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—
Chair

Mr. David Tilson

Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration

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• (2325)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP)): I would like to start.

Madame Groguhé, you have the floor.

• (4720)

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Thank you for giving me the floor, Madam Chair.

We are resuming this meeting after it had been suspended, and it is very late: it is 11:25 p.m.

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC): She called the meeting. How does this...?

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: We have been getting used to these unusual schedules over the past few weeks. Yesterday, I sat until 12:15 a.m., and I got home at 12:45 a.m. I can tell you that my night was very short, hoping that...

[English]

Mr. Ted Opitz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Madam Chair, I have a point of order as to relevance.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): As we know, the practice, both in the House and at committees, is that members who speak get a certain amount of latitude when they speak on an issue. As my colleague has just spoken for less than a minute, I would like to see where she is going with this, and then I would be able to judge the relevance or lack thereof.

I can see that we're going to have a fun evening tonight.

Ms. James.

• (4725)

Ms. Roxanne James (Scarborough Centre, CPC): I just want to go on the same point of order, because we're talking about relevance. I have to say that I have read Mr. Shory's bill inside and out and I have not once seen anything related to someone walking home, or when they got home, or a late night.

I want to know how soon we're going to get to the relevance of your statement. Quite frankly, it is going to be a long night, and I'd like to actually debate this bill and talk about it, rather than hear about someone's night or what they did when they got home.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Ms. James, Madame Groguhé has the floor. If you would let her carry on, maybe she will be able to communicate with you as to the relevance of the points she makes.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is just a reminder and a nod, if I may say so, to the incoherence of this government that is forcing us to spend impossible hours in the House for debates.

Let us come back to the issue at hand. I would like to point out that we have gone from an in camera meeting to a public meeting, which will allow us to resume debate on this Conservative motion which, I might remind you, seeks to extend the deadline by 30 days in order to submit a request to Parliament to broaden the scope of Bill C-425.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Could you hold on just a little, please, Madame Groguhé?

A certain level of conversation to the side is fine, but when the conversations become so loud that the chair can't hear clearly what is being said, I think they begin to interfere with the operations of the committee. So I would ask people to be respectful.

Thank you.

We will go back to you, Madame Groguhé.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Things have changed since yesterday. Yesterday, the Conservative majority on this committee forced us to go in camera. We were opposed to that, saying that the debates that we could have had in public could have helped us make progress on this matter in a much more transparent fashion. Today the government has changed its mind and is asking us to continue this meeting in public, something that we had adopted earlier.

As concerns the fact that we were forced to go in camera, the way it happened was...

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I want to remind all my colleagues that up to now we have been in camera, and we have to be very careful that we don't make reference directly to what was said in camera, or things such as that. I'm just reminding people that "in camera" has a meaning and that meeting in camera has a purpose.

I will be applying the same rule right across the board. I want people to be aware of that.

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): As a point of clarification, does that mean we're not allowed to talk about the colour of wedding dresses?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): No, you can talk about the colour of wedding dresses as long as you don't reference the exact conversation that occurred while we were in camera. For example, you could ask another question of any member about the colour for the wedding dresses, if that's your desire, if that's how you want to use up your committee time, but it would not be right for you to reference what happened in camera previously.

Look, the chair is just going to try to chair and follow the rules we have. When I remind people about being in camera, it's also to remind us about the obligations and responsibilities we have as parliamentarians and about the respect we have for our institutions and our committees. In camera has to mean something. Because it has to mean something, I'm just trying to explain to people how, why, and when they can or cannot make reference to something. I was not trying to make any other point at all.

I am going to go back to the speaker, unless I have a point of order.

Do you have a point of order, Mr. Shory?

Mr. Devinder Shory (Calgary Northeast, CPC): Really, Madam Chair—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Do you really want this bill discussed today?

Mr. Devinder Shory: Absolutely. I honestly do not want the chair to use the gavel every two minutes. If the chair has some rules to set up, I request that the chair set up the rules in the beginning.

The minute we get engaged with the speaker, the chair picks up the gavel and starts a new ruling. So I suggest and humbly request that the chair set up whatever rules the chair wants.

This is a public meeting. Canadians are watching. I do not want the chair to use the gavel every two seconds or every two minutes and set up a new set of rules.

If there are certain rules the chair wants to address to the committee, they should be addressed immediately.

• (4730)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): So far, whenever the chair has used the gavel, it has been to get the attention of the committee and to explain the rules that exist. I needed to remind people of the rules that exist about in camera simply because a member referenced something that happened in camera. So I reminded people of that. That is my job.

If the room gets too loud and there is too much conversation, it's my job to make sure the committee functions with a certain amount of decorum. And this chair will continue to exercise that right.

I really want to say to my honourable colleague sitting at mike 14 that I would be very careful with your choice of words, if you are now beginning to say that the chair is making up the rules. That is not the case. The parliamentary secretary, in this case, would agree with me that the chair is following the rules that exist, and did explain that, as is required of the chair.

There is no way that anybody who sits in this chair can allow anarchy to take place, and I do not plan to allow it.

Mr. Ted Opitz: You were following parliamentary procedure.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you. That's what we're trying to do.

