



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

43rd PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 005

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Chair: Ms. Ruby Sahota



Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

• (1100)

[English]

The Chair (Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.)): The committee is now in session.

Good morning, everyone.

As we've all been waiting for, today is the day we'll finally be able to ask follow-up questions following the presentation we received and the tour we took of Centre Block.

Before we begin with questions, I want to remind everyone that this committee is webcast, which is the default for all meetings unless a televised meeting is requested specifically. We have webcasting taking place, so it's no longer just the audio recording; the visuals are being recorded as well. I mention this just so that all members are aware of it.

We do have some committee business, so hopefully we can get through the questions, leaving us some time at the end of the meeting to resolve some of the issues that may be brought up. We'll see how it goes.

Let's start with Mr. Richards, who's first on the list for questions.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): We put you on the list.

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Sure, I'll allow my colleague—

The Chair: Okay, Mr. Tochor.

Mr. Corey Tochor (Saskatoon—University, CPC): Thank you very much.

My questions are about the lack of costing for this plan. Seemingly the first decision that parliamentarians are being asked for input on is this visitor centre, which is a hole in the ground right now...and it's dug.

We haven't had any feedback on the costing of the three options. We would like even a rough estimate of the difference in cost between options 1, 2, and 3. What would they be?

Mr. Rob Wright (Assistant Deputy Minister, Science and Parliamentary Infrastructure Branch, Department of Public Works and Government Services): That is an important question that we will have to work through together. It would enable us, as we continue to develop the requirements for the visitor welcome centre, to come back with some high-level comparisons.

Of course, it is hard to give cost estimates before we have the definition of the requirements from Parliament. There are a number

of material decisions that would have impact on the scope, cost and schedule.

I completely understand the question and your frustration. At the same time, it is very difficult to give costing without knowing whether or not there will be committee rooms going into the visitor welcome centre. There are questions of functionality as well as size, and they have a material impact on costs. So getting a little deeper into an understanding of what Parliament would like to see in the visitor welcome centre will be very helpful to us when we come back to give some comparisons on costs.

Mr. Corey Tochor: I find this kind of bizarre. It's similar to someone going through a house construction. You have a contractor who is going to redo your front entrance and give you three examples to choose from. Obviously, if money had no bearing on the decision, everyone would pick the grandest and biggest one.

How are we to actually make a determination on...? Seemingly, one of the first questions involved is concerning to say the least. When will this committee find out those numbers? I know you're saying that we have to tell you what we need in order for you to come back at us with costs. I understand we don't have the power to make a decision today, but if we wanted to find out an actual breakdown of the costs between the three, how long would it take you to provide it to us?

• (1105)

Mr. Rob Wright: One of the challenges we face with the Centre Block and the visitor welcome centre—which is a bit of a shift from, say, the West Block, which we did in collaboration for the House of Commons, or the former Government Conference Centre, now the Senate of Canada Building for the Senate of Canada—is that this facility requires input from all parts of Parliament. There are requirements from the House, the Senate, the Library of Parliament and the Parliamentary Protective Service.

We are working through that at the officials level, but until we get integrated feedback on those elements, it is very difficult to give costing. However, we are one hundred per cent committed to working through that process with you. As we get the feedback on what you would like to see in each of those options, we can then come back with cost comparisons.

It's a bit of an iterative process. It is difficult to give you anything that would be useful from a cost comparison point of view on, for example, whether there are Senate committee rooms in the visitor welcome centre or not, or how much of an interpretive program... We are starting to get good ideas on that, but feedback from you on what you want to see would be very important for us to then be able to come back with some cost comparisons to support the decision-making process.

Mr. Corey Tochor: All right, we're not going to get any costs on the actual plan going forward. Can we look at past costs, so that this committee can have an understanding of projects of similar scale? What was the initial budget? What was the initial timeline? What did it end up at? A prime example is this building.

Mr. Rob Wright: Since the long-term vision and plan was recalibrated in 2006-07, there's been quite a strong track record of delivering projects on schedule and on budget. Consecutively, 24 major projects were delivered on time and on budget. I can walk through a couple of those, if that would be helpful.

Phase one of the visitor welcome centre, for example, was \$129 million. That was a 5,000 square metre facility, which gives you some benchmarking for some cost comparisons. Approximately 5,000 square metres and \$129 million were delivered on schedule in 2018. This building was delivered for \$863 million on budget in 2018.

The Senate of Canada Building, which also included other space for senators, was delivered in 2018 for \$269 million, again, on budget.

The Wellington Building was delivered in 2016, at a value of \$425 million.

The old Bank of Montreal, now the Sir John A. Macdonald conference facility, was delivered in 2015 for a cost of \$99.5 million, again, on budget and on schedule.

Those are some examples. We can go through some more, if you'd like.

The Chair: Thank you.

That's all the time you have, Mr. Tochor.

Mr. Gerretsen

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Just for the record, how much time do I have?

The Chair: You have six minutes.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Thank you.

My questions are about the Senate committee that is providing input into the process. Who would be the best to answer those questions?

Great.

I have a number of questions. How many Senate members are on their committee?

Mr. Rob Wright: To my understanding, it's the committee on internal economy, budgets and administration. There is, traditionally,

a subcommittee on the LTVP, or the long-term vision and plan, which is the work we're undertaking on the restoration and modernization of the precinct.

To my understanding, that committee is still being stood up. I think that is almost finalized, but I don't think the final membership has been determined.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Okay.

How many members were there? Do you know the composition?

Mr. Rob Wright: The numbers would be similar to this committee, not entirely—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Is there a method by which the composition is determined?

● (1110)

Mr. Rob Wright: I think that is potentially in a little bit of flux in the Senate.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: When was that committee formed?

Mr. Rob Wright: I've been here working on this for over 15 years, and it pre-existed.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Okay.

Do you know how often they meet to discuss Centre Block specifically?

Mr. Rob Wright: There has been fairly active engagement with the Senate on the ongoing work. The Senate has revitalized the parliamentary precinct over a number of years.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Do you know how often it meets? Does it meet weekly or monthly? Could you give me a rough idea?

Mr. Rob Wright: There is a bit of a combination between the Senate administration appearing without Public Services and Procurement Canada. We are called to some of those meetings. Over the past 10 years or so, I have attended probably in excess of 20 meetings of the Board of Internal Economy and the committee on internal economy, budgets and administration.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: You don't know how often it meets to discuss its Centre Block input, correct?

Mr. Rob Wright: I couldn't—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Do you know if the meetings are public or private?

Mr. Rob Wright: Traditionally, the committee on internal economy and administration has been broadcast, but the subcommittee is in camera.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Can you describe what the committee's level of input has been? What kind of stuff is it commenting on, whether it's Centre Block or this building? Does the committee get into the weeds of what colour the carpet should be, or is it more high level and dealing with the size of rooms and stuff like that?

Mr. Rob Wright: It's been grosso modo quite similar: the core requirements; the number of committee rooms; where parliamentary offices would be; the requirements for a chamber, for example; the galleries for a chamber; security; and the range of elements we discussed in our presentation a week ago.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Would you say the administration is receptive of its input? Do you think there is value to the Senate's input?

Mr. Rob Wright: It's hard for me to speak to the dynamics between the Senate administration and senators, but there has been an active engagement over the years on the ongoing work in the precinct.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Do you see value in the senators' contribution—

Mr. Rob Wright: I would say—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: —or would you rather they just got out of the way?

Mr. Rob Wright: We work within a governance framework in which there are two independent Houses of Parliament, and we do our best to serve you equally.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: The last major renovation was the re-building in 1916. Are you aware of what input was made by the Senate or House? Did a committee exist, and was it a joint committee? If somebody else could provide more details about it, I'd like to hear it, but what level of engagement was coming from the Senate and the House?

Mr. Rob Wright: That's a good question. I wouldn't be able to respond to that today.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Does somebody else know?

Ms. Susan Kulba (Director General, Real Property, Real Property Services, House of Commons): We know that Pearson worked very closely with the Speaker of the House at that time on some of the elements. Pearson was the architect employed by PSPC, but there was involvement through the Speaker.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Through the Speaker. Do you know if there was a committee?

Ms. Susan Kulba: We can see if there is anything in research.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Can you look into that, and let us know? It would be nice to get an understanding of what the level of engagement was then from the House and the Senate, and how that was structured. It would also be good to know what that input could look like now.

The Chair: Mr. Therrien.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Good morning, everyone.

I'm very glad to see you here today.

I don't know if what I am about to say is in order, but you will let me know if it is. Last week, you presented several scenarios. Among other things, you indicated the anticipated number of MPs. I don't know if you have already made those clarifications, but I don't think you have.

How do you go about determining which of all the scenarios considered will be the right one? Who is responsible for this? Which parameters are used to help us make an informed choice?

• (1115)

[*English*]

Ms. Susan Kulba: Essentially, we are following the legislation, which predicts the number of MPs we would be planning for. After that, once we have that scenario, those are the options we will put forward, and they would go up through the governance process for approval.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Therrien: As far as the budget is concerned, I imagine that the more imposing the building, the more expensive it is. Do we know what the limit is?

