tabled. Are you speaking to his point of order?

● (0940)

Hon. Joseph Volpe: No, I'm accepting it, so I can finish with my own point.

The Chair: Then I actually have to go to Mr. Laframboise, who's still speaking on that point.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Well, let me finish on that point and then we can come back to mine.

The Chair: But you weren't on the floor on a point of order; you were addressing the amendment. That's the place where we were, on amendment G-6.1.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: But you asked whether it was acceptable to table this.

The Chair: Right.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: And I just wanted to clarify that I actually did speak with the president of the Canadian Jewish Congress, who was unaware that the letter had gone out. He was completely unaware. I spoke then to the individual who's responsible for this file, who thought, quite frankly, that the letter could be issued on the basis of a conversation that was supposed to resolve the issue—but it never took place.

I'm wondering whether the parliamentary secretary wants to talk about breach of privilege or deception.

The Chair: I'll recognize Monsieur Laframboise on the same point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Still on the point of order, Mr. Chair, I cannot agree to the letter being tabled because it is in English only. But I can tell you that I have received correspondence from the community in French,

including a proposed subamendment. So I can confirm that there have been contacts between the government and the community. The Liberals are just doing their job.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Laframboise, for that clarification.

Mr. Volpe, we're back to you. We're discussing G-6.1, which has been tabled by Mr. Jean.

For clarification—and here I apologize to Mr. Volpe—when I have made a ruling, I can entertain points of order, but no discussion or debate on G-6.1. Because I've ruled it inadmissible, we either accept a challenge of the chair or accept my decision. So if you're on a point of order, we can allow that to continue, but there is no debate about G-6.1. It's a point of order to make a point.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe—

The Chair: I'll interrupt you one more time.

Mr. Jean, do you have a point of order?

Mr. Brian Jean: It's not a point of order, Mr. Chair.

Does he still have the floor?

The Chair: Yes, on a point of order of his.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: As I understand it, until I finish on the point of order and you rule on the point of order, nobody can make a motion to challenge the chair. So we're not even on that yet.

The Chair: We're on a point of order raised by you.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: So we're still on a collegial, cooperative basis. Wonderful.

My point of order is that I don't think any amendments and decisions by the chair can contravene the basic principle established in the House, that being that you cannot sneak in the back door what can't go through the front door.

What the front door represents is all of the decisions made by the committee leading up to and including the vote on 7.1. The votes up to and including 7.1 say that the Government of Canada is going to be responsible for finding the terrain, erecting the monument, and maintaining that monument, because that's the only way this is going to be a Canadian public monument. Any other monument is something erected by a very specific element of the Canadian citizenry, and that's not the intent of the legislation.

Any of these amendments that go against that basic principle, in other words, that try to sneak in the back door what has already been shut out of the front door, have to be ruled out of order.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Volpe.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I challenge the chair.

The Chair: Okay. The ruling of the chair has been challenged.

I'll go to Bonnie.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Bonnie Charron): [*Inaudible—Editor*]...that the decision of the chair be sustained.

(Ruling of the chair overturned: nays 7; yeas 4)

• (0945)

The Chair: So the ruling of the chair has been overturned, and we will now debate G-6.1.

Mr. Volpe, on a point of order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: It's with great regret that I see, first of all, that we are yet again challenging the chair and that this time the challenge was sustained.

I know that the Bloc refused to have a letter presented by the parliamentary secretary to be tabled. It is well within its rights to do that, for exactly the reasons it indicated. However, parts of the letter were read into the record for the purposes of influencing a decision. I just want the record to indicate that that letter was obtained under false pretences, and I—

Mr. Brian Jean: I object, Mr. Chair. I certainly object.

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: That is a direct insult to me, Mr. Chair. I did not ask for that letter. That letter was provided to me. It was provided directly to me.

An hon. member: Out of the blue?

Mr. Brian Jean: The point is that the letter has been provided. The point is that the substance of the letter confirms that they support the government's amendments and this bill.

To suggest that I obtained it under false pretences is just simply wrong, and, quite frankly Mr. Volpe, it is insulting. I thought better of you, bluntly.

The Chair: Members, I'm going to go to Monsieur Laframboise on the same point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, Mr. Volpe knows exactly how the Standing Orders work. The committee is master of its own proceedings. We have the right to overturn the chair's decision. If he does not agree with that, he can take it up with Speaker Milliken when the bill is referred back to the House. These are amendments proposed by the government that hopefully has done its job. We will see how things turn out.

Meanwhile, I hope that we will clear the frustration from the room and move on. We have the right to overturn the chair's decision. If Mr. Volpe is not happy with that, he can just use other procedures.

[*English*]

The Chair: I have two other people left to speak, Mr. Dhaliwal and then Mr. Bevington.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, I'm respectfully looking at this letter that is written by the Canadian Jewish Congress and tabled now, and I have to agree with Mr. Volpe. This is clearly a very vague letter, which does not explain which amendments it supports. We do not have the full story to this letter, and this letter was not written in full discussion with members on this side, the Liberal side, as well.

I would suggest that, with every respect...I think every Canadian, including myself and my children, would feel very proud to be part

of erecting this monument for the Holocaust. This is a history, in fact, that we should all be sharing. Not only political people should be able to come in and say that's their duty. In fact, being Canadian, I would personally feel that every Canadian feels as proud.

Those are my comments.

Mr. Colin Mayes (Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): I thought we had already determined that that letter was not admissible because it was not produced in French. Why are we discussing this letter? It doesn't exist.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'll go to Mr. Bevington for a comment.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Well, I've got a copy of the letter here, and it was given to me here, but whether it exists or not in terms of the committee, I'm not sure.

If there are some questions about the support for the direction this bill is taking, perhaps we need to bring some more witnesses forward. If that is the case and if there's some concern about how this is unfolding, I'd like to get to the bottom of it. We're spending a lot of time on this, I know. I have lots of other things I'd like to see the committee move forward on, but there is a basic element here. Is the government responsible for this memorial? Of course, as a Canadian citizen, I want the government to be responsible for the memorial because then it represents the feelings of all Canadians. My father was a war veteran and partook in the bombing of Germany to stop the war and the death of many people, to right wrongs. Should I not ensure that the Government of Canada is fully responsible for this memorial to honour his actions in dealing with the Holocaust? If I asked him what I should do here, I would think he would tell me, yes, it has to be the Government of Canada that initiatives, approves, and puts the monument in place. So for me, this is an important issue, and I thought the private member's bill that is in front of us clearly says it.

The parliamentary secretary asked me to review a document that he said had the considered opinion of a very important group dealing with the Holocaust issue. I want to understand that what he gave me was correct and that it matches with their particular point of view. But when it comes to that larger issue of who is responsible for this memorial, I can't take any other position than the one I have.

• (0950)

The Chair: Thank you.

Before we go any further, I have one more point of order to recognize.

I do want to suggest that we are getting into debate around other issues. I will respectfully ask Mrs. Crombie to make her comments, and then I'll rule on the point of order. Hopefully we can proceed.

Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Mr. Chairman, there is no one more excited about the erection of this monument than I. My grandfather, too, was a prisoner of war in the Second World War and was held in a labour camp for five years. So I was quite excited that we would take this initiative as a government, and as a whole, the taxpayers of Canada themselves would be part of this initiative.

Now, portions of the letter that we're not discussing have already been tabled and read into the record, as a matter of fact. Clearly, there is some uncertainty with respect to the reference to the quote, "the government's amendments", which are specifically very vague. They don't refer to which government amendments, and we're not certain whether the third party involved, the CJC, is aware that those amendments fundamentally change the essence of the bill as it had been presented.

Now I think we have no other course of action than to bring them forward and ask them to appear as witnesses to provide clarification as to whether they understand fully that these amendments, which they purport to support, fundamentally change the essence of the bill that had been initially tabled and that was supported by this committee.

Perhaps before we can move forward on a clause-by-clause basis, we need clarification from the organization on the letter, which hasn't been tabled and isn't official.

If I could add one more point, Mr. Chairman, I find it offensive, to use the word of my colleague across the floor, that the government would share amendments with outside organizations, no matter how wonderful the organizations may be, without bringing them forward to their colleagues at this committee first. That has to be immoral and probably wrong, but it is certainly offensive that they do that and that they tabled these amendments nine hours before we have to come to a decision on them, without giving us the respect to review them properly, to consider them, and to debate them as a caucus ourselves. That is disrespectful and quite offensive, and they should absolutely be out of order.

•(0955)

The Chair: Thank you.

It's not a point of order. It is, in my mind, debate.

We have tabled G-6.1. The decision of the committee is that we deal with G-6.1 and that's what I would ask that the debate open on.

Mr. Volpe, do you have a point of order?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I think you're absolutely right, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Bevington raised the point, and Madam Crombie raised a similar point, namely, that when we discuss clause-by-clause we typically have the technical experts—usually from the department—here before us.

We've been sidetracked from that because of a letter. I used language that was pretty strong, and I don't mean to get into ad hominem attacks. I never do that. I want to retract the words that were offensive to my colleague, Mr. Jean, but I found it difficult to come up with any other language. I'm sorry for that.

We have, as one of our observers, a representative from the Canadian Jewish Congress. This representative is responsible for the

file, wanted to be consulted on this letter, and was probably consulted on what the conversation was about. Even though the letter was not accepted for tabling, the first paragraph was read into the record. We can deal with it because it was read into the record in both English and French.

I'm wondering, Mr. Chairman, whether you would call up Mr. Eric Vernon from the Canadian Jewish Congress. He can appear before us and answer any questions specific to these clauses. He's the only one who can determine whether the letter was solicited or offered voluntarily. He's the only one who can tell us whether it reflects the points that Mrs. Crombie, I, Mr. Bevington, and others have been trying to make. I'm wondering whether you would call Mr. Vernon to the table.

The Chair: Thank you for that advice, but we cannot entertain witnesses when an amendment is on the floor. We have to address the amendment, and then if the committee consents, we can bring any witness forward that we choose. But because G-6.1 has been brought forward, we have to address that amendment before we can move in any other direction.

I would ask that we open the debate on G-6.1 and move forward.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I come back to the principle that I repeated on many an occasion. I'd like to add another one, which builds on what Madam Crombie said a moment or two ago and was repeated by Mr. Bevington. I think even Mr. Laframboise referred to it. That is that such a monument is important to the history of Canada. It's important to the people of Canada, and it should not be relegated to a particular group in Canada. It is not a monument for 100,000, 200,000 or 300,000 people. It is one that has the full commitment of all 32 million inhabitants of the country, and that's why it's important for this bill to reflect the interest not only of the Government of Canada but the entire Parliament of Canada, and indeed, Mr. Chairman, the entire House of Commons—no exceptions—voted in favour of the bill with those principles in mind.

The government has turned the tables on that process and is now talking about user fees for specific people who might be interested. Mr. Chairman, colleagues, I plead with you to think in terms of what that means. It means that all of us are going to be implicated in stepping back from the commitment by the entire public of Canada to erect a monument to commemorate the injustices done by evil around the world, and that specifically affects all of our values as Canadians—all Canadians.

I can't be a part of that. I'm not sure anybody else would want to be a part of it. I'm not sure the Canadian Jewish Congress would agree to that process, as much as they are excited about having such a monument erected. But such a monument erected according to the principles outlined by amendment G-6.1 by the government would mean that monument is specific to a small group in Canada, financed by a small group in Canada, by their own volition, by their own resources, irrespective of outreach by all other Canadians to share in the tragedy that befell them and affected all of us. We can't have that. They won't have it. I'm sorry that you won't call them, because the rules don't allow it, to come before us during the discussion on this amendment. Perhaps we'll have to consider it on the next amendment.

But, Mr. Chairman, I think I reflect the views of all colleagues, not just the government members, to stay true to the principle that we have accepted so far. This amendment rejects that principle. I'm not going to implicate or allocate a motive of false intent, malicious intent, or even oblivious intent. I just think it's wrong. It's wrong to turn our backs on the principles that make this a worthwhile project that had all Canadians interested and involved and now are turning a portion of the population into a wedge. That's never been the intent of this legislation. It's not anything that my caucus colleagues on the Liberal Party could ever support. We couldn't support this amendment even if we wanted to comply with the government's desire to go out there and involve Canadians in a fundraising exercise, to get user fees, by any other language. The money is there. We saw the minister agree to it. We saw the minister agree when he came before the committee last week and said that the royal recommendation is not a problem. Those are his quotes. We'll offer; the money is there. Finances are not an issue.

The principle is an issue. This amendment not only erodes the principle, it destroys the principle, turns its back on the people who are most affected, and it turns its back on the values of the Canadian public that wanted to be at one with all the people who are affected, because the Holocaust affects us all.

I urge everybody to turn this amendment down.

• (1000)

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, it is funny, but I am in favour of amendment G-6.1, as I would be for amendment G-7.1 and the government amendments. Let me explain why.

It is true that the law clerks have recommended that you do not accept these amendments. I would just like to challenge the position they have taken. The objective of the amendments is to make the bill better. We are coming up against the limits of a private member's bill. A bill like that has limits. We have already talked about them here.

When it tabled amendments G-6.1 and G-7.1, the government confirmed that the minister would remain responsible but would delegate that responsibility. Personally, I feel that that is allowed. That is why I said earlier that, if the Liberal Party is not happy, it could get the Speaker of the House involved and ask him to decide. With all due respect to the law clerks advising you, I feel that he would rule in favour of the decision that was just made to overturn your decision. I feel that the minister is going to issue a power of

attorney. It is a kind of proxy. He keeps the responsibility, but he is delegating part of his authority. When you delegate part of your authority, you always remain responsible. To me, this is a legal debate.

I understand the Liberals. They have been trying to filibuster for a while. They can do that. They know very well that it is another way, another strategy, to get the original bill passed. If they can filibuster until June 11, it will be passed as is.

We have to give the government amendments a chance. Personally, I am going to support them. If there is ever an objection, if the Liberals and the NDP vote against, fine; the Speaker will decide. That is where the debate will be. As for the amendments, the government has the right to delegate its authority. The law clerks are against it doing so. So I feel the decision will have to be made by someone else, and that someone is the Speaker of the House.

But I would prefer not to have a political debate about whether we will or will not have a monument. I want us to have a monument and those people to have the recognition they deserve. If that is a problem legally, let us support these amendments on division if we want to, and the Speaker will decide. I have no problem with that.

• (1005)

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, I want to continue with this discussion, and I will, but first I think I'd like to move for adjournment until we can get witnesses to clarify some of these issues.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe, are you asking that the meeting be adjourned or debate?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: That the meeting be adjourned until we can call witnesses to address some of these issues.

The Chair: The call for the meeting to be adjourned is admissible, and it's open for debate.

For clarification, the motion is acceptable and open for debate because it has been qualified with the comment that we receive further information from witnesses. It therefore becomes debatable, and then we'll vote on it.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, all I want to do is to simply say, adjourn the meeting. I only wanted to give an indication as to why, but there's no need for me to add the why. I think everybody knows it, so I move to adjourn the meeting.

The Chair: Now there is no debate because it's a direct motion to adjourn. I will call the vote.

Mr. Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, I would like to make an amendment to the motion. I suggest that we adjourn for five minutes. If they want to have a discussion, I see no problem with us adjourning for five minutes and coming back. Otherwise, I will vote against.

[*English*]

The Chair: Are you acceptable to that?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I accept that there's no debate, no amendment.

The Chair: Okay.

Regrettably, I can't accept that, so we will vote now on the motion to adjourn.

(Motion negatived)

The Chair: We're back to debate on G-6.1.

Mr. Bevington.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Is a motion to adjourn for five minutes in order now?

The Chair: It appears there is agreement to take a 10-minute recess.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I'm just curious. Once you've moved a clause in clause-by-clause and you have it in front of you and it's being debated, can you then move to adjourn?

