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Chair: The Honourable Judy A. Sgro



Standing Committee on International Trade

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• (1535)

[English]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Dancella Boyi): Good afternoon, honourable members of the committee.

[Translation]

I see that there is quorum.

I must inform you that the clerk of the committee can only receive motions for the election of the chair. The clerk cannot receive other types of motions, cannot entertain points of order and cannot participate in debate.

[English]

We can now proceed to the election of the chair.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the chair must be a member of the government party.

I'm ready to receive motions for the chair.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Thank you.

You know, when Mr. Eyking was the chair, he actually did a really good job of bringing lobsters and socializing in this committee. I would think the new chair would continue in that fashion and that tradition.

I think Judy Sgro would make an excellent chair and I know she would do that.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Is that conditional on my getting the lobsters this time?

Mr. Randy Hoback: We're raising the bar of expectations. We'll see how you do.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: It may have to go back to Scotch. It's easier to bring Scotch.

Mr. Randy Hoback: I nominate Judy Sgro to be chair.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: Thank you very much.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Hoback that Ms. Sgro be elected as chair of the committee. Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Ms. Sgro duly elected chair of the committee.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Clerk: I invite Ms. Sgro to take the chair, please.

The Chair (Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.)): Is it the pleasure of the committee to continue with the election of the vice-chairs?

[Translation]

The Clerk: Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the first vice-chair must be a member of the official opposition.

[English]

I am now prepared to receive motions for the first vice-chair.

Mr. Arif Virani (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Madam Chair, with your permission, can I proceed with a nomination?

The Chair: Please do.

Mr. Arif Virani: I would propose that, in keeping with tradition, we would nominate a member of the Conservative caucus. I would propose Mr. Hoback to be an excellent vice-chair candidate.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Mr. Virani that Mr. Hoback be elected as first vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

Mr. Arif Virani: Perhaps Mr. Hoback could speak to what delicacies he would propose bringing as vice-chair when he arrives in that role, should he be given that confidence by this committee.

Mr. Randy Hoback: I'll reserve comment until I'm elected.

The Clerk: Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Absolutely.

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

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

The Clerk: Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the second vice-chair must be a member of an opposition party other than the official opposition.

[English]

I am now prepared to receive motions for the second vice-chair.

[Translation]

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): I nominate Mr. Savard-Tremblay, from the Bloc Québécois.

The Clerk: Ms. Dhillon moved that Mr. Savard-Tremblay be elected second vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

[English]

Mr. Randy Hoback: I second that nomination.

[Translation]

The Clerk: Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Mr. Savard-Tremblay duly elected second vice-chair of the committee.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much to all of you for your support. For all of us who are chairs and vice-chairs, we all look forward to starting our new process and doing some really serious work together. I think we have a great membership here on the committee, and I'm pleased to get started.

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

I want to take this opportunity to remind all participants in the meeting that screenshots or taking photos of your screen are not permitted.

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 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's highly recommended that the mask be worn at all times, including when seated. You must maintain proper hand hygiene by using the provided hand sanitizer that is at the entrance to the room. As the chair, I will be enforcing those measures for the duration of the meeting, and I thank members in advance for their co-operation.

To ensure an orderly meeting, I have to outline a few rules to follow. For members participating on Zoom, you may speak in the official language of your choice. Interpretation services are available for this meeting. You have the choice at the bottom of your screen of either English or French. If interpretation is lost, please inform me immediately, and we will ensure interpretation is properly restored before resuming the proceedings. The "raise hand" feature at the bottom of the screen can be used at any time if you wish to speak or alert the chair.

For members participating in person, proceed as you usually would when the whole committee is meeting in person at the committee room.

Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. If you are on video conferencing, please click on the microphone icon

to unmute yourself. For those in the room, your microphones 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 remind you that all comments by members and witnesses should be addressed through the chair.

With regard to the 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.

Thank you for all that.

With the agreement of the committee, does the committee want to proceed with the consideration of routine motions? All right, we have consensus.

The committee clerk has circulated a list of the routine motions that the committee adopted in the last session of the previous Parliament, and as a reminder, a motion must be moved by a committee member.

• (1540)

Mr. Randy Hoback: We haven't seen those from the clerk. Are they providing a physical copy here in the room?

The Chair: I'm looking at the clerk. Were the routine motions supplied to all of the members?

The Clerk: They were distributed with the welcome email. I can redistribute them right now—

Mr. Randy Hoback: I think we should.

The Clerk: I don't have any physical copies right now, but I can endeavour to get some. I will redistribute them electronically right away.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Okay, I would feel better if we all had a copy of them.

The Chair: I think everybody should have them in a paper copy in front of them.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Yes.