The Conservatives have put forward the idea that the various budgets that we would have to support should be considered. You are probably thinking that it's rare that work of this magnitude can be done, given that you cannot shut down Parliament at any moment. We can decide to go merrily along and give the construction as much scope as possible.

However, is there no limit that we could impose on you in terms of your budget?

Mr. Rob Wright: The budget is really important, of course. Before we start construction as such, we will have to have a tight budget and deadlines. From then on, it will be up to us to meet that budget and those deadlines.

[*English*]

We're at a point right now of being in an iterative piece of back and forth to really understand what the houses of Parliament want in Centre Block and the visitor welcome centre. Once that becomes a little clearer, we'll be able to give you those cost comparisons so you can make informed decisions. That is critically important. Then it will be our job to respect that budget and schedule once they are established. It is our hope that over the next several months we will be able to go through that process together. Then we will be able to go to the Treasury Board in the fall to get that baseline scope, budget and schedule. From there we would proceed.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Therrien: The questions I am asking are really not an inquisition. I just want to know how it works. I imagine you have some idea of the demographic trajectory that determines that, in 50 years, the number of MPs should increase. I imagine you are relying heavily on those projections to come up with the best possible product. Isn't that right?

A voice: Yes.

Mr. Alain Therrien: I have no further questions.

Thank you very much.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Therrien.

Ms. Blaney.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): First of all, I want to thank you all for the tour. It was very informative, and as a person who once sat in that place, I was a little sad to see it under construction.

I see in your presentation to us that you do have key-decision timelines. I think that accountability and the finance are really important. I think of the people in my riding, who think they're getting a big renovation if they spent \$100,000; that's a big deal to them. This is a significantly bigger renovation.

I'm wondering if you could speak to some of the decisions, for example, the House of Commons chamber. That's a pretty significant one. We know that the population of Canada is growing. As a result, eventually our Parliament will grow as a reflection of that.

How does that process unfold and how are these decisions made? Looking at it comparably to the financial ramifications, can you talk a little about the process and timeline?

Mr. Rob Wright: I think you underline a really important decision point, of which there are many. The House of Commons chamber is critically important for a number of reasons. Maybe I can underline three.

One, for all of the projects we undertake within the parliamentary precinct, there is a tension between heritage and functionality, as well as elements such as accessibility and security. The goal is always to find the appropriate balance point. The House of Commons chamber is perhaps one of the highest heritage places in Canada. The stress point between heritage and functionality is quite extreme there. We have to make sure that, as we move forward to restore and modernize that space, it meets the needs of Parliament and that we work together to ensure that we try to respect the heritage space while trying to find that balance.

There are also significant cost impacts of the decisions at play, which would have a material impact on the overall budget of the Centre Block. We had a question earlier about the governance interplay between the House and the Senate, and I guess it's a question for the House as well. We have to factor in all of these inputs from various parts of Parliament to get to one integrated solution. It is a challenge point as part of these projects, and probably more of a challenge with regard to the Centre Block, because we're working with all of the parliamentary partners. Again, it is difficult to sit at a committee of the House of Commons when, in a couple of weeks, we'll be going to a committee of the Senate where we'll need to rationalize those perspectives. Once that rationalization starts to come, then I think we'll be able to come back with cost comparisons. It's difficult to do that before we've had all those conversations. The feedback would be definitive for us as part of moving down a pathway together.

● (1120)

Ms. Rachel Blaney: One of the things that I saw very clearly in the renovation of this building, when the members came and the House officers' staff came, was that there were some very specific challenges. In your presentation, you talked about consulting with MPs and staffers on how the space is used. Hopefully we won't have those same challenges. I'm just wondering if you could talk about what that process is going to look like and maybe talk about lessons learned from this renovation.

Mr. Michel Patrice (Deputy Clerk, Administration, House of Commons): Thank you.

As I said before, and it's on the record, personally, I feel that members were not consulted enough with respect to the West Block project. Obviously, that's why we're here before this committee. We have also engaged in discussion with the Board of Internal Economy and provided you a list of points on which we feel that parliamentarians need to be engaged. Obviously, Rob talked about the expansion, or not, of the chamber, taking into account the projected growth of MPs. These decisions can be made by only parliamentarians, not by the administration and not by public works. It's very important for us that you are properly engaged. Also, if you look at the list, sometimes it goes into a level of detail that may appear trivial but is very important because it's your workplace and you need to define the environment for the future.

I know that it's difficult sometimes to project 10 years ahead, but the intent here, as said in the presentation the last time, is to rehabilitate the Centre Block for a span of 100 years. I know it's a difficult exercise, but I think Rob mentioned the iterative process. We're going to have to engage in presenting options and scenarios. You're going to give your feedback, and then we'll come back, regarding the options, to say these are the costs, for example. At that time, when we have more defined requirements, those costs will be clearer. Then it's going to be clearer for you in terms of making choices going forward.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Brassard.

Mr. John Brassard: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Wright, and all of the people affiliated with the project who came in last week to give us a tour and have come back today to answer some of our questions.

Like Ms. Blaney, I kind of had mixed emotions in there the other day seeing this iconic symbol of our democracy reduced to a construction site. As we sat in there, the emotions were quite raw, but thank you for doing that.

Has the current minister been updated? Have you had meetings with her to talk about the long-term vision and some of the ideas you've presented to this committee?

• (1125)

Mr. Rob Wright: Absolutely., I can say that one of the first acts of our new minister was to visit the parliamentary precinct, the Centre Block in particular. The minister went on quite a significant tour of the facilities of the building, just as you did last week. There have been a number of briefings of Minister Anand and ministerial staff. I would say they are fully and deeply engaged, feel the importance of the file, and are committed to getting it right in partnership.

Mr. John Brassard: As we speak about partnership, Mr. Wright, you've said that the parliamentary partners are important to this whole process. In the exchange of ideas, there are going to be a lot of ideas from members of Parliament and members of the Senate on just what the functionality of this building should be like. Take the committee rooms for example. We've already heard that the Senate has talked about the potential of 10 televised committee rooms.

Will you feel comfortable, and at what point, challenging some of those elements that are going to come forward with some of these great ideas, by saying that you cannot do something functionality-wise, in practical terms? Are you going to be comfortable pushing back when you need to, Mr. Wright?

Mr. Rob Wright: I would mention two elements on that. We work on a daily basis with the administration of the House, the Senate, the Library and the Parliamentary Protective Service. I would say there's a really healthy back-and-forth, in which there is challenge function every single day.

We see it as our responsibility to provide that challenge function and to consider a facility, an iconic building such as the Centre Block, within the broader precinct. Does everything need to be in that location? How does it fit in the broader campus? What can be in the West Block? What can be in the East Block? That goes on daily.

It is then the job of the administration to bring advice to parliamentarians. Then there is a second-level discussion. We provide that challenge function on a daily basis with the administration. Then there's that conversation involving parliamentarians, which we're really fully engaging in now. I would say there's been an on-going challenge function beyond the last year and beyond that. That's a daily part of the exercise.

Mr. John Brassard: That's good to hear, because you are going to get lots of ideas. Many of them, for practical reasons, as you stated, are not going to be sustainable in terms of the overall campus or look at the building.

My last question relates to the lawn. As it stands right now, as we stood there, it almost looks like a third of the iconic Parliament Hill lawn is not going to be part of this new process. I realize there are a lot of moving parts here, and there are decisions to be made, but can Canadians be assured that a majority of that lawn, which has been used for so many historic purposes throughout the history of this country, will be maintained? I'm not talking about green grass being maintained, just the space or area being maintained going forward?

Mr. Rob Wright: Absolutely. In fact, we're talking about green grass being maintained, sir. The visitor welcome centre will be built

into the landscape—subterranean—much like phase one of the visitor welcome centre.

There are different options for the visitor welcome centre, but there are options put forward where, essentially, the vast majority of the lawn is retained and the visitor welcome centre is simply underneath the lawn. The entry point to the visitor welcome centre would be aligned with the Vaux wall, the traditional kind of stairway leading up from the great lawn to the Centre Block. It would just kind of be integrated into that.

There is an option, a larger visitor welcome centre, that would see an entry point, if there was a central entry point, projected a little further south. Even that would see the majority of the lawn retained.

• (1130)

Mr. John Brassard: Notwithstanding the historical value, I'm sure the Wednesday yoga attendees would appreciate that as well, Mr. Wright.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Wright.

That's the end of your time, Mr. Brassard.

Since we haven't had too much formal questioning in this committee yet, I'm just going to remind everybody what the process is. It seems like there have been some questioning looks.

The rounds go like this. The first round is for six minutes each, starting with the Conservatives, Liberals, Bloc Québécois, and then the New Democratic Party. The second round is five-minute questions, beginning with the Conservatives, the Liberal Party, then the Conservatives again, and then the Liberal Party. Then we carry into 2.5-minute questions, starting with the Bloc Québécois and then the NDP.