Mr. Menegakis.

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC): Madam Chair, I have a point of order. I think your intervention and clarification about what can be said and what cannot be said with respect to in camera meetings was correct.

I believe Madame Groguhé has the floor. Could we continue on with the meeting, please?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you very much, Mr. Menegakis.

Thank you, Madame Groguhé.

We have another point of order.

Ms. Sitsabaiesan.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP): Actually, it was on the same point, Madam Chair. Your ruling clarifies it, so I'd like to strike my name....

Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you.

We're going back to Madame Groguhé, who has the floor. She can be interrupted only by a point of order.

From now on, when members have a point of order, I'm going to ask that they state their point of order and then speak to it, rather than speaking and then trying to work out what that point of order could be.

Madame Groguhé.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Thank you, Madam Chair.

As concerns your observation to the members of this committee, I would just like to mention that I was particularly referring to the process used by the government regarding in camera meetings. I am certainly not going to address the content of the in camera meeting. This imposition of an in camera meeting by the Conservative majority is certainly regrettable, but not at all surprising. It is perfectly representative of the attitude that prevails both in the House and in committee. It was particularly clear during our study of Bill C-425.

This study was hampered by the government's will to considerably amend the content and scope of Bill C-425. All of this was orchestrated by the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, who dictated his amendments to the committee. These amendments were then introduced word for word by his parliamentary secretary.

The main consequence of this was to transform a private member's bill into a government bill. Given the refusal of the committee chair to recognize that these amendments were in order, the committee produced a report, without the consent of the opposition, calling for the scope of Bill C-425 to be broadened. The purpose of this was to impose the minister's amendments.

Obviously, this is the aspect that I am talking about today. We expressed our concerns, which were echoed by the Speaker of the House of Commons when the request concerning the adoption of the eighth report was submitted to him. A point of privilege was raised concerning this report. This is what I stated at that time, that is, on April 30.

• (4735)

[English]

Ms. Roxanne James: A point of order.

It's my understanding that when a chair is chairing this committee, he or she must remain in his or her seat. I'm actually reading this bill, listening intently to Madame Groguhé, and I look up and the chair is not even present in that chair.

I'd like clarification on that particular rule.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I'm going to give you that clarification right now.

Ms. Roxanne James: Can the chair just simply walk away from the committee?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I have been a member of this committee for about two years and a bit, and while we've been here, Mr. Tilson has often gotten up, either to get food or to get a coffee or a cup of water. That's all the chair did—poured some hot water and walked back to her seat.

Mr. Dykstra agrees with me and thinks I did nothing untoward.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): On the same point of order, if I may, Madam Chair, I did get the opportunity to take a look at the speaking order, and I just conferred with Ms. Freeman. I think both of us were of the opinion that I was going to be speaking before her. Now, I don't know—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): The clerk kept the speaking order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Right.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): It's there and that's what we're going to go with. I'm not sure of any other way to address this.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: I don't think anyone would be offended. Ms. Freeman and I definitely wouldn't be offended if we just reversed the two of us in terms of—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): If I can get unanimous agreement to that...

Ms. Mylène Freeman (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, NDP): Madam Chair, Mr. Lamoureux and I were just chatting. We were both of the same original opinion that we had been switched. I think we would both agree, at least, that he was before me before and that I would be okay with switching my spot with him now. I think that would be okay.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Can I seek unanimous agreement that the two spots between Mr. Lamoureux and Ms. Freeman can be switched?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Thank you. That's very much appreciated.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Well, thank the committee.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: We want to make sure that our Liberal colleagues are accommodated within a committee setting. I'm very glad that we are able to do that.

Thank you to the committee.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): He feels warm to the cockles of his heart.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: It was a touching moment.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Madame Groguhé, is this a point of order? Can I ask you to state your point of order first, which is the way we're doing it?

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Madam Chair, I would like to ask a question concerning points of order that are currently being raised indiscriminately.

Does the chair have the right to decide whether points of order are justified or acceptable? Perhaps this would help us progress with the study of this bill. It is up to you to decide.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Your point is well taken, Madame Groguhé, and the chair will monitor whether it's a point of order or whether it's just someone who should put their name on a list and wait until it's their turn to speak.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Madam Chair, with your permission, I would like to come back to the important matters that I have just mentioned, so that they can be recorded clearly once and for all, and I hope that I will not be interrupted.

It is certainly unfortunate that the Conservative majority is forcing us to meet in camera, but it is certainly not surprising, because their attitude is absolutely consistent with what is going on both in the House and in committees, especially during the study of Bill C-425.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you, Madame Groguhé.

I do want to remind my colleagues on both sides of the table that we are in a committee. We are trying to listen and be respectful to one of our colleagues while she speaks. It would be appreciated if the noise could be kept down. We have extra people in the room, and we're not saying we're not delighted to see you. Who wouldn't want to see extra friends late at night? But we're going to suggest that you take your conversations outside. If you're going to be in the room, a slight whispering in the distance is fine. But if the chair hears your conversation, then I have to think about interference with the speaker, and I cannot accommodate that, because it's my job is to make sure that the proceedings go along in an orderly manner.

We will go back to Madame Groguhé.