It's just very interesting. I've never seen it.

The Chair: A motion to adjourn supersedes the amendment debate. If we have agreement, we can take a 10-minute recess.

We'll recess for 10 minutes.

● (1005) _____ (Pause) _____

● (1020)

The Chair: Thank you, and welcome back, everyone.

The debate was taking place on government amendment 6.1. We were, I think, near the end of the debate. But if there's no one else, then I will—

An hon. member: Mr. Volpe was still speaking—

The Chair: Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, this particular amendment by the government is attempting, as I said earlier on, to reverse some of the decisions that had already been made by the committee leading up to this particular clause.

All of this is predicated on the parliamentary secretary reading into the record part of a letter that was not accepted for tabling, for the usual procedural reasons—legitimate as they have always been—by other members of the committee. However, with respect to what

was already read into the record, it would appear that a letter of endorsement was produced on the basis of a scenario depicted to the letter writer or to his colleagues responsible for the file that conveyed an impression that might have been, at the very least, incomplete.

On the basis of those conversations and the scenario being incomplete, we voted on accepting or not accepting to continue the debate. We are now here on G-6.1.

I think it always bears repetition that the government is trying to do something through the back door that has already been shut at the front door. What the government is doing is it is essentially saying that anyone who wants to build a monument can go ahead and do it on their own. What this amendment says is we'll establish a council, we'll use the appropriate legal model to ensure that it exists, we'll give it the articles that we give any other corporation, we'll let them—although the legislation doesn't say that—maybe establish themselves as a charitable organization, and we'll let those people go forward who have a direct tie to the Holocaust.

We've already rejected that language. We already rejected that language because Canadians all have a direct tie. But the government doesn't think so. The government thinks that it's only members of those families who have an immediate connection to someone who perished during the Holocaust. And in that thinking, Mr. Chairman, the government is saying that the Canadian public doesn't want to have anything to do with the monument. That analysis is wrong. The Canadian public does want to do this, but there are only so many ways the Canadian public can express itself in favour of a monument that commemorates the tragic genocidal actions committed in our generation.

So the government comes back and it says what they're going to do is establish this council; they're going to conduct a fundraising campaign. They'll cover the cost of planning, they'll cover the cost of designing, they'll cover the cost of construction, they'll cover the cost of installing and maintaining the monument, and they'll cover any of the costs the council establishes.

● (1025)

Well, you know, Mr. Chairman and colleagues, everybody else in the country is asking why we need the legislation for us to establish such a council in the first place. We don't need permission to do that in a free and open country like Canada. If we have the money, we'll do that. We'll do it ourselves. We can buy property here through the National Capital Commission. We can do it on our own. We don't need the permission of the Government of Canada. We don't need the consent of this committee to send out a real estate agent to locate the land for us. We might actually come up with a better location than the one you want to give us. We don't need you to conduct a nationwide contest from an architectural design point of view. We don't need you to give us the money. We just want to do it on our own.

Well, you know what? We can. Every citizen can. Every group of citizens can. So we're not talking about the financing of a concept. We're not talking about permitting a concept to be generated. We're not talking about the abilities of any community to generate the resources necessary to realize this project. There is in fact already a group out there that says it has this project in mind and it thinks it's long overdue and it is already generating funds. It wants to get it done. People have already done that. Why do we need a government amendment to say they have our benediction, they have our approval, they have our consent? Give us a break. In a democratic environment where the citizen prevails, we don't need the Government of Canada to do that.

But here's what we need the Government of Canada to do. We need the Government of Canada to speak for all Canadians—every single one of the 32 million who have subscribed to the census and have identified themselves as legitimate inhabitants in this place. We need the Government of Canada to collectively speak on behalf of those 32 million and to say collectively that it is our will to ensure that such a monument be planned, designed, constructed, installed, and maintained at our expense—because it is our monument, because it is an expression of our experience, because it is a reflection of all the values that make Canada what Canada is.

Do you want to help? You're quite welcome. But the Government of Canada has the resources, the generative resources of talent, ingenuity, even will, and finances. To be able to marshal together all of those elements that collectively give a stamp of Canada on the project, that's what every community would need. They don't need the Government of Canada for anything else. They don't, and the committee has already said, all along, leading up to this amendment, that it doesn't need anything other than an expression of the Government of Canada's will to do this.

But do you know what, Mr. Chairman and colleagues? Members of Parliament have already done that. They've done the heavy lifting for the Government of Canada. They've already done all the preparatory work for the Government of Canada. They've done it in the House of Commons, unanimously. They expressed support for a bill presented by a backbench member of Parliament, seconded by an opposition member of Parliament, and everyone agreed that the principle should be the one we've enunciated—everyone. The bill came before this committee, and to everyone's surprise, the government presented an amendment for every single clause in the bill. Just reflect on that, colleagues. Every single clause in the bill was pulled back by the Government of Canada.

• (1030)

The Government of Canada said no, we could not have the expression of the public's desire to support this concept. The Government of Canada said to that community, which is already busily working away to build a monument in the national capital region, to ensure that the Canadian public lends its support to that initiative. Let it stand out there like a beacon, worldwide, and say the people of Canada have done this—not the Government of Canada, the people of Canada. The Parliament of Canada—members of Parliament from every nook and cranny in Canada, from every political stripe, from every religious background, members of Parliament elected in rural Canada, in maritime Canada, in urban Canada, in the north, members of Parliament as remote from the

experience of the Holocaust as you can get, collectively joined in and said, “We want our voice stamped on that monument.” There's only one way for us to do it, and that's to say that the people of Canada—the Government of Canada—want to finance, plan, design, build, and maintain this monument. It's a reflection of our will. It's a reflection of our design. It's an expression of our commitment to fellow man.

That's a laudable thing to do. But the government said “uh-uh”. What's going to trump all of this is money. And even though the House of Commons agreed with us wholeheartedly, completely, thoroughly, unanimously, the government, upon reflection, said it doesn't want to do this anymore, that money is an issue. What money? The Government of Canada's annual budget is something like \$255 billion. The Government of Canada has that much money at its disposal on an annual basis—\$255 billion. I don't know how much this monument would cost. I dare say it probably won't even put a dent in that \$255 billion budget.

So really, the issue of money can't be it. Well, maybe it's because we're in a time of constraint. Now we have to reduce the deficit, we have to reduce the debt. We have to balance off all of the woes that have afflicted our finances. So the first casualty will be this monument. Well, is money that significant? To judge by the statements of the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities just the other day, when he appeared before a committee, money is not the issue, and the reason for that is that the budget gave even more money to the National Capital Commission for the conduct of its business, for the management of its real estate assets, and for its operations. The Government of Canada, thanks to votes in the House, was able to transfer to the National Capital Commission additional millions of dollars—additional—for projects just like this one. In fact, they didn't even need this legislation.

I pointed out in a letter to the minister that the NCC already possesses the authority to establish a monument without parliamentary approvals. Indeed, the NCC currently is responsible for, count them, not one, not two, not three, not four or five, but 16 monuments, including the Hungarian monument, the Canadian tribute to human rights, the monument to Canadian aid workers, and currently there's even construction under way of a national naval monument. None of these required legislation.

•(1035)

What makes those people who want to have a national Holocaust monument so special that they require legislation to get it done? Do you know what, colleagues? The National Capital Commission is in the planning phase for the creation of a national monument for victims of communism. I don't want to diminish that because there are countless millions who have suffered at the hands of communism, who died, in the old U.S.S.R. and other places around the world. We're building a monument to them. That's to our credit. But we didn't require a bill. We didn't ask the families of those victims to go out and do the fundraising. We didn't ask them to engage in contributing user fees, because that's what this is. We found the community that wanted one of these monuments and we said, oh, well, maybe they have the wherewithal to pay for it, so we don't have to pay for it. Can you imagine anything so cynical? Can you imagine any member of Parliament on this side of the table or even on that side of the table turning around and saying our cynicism is covered by their willingness to self-tax for a monument we could build just like that? We don't need the legislation. Finances aren't the problem. Could it be greed?

•(1040)

Mr. Mario Laframboise: A point of order.

The Chair: Mr. Laframboise.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I have no problem with Mr. Volpe's filibuster. But he has no right to repeat the same things.

Yes, it is true that the government wants someone else to pay... please can he come up with something else? I have no problem listening to him, but he must not be redundant.

[English]

The Chair: *Merci.*

I would advise Mr. Volpe that there does seem to be some repetition in his comments. I will respect the point of order.

[Translation]

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

So I will begin again in French, because I have to use just the right words to describe the concept...

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Laframboise on a point of order.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: He can speak in English or French, but he cannot use the same words, the same expressions and the same information over and over again. English or French, no problem, but please can he come up with something else?

[English]

The Chair: I would ask Mr. Volpe to renew his vigour in debate.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I must confess—

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: I want to confirm, Mr. Chair, and I understand why Mr. Volpe is filibustering this today. The Liberal Party made a promise, I think 10 or 15 years ago, to provide money for a Holocaust monument. In another 10 or 15 years they might get in government again and would be able to fulfill that promise. I'm not sure if they would once they get back into power, if they ever do.

I do want to point out, Mr. Volpe, that the Winnipeg museum raised over \$100 million from Canadians, a museum, frankly, that is the human rights museum, and all Canadians wanted to be involved.

I understand Mr. Volpe is filibustering, and I understand he's not getting what he wants out of this bill, but we believe on this side of the House that Canadians want to come forward and they want to be part of this. People who were directly connected to the Holocaust want to come forward and make the decisions and oversee it. That's why we believe we should move forward in one way or another, today, to get this done. We can't wait another 10 or 15 years for a Liberal promise to be kept.

The Chair: Mr. Watson, on the same point of order.

Mr. Jeff Watson: Just briefly, Chair, for the benefit of the committee, in terms of past experience, when I've seen people filibustering at committee, at least they had to be relevant to the specific clause that's under consideration. If Mr. Volpe wants to speak about things more broadly that were appropriate at second reading debate and not so much at committee here....

Mr. Chair, if that understanding is correct, then I think Mr. Volpe should stay germane to the clause we are debating here and not a whole lot of other matters.

The Chair: I thank everybody for their advice. I have suggested to Mr. Volpe that there is starting to be some repetition and I would ask him to continue to stay relevant but with fresh material.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: The material is always fresh, Mr. Chairman, and I accept the intervention of colleagues. They probably suffered under the mistaken impression that perhaps I was tiring in my energy, and so just to give them an opportunity to think of themselves as having fulfilled something of benefit, I can now assure them that, no, I was not tiring, but that the added moment of freshness in the air is probably going to generate even more energy about a topic on which we should all speak with passion.

I apologize to my colleagues from the Bloc who thought my command of the English thesaurus was more limited than they had expected of me, and I'll try to live up to *Le Petit Robert* and *Larousse*, etc., if I can, in order that the repetition not fray any nerves.

But it's important to keep in mind, Mr. Chairman, that repetition is the soul of integration. In fact, if you repeat, yes, in repeating the concept we drive home the point, and the point is still the one I was talking about a moment ago: first, whether it was will, public will, public reflection, public involvement; secondly, whether it was a question of moneys—and we have clearly dealt with the issue of moneys not being the issue.

It must be something to do with authority: in other words, whether the Government of Canada could have, should have, must have the authority to put this forward. Mr. Chairman, colleagues all know that the authority is vested in the cabinet and exercised through the various ministers. Now, the only way that any community—whether it is the Jewish community, the Italian community, the Hungarian community, any community in Canada—can know that the Government of Canada, the people of Canada, side with them is if a minister of that cabinet, a minister of the crown, an administrator of the authority of the people, can actually speak on their behalf. A minister did. The Prime Minister did. The member who presented the bill, when questioned here before this committee, said yes, he had not only consulted the Prime Minister and the cabinet and the minister responsible, but he'd gotten their approval. They've gotten their approval. Can you imagine? The Prime Minister and the cabinet said yes, the bill is great, and they supported it. Everybody supported it.

But then the Prime Minister and the cabinet and the cabinet minister responsible for this pulled themselves back, apparently. So now we're looking at something like this. This particular item says “No, no, it can't be the minister, it can't be the government, it can't be the Prime Minister who is going to incur the costs of covering the planning, designing, construction, installation, and maintaining of the monument. No, it can't be the Prime Minister. It can't be the Government of Canada. It can't be the people of Canada. It has to be somebody else”.

Well, let's pick some people. We'll call it a council, but it can't be the people of Canada. It can't be the Prime Minister. That's what this amendment says. I can't imagine that the government would promote an amendment that would cast such aspersions on the will of its own Prime Minister and cabinet minister.

When the cabinet minister stood before this committee, he was sitting right there by number 18, Mr. Chairman, and I asked him if he was still committed to this. He said there was no doubt. I asked if he was willing to give a royal recommendation in case there were costs associated with this. He said there was no doubt. Well, I don't know who speaks for this government or for the people of Canada anymore. There's no doubt, apparently, that the minister wants to cover the expenses, wants to exercise his authority. There's no doubt. There's no doubt that they will cover all the financial considerations because they're prepared to give a royal recommendation. And the government members opposite present an amendment that says, “No, we don't want to do that. It costs too much money.” We don't know. Nobody's every asked for an estimate. Nobody has done a feasibility study on this. Nobody has looked at the design projects. Nobody has conducted a national campaign to find out who's interested, which architectural firm, what's going to be done, and where it's going to be done. Nobody has done that, so we don't know what the cost is.

● (1045)

Members opposite must know the costs, because they're saying they want the council to cover all this. We don't know whether it's \$10 or \$10 million. It doesn't matter because it's all the same to them. That \$10 or \$10 million is going to break the bank. It's going to ruin the finances of a government that has \$255 billion in expenditures. Can you imagine that?

Well, we can't imagine that. We can't. We have to take all of our colleagues at face value. When they presented this particular bill... and I'm going to ask my colleague from Mississauga—Streetsville or my colleague from Newton—North Delta what their understanding might be when in the House they voted for something completely different, i.e. that the minister would be responsible and that the minister accepted that responsibility.

Now think about this—just to change topic for a moment; the word “responsible” is there for a very specific reason, Mr. Chairman, and that specific reason is that we live in a parliamentary system that says the government is responsible—responsible—and accountable to the people for everything it decides.

So here, now, is something novel: the government members are presenting an amendment that says the minister can no longer be responsible.

● (1050)

The Chair: A point of order, Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, this clause 7 has nothing to do with government responsibility. I would like Mr. Volpe to concentrate on the clause and the amendment that have been brought before us. Again, he has brought up the fact that the government has \$254 billion, and all that.

He has other colleagues. I am sure that his Liberal colleagues would like to join in this filibuster too. If he has nothing else to say, can't he just yield the floor to someone else, Mr. Chair?

[*English*]

The Chair: I would have to suggest, Mr. Volpe, that it is becoming repetitive, and I respect the point of order. So if you want to continue, I would ask that you stay relevant to the amendment being proposed.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I was trying to do exactly that, Mr. Chairman. I thank my colleagues for having care for my own health, but when I'm clearing my throat, it's okay, don't worry.

This particular amendment really begins to address the other issue that's very relevant to all of us, and that is where we think the responsibility for the decisions needs to be vested. Whether they're going to be delegated off to a council, a group of people, or whether the minister of the crown is still going to be answerable to the people of Canada—because this is an expression of the people of Canada's interest—we see that they are subverting their own understanding of what the responsibility of a minister might be.

But I'm going to cede to the entreaties of colleagues opposite who think perhaps I'm speaking too energetically to this particular issue. I know that my colleague from Mississauga—Streetsville wants to continue on this theme, and in deference to her, I will cede the floor.

The Chair: Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I mentioned earlier how all the people of Canada want to honour the memory of the victims of the Holocaust and how my own grandfather served in World War II and was a prisoner of war who served in a labour camp for five years. So it's as important to me as I know it is to all Canadians. That means they all want to know that they're taking part and sharing in the responsibility and obligations that go with honouring these victims.