Right now we have started with the second five-minute round, and we will carry on with Ms. Duncan.

Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Ettobicoke North, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank the officials for coming not once but twice, and for what was a first-class tour. As people have talked about, Centre Block is an iconic heritage building. It is the heart of our democracy. It's not just a building. It is our past, and it is our future, and we all want to get it right.

I'm wondering if there are two things that could be tabled with the committee. The first is the projected costs of a 338-member Parliament versus a 450-member Parliament. What are the costs associated with this and with the resources that will be required?

I also believe there was a study done in 1996 about increasing the number of seats within the chamber to 400 or 400 plus.

Can those two things be tabled with the committee?

Mr. Rob Wright: I'll start with the second one first. We do have a lot of studies on how the chamber could be.... We could put in additional seating. Right now, we're in the the existing footprint, in the 420-some zone, of how many seats could be integrated there.

Hon. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Wright, sorry. If I could....

Thank you. You don't have to....

Mr. Rob Wright: Oh, sorry.

Hon. Kirsty Duncan: If you could just table those two if you don't mind....

I have a report here—and I'd like the committee to be aware—done on April 24, 1916. A joint parliamentary committee was struck to oversee the reconstruction, so I think it's important.

I, too, like Mr. Gerretsen, am concerned about the governance of the project. Picking up on my colleague Mr. Brassard's comments, I will ask this: Can you explain how the governance for key decisions relative to functional requirements is being taken, i.e., how are the decisions being prioritized and challenged to ensure a highest and best use?

Mr. Rob Wright: It's multi-layered. The governance is complex and the Canadian example is unique. In most countries, the legislative branch is fully responsible for the parliamentary buildings. Nation building, as you would know, went through cycles around the globe, and most countries went through a nation-building cycle in the mid to late 19th century, so parliamentary buildings are in the same condition as ours around the world. We've developed an international network in which there are about 17 countries involved, so we do have a fair amount of engagement there.

Countries are facing governance challenges as they move into these major initiatives. For example, the Palace of Westminster is developing a sponsor board and a delivery authority. The Austrian Parliament legislated a private company to undertake the work. In the United States there's the Architect of the Capitol, which is a fully set-up kind of office.

There are differences around the world, but I would say there's a division between the executive and the legislative branch, and then the two houses of Parliament are independent as well.

As we move through it, we have to work with each Parliament. Before a major initiative goes forward, we go to the Senate committee; we go to the Board of Internal Economy at the House of Commons, traditionally; then we would take that and go for government approvals at the cabinet and Treasury Board levels; and then we would implement that.

When we have an integrated project like the Centre Block and the visitor welcome centre, that becomes even more complex than the West Block or the Government Conference Centre.

• (1135)

Hon. Kirsty Duncan: Thanks, Mr Wright.

Could I just raise one last thing? I was going to talk about the lawn. I too am concerned that, when Pearson designed the building, it was as a complete work of art. How do we ensure that the decorative elements—the oak desks, the clerk's table—are preserved?

The Chair: That's all the time you have. Maybe the answer can be incorporated into Mr. Duncan's answer.

Perhaps—it depends on what your question is, Mr. Duncan.

Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC): Thank you very much.

Thank you for being here.

I take a bit of a different angle. I was a Hill staffer for nine years in Centre Block, so with the baseboard heating and the wires all over the place and the random sinks, it was definitely time to do some work on the building.

If I mention the phrase “the Holyrood Inquiry”, does anybody know what I mean by that? That is the report on what happened with the Scottish Parliament. Just as a quick background, that building was to be completed around 2001. It was several years late. In the original estimates, it was supposed to cost between \$17 million and \$70 million. It ended up being \$731 million.

It's riveting reading. It's 200 pages. I've been through most of it. Yes, I have no life. I acknowledge that, but I will say with that I do find a lot of similarities or concerns, respectfully, with the process. This is not so much a shot at you as it is at the overall governance going back to some of the questions that had been raised about the decision-making ability here and who exactly has that.

Yes, and the other aspect of it is deadlines. I will build on that a little bit.

That report goes through the whole management, cost increases, design changes and those types of things. Frankly, I get a little worried in saying this, respectfully. We're digging a hole on the front lawn but we don't know what's going to be in it, and we don't know how much it's going to cost.

To me, I think average Canadians who would be watching might be a bit concerned by that, so I'm just worried a little bit, and it's not so much about the tools you've been dealt, trying to see this project through, but about some of that governance.

I don't know if you have any comments on the Holyrood Inquiry, if there are lessons learned from that, but maybe I can give you a chance to comment on it.

Mr. Rob Wright: Sure. I would say there are a couple of elements. I'll deal first with the visitor welcome centre and the excavation work. The approach we're taking with that is essentially what I would call a "no regrets" approach. We've tendered it in a way so that it is scalable. The goal over the next several months would be to be able to make those decisions to align with the excavation. The excavation will take a significant amount of time. We've tendered that in a way that it'll align as well as possible with decision-making and that there will be no delays.

Decision-making, obviously, is critical. Resilient decision-making is fundamental, as is the agility of the decision-making. This level of engagement should hopefully get us to a point where there are no later changes. We get resilient decisions and that is really critical to these types of projects. Changes are what have a significant impact. The work we've done on the assessment program for de-risking unknowns and working through this engagement to ensure there is consensus around where we're going is a solid approach to ensuring that we're able to move forward. Over the past decade plus, in partnership with parliamentary partners, we have integrated a host of lessons learned and developed capacity and competencies to be able to complete this work, and have demonstrated a track record of being able to deliver these projects on time and on budget. We have, from a management perspective of the project, a fairly well-oiled machine to be able to implement this. It's really going through this engagement process to get to decisions that Parliament will be comfortable with today, in 10 years and 100 years from now.

• (1140)

Mr. Eric Duncan: Perhaps I can build on the engagement aspect of that. Again, respectfully, I think right now we're almost consulting about the consultation process with members of Parliament, for example, and what the forum is for our having a say. I tease my colleagues, though I'm one of them now, that you can ask 338 members of Parliament their opinion or ideas and you're going to get 500. How do you narrow that down in the decision-making process amongst ourselves? Is it just our committee? Is it the minister who has the final say? Is it PROC? Is that decided yet?

My second question is about working backwards or the reversing time frames. The goal is—and I wish you well—to be back in Centre Block in 10 years time, or whatever that time frame may be. If we're working backwards, what are the deadlines that you need a final answer from us on, whatever that consensus may be? I worry, as we spend all this time consulting and taking months to decide that, all of a sudden, we're now at a point where the one-year and two-year costs will be different. Can you work backwards? If we're going to keep on the time frames that you have right now, do you need a final answer from members on all these items by x date?

Mr. Michel Patrice: To the first part of your question, the past decisions made on the House of Commons' requirements were made by the Board of Internal Economy. For example, you talked about the planned digging of the hole. That was decided back in June. The board decided, at that time, to go for the middle option with the visitor welcome centre, in the understanding that it could be scaled up or down.

Mr. Eric Duncan: The three options.

Mr. Michel Patrice: Yes. That's the middle ground, with the understanding that, once requirements are defined, and so on.... Decision-making over the last few decades has been by the board, but, as I said before, sometimes not to the level of detail that I personally would feel satisfied with. But the board has been really engaged in the past. It's been over a year now that we've been in this building, but the board was really engaged in the transition, in the decision when to move from Centre Block to West Block, and also in the follow-up and all of the things that needed to be corrected.

The Chair: That's all the time we have, but I don't know if you really got to the question. Are there internal deadlines set for certain things?

Mr. Michel Patrice: Yes.

Mr. Rob Wright: The presentation we provided last week mapped out a number of key decision points—some larger, some smaller—and gave a notional timeline of when those decisions would support us in proceeding in a timely manner.

It is always a challenge with these projects. Projects don't always align with parliamentary cycles. We have to manage through that together. This project will see out several parliaments. There will be recesses throughout that we'll have to try our best to align with.

Certainly in the calendar that we mapped out in that presentation, we've had a number of decisions over the spring timeline that were kind of articulated from our perspective of aligning with and continuing with the project schedule.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you. I think we've provided a lot of leeway.

Mr. Turnbull.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): First of all, I just wanted to say that I was extremely impressed by the work done to date. I want to thank all of you for your work. Going on the tour was quite an eye-opener as to the sheer size and complexity of the project that is being undertaken. I want to commend you on all the attention to detail. I really appreciate it.

I have two areas that I want to ask about. One is cost control. There seems to be a lot of conversation about that. I also want to ask about process design.

I'll start with cost control. You've mentioned iterative design, and I think that on the tour you mentioned agile project management, which are two terms that I'm aware of and comfortable with. I'm not sure if everybody else is aware of those terms. Maybe you could describe how, from your experience, those are really effective methods for cost control.

• (1145)

Mr. Rob Wright: Thank you for the question, Madam Chair. I'll give a high level on that and then pass it over to my colleague, Ms. Garrett, who is responsible for the Centre Block program.

