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Chair: The Honourable Jim Carr



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• (1100)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Jim Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order.

Good morning, everybody. We're on time. That's the first victory.

The second victory in no particular order was the Winnipeg Blue Bombers' victory in the Grey Cup. If the vice-chair and I have a bit of a spring in our step this morning, you will give us a little bit of slack. It was an incredibly exciting game, as it has been for more than 100 years, and we from Winnipeg are absolutely thrilled that we were able to emerge, so we're in a pretty good meeting space this morning coming off this victory.

I am very grateful to all of you for arriving on time. Punctuality, as my mentor once said, is the courtesy of kings and queens. We will start our meetings on time, and I hope we can more or less end them on time.

I will be very alert to allotments of time when we have witnesses. It is very important that we respect that rule. It just keeps everybody a little bit sharper, and it's the right way to run a meeting.

Welcome to meeting number two of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format pursuant to the House order of November 25, 2021. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely by using the Zoom application, as I am. The proceedings will be made available via the House of Commons website. So you are aware, the webcast will always show the person speaking, rather than the entirety of the committee.

Given the ongoing pandemic situation, and in light of the recommendations from health authorities as well as the directive of the Board of Internal Economy on October 19, 2021, and to remain healthy and safe, all those attending the meeting in person are to maintain two-metre physical distancing and must wear a non-medical mask when circulating in the room. It is highly recommended that the mask be worn at all times, including when seated. Everyone must maintain proper hand hygiene by using the provided hand sanitizer at the room entrance.

As the chair, I will be enforcing these measures for the duration of the meeting, and I thank members in advance for their co-operation.

To ensure an orderly meeting, I would like to outline a few rules to follow.

Members and witnesses participating virtually may speak in the official language of their choice. Interpretation services are available for this meeting. You have the choice, at the bottom of your screen, of either "floor", "English" or "French". If interpretation is lost, please inform me immediately, and we will ensure interpretation is properly restored before resuming the proceedings.

For members participating in person, proceed as you usually would when the whole committee is meeting in person in a committee room. Keep in mind the Board of Internal Economy's guidelines for mask use and health protocols.

Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. If you are on the video conference, please click on the microphone icon to unmute yourself. For those in the room, your microphone will be controlled as normal by the proceedings and verification officer. When speaking, please speak slowly and clearly. When you are not speaking, your mike should be on mute.

I will give a reminder that all comments by members should be addressed through the chair, and with regard to a speaking list, the committee clerk and I will do the best we can to maintain a consolidated order of speaking for all members, whether they are participating virtually or in person.

Moving to committee business, pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), the committee is meeting today to consider a request received by the clerk and submitted by four members of the committee to discuss the mandate given by the House and the urgency for the committee to organize its proceedings and invite the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other witnesses to appear.

Members have all received the letter.

I will now open the floor to debate.

• (1105)

Who would like to speak first?

I don't see a hand up.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Wassim Bouanani): Madame Michaud raised her hand, sir.

The Chair: Madame Michaud, the floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I thank the members of the committee who, pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), signed the letter stating that today we will plan how we want to receive our witnesses after the holiday season. We have drafted a motion to discuss this today.

Mr. Chair, would you like me to read the motion again so that we can actually debate the specific things that are in it?

[*English*]

The Chair: It's never a bad idea for members to have reinforcement. It's from the mover, in this case. Why don't you proceed with that?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Perfect. I'll try to read it slowly. I think our interpretation is working well.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank the interpreters.

The motion is the following:

That, in addition to the meeting already scheduled by the Standing Committee on Public Safety on December 15, 2021, to hear from the Minister of Public Safety and from departmental officials, the committee:

(a) hold, by December 17, 2021, at least one (1) additional meeting to hear from Royal Canadian Mounted Police officials for a duration of three (3) hours;

(b) plan, prior to the holiday break, to invite representatives from the Border Services Agency and union representatives of the agency's employees to appear for a period of three (3) hours and that this meeting be held no later than February 4, 2022;

(c) plan additional meetings to hear from witnesses based on suggestions from the various parties on the committee, with the understanding that they will provide their suggestions to the clerk of the committee no later than Friday, January 14, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.; and

(d) report its findings and recommendations to the House no later than February 25, 2022.

I would add that this seems to be a fairly short time frame to report back to the House. However, because this issue was put on the table in the context of an emergency, particularly because of the shootings in Montreal and other major Canadian cities, it is an urgent issue that we must address now. That is why we have a fairly short deadline to report back to the House and make specific recommendations to the government on this subject.

I will be very pleased to hear from my colleagues on this matter.

Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Clerk, I am not seeing hands up on my screen right now, but I'm positive there are some. If you can see which hands are up, I would ask you to call on them, please.

• (1110)

The Clerk: Yes, sir.

Ms. Damoff is next.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Thank you, Chair, and thank you, through you to the clerk, for assisting with the technology here.

I want to thank the members of the committee for bringing this motion forward. Gun violence is an issue that is of great importance to our government and to me personally, having worked on this issue in previous renditions of this committee.

First of all, thank you, and thank you, Madame Michaud, for your leadership in seeing this come to the committee.

I have a number of amendments that I would like to make to the motion, all of which are to make the study more efficient. I have the changed motion in both official languages. I only have tracked changes in English, so I can't distribute that, but I can go through that for you. If I could speak to them generally, I'll then go through each one at a time, if that's okay.

The Chair: That's fine.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Because (a) and (b) go together, the first change would be to delete (a). The rationale for that is because having the RCMP and the CBSA appear at the same committee meeting, by February 4, would be more efficient and more productive for the committee. When the RCMP says "That's not us; it's the CBSA", or when the CBSA says "That's not us; it's the RCMP", both agencies are before the committee at the same time to respond.

The first amendment I have is to delete (a).

Will I have the floor to go through all of these amendments? I have four of them.

The Chair: Yes, I think that might be the most efficient way of doing it.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Okay.

The Chair: Mr. Clerk, do you have a view on that? Do you want to do them one by one?

The Clerk: Yes, let's do one amendment at a time.

The Chair: Okay. I'll pause after hearing the substance of the first amendment and ask other members of the committee for comment.

Again, I cannot see hands up, so Mr. Clerk, I'll ask you to advise me.

If there are no hands up to comment on the first amendment, would we then proceed to a vote on the first amendment?

The Clerk: Madame Michaud just raised her hand.

The Chair: Madame Michaud, the floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

There is also the Canada Border Services Agency employees' union.

With one meeting with the RCMP and CBSA, will we have enough time to meet with the union representatives?

In fact, I think that what the border services officers have to say is just as important as what the agency representatives have to say. Could this all take place in one meeting?

It's mostly a matter of logistics.

[English]

The Chair: Go ahead, Madam Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: The change that I made already includes the CBSA union. Do you want to include the RCMP union as well?

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: No, I don't particularly want to. In fact, it's just to make sure that the union will be there along with the Canada Border Services Agency representatives.

I understand you want to add the RCMP to the same meeting. Is that correct?

[English]

Ms. Pam Damoff: I did not remove the CBSA union from your motion.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: The union will be there? Okay.

[English]

Ms. Pam Damoff: As I said, I tried to honour the spirit of the motion as best I could. The only change I will be proposing next is that the RCMP be added with the CBSA and the union representatives.

The Chair: Okay. Are there other comments about the first amendment?

The Clerk: Ms. Dancho would like to speak, sir.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm wondering, Ms. Damoff, if we have the track changes. I'm not sure. I'm not clear if—

Ms. Pam Damoff: I have them in English but not in French.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Okay. I don't think we have either. I'm not seeing where the changes are made in here, unless I'm not looking at the right document.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Can I distribute the English?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Do you have an extra document?

• (1115)

The Chair: Has the staff distributed these track changes to members?

The Clerk: The document that was provided by Ms. Damoff was distributed. It did not contain the track changes, as far as I understand.

Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: On a point of order, go ahead, Mr. McKinnon.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: If Ms. Damoff were to read the amendment, it might be helpful.

The Chair: That's fine, but as a matter of good practice moving forward, when there are amendments in front of the committee, track changes should be printed and put in front of members of the committee. Can we note that? Since that's not the case now, the next best thing would be for Ms. Damoff to read the substance of the amendment.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Chair, I think I have it in both official languages, but it does not show up on my phone. How do I send it to the clerk? If you could give that to my staff, they could forward it to you. They're right here.

In the meantime, the first change I want is to delete clause (a) of the motion. We would be deleting the line that says:

(a) hold, by December 17, 2021, at least one (1) additional meeting to hear from Royal Canadian Mounted Police officials for a duration of three (3) hours;

That clause would be deleted, and that's what we're voting on now. The reason for doing it is that I propose adding the RCMP to clause (b).

The Chair: Is that clear to all members of the committee? Are there any other comments before I ask for a vote on that first amendment?

The Clerk: Sir, Ms. Dancho has raised her hand.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would just like to hear from our Bloc committee member's thoughts on this amendment. Is she supportive? Is this something that she feels will achieve the outcome she is desiring with her motion? I would appreciate her feedback.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

The Chair: Go ahead, Madame Michaud.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Dancho, for the opportunity.