So I ask myself, what's behind these amendments? What's behind amendment 6.1? What's really going on here? Is there not some nefarious purpose? I wouldn't go that far, because clearly we wouldn't accuse the government of having a nefarious agenda. So what is going on?

You know they had unanimous support in the House of Commons. All parties rallied behind this private member's bill, because it was the right thing to do, it was the moral thing to do, it was the ethical thing to do. They sent it to committee for further study so we could analyze it clause by clause. Of course, this committee stamped it.

What's happened here at the 11th hour—well, not even at the 11th hour, but a little less than that—is that government members have presented amendments in a very underhanded way. It showed their contempt for the process, because it's a bait and switch. That's what's happened.

It is not the first time we have witnessed this government's contempt for the process, its contempt for Parliament. Amendment 6.1 speaks to its further contempt. They have ignored the supremacy of Parliament on a number of occasions. We can look at the issue of the Afghan detainees and the production of non-redacted documents. The same thing happened when we sat in the public accounts committee, where the government refused to produce non-redacted documents on the Afghan detainees—

• (1055)

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise, on a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I am not sure why the Afghan detainees matter has come up in this discussion. I am happy to listen to our colleague, but it would be better if she could stick to the amendment that we are considering.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Monsieur Laframboise.

I would have to ask, Mrs. Crombie, that you be relevant to the clause, please.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and to my colleague, Mr. Laframboise.

I was trying to elicit yet another example besides amendment 6.1 of how this government has shown contempt for the process, as it has in other instances.

Yesterday, we saw another example in the government operations committee, where witnesses wouldn't appear, even though they had been subpoenaed to appear—

The Chair: Mrs. Crombie, I'll have to ask you to be relevant to the clause, please.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: All right.

So what is going on here with these amendments? It appears, once again, that the government has ignored the intent of Parliament to construct a monument to honour the victims of the Holocaust.

So what do they want to do? They want to provide the appearance of erecting a monument but not take any of the responsibilities, by not assuming any of the costs of the planning, designing, construction and installation, and then the maintenance of the monument. No, they want to wash their hands of all of that and impose a tax on Canadians. In fact, it's almost double-dipping, because Canadians have set aside money for this, moneys that the minister agreed had been allocated and he supported. No, they want to turn over this responsibility for the construction, maintenance, and planning of a monument to a third party, to a council—

The Chair: Mr. Jean, on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Chair, I have been so persuaded by Mr. Volpe and Mrs. Crombie that I would like to withdraw government amendment 6.1.

The Chair: That would require unanimous consent.

Mr. Brian Jean: I would so ask for it. If Mr. Volpe is not satisfied with 6.1, and Mr. Bevington and Monsieur Laframboise, then let's withdraw it. I would ask for unanimous consent to do so.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I'm glad the government is being persuaded to address the basic principles of the bill as amended so far. I know that you can't undo what you've already done, but amendment G-6.1 essentially attempts to replace subclause 7(2), which we voted on.

Mr. Brian Jean: I'm seeking unanimous consent. The point of order is just simply whether you agree, Mr. Volpe, that I withdraw the amendment that you want to filibuster, or do you not agree? Because if you don't agree, then continue with your filibuster. You don't like the amendment we put forward, so if you don't like it, agree to allow us to withdraw it.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I can understand that you're frustrated—

Mr. Brian Jean: I'm not frustrated, but Mrs. Crombie had the floor, and this is in relation to a point of order—

Hon. Joseph Volpe: She did have the floor, but you've addressed a question to me, so I'm trying to answer.

Debate is not necessarily filibuster. What we're trying to do is do what we are mandated to do, and that is to deliberate on clause-by-clause. That's not filibustering, and I resent the fact that somebody's attributing a different motive to it.

I think what we might do is just simply move on.

The Chair: We're on a point of order of Mr. Jean, who suggested that amendment G-6.1 be withdrawn.

Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: We agree.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Dhaliwal, did you have a comment?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to support what Mr. Jean brought forward.

The Chair: I will ask for unanimous consent by a show of hands, please.

Unanimous consent has been granted to withdraw amendment G-6.1.

(Amendment withdrawn)

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

•(1100)

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Chair, I move that this committee continue to sit until clause-by-clause on this bill is finished.

The Chair: Mr. Jean has proposed that we sit until the bill has been dealt with. Are there comments?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Does it need unanimous consent?

The Chair: No.

Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I would provide a friendly amendment that we continue to conduct a thorough clause-by-clause analysis at our next meeting. I know many of us have other committees to get to at the present time. The time set aside for our committee meetings is the time we should be using to conduct committee business. There are other committees that are equally important that will require the time and attention of members of Parliament. I think many of us—certainly Mr. Mayes and I—have to move on to another committee. But I'm absolutely willing to go back to the clause-by-clause review at the next time allocation.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: It is 11 o'clock.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, I'm glad the government has decided to withdraw this particular amendment. I don't know what its intentions are for the others, but the last time we reflected on how best to proceed on clause-by-clause, we wanted to have people from the Canadian Jewish Congress before us. We couldn't ask them when we were in the middle of debating this particular amendment, but now that we are not in the process of deliberating on amendments, perhaps we can defer further discussion on this bill or the clause-by-clause until such time that we can get the president or CEO of the Canadian Jewish Congress here, so that they can address the issues that appear to have so captured the attention of the government members. By that time, we can ask the signator to that particular letter that was not tabled to appear as well, and we'll know specifically what the intentions are without attributing anything to anybody.

While I think the government member's intention to continue this debate might be laudable, it would really be fruitless unless we have the very important presence of those members here. So my recommendation, and I'm prepared to move it if it is so required, is that we not sit until they come before us as witnesses. I think it would be only fair.

The Chair: Unfortunately, you can't introduce a motion when we're actually debating a motion.

All those in favour of the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: The motion has been accepted that we continue debate on this until we're finished.

We will move the committee to the West Block, room 209, and I would suggest we resume in 15 minutes.

The meeting is suspended.

•(1100) _____ (Pause) _____

•(1125)

The Chair: Welcome back, everybody. We're returning to clause-by-clause.

Mr. Jean

Mr. Brian Jean: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's great to be back.

I see subclause 7(1) as good the way it is, but I would like to propose an amendment to subclause 7(2), and I will read it into the record.

The first thing I think would be good is to delete the two final lines of subclause 7(2). The new subclause 7(2) would read as follows:

The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign to cover the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing and maintaining the Monument, and any other costs incurred by the Council.

It so happens I have that in writing, Mr. Chair, if you would like it in writing in both official languages.

•(1130)

The Chair: The amendment has been tabled. Debate?

I'm going to ask the messenger to make a copy for everyone.

•(1135)

We haven't actually tabled it yet. We're waiting for Mr. Volpe to come back.

Everyone now has the new amendment in front of them.

An hon. member: Do you mean the same amendment?

The Chair: It's a new amendment.

As the motion is very similar to the previous one, I would have to rule it inadmissible.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I challenge you on that ruling, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. The chair's ruling has been challenged. I turn it over now to Bonnie.

The Clerk: The question is, shall the decision of the chair be sustained?

(Ruling of the chair overturned: nays 7; yeas 4)

The Chair: The ruling of the chair has been challenged and overturned.

Mr. Volpe, on a point of order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I'm sorry I wasn't here a moment or two ago, but if this is the amendment that the colleague opposite has represented, which you ruled inadmissible, it was just withdrawn before we suspended. Who's playing games? This is nonsensical in the extreme. It's exactly the same wording.

I know some of my colleagues have already made up their mind on this, and that's fine. Everybody is free to do that. But to then take us to a position where we're going to withdraw something and present it all over again...I'm not sure whether the appropriate term is respectful of the process or not, but it certainly is a devious way of trying to deal with an issue that obviously wasn't going anywhere.

Am I to understand now, Mr. Chairman, that we begin the debate entirely all over again, and that all of those words that appeared to some colleagues to be repetitive have now been washed off the beach?

The Chair: I have other people who want to speak on the point of order and then I'll make a ruling.

Mr. Bevington.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Sorry, I wanted to speak to the motion.

The Chair: Okay.

Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, this is simply silly gamesmanship, quite frankly, and it is unethical and beneath this government to do this. We simply wasted the past two hours in committee debating an amendment that they withdrew. Then we return 10 minutes later and they re-table the

exact same amendment with a different number. It's unethical. It's bait and switch. It's trickery, chicanery, and every other word I can come up with that means the same thing, but the bottom line is that it's wrong and it shouldn't be allowed.

•(1140)

The Chair: Mr. Dhaliwal.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Chair, first of all, I have to commend the role you play. As I mentioned to you many times, you are one of the chairs that I have a lot of respect for, because you are very fair. When they bring in the same amendment, exactly the same wording, with a different number on this amendment, it shows how cheap the politics are that the Conservatives are playing. If you want to go there, that's there.

Mr. Chair, I supported Mr. Jean's recommendation to withdraw this amendment, in the way that he was honest, in the way that he was up front with us. When we see the same amendment coming in and challenging your chairmanship, I feel he's betraying my trust. Next time I'll have to be very careful when he says this type of thing.

The Chair: Thank you.

Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, if filibustering is a valid strategy, then withdrawing an amendment in order to bring in another one is a valid strategy too.

If the Liberals had called the question earlier, it would all be settled and we would not still be talking about it. The parliamentary secretary has the right to make an amendment. He has the right to do so. We can tear our hair out if we like, but it is still a strategy. I do not support the Liberal strategy of filibustering any more than I support the parliamentary secretary's strategy of making a new amendment.

But we still have the same problem. We have a legal problem. I told you that I did not agree with the law clerk's decision or his recommendations about all the amendments that were made. In my opinion, they were in order. But they decided that they were not.

The solution is to vote according to our conscience. The Speaker of the House of Commons will make the decision. Then, if they want a political debate—because I have no idea what the Liberals are after—they can just start their filibuster again. We have decided that we will go through to the end and that we will spend the night here if we have to. I have no problem with that.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

It is not a point of order. Amendments can be reintroduced at any time throughout the clauses of a bill. The ruling of the chair was challenged and overturned; therefore, we are debating the new amendment that was presented by Mr. Jean.

I'll open the floor for debate.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I'm wondering whether the government wants to give us an elucidation of the merits of this amendment so we can understand why they propose it, unless they don't believe in it.

The Chair: Mr. Jean, any comment?

Mr. Brian Jean: It's self-evident.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

The floor is open for debate.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Let me explain how self-evident it is then, Mr. Chairman, because I think we're going to be here quite a while.

With all due respect to Monsieur Laframboise about the tactics of Parliament that include, in his words, filibustering or the chicanery of withdrawing motions just to reinsert them because we've changed venue, I don't think either one of those two terms applies. On the one hand, one is open to a very legitimate debate to understand exactly what this amendment tries to do. On the other, we're talking about the tactics used by a political party to achieve through stealth and chicanery that which they are not legitimately able to achieve. It may be acceptable to the tactics of some in the process of political debate, and maybe partisan debate, but it certainly is debate, because that's the way we need to get things done in this Parliament. We can't do that, Mr. Chairman.

So I'm glad the government gave me the opportunity to speak on what is self-evident in this amendment. Presuming they have been missing on the way to Damascus with an illumination that says we do want to go through the self-evident truths inherent in this amendment, and that the Bloc, who supports them, is also interested in seeing what is self-evident in this, I will proceed. I'm hoping you have provided some nourishment for them, because it may take a while for me to find what is self-evident, both in the positive and in the negative.

• (1145)

The Chair: Mr. Jean, on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Relevance? Liberal filibuster.

The Chair: I would ask, Mr. Volpe, that you now start talking about the amendment, please.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, again, because the word "filibuster" is out there, I'll talk about chicanery. That's relevant.

This is exactly the same amendment the government felt it needed to withdraw. Why did it feel it needed to withdraw it a few short moments ago? I'll tell you why they felt they needed to withdraw it, Mr. Chairman and colleagues from all parties. They wanted to withdraw it because they realized it cannot be in order for them to introduce an amendment that would contravene everything the committee and the House of Commons has already approved. They just cannot do it. There's no authority there.

As Mr. Laframboise said a moment or two ago, perhaps we ought to leave this to the Speaker, because the Speaker will make a ruling. I think that would be a dereliction of duty, a dereliction of obligation, an irresponsible way to act. The Speaker of the House of Commons

didn't ask this committee to deal with this so he could then deal with it himself. The Speaker of the House, on behalf of all members of Parliament, said there was a bill and asked us to go through it clause by clause.

Typically what happens is you deal with it on technical issues but respect the principle inherent in the decision of the House of Commons, and the decision, if I might be so bold, was to provide a full loaf to the decision. It wasn't to take it away. It wasn't to slice up that loaf and ask people to be satisfied, or to wedge the Canadian public and say a particular part of the community that should be interested in this is in favour of our slicing this up and providing less than the full loaf that the House of Commons said the Canadian public needed.

You cannot get the consent of the individual or the group—the community that may have been included as part of the larger issue of Canadian values—to take a diminished amount than what the Parliament of Canada, the House of Commons of Canada, had already accorded. That's one of the reasons why they felt they needed to withdraw the motion that has now been re-presented. They knew it had to be withdrawn.

The Chair: Mr. Watson on a point of order.

Mr. Jeff Watson: If I understand procedure properly, we are now debating a new motion—I think those are the words—a new amendment, as you mentioned, Mr. Chair. We're not debating an old one. He's speaking to an old amendment. Mr. Chair, I'd ask that you direct him to be relevant to the new amendment, as you had already decided.

The Chair: All right. Thank you.

Again I would ask Mr. Volpe to try to be as relevant as he can to the actual amendment, which deals with covering the cost, planning and design, and construction.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: You're absolutely right, Mr. Chairman. It seems the words are similar. The government members want to talk about a new amendment using the same words in exactly the same order to produce the same intent. So you'll forgive me if addressing the words—

The Chair: Mr. Watson on a point of order.

Mr. Jeff Watson: I haven't spoken about a new amendment, Mr. Chair. I believe you spoke about a new amendment.

The Chair: It is presented as a new amendment from the floor, and those are my words.

Mr. Volpe, I'll ask you to continue.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: It seems the government members agree with the suggestion that it might be a new amendment. I'm wondering whether, in their suggestion and their agreement with the suggestion, they are still prepared to go to a letter that was read but not tabled, which said that particular members of the community, of the Canadian Jewish Congress, might have been in agreement with amendments they had seen but now no longer exist. What does that mean? I think you'd have to consider this yourself, Mr. Chairman. Does that now mean that the support the Canadian Jewish Congress gave to the initial amendment has suddenly vanished?

•(1150)

The Chair: Mr. Watson on a point of order.

Mr. Jeff Watson: I don't see any reference to a letter or the Canadian Jewish Congress in the new amendment before us. I'm not sure it's relevant, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Same point of order, Mr. Jean?

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes. So far, we've had you ask the member to have relevance at least three or four times. The member himself has agreed each time that he should keep it relevant. If he continues this, Mr. Chair, is it possible that you can sanction this member?

The Chair: I will ask Mr. Volpe to be relevant to the amendment, please.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, I'm trying as hard as I can. As I said, I'm trying to look at the new amendment that's before us, the new amendment with the same words, the same syllables, the same vowels and consonants grouped together to present language that is still in the English dictionary; it's even in the French dictionary. And you know what? They are exactly the same words. So I'm trying to be relevant to the constancy and the integrity of the words that are in this amendment.

I have to speak as well to the fact that this is a new amendment, so because it is a new amendment, the words that are coming out have not been heard before. They haven't been heard by anybody. In fact, they don't make any reference at all to this letter by the Canadian Jewish Congress that was read in part into the record. So I'll only address the part that was read into the record.