As far as establishing the cost and schedule go, we have a quite mature system within the precinct. The designers, as well as the constructors, develop costs and schedules. We have our own in-house experts. Then we have independent risk, cost and schedule experts and what I like to call "triangulation". When our internal expertise and what we have coming from the designers and constructors lines up with the independent expertise, we feel quite comfortable that we've brought that to ground. When one of those points is out of sync, we drive that to ground until we resolve it.

That has been a tried and true methodology that we've used in the past to be able to deliver these projects on schedule. I know that there are a number of detailed, very important strategies that are being employed in Centre Block program. I'll ask Ms. Garrett to add some detail.

Ms. Jennifer Garrett (Director General, Centre Block Program, Science and Parliamentary Infrastructure Branch, Department of Public Works and Government Services): Yes, of course.

Thank you for the question.

Before we launch into the more strategic aspects of what you might be referring to, rest assured that we have very strong controls in terms of contract management and financial management day to day in the project. We make sure that we're executing those contract activities, monitoring those costs and making sure that the work being delivered on site brings value for Canada.

I think where your question is really going is to the strategic aspect of cost. What I think is most interesting about the project is that, based on best practices in project management, we are executing what we call "integrated lean program delivery".

Two key aspects of this that I think are worth highlighting for this conversation are the physical integration of key stakeholders: from the parliamentary administration to the independent cost support and to our constructor and designer in one physical location. Beyond that, we have further broken down the barriers regardless of who you work for. For example, in the assessment program we talked about here last week, you worked together and you were co-located. We're trying to further break down those barriers and to collaborate and exchange information.

As it pertains to agile design and cost control, one of the aspects as we get your feedback and we start to understand the functional program and we start to lay down what those broad options are and then make decisions is that we're then going to design the budget. We will use target value design. We already have an approach for

how we're going to do that for key aspects of the design process. We will appropriate budgets that are associated with those key areas, ranging from heritage conservation to the chamber, as key examples.

We will work to make sure that we're aligning the design with those budget constraints and flagging when we feel that we are not achieving fundamental requirements that might affect our operations at the end of the day, or otherwise generating efficiencies out of those exercises and re-profiling them to other parts of the program where they might be more needed.

The Chair: You have 20 seconds.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Wow. I have one more question, then.

It sounds like to manage costs, one of the key things we need within that iterative process is input from MPs, as well as senators, of course. I'm just wondering what the process looks like for that consultation so far.

Mr. Michel Patrice: As I said, traditionally, the board has been making those decisions and holding those consultations. There's been broader consultation, as our team consulted previous PROC members individually for their input, but the appearance before this committee is also helpful for us. We're going to have a meeting at the board this Thursday, where we're going to discuss the going-forward governance decision-making.

• (1150)

The Chair: Thank you.

Monsieur Therrien, you have 2.5 minutes.

Mr. Alain Therrien: That's okay.

The Chair: Ms. Blaney.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I'm happy to take those 2.5 minutes if you want to pass them on.

One of the questions I have, per Ms. Duncan's earlier comments, is about how historic a lot of the work is in that space. What I'm curious about is the skill set needed in some cases to duplicate that craft work. How are you going to manage this? I'm assuming that in the other buildings you had to deal with this too, but in the Centre Block it's going to be required even more, I guess. How do you manage budgets as you're looking at these particular detailed craft works that are needed?

Mr. Rob Wright: Madam Chair, it's a really important question. The capacity challenge is fundamental to the success of these projects. The work that we've undertaken over the past decade-plus has really reaped benefits for this program. When we were at the very early stages of the West Block, for example, there really wasn't much of a local masonry industry left, and that's been revitalized through these projects.

We've worked with a range of universities and colleges. We worked with Algonquin College to put in place apprenticeship programs. We had the largest apprenticeship program in stone masonry in North America, and 30% participation of female trades in that area, which is again the largest in North America. Two of the carvers who worked on the West Block won international gold and silver medals. There's been a revival of these really important trades—the copper roofing industry and so on.

At the same time, we continue to innovate. We've done a lot of work with Carleton University, for example, on digitizing the facilities, the Centre Block first and foremost. That is enabling us to do robotically assisted fabrication that is working hand in glove with the trades people and the expert crafts people working on these projects. Several of the elements throughout this building and the Senate of Canada building were hand crafted first. Then there is robotically assisted fabrication through 3D modelling when we repair a grotesque or a gargoyle. That can be developed into a 3D image; then we can work to fabricate that using robotics and then have the crafts people put the final touches on it.

We've made a lot of progress, I would say, over the past decade, both from the capacity of working with what can be an industry with some capacity challenges, as well as innovating defined solutions that will work to ensure that we're able to achieve all of the objectives of this most important project in Canada.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Another challenge that I know of with some of these older buildings is the issue of accessibility, not just for folks who are working and coming to visit here but also for the members. As you're looking at the House of Commons, I'm wondering what sort of work you are doing to make sure that there's more accessibility for members who may be elected.

Mr. Rob Wright: Absolutely, it's a critical question.

Centre Block has a lot of accessibility challenges. When you look around, the public gallery is a prime example, and there are lots of other areas.

We faced those same challenges in this building as well as the former Government Conference Centre, which is now the Senate of Canada building, and we've been able to achieve significant improvements, in many cases exceeding the building codes from an accessibility perspective. We're continuing to push forward on accessibility.

We are working through those challenges of how to find the balance between the preservation of the heritage and improving the accessibility. Sometimes that requires some remodelling of the space. Sometimes that involves putting elevators in different places so you can get to an accessible entry point.

The gallery in the chamber is a perfect example of feeding an elevator to a point where there's accessibility. It avoids the stairs that

go down into the gallery, as one example. If we are to retain the House of Commons chamber, it will require some kind of remodelling of the gallery to make it fully accessible, but we are working through that and we have plans that enable the chamber to be fully accessible, the gallery to be accessible and all key areas of public interaction and that are core to parliamentary use.

• (1155)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Wright.

Since the committee is working so well together, I thought that rather than go back, since we've completed our formal rounds, that we have an informal round and people have been putting their names on the list. Each person would get five minutes to speak.

The list as we have it right now is Ms. Petitpas Taylor, Mr. Duncan, Mr. Brassard, then Mr. Gerretsen. If we have more time we will also take more—Mr. Turnbull.

Okay, Ms. Petitpas Taylor.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.): Thank you so much, Madam Chair.

I also want to thank the committee members for hosting us last week at Centre Block. We often say a picture is worth a thousand words, and being on site really provided us with a great opportunity to see the extent of this huge project we are taking on.

You may have already answered this question, so please excuse me if I've missed it. We certainly recognized when we moved into West Block—the building is beautiful, but it perhaps isn't optimal to meet all our needs. I'm wondering what the consultation was like with members of Parliament when doing the work for West Block. Again, I recognize that the Senate is not here, so this is just with members of Parliament, but I'm wondering what type of work was undertaken with the members of Parliament concerning the consultation process. How long did it take?

Mr. Michel Patrice: As I said, I don't think the consultation with members was sufficient in designing the accommodation of the West Block. It's a project that spanned seven years.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: To dig a bit more, it was not sufficient, but what did it look like?

Ms. Susan Kulba: Essentially there weren't a whole lot of individual consultations with members. The administration at the time was looking at the consultations that happened pre-2001. In 2001 established standards were approved at the board level, and those were the standards we were working with to get through the design of the West Block in the early years, and that then went up at a higher level for decision-making—not in the granularity, but through the Board of Internal Economy.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: If I understand correctly, the final decisions for this building rested with the Board of Internal Economy.

Ms. Susan Kulba: That's correct, but again not at a granular level. That was being delegated to the administration.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: I believe it may have been Mr. Duncan who asked an earlier question that I want to ask, if I can piggyback on that. Are there any decisions that need to be made by a certain timeline that would be detrimental to the budget if they are not made?

We've indicated that we have a 10-year timeline to get this project completed. I'm assuming there have to be some decisions that you're going to need to have some input on fairly quickly, and I'm just wondering what that time frame looks like.

• (1200)

Mr. Rob Wright: First and foremost, layered decision-making can occur. If we have all the decisions at one time, that's optimal. But first and foremost, I would say that the size of the chamber and the size of the visitor welcome centre are the two most critical decisions. We're now doing the deconstruction work, the asbestos abatement, and that can proceed without those decisions. We have an approach on that. The structural work in the building would really be the next layer of work. Having agreement on the size of the visitor welcome centre so that we can continue that excavation work and whether or not we will retain the House of Commons chamber or enlarge it are the two most critical decisions that it would be ideal to have made this spring so that we can proceed with the design and construction in parallel, in a layered approach.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Duncan.

Mr. Eric Duncan: Thank you.

Hello again. I have a couple of questions to go through.