I quite liked Ms. Damoff's point that it will be possible to delineate what is under the control of the RCMP and what is under the control of the Canada Border Services Agency. I think it's a good idea to have them in together. We just need to clarify that we are sure we have three hours for both organizations. I agree with that.

[English]

The Chair: Fair enough. Good.

Are there any other comments on the first proposed amendment?

Go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I'm just wondering how this would impact.... I know that we were talking about a Friday meeting with the RCMP. Is that in the works? If this is passed, will we not be able to see the RCMP on Friday?

The Chair: You mean Thursday.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I think Thursday we were supposed to meet with the minister, and I think we were in discussions for a potential meeting on Friday. We were hoping to hear about that today.

The Chair: It's the first I've heard of a possible Friday meeting. At the will of the committee, we can discuss that.

Clerk, are you aware of the possibility of a Friday meeting?

The Clerk: I have not received any direction, sir.

The Chair: Okay.

Well, let's deal with the issues one at a time here. I gather that the wording of the House, which asks the committee to meet with the CBSA and the RCMP for three hours at its convenience, gives the committee some discretion on how many meetings it might take to reach those three hours. Looking at the issues sequentially, the first order of business is to deal with Standing Order 106(4) and the amendments that arise from this discussion. We're involved in discussing the first amendment now.

Are there any other comments about the first amendment? Okay.

Clerk, how do you want to proceed with the vote?

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

• (1120)

The Chair: I can't see whose hand is up. Who has the point of order?

Mr. Dane Lloyd: It's Dane Lloyd, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I've listened intently to the amendments twice, but I learn by reading, and I still haven't seen a copy of the amendment. I am still a bit confused about what the amendment is. It's a Standing Order practice of the committee that the chair has to submit the amendment to the committee before it can be voted upon. I still haven't seen a copy of it. I've listened twice, but I'm still not 100% sure what this amendment is really proposing.

I would hope that any future amendments that the member will be proposing today would also be distributed so that we can avoid going through this confusion again.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Yes. I accept your point. I agree that members of the committee should have a printed copy of the amendments as proposed.

What's necessary, Mr. Clerk, to make that happen?

The Clerk: I think maybe Ms. Damoff has an answer to that question, sir. She has raised her hand.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: The members do have a copy of the revised motion in French and English, but it's without the track changes. They do have a copy of the revised motion in both official languages in front of them. They do have everything there. It is always nice to have track changes, but it's not required.

As I said, Chair, I do have it in English, and I'm endeavouring to get it in French with track changes, but the members do have the amended motion in front of them.

The Chair: Do the members have an amended motion in front of them?

That's "yes". Unless I hear from any member of the committee who does not have the amended motion in both official languages in front of them, I will assume that it is in front of members and that we can then proceed.

Is that okay with everybody? Okay.

Clerk, I see an empty chair there—maybe that's because you are running around distributing pieces of paper—but we have had a discussion of Ms. Damoff's first amendment, and I'm now prepared to call for a vote....

I see another hand up.

Go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Further to my last comment, I'll just clarify. In the original motion, paragraph (a) says the following from Ms. Michaud: "hold, by December 17, 2021"—which is this Friday—"at least one (1) additional meeting to hear from Royal Canadian Mounted Police officials for a duration of three (3) hours".

In my previous comment, what I was asking about is that Ms. Damoff's motion takes out the requirement to have the meeting by December 17, this Friday, and then adds the CBSA, so we have to have the CBSA and RCMP together before February 4, whereas Ms. Michaud's original motion said we'd have to have the RCMP by this December 17, Friday.

I want the committee to be clear that the amendment will in essence ensure that we will not see the RCMP before we rise for break, and I just want to make sure that this was the aim of Ms. Michaud in her motion.

The Chair: I think we heard from Madame Michaud. We'll hear from her again, if she has more to add, and also from Ms. Damoff.

Go ahead, Madame Michaud.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I'd just like a small clarification.

The document that has been distributed to us is Ms. Damoff's amended motion, correct?

[*English*]

The Chair: That's correct.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I see that the length of the testimony would be changed, so I wonder if that is in the amendment that is being proposed now or if it is a new amendment that will be proposed later. It's okay if the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are delayed, but I just want to make sure that we get them for three hours, as planned, as well as the Canada Border Services Agency and the union. I just want to make sure that the first amendment we are debating does not refer to hours. Then I would have no problem with it.

[*English*]

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Chair, I was putting it in the time of our committee meetings, which is two hours; however, if the member feels strongly about three hours, I won't move that part of the amendment.

In essence, right now we're only discussing (a), but assuming that the clerk can do three hours and that the committee can do three hours at a time, I won't move that portion of (b) when we get to that.

• (1125)

The Chair: I see that Mr. Van Popta has his hand up to add to the discussion.

Go ahead. The floor is yours.

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Thank you.

Part of my question has been answered already, but my concern is that the original motion from Ms. Michaud is for three hours for the RCMP and the subsequent meeting is for three hours with CBSA and union representatives. Now it's all being squeezed into one meeting of two hours. Maybe it becomes three hours, but still, there are three sets of witnesses in one meeting over two or three hours when it was going to be six hours originally.

Is my understanding correct of the amendment and of the original motion? Also, what does Ms. Michaud say about what is essentially a reduction in the time that's being allocated to a very important study?

The Chair: Go ahead, Madame Michaud.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Ms. Damoff might be in a better position to clarify this. My understanding was that while we would not receive the RCMP representatives before Christmas, we could receive them after Christmas for a three-hour period, as per the original motion.

[*English*]

The Chair: Go ahead, Madame Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: My intention was to have both agencies.

Chair, I think there are others who had their hands up before me, but if you want to recognize me, that's fine.

The Clerk: If I may, Mr. Chair, Mr. MacGregor raised his hand earlier.

The Chair: Mr. MacGregor, the floor is yours.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

I think we can find a compromise here. We do have to be mindful of the order from the House, which does, in part (d) of its motion, specify a period of three hours. I think there's a relatively easy fix whereby we take Ms. Damoff's amendment to this motion, make a quick change to the number of hours and go from two to three. Because of the constraints on where committees can meet and the House resources that we have, we may have to spread it over two meetings, but as long as we get the three hours so that we honour the House motion and what Ms. Michaud's intent is with her motion directing this committee's study, I would submit that we compromise and amend Ms. Damoff's amendment so that it reads three hours and includes the RCMP and CBSA.

I hope committee members will agree to that as a quick fix, and I'll leave it at that.

The Chair: Mr. McKinnon, your hand is up.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd certainly like to support Mr. MacGregor's comments. I just want to observe to the committee that we don't need to get overly litigious about the particular times and particular meetings. We have the scope to add and adjust as we go forward. The House motion does not require us to have these three-hour sessions with the minister and the RCMP in one fell swoop. They can be spread out over time. We can absolutely honour the intent of the House motion, but I would recommend that we don't get too bound up in particular dates and times at this time. We can adjust as we go forward so that we can get a full and robust study before us.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Van Popta, did you have your hand up?

Mr. Tako Van Popta: I think my question has been answered. I would support what Mr. MacGregor is saying, but I want to speak in favour of having two separate meetings if that's what is required. It's a very important study, and I think that we need to give it the time it requires.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Noormohamed, your hand is up. The floor is yours.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In respect of what Mr. MacGregor and Mr. McKinnon said, I think we may wish to take advantage of the fact that the House motion is not specific to having a three-hour block. Our ability to potentially have those conversations spread over one or two different sessions will allow us the time to consider what we have heard.

I would support what Mr. McKinnon is saying. I think it does allow the committee to do its work in perhaps a more extensive way.

The Chair: Ms. Damoff, you've heard the discussion around the detail of your first amendment. Are you supportive of what the consensus seems to be? Could you articulate that consensus...?

Oh, I have another hand up. Go ahead, Mr. Shipley.

• (1130)

Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Thank you very much.

I don't want to belabour this issue too much. I agree with what Mr. MacGregor is saying. I like the tone of it, especially since we're all heading into Christmas time and conciliatory efforts are great. Thank you, Mr. MacGregor.

By the same point, Mr. McKinnon, I think that sometimes the devil's in the details. I think that sometimes around this table we need to decide now what we're doing and when we're doing it, going forward. Sometimes it clears up a lot of confusion down the road. As much as I hate to sit here in the minutiae of it and waste time on planning meetings and times—because we really want to get into the study and make some resolution—I think today is the day we sit here and figure out exactly where we're going as a committee. Let's get it figured out.

I think Mr. MacGregor has us on the right track. Let's just get the details down and know where we're going as we move into the new year. That's my opinion on it.

Thank you.

The Chair: I think we've had a pretty robust discussion.

Ms. Damoff, I'll give you what might be the last word in this discussion before we go to a vote. You can summarize the consensus that I think is discernible around the table, and then we'll move.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thanks, Chair.

The vote we're doing right now is only on removing paragraph (a), but the second part is contingent on that. I'm in agreement that three hours is appropriate. When we get to paragraph (b), I will not move to change that to two hours.