Because this is a new amendment, and these are new words, new syllables, new vowels, and new consonants, it means, to anybody who would follow this, that the Canadian Jewish Congress no longer supports the government's position, because it's brand new. It's completely different, even though the words, the syllables, the nouns, the consonants, the vowels, are all grouped in the same phrases and paragraphs.

Mr. Chairman, the reason the government withdrew that old amendment and introduced this new amendment is because they realized there was no support for the old amendment. They realized they were giving members of the community, the larger Canadian public, and specific elements of the Canadian public, less than what the House of Commons had insisted they receive.

You know, he said a few moments ago that this issue has been on the table for 10 to 15 years. I just got off the phone with the person who signed the letter that hasn't been tabled but was read—

The Chair: On a point of order, Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, relevance. He's filibustering. If he's going to filibuster, at least utilize the proper amendment.

The Chair: I will have to ask one more time, Mr. Volpe. You're making reference to a lot of items that aren't included in this amendment. I would ask you one more time to please deal with the amendment.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, I will try very hard to do this. I mean, I wasn't challenged before, but we were dealing with an entirely different amendment.

Now this one here, because it appears to the great unwashed to be exactly the same—oh, I'm sorry, I shouldn't use that language—to be absolutely similar, by vowel, by consonant, by word, by phrase, by paragraph, then you'll have to forgive me if I try to find the self-evidence that the member from the opposite side suggests is there, because it's not obvious to everybody. It's not obvious to everybody that the government would want to redo what it cannot do by—

The Chair: Mr. Jean, on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Relevance, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Again, I would have to agree, Mr. Volpe. You have—

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: A point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: I'll rule first, if I may.

You have to be relevant to the conversation, and it is the amendment we're addressing.

I'll address Mrs. Crombie's point of order.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: The point of order is that the member across the table is interrupting the member who is speaking by asking for relevancy. Mr. Volpe, from my view, is speaking specifically and entirely specifically to the new amendment, describing it by consonant, by vowel, by sequence, by phrase, and he continues to be challenged. Mr. Chairman, I ask you, can you censure this individual for constantly interrupting a member who is speaking?

•(1155)

The Chair: Thank you for your intervention. It's not a point of order.

Mr. Volpe, I would ask that you stay relevant to the amendment. I think, as has been said before, I've tried to maintain a fair and balanced.... I don't want to have to exercise some of the rights that a chair may have to bring relevance to the discussion. I would ask that you do that.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Let me address the issue of covering the cost of planning.

Now, obviously, whenever the government, by authority given in the House of Commons, is about to engage in a particular enterprise, a particular project, it has to address the issue of costs. All of us, as responsible parliamentarians, want to know that things are affordable, whatever project we're talking about. The cost of planning a project is inherent in the overall expenditure plan that the government puts when it plans to do something.

We know, Mr. Chairman, that the government, through its backbench MP, presented this bill initially. Only now are we being asked to take a look at the cost of planning. But there is no business plan presented to us—none whatsoever—with this amendment. There's no indication of how much it will cost for the land, how much it will cost for the erection of a monument, how much it will cost for the maintenance. In fact, we don't know the scope of what is planned because we haven't even got it to the point of the design phase. So what is the cost of the design phase, and what cost is the government planning to offload onto the council?

Remember that the House of Commons said that in principle, this is what we want. There was unanimous agreement in the House of Commons by all parliamentarians of all parties that the costs would be absorbed by the House of Commons, by the Parliament of Canada. Now there's an amendment in which the government says, "No, we want the council "to cover the cost of planning"—without a business plan—"designing".... Can you imagine?

We don't know whether they're going to do a national or international competition to get people to make—

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I looked at the original bill we had, which the House of Commons voted on, and it clearly states, "The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign to cover the cost of constructing the Monument". Now, that's what we voted on. The entire House voted unanimously on that, and Mr. Volpe, with respect, just misled anybody who is listening to this, because they know, clearly, that the original vote by the House of Commons included the fundraising campaign to cover the costs. We had the same thing here. It's an amendment, not a change.

So if Mr. Volpe is going to filibuster today and take our time—and I have no problem being here until tomorrow night, actually—let's have the truth. Let's have it so that Canadians know that fundraising was mentioned in the original bill, and there's fundraising in this bill. It's consistent.

The Chair: Is it on the same point of order?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Well, I guess, if you want me to go back—

The Chair: I will rule on the point of order.

It's not a point of order. It is debate.

Please continue.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: The truth is, of course, Mr. Chairman, that the government decided to amend every single clause in the bill that it now says it supports. I don't know whether you can have it both ways or three ways or four ways, but the government appears to want everything its way. That's irrespective of what the rules or what the procedures or what the principles that are agreed on 10 minutes ago might be today, 10 minutes later, or indeed a couple of hours later. It doesn't matter. This is a very whimsical approach to anything.

Now we're still talking about covering the costs of planning and covering the costs of design. There's no indication of the process of how to get to the point where we have a design project in place. We don't know what the cost of that might be. We don't know what the cost of the whole planning process might be. We don't even know what the cost of the construction process might be, because we haven't even taken a look at what the materials are that are going to be used and how much of those materials are going to be used. What is the extent of the project? All of these factor into the cost.

So what we might be doing is we might be saddling this council with an enormous cost that the public doesn't want to offload on to a private concern. It said we want this monument and we want it at the expense of Canadians. No, I'm sorry, it shouldn't be at the expense... it's at the contribution of all Canadians. We all want to participate

and it becomes ours. We become proprietors of it because we participated through our tax structure. We want the minister, as a representative of the government and as a representative of the people of Canada, to absorb that cost because that's the only way we can demonstrate that it is ours. It's not somebody else's. It is not some nameless council's. Anybody can make a contribution.

As I indicated at another discussion with another particular amendment, in this one here we're talking about construction, installing, and maintaining a monument that reflects the will of all Canadians. Where's the business plan, as I said a moment ago? We want to be relevant. We want to be responsible. You want to indicate that you're doing what the right thing would be. Well, tell us what the scope and size of this monument would be. Tell us what the cost range might be. And tell us in fact how this is going to be covered. What are the mechanisms? What are the responsibilities? Don't tell us that while you've accepted the principle that this be there, a private group of five individuals is going to assume all the responsibilities for covering the costs and then eventually might be able to say that this belongs to all Canadians.

Any five individuals, any 10, any 20, any 500, any one can go ahead and erect a monument on his or her own, but it reflects his or her own.... Here we're talking about covering the cost, the planning, the design, the construction, the installation, the maintenance of a monument, and any other costs included by the council. Why? Why would we tell everybody, here you are, you can go ahead? You can formulate yourselves into an organism that we will approve—although you don't need our approval—and then you can go out there and raise the money and you can build this, and then we'll call it Canadian. That's a user fee. That's a tax on a particular community, not the general taxation system, where every Canadian makes a contribution, directly and indirectly.

You know, Mr. Chairman, I can't believe the chicanery associated with trying to get this passed when the government knows it is unacceptable. It was unacceptable because you as the chair received the studied opinion of those who procedurally look at what this clause means in respect of everything else that's been done—

● (1200)

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: It's the relevance again, Mr. Chair. I don't believe what the member is suggesting is relevant and I would ask him to quit his filibuster.

The Chair: I won't rule it a point of order, but I think you were starting to move off the discussion around the amendment and I would just ask that you keep to that.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: You're right. And nobody's filibustering. But I realize the talking points given to the government members are to utilize certain language in order to engage in ad hominem attacks on—

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: A point of order.

It's on relevance, Mr. Chair. He's talking about something that has nothing to do with the amendment we have in front of us.

The Chair: Again, I would just ask Mr. Volpe to refer back to the amendment.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: The new amendment has language that is so completely different from the last one that I think if you superimposed the words from it on the previous amendment, every single one of them would coincide. Somebody called this chicanery, and another person said it's an appropriate tactic of politics, but it's probably brought to a fine art by members opposite.

Let me talk to the relevance of "planning, designing, constructing, installing and maintaining". A council—a nameless council—is going to be responsible for the maintenance of a monument that represents all Canadians, a nameless council that can do anything it wants with the funds that are raised, a nameless council that will go forward and erect a monument that it could, at any time it wanted, anywhere in this country, plan, design, construct, install, and then even maintain ad infinitum, and forever be responsible for this, when the Government of Canada is fully equipped to do all of this, when the Government of Canada, through the House of Commons, has already expressed that it is in favour of covering the cost, the planning, the designing, the constructing, the installing, and the maintaining of a monument in perpetuity. Government members want to deprive the Canadian public of the opportunity for the Government of Canada to do its job, to do what it was obligated to do by the vote in the House of Commons.

Mr. Chairman, I can't believe that the government members want to go out into the Canadian public and crow that they are—

• (1205)

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, it's the same point of order as the last 25 points of order. He's not relevant, Mr. Chair, to the amendment we have in front of us. I know he wants to continue to filibuster. You can call it anything you like, but what he's trying to do is delay this bill from happening. We've waited long enough. I think Canadians have waited long enough. Clearly, Mr. Chair, if he's going to refer again to things that are contained in the bill, I would ask that he be accurate.

For those people listening, I would ask that they look at the original bill and the new bill and the amendments by the government and see the differences. They are exactly what the Jewish community has told us they want, and that's what we're putting forward.

I would just ask that the member be relevant.

The Chair: Thank you.

Again, I would ask Mr. Volpe to debate the amendment. I do have a list of people who are starting to line up to speak, but I would just ask that you be relevant to the amendment.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Sure. Mr. Chairman, I'm trying very hard to address the new information. But he's introducing new information, so he can't speak to the Jewish community's support for the new information. He can't. I don't know whether that's relevant or whether it's chicanery or whatever, but certainly I have to address the issue on the point of whether we're talking about cost, planning, designing, construction.

I've asked him where the business plan is. Where's the business plan for all of this? It's an amendment that came out of the blue, completely out of the blue, and there's no plan at all. He wants a responsible committee of Parliament to go back to the House of Commons and say, "Here's a blank cheque."

We don't know what we're talking about. We don't know who's going to do it. We don't know how much it's going to cost. We think the idea is great. We're not sure. We thought it was great when it passed the House of Commons, but then we introduced nine amendments, one for every clause, to make sure that we wouldn't support it. Then we're going to accuse the members of the opposition of filibustering for trying to be true to what the House of Commons said, to be true to what the people of Canada want to do with respect to this Holocaust memorial.

So here he is, the parliamentary secretary, talking to us about a small council to do that which the Government of Canada has already committed to doing.

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Again, I would ask for relevance. I just want to know what is different today from when Mr. Volpe stood up in the House and voted for the bill, which said, "The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign to cover the cost of constructing the Monument." Now he has changed his mind. I would like to know. I understand he has to speak to the amendment, Mr. Chair, but since he's so flowery in his communication, why has his mind changed today from what it was when he stood up in the House and supported the idea of the council spearheading a fundraising campaign? What has changed today from when he voted before? Why has it changed?

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Dhaliwal on the same point of order.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, the parliamentary secretary, Mr. Jean, suggests that this amendment was already included in the bill. Then why did he need to bring it back here? He should be able to withdraw it and work on the original wording that Mr. Volpe and every other member of Parliament, of all stripes, voted to support.

The Chair: Mr. Bevington on the same point of order.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Yes, I'm having trouble with Mr. Jean's logic here because it states quite clearly in clause 6, "The Minister, in cooperation...shall oversee the planning and design of the Monument". So the minister would oversee the planning, he would come up with a plan and a design for a monument. Then "The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign to cover the cost of constructing the Monument." So the minister determines what the design is going to be of the monument, then the council will spearhead the fundraising to construct the monument, and after that the monument will then become part of the National Capital Commission, and they would handle the ongoing maintenance and....

So the motion entered into by the government is quite different from what was in the bill here, because the bill quite clearly puts the minister responsible for overseeing the design. When you oversee the design, you establish what the construction is going to be; then you go out and fundraise for the construction, which is a specific amount of money that has been determined by the minister through the design process. What we've done here is turn this all into one clump.

And if anybody has ever been involved in this kind of process, they would realize that this is quite a different approach. You have this council that's going to go out and cover the cost for the design and the development; they're going to do this whole thing themselves. So where's the government in this? Where is the public oversight into what this monument would be? I think that's the critical element of why this amendment is different from what the bill says.

• (1210)

The Chair: I know we're moving down the path of debate on a point of order. I have Monsieur Laframboise and Mr. Watson, and then I'll rule, and we'll get back to the debate on the amendment.

Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, the point of order had to do with the fact that we are now in the middle of a filibuster. The Liberal Party has no improvements to make. The amendment as presented just asks us to add funds to cover the costs of planning, designing and constructing the monument. I support the people from the Jewish community when they say that, if they are going to go to the trouble of setting up a fundraising campaign, they will include maintaining the monument as well as building it.

If the Liberals had made an amendment that suggested contributing to the costs rather than covering them, we could have assumed that the government would cover them if ever there was not enough money. Mr. Volpe argues that we have no plan, no figures and no analysis. He had none either when he made his amendments. So we then have no choice but to respect the requests of the community.

That is what the Bloc Québécois is doing. They are telling us that, since they are going to be conducting a fundraising campaign, it will not just be for construction, but also for maintenance, design and installation. I think that is great.

Then, if you want the government to cover the costs... I still maintain that the government is responsible, under the terms that have been submitted to us. If you have amendments to improve it, I am open to them. But we see that the Liberals are opposed to that. They insist on opposing what the community wants. That is their choice, which is why we have this filibuster. The Liberal Party has no intention of improving this bill, but rather seeking political advantage through their filibuster.

I am ready to stay here. I am going to take on the Liberals anytime, anywhere. I have no problem with that. I can take all the time we need.

[*English*]

The Chair: I'm going to rule that it's not a point of order, and I think we were going towards debate. I think there has been good information put forward.

We are discussing the amendment, and I'll refer back to Mr. Volpe to continue his debate and relevancy to the amendment.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I thank my colleagues for their intervention, because, quite frankly, we want to clarify who is going to assume, under the act, all the costs for the planning, design, construction, installation, and maintenance of the monument.

Contrary to what Monsieur Laframboise just mentioned a moment ago, we have no need to introduce an amendment to identify who would do that because we've already accepted in the amendments, and the bill, unamended clauses that the government, through the minister, be responsible for all of those. That in fact is one of the basic principles of the bill, that the government have that responsibility for the public of Canada, not, as he says, for the Jewish community, but for everyone.

That's the basic element here. Is it going to be the Canadian public who are responsible for the planning, design, erection, and maintenance of this, or is it going to be only one particular community?

The Canadian public, through the House of Commons, said no, this is a Canadian issue. This is a Canadian values issue. This is something that reflects the Canadian public, and therefore the Canadian public, through its ministers, is going to assume that responsibility.

I don't need to introduce an amendment on behalf of the Liberals to say something otherwise. We agree that's going to be the case. That's why we would object to this. This particular amendment says no, it should be a council. If they aren't capable of raising those funds, the monument doesn't get built. If they don't do it in a timely fashion, it might not get built before those who really want to see it built are there to see it built.

• (1215)

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Relevance. There's nothing in this clause that deals with time period.

The Chair: I won't rule it a point of order, but again, we are discussing an amendment to clause 7. Again, I would ask Mr. Volpe to stay relevant to that amendment, please.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Who pays is a fundamental component of the expenditure plan envisaged by the bill. The government has, with this plan, with this amendment, turned around and said the financial responsibility lies with the council and with the individuals we put on the council and their ability to raise those funds. In fact, they might even take a look at spearheading a campaign to cover the costs.

Why would you treat particular members of a community differently from all the others who have received a monument in the national capital region? Why? Why would you say that this group of people, now on a council, now have to assume the financial liabilities associated with the planning, design, construction, installation, and maintenance of a monument when the Government of Canada, directly or through the National Capital Commission, already has the funds available and is already able to do all of this legislatively without even having to have either the bill or the amendment?