Everything is returning to Centre Block once Centre Block re-opens, but is there any conversation or any options being presented about certain aspects staying in West Block? The reason I just throw this out there is that as I was sitting in the chamber of West Block, we were talking about enlarging Centre Block and the constraints that are there with the two floor lobbies. Just for context and as an example, I'm wondering if there's any conversation saying, look, if you keep the chamber where it is in West Block now, it could be expanded. Again, to me, that footprint in that back hallway and the lobbies could be more feasible than the constraints of Centre Block.

Is there any conversation on that, or is everything purely going back to Centre Block?

Mr. Michel Patrice: I will say that there's a conversation on leveraging the West Block facilities, in terms of the administration, for example, to maximize space for MPs at Centre Block. As for the one you're suggesting with regard to the chamber, I would suggest that's a discussion that the members—

Mr. Eric Duncan: Fair enough. I just wasn't sure if that was an option. I still struggle with our path to have these conversations or these ideas in that forum. But I'll get back to that.

In the redevelopment, block 2 concerns the relationship with the City of Ottawa. I'm wondering if in all of this you are in regular contact with the City of Ottawa, and I think right now the Sparks Street BIA, on the major redevelopment that's going on along there. I would just hate to see those conflict. Have you done presentations similar to this for the planning committee or the subcommittee on heritage at the City of Ottawa?

Mr. Rob Wright: Absolutely. We work hand in glove with the city, the NCC, the Sparks Street Mall Authority and the BIA. In fact, we worked in partnership with the City of Ottawa on the initial planning and consultation for the revitalization of Sparks Street. We gave a storefront for the consultation to occur and provided some funding to support that development. It is fully, fully integrated. They are quite supportive, I would say, of the direction in which we're proceeding.

Mr. Eric Duncan: I have a quick follow-up on that with regard to Wellington Street. Is there any conversation specifically with the City of Ottawa on the future of Wellington Street? We talk about Sparks for pedestrians, but I think one of the challenges is sometimes the precinct safety and security in terms of the future of Wellington Street, what it's used for, how it's used, and that type of thing.

Mr. Rob Wright: I would say there has been an ongoing conversation around Wellington for a long time. That's an ongoing conversation. I would say that the LRT and how transport works within the capital—

Mr. Eric Duncan: Let's not talk about the LRT.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rob Wright: The links between Gatineau and Ottawa have, to a certain extent, revitalized some of those conversations on how Wellington can be maximized in the future.

Mr. Eric Duncan: I appreciate that.

Going back to the Holyrood Inquiry, just as a sub-note to this, I read that the BBC had a very good relationship with the Scottish Parliament to document, through video, interviews and that type of thing, the work being done. I think about the historical perspective, or about Canadians being able to see the front lines that we got to see, which was very, very cool. I know there have been some tweets on that by members, and there was a lot of interest from the general public.

Is anything being done to consider opening it up—not public tours like we got, but video or any sort of relationship like that to document the work being done? I just think about the number of Canadians who watch HGTV, or whatever it may be. There might be an interest.

Mr. Rob Wright: I would say that this has been an ongoing conversation between ourselves and the parliamentary partners. It is a partnership. We're trying to look at what is the best approach for that, but I would agree that it's a good idea.

• (1205)

Mr. Eric Duncan: This is the last comment or question that I have. Where do we go from here? We've had a lot of comments about governance and some of the concerns we have had over this. When we talk about BOIE and some of their approvals, I question, respectfully, what our role as PROC is if BOIE has some of those approvals. Are we here for questions? Are we here as part of that MP consultation stage? Is it our work to go out to members?

I just wonder what the next steps are for us, having got the information, knowing and seeing some of these challenges of working between the BOIE, the House, the Senate, PROC, cabinet, Treasury Board and all of these approvals and angles. I don't have an answer—that's more of a rhetorical one for ourselves as a committee. Perhaps we could hear any comment you may have on suggestions, improvements or next steps of what goes on.

Mr. Michel Patrice: The next step, I would suggest, is the board meeting on Thursday, in terms of continuing the discussion.

Mr. Eric Duncan: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Brassard.

Mr. John Brassard: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We focused a lot over the last week or so on the physical aspects of the building in the reconstruction process, but I want to talk about the brains within the building. I'm certainly not talking about members of Parliament, and I include myself in that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. John Brassard: Mr. Aubé you aren't going to get off easy on this one regarding information technology. I can imagine, over the course of all these years, the absolute hornet's nest that exists within that building as to information technology. We've heard about the physical limitations of heating and ventilation.

Where do you see us going with information technology in the reconstruction process, compared with where we are right now?

Mr. Stéphan Aubé (Chief Information Officer, Digital Services and Real Property, House of Commons): The biggest challenge is planning for the proper infrastructure allowing us to have the proper connectivity when the time comes, because as you know, trying to plan 10 years ahead of time when we know that in our technology lifespan we live on a three-year basis means that we just can't plan 15 years ahead of time.

The goal, as Mr. Wright and Mrs. Garrett said, is to have technology team members integrated into the construction team. Our goal right now is to work closely with them to have the proper infras-

tructure everywhere in the facility, so that we can then talk about the systems and the solutions once we are in the design stage of the building, in order to provide the services.

That is another area on which we need consultation with members. As you know, if we're moving toward a chair layout in the chamber versus a desk layout, that certainly will change how we interact with you from a technology perspective in the chamber. It might be the case that we won't be able to supply you with a Surface tablet or a laptop. We'll need to find different ways to interact. It will be the same thing with voting.

There are different things that we're going to be looking at over the next year, but our focus right now is really on the technology infrastructure and making sure that it is everywhere in the facility so that we can have the proper security, proper connectivity and proper environmental control systems that you will require in this new facility, sir.

Mr. John Brassard: So, just as it's difficult to project the costs in the physical aspect of the building, given all the various options that exist, how do you possibly work on projecting the costs for what's required in 10 years and then what will be required in subsequent years as that technology changes? How is that even possible?

Mr. Stéphan Aubé: To Mr. Wright's point earlier, we've built a lot of buildings over the last five years. We've built the chamber, we've built many committee rooms, we've built many meeting rooms and we've built many offices. So, we have baselines right now that we've established over the years of how much a committee room costs, how much a chamber costs and some of the technology.

Our approach, sir, is to constantly revise these through the submissions processes of Public Works, and if there are any changes required, to raise and escalate those. But we certainly work closely with the project team to make sure that we use the baselines and the experience we've had through our different renovations, and then supply that as a baseline for budgets, and then look at how things evolve.

I must say, sir, that I have been in the field for about 30 years. The price of a PC hasn't changed a whole lot over the last 10 years. It's just the functionality that seems to evolve within that PC, but we didn't get a price rebate on all the new stuff they're offering.

I've seen pretty much the same thing with the audiovisual and broadcasting aspects over the last 10 years when we did chambers and committees. Our budgets have pretty much been similar, recognizing that technologies have changed a lot within them.

• (1210)

Mr. John Brassard: I also imagine that for the visitor experience, the technology within that has obviously evolved significantly. So, incorporating some of that, maybe give us an idea where your thinking is on that.

Mr. Stéphan Aubé: We're in the initial phases of the discussion with the library. I don't want to pass this along to Mr. Morin, but once the concept is aligned—and the library is already working with Carleton University and other universities, looking at virtual tours, physical tours, and at the audiovisual requirements—once we nail this down over the next year and have an agreement on what experience the members want for the visitor welcome centre, we'll be able to cost these out fairly easily. The costs of these facilities are very similar to those for building a committee room. We do have a very good understanding of what it costs to put the proper projection facilities and connectivity into these places.

Mr. John Brassard: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Gerretsen.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I have a couple of quick questions and a comment.

First of all, Mr. Wright, to your point about working with other colleges and universities, my understanding is that Algonquin College cancelled that historic masonry program back in the spring of 2018. Is that because there isn't work here? You talked about an industry that had been revived, but it seems as though Algonquin College was struggling to get people into the program.

Mr. Rob Wright: You're quite right. That program was cancelled. We had some conversations with Algonquin College at the time. I think it that was really around the financial considerations of running a college, rather than of the masonry industry.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Do you still have the people to do the work?

Mr. Rob Wright: I would say two things. One is that there's been a significant capacity built in the capital region through this work, and the second is that capacity remains a challenge. It is a challenge within this industry across the country. There are certain demographic realities within this industry that—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Just to clarify, it's not the masonry program that was cancelled; it was the historic masonry program.

This question is for you, Mr. Patrice, as you may be best for this. Who decides the room allocation? When this building was being built, who decided that the opposition whip's office was on the fourth floor, or is it the third party? Who decides that stuff? Who decides where those rooms are going to be located?

Mr. Michel Patrice: Unfortunately, for this building it was the administration. Room allocation is the whip's prerogative. That's for the future.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: You're saying for this building, it was done by administration.

Mr. Michel Patrice: Yes.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I'll preface this with a comment. I come from a municipality that takes great pride in its heritage. In our city hall in Kingston, you can't put a nail in the wall to hang a picture without approval from a curator. From that perception of heritage,

it's almost to the point where people don't want to have meetings in city hall anymore because of all of the heritage impacts and elements of that. It's easier to hold them somewhere else.