The intent will be that the RCMP and the CBSA appear together at one meeting for three hours. For any of you who have been in these meetings, you know that three hours for those two agencies is more than ample time to deal with the issues that will be before us.

Right now we're only dealing with paragraph (a). The motion right now is to remove paragraph (a) from the motion in front of us.

The Chair: I believe that we have consensus. Clerk, how do you want to proceed with a vote on the first amendment?

The Clerk: We can have a recorded division, sir, unless there's unanimous consent.

The Chair: Do we have unanimous consent? Does anybody disagree with the proposed amendment?

Hearing none, I would say we have unanimous consent. Excellent. That's a great start, everybody.

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: Madam Damoff, let's go to the second amendment.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thanks, Chair.

In paragraph (b), the change would be to delete the words “plan, prior to the holiday break, to”, and then it would start with “invite representatives from the Canada Border Services Agency and union

representatives of the agency employees” and add the words “and the RCMP”. The rest is “to appear for a period of three hours and that this meeting be held no later than February 4, 2022”.

The two agencies who would have a great deal to say on this issue would appear before our committee prior to February 4, and the meeting would be for three hours.

I would propose that if the House administration does not have the capability to do a three-hour meeting during that week of February 4, we have the ability to have a two-hour and a one-hour meeting. Regardless of how the logistics work, it would be for three hours, as proposed by Madame Michaud.

The Chair: Would this honour the spirit of the resolution of the House?

Ms. Pam Damoff: That's correct.

The Chair: Let's open the floor to discussion of the second amendment.

Who would like to speak to it? I don't see any hands up. Clerk, do you?

The Clerk: No, sir—

I see Ms. Dancho, sir.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm sorry. I'm just not clear on it. The first motion that we moved was to combine.... It's paragraph (a) that I'm looking at here. Is that correct? Are we just changing it from two hours, as listed on your document, to three hours?

The Chair: Ms. Dancho, the floor is yours.

The Chair: The second amendment proposes three hours in a combined meeting with the CBSA and the RCMP.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I'm sorry. I thought that the first motion was to combine them.

The Chair: It just deleted paragraph (a) in the original motion.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I understand. We're doing this in two parts in paragraph (a) of the our document.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: I have a point of information.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: The numbering of these paragraphs in the two documents is different. What we're modifying, paragraph (b) of the original motion, shows up here on the amended version as paragraph (a). Perhaps there's a discrepancy there.

• (1135)

Ms. Raquel Dancho: The old version is (a) and (b); the new version is just (a). Okay.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Yes.

The Chair: We'll make sure that the alphabet's in the right order in both official languages.

Thank you.

What I'm hearing is consensus on the second amendment, which would mean we do not have to have a recorded vote, but let me pause and make sure that I've got that right.

Is there agreement that we proceed with the wording from Mrs. Damoff on the second amendment?

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

The Chair: Mrs. Damoff, you can go to the next amendment.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you, Chair. I'm a Ms., not a Mrs.

The Chair: Okay.

Ms. Pam Damoff: The next section relates to making this study more extensive. It would be a new clause to follow what is now paragraph (a) and was paragraph (b).

This one is all new. It would say, "Include in this study the following urgent issues in relation to firearms: (a) all the ways that firearms are illegally diverted, including domestic diversion." It's critical that when we're looking at how firearms are being used in crime, we look at all the ways firearms are finding their way into criminals' hands. That includes not only coming across the border, but also those that are sourced illegally domestically.

The second paragraph is that the study would include "the increase in femicides using a firearm and rise in gender-based violence where a firearm is involved". This is something that, sadly, has always been an occurrence, but since the pandemic began, the rise in femicide and gender-based violence in which a firearm is involved has increased dramatically. I read just last week the Ontario report on femicide, and the number of cases that involved a shooting was absolutely terrible. Over the last five years, 500 women per year were victimized with firearms.

The last item, (c), is "suicides, mental health and the role of firearms". We know that over 75% of people who died by firearms died by suicide. We know that mental health is also an indicator of issues that we are having with firearms, so adding these three to our study is really critical. It's imperative, actually, if we're going to be taking a look at firearms. Those are the three items that I would like to—

I'm sorry. There's a fourth one. I didn't turn my own page.

The fourth is "recognizing the involvement of gangs in firearms, the review of the programs that address the causes of youth gang involvement, programs that prevent recruitment, retention and diversion". Paragraph (d) is actually taken word for word from the motion that we passed in the last Parliament around gangs. We're certainly seeing an increase in gang crime. It's important that we deal with the gang aspect in relation to firearms, not just the firearms themselves. As I said, I took the wording for (d) directly from the study that we were hoping to complete in the last Parliament, but we never got time to finish it.

I'll leave it there, Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Damoff. That's a substantial piece of work.

I now open the floor to commentary. I see that Mr. McKinnon has his hand up.

Go ahead, the floor is yours.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think we have maybe another discrepancy in the documentation. Ms. Damoff is talking about subpoints (a), (b), (c), and (d) and so forth. In my document, they're small Roman numerals, (i) through (iv). I just want make sure that we're looking at the same thing.

Ms. Pam Damoff: We are. I'm sorry about that.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: When you say part (c) and part (d), you're meaning actually (iii) and (iv), correct?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Yes.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Very well.

That's it. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. That's an important distinction.

Go ahead, Madame Michaud.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

These are all very important issues. The only concern I have is that the motion was put forward with great urgency, as I mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, because there is a big problem with shootings in Montreal and other major cities in Canada. The original motion specifically suggests that we deal with the trafficking of illegal weapons and gang crime, which is already in the order adopted by the House. While these are very important topics that we could certainly study at another time, I fear that if we expand the scope of our study too much, we will lose sight of our original mandate. I want to hear the minister talk about his plan to counter the trafficking of illegal weapons, about what we are going to do differently at the borders, about what we are going to do to remove weapons from street gangs in Montreal. I'm afraid that if we look at a whole host of other issues, we'll get a little bit lost in the recommendations that we want to put forward to the government, which is the heart of the matter.

I'm a bit stymied. I totally agree that we could start another study on these topics after the current study. We would have to check some details about how many meetings we want to have on this subject. I'm afraid we're losing sight of the original request, which was really about gun control at the borders, gun trafficking and why illegal guns are getting into the hands of our young people and shootings are happening repeatedly in the big cities. That's my fear.

• (1140)

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

We have a bit of a speakers list that's forming.

Next is Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm inclined to agree with Ms. Michaud on this matter. I agree that all of these amendments are important subjects to study, but I believe each and every one of them could be the subject of its entire own study. Given the limited time that we're giving ourselves to study this very important issue of the rise of crime and the illegal firearms trafficking over borders, I think it would water down this committee's ability to target in and focus on that specific issue if we were to expand its scope with these important but additional very weighty issues.

I would encourage the members of this committee who want to study this to propose a separate study in and of itself, because it would be important. I also believe that in the motion in and of itself, when we're talking about subsection (i)—“all the ways that firearms are illegally diverted”—I believe domestic diversion would be included, and that already would be covered by the existing motion. There's nothing to stop witnesses from being asked about it or to provide evidence to talk about domestic diversion. I think that's something that absolutely would be considered on topic for this committee to discuss and to include in our report.

Then on subsection (iv), particularly “the involvement of gangs in firearms”, absolutely we should be reviewing programs that address the causes of youth gang involvement and recruitment and retention, as well as diversion. I think that would already be covered in the scope of the existing study without the amendment.

I will close by saying that I'm in support of the concerns by Ms. Michaud and that we should keep this committee study targeted on the spirit of the motion that was passed by unanimous consent in the House.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. MacGregor is next.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I'm again going to suggest a compromise. I know what led Ms. Damoff to include these points, because of course they do concern her and the people in her riding, and indeed in many communities here. When I look at the original motion from the House that directed this committee in our study, I see that it makes specific reference to gun control, illegal arms trafficking and increasing gun crime committed by members of street gangs.

Perhaps, members of the committee, the compromise is for us to amend this section and simply concentrate on paragraphs (i) and (iv).

I'll leave it at that, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Dancho is next.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate Mr. MacGregor's recommendation.

I think overall the amendment does sort of take away the focus and the work done by our colleague Ms. Michaud on behalf of Quebec and the people of Montreal, who have been significantly suffering over the last number of weeks from serious issues with criminal gang violence and gun violence. I do think the focus should be kept on the motion, which was very inclusive of a lot of the spirit of what Ms. Damoff is hoping to achieve in her amendment. If we look at it again, it says, “as a priority, a study on gun control, illegal arms trafficking, and the increase in gun crimes committed by street gangs.”

To me, and I know to many members of this committee, the focus of this study is urgent, and it needs to be on gang members and illegal arms trafficking. As we know, 80% of gun crime in Canada is from gun smuggling. To me, it is quite a large oversight that this amendment by Ms. Damoff unfortunately does not include that. I was particularly concerned about number four, which says, “recognizing the involvement of gangs in firearms”. I don't believe that language is nearly strong enough. It is the number one issue in the Bloc's motion that we need to be focusing on, and the way it is worded sort of downplays the significance of the focus of the Bloc's original motion.