Madame Groguhé.

• (4740)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Madam Chair, I would like to raise a point of order. I think that it is important and necessary to genuinely insist on decorum. This is often done in the House. So I think that this reminder is very important, because we need to respect decorum once and for all in this committee.

This committee meeting is currently being held in public, and the image being conveyed to Canadians by the attitude of certain members is quite deplorable. Bill C-425 nonetheless raises a very important question.

Madam Chair, decorum must be respected, and I would ask you to ensure that this is done.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): The chair is going to appeal to all members of the committee. As a teacher, one of the things I used to hate was to admonish those who were behaving perfectly fine. I want to commend those of you who are not part of the noise machine. As for the rest of you, I want to remind you that there is a certain level of decorum we expect at a parliamentary committee. This is not question period. So I ask you to keep it so that we can hear Madame Groguhé.

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

Mr. Ted Opitz: It's the same point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Could you state it, please?

Mr. Ted Opitz: I had started off talking about relevance. As a former serving lieutenant-colonel in the Canadian Forces, I want to point out that we're talking about advancing the citizenship of people who are permanent residents, who put their lives on the line for Canada, who risk it all, who go into universal service—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Mr. Opitz, if I might—

Mr. Ted Opitz: I'm not done. Can I finish my point?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): No, you are getting into debate. You're not making a point of order.

Mr. Ted Opitz: I'm about to finish my point. You gave everybody else latitude.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay, then, make your point of order.

Mr. Ted Opitz: I think you should give me a moment's latitude to make the point.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Your point of order has to do with decorum?

Mr. Ted Opitz: Yes, it does.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay, Mr. Opitz.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: I have a point of order.

Mr. Ted Opitz: The decorum is—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Mr. Opitz, you are entering into debate and not speaking to a point of order.

Mr. Ted Opitz: I am not entering into the debate; I'm entering into the point—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): You are entering into debate of the bill, and you will have lots of opportunity to do that.

Mr. Ted Opitz: But the point of order is the conduct and decorum of the speaker, and that's the point. The point is on the bill, and the bill is about people advancing their citizenship through service to Canada. The bill is about making sure that people don't commit acts of terrorism against Canadian Forces. Many of my buddies were killed overseas, and that's the point of the discussion.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay.

I think it's going to be a very fun evening tonight, and I can't wait for the rest of it to proceed. I'm going to go to Ms. Sitsabaiesan.

Do you have a point of order or a point of privilege?

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Privilege.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay. State your privilege.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Thank you.

Madam Chair, I really tried not to bring this up because... I tried not to, but I really had to. My question of privilege, Madam Chair, is that in this committee, time and time again, women are not treated equitably.

Voices: Oh, oh!

An hon. member: A point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): It's a question of privilege, and after the privilege, I will come back to you.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Madam Chair, if I may continue, whenever you're ready, please let me know.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Carry on. You are stating a point of privilege—

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Yes.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): —and you have a right to do that. Once you've finished your point of privilege, I will be going to Ms. James, who has a point of order, I believe.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: I may continue?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Yes.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We know, Madam Chair, that in this committee I myself have been called, and I quote, “little girl”.

• (4745)

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Where were you called that?

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: When was I called that...?

An hon. member: In camera.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: No.

Sorry. Should I be responding to somebody who is heckling, Madam Chair?

Voices: Oh, oh!

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: I'm sorry, Madam Chair—

Ms. Mylène Freeman: He's not even at the table—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Order. I will—

Mr. John Weston: I do have to raise a point of order on that.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I will actually....

I wish you guys would let the chair do the chairing, and I will get back to you.

Mr. John Weston: This does go right back to your first statement.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I will remind all—

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: No worries, Madam Chair—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I will remind all members from both sides of the House of the rules in committee and speaking in camera, and speaking about things in camera outside of in camera.

I'm going to go back to the point of privilege. We have a speakers list that is being kept, and we will get to the rest of you. We have a long night, and we can carry on this way.

Okay. Back to you, Ms. Sitsabaiesan.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Just to bring you up to speed as to what the heckler across the way from the Conservative benches was saying, it's that they thought I was saying that me being called “little girl” was actually in camera. It wasn't, Madam Chair. It was quite a few weeks back by...

It should be recorded in Hansard, because the person who called me a little girl, who is a man on this committee, had his microphone on. So, Madam Chair, it was not in camera.

Mr. John Weston: A point of order.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: I feel—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): [*Inaudible—Editor*]...get finished.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: I feel that as a woman parliamentarian, as a young woman who is a parliamentarian... I faced many barriers to be able to even enter politics, and while here, I would think that this House, this Parliament, the highest place where anything is done for this country with elected officials, would actually be respectful of the two genders, of the two sexes, and that

as a woman I would actually be treated as a parliamentarian, and not as less of a parliamentarian because I am a woman.

Madam Chair, you know that I can't say what was said multiple times, what was or was not mentioned while we were in camera. I can't articulate exactly what that was, Madam Chair, but what I can say is that what we've seen even just this evening with what is happening.... We know that when there was another time when I felt.... I was victimized by another person, and we know that I actually—

A voice: Oh, oh!