What I've always found remarkable about Centre Block, and what I've told people, is that it is just as much an opportunity for people to learn about Canadian heritage as it is a practical building that is utilized. Any given room can be a reception in the evening, and then the next morning it's a caucus room, and then later on it's a committee room. They're very practically used buildings. To the point that Mr. Duncan brought up about wires dangling everywhere, as much as that takes away from a bit of that historic element, it really provides the functionality of it.

That's what this building lacks. It's very functional. This building is top notch in terms of technology, but it misses the component of public engagement. When I was in Centre Block it always felt like a publicly open building, because as I walked through the hallways, I would see people walking along on a tour. This feels more like an office building. I understand the constraints that led to that; I'm not criticizing this building. But how do we ensure that when we develop and redo Centre Block, we keep those elements of the historic...telling Canada's story, welcoming visitors, welcoming Canadians, while at the same time providing for that level of functionality? Does it include—and I say this very cautiously—something, for example, like having more administration in this building, and utilizing that building more for parliamentary purposes?

• (1215)

Mr. Michel Patrice: That's certainly the vision for the Centre Block. As I said, leveraging this facility for the administration or other functionality, now that it's a utilized building, those committee rooms will remain, for example, and also other facilities that we may have across the street.

As you said, Centre Block is a heritage building. It's one of our most symbolic buildings in Canada, but it's also your workplace. It's where you meet your constituents and where you meet Canadians and so on. We need to recognize that.

It's always easy to look at the facility on site and say it should be better. I have those thoughts often enough. But at that time, they said this building was a temporary chamber, and it was designed with the view that it would become an office building. This means that for the period of time when it's an interim chamber, it won't look or feel like the Centre Block did. The inside of that building was essentially gutted. It had no historic heritage fabric because of a previous renovation.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Patrice.

Ms. Blaney, then Mr. Turnbull and then Ms. Duncan.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you for this third opportunity.

You're going through the building and doing the renovations and the upgrading that's so desperately needed, while looking at maintaining the important heritage, but I'm curious how security fits into this whole aspect. Perhaps you could talk a little about how you're manoeuvring some of the security issues and about the challenges we faced when we were in Centre Block and how, hopefully, they will be remedied.

Mr. Rob Wright: I'm going to talk at a high level to a certain extent.

First, there's a layered approach. Every building sits within a broader security perspective.

Over the past number of years, efforts have been made to create greater security around the movement of vehicles, for example. The vehicle screening facility and bollards have been implemented.

Phase one of the visitor welcome centre is all about ensuring that the public goes through proper security screening. Phase two of the visitor welcome centre will apply that to the Centre Block and the East Block as a critical security initiative.

Cameras are also integrated throughout the facilities, as well as controls on doors to ensure that those can all be managed and locked down as required. There are control points at all of the exterior doors in facilities such as the West Block.

Then we look at elements such as hardening the building as required, ballistic in some areas, as well as efforts at cybersecurity and speech security to ensure that if you are having a private conversation in a room, it is indeed a private conversation.

All those elements, which previously didn't exist in the Centre Block, will be applied as we move forward in its modernization.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I can imagine that it's very interesting and complex.

One of the things that there has been some discussion around is the visitor welcome centre area. Hopefully by building that up, it will also increase the ability and capacity for better security, as you mentioned.

However, I'm just wondering what other functions there are in the vision for this. I know there are three different sizes. The large size is everything you could imagine in terms of meeting rooms. I'm curious about how that's going to work. I know this is really boring, but if you've ever renovated anything, one of the biggest issues you have is storage and where you put things. I understand that part of that welcome centre, in the bigger vision, will include storage. But if that's not going to work out, what are you planning around storage?

• (1220)

Mr. Rob Wright: I'll address the three options at a very high level, before passing this to Ms. Garrett for some greater detail.

In the smaller option, first, security is there, plus back-of-House functionality. The medium-size one, on top of security, adds the library program and the visitor experience. Then the largest, on top of these two key objectives, adds some greater core parliamentary

space, larger committee rooms for the Senate, for example, as well as meeting space for the House of Commons.

I will ask Ms. Garrett to add some greater detail.

Ms. Jennifer Garrett: We basically have three different sizes of the visitor welcome centre. In fact, just to supplement—not duplicate, for the sake of time—we really are at an in-between stages in terms of the libraries program, if I could start there.

As to the small and the medium options, we're talking about the difference between a capability that just supports tours, or just putting back the capability that exists now. The medium one, though, provides for a curated or alternate experience for visitors coming to the Hill.

In the small and medium options, there are no committee rooms, as they pertain to the House of Commons. The committee room function is driven by Senate of Canada requirements, just to be very clear about that.

What we're also talking about—and for all options, it's consistent—is a safe, secure screening capability that is outside the footprint of the Centre Block building proper.

Finally, for all of them, focusing on the small and the medium options, we're talking about making sure that we have one integrated parliamentary campus and that buildings such as the West Block, the Centre Block and the East Block, regardless of where parliamentarians are in the parliamentary complex, are connected and can work in a cohesive manner or are functioning physically throughout that building complex. It becomes essentially one connected facility.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Garrett.

Mr. Turnbull.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Thanks. I want to go back and follow up, because I felt that I got cut off last time. Thanks for giving me a bit more time.

It sounded as though there are crucial decisions with impacts upon costs, timelines, configurations, space allocation and project management, for sure. I think you mentioned those in your briefing. The visitor welcome centre, the chamber, the gallery, the lobbies all have key decisions needing to be made. They would have a pretty big impact on the overall parameters of this project.

Size and scope, I think, are going to shift dramatically, depending, as you said, upon whether there are structural changes—that the chamber needs to be expanded, or something. That's a big decision that is going to impact upon everything else.

I guess I'm going back to what methods of engagement should be used and included in a process such as this to help make some of the key decisions. They really are key, to speak to the point made by my colleague from the Conservative Party, who was concerned about costs and cost overruns. Ensuring that we have a good process for engaging MPs in helping to make some of those decisions is probably going to help manage costs and expectations.

My really clear question, after this long preamble, is: what are the methods of engagement that should be used, and how often should MPs be given input, in an ideal scenario?

Mr. Michel Patrice: It's a bit unknown at this stage, as I said, because the discussion will be pursued with the Board of Internal Economy this Thursday. Obviously, in making those decisions and, may I say, the authoritative process for making them among the various options, I'm going to say that it will require quite some involvement by members, whatever it is going to be...

• (1225)

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Should it be continuous? Should it be up front? Should it be at key pivotal moments throughout the process?

Mr. Michel Patrice: I think it will be a continuous engagement with those who are tasked with the responsibility of making those decisions.

For example, in the past parliament, for the visitor welcome centre there was a working group established by the Board of Internal Economy. Just on that question—it's a significant one—and the recommendation that came forth, the group met for over six hours in three different meetings on decorative questions and so on, and a briefing, and coming back with options, projected costs and things of that nature.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Did that working group work well to help make some of the decisions at the time?

Mr. Michel Patrice: From my point of view, it did work well, but that was in the past.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Okay.

Do I still have time?

The Chair: You have two minutes.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: I'll ask another one of the questions I had; it goes back to energy efficiency.

I'm interested in hearing more about any innovations. Clearly this is a topic that we all believe in today. We're looking at energy efficiency in homes, at energy efficiencies anywhere we can achieve them, and looking at renewable energy and clean tech. I'm interested to know whether any of those new technologies or advancements or innovations are being incorporated into the design concept.

Mr. Rob Wright: Absolutely.

With all of the projects that we've completed, sustainability has been a critical objective. From the baseline of 2005, we've reduced GHG emissions by 56% to 2018. That's a little ahead of our target. I think the target for that timeline was 40% by a decade ahead of that target and further.

With each project we have implemented a number of initiatives from a sustainability perspective. Right now we're undergoing research with the NRC and Concordia University, specifically on the thermal performance of heritage buildings and how to improve their performance from an energy conservation perspective. Of course, with everything there will be water conservation. For the first time really, the Centre Block will be hooked up to modern heating and cooling, with modern facilities driving all of that, which will drive down the energy consumption significantly. There will be LED lighting, and on and on.

Within, for example, the Sir John A. Macdonald Building and the chamber here, we use the recycling of air. In the summer we're able to vent the hot air. In the winter we're able to recycle large volumes from the upper portions back down to ground level.

It is a priority, and I'll ask Ms. Garrett to give a couple of more details on the Centre Block in particular.

Ms. Jennifer Garrett: Certainly.

I think one of the context pieces for this actual particular rehabilitation program is that the courtyards that are contained in the Centre Block are really exterior walls, so for a building of its size, which is already very large, you have a significantly higher percentage of exterior exposure. Right now we are pursuing a design solution that will actually close those courtyards, effectively making those exterior walls into interior walls. This will bring us significant gains along the sustainability spectrum as well as provide optionality in terms physical use of the space. It's a win-win situation in terms of that.