I think the government is really stalling on the intention expressed by the House of Commons. They don't want to build this, and they're hoping that the members of the Jewish community who may end up being on the council might be capable of raising the funds for we don't know what type of monument. We don't know the size because we don't know the design. We don't know the planning and we haven't got the construction plan yet either.

People are asking us to buy a pig in a poke. That's what this particular clause says. It says trust us. Trust them. Don't worry, there's not going to be anything wrong. The council is going to be responsible for everything. But you know what, Mr. Chairman? I'm not sure that people who look at this logically and look at it in terms of procedure would ever accept that such a clause should be part of a bill. It wasn't a part of the bill before, and the bill passed with every member of Parliament.... I'm constrained; I can't name them all or say who wasn't there, but everybody who was present supported it, including all the members of cabinet.

It's not as if the executive branch didn't already assume a principled position of supporting this financially. Why would the government withdraw that financial support with this amendment? Why would it say we no longer want to incur the costs of planning? Why would it say we no longer want to incur the costs of the design? Why would it refuse to absorb the costs of construction?

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

An hon. member: It's completely on topic.

Mr. Brian Jean: It absolutely isn't on topic. And it's inaccurate, because Mr. Volpe voted in favour before that "The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign to cover the cost of constructing the Monument." He just said that the government should be paying for it. Well, he voted for that. He voted for it in the House. Every single member of his party who was in the House at the time voted for that. So what is different today from yesterday? Why were you in favour then and not now?

The Chair: That's not a point of order, but I'll ask Mr. Volpe to continue, please.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I listened to the parliamentary secretary just swallow himself whole. He voted for exactly the same thing and then he introduces this amendment, the second time—I'm sorry, I'll slap myself on the wrist—a new amendment with exactly the same vocabulary, in exactly the same order, to try to introduce and get something across that he couldn't do before, that he withdrew because he recognized the error of his logic. And now he comes back to say, "Well, the Liberals voted for this, the NDP, the Bloc. We, the Conservatives, voted for it and now we actually want something else." That's exactly my question. Why do you want something else?

We were happy with what was there before. Why do you want something else? Why would you want to foist the responsibility of the expenditure plan onto a council that has yet to be named? If you're sincere about actually building this monument for the people of Canada, for all Canadians, all 32 million, then why would you take everybody through this exercise where you have to get a council that's outside of the parameters of government, a council from one specific community, not all Canadians, and say that we're going to let them do it because it's theirs, it's not ours?

Mr. Chairman, this amendment goes to the heart of the whole bill. It isn't just theirs; it's all of ours. And that's why this amendment can't be accepted. It isn't for the Jewish community. It isn't for that council. It's for all Canadians, and all Canadians deserve proprietorship of this. The Government of Canada can't leave this to the vagaries of the economy and the ability of whatever the council does.

• (1220)

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise on a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, Mr. Volpe has already told us three times that it belongs to everyone. He is being redundant. I would like him to tell us something new. I do want to hear what he has to say, but I would like him to move on, not belabour the same point.

[*English*]

The Chair: I would have to agree that we are starting to get repetitious. As I mentioned earlier, I do have other members who wish to speak on the bill.

But I would ask, Mr. Volpe, if you have any more comments—new—then please proceed.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Well, okay, then let me put on the record the following, Mr. Chairman, because a new word has been introduced. I hadn't had it as part of my thesaurus collection. It's the word "redundant". But it was used *en français*. What it meant was that we're beginning to see the word used often enough that it's beginning to seep in, it's beginning to be integrated, and therefore it's no longer needed.

This is the reason that this particular amendment has been reintroduced. It's exactly the same vocabulary in exactly the same order, both

[*Translation*]

In both French and English, it is the same thing. If the amendment is the same and we allow the same thing, we can give it consideration that would lead to the same answers. That is obvious!

[*English*]

It's evident that there's no redundancy. If there is no redundancy in the chicanery associated with bringing back an amendment that the government already withdrew because they knew it was wrong, then surely to reflect on the reasons that this xeroxed copy of an amendment would not be eliciting members' reflections—

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise on a point of order.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Volpe, that is the third time you have said this amendment does not add anything new. You are not going to be able to do miracles. You are saying the same thing over and over again. It is sad to say, but the chair is going to have to tell you that you have nothing new to bring to the debate. Be creative, so we can appreciate what you have to say. Otherwise, you are just boring us.

[English]

The Chair: I would agree that it is a point of order.

Mr. Volpe, I don't want to have to use the authority of the chair, but if we continue to hear repetition.... I do have people on a list who do want to speak as well, so if you would....

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I don't want to consume all the time of the committee, but having been around here a while, Monsieur Laframboise is right, I can identify when something is sad.

[Translation]

The current situation is unfortunate. What is sad is that the government is trying, through constant argument, to introduce something that could never be accepted with an open mind. Repetition becomes repetitious.

[English]

Mr. Chairman, repetition is repetition when it is a repetition of somebody else's words. I haven't used anybody else's words. I was reflecting on the word "redundant" that came by in French with respect to what it means when we're talking about financial expenditures—

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: I want to mention to Mr. Volpe that he's not relevant and lunch is great.

Maybe he could take 30 seconds to grab a bite, come back, and continue his persuasive argument. But I would prefer that he kept it to relevance on the amendment.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I'm not sure whether that means he's asking that we break for lunch.

The Chair: We're not breaking for lunch, but I will have to advise you, Mr. Volpe, that I will be moving on to the next speaker very quickly, so I would ask that you conclude your remarks.

• (1225)

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I will conclude my remarks if you give me the few seconds required.

Let me repeat for everybody present. Whether it's the Jewish community or the entire Canadian public—and I prefer to talk about the entire Canadian public—the Canadian public wants the full loaf associated with what we had prior to the government introducing amendments. It is not a time to give anybody half a loaf, a slice, or a crumb, and then to say they have the full loaf.

This is wrong. This amendment doesn't deserve to go anywhere.

The Chair: Mr. Bevington.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: As I read the original bill that I voted on and that passed, the minister will oversee the planning and design of

the monument. That means the minister will ensure that the design and plan for the monument are put in place. Then he will allocate the public land for the monument. Then the council will spearhead a fundraising campaign to raise the money for the monument the minister has decided is appropriate, the level of expenditure that is appropriate, and that is the way this bill is laid out. After that, the maintenance is going to be handled by the National Capital Commission.

How is this motion we're facing not completely different? What it's doing is asking the council to be engaged in the entire process. The council will raise the money to cover it all. To that extent, I think it's putting a lot of weight on the council and it's taking weight off the minister.

I don't have a problem with the campaign supporting the cost of planning and design, working with the minister, as this bill outlines "in cooperation with the Council, shall oversee the planning and design of the Monument". I would like to see something that would allow the minister to make the decision about the design of the monument and the council then be engaged in raising the money to construct it, just as the bill is laid out.

I find this amendment casts too much weight onto the council. It could lead to a situation whereby a council was, through its fundraising efforts, not able to raise enough money to do the project properly. I see that happening. I see that we might end up with an inferior monument this way because of the vagaries of fundraising for the particular monument, or we end up with a monument that would be inappropriate through the process that went ahead. I'm concerned about that.

I would like to see an amendment that could change the word "cover" to "support", so the operative word "cover", which as I understand it means to take on all the costs—cover the costs—becomes the word "support".

Mr. Chairman, can I put forward an amendment in this fashion, or do I need the consent of the committee?

The Chair: It can be presented as a subamendment that becomes votable.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Okay. Well, I put forward that subamendment, that we change the word "cover" to "support". That would allow me to carry forward with the motion.

The Chair: We now have on the floor a subamendment from Mr. Bevington that would change the word in the amendment from "cover" to "support". So it would read:

campaign to support the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing and maintaining the Monument, and any other costs incurred by the Council.

Mr. Jean.

•(1230)

Mr. Brian Jean: On this subamendment, it's not a bad idea in some respects. In speaking with Monsieur Laframboise, he actually had a proposal, I understand, in relation to the next clause that would deal in part with Mr. Bevington's issue. It would allow the government not to be precluded from actually contributing to the museum.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe on a point of order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: We don't have another clause on that. We were discussing another clause. We're only discussing this one, so I'm wondering whether we could just stay relevant.

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I would like to suggest to Mr. Bevington and the committee that we discuss the amendment to clause 8 that I introduced before we discuss the subamendment. I think then we would understand each other. We could do that, if Mr. Bevington agrees.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Volpe on a point of order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I've always been willing to cooperate and help people out. If Mr. Laframboise is asking the committee to adjourn so that he can negotiate discussions on clause 8 with Mr. Bevington on his subamendment, then I'd be prepared to entertain a motion to suspend or adjourn, whichever is more convenient, while he conducts that negotiation. Otherwise, there isn't another amendment to talk about.

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: In relation to this point of order, I would certainly not object to taking the current clause and suspending that vote until such time as we vote on the next clause, if that would make Mr. Volpe happy. Then we could vote on clause 8 and go back to clause 7. The amendment that Mr. Laframboise is proposing and Mr. Bevington is interested in could then be dealt with. And then we could vote on clause 7. There's nothing that precludes this committee from doing that.

The Chair: It's been proposed that we would stand clause 7, with the idea of having amendments introduced in clause 8 that may satisfy Mr. Bevington's concerns. To do that, we would need unanimous consent.

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Chair, you have unanimous consent from the members on the government side.

The Chair: I'm sensing that there isn't unanimous consent. We can debate Mr. Bevington's subamendment and then we will move to a vote on the subamendment and the amendment.

It's on the floor that we change the word from "cover" to "support". The floor is open for debate on that issue.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I didn't mean to interrupt Mr. Laframboise. I was just trying to be helpful.

He was talking about an approach that would help him to digest Mr. Bevington's subamendment a little bit more clearly. I thought he meant that he wanted to suspend the sitting until such time as they clarified with each other where they were going. I wondered whether he was actually asking to do that, to which request I would have given consent. I think my colleagues on the Liberal side would have agreed with me, strange as that might appear. But I'm not sure whether Mr. Laframboise is doing this. So perhaps if he answers that question first, then we can go on with what you're suggesting.

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I have no objection to suspending the meeting for five minutes, so I can discuss it with Mr. Bevington. I could also speak to Mr. Volpe. Five minutes would do the trick, but I would like unanimous consent on it.

•(1235)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Laframboise is asking for five minutes, with unanimous consent, to discuss his amendment.

Is there is unanimous consent at the table?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Brian Jean: We haven't heard from Mr. Volpe yet.

The Chair: Do we have consent?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: If that's what he wants.

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I'd like clarification that within a certain amount of time we will reconvene and continue.

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise has requested five minutes.

An hon. member: Five to ten minutes.

The Chair: No. We'll suspend for five minutes.

•(1245)

_____ (Pause) _____

•(1255)

The Chair: We're back again. Apparently we're going to take one more minute.

•(1255)

_____ (Pause) _____

•(1255)

The Chair: Thank you, and we're back.

When we left, Mr. Bevington had proposed a subamendment to the motion. I know there were discussions. I guess I would ask the committee if they're prepared to move forward on the subamendment.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chair, we're prepared to hear what the proposed subamendment is.

The Chair: I read it into the record. He actually changed the word from "cover" to "support".

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Is that true?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I'm not sure. I thought Mr. Bevington was.... If you don't mind my hearing it again, I'd—

The Chair: If I may, I took the amendment the way he proposed it. If he wants to propose another amendment, a subamendment, he'll have to do that. He asked to have one word changed, “cover” to “support”, and that's what's on the floor right now. We can have debate on it. If I have just one second....

The rule is that we have to deal with the subamendment first, and if he chooses to submit another one, we can deal with that at the time.

Mr. Bevington, are you comfortable with that?

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Well, those are the rules.

The Chair: Okay. If there's no debate on that, I would ask the question.

All those in favour of the subamendment?

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Mr. Chair, is there any more debate? Aren't we debating this?

The Chair: I just asked. Nobody put their hand up.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I'll talk to it.

The Chair: I'm sorry. I have called the vote.

(Subamendment agreed to)

The Chair: We're now back dealing with the amendment as amended.

I have Mr. Dhaliwal on my list.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: No, I'll skip to the other ones for now.

The Chair: Okay. Is there anyone else?

Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Mr. Chairman, this has been a long and arduous process to discuss amendments, new amendments, sub-amendments, and amendments to subamendments. I don't feel that the new amended amendment respects the principle or the original intent of the bill as it was presented in the House of Parliament, which we all voted on unanimously. Why or how there have been 11th hour changes—

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Relevance—

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I am speaking to the amended amendment, sir.

The Chair: No, we're speaking to the amendment as amended.

Mr. Brian Jean: The subamendment passed.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: So what are we speaking to?

Mr. Brian Jean: That was my point.

The Chair: We're speaking to the amendment that was....

I will recognize Monsieur Laframboise, but for clarity, we are discussing the amendment as subamended by Mr. Bevington to remove the word “cover” and add the word “support”.

Monsieur Laframboise, a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I have just one question. I would like the law clerk to tell us whether the wording would be in order if the subamendment were applied.

[*English*]

The Chair: That doesn't change the amendment we're now debating. It changes the words, but we've already agreed that the amendment is in order based on the vote in the committee.

So we can move forward and debate it with the word “support” as opposed to “cover”.

Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There have just been so many amendments and subamendments, it is difficult to follow.

I want to ensure that the original intent of the bill is maintained and preserved in the subamendment, the amendment to the amendment of the original amendment. So what we want to preserve is that the minister is the individual who is responsible for allocating the land, for the cost of—

The Chair: Mr. Jean, a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Nowhere does subclause 7(2) use the word “minister”. It talks about the council spearheading a fundraising campaign. It doesn't talk about the minister. So could she please be relevant?

The Chair: There is no reference, Mrs. Crombie, and I would ask, Mrs. Crombie—

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Certainly, there is a reference in subclause 7(1), Mr. Chairman, and I was getting to the balance of the re-amended subclause 7(2) before I was so interrupted.

The Chair: I would just ask that you deal with the amendment to subclause 7(2) as amended. Please proceed.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I was interrupted, I was trying to convey that what we need to preserve here is that the minister is ultimately responsible for, as described in subclause 7(2), the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing, and maintaining of the monument and any other costs incurred, and that the council may support the ultimate responsibility that falls on the minister.

This is integral to the essence of the original intent of the bill: that the underlying responsibility remain with the minister, not the council, and that the council can play a supporting role.

And I can—

The Chair: Mr. Jean, a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Actually, the original text that Mrs. Crombie is referring to, which she voted in favour of, and Mr. Volpe voted in favour of, and Mr. Dhaliwal voted in favour of, talks about the council spearheading a fundraising campaign to cover the cost of constructing the monument. That's the original thing they voted for.

I don't know where she's going on about the minister being responsible for all of this, because nowhere in this text or the amendment does it talk about the minister. I would just ask that she be relevant.

The Chair: On the same point of order, Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: The point of order is that this committee has already voted on subclause 7(1) and accepted the amended subclause 7(1). I'll read into the record what that says:

The Minister shall be responsible for the construction and maintenance of the Monument.

Therefore, the government's amendment, as subamended by Mr. Bevington, addresses the issue of support for an amendment that's already been approved by this committee.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Precisely.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: So if Mrs. Crombie is speaking to what subclause 7(2), as per the government's amendment G-6.1 says, it is absolutely relevant to how the relationship goes to the minister.

The Chair: I'll ask Mrs. Crombie to continue, and to continue dealing with the amendment as subamended under debate.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

There does seem to be some confusion, even on the part of Mr. Jean. Yes, we voted for it. He voted for it. His party voted for it. In fact, the entire Parliament voted for this bill, so we don't understand the need for this subamendment and these amendments continually being presented. What was passed at the last meeting, which unfortunately I wasn't able to be present at, was Liberal amendment 2 to clause 7. It reads:

The Minister shall be responsible for the construction and maintenance of the Monument.