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Once again, we have people laughing at me while I share my point of privilege, Madam Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I really ask committee members to be respectful and to listen to each other's point of view.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Because I know you were on the committee at the time and present in the room when this happened, when I was victimized by somebody here so that I could not even continue my duties as a member on this committee, because I was led to tears and had to leave the room, Madam Chair.... Maybe some of the other people—

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Madam Chair, I'm sorry, a point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Excuse me—

Ms. Mylène Freeman: This is the second time that my colleague mentions this particular incident and laughter occurs on the other side of the table.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Madame Freeman, may I ask you to contain yourself?

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Yes.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): May I also say to you and everybody else that I will be dealing with this point of privilege and I will get to others. I will be addressing everybody's issues. But could we simply give each other the time and the patience to listen to each other? We may not always be in agreement. I'm really trying to listen to this question of privilege because I have to respond to it and I'm finding it's a bit too much of a decorum issue.

Mr. John Weston: It is a point of privilege on this side, too, because—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I will get to you—

Mr. John Weston: —these are unsubstantiated allegations—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): —as soon as—

Mr. John Weston: —without time—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): John, I will—

Mr. John Weston: —without place—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Mr. Weston, I will get to you as soon as—

Mr. John Weston: —fabricated, exaggerated—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I'm going to suspend the meeting for five minutes.

• (4745)

_____ (Pause) _____

• (4750)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Does everybody want to return?

I want to remind people that this chair is not willing to tolerate poor decorum to the stage at which I cannot hear people and we can't conduct the meeting.

The process the chair is going to follow right now is that a point of privilege has been raised. Ms. Sitsabaiesan gets to finish her point of privilege. I will rule on that point of privilege, and that's how we're going to proceed.

If anybody else feels their privilege has been violated, or they want to raise a point of order, they will get exactly the same treatment.

The chair is going to proceed right now. I'm hoping that in the very near future we can get back to Madame Groguhé for a very eloquent and well thought out speech.

Madame Sitsabaiesan—did I pronounce your name correctly this time?

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: You did. Thank you, Madam Chair.

There was a point, one example, Madam Chair—I'll just go back so that you have the full example. There was a time when I was actually brought to tears because of something that was said that personally attacked me. I felt personally violated and attacked as a result of comments being made, and I actually could not continue my duties as an MP on that committee. I had to leave the room so as not to disrupt the rest of the proceedings of the committee. When I brought it up with the chair afterwards, I was dismissed by the chair, just kind of shooed off. Then, when I challenged the chair—the person sitting in the chair at the time was male—my challenge was ignored. I was dismissed once again. We know that the proper procedure is for the Speaker of the House to make a ruling, and that was not done.

I appreciate our chair for apologizing to me after the fact, but at that point there was nothing that could be done.

Madam Chair, there are other examples that have taken place just today that continue to hinder my ability as a woman parliamentarian. As soon as the public part of our meeting disappears and there's bullying behaviour by members opposite, it doesn't make it a safe working environment for me when I have to deal with this type of harassment. When one member says, "Is that the only tool you have left in you?", or when another member says, "Hey, Rathika, do you need a kleenex?", making fun of me—sarcastic remarks about my very serious concerns, about my ability to continue my role, my ability to carry out my duties as a member of Parliament—it is seriously not tolerable, Madam Chair.

Another thing is with regard to women who are being personally attacked or whose authority is being questioned. For example, Madam Chair, you yourself saw how many times your rulings were just ignored and people continued to talk over them. When the chair

makes a decision or a ruling, that is a ruling. And what did we see in this committee? Because you as a female chair made a ruling, people decided to ignore it and speak right over it.

This type of bullying behaviour cannot be tolerated. I refuse to continue in this type of working environment, Madam Chair. That is my question of privilege that I'm raising with you today.

• (4755)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you very much, and I want to thank the member for raising a point of privilege. And as she so rightfully said, a point of privilege, as you know, can only be addressed in the House by the Speaker.

But I do want to remind members, all members.....

I'm hoping, Mr. Dykstra, you're listening as well, because this will apply to you in equal standing. I would once again give a reminder that a certain level of decorum is required here—not a certain level, but I would say there is a bar that we shouldn't be sinking below.

I want to remind members that there is no way any member should feel harassed, intimidated, or bullied at committee, or anywhere else in the world, really. I've been teaching anti-bullying all my life. It is very difficult for the chair to look at things retrospectively, because when those behaviours occur it's really important that they are recognized and spoken about at the time, or as close to the time as possible. As time passes, it is very difficult for us to go back, for this chair anyway, to try to deal with those things.

The chair is once again going to say there is a big difference between privilege and feelings being hurt and being bullied. I think there are different places where these things can be addressed, but as far as this committee is concerned—I am actually going to make this very firm now, so I'm hoping all of you are listening—I am not going to tolerate anybody making, I would say, unparliamentary comments or heckling unnecessarily when the other person is speaking.

Look, I'm not going to say all of you have to sit here like this either. We're all human beings. Sometimes we say things, but I think we do have to be respectful and careful of the words we choose. This doesn't just apply to one side of the room; it applies to everybody at this committee.