We have baselined the building and we're working very hard to be a flagship for sustainability and understand where we can push the envelopes as the design progresses forward. We're not there yet in terms of understanding exactly what technology we're going to be putting into the building and how that will relate to the broader campus, which also has a sustainability objective.

• (1230)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Garrett.

Ms. Duncan.

Hon. Kirsty Duncan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Before I start, could I just thank our colleagues who have come here, the officials?

Would you like a minute to just go "sigh", because this is exhausting? Would you just like a minute to breathe?

Mr. Michel Patrice: We enjoy the discussion. We are learning a lot.

The Chair: If I may say, this is the last member, so after five minutes of questioning, I think at that point we will be able to adjourn this part of the meeting.

Hon. Kirsty Duncan: I'm just going to come back to that 1996 study. I know you're going to table that with the committee. Without enlarging the chamber, how many seats did that 1996 committee study offer?

Mr. Rob Wright: I can't speak specifically to the 1996.... I don't have it with me. I can say that in the studies that we've been undertaking—which would have leveraged that, I'm quite sure—it still bumps around by a few, but 429 is the maximum that we've been able to fit into the space. It would be somewhere in the 420 zone that we would be able to fit, as for members in the chamber.

Hon. Kirsty Duncan: Thank you, Mr. Wright.

I'm going to come back to you. I am very worried about the governance issues. I mentioned that there was a joint committee in 1916 to bring both the House and the chamber together to oversee the construction, and I think we need to do some work around that.

We've all asked questions about governance, but I think it's important to see what that governance structure is. I'm wondering if you could table with the committee a diagram to that effect, and also, perhaps, how the decisions are being prioritized and challenged to ensure the highest and best use.

I'm going to come back to the visitor centre. I think when you come to Parliament Hill, when you see that great expanse and you see that beautiful building, there's a sense of awe as you walk up to it. Then when you go in the entrance, it's the rotunda, and you look around the rotunda and it's the signs and symbols of Canada.

It reminds us parliamentarians where we come from, more importantly, who we serve. How do we ensure that the cultural heritage and the story of Canada are not lost?

Mr. Rob Wright: Thank you for that very important question. When it was built, the Centre Block, if you may know, was essentially very much a blank canvas, and the story of Canada has been filled in over the past century. There still are spaces for the story of Canada to continue being told in the Centre Block, and that will be a key component of the project. We'll be working with the House of Commons, the curator, the dominion sculptor and others to develop an appropriate strategy to ensure that it tells of both our past and where we're going as well.

Hon. Kirsty Duncan: Thank you, Mr. Wright.

The last thing I'm going to come back to is that this is not just a building: It is the past of Canada; it is our future. When we think of what Mr. Pearson designed, we think of that wonderful chamber where we turn the pages to remember those who gave their life in the service of this country. The stonework there was brought from Europe. When that building was built, it was the only place that people could come to to honour the fallen. I want to know how we are going to protect that space.

Ms. Susan Kulba: We are very conscious of the heritage value of the Centre Block. It holds the highest designation. It's a classified heritage building. We work hand in hand with FHBRO, the federal heritage review board that advises us on how to treat the heritage elements in our classified buildings. We consult with them; we take advice from them. They're an advisory board. And we have experts, whether they be on our own staff, or the consultants that Public Works has engaged, who have spent their careers working on heritage facilities. We're very conscious of the heritage value. We understand the value that certainly is embodied in the design of the Centre Block. Our hope and aspiration is to preserve that and actually to add a new layer, with the visitor welcome centre, of cur-

rent cultural heritage that will be as respected 100 years from now as the Centre Block is by us today.

● (1235)

The Chair: Okay, I guess the rounds of questioning have come to an end.

I want to thank everyone from the House of Commons, from the Library of Parliament, from Public Works for being here today. All of you did your very best to answer our questions, and I know some of them were tough. Our wonderful clerk is also going to give you access to the blues and all of the information you might need to provide some of the requests that were asked for here today. Perhaps you might just have, even if they weren't formal requests, some more information to provide as a follow-up to some of the questions that we may not have gotten complete answers to today.

Other than that, I'd like to call this portion of the meeting to an end and suspend for about five minutes before we move into committee business. Is that okay with everyone?

An hon. member: That sounds good.

The Chair: Okay.

Thank you to the witnesses.

● (1235)

(Pause)

● (1245)

The Chair: I'm going to call this meeting back to order.

A couple of things have been brought to our notice.

The first is Mr. Richards's motion, and I believe Ms. Blaney may also want to talk about her motion, but we'll move on to your motion first, Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards: I'll read the motion into the record. I think it and the reasons for it are fairly self-explanatory. We don't need to spend a lot of time dwelling on it. It's typical and standard:

That the Committee invite the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and departmental officials, and the Chief Electoral Officer and Elections Canada officials, to appear on Supplementary Estimates (B), before the reporting deadline set out in Standing Order 81(5), and that these appearances be televised.

The Chair: Is there any debate?

Yes, Mr. Alghabra.

Hon. Omar Alghabra (Mississauga Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I don't have any opposition to the motion, but I want to raise the point about inviting Minister LeBlanc. I've just been informed that because of his health, he's probably not going to be able to appear until after the deadline mentioned in this motion. I just want the record to state that there's no objection by the minister to appearing before the committee, but that he may not be able to make it before the deadline stated in the motion.

The Chair: Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards: We had that conversation and I understood that. Obviously, everyone here is respectful of health challenges. He can govern himself as he needs to in relation to that for sure. We all understand.

The Chair: Okay. So in his place we could have his officials attend.

Mr. Blake Richards: His parliamentary secretary could possibly attend as well.

The Chair: Okay.

I was just made aware that there's a lot of competition sometimes for the crews televising the committee appearances, but we will try our best to make sure that this request is approved and the committee meeting is televised. However, if that is not possible, then is it okay if we are webcast? That's our default position anyway. I think it should be possible; it's just every now and then....

Mr. Blake Richards: I don't see why there would be any trouble with that. It should be doable.

The Chair: Apparently, the number of crews is the issue, not the room or the capability or technology.

I don't foresee that being a problem necessarily, but I've been informed that it has been at times, so it could be. I can inform you of that possibility if that does occur.

Mr. Blake Richards: Yes, we'll ask you to come back to the committee and let us know that and we can see how to address it.

The Chair: Is everyone in favour of this motion?

(Motion agreed to)

Just for everyone's information, this meeting may need to take place a little sooner than what we might be thinking because of the constituency week we have in March, so we'll be inviting them for either March 10 or March 12, just for your information.

I saw Ms. Blaney's hand was up.

Ms. Blaney.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Thank you so much.

As you all know, there is a motion on the floor that I would like to bring forward. I'm not sure if that requires an official motion, but I'm hoping that we can discuss the motion further today.

• (1250)

The Chair: Are you referring to your original motion, Ms. Blaney?

Ms. Rachel Blaney: Yes.

The Chair: Is everyone okay with discussing Ms. Blaney's motion?

Okay.

Would you like to start, Ms. Blaney?

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I want to thank everyone very much for how long this has taken.

We've been a bit busy in the last little while. To go back to the core motion, it addresses the issue of our having a minority Parli-

ment. There are four parties recognized in the House of Commons. It would be nice to have that reflected in all of our committees.

I had a member come to me to say that he was on an important committee and not in the position of a vice-chair. A letter was sent to the vice-chairs and the chair of the committee, and somebody noticed there was no representative in that role from the NDP. That letter was forwarded to him, and said to the effect that, "We're not sure what role you have on the committee, but here's the information we sent to the chair and the vice-chairs."

We really have to look at this by addressing the issue of making sure that when we're here at this table, all of our recognized parties are remembered. We need to ensure that those stakeholders who connect with our committees are recognized by all parties at the table. That's what I'm hoping to address today.

The Chair: Just as a reminder, technically, we are on Mr. Richard's amendment to this motion.

Mr. Gerretsen.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: To the amendment, Madam Chair, the issue that was flagged, and seems to make sense is that the way the amendment is currently proposed by Mr. Richards includes the condition relating to multiple vice-chairs and multiple double-dipping, if you will. This would lead to a scenario—in my opinion, and I believe it's the clerk's opinion, or yours too, Madam Chair—that if this were to pass and go back to the House, because one part of it is not enforceable, it would actually make the entire motion moot for the lack of a better expression.

I'm going to vote against the amendment put forward by Mr. Richards. Hopefully, if it does not pass, I would move an amendment that would effectively capture the same intent, and send the required component of this over to the body that would oversee how this is done.

The Chair: Any more discussion? Can we vote on Mr. Richards's amendment to Ms. Blaney's motion?

Mr. John Brassard: A recorded vote, please.

The Chair: Sure.