I do have significant concerns that we are broadening the scope, diluting what Ms. Michaud was hoping to study. I do agree with my colleague Mr. Lloyd that these are all worthy of study, but it does broaden the scope beyond what Ms. Michaud was hoping to do and also does not focus enough on the gang issue and the trafficking, particularly across the U.S. border. I have considerable concerns. I do believe the motion as it was directed from the House is sufficient in terms of narrowing the scope and increasing the urgency of this study.

• (1145)

The Chair: Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Van Popta.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Thank you.

Much of what I was intending to say has already been said.

I agree with Ms. Damoff that these are all very important studies. I do remember from the previous Parliament that we wanted to undertake some of these studies, particularly relating to gang violence. However, the study is becoming very broad with the inclusion of these additional considerations. I would support any initiative to commence a separate study for these very important topics. To include them in this one, I think, is probably loading too much onto it.

I respect Mr. MacGregor's compromise position, but I would say that the original wording is probably good enough the way it is without including (b) in the motion at all. I would advocate to keep it a narrower study for now, knowing that the door is always open for us to introduce these studies. I would certainly support that at that time.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Go ahead, Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you very much, Chair.

I appreciate our colleague from the NDP. We're going to give him a referee jersey to be the mediator in this discussion. We very much appreciate his suggestions.

I am also appreciative of the Conservative Party members saying they are willing to study femicides, mental health and suicides. I will hold your feet to the fire on that one and take you at your word that you are interested in studying those issues. They are incredibly important.

I recall speaking to a women's shelter from Lethbridge, Alberta, who said that every single woman who came into that shelter was there because of a firearm in the home. Women in Canada should not be afraid and should not be dying because of firearms. We need to be taking that seriously and studying it, so I will take you at your word that you are interested in studying that issue at a later date.

The first and the fourth additions I put forward would be important to include. While I can't remember who said that the language was not strong enough, Mr. Van Popta will remember we spent hours coming up with wording on gangs. In the spirit of trying not to debate that, I used the wording that we decided on with Mr. Kurek and Mr. Sikand at the time, and all of us were involved.

Mr. MacGregor's compromise of including (i) and (iv) and dropping the middle two would be agreeable. Perhaps, Chair, I could suggest that maybe we vote on each of the four separately, or if Mr. MacGregor wants to amend my amendment to remove those two middle ones, that would be fine with me as well.

• (1150)

The Chair: I have Mr. McKinnon with a hand up. I will ask him first.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to speak in favour of this amendment. All of these issues are inextricably intertwined, and it's very important that we consider them all.

It is fully in keeping with the spirit of the House amendment. It should be noted that we cannot reduce the scope of the House amendment. Whatever we do here can only expand it, so if you find that the wording in the House motion is stronger, then that is what shall prevail.

Really, the true scope of the study is going to be determined by the witnesses we call, which is really up to all of us, and the questions we ask of those witnesses. There's no reason for that to dilute the results of this study. The analysts are very adept at extracting the information that is presented to us by the various witnesses. Then we, of course, are fully able to put forward our recommendations as well.

Having said that, I have no problem with supporting Mr. MacGregor's amendment, should he wish to amend Ms. Damoff's amendment.

The Chair: Thank you.

Madame Michaud, please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. MacGregor. I, too, am very fond of compromise, but in this case I will maintain my original position so that we can focus on the original motion referred from the House. The motion already mentions street gangs. We want to focus specifically on the gun trade. I will repeat exactly what Mr. Van Popta said. These are extremely important issues that have been added by Ms. Damoff, but I think it would dilute what we want to focus on at the moment. Although the compromise is reasonable, I still maintain my position to keep the original motion and not to amend it. So I am against the amendment, unfortunately.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. MacGregor, the suggestion has been forwarded that you may want to consider an amendment to Ms. Damoff's amendment. Can we hear from you, please?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

For your benefit, and for the benefit of the clerk and all committee members, I will formally move that we amend Ms. Damoff's amendment by deleting paragraphs (ii) and (iii). By virtue of that, we keep (i) and (iv), which I guess we can renumber as part of the new clause (b).

The Chair: Maybe just for clarity, we should not only renumber them but also remind committee members of the substance within them. If you could read them, that would be helpful.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Yes. If we were to delete those two, Chair, the new section would read as follows:

b) include in this study the following urgent issues in relation to firearms:

(i) all the ways that firearms are illegally diverted, including domestic diversion;

Then there is (ii). This is the renumbered one:

(ii) recognizing the involvement of gangs in firearms, the review of the programs that address the causes of youth gang involvement, programs that prevent recruitment and retention and diversion.

The Chair: Thank you.

We now have the proposed subamendment to Ms. Damoff's amendment. It is there for members for commentary. Do I see any hands?

I think I see a hand. Whose hand is that?

Mr. Dane Lloyd: It's Dane Lloyd, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I'm wondering, given that nobody else is speaking to this, if we can move it to a vote and possibly get it through with unanimous consent.

The Chair: That would be an excellent place to start. Let's ask members of the committee if there's unanimous consent for this subamendment to Ms. Damoff's amendment.

Do we have unanimous consent?

• (1155)

Ms. Pam Damoff: No.

The Chair: We do not.

Go ahead, Mr. Van Popta.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: I have a question, for clarity. We vote on the amendment, but then we go back to the original motion, right? If I think the motion is better with Mr. MacGregor's subamendment, I would vote in favour, but I could still vote against the main motion, right?

The Chair: Yes. Well, if the amendment passes, then—

Mr. Tako Van Popta: That's if the amendment passes, of course.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Otherwise we'd vote on the original motion without the amendment.

The Chair: We would vote on the amendment first, would we not, Clerk?

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Yes, of course.

The Chair: It's a vote on the amended amendment.

The Clerk: The subamendment is first.

The Chair: It's on the subamendment. Why don't we do that? I don't think we have unanimous consent, or did I miss something?

Do we have unanimous consent for the subamendment?

Mr. Dane Lloyd: No, we don't.

Ms. Kristina Michaud: It's okay.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Is it okay?

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Yes.

The Chair: Oh, it is okay. We do. That's wonderful.

(Subamendment agreed to)

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Then I'll vote against.

The Chair: Okay. Just for clarity, we don't have unanimous consent. We have Madame Michaud voting against and the other members of the committee voting in favour. Is that correct?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: In the end, it does not matter, because I will vote against the amended amendment. So there can be unanimous consent to amend Ms. Damoff's amendment. It is complicated, but do we understand each other?

[*English*]

The Chair: Yes, I do.

Clerk, did you want to add something here? No.

We have unanimous consent to approve the subamendment and now we have in front of us the amendment. We have had a discussion on it.

Is there any further commentary that members of the committee want to offer at this stage before we put the amendment to a vote?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, I have a subamendment to move on the now-amended amendment. I believe the subamend-

ment I'm proposing will capture a bit of the spirit of the original motion from the House. That is my aim. It's just to strengthen some of the language so that our aims of the original motion are clear.

Under (i), I propose “all the ways that firearms are illegally diverted, including smuggling across the United States border and domestic diversion”.

I'm just adding in the additional emphasis that was implied in the original motion from the Bloc.

Then under what was previously (iv), which I guess is now (ii), I propose crossing out the word “recognizing”, because I believe this depreciates the importance of the gang issue. The version of paragraph (ii) that I propose would read as follows: “the increasing involvement of gangs and firearms, the review of the programs that address the causes of youth gang involvement, programs that prevent recruitment and retention and diversion, and the causes of high recidivism rates”.

The reason for that last addition is that we know gang members are often repeat offenders who commit gun violence over and over again. I think that brings more emphasis and seriousness to the gang focus the Bloc had originally.

The Chair: Again, there's the issue of whether members have printed copies of this proposed subamendment, or they are just—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, on a point of order—

The Chair: We have a point of order.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I don't have the subamendment printed because we did not receive the amendment prior to this meeting. There wouldn't be a way that we could have done that, because we were not given the opportunity to review this before the committee began. I would ask that you proceed with my subamendment.

The Chair: Yes.

Clerk, what is the protocol in a situation such as this?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Whose point of order is it?

The Clerk: It is Mr. MacGregor's.

The Chair: Mr. MacGregor, go ahead.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I believe, Mr. Chair, because the clause we are considering is already before the committee, Ms. Dancho is in order in proposing a subamendment at this time. It is not a brand new motion that none of us has ever seen before, so I think her subamendment at this time is in order. I think it's been the practice of many committees that I've been on. I'm following along quite easily.

The Chair: As long as members are comfortable that they're following the gist of the substance of the subamendment, then we're okay.

Is there other commentary on Ms. Dancho's subamendment? The floor is open.

• (1200)

The Clerk: We have Mr. McKinnon, sir, followed by Madame Michaud.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. McKinnon.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to speak in opposition to this particular subamendment. I think that the first part of it is incorporated already in the House motion. There's no need to strengthen that or emphasize it. It is what it is. We cannot in any way reduce the strength of what the House has given to us. That's the main point.

I don't have a problem with recognizing the involvement. The involvement that we recognize might well be an increase, but I don't want to presuppose that outcome, so I would oppose this subamendment.

The Chair: Go ahead, Madame Michaud.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like a clarification.