I would urge the member, in regard to these concerns you have expressed, that if it happens again you bring it to the chair's attention there and then, and then put processes in place.

I also want to remind people that it's very easy when you're feeling under pressure to start bringing up things from the past. There is a certain time limitation as to how you can address things that happened outside of this meeting, at least for this chair. But the chair will very conscientiously and very deliberately take a look to ensure that is not happening here.

Whether it's a man who is being bullied or whether it's a woman being bullied, neither is acceptable. I have both a son and a daughter, and I wouldn't want either one of them to be the victim of bullies. I think we always think that bullying only occurs one way. I would say that at times, as a chair, I have noticed that in our excitement sometimes some members have words come out of their mouths. I must admit that I may have been guilty of this at different times, so I'm trying to be very conscious of my behaviour as well. Let's all of us reflect on that, and make sure that we don't create a situation where a member feels bullied, intimidated, or picked on.

As far as privilege goes, privilege cannot be decided here. That has to be decided by the Speaker. In this case, from what I have observed in the meeting today, I can't make a ruling, but I would not say I saw privilege being...what is it? The right word would be "transgressed".

● (4800)

Mr. John Weston: Or offended.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Or offended. Thank you, lawyer. I appreciate your assistance.

That's my ruling on the point of privilege.

I do want to say to Ms. Sitsabaiesan, as well as everybody else, that if there is a time anybody in this room feels that intimidation or bullying, please bring it to the chair's attention, and the chair will do their very best to ensure it ceases. But unless it's brought to the chair's attention, unless it's very obvious....

I know we had a lot of excitement back there for a while, and I would urge everybody, let's just deal with the content. Let's let Madame Groguhé speak. But I do have other people who have their hands up for different things.

Mr. Opitz was first.

Mr. Ted Opitz: No, it's Ms. James.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I only go with the list.

Mr. Ted Opitz: I've already spoken.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): We'll go to Ms. James and then we'll come back to you, Mr. Weston.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I hope you afford me the same length of time to talk about this point of privilege, and your comments, as you have afforded the NDP and of course yourself as the chair.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Is yours a point of order or of privilege?

Ms. Roxanne James: It is a point of order on what I just heard on the point of privilege. I believe I have—please don't make that face at me.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I'm just trying to see—

Ms. Roxanne James: When we're talking about being bullied—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): —if I can have a point of order on—

Ms. Roxanne James: —I hope that you respect me as a member of this committee—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay. Let's see—

Ms. Roxanne James: —and not pull faces at me when I'm trying to get my point out, please, Madam Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): It was puzzlement, because I'm trying to think things through. It was not any judgment on what you're saying. I'm going to seek some guidance from the clerks, because this area is new to me, when we have a point of order on a privilege.

Ms. Roxanne James: I have a point of order, period.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): When you—

Ms. Roxanne James: Does that help you out?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I heard you say that your point of order was on the previous privilege—

Ms. Roxanne James: I raised my point of order while she was speaking about her point of privilege.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): But it's not on the content of her privilege.

● (4805)

Ms. Roxanne James: I would like to make the point of order. Please let me state it.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay, let's hear your point of order.

Ms. Roxanne James: Yes. Thank you.

First of all, I would like to make a point of order on the fact that I am the lone woman on this committee, and not once have I ever felt that I have been treated inequitably.

I have an opportunity to state this as a point of order.

An hon. member: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Ms. Roxanne James: Absolutely.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Colleagues—

Mr. Rick Dykstra: [*Inaudible—Editor*]...point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Mr. Dykstra, I had picked up my gavel, I had hit it, and you carried on anyway.

Let me remind colleagues....

Ms. Freeman, let us hear... Ms. Sitsabaiesan was afforded full respect while she made her statement of privilege—it was after a little bit of a reminder, but she was. Ms. James is going to get that same respect that was later on showed to your privilege motion.

Ms. James, go ahead.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you.

For me to sit here and hear someone in this committee play the victim card as a woman when I know very well that every single person on this committee is treated equally...it's embarrassing. As a strong Conservative woman in this committee who stands up for the rights of women across my riding and across Canada, I cannot believe that the member from the NDP played the victim card because she felt her feelings were hurt.

We're dealing with a bill that deals with terrorism, and the real victims of crime are those who have died...in fact, we've had witnesses here in this committee. Mr. Bal Gupta was a witness whose wife died in the Air India bombing. That's the real victim of crime—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Ms. James.

Ms. Roxanne James: —not someone who feels that their feelings have been hurt.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Ms. James, this is not a point of order.

Ms. Roxanne James: It's absolutely outrageous, to sit in this committee, when we're dealing with terrorism—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Ms. James, this is not a point of order.

Ms. Roxanne James: —and have to listen to this nonsense from across the way.

I am a strong woman who is proud to be in this Conservative caucus where we are all treated equally.

Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Order.

I want to remind members of this committee that when the chair hits the gavel, it means that the chair is going to speak and is asking for the members to listen.

I sought advice, and the speech you made, Ms. James, is not a point of order. As the chair, I have a right to interrupt something when it is not what it purports to be. You started off by saying that this was a point of order, and that was not a point of order.