Now, as we had just voted on a subamendment to this clause, we now continue on with G-7.2 to suggest that:

The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign to cover the cost of—

An hon. member: Rather than “cover”, we're now going to “support”.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I'm just going to try this one more time. It reads:

The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign to support the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing and maintaining the Monument, and any other costs incurred by the Council.

The fundamental essence of the bill and the amendment and the subamendment is the ultimate responsibility of the minister, and that intent and that integrity must be preserved. What we don't want to see is continued contempt for the procedure and contempt for Parliament, which this government and the government members have enacted here through these underhanded and—

Mr. Jeff Watson: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Watson on a point of order.

Mr. Jeff Watson: I believe it's only the Speaker who can rule on contempt of Parliament, not the member.

The Chair: That is a point of order, and again, Mrs. Crombie, I would ask you to be relevant to the amendment that we're actually addressing, please.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I withdraw my comment that it was contempt of Parliament. I'll just stick to chicanery, trickery, and underhandedness.

Fundamentally, we need to preserve the minister's ultimate responsibility for establishing the monument.

Where are we again? No, no. We're going right around in circles, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Brian Jean: A point of order.

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: What does that have to do with the amendment? I'm asking for relevance, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Again, I think you have to address the amendment as presented, please.

Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Mr. Chairman, I think I have been fairly clear in our discussion that ultimately the minister has to retain ultimate responsibility so that we can preserve the original intent of the bill. Anything less is a shift of responsibility—

Mr. Brian Jean: A point of order.

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: It's not relevant, Mr. Chair. It has nothing to do with this clause whatsoever.

The Chair: Excuse me, please, I would ask again that you address the amendment as amended, please—

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Of course it does. The amendment—

Hon. Joseph Volpe: A point of order, please.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe on a point of order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I think it's fair to say, Mr. Chairman, that when we're looking at this amended amendment, we must make reference to subclause (1) of what we are amending. We're amending subclause 7(2). Now Mr. Bevington has asked for and received support for changing the word “cover” to “support”. It is our contention—and I believe I'm interpreting what Mrs. Crombie is saying correctly—that by using the word “support”, we're essentially reinforcing the principle and the law that's already been accepted by committee in subclause 7(1), and that nothing that we do from subclause 7(1) onward takes away from the ministerial responsibility to build and to maintain this monument. That's all Mrs. Crombie is doing.

I can't, for the life of me, understand why the parliamentary secretary would think that his amendment, amended, to subclause 7 (2) is in any way not on topic, because we're dealing with all of clause 7.

● (1300)

Mr. Brian Jean: On that point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Jean on the same point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, sir. Just to answer his question, the reason I keep doing it, Mr. Chair, is simply because the Liberals continue to filibuster this bill because they don't like what they have in front of them. They don't like the majority of the committee members who do listen to the Jewish community across Canada and who have decided to follow through with their wishes. That's why I keep bringing a point of order, because she's not relevant to the issue, and they're trying simply to delay this bill.

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise on the same point of order.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: What is worse is that they can filibuster on a point of order. Now that is something!

[English]

The Chair: Order, please.

Again, for clarification of the committee members, the clause that we are dealing with, that has been subamended by Mr. Bevington reads:

The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign to support the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing and maintaining the Monument, and any other costs incurred by the Council.

So relevance would be important, I think, if members were talking about the council and their role in this amendment.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I just want to get this right, because we want to be relevant. The parliamentary secretary says that any of our input in subclause 7(2) is not relevant because we've already established the principle, in subclause 7(1), that the Liberal Party really does support not only the Jewish community but all Canadians by making sure that the government, through the minister, is responsible for the construction and the maintenance of a monument. He thinks that's wrong. Is that what he's saying?

The Chair: I'm merely suggesting that subclause 7(2) refers directly to the council, not to the minister or government.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, it's on the same point of order.

On his point for clarification, what I'm trying to point out to the people listening, Mr. Chair, is that the Liberals are just simply trying to delay this bill and filibuster it. They're not listening to the Jewish community. I think that's ultimately what I'm trying to say.

The Chair: Thank you.

I would ask Mrs. Crombie to please continue again on subclause 7(2), which deals with the council.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to remind the committee that the Liberal Party is very supportive of constructing this monument and will stick to commenting solely on the relevance of subclause 7(2). However, we want to indicate that the parliamentary secretary continues to introduce new information with respect to a letter that was sent to the Jewish community, where he misrepresented facts. They signed under false pretense.

Mr. Brian Jean: A point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: I understand that Mrs. Crombie may wish to say things about my ability here in committee, and other things, but when she starts slandering me personally, Mr. Chair, I take offence at that. I'm doing my job, just like she is filibustering under orders from the Liberal caucus. I am doing my job trying to pass this bill, as I have orders under the Prime Minister to make sure this gets through, because this is what the Jewish community has identified they want. But that does not give her an excuse to slander me or to suggest that I have unethical motives, which she is. I would ask her to apologize for that and refrain from that in the future.

The Chair: Okay. I'm dealing on the same point of order with Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I withdraw my remarks if, in any way, the parliamentary secretary felt that they were slanderous. I withdraw those remarks. My intent is to preserve—

• (1305)

The Chair: That's the point of order now. I think it's been resolved.

Again, Mrs. Crombie, I have to ask you to stay relevant to the amendment as subamended, as opposed to making criticisms of any part of this. We have to deal with the clause, and I would ask that we stay on the clause, please.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: This is a point of order now.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe on a point of order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, we have gotten off the point of debate, and we're talking again about segmenting Canadian society. If the parliamentary secretary continues to attribute support from a particular community, then I make the same offer that I made before we began discussing this amendment, and that is to bring members of the Canadian Jewish Congress before the committee.

The Chair: We've addressed that before.

I will ask Mrs. Crombie to maintain or continue her comments specific to that section, subclause 7(2), and again advise, as I did earlier, that if it's not relevant I will intervene and we will move to the next speaker.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

I do intend to wrap up. My goal here is to ensure that the original intent of the bill is preserved, that the integrity of the original bill is preserved. So I want to ensure that the minister has the ultimate responsibility and that the council is in a supporting role when it comes to spearheading a campaign for the cost of planning, constructing, designing, supporting, installing, and maintaining the monument, as was the original intent of the original bill that everyone so unanimously supported.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Crombie.

Mr. Dhaliwal.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's very confusing. First of all, when I hear filibustering from the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Transport, he should have been sitting on the access to information, privacy and ethics committee that I was sitting on when the Brian Mulroney and Schreiber case came forward, which tried to—

The Chair: Mr. Watson on a point of order.

Mr. Jeff Watson: I thought we were in debate on G-6.2 as subamended.

The Chair: I will advise again. I know you're headed there, but I would ask that you get there, please.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: That was really filibustering, where they tried to hide everything under the carpet, and now—

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Relevance?

The Chair: Mr. Dhaliwal, I would ask that you please move to your comments with regard to the clauses, please.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chair, as a member of Parliament I have always supported the original intent of the bill that was presented in the House of Commons. Has the Jewish community had an opportunity to express their views?

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: Relevance, Mr. Chair. We're talking about an amendment. We're speaking specifically to subclause 7(2).

The Chair: Comment on the point of order, Mr. Dhaliwal.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: You know I'm not going to be going out of order. All I'm doing is just the bill and the community—that's it.

The Chair: The subamendment, please.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: The amendment is...? We're talking about the Holocaust monument, right?

•(1310)

Mr. Brian Jean: We're talking about a council spearheading a fundraising campaign—

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: It's the whole intent of the bill. I'm not going to debate the bill. I'm going to come back to this. If the chair feels it's not relevant, then he can kick me out. I'm not reporting to you on this.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is the only opportunity I have to speak on this amendment, Mr. Chair. As I said earlier, we are fully in support of the bill to build a monument, but when it comes to saying there should be a particular steering committee that should be supporting and campaigning on the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing, and maintaining the monument, and any other costs incurred by the council, it means we are giving them the freedom to buy land, to build their own monument, to look after it the way they want. We as Canadians should take the responsibility.

I can tell you of a similar event. It's a coincidence that I was talking to the Sikh community this morning—

The Chair: Mr. Jean on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Jean: I want to make sure people aren't misled by what Mr. Dhaliwal just said. He indicated that council has the authority to buy land. Nowhere in this act does it talk about them buying land. The NCC is the place, if he would read the rest of the act, where it specifies.... It's got nothing to do with buying land, so I don't really understand what he's doing.

The Chair: That's not a point of order. Information is presented.

Mr. Dhaliwal, please continue.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to respectfully say that the act before us today is about creating a public, country-wide monument to commemorate a very dark chapter in the history of humanity. Indeed, this event was an especially difficult event that touched many of our fellow Canadians through what happened to their families, their friends, and their colleagues. It was an event that touched so many Canadians across the whole country. It is important that a national monument commemorating it be a truly national and public project that should be taken care of by the public. In other words, it should be fully taken care of by the Government of Canada, which is representing those Canadians. That's exactly what is true. Otherwise, another community will come and they will try to build their own monument, and a third community will come.

There are many dark chapters in history in many communities. I can talk about the Sikh community. You know, it's very coincidental, in June 1984—

Mr. Brian Jean: On a point of order, relevance. We're dealing with clause-by-clause.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: It is relevant. I have to explain some similar events.

The Chair: If you could, very briefly.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: I think it's very relevant. I'm saying that it's a coincidence that in June 1984, the holy shrine of Sikhs was attacked by the military, assaulted by the military, and thousands of innocent Sikhs were killed. In the same year, there was a pogrom in New Delhi where thousands of Sikhs—

The Chair: Order.

Ms. Lois Brown (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Where is the relevance to this debate?

The Chair: I'm certain that Mr. Dhaliwal is getting there very quickly, but I would ask him to address the amendment as quickly as he can.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: I'll take 30 more seconds—

The Chair: Thirty seconds, yes.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: —to go back to where I started, and then I'm coming back.

I was talking about 1984. In the same year, in November 1984, there were thousands of Sikh women—with due respect, Ms. Brown, you should be able to know this—who were raped and burned alive in Delhi in a pogrom organized by the state. Those people are also looking for something like this. When they were looking at this bill, they came to me to talk to me about whether they can have a similar bill. I—

Mr. Brian Jean: On a point of order, relevance, Mr. Chair. I understand your leniency in relation to this, but I just don't see the relevance to "The Council shall spearhead a fundraising campaign".

I would like to know what the relevance is, and I don't see it.

The Chair: I would just ask, Mr. Dhaliwal, if you could—

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: If we give one community or five individuals control to build a public monument, then every other community will come forward and start building those monuments that are the dark chapters in their history. That would not be Canadian pride. I want to make it Canadian, so the minister should be 100% responsible for erecting, maintaining, planning, and building this monument, and for supporting the Jewish community.

Thank you, sir.

• (1315)

The Chair: Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We now have in subclause 7(2), which has been amended by the government and amended in turn by Mr. Bevington, an amendment that says:

The Council should spearhead a fundraising campaign to support the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing and maintaining the Monument, and any other costs incurred

Mr. Chairman, we are, on the Liberal side, reminding everybody that we've already accepted subclause 7(1), which says that the minister shall be responsible for building and maintaining this monument.

I think at this point in the game we might just simply ask you to call the question.

The Chair: We're good? Okay.

(Amendment as amended agreed to)

(Clause 7 as amended agreed to)

(On clause 8—*Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada*)

The Chair: Mr. Jean, do you have an amendment?

Mr. Brian Jean: I do. It's G-7.1 for clause 8.

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, Mr. Chair. I just need a second here, but I'm getting there.

This amendment actually speaks for itself, Mr. Chair:

The Minister may delegate to the Council his or her responsibilities under paragraphs 6(a) and (c) and subsection 7(1).

The reason why the government believes this is the right thing to do is because we heard from the Jewish community that they want to

participate in certain parts of this, and they want to oversee certain parts of it. That's in conjunction with the minister and in conjunction with, of course, the NCC in this case, because the land they will receive will be through the NCC. So that's why this is there.

We've listened to the community, Mr. Chair, and that's what they've asked for.

The Chair: A point of order from Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, if we're going to follow the parliamentary secretary's admonitions to stay relevant.... So he's presented an amendment that he says comes as a result of listening to the Jewish community.

All along we've been talking about this being a bill—together with all of its amendments—reflecting the entire Canadian public's commitment to this. But this is the third time I've asked.... If in fact we are going to take the parliamentary secretary's words as truth, it behooves us all to have the representatives of the Jewish community to whom he has spoken—and who have allegedly supported everything he has done—come before the committee. There's nothing wrong with us listening to all of them to find out what it is they wanted.

Presumably everybody consulted with the community prior to the bill being presented in the House. So now we've got amendment after amendment being withdrawn and replaced by the same amendment, and we don't know what the Jewish community supports or not. Not that it matters, because this monument is a monument that is being supported by the public of Canada. Every single community and the public of Canada wants this monument, and they want the Government of Canada to assume the responsibility and the costs and the maintenance for this.

We've already voted this far. What purpose is there to continually harp on the fact that a particular segment of the Canadian public wants it? Is it to diminish their right to have a monument?

• (1320)

The Chair: I have Monsieur Laframboise and then Mrs. Crombie. [Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, if the Liberal Party wants to speak to the Jewish community.... We have been studying this issue since 9 o'clock this morning. I hope that the Liberal Party's research office took the time to speak with the community.

What I want to know first is whether the government's amendment is admissible because I would have a subamendment to propose.

[English]

The Chair: Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: My point of order was more on the parliamentary secretary's statement that it's what the community wants.

I don't think it's fair that he alone knows what the community wants. I think they should have the opportunity to come in here, address us, and let the committee know specifically what they want. At that time we can discuss a letter that was almost tabled this morning, to find out if they had all the facts before this letter was tabled.

The Liberal Party is the champion of the Jewish community, because we're the only ones here trying to preserve the original intent of this bill. It is what all Canadians wanted, what Parliament wanted, and I'm sure what the Jewish community wanted. We want to preserve what they were promised. So let's hear from them. Why not bring them in?

The Chair: I will have to rule that that isn't a point of order. It is ground that we covered earlier in today's meeting.

I will also suggest that G-7.1 is inadmissible and beyond the scope.

Mr. Brian Jean: On a point of order, I would challenge the chair.

The Chair: Mr. Jean has challenged the chair.

The Clerk: Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?

(Ruling of the chair overturned: nays 7; yeas 4)

The Chair: The ruling of the chair was challenged and overturned by the committee.

Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I want to move a subamendment.

[*English*]

The Chair: I'll ask to have it circulated.

I think we'll wait until everyone has it.

Everyone has it in front of them now.

Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I move that Bill C-442, in clause 8, be amended by adding, after line 18 on page 3, the following:

8. (2) Nothing shall prevent the Minister from contributing funds for the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing and maintaining the Monument.

After the text that was put forward by Mr. Jean earlier.

[*English*]

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise has presented a subamendment, but because of the presentation, it becomes an amendment. We will have to deal with this amendment and then deal with it as an amendment to it.

Mr. Volpe.

• (1325)

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Are you saying that in order to consider what Monsieur Laframboise is presenting, we have to consider his presentation as a subamendment to the government's amendment?

The Chair: What I'm saying is that what he has presented would be considered another amendment, as opposed to a subamendment to the government bill. Basically we would deal with the government amendment, and then Mr. Laframboise would add another amendment to the clause. We would have two issues.

We are discussing clause 8 and amendment G-7.1. Do we have debate?