Ms. Dancho would like to see the word “increasing” or “serious” added in front of the word “involvement” to strengthen the wording in point 4. Is this correct? Was there another word added? I'm not sure I wrote it all down.

[*English*]

The Chair: Ms. Dancho, would you please repeat and clarify?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Ms. Michaud.

To clarify again, I'm trying to emphasize the importance of gang violence in this study. Right now as it stands, paragraph (ii) says, “recognizing the involvement of gangs in firearms”, which I don't believe gives nearly enough emphasis on the serious issue of gang violence in Montreal and what's been happening. I think we take out “recognizing” and simply say, “the increasing involvement of gangs and firearms”. That would be the first part.

At the very end of point (ii), we would add “and causes of high recidivism rates”, because we know with gang violence that repeat offenders cause a lot of these shootings and the violent crime that we're seeing in our cities.

It's including a lot. We're now going to be looking at programs. I think that if we're going to be expanding it in the way Ms. Damoff is recommending, then we certainly must be looking at the rate of recidivism in Canada, because that is a part of the gang violence that we're seeing.

The aim of my subamendment is to focus attention on the problem, which is gang violence. It's perhaps not the most eloquent wording, but it's on the fly.

Thanks.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: I think “on the fly” is an appropriate description of many things.

Ms. Damoff, the floor is yours.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thanks, Chair.

I think the first change is redundant. I don't think we need to add that. It's included in “illegally diverted”. I'm ambivalent about whether it says “recognizing” or “increasing”; it doesn't really matter. As I said, I used the wording from a previous motion at public safety, hoping that we wouldn't have to debate, but “increasing” is fine.

I think adding “causes of high recidivism” could be covered under the wording that's already there. If that's the focus people want to take when we have witnesses, including the witnesses they choose to call, I think it's already covered in the wording that is there.

I think the changes are not needed, to be honest with you. We'll accomplish the same things with what we've already done and put forward.

The Chair: I have Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Chair, I'm rereading this in support of my colleague's amendments, but one thing that is confusing to me and might be confusing to Canadians when they read this study is the final line after “include in this study the following urgent issues in relation to firearms” which reads “address the causes of youth gang involvement, programs that prevent recruitment and retention and diversion”.

I don't think we're talking about programs that are preventing diversion. It seems kind of confusing there. We should be talking about programs that are encouraging diversion. The wording is confusing, because it says that we're reviewing programs that prevent diversion, but we should be looking at programs that encourage it, unless I'm mistaken on the purpose of the term “diversion”. It's kind of unclear. Maybe that could use some clearer wording as well.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

● (1205)

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I didn't have my hand up, but I do have a comment.

I think my issue with “illegally diverted” is that it's not the common terminology that we see. Again, 80% of gun violence in Canada is a result of gun smuggling across the U.S. border.

It may be redundant, but the way it is worded currently does not make it clear that this is the aim. If we want to look at the original motion as Ms. Michaud wrote it, which is “illegal arms trafficking”, we could also use that language.

“Illegally diverted” is not the recognized term I've seen when discussing this with the stakeholders, with police forces, forces at the border and victims rights' advocates. “Smuggling over the border” is perhaps a colloquial term, but again, if you're not happy with that, I recommend that we talk about perhaps another subamendment to say “illegal arms trafficking”.

I'm certainly not happy with the way it's written right now, because it's not clear what the aim of it is.

The Chair: Are there other comments on Ms. Dancho's subamendment?

I have Mr. Van Popta and then Mr. Shipley.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Thank you.

In support of what my colleague Ms. Dancho said, I agree that the term “illegally diverted” is not clear to me.

I had a question in question period a while ago relating to the source of firearms used in crimes. Minister Blair said there are three sources: They're stolen from legal gun owners, they're straw purchased or they are smuggled in. Those are the three categories that he used.

I'm just not sure what the term “illegally diverted“ means. Is that just a general term that captures all sources of firearms used in crime?

Let's just stick to colloquial and accepted language that's commonly understood.

The Chair: Okay. We've had a pretty good discussion on this. If there are no more hands up, I would proceed to a vote on Ms. Dancho's subamendment.

Clerk, how do you proceed in this case? Do we do a recorded vote?

The Clerk: Yes, sir.

The Chair: Okay. All those in favour of—

The Clerk: I'm sorry, sir. It's a recorded division.

The Chair: Yes. It's a recorded division, correct?

The Clerk: Yes, that's correct. I'm going to go ahead, then.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Yes, Mr. MacGregor?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I have just a point of clarification.

Mr. Chair, there was some discussion from my Conservative colleagues that they were unhappy with the term “illegally diverted”. Have they formally decided to change that form, or are we just sticking with what Ms. Dancho read into the record?

Before we have a vote, I just want to be clear on what we're voting on.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Yes. Again, I think that had I been given more time, I could have been a bit more eloquent, but in the interest of time, I just went for our clarification in the terminology, which the minister himself and others have used, including “smuggling across the U.S. border” and “domestic diversion”.

Actually, now that I think about it, the Liberal members have said that they have an issue with the redundancy, but again, their own paragraph (i) has its own redundancy within that argument, with “illegally diverted, including domestic diversion”, which arguably could be included in the definition of “illegally diverted”.

Again, to Mr. MacGregor's point, it would just simply say “including smuggling over the U.S. border and domestic diversion”. Again, it's trying to work with the original amendment but just

making it more clear with the language, as my colleague Mr. Van Popta said.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: I have a point of order here.

The Chair: I have a point of order from Mr. McKinnon.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: I understand Mr. MacGregor's concern, but that's not what was moved as a subamendment. We really can't amend a subamendment, so we are left with the subamendment as originally moved by Ms. Dancho. Is that correct?

Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Right.

The Chair: Are members of the committee clear on what's about to be put to a vote? Are there any points of clarification that need to be reinforced or are we ready for the division?

Clerk, go ahead with a recorded division, please.

(Subamendment agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

• (1210)

The Chair: Thank you. That is an historic moment. It was our first vote as a committee.

Ms. Damoff, we go back to you. Are there other amendments that you wish to propose?

Ms. Pam Damoff: I have just one more, Chair.

The Chair: Okay, go ahead.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Maybe I have two. I don't know if the committee realizes that the date of the original motion has the wrong date for the minister's appearance. He's actually coming on the 16th, not the 15th, but I'll leave it to somebody else to change if they want.

The last—

Mr. Ron McKinnon: On a point of order, Chair, we still have to vote on the motion. We voted on the subamendments and the amendment. We're back to the motion, which was Ms. Damoff's amendment.

The Chair: Let's go back to the motion to see if we have unanimous consent for it.

I see two hands up. I don't know who they are. Could somebody tell me who it is?

Ms. Pam Damoff: It's Mr. Lloyd and then Mr. Van Popta.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I feel like I'm in The Wizard of Oz, Mr. Chair. Pay no attention to the man on the screen, I guess.

I wanted to move another subamendment. Please don't hate me for this, but it is related to the earlier point I made. Is it just me or is the wording kind of confusing, even with “programs that prevent recruitment and retention and diversion”?

I would like to move a subamendment to clarify that we are looking at programs that prevent recruitment and retention and programs that promote diversion. That would be just one quick line that could clarify that wording, so that it doesn't look like we are trying to prevent diversion.

I will move the subamendment. I hope I can get unanimous consent that we change that one line to read "programs that prevent recruitment and retention and programs that promote diversion".

It is just three words: "programs that promote" diversion.

The Chair: I would open that up to commentary among members of the committee.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Are we paying attention to the speaking order?

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: That's an excellent amendment. I would be happy to vote in favour of that.

The Chair: Are there others, keeping in mind that I cannot see hands?

Go ahead, Mr. Van Popta.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Thank you to Ms. Damoff for that clarification.

I agree that's a good amendment. Thank you for that.

Just as a point of clarification, I'm not quite sure what we are voting on now, other than my colleague Mr. Lloyd's subamendment. The original motion was to delete subparagraphs (ii) and (iii). Have we voted on that already?

We are down to just (i) and the new (iv), which is now number (ii), with Mr. Lloyd's small amendment. Is that what we're voting on?

Mr. Ron McKinnon: I have a point of information, if you will.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. McKinnon.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: The original motion as made by Ms. Damoff was amended by Mr. MacGregor to drop off paragraphs numbered with Roman numerals (ii) and (iii), and was subsequently modified by Ms. Dancho to modify the language in paragraphs (i) and (iv), I believe, although I'm not sure about (iv).

At any rate, that change was made. That passed. It is now being further modified by Mr. Lloyd to add some clarification to former paragraph (iv). That last amendment, to modify the language of subparagraph Roman numeral (iv), is what we're voting on right now.

• (1215)

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Thank you.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I have a comment, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you.

Because we've added "and causes of high recidivism" at the end of this paragraph, I'm a little worried now, with your addition, that we're saying "encourage" causes of high recidivism.

I agree with what you're saying, Mr. Lloyd. I'm just a little concerned with the wording that's in there now. I'm wondering if it should say "programs that prevent recruitment and retention and causes of high recidivism" and then insert your part, moving the "diversion" part to the end of the sentence.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Mr. Chair, I'd view that as a friendly amendment. I would support that as a friendly amendment.