I would remind people that it's the chair who is in charge of this meeting, and the chair sets the rules, guided by the clerk and our rules and procedures. When somebody says it's a point of order and it is not a point of order, the chair is going to interrupt the speaker. If I have to, I will adjourn the meeting, if I am not going to get people respecting how a meeting is being run.

I don't want to keep having this conversation over and over again, but once again, we're running this meeting according to the rules, and everybody will get a chance to say their piece according to the rules. You do not get to make a lengthy speech when you are not on a point of order and get to call it a point of order, just as Ms. Sitsabaiesan did not get to claim privilege, because once I heard, I made the ruling based on what I had heard.

It is exactly the same rule in the House. The Speaker in the House does not allow a point of debate on a point of order that goes on to something else. You get to make your point of order, not to debate and talk about other things.

I'm now going to call the meeting back to order.

Ms. James, you may continue.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you, Madam Chair. I apologize if I was very passionate about what I was speaking about. It's a very passionate issue to me.

● (4810)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I appreciate that, Ms. James.

Ms. Roxanne James: That's not my point of clarification. I just want to understand what I am to do to make sure that I am not categorized with the member opposite, who claims to be a victim. I just want to make sure for the record, as a woman on this committee, that those who may be listening realize that I'm here to do a parliamentary job representing my constituents and am certainly not considering myself to be a victim in this committee. I want to know how to get that across.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Ms. James, you have lots of opportunity to do that. Just because one member claims something or says something does not automatically stick to you or attribute it to you.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): You will get lots of opportunities to say those things in venues other than this, but for the sake of this committee and the topic we're here to study, let's make sure that we stick to the rules for this committee.

Mr. Weston, I believe you have a point of order.

Mr. John Weston: It's a point of privilege, actually.

I think that as things get rambunctious this evening, and they will, we will all rise to that challenge. You've done a good job, Madam Chair, of putting into perspective that when we start exchanging allegations about treading on equality rights and things such as that we are crossing over a certain boundary. I would like us all to stay within a certain boundary.

In other words, for those of us who take equality rights really seriously—in my own case, having set up a foundation that made that the centre, the Canadian Constitution Foundation—and I'm surrounded by colleagues on both sides who take those things really seriously, those rights aren't to be trivialized. If we make allegations that may in some minds seem wild or specious or groundless, that trivializes the whole notion of equality. I don't think anybody wants to do that.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you very much.

What I'm going to do now is go back to Madame Groguhé. She's going to go back to speaking on the motion.

Once again, I want to remind people of a level of behaviour and decorum that is required. The chair, if I find things are getting out of line, is going to end the meeting. I'm just giving everybody fair notice of that.

I'm going to go to Madame Groguhé.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I will thus go back to what I was saying about the imposition of an in camera meeting, which, coming from this Conservative majority, is certainly regrettable but not surprising. It is perfectly representative of the attitude that prevails both in the House and in committee, especially during the study of Bill C-425.

This study has been hampered by the government's will to considerably amend the content and scope of the bill, which was orchestrated by the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, who dictated his amendments to the committee, and these amendments were then introduced with no changes by his parliamentary secretary. The main consequence of this was to transform a private member's bill into a government bill, and that is the gist of the matter, which is why we were so concerned about this procedure. Indeed, the procedure seeking to broaden the scope of this bill raised many questions.

Given the refusal of the committee chair to recognize that these amendments were in order, the committee thus had to submit a report, without the consent of the opposition, calling on the scope of Bill C-425 to be broadened in order to be able to impose the amendments of the minister. A point of privilege was raised concerning this report, and this is what I stated at that time, that is, April 30. But for...

[*English*]

Mr. Devinder Shory: A point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): The vice-chair has left her chair to get a glass of water.

Do you have a point of order?

Mr. Devinder Shory: Madam Chair—

● (4815)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Because if you're just speaking for the sake of it—

Mr. Devinder Shory: Madam Chair, I want you to be in the chair.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Yes, Mr. Shory?

Mr. Devinder Shory: With all due respect, Madam Chair, the speaker was addressing Madam Chair, and Madam Chair was not there, so I—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Do you have a point of order?

Mr. Devinder Shory: I do have a point of order—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Can you state your point of order?

Mr. Devinder Shory: Well, Madam Chair...

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Mr. Shory, can you please stop? State your point of order and then you get to speak. You don't get to speak and then state a point of order.

Mr. Devinder Shory: Madam Chair, I want to ask the clerk whether the chair should be in the chair all the time or not.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): What is the normal practice here, Clerk, for the...?

Mr. Devinder Shory: Rule.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): If the chair is missing from the chair for a long time, that can cause problems. But for the chair to get up and grab a cup of tea or water, it is not considered unreasonable, and it has been the common practice at this committee.

That is the ruling of the chair in consultation with the clerk.

That has been given to you before. If you're going to ask it of me every time I stand up, then I will answer every time.

Mr. Devinder Shory: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Madame Groguhé.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: As I was saying, Madam Chair, further to the request to broaden the scope of Bill C-425 in order to impose the amendments of the minister, we had to submit the eighth report to the House and to the Speaker. The Speaker then ruled on a point of privilege that I had raised on April 30.

