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Standing Committee on National Defence

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Monday, October 2, 2017

—
Chair

Mr. Stephen Fuhr

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• (1530)

[English]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Elizabeth Kingston): Honourable members, pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), we will now proceed to the election of the first vice-chair. I'm now prepared to receive motions to that effect.

Mr. Garrison.

An hon. member: You're already vice-chair.

Some hon members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): I would like to nominate James Bezan.

The Clerk: Are there any further motions?

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Mr. Bezan duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

Congratulations, Mr. Bezan.

The Chair (Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.)): Congratulations, James. I believe you have a motion.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.

I sent out on Friday a notice of motion. I'll move the motion now:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee immediately undertake a study of no less than 4 meetings on the proposed changes to the tax system outlined in the government's consultations titled "Tax Planning Using Private Corporations" as publicly released on July 18, 2017, in order to assess the impact of the changes as they apply to small businesses that support, supply, and maintain the Canadian Armed Forces and the Department of National Defence's operations and equipment; and that the findings be reported to the House; and that the government provide a response to the recommendations made by the committee.

The Chair: It is so moved by Mr. Bezan.

Is there debate?

Mr. James Bezan: Sir, I'll just start off by saying that we are hearing that the small business tax changes that are being proposed by Minister Morneau are creating quite a bit of controversy out in the public. We're hearing about small businesses and farm families that are going to be severely impacted. We know that a lot of these small businesses also supply material and services to our armed forces at

numerous bases right across this country, along with services provided at national defence headquarters here in Ottawa.

I think it is incumbent upon us to see whether the tax changes are going to impact those businesses, and ultimately, if they are being impacted, how that is going to affect the operations of the Canadian Armed Forces who have these services provided across the country. A lot of times it's training that is provided. It's logistical support. It's support for the maintenance of equipment, and it's maintenance and infrastructure development at the various bases across the country. This has a huge impact on those businesses, and I think it is important that as a committee we look at how it's going to impact those businesses and, ultimately, the readiness of the Canadian Armed Forces.

The Chair: Is there any further debate?

(Motion negated)

The Chair: Before we move in camera to do committee business, I just wanted to formally recognize and welcome Randy Hoback and David Yurdiga. Thank you for coming. I know you're members of our committee now, and I welcome you very much.

Sherry Romanado is now a member of our committee as well. Soon we'll see her from time to time. Jean Rioux has always been a member.

Thank you very much. Unless there's anything else, I want to move the meeting in camera.

Mr. Garrison.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Sorry for being a bit slow here today. Can you explain to me how we have new members of the committee? They're obviously not full members of the committee.

The Chair: They're not voting members, no.

Mr. Randall Garrison: Then how have they been added to the committee?

Elizabeth, do you want to take over with the standing order?

The Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Garrison.

There's a new standing order that was adopted by the House that allows for parliamentary secretaries to be part of the committee. They are not counted in quorum. They may not vote, but they may be part of in camera proceedings and receive the documents.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bezan.

Mr. James Bezan: The Prime Minister promised in the 2015 election that parliamentary secretaries weren't going to be part of committees. Now that the Standing Orders have been changed to allow them to be members of committee, are they allowed to participate in the questioning of witnesses during studies, and will their participation have to come after the permanent members of the committee are allowed to ask questions, or can they intercede at any point in time?

• (1535)

The Chair: No, I don't believe so. I think that, as agreed by all parties, each side will have the appropriate order with the appropriate

minutes, and if a person chooses to give their time or yield their time, they're welcome to do so. That's the way that we'll carry on, as agreed to previously.

Mr. James Bezan: Okay.

The Chair: We've had practice in the past.

Mr. James Bezan: Okay.

The Chair: If there's nothing else, we will move in camera.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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