The Chair: Okay.

Is there any other commentary about this proposed subamendment? Do we have unanimous consent, in that case, for the proposed subamendment?

It looks like we do.

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

The Chair: Clerk, am I correct that we now have to go back to the original motion?

The Clerk: It's to the original amendment, sir.

The Chair: Yes.

Do we have unanimous consent for the original amendment as put forward by Ms. Damoff?

Hearing no objections—

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Mr. Chair, it would be the motion as amended by the various subamendments.

The Chair: Right. It's the motion as amended by various subamendments. Is that clear?

Madam Michaud, would you like the floor?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Will there be any further amendments to paragraphs (c) and (d), or shall we vote on the motion as amended?

I would just like this to be clarified, because what is written in the document we received from Ms. Damoff is not the same as what was in the original motion, as far as the dates are concerned. I just want to know if there will be any other amendments.

[*English*]

The Chair: Ms. Damoff is next.

Ms. Pam Damoff: We're only voting on the amendment to the additions to the study. We're not voting on the motion yet. There's still another change that I want to make to the motion.

The Chair: Oh.

Ms. Pam Damoff: It's only on the expansion of the study. We're voting on the amendment as amended, right?

The Chair: We're voting on the amendment as amended to expand the scope of the study. Is that correct?

The Clerk: Yes, sir.

The Chair: Okay.

Do we have unanimous consent for that? We do.

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

The Chair: That leaves the original amendment, Ms. Damoff. Am I correct?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Yes. I have one more change, Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Okay.

In the last bullet point, paragraph (d), it's not realistic to have the witnesses' testimony and recommendations back to the House by February 18. I think we all know how long it takes for an analyst to write the report.

In fairness to our amazing analysts—Holly, I haven't had a chance to say hello to you yet—I would say, again, keeping in the spirit of the original motion, that we delete the words “report its findings and recommendations to the House”, and that we say, “complete witness testimony no later than February 18, 2022”.

I would just point out that February 25 is not a sitting date, so I've moved it to the last sitting date in February.

Then I would add, “at which point the committee will draft and complete a report to be tabled in the House no later than March 31, 2021”. That gives us adequate time, I believe, to get a report and recommendations written and to review them, but it also recognizes the urgency of this issue and wanting to get a report back to the House in a timely manner. I think giving ourselves the month to report back to the House is reasonable.

As we saw with the systemic racism study, report writing can drag on for weeks and weeks and months and months. Adding the March 31 date puts pressure on each one of us to make sure that we're being efficient when we're meeting to review the report.

Those are the changes I have, Chair.

• (1220)

The Chair: Thank you.

The floor is open for comments from members of the committee.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: I think it's a typo. The date in that motion is 2021. It should be 2022.

Ms. Pam Damoff: It's 2021? Oh, gosh.

The Chair: That's the power of retrospect. That's been duly noted. Thank you, Mr. McKinnon.

Are there other comments on Ms. Damoff's suggestions?

Go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to confirm that this will mean we'll have six meetings total for this study. I just want confirmation that it is sufficient in Ms. Michaud's opinion and that this is the aim or the result of this amendment.

The Chair: Clerk, is that the right math?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: It's seven, I guess, including this Thursday.

Thank you, Dane.

The Chair: There are seven meetings in total? Okay.

Does that answer your question, Ms. Dancho?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I believe so. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Are there any other comments on the proposed amendment from Ms. Damoff, just to do with deadlines?

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Mr. Chair, I've been in this place for a few years, but maybe somebody who has more experience here might know better. If we were to table the report in the House by the end of March, how much time does that give the government to reply to the report? Would that be replied to before the House ends for the summer, or would that come in the fall when the House reconvenes?

The Chair: Clerk, do you have an answer to that?

The Clerk: Yes, sir. It's 120 days.

The Chair: Now there's a clear answer.

Therefore, when you do your math, it's the end of March and then another four months. It would probably take us into the summer break, wouldn't it? Is my math correct that 120 days after the end of March takes us into the summer? I think that's the right math.

Are there other comments in response to Ms. Damoff's last amendment?

Do we have unanimous consent to accept the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

The Chair: Excellent.

Thank you very much, everybody.

There are no other amendments to vote on. Now we have the whole thing. Now we go back and vote on the whole thing.

Is there unanimous consent to approve the series of subamendments and the amendment?

Ms. Damoff, do you have your hand up?

Ms. Pam Damoff: No. I'm sorry, Chair. It's a thumbs-up.

The Chair: It's a distinction between a hand up and the thumbs-up that chairs have to pay a lot of attention to.

Do we have unanimous consent to pass the motion as amended?

(Motion as amended agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Very good. Excellent work, committee, excellent work. What I saw here was the spirit of compromise ending up in a place that expresses a common aspiration, and that's great. I'm very pleased.

Mr. MacGregor, do you have a hand up?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Yes, Mr. Chair.

This is very quick. I want to move the motion that I distributed to committee members earlier this week. It's a very simple motion.

Just to give you some background, in the previous Parliament the public safety committee produced quite a comprehensive report on systemic racism in policing in Canada. The purpose of my motion is to readopt that report and have the chair retable it in the House of Commons in this Parliament so that we may elicit a government response.

I'm going to make a slight amendment to it, because I think there is a part that's not necessary. I'm going to read it into the record so committee members understand what I'm doing. It goes as follows, Mr. Chair.

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study of systemic racism in policing in Canada;

That the evidence and documentation received by the committee during the 2nd Session of the 43rd Parliament on the subject be taken into consideration by the committee in the current session;

That the committee adopt the report entitled "Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada" adopted during the 2nd Session of the 43rd Parliament;

That, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request the government to table a comprehensive response to the report;

That the Chair present the report to the House.

For committee members, what I've done is delete the part that asks for dissenting or supplementary opinions, because I believe all members provided those and they're already part of the report and I don't think we need to revisit it.

Mr. Clerk, I hope that's in order and that it reads clearly. I'll leave it at that for any comments.

• (1225)

The Chair: Thank you very much. I think it was clear.

I will open the floor for commentary from members.

Ms. Damoff, I see your hand is up.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I had another motion, Chair.

I'm good to support this one. This is an excellent motion from the opposition, because that was an outstanding report that we did, and it's important that the government respond to it. I fully support it.

The Chair: Let's do it one at a time. Let's deal with the motion that's on the table.

Is there other commentary?

The Clerk: Madame Michaud is first, sir.

The Chair: We have Madame Michaud, followed by Ms. Dancho.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thank my colleague Mr. MacGregor for this motion.

As Ms. Damoff said, this is a report that we worked hard on, in the last session. It is only right that we get a response from the government.

I just have a question about a word in the first sentence, which bothers me: "*Que [...] le comité entreprenne une étude...*", while in English it says "undertake". It's like saying that the committee is going to do a study on systemic racism again.

So, I would just like a clarification on that word. I don't know what the intention was behind it, but I just want to make sure that this motion says, finally, that we are sending it back to the House to get a response from the government, but that the committee is not taking up a new study on systemic racism.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. MacGregor, can you clarify that?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I've looked at the ways a number of committees have done these types of motions before, and there is a little bit of variance. We got the format for this particular motion from a clerk at the immigration committee. I think that in order for the chair to retable the report, we first have to undertake the study. It's basically a formality.

I'm not asking for us to re-engage in this study; it's just to allow the chair to take the necessary steps to adopt a report and retable it. I don't want to spend any more time than is necessary.

The Chair: Clerk, I see a thumbs-up from you. That means this is the way it's done and it does not require further study. It's just a matter of semantics. Is that right?

The Clerk: Yes, sir. I concur with Mr. MacGregor.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. McKinnon.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to speak up in favour of this motion as well.

It often happens towards the end of a Parliament that when reports are filed, there is not enough time for the government to respond. This reactivates that clock and gives the government a chance to respond substantively as requested.

I'm 100% in favour.

The Chair: Thank you.

Madame Michaud, the floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I'm fine. I obtained my clarification.

Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Van Popta.

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Thank you.

I too speak in support of the motion. I was part of the study last time, together with Pam and Kristina. We did a lot of work. We saw a lot of witnesses. There were 19 meetings, according to the summary, and the report had over 50 witnesses and 42 recommendations, so it was a lot of work.

It's an important study. I think it needs to be brought forward.

• (1230)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I don't want to digress too much from spirit of the committee on this, which is an important study. I'm concerned that between the completion of this report and today, we had an election.

I know this was an issue that was discussed at the doors. I'm not asking us to reopen the study, but I might appreciate.... You're removing your subamendment to remove the dissenting reports for December 15. You're maybe putting this forward as a friendly amendment, but I'd like an opportunity to have some time to review the report again and maybe have an opportunity to provide a slightly changed version, if necessary, because we did have an election.

It's important to demonstrate to Canadians that elections matter and that issues that are talked about during elections should be reflected in our report, rather than just accepting a report from the previous Parliament without any opportunity for a review.

Those are my thoughts.

The Chair: Is there other commentary in response to Mr. Lloyd's intervention?