However, before coming to said point of privilege, I would first like to come back to the content of Bill C-425, remind people of its purpose and put it into context.

The question before us concerning this motion to extend the deadline by 30 days in order to broaden the scope of Bill C-425...

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): If I may interrupt you for a quick second, I really want to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to our amazing clerk, who has been waiting around for most of the day. He does such an amazing job of putting everything together and dealing with some of our behaviours.

Thank you, Clerk.

Sorry for the interruption. We're back to you, Madame Groguhé.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to remind members of the purpose of Bill C-425 and its background, and to draw a parallel with the motion that has been introduced in order to show how incongruous this motion to go ahead with the bill is.

Bill C-425 sets out three major reasons for granting or revoking citizenship to members of the Canadian armed forces, pursuant to the Citizenship Act.

Clause 1(2) of the bill replaces section 5(4) of the act by providing in subsection (b) new ministerial authority to reduce residency requirements in Canada for Canadian armed forces members who wish to acquire citizenship. The bill gives this power to the minister in order to alleviate cases of special and unusual hardship or to reward services of an exceptional value to Canada, and, on application, to reduce from three to two years required residency in Canada for Canadian armed forces members seeking citizenship, on condition that the members have signed a minimum three-year contract and completed basic training.

Clause 2 of the bill adds two subsections to section 9 of the Citizenship Act. Section 9(1.1) would provide:

That a Canadian citizen who is also a citizen or a legal resident of a country other than Canada is deemed to have made an application for renunciation of their Canadian citizenship if they engage in an act of war against the Canadian armed forces.

Clause 9(1.2) would provide the following:

A permanent resident of Canada who has made an application for Canadian citizenship is deemed to have withdrawn their application if they engage in an act of war against the Canadian armed forces.

This bill's purpose is to further integrate permanent residents and underscore the exceptional value of Canadian citizenship, thereby highlighting the contributions of our brave military members. Obviously, we were in favour of that part of the bill, because it is very important to value the contributions made by our military and to underscore their engagement and courage in the defence of our country.

We are in favour of the idea of expediting the process to obtain Canadian citizenship in order to reward permanent residents for their dedication to serving in the Canadian armed forces. We were also in favour of the Canadian armed forces reflecting, in a significant way, the great diversity of Canada, and this bill would contribute in part to that objective.

Unfortunately, some aspects of the bill relating to applications for renunciation and withdrawal of applications for Canadian citizenship are a problem. According to the wording, the bill provides that a citizen or an authorized resident of a foreign country who commits an act of war against the Canadian armed forces is deemed to have made an application for renunciation of their Canadian citizenship. Similarly, a permanent resident who would have committed the same act would be deemed to have withdrawn their application for Canadian citizenship. The bill does not state clearly that legal proceedings are necessary to determine whether someone has committed an act of war or who would be making the decision. Moreover, certain key terms are not defined. "Act of war" is not defined in Canadian law. There is no definition for the expression "legal resident of a country other than Canada" either.

Broad changes brought about by Conservatives to the Canadian immigration system have unfortunately not made it more effective nor fair. We New Democrats are in favour of the idea that Canadian armed forces should better reflect Canadian diversity. However, the circumstances under which Canadian citizenship could indeed be revoked or an application for citizenship withdrawn should be entirely legal and subject to regular judicial proceedings.

This bill contains notions that are not very clear and parts that are limited in scope. I would like to get back to an idea mentioned in this bill which will create two classes of citizens, on the one hand, individuals with a single citizenship and on the other, those who have more than one. The latter may risk losing Canadian citizenship, even if they are born in Canada and have never been to the other country they are citizens of.

Canadian citizenship should not be considered a privilege that can be withdrawn like a driver's licence can be revoked. It is useful to point this out. Indeed, this is undeniably discrimination. It creates two-tier citizenship whereby people are not treated fairly. Several witnesses have appeared before this committee to discuss the arbitrariness of these measures and the potential for discrimination towards citizens who may be considered different.

I would like to get back to the question of privilege I raised in the House and that the Speaker replied to. This will also shed light on the procedure to broaden the scope of this bill. This motion, I would remind members, provides for 30 additional days and a broadening of the bill. The Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism wants to pass amendments to broaden the scope of Bill C-425.

● (4825)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Madame Groguhé, would you just hold on a second, please?

Ms. James, do you have a point of order?

Ms. Roxanne James: I'm not sure.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Let's see.

Ms. Roxanne James: I just want to clarify if my name is on the speaking list yet, and if not, would you please add it?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): It's not, but it will be now.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you very much. Sorry to interrupt.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Madam Chair, the broadening of the scope of this bill has been a grave concern to us, because it would radically alter the original bill. As we have mentioned, the initial bill should have been reviewed and revised. And because it imposed certain limits in its wording, we worked on the issues together as a committee for several sittings to finally propose some amendments.

In the meantime, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism decided to broaden the scope of the bill, as I have just stated, and he proposed his own amendments. However, the minister's proposed broadening distorts the very nature of the initial bill. Now, we cannot even refer to this bill as a private member's bill because it is actually a government bill as moved by the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism.