(Amendment negatived: nays 6; yeas 4 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

Mr. Gerretsen.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: With that, Madam Chair, I will put forward this amendment. I hope it captures the intent of amending the motion presented by Ms. Blaney, so that it would read, after the words "Standing Order 104", as follows:

and that the committee request that the Board of Internal Economy, under the powers granted to it under section 59 of the Parliament of Canada Act, enact a rule or order that the sessional allowance of a Member is reduced by the equivalent amount listed under section 62.1(h) and 62.3 of the Parliament of Canada Act when a Member occupies more than one position under these provisions of the Act so that a Member may only receive one vice-chair salary, regardless of how many vice-chair positions they hold

Just on that, Madam Chair, I won't speak on behalf of all Liberals at this table, but indeed will note that a lot of the discussion has focused on the idea of double-dipping. I seem to be in agreement with that concept, and I would like to make sure that the proper body with the jurisdiction to limit that ability is given the opportunity to do so. I believe this amendment as presented will provide the request to BOIE to make that amendment, while at the same time not making the entire motion moot as I previously suggested prior to voting on the previous amendment.

• (1255)

The Chair: Thank you.

Any there any other comments on this new motion?

Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards: I would like to move a subamendment. Mr. Gerretsen's amendment could be amended by just adding at its end the following:

provided that the amendment to Standing Order 106(2) shall not have effect until the said order under the Parliament of Canada Act has been implemented

Obviously, if we're going to ask the Board of Internal Economy to deal with this, we should make sure that everything is resolved there prior to something taking effect. That's the idea here, just to make sure that it all lines up properly and that the decision is properly made prior to its taking effect.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Gerretsen.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Although I appreciate where this is going, I'm cautious about it because I don't know how long it will take. To Ms. Blaney's point about getting the vice-chairs in position so they can be receiving the information, as she described in the example she set out, this could just add a delay to it.

I would also say that there is lots of representation on BOIE. For example, the opposition whip and the opposition House leader both sit on BOIE. There is an opportunity. I believe they are meeting very soon, as we heard in the presentation. I think there is an opportunity to push this along, especially from the Conservative position that has really spearheaded this angle of it. My inclination would be to vote against the subamendment unless I hear great reason to do otherwise.

The Chair: Can I ask you a question, Mr. Gerretsen?

What would happen to the issue of the salaries in that interim period if it were to go into effect but BOIE hasn't made specific...?

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I think that's a better question for you, Madam Chair.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Yes, it might be. It's not something that you have thought about?

Okay.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: I don't know.

My interpretation of what Mr. Richards is trying to accomplish—and you can correct me if I'm wrong—is that the positions are not appointed until BOIE makes that decision and changes the rules

with respect to the payment. I understand that BOIE works primarily by consensus. I would assume that the Conservatives who are on that board, the House leader and the whip, will bring this up right away at the first BOIE meeting to say that we need to take care of this because this matters to us. Let's do this right away, and rightfully so, because I think the issue should be addressed. All I was saying was that I think the vehicle is there to drive this faster if the House leader and the whip on the Conservative side choose to do so in their participation on BOIE.

The Chair: Okay.

Thank you, Mr. Gerretsen.

Ms. Blaney.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: This is such a long process, and I really appreciate everybody's patience as we look at the framework as we're addressing this type of minority Parliament.

I have to say that for me this is timely. It's going to take time for this to go through the next step of coming to the House. I will be pushing, of course, everyone to address this. I do think we are already sending it to the Board of Internal Economy. I think they can fix this quickly. The real issue for many of my members is just being acknowledged. So I will not be supporting the subamendment. I will be pushing my House leader hard to make sure that this is addressed as quickly as possible through the appropriate channels.

• (1300)

The Chair: Thank you.

Monsieur Therrien.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Therrien: I abstained earlier because I was in a conflict of interest. I have already explained my situation to you. Now, I think I am no longer in a conflict of interest since I do not have two vice-chair positions. However, something concerns me. I am a new member of Parliament so I do not know how it used to be done, but with respect to the potential third vice-chair from the NDP and our second vice-chair, there were debates in some committees that made everyone uncomfortable. We thought there would be a third vice-chair eventually, but we're still waiting.

Personally, I find the situation of the Bloc québécois and, consequently, that of the NDP, to be less than ideal. I am obliged to speak with the various leaders to tell them that this should be done in the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, but this puts us in somewhat unpleasant situations. When I see the timeline being stretched, I find that it creates discomfort among the people who have to sit on these committees. That is my opinion.

[*English*]

The Chair: Are there any other comments?

We will move to the vote on Mr. Richards' subamendment. Would you like a recorded vote for this one? Yes, I thought so, especially for this.

(Subamendment negatived: yeas 7; yeas 4)

Now we will move to the Liberal amendment. All in favour?

Mr. John Brassard: A recorded vote.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 7; yeas 4)

The Chair: Is there any debate on the original motion as amended by the Liberal amendment?

Yes, Mr. Brassard.

Mr. John Brassard: I have a couple of quick points, Madam Chair.

We've been dealing with this now for the better part of a month—since this committee has been constituted—and I still have not been able to reconcile the fact that here we are, as members of Parliament, effectively voting ourselves an increase when that is not the normal practice.

There are many Canadians across this country who would love to be able to say to their employer, or to themselves as an employer, "I'm going to give myself a \$6,200 or \$6,300 raise." As members of Parliament we take it externally. There have been several examples, and Mr. Duncan and Mr. Gerretsen spoke about this. Certainly, when I was on Barrie city council we never made the decision on what kind of increase we were going to have. We made the decision on whether we were going to get the increase as recommended by an external body of community-minded people who came together and made recommendations.

We're effectively changing the standing orders on the fly, which is against the normal course of action around this place. The constitution of this place has been such that there's been consensus. I fundamentally disagree with the fact that members of Parliament are giving themselves a raise. There is no need for a third vice-chair at these committees. That hasn't been the normal course of practice around here. Frankly, I'm embarrassed that we're doing this.

I think most Canadians would have trouble reconciling what's happening within this committee. Certainly, there are people all over this country who are finding it awfully difficult to make ends meet. We know the statistics; they've been repeated several times in terms of where Canadians are at on their monthly obligations, and their inability to afford that. They would love to give themselves a \$6,200 or \$6,300 raise, but they don't have that luxury. For members of Parliament to do that, quite frankly, embarrasses me.

Thank you.

• (1305)

The Chair: Mr. Gerretsen.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Very quickly, Madam Chair, I want to point out for the record that we're not in any way able to give ourselves a raise, as Mr. Brassard is suggesting. We could not unilaterally say we are going to give somebody a raise of x dollars. What we're doing is assigning another person a position, for the reason that was very well put out by Ms. Blaney a few minutes ago, which

is that one party is not getting access to information as a result of not having a vice-chair position.

We've taken a further step beyond that, Madam Chair, to ask BOIE, which is responsible for establishing and setting those supplementary payments, to look at making sure that scenarios don't exist where people would be double dipping per se. I just thought it was important to put on the record that we do not have the ability to give ourselves a raise—or to give anybody a raise, for that matter. That's not what's happening here. We're assigning a position to individuals.

The Chair: Okay.

Is everyone prepared to vote on the motion as amended? We'll have a recorded vote.

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 7; yeas 4 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

Ms. Blaney.

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I just want to take a quick moment of everyone's time to let you know that I will be putting a motion on notice. I'm going to read it into the record today. I'll preface it by saying that this conversation has been really insightful for me. Again, I will just say that for this Parliament, I think it's really important we have the vice-chairs in those roles. It lets people know who's representing the parties, and I believe that's important.

This is the motion:

That in relation to the proposed change to the Standing Orders to add an additional Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 43rd Parliament, the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs undertake a study on the issue of additional allowances for all vice-chairs under the Parliament of Canada Act and that the Committee make recommendations and report its findings to the House.

I think it's important that PROC do its work on this issue. It's really important, and I want to thank all the members for this discussion. I will make sure to get this in to you as appropriate.

The Chair: Thank you for the notice, Ms. Blaney.

I want to bring to your attention that the next meeting is Thursday. We're meeting with the minister from 12 to one. We did have committee business slotted in from 11 to 12. Is it the desire of the committee, perhaps, to have the steering committee meet at that time or to take committee business off the agenda since we don't have much going on in terms of that? We have the study.

Ms. Blaney, would you like to talk about the studies in the full committee or would you like the steering committee to take a look at those?

• (1310)

Ms. Rachel Blaney: I think that's at the will of the committee. Of course, I would be happy to come here in the whole committee or the subcommittee to discuss motions that we need to move forward.

I think it would be good for us to start planning the next steps for our committee, for sure.

Thank you.

The Chair: This is just a reminder, now that we have passed and adopted this motion, that I will be reporting it to the House and BOIE will be doing its work.

As for my earlier question, do you want the first hour of the next meeting to be a steering committee meeting or a meeting of the whole committee with all of its members to discuss further studies and other business?

A voice: Do it in the steering committee.

The Chair: That will be in the steering committee? Is that okay? All right, the steering committee will meet from 11 to 12 and we'll be with the minister from 12 to one.

Thank you so much. The meeting is adjourned.

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

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

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

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

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

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

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

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

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

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

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

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

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

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