I see Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I do, Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I'll just say that if you start opening it up to adding dissenting reports, you could open it to redoing the whole report. A lot of work was done on it. The parties did submit their dissenting reports. I think that if we want to embark on a new study on systemic racism and do new reports on it.... I think as a whole report, the dissenting report is responding to recommendations that were in the report and the witness testimony, so I don't think we should be changing it.

If Mr. MacGregor wants to add that back in, I'd like to hear from him.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. MacGregor.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think all of the parties included supplementary reports. I don't know if anyone dissented. Everyone was generally in agreement with all of the recommendations. Each party just added little bit more colour commentary to it at the end. I appreciate, Mr. Lloyd, your wishes to re-examine the report, but really my intention with this motion is to ensure that we get a timely government response and to honour the huge amount of work that was done by the committee in the previous Parliament.

That's my main motion, and I don't want to take away any more time from that main goal.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I don't mean to create a misunderstanding. There's no interest from me in reopening the study. I just noticed that your original amendment said that dissenting or supplementary opinions should be in Calibri 12-point font, so I believed from your original amendment that there would be an opportunity to maybe review supplementary opinions before pushing for this report to be picked up again. However, it seems like your removing that has basically said that it's not necessary to review them because they're already in and there's no opportunity.... Is there an opportunity to possibly change a supplementary opinion, or is there no opportunity now that it's in? You don't want any opportunity to look at a supplementary opinion.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. MacGregor.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I would be in favour, Mr. Chair, of the motion as I read it out, with the part referencing supplementary or dissenting opinions to be removed completely, so I wouldn't support Mr. Lloyd's putting it back in. I'd like to support the motion as I read it into the record the original time.

The Chair: Okay. Is there other commentary before we put this to a vote?

Clerk, are you pointing to somebody with a hand up?

The Clerk: Yes, but—

Mr. Ron McKinnon: I want to note that when the report was originally filed, there was an opportunity for all the parties to submit supplementary reports. The real point now is to get the government to respond to the report. The government wouldn't normally respond to the supplementary reports in any event. The point is to get a government response, and that's the reason for going ahead.

The Chair: Thank you.

Are there other comments before I seek unanimous consent?

Do we have unanimous consent?

I do not believe we do. Would we go to a recorded division, clerk?

• (1235)

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I think you do have unanimous support, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Oh, that's even better. I'm getting various circular motions from the clerk's right hand, so I'm not clear.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: It's unanimous consent again. Holy smokes. We can change the world in this committee.

Ms. Damoff, did you want the floor?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Yes, please, Chair.

I have a motion—

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I do believe I had my hand up first, and I think the video would show that, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay, go ahead.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Chair, sorry; I have a point of order. I had my hand up at the same time as Mr. MacGregor some time ago, so I think I did have my hand up. I mentioned that when you came to me to respond to Mr. MacGregor's motion as well that I had my hand up on another motion, and you said I would be recognized right after Mr. MacGregor.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, the same could be said for me. Again, the motion was carried. My hand went up first. I would appreciate being called on by you, Mr. Chair. My hand was up first.

The Chair: Sorry; was your hand was up when we asked for unanimous consent, or was there another matter?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: It was immediately following.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms. Pam Damoff: So was mine, Chair.

No, I'm not going to.... With all due respect, I think the chair could rule on it.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: We could review the video if you'd like, Ms. Damoff—

Ms. Pam Damoff: I think it's up to the—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: —but my hand was up before yours.

Ms. Pam Damoff: It's up to the chair to recognize whomever he wants to recognize.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, you've already given me the floor, so I'd like to move forward, if that's all right with you.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I'm going to present a motion.

I move

That the committee instruct the chair to report to the House the following: the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security calls on the Minister of Public Safety to make a decision on Huawei's involvement in Canada's telecommunications network. For over three years, security experts, allied countries, the House of Commons and Canadians have called on your government to act on the serious national security concerns and ban Huawei from Canada's 5G infrastructure. On Tuesday, September 28, 2021, the Prime Minister promised to make a decision "in the coming weeks". The government's indecision has been

exploited by Huawei, which sold Canadian telecommunication firms hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of critical equipment installed in their networks. Now, these large Canadian telecoms are seeking over one billion dollars in compensation from the taxpayer to remove and replace Huawei infrastructure from their networks. Canadian consumers already pay some of the highest monthly fees for cell phone service in the world. The committee recommends that the government reject the requests for compensation from Canada's large telecommunication companies, and that the government inform the committee of the date on which a decision will be made on Huawei before year-end, and the committee requests a government response.

The Chair: I'm disappointed that we had two members of the committee who were vying for the attention of the chair simultaneously, and I had no way, given the technology, of knowing who was first.

I am going to call on Ms. Damoff to tell us what she was about to say to the committee, and then we'll proceed from there.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I can't do that, Chair, because there's a motion on the floor.

I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

The Chair: That, I believe, is not debatable, is it?

There's a motion, Clerk, to adjourn debate on Ms. Dancho's motion.

The Clerk: It's a dilatory motion, sir.

Can I proceed with the vote?

The Chair: It can't be debated, so we will proceed with the vote.

(Motion negated: nays 6; yeas 5)

The Chair: Clerk, does that mean we proceed with the debate?

• (1240)

The Clerk: Yes, sir.

Ms. Dancho has raised her hand.

The Chair: Ms. Dancho, please go ahead.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, I just wanted to add some comments to the motion.

Again, we know that this has been an issue going on in Canada for several years. It's been about three years since the Prime Minister promised Canadians that he will make a decision on Huawei, and that has yet to occur. In my meetings with a number of the telecommunication companies in Canada, I have found that this is a pressing issue for them. They continue to need to evolve their infrastructure, and yet they're being held back on the decisions they can make. Just from a purely telecommunications point of view, this is impacting access for all Canadians to upgrade their network.

On the other hand, we're also seeing significant national security concerns expressed about Huawei from experts across the western world. We are the outlier in the Five Eyes in banning Huawei from our 5G infrastructure and from infrastructure for telecommunications across Canada. We need to be leaders to ensure that our telecommunications are protected and that Canadians are protected.

This is a national security issue, and it is of grave concern to opposition and opposition parties that the government is not being a leader on this issue. We have Huawei technology in Canada. In our international airport in Ottawa, when you come down the escalator, what's the first thing you see? The largest advertisement in the Ottawa airport is of Huawei.

There are clear indications that the Huawei company is taking advantage of the government's indecision, and we are increasingly concerned that this will threaten the longevity and the security of our telecommunications and therefore the national security of each individual Canadian. We all own cellphones now. We are incredibly dependent on them. We must ensure we are working with companies that protect our national security. We do believe that before we break for Christmas, we need to ensure the government is aware that opposition parties will continue to hold them to account. We view this matter as urgent, and that is why we've brought forward this motion today.

The Chair: Thank you.

Is there other commentary?

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Mr. Chair, I concur with this motion from my colleague. This is a very important and pressing issue, more so because of the inordinate amount of time that this government has taken on this issue.

It's becoming apparent to Canadians that it is highly unlikely that the government is still waiting on the results of some sort of national security review and that this decision is most likely sitting with political decision-makers who are refusing to make or announce a decision. That's speculation, but Canadians want to see a path forward and they want to see what action this government is going to be taking.

This motion really illustrates why it is so vitally important. We have seen that taxpayers are possibly incurring a growing liability each and every day that the government doesn't make a decision. We know that many Canadian telecom companies are pursuing partnerships with Huawei and using Huawei technology, and it's been reported widely in the media that we're talking about investments in the hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars in Huawei equipment. The longer the government chooses to delay it, the bigger the potential liability for Canadian taxpayers if these telecom companies choose to take legal action against the government to recover the costs of their investments.

It's only fair to all parties involved, and Canadians, for the government to issue a clear directive on which direction they want to go. As noted in the motion, the Prime Minister promised on September 28 that this decision would be made in the coming weeks. We've heard over and over again that a decision is going to be forthcoming, yet no decisions are being made.

The longer we continue with this, the more of a farce it becomes. If the government does not want to make a decision on this issue, they should be clear with Canadians that they're not going to make a decision so that everyone can plan accordingly.

The fact is that they do have to make a decision. It's their job. They're in government. They were elected to a minority government to make decisions on behalf of Canadians on our national se-

curity and our telecommunications infrastructure. There's no more ragging the puck on this. They've got to come to a resolution to this issue for the reasons that were put forward.

We know that telecommunications costs and cellphone costs for Canadians are among the highest in the G7 and the world. What we don't want to see is Canadian consumers getting penalized by the costs of the government's indecision on this matter, and these costs being passed along to consumers with regard to higher Internet broadband and cellphone bills.

It's very appropriate of this committee to call on the Minister of Public Safety to.... We're not even necessarily calling on the Minister of Public Safety to make a decision before the year's end, but we're calling on him to tell Canadians when a decision will be made, which is entirely reasonable for this committee to ask.

We've given plenty of leeway to this government to review the facts. We've had several election campaigns when the government could talk to their constituents, to Canadians, about their concerns on this issue.

It's time for a resolution. If this committee needs to be the one that pushes that first domino over, let it be this committee that does it.