That said, let us get back to the question of privilege I raised in the House. I will start by reiterating the content of the question and then read the speaker's reply. My question was the following:

Mr. Speaker I rise today on the question of privilege — which is not truly a question of privilege — raised by my colleague from Toronto Centre. The question has to do with the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, which recommends to the House that it:

[...] be granted the power during its consideration of Bill C-425...

[English]

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Madam Chair, I have a point of order.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): We have a point of order.

Madame Groguhé, if I could beg your indulgence one more time, I know you've had many interruptions, and as a chair I do feel terrible, but we do have a point of order from Ms. Sitsabaiesan.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Madam Chair, I'm just wondering if you can advise the committee if we have quorum right now.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Yes, we have quorum.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Madame Groguhé.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: I was mentioning the question of privilege I had raised before the Speaker of the House, to see about the relevance of tabling the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration.

So I will resume my reading of this question of privilege raised in the House:

[...] be granted the power during its consideration of Bill C-425, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (honouring the Canadian Armed Forces) to expand the scope of the bill such that the provisions of the bill be not limited to the Canadian Armed Forces.

I want to share why I think this question should be ruled out of order. However, before I share my arguments, I would like to correct what has been said so far. When the Honourable Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, the member for York—Simcoe, spoke on April 25th, 2013, he misled the House. In speaking about the amendment, he implied that the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration is:

[...] asking the House to debate it for a number of hours and decide whether we think it is within the scope of the bill [...]

As you know, Mr. Speaker, that is not at all the case. This report does not ask us to determine whether the proposed amendments are within the scope of the bill. On the contrary, as I will explain later on, the committee clearly showed that it knows the proposed amendments are outside the scope of the bill. The report asks the House to give the committee the power...

• (4830)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Madame Groguhé, I am going to ask you to stop for a second.

With all due respect, I would ask that if members have a conversation they want to carry on, they take it outside or turn down the volume, because it's very difficult to hear the speaker. I don't know if it's my earpiece that's faulty. I do have it turned to maximum, and I am having difficulty hearing. I'm just letting you know. So either carry on outside, please, or turn it down.

Ms. James.

Ms. Roxanne James: I just want to let you know that I actually have trouble hearing, but I can hear fine, so it might be your earpiece.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): It could be, but it's already turned up to maximum. I either get this huge echo or I don't hear anything. I could also hear the conversation clearly word for word. I'd rather not hear it.

Ms. Freeman.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Sorry, Madam Chair. I don't want to waste any of your time. I was going to raise the same point of order. I'm literally sitting one chair away from the speaker right now and I could not hear her well.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: [Inaudible—Editor]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Can I finish with that point of order? Then I'll get back to you.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Sure.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): As I said, Ms. Freeman, I have asked people to be quieter.

Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Just on a point of order, Ms. Freeman was actually outside of the room; I would find it difficult to hear Madame Groguhé speak if I were out of the room. That's almost impossible to hear, when you're actually not here. That might have been part of the reason she couldn't hear.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Madam Chair, just on what Mr. Dykstra has raised, I think when I returned from leaving the room, which I think I was within my rights to do, given that we were three members sitting here—I mean an extra member was sitting here—and we were five NDP members in the room.... I thought I was able to at least use the facilities—I'm going to try to be polite despite this late hour. When I returned to the room, I noticed the amount of noise and was about to raise it with the chair when she clearly had the same instinct.

I think the chair did settle that, and I'm glad to see everybody's back.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Thank you very much. The member is sitting in the chair right now.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: She should be able to hear now that she's back.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): She was saying when she was sitting here she could not hear.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: For the record—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay, let's remember what I said earlier.

Ms. Sitsabaiesan.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

My understanding of O'Brien and Bosc and our Standing Orders in this place is that, just like in the House of Commons, you do not state whether a member is present or not present, whether that's in their seat in the chamber or in their seat in the committee; you don't actually point out whether a member is present or not.

I'm sure that our honourable colleagues on this committee are very well aware of this rule, and if any of the members of this committee need to use the facilities, need to get a drink of water—we're all human beings and our bodies have bodily functions that need to be taken care of, Madam Chair. I think people in this room can at least—at least—know that one rule because it's been raised in the House several times. I think everybody should know that rule by now, Madam Chair. Nevertheless, I will remind them all once again.

• (4835)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): I have a speakers list, so I would encourage people....

Look, what has it got to now? We are making comments here about when somebody has gone out of the room and into the room. Everybody knows the rules. Let's just remember the rules.

I'm going to go over to Ms. James.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you. I just—

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Mr. Dykstra.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: Madam Chair, I was just making a point that Ms. Freeman, who was saying she couldn't hear.... Part of the reason wasn't whether she was sitting in her chair or not—that's irrelevant; I don't really care about that. I was just pointing out that it's tough to hear someone when you're not in the room. That was my only point.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): With all due respect, what was mentioned was that a member was not in the room. It doesn't matter how directly or indirectly; it was very clear.

Mr. Rick Dykstra: I will make sure I don't mention who is and is not in the room, but it is tough to hear when you're out of the room. I'm just making that point.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay, okay, guys

Ms. Mylène Freeman: I'd like to know when I'm going to be able to speak next.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims): Okay, guys, you know what? The meeting is adjourned.

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