All right. Go ahead, Mr. Bevington.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: I would like to seek clarification from Mr. Jean on what he considers responsibilities. Within the definitions, I don't know whether there is such an interpretation. I don't see an interpretation of responsibilities, so I have problems with this amendment, because it doesn't clearly say what responsibilities are and whether they differ from authority. Responsibility and authority sometimes can be confused, and I want to make sure that we clarify those particular points so that we understand that responsibilities are different from authority.

The Chair: Do you have a response, Mr. Jean?

Mr. Brian Jean: Certainly. My understanding, Mr. Bevington, is that a minister cannot delegate authority for anything he's responsible for, unless he specifically delegates authority. Responsibilities in this case would be, for instance, the design and the location. I think paragraphs 6(a) and 6(c) specifically talk about planning, design, construction, and installation.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: I'm sorry, but the parliamentary secretary is referring to clause 7 and the amendment refers to clause 8, so I'm asking him for the relevance of his comments.

Mr. Brian Jean: In clause 8, it actually indicates on G-7.1.... Is that correct, Mr. Chair?

It refers to proposed paragraphs 6(a) and 6(c) and proposed subsection 7(1), which I was referring to specifically in relation to some of the responsibilities. In clause 6 those responsibilities include planning, designing, and construction, and I was trying to clarify Mr. Bevington's—

Mr. Dennis Bevington: The words that I consider important in terms of authority are “shall oversee” and “shall choose”. Those refer to authority rather than responsibilities. That would be the question. Does this refer to those particular items within clause 6, “shall oversee” and “shall choose”? That's the clarification that I need to support this motion. Those are the key operating words for the minister.

• (1330)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: To be honest, I don't really understand your question. Maybe you could repeat it so that I—

Mr. Dennis Bevington: The minister may delegate to the council his or her responsibilities under proposed paragraphs 6(a) and 6(c). Does this mean that he has the ability to delegate the right to oversee and the right to choose? Those are the two things I'm concerned about; the rest I agree with. Those are the things that are, I think, very much of importance to everyone in this room when it comes to the development of this memorial.

Mr. Brian Jean: My understanding is that the minister, since he has the authority under this act, can't lose the authority, but he can assign the responsibility to somebody else, such as a deputy minister. That's my understanding from reading this, and I would think that's what it is. It makes sense to me already. He can't give up his authority and his ultimate responsibility for it.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, the parliamentary secretary's response to Mr. Bevington's question is a clear indication of why we would have to have somebody before the committee who actually knew what this meant.

My sense of what Mr. Bevington is saying is divided into two parts. I am sure—the parliamentary secretary has already said so—he is not in a position to be able to answer this. We're talking about the minister's authority and the minister's responsibility. Under our system of government, the responsibility is always vested in the government. It cannot be delegated to anybody else. Someone else can have delegated authority to execute a decision, but the responsibility for that decision is always resident in the executive, in the minister.

So under this clause—and this is, I think, why Mr. Bevington may have difficulty with it, and why I have difficulty with it—we're not even empowered to ask the minister to delegate his responsibility, because he can't do it. If that interpretation is correct, then I think we need to maybe have the law clerk of the House before us to tell us whether this would be acceptable. If in fact we can do that and the parliamentary secretary's interpretation that everything always stays with the minister anyway, no matter what...then we can deal with the clause as we ought to, in a thoughtful, deliberate fashion.

Under the circumstances, the answer I've heard makes it as difficult for me as it makes it for Mr. Bevington to say that we can authorize the minister to eliminate or to delegate his responsibility. He can't. He can delegate his authority. That's why we have a bureaucracy. That's why the deputy minister exists. That's why everybody below the deputy minister exists, to execute the authority of the minister.

I'm not sure we even need this, especially given that Monsieur Laframboise has already proposed an amendment that you say we must deal with after we deal with this one. Mr. Laframboise's proposal—even though it's not yet on the table, but you have said we have to refer to it later—addresses that issue.

I wonder if you would revisit your decision and make a decision as to whether, for the sake of clarity and moving along, we could ask the government member to withdraw amendment G-7.1—which I guess would now have to be numbered differently—in respect of the Bloc's amendment to clause 8. At the very least, you would clarify that constitutional issue that's raised by the words “responsibility and authority”.

The Chair: I don't have the authority to do that, but obviously the committee does have the authority if they so choose. We are debating amendment G-7.1.

The debate now is on amendment G-7.1. The floor is open.

Mr. Volpe.

•(1335)

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, in view of the debate that we've already had on this, I think you should call the question.

The Chair: Thank you.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I move the amendment I proposed earlier, in other words, that Bill C-442, in clause 8, be amended by adding, after line 18 on page 3, the following:

8. (2) Nothing shall prevent the Minister from contributing funds for the cost of planning, designing, constructing, installing and maintaining the Monument.

[*English*]

The Chair: The advice I'm getting is that the amendment is in the wrong place in the bill, and therefore I would....

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I would challenge your finding, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: The ruling of the chair has been challenged.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I know it's not debatable, but I'm asking for a point of clarification. Does that mean it should be—

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Hold on. I don't know how you can say you can't, on the one hand, have any other interventions and then ask for clarification on your own motion to challenge the chair.

An hon. member: That's right. There was a vote called.

The Chair: It's been challenged. We'll go to the vote.

The Clerk: The question is, shall the decision of the chair be sustained?

(Ruling of the chair overturned: nays 7; yeas 4)

The Chair: The ruling of the chair has been overturned.

Debate?

Seeing none, I will call the question. Shall the amendment of Mr. Laframboise pass?

(Amendment agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

(Clause 8 as amended agreed to on division)

(On clause 9—*Three years*)

The Chair: Mr. Jean, you are moving G-8.1?

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, I am, Mr. Chair. I think it makes sense, just in listening to the Liberals across the way expressing the problem with the first section 9 as it was originally, that it “be completed not later than three years after this Act comes into force”. What we're worried about as a government is that there won't be sufficient funds, and we don't want to have a situation where the monument is not completed for that reason. As a result, we're asking for this amendment to be supported by the committee so that not “later than three years after the day on which sufficient funds, as determined by the National Capital Commission, have been raised under subsection 7(2).”

The Chair: Debate?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Is it in order, Mr. Chairman?

The Chair: If it wasn't, I would state that. It is in order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Oh man.

Mr. Chairman, I just can't believe this.

An hon. member: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I don't challenge the chair.

An hon. member: We leave that to you.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: And please recognize that the opposition members have been attempting to work within the system, and they've always supported the chair. We've never challenged the chair. We've left that to the government, and the government has challenged the chair on every one of its decisions.

But at any rate, Mr. Chairman, this amendment essentially puts a constraint on the fundraisers, mandating the fundraisers as to what they ought to do and what they cannot do. This is a volunteer group. It says "as determined by the National Capital Commission". So here you have the Government of Canada—let me repeat it again—through its executive branch, the minister, washing his hands of the whole affair and saying that the National Capital Commission will determine whether these guys were able to get enough funds on the table to build the monument. Incredible. Just absolutely incredible.

Thank heaven for the subamendment by my colleague from the NDP, and thank heaven for the other amendment from the Bloc Québécois about contributions that can be made. This points out once again that the government has not only said goodbye to this monument, it's turned its back on it. It has done everything it can to the concept, to say to heck with you, and to treat the Jewish community differently from everybody else by making them pay for something the Canadian public has already accepted. That is scandalous and shameful that they should be taxed specifically for something that represents all Canadians' interests. I'm embarrassed they would put in this clause.

• (1340)

The Chair: Mr. Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I just wanted to ask the parliamentary secretary something. In light of what Mr. Volpe said about the amendment to clause 8, I think we should extend the period, that it should be five years instead of three.

But it says that nothing shall prevent the minister from contributing or advancing funds—because, at the end of the day, contributing can mean advancing funds and so forth. I think that, out of respect—I know this community is extremely proud and will see to fundraising—if we wanted to make it five years rather than making it conditional upon a determination regarding the funds, I could understand.

I would like the parliamentary secretary to think about it. Five years might be a good time frame to at least be able to have a definite date. I am certain that the community will be able to do it before that time frame.

I can also understand the government not wanting to back the National Capital Commission into a corner regarding the funds. The parliamentary secretary could check; we have a few minutes. I know he uses his BlackBerry, as do others. Perhaps he could extend it by two or five years. That would satisfy me.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I understand what Monsieur Laframboise is saying. I, quite frankly, see no difficulty with it, except that it's been 50 years now and it would be nice. I also see no difficulty with changing National Capital Commission to the minister, if that would be the preference of the Liberal members or the Bloc, if that would be more satisfactory to them, because we could have it within three years and the minister would make that determination in relation to the funds, in relation to all of the rest. So certainly that would be in order if it would be acceptable.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I can move a subamendment. The sentence would read as follows:

[...] later than three years after the day on which sufficient funds, as determined by the Minister, have been raised under subsection 7(2).

It would be up to the minister to decide. Given the pressure that will be on him, I think it will be done in less than three years.

[*English*]

The Chair: As I understand it then, the change is to the minister as opposed to the *Commission de la capitale nationale*.

I have Mr. Bevington on my list.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: I'm good with the amendment.

The Chair: Now we are debating the subamendment by Monsieur Laframboise. I would ask if there's any debate on it.

(Subamendment agreed to)

(Amendment agreed to on division)

(Clause 9 as amended agreed to on division)

• (1345)

The Chair: We're moving to new clause 10.

Mr. Jean, are you presenting G-10?

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, Mr. Chair, I am.

The Chair: Please proceed.

Mr. Brian Jean: Thank you.

Mr. Chair, what we're proposing are clauses 10, 11(1), and 11(2), and I'll deal with the first one.

We believe as a government that the council should submit an annual report to the minister on its activities. The first report should be—

The Chair: Mr. Jean, if I may interrupt, you've stated it correctly, but the information I'm getting is that actually instead of subclauses 11(1) and 11(2), they should actually be two stand-alone clauses.

Mr. Brian Jean: Clauses 11 and 12.

The Chair: It would be two separate amendments, one for clause 10 and one for clause 11.

Mr. Brian Jean: Certainly. I'm prepared to deal with them that way.

The Chair: Okay. So we'll deal with clause 10.

Mr. Brian Jean: It's simply that the council shall be accountable and, as such, report to the minister on its activities within 15 months after the day on which the council is established under section 4 and thereafter annually.

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I would like to move a subamendment. It would read as follows:

[...] shall submit an annual report to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities on its activities.

[*English*]

The Chair: So the subamendment would read that:

The Council shall submit an annual report to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities on its activities.

Debate?

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, as much as I applaud the effort by the Bloc to recapture the importance of the reporting mechanism, it still has to go to the minister. We have made him responsible. His responsibilities are also to receive the reports. If we say it comes directly to this committee, then we are absolving him of the responsibility we have accepted. He cannot delegate.

So perhaps, with all due respect, my Bloc colleagues would amend it a little differently. I propose, for example, that:

The Council shall submit an annual report to the Minister and to the Transport Committee.

And whatever is the appropriate translation. Then I think his intention and the propriety of the process would be well served.

The Chair: One challenge with submitting it to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities is the fact that there are times when that committee doesn't exist and may or may not exist in the future, subject to governments changing that particular department.

The suggestion I have is that it should make an annual report to the minister and the House, which can then be referred to the...

Mr. Watson.

Mr. Jeff Watson: I'm sorry, can you state again what the suggestion is?

The Chair: Because the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities may change over time—it was originally once called the Department of Transport—if we take that reference out and refer the report to the minister and the House, then the House will have the ability to refer it to the appropriate committee.

Mr. Watson.

Mr. Jeff Watson: Then I do have a question. How does the council submit an annual report to the House of Commons? I can understand submitting a report to the minister, who can then table it in the House of Commons.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: It could be “to the Minister and through the Minister to the House of Commons or the appropriate committee”.

Mr. Brian Jean: Then the committee can deal with it at the committee level. If they want to report anything to the House, that would be up to the committee to decide.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Well, the committee will always report to the House.

Mr. Brian Jean: That's true.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: So perhaps this—

• (1350)

The Chair: If I may then, I'll try it again.

We would submit it “to the Minister and the appropriate committee of the House”. So that is how the subamendment reads.

(Subamendment agreed to)

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: We have to go to the next amendment.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Chair, just as a point of clarification as I introduce this, if I may, these can be subclauses 11(1) and 11(2). Is that correct? I just had some confusion when I was....

The Chair: We have to vote on proposed clause 10 as amended, which was what the previous discussion was on.

(Amendment agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Now we're going to move to proposed clause 11, and there are two parts to it.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: This is more of a housekeeping matter than anything. It indicates the government's intention that this monument, after the funds have been raised and after it has been installed and built and properly located according to the terms of the act, will then become the property of the National Capital Commission, which obviously means the National Capital Commission at that stage will be dealing with most of the requirements of the monument itself.

The second part of that deals with the fact that once it becomes the property of the National Capital Commission, any additional funds that would be raised would become the property of the National Capital Commission at that time.

The Chair: Are there any questions?

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Chairman, I don't think we can be in opposition to proposed subclause 11(1). At the very least, both 11(1) and 11(2) now take us full circle to all the arguments we have been making all along; that is that the Government of Canada, through its minister of transport, be responsible for the planning, the designing, the building, and the maintenance of this monument on behalf of all Canadians.

New subclause 11(1) really says, you know what? This monument does revert back to Canadians. New subclause 11(2) says, and by the way, if you've raised any money—which we've referred to as an additional fee, a tax on a particular community—it comes back to the Government of Canada.

I think anybody who has listened to this debate or watched it all along would agree with our assessment, that the intent we had presented with our amendments in support of the original bill was that the Government of Canada do everything for the people of Canada. The government has dragged the Jewish community along and deceived the regular public, and now it's coming back and saying, by the way, we did do all of that, but the monument is going to come back and be a Canadian monument.

We applaud the fact that it's going to be a Canadian monument, because that's what we thought it was going to be all along. But the government fought it all the way along, and finally, with an amendment, it says *mea culpa*, we're sorry, you're right.

An hon. member: And retain the funds.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: And by the way, if there is any special spare cash, we're going to bank it. That's great, but at any rate, at least the end objective is resolved.

We're sorry that the Jewish community was deceived through all of this, and that the Canadian public was manipulated, but we're happy to see that the monument is going to be built. It's going to be resident in the national capital, and the Canadian public can call it its own.

I think we can call the question.

(Amendment agreed to [See *Minutes of Proceedings*])

• (1355)

The Chair: We now refer back to clause 2, which we moved to the back at the start of the review. There were two government amendments, G-1 and G-2.

G-4 was not adopted, which was contingent on that, and G-6 was not adopted as well.

I look to Mr. Jean for any comment. I assume they are no longer relevant.

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Chair, I would ask for unanimous consent to have a five-minute adjournment.

Actually, I see it's question period in five minutes, so if we can suspend until after question period, that would be appropriate.

The Chair: Do we have agreement for that? No?

An hon. member: There's not unanimous consent.

The Chair: Is there consent for a five-minute break?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I don't know how we can do that. Are we allowed to sit after two o'clock?

The Chair: Yes, we can. By the amendment that was approved in the previous meeting, we come back and sit right after QP.

Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I want to ask the law clerk whether the clauses that have not been dealt with yet contain information that is now irrelevant or contradictory, given the amendments and decisions that have been made.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: That is the difficulty, Mr. Chair. I see we have two clauses left to deal with. And certainly in my mind, we probably do have G-1 and G-2.

The difficulty is that we have been going back and forth for two days, and I want to make sure that we actually adopt a bill today that is not just relevant but makes sense. That's why I wanted the five minutes, just to go through each clause that we have done, and that's what I'm asking for. It's just a couple of minutes to be able to go through and make sure we have a bill that's proper before us and that we're not missing any clauses that need to be there, because we have had some issues going back and forth between us.