I support this motion.

• (1245)

The Chair: Mr. Lloyd, I'm sorry, but you'll have to put your mask on.

Is there other commentary?

The Clerk: Mr. MacGregor raised his hand first.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Mr. MacGregor, go ahead.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I just wondered about your comment to please put my mask back on. Is it the practice of this committee that when members are engaged in speaking and drinking a glass of water, they are still required to wear their masks?

The Chair: No.

Go ahead, Mr. MacGregor.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm just speaking briefly in support of this motion. That's one of the reasons I couldn't vote to adjourn debate. One of the important roles of a legislative committee is that oversight function over the executive branch.

I believe that for too long we have been awaiting a sense of direction from the government on this issue. It has consumed the media for a number of years. Many people in Canada are not sure why we continue to have a delay on it.

As a part of our oversight functions over the executive branch, I definitely support this committee taking a firm stand and sending this letter to the minister.

The Chair: Are there any other comments?

I see a hand up, but I don't know whose it is. We will have to figure out this technical glitch for next time.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: May I speak, Mr. Chair?

[*English*]

The Chair: Madame Michaud, is it you? Go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I thank Ms. Dancho for tabling her motion, with which I am in full agreement.

I also fully agree with what Mr. MacGregor has just said. It is high time that the government make a decision and inform the House. We asked it to take a position over a year ago, so I will be supporting this motion.

Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Are there any other comments?

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Mr. Chair, I too want to speak in favour of this motion.

It's high time that Canada makes a decision on this very important question. As has been noted already, we are the outlier among our closest allies, the Five Eyes. It is high time for us make a decision.

The market hates uncertainty, and that's what this government's dithering on this issue is doing. It's bringing uncertainty into the marketplace. Investment dollars are sitting on the sidelines, wondering where they should go and which technology Canada is going to follow. It would seem obvious, at least to the casual observer, that we should be working with our Five Eyes allies, making the right decision and making that same decision, but more importantly, a decision has to be made so that the market going forward knows where we need to go.

We live in a competitive world, and certainly that is the case with high-tech industries. We need to get on with it so that Canada can remain competitive and we can keep growing our economy, creating good jobs for people, and letting our investment dollars know where to land and where to invest.

It's certainly a public safety issue involving national security. I would really urge the government to step forward and make that decision, and an encouraging word from this committee would go a long way toward encouraging the Prime Minister and his cabinet to go ahead and make that decision, finally.

Thank you.

• (1250)

The Chair: Thank you.

Are there other comments from members of the committee?

The Chair: Mr. Noormohamed, go ahead.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Many of us are confident that the government is not only going to review, but will make the appropriate decision.

It's important, given the comments that have been made today, to reflect on how we ended up having to have this conversation in the first place.

Before some of us were here in 2012, if I remember correctly, it was Prime Minister Harper who was talking about what a wonderful important honour it was for him to preside over the signing of the agreement that Huawei had formed with Telus. Indeed, that was in some sense the precursor that has put us in the situation where we are today.

As we seek to work together on these things, ascribing blame to the government of the day to try to expedite a decision right away belies the need to think about how we ended up where we are. It's important to realize that there have been so many close contacts, close relationships, and close supports between the Conservative Party and Huawei over the course of the last number of years.

I'm glad there are so many of us now who agree it is important to have an appropriate review and an appropriate process. Due process is important in making sure the government makes that decision in a way that protects the interests of Canadians, as it has always done, and takes into consideration the information that our intelligence agencies provide, which it always does. That is the right approach.

This is one of those situations in which Canada's national security decisions are going to be made by the people who know it best, and we should be confident in that.

The Chair: Are there any other comments from members of the committee?

The Clerk: Ms. Dancho—

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you, Chair.

I don't think we should be supporting this motion. I think we're dealing with national security issues and the development of the 5G network in Canada. I think that the national security agencies need to be involved. I recognize that other countries have made decisions on 5G. We're taking that into account. I do trust that the minister and the government are taking all of these things into consideration.

I think the motion is asking for us to encourage the minister to make a decision. I know that the government is seized with this issue and is looking at it. To make assumptions like my colleague across the way did about why things are happening and say that that the decision is just sitting on a desk is unfair. It leads to Canadians thinking that we are not taking their safety seriously. We do.

As a government, we don't rush when it comes to the safety of Canadians, nor should we. I think it's very important that the government take the time. They've made statements on when this decision will be coming. If the telecom companies have invested in something, that's a corporate business decision. I don't think it's something that we should be getting into here at the committee. I think we should be considering this in the perspective of national security and ensuring that Canadians have confidence that the government has reviewed all of the issues before us and that we are moving forward in a responsible way.

• (1255)

The Chair: Are there other members of the committee with commentary?

Is that Ms. Dancho?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I do believe that the public safety committee of Canada is a long-standing committee and that its responsibility, among many, is to ensure the public safety of Canadians. We do believe that this a national security issue. This is well within the scope of this committee. I do believe it is a duty of ours to indicate to the government that there has been enough waiting. It is time for a decision. Canadians want a decision. They have been promised a decision. The telecommunications companies would like a decision. Again, this government has been in power for six years, and they have been promising a decision for three of them.

Australia, New Zealand, the U.K. and the U.S. have all moved forward in the last number of years and made decisions. There is no reason we cannot do the same for Canadians. Again, I think that this Liberal government has been marked with indecision and blaming former governments. Ultimately, the decision remains with them. They promised to deliver it, and I do believe it is the duty of the public safety committee of Canada to ensure the safety of Canadians. That includes our telecommunications security.

Thank you.

The Chair: Are there further comments?

Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Yes, Mr. Chair.

I really think this is a good discussion and an important one to have. I myself have been hearing a lot about Huawei and have some concern around it also.

At the same time, I believe we've seen our security agencies protect Canadians. I have full confidence that they will do so, especially on this very important matter of domestic security. I also recognize how this is somewhat of a complex issue. It involves both domestic security and some level of international relations. We have seen clear signals from the government that a decision is imminent and forthcoming. We all know that this question has been out there for a while, but the language around the timing of this decision is whittling down.

For that reason, I trust that a decision is around the corner. For this reason, I won't be supporting this motion brought forward by our colleague.

I just wanted to go on the record on that point.

Thank you.

The Chair: Colleagues, we are within a minute or so of our prescribed end time. Is there another comment from a member of the committee?

Do we have majority consent to adjourn the meeting?

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Mr. Chair, there are hands up for discussion.

The Chair: I don't see hands up.

Mr. McKinnon, is that you?

Mr. Ron McKinnon: It's Mr. Chiang.

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

Mr. Paul Chiang (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As a former police officer, I'd like the committee to be focusing on gangs, crime and the gun violence in our country. It is very important for us to focus on that, because of gang violence. We need to work on that instead of looking at Huawei. Our government is doing a study on that, and they will be working on that component. I would vote against it.

The Chair: Thank you.

Is there other commentary? I see the time is one o'clock, except in Bomber land, where it's noon.

Do we have a sense that the meeting should adjourn?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: No. I have a comment.

The Chair: Can we adjourn the meeting, Clerk?

• (1300)

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Yes, go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, we don't give our consent to adjourn.

I know the Liberal members have already put on the record that they're not supporting the motion, so I suggest that we vote on the motion. Many of them have already expressed that they won't be supporting it, so let's vote. That's my recommendation, Mr. Chair, and then we're free to adjourn, from our perspective.

The Chair: Clerk, where do we proceed from here? Do we move a motion to adjourn?

The Clerk: As long as there are speakers, sir, we need to keep going. Mr. McKinnon and Ms. Damoff have raised their hands.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Mr. Clerk, I move that we do now adjourn.

The Clerk: Can I proceed with the vote, sir?

The Chair: You may.

The Clerk: The question is on the motion moved by Mr. McKinnon. I will take the vote.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Mr. Chair, I misunderstood what we were voting on. If I can correct my vote, I'm voting to adjourn.

The Chair: Yes, I think that was clear.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Thank you.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, I have a point of clarification, if I may.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I'm just not clear.

Mr. Zuberi, you weren't aware that we were voting to adjourn, or...?

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: That's exactly right. I wasn't aware of that. I thought we were voting on something else, and I'm voting in favour of adjourning.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Okay. We could press the issue, but we'll let it go this time.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: I think I have the right to.... We'll let it go.

The Chair: Ms. Dancho, I think that's very gracious of you. Let's move on from there.

Mr. Ron McKinnon: Can we continue with the vote, please?

The Clerk: Mr. Chair—

The Chair: Yes. Do you have the results, or are there more members to poll?

The Clerk: Yes, I do.

The Chair: I'm sorry, Clerk. I'm awaiting your tally here.

The Clerk: Yes, sir. We have yeas 6, nays 5.

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

The Chair: We can adjourn.

Members, I'd like to thank all of you very much for your spirit of co-operation. I think we did some very important work, with everybody, including me, doing things for the first time. The hands will become surer as we proceed with committee meetings, but I am very grateful for the spirit of co-operation that was evident this morning and I look forward to seeing everybody just 46 hours from now.

Thank you, everybody. The meeting is adjourned.

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