I'm a little confused, bluntly put, in relation to the content.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I could do some filibustering, as well. I gave Mr. Jean a chance to—

An. hon. member: Thank you very much.

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Go ahead, Mr. Jean, make your calls.

In the meantime, it is important for the law clerk to give us her opinion on the clauses that have not been dealt with yet.

[*English*]

The Chair: I'm going to recess until after question period so that we can get the opinions of the clerks. Legal counsel has suggested that they will stay here, and if we have any questions on the rest of the bill, we'll try to answer them as directly as we can.

When we reconvene after question period we will be meeting right here, and I would suggest that we will commence promptly at 3:30.

Monsieur Gaudet.

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Gaudet (Montcalm, BQ): Are we reconvening at 3:30 p.m. or 3:15 p.m.?

[*English*]

The Chair: If 3:30 accommodates everybody, that's the time I would set.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I just wonder whether the parliamentary secretary, in his request to you, to which you have acceded, is also prepared to make a commitment to the committee members that he is not going to come up with any new amendments that reflect the same vocabulary as previous amendments already dealt with. We just want to know what we're dealing with when we come back.

The Chair: Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I can assure the member that I will do everything possible to make sure that this bill is an excellent bill when it leaves this committee.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: In other words, he's so full of—

The Chair: Thank you, and with that, if anyone has questions, our counsel is here to give advice, so I would encourage you....

The meeting is suspended.

• (1400) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1530)

The Chair: Welcome back, everyone. When we were last here we had just completed a new clause. We are now moving to clause 2.

(On clause 2—*Definitions*)

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Mr. Volpe on a point of order.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I want everybody to get into the habit of the ambience we left off with.

The Chair: Thank you for that. It startled me, so it's working.

There were two government amendments. I understand the government has a new amendment to replace perhaps amendments G-1 and G-2.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Could we have a point of order from Mr. Volpe, just to distract everyone away from the fact that they're not ready yet?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: So we can filibuster while you get your act together?

Mr. Brian Jean: Exactly.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I seem to have had a little problem finding amendments G-1 and G-2. But I've come across them now.

First of all, Mr. Chair, what I would like to do, in relation to clause 2...and I have to read it into the record because I have it in English only. It is moved that clause 2 be amended by adding at the end of line 10 on page 2 the following:

and directed as such by the Minister to form a legal entity in order to properly manage the functions and ensure good governance and accountability of said Council.

The Chair: Mr. Jean, do you have that? Could I have it in English just so...?

Mr. Brian Jean: I do, but part of it's in my scratching.

The Chair: That's fine.

I'm just going to turn off my mike for a minute and get some counsel here.

• (1535)

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Chair, in terms of amendments G-1 and G-2, which all the members have had for some time, it needs to be read in with that particular amendment. Amendment G-1 deals with the council. Amendment G-2 deals with deleting lines 15 to 17 on page 2, which I think has to do with the lands.... I apologize, it is the public land. We've already identified that as the NCC, so it's just deleting that. In terms of the other one, which is amendment G-2, I would table it, as well as amendment G-1, both at the same time.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Amendment G-2 is the definition of public land.

Mr. Brian Jean: Deleting lines 15 to 17....

Hon. Joseph Volpe: On page 2 of the bill, as I read it, 15 to 17 says:

“public land” means an area of land owned by the Crown that is accessible to the public at all times.

Mr. Brian Jean: Yes, and I am fully prepared, from the government's perspective, to look at an amendment on that. We have already identified that we want it to be in the NCC. So possibly “public land” means an area of land owned within the National Capital Commission.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Joseph Volpe: That is not necessary, because it is public land. It is an area of land owned by the Crown that is accessible to the public at all times. What matters are the words “accessible” and “at all times”.

[*English*]

So it's got to be accessible at all times. Why would you want to delete that from anything?

Mr. Brian Jean: Well, under clause 7, did we adopt the amendment to say, “The National Capital Commission is responsible for identifying a site that is accessible to the public at all times where the Monument will be located”?

The difficulty we have at this stage, committee, is that we do not have that unless we change “public land”, amend it to say that public land, under this act, would mean....

The Chair: Just for clarification, I think we're going to have to deal with the first amendment and then see.

Mr. Brian Jean: Certainly.

The Chair: We have G-1 and G-2 still in clause 2 that haven't been dealt with—

Mr. Brian Jean: Absolutely, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: —and what you're suggesting is going to impact those, if they're acceptable.

So can I ask you, Mr. Jean, maybe just for clarity, to read into the record what you're proposing, and I'll give you back your document?

Okay. We're now proposing the G-1, which you have, but with an amendment to it.

• (1540)

Mr. Brian Jean: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will read it into the record, just to make sure. I've been told I'll probably have to read it twice.

If you look at the original bill, this affects clause 2 in relation to the definition of “Council”. I will quote:

“Council” means the corporation incorporated in accordance with section 5 as the National Holocaust Monument Development Council established by the Minister under section 4 and directed as such by the Minister to form a legal entity in order to properly manage the functions and ensure good governance and accountability of said Council.

So I've wrapped those in.

The Chair: Before I make any kind of ruling, I just want to make sure everybody understands the statement by the amendment. If you do, then I'll ask Mr. Jean just to share with me that piece again, so we can review it.

Mr. Brian Jean: Read it out one more time?

The Chair: No. I think I just want to study it here before I make a decision.

Mr. Brian Jean: Okay. You'll have to just follow the one, two, three on mine.

•(1545)

The Chair: If I may, with some clarification, again thanks to counsel's advice, the amendment would read:

“Council” means the National Holocaust Monument Development Council established by the Minister under Section 4 and directed as such by the Minister to form a legal entity in order to properly manage the functions and ensure good governance and accountability of said Council.

I just want to make sure everybody understands that. Again I will have to rule it as out of order, as inadmissible, Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I'll do the same thing as usual, Mr. Chair. I challenge for the final time, I'm hoping.

The Chair: My ruling has been challenged. There is no debate. We'll go to Bonnie to call the vote, please.

The Clerk: The question is, shall the decision of the chair be sustained?

(Ruling of the chair overturned: nays 7; yeas 4)

The Chair: It seems to be a refrain I'm repeating often, but the ruling of the chair has been overruled. The amendment is up for debate. So you can have a point of order, but we now have debate.

The floor is open.

Mrs. Crombie.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It's not that I may agree or disagree with the amendment; it's that I haven't had a chance to review it, and I know my colleagues in the Bloc haven't had it presented to them in French. I feel like we're writing legislation on the fly, on the back of a napkin, and I don't think that's the way we should be conducting our business as parliamentarians. I think that's just wrong.

I'm a visual person. I need to see it written before me. I don't think I want to vote on something I don't have a chance to look at, something that has just been read out, on the back of a napkin, that was created by the parliamentary secretary just moments ago, without thoughtful consideration and mindfulness. It hasn't been translated either, so I'm not prepared to vote for this, no.

The Chair: Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Chair, I leave it to your wisdom to give us your opinion, but, to my knowledge, we are allowed to move amendments in committee. I received the French version from translation services, and it is fine with me. I understand what the amendment is about. Otherwise, I would have said something.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Volpe.

[*English*]

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I'm sure he wanted to add, Mr. Chairman, that this is not precedent-setting, the decision to accept something that hasn't been in both official languages, and I would applaud him in saying that it isn't precedent-setting. Having said that, call the question.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Volpe.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: Mr. Jean, you have one more amendment.

•(1550)

Mr. Brian Jean: I do.

It was just in relation to the location. I think you have the paperwork.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: The G-2 amendment.

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Jean: No, that's not it.

What outstanding amendments do we have? G-1?

A voice: G-2.

Mr. Brian Jean: Thank you to all those people who passed me G-2. I really appreciate it.

This is in relation to clause 2, which deals with the issue of public land, because as the members will recollect, the land itself that we had indicated as a committee we wanted this monument to be on, and that was identified to us by participants, would be on NCC land. We have nothing within the bill that means that, and as a result, I would propose as a committee that we deal with the definition of “public land” to reflect that it will be located on NCC land.

The Chair: I'm just getting some advice here and then I'll advise committee.

Does everyone understand the motion or the amendment that was put forward?

Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I would like some clarification, Mr. Chair. In the LIB-1 amendment, it says the following:

(b) choose a suitable area of public land in the National Capital Region for the Monument to be located; and

I would like the law clerk or the committee clerk to tell us the exact wording that we adopted in clause 6 regarding the land chosen.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Jean, for clarification.

Mr. Brian Jean: Just in relation to that, LIB-1, which amended clause 6, actually states that “Council, shall”, and it talks about “choose a suitable area of public land in the National Capital Region”. As such, I think all we need to do with the definitions section is either reflect the same thing the Liberal motion did or else just delete it entirely, unless I misunderstand.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: We need to know the wording that was chosen when clause 6 was dealt with.

[English]

Mr. Brian Jean: *Oui.*

The Chair: We had adopted “choose a suitable area of public land in the National Capital Region for the Monument to be located”.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: So all G-2 does—

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: If we go with the term “public land”, we should define it. The definition in clause 2, which the parliamentary secretary wants to amend, is “an area of land owned by the Crown that is accessible to the public at all times”. The idea is to choose an area of public land in the national capital region that is owned by the Crown and accessible to the public at all times. I do not think we should amend that clause. Until someone can convince me otherwise, I think we should leave it as is. In clause 6, we approved the idea of a suitable area of public land being chosen in the national capital region. Therefore, it needs to be an area of public land, not private land that would not be accessible to the public.

[English]

The Chair: Before we have any further discussion, I would again rule that the proposed amendment is substantive and therefore inadmissible.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: I'm not going to challenge you, Mr. Chair, because I don't want to, bluntly, but I just want to understand—

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Anybody back there have champagne?

Mr. Brian Jean: I just want to make sure for the record, which clearly will be kept in relation to this for future generations of interpreters, that public land, in the definitions section of clause 2, will coexist with clause 6. As such, then, there does not need to be an amendment of either one. So we don't have to have the challenge and we don't have to have the ruling, in my mind.

[Translation]

Do you understand?

• (1555)

[English]

Hon. Joseph Volpe: You withdraw G-2?

Mr. Brian Jean: I withdraw G-2.

(Amendment withdrawn)

The Chair: So we will vote on clause 2 as amended.

(Clause 2 as amended agreed to on division)

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Hold on.

The Chair: There are no amendments there.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I was just looking for Tim Uppal's name, and it doesn't appear anywhere.

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall clause 1, the short title, carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Shall the bill as amended carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: On division.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: On division.

The Chair: Shall the committee order a reprint of the bill?

An hon. member: Good luck on that end.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: On division, Mr. Volpe?

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Get all the monks in the monastery to try to rewrite this thing.

The Chair: On division.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Are we done with that order of business? Before we finish up on this, I would like to bring a point of order up, if we're all done.

The Chair: We are done, and we do have one order of business on the agenda.

Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Chair, in my research I came across a Canadian saying, 65 years ago, that none is too many, in reference to the Holocaust. I was so ashamed to find that a Canadian said that, and I am obviously moved by this whole issue.

In studying our history, I'm ashamed as a Canadian of that one part, that they would refuse people, refugees, from the Holocaust and say that none is too many.

I want to put it on the record today that those are not my words. Canada missed a real opportunity there, and the words should have been “Canada wants them all.”

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Jean.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Fine sentiments, Mr. Chair, and those are the ones that have actually motivated the Liberal Party to ensure that it is all Canadians who support this monument, and that the monument is a reflection, on its merits, of the values of Canadians today, perhaps in part because we regret that these values weren't as prevalent 65 years ago or earlier.

This isn't an issue with which one ought to play politics or try to spin an advantage. None of us would for a moment think that a monument to the Holocaust to reflect on all the evils that were perpetrated against a very vulnerable community of humanity would be swayed by any political thinking. For us, it's the Government of Canada speaking for the people of Canada and doing something that all Canadians want. That's why we insisted all along on some of the amendments and took the positions on other amendments that needed to reflect that. It was important for us, and we know that everybody else agrees.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'm pleased to report that the bill is finished.

Mr. Bevington has brought a motion and has given notice. I know we are a little bit time-crunched, but, Mr. Bevington, you have the floor.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This motion speaks to a very important issue that is in front of the House right now in terms of a unanimous motion that was passed in Parliament last week. It directly speaks to the issue in front of the transport committee, because transport has the responsibility for oil spill response planning.

My motion is:

That the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities engage in a study of the federal government's oil spill response planning and capacity, with particular interest in response to spills caused by off-shore drilling along all three coasts, and report the results of the study and make recommendations to the House of Commons.

• (1600)

The Chair: Are there comments?

Go ahead, Mr. Jean.

Mr. Brian Jean: My only comment would be, bluntly, that I haven't had time to do a lot of research on this matter. I'm wondering whether we could postpone the vote by the committee until the next meeting, simply so that I could do some research to ascertain whether this is the proper place for this study. I've noticed that in question period, for instance, it's the Minister of Natural Resources who's answering these questions. I'm wondering if that wouldn't be more appropriate, or even the environment committee.

I'm not saying we're going to vote against it, Mr. Bevington; I'm suggesting that we put it off until the next meeting so that we can ascertain whether it would be more appropriate for us to study it or for another committee to study it. That's my only issue.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Could I answer that question? It's up on your Transport Canada website, for instance.

I think that's one of the problems we have within Parliament right now. It was in evidence again today in question period, when the natural resources minister, rather than speaking to oil spills, was

talking about regulations on drilling. I think we need to clarify who's actually responsible for planning and implementation of oil spill response teams, and it's Transport Canada.

That's the problem we're having right now in Parliament. It's the confusion that has been created. This certainly will make sure that Transport Canada is the recognized authority for what it's responsible to do.

The Chair: Go ahead, Monsieur Laframboise.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: I have a problem with something. I sent the motion to my leader's office. It is not at all clear that it is the responsibility of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. I was told to ask Mr. Bevington why he was submitting that to our committee. If the reason is that you saw it on the Web site, the leader's office will be a hard sell. It has to do with drilling. So it is really more of an issue for the Standing Committee on Natural Resources. If it involved transportation by oil tanker, we could always study the issue. I know the Standing Committee on Natural Resources has tried to move motions and has held discussions on the matter. I do not want us to be divided on that, here.

I will relay your explanation to the leader's office and let you know what they say.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Bevington, do you have a comment?

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Quite frankly, drilling and the regulations surrounding what companies do in the water when exploring for oil are under Natural Resources Canada, but oil spills and responses to them can occur in many fashions from many sources. They may not be part of drilling; they may be part of other activities that come under Transport Canada. It's Transport Canada that has responsibility for ensuring that preparedness for oil spills is there in the water, not Natural Resources Canada. I think that's what we really want to clarify here, otherwise we're not going to be able to move forward in a good fashion with this.

The Chair: I'm obligated at the ringing of the bells to shut down the committee. I've allowed three parties. I'm going to ask Mr. Volpe to speak, and then I'm going to defer the vote until the start of the next meeting.

Mr. Volpe.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Thank you very much.

I think Mr. Bevington is, in principle, onto something correct. It would make it easier for all of us to determine how well our committee can do this if we moved this over to our steering committee. The only encumbrance I see is whether we can fit it into our schedule before the House rises. I think we should examine every opportunity to do that without dismissing the motion. We can't do it justice in this next minute or two, and I'm wondering if Mr. Bevington and the government side will accept moving it into our next meeting of the steering committee to deal with it and establish a timeframe for it.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Would that next meeting be on Tuesday?

The Chair: We could have the vote on it on Tuesday or bring it to the steering committee.

• (1605)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Why can't we have the vote now and then let the steering committee decide later on?

Mr. Dennis Bevington: I hear that the members want to examine this for themselves. I would be comfortable with having the vote on Tuesday.

The Chair: I'll table it until Tuesday then, and we'll have our information back to us.

Thank you, everyone.

The meeting is adjourned.

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