The Chair: Mr. Virani.

Mr. Arif Virani: I was prepared to move them. I can read them into the record, dividing my time in each official language if that assists. I have a hard copy of what I'm going to read here as well, so you can make a photocopy of that after the fact, if that assists.

Mr. Randy Hoback: I'd prefer to have them in front of me as you read them.

The Chair: Mr. Hoback doesn't have a copy.

How long would it take, Madam Clerk, to get some copies?

The Clerk: Perhaps we can suspend for about five minutes.

The Chair: Okay, I'm going to suggest that we suspend. I see that some people have them and some don't. In order to go through them, we all should have them in a paper copy in front of us. I'm going to move that we suspend for five minutes, and the clerk will get us copies as quickly as possible.

• (1540) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1555)

The Chair: You've had a chance to read the routine motions.

Mr. Virani, you're going to read them into the record. Would the committee want to vote on all of the routine motions at the end of their being read in, or do you want to vote on them individually?

Unless there's an objection, we'll continue, and if there's an area that's a problem, please make sure that you flag it, and we'll discuss it at that time.

Mr. Virani, please go ahead.

Mr. Arif Virani: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

The first routine motion deals with analyst services:

That the committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the Chair, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

[Translation]

The second part of the routine motions is respecting the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be established and be composed of five members; the Chair, one member from each recognized party; and that the subcommittee work in a spirit of collaboration.

[English]

The third motion relates to meetings without a quorum:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence published when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four members are present, including two members of the opposition parties and two members of the government party, but when travelling outside the Parliamentary Precinct, that the meeting begin after 15 minutes, regardless of members present.

[Translation]

The fourth motion relates to time for opening remarks and questioning of witnesses:

That witnesses be given five minutes for their opening statement; that whenever possible, witnesses provide the committee with their opening statement 72 hours in advance; that at the discretion of the Chair, during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated six minutes for the first questioner of each party as follows for the first round:

Conservative Party

Liberal Party

Bloc Québécois

New Democratic Party

For the second and subsequent rounds, the order and time for questioning be as follows:

Conservative Party, five minutes

Liberal Party, five minutes

Bloc Québécois, two and a half minutes

New Democratic Party, two and a half minutes

Conservative Party, five minutes

Liberal Party, five minutes.

[English]

The fifth motion deals with document distribution:

That only the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute documents to members of the committee provided the documents are in both official languages, and that the witnesses be advised accordingly.

[Translation]

The sixth motion concerns working meals:

That the clerk of the committee, at the discretion of the Chair, be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working meals for the committee and its subcommittees.

[English]

I'll add parenthetically that any additional cost that arises thereto respecting lobsters will be the sole purview of the chair.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Arif Virani: The seventh motion deals with travel, accommodation and living expenses of witnesses:

That, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses not exceeding two representatives per organization; and that in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be made at the discretion of the Chair.

[Translation]

The eighth motion concerns access to in camera meetings:

That, unless otherwise ordered, each committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one staff member at in camera meetings and that one additional person from each House officer's office be allowed to be present.

[English]

The ninth motion deals with transcripts of in camera meetings:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee or by their staff; and that the analysts assigned to the committee also have access to the in camera transcripts.

[Translation]

The 10th motion relates to notices of motion:

That a 48-hour notice, interpreted as two nights, be required for any substantive motion to be moved in committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration, provided that: (a) the notice be filed with the clerk of the committee no later than 4:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday; (b) the motion be distributed to Members and the offices of the whips of each recognized party in both official languages by the clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour; (c) notices received after the deadline hour or on non-business days be deemed to have been received during the next business day; and that when the committee is holding meetings outside the Parliamentary Precinct, no substantive motion may be moved.

• (1600)

[English]

I forgot which number I'm on. I think it's 11, which deals with the orders of reference from the House respecting bills:

That in relation to orders of reference from the House respecting Bills,

(a) The clerk of the committee shall, upon the committee receiving such an order of reference, write to each member who is not a member of a caucus represented on the committee to invite those members to file with the clerk of the committee, in both official languages, any amendments to the bill, which is the subject of the said Order, which they would suggest that the committee consider;

(b) Suggested amendments filed, pursuant to paragraph (a), at least 48 hours prior to the start of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill to which the amendments relate shall be deemed to be proposed during the said consideration, provided that the committee may, by motion, vary this deadline in respect of a given bill; and

(c) During the clause-by-clause consideration of a bill, the Chair shall allow a member who filed suggested amendments, pursuant to paragraph (a), an opportunity to make brief representations in support of them.

[Translation]

The 12th motion concerns technical tests for witnesses:

That the clerk inform each witness who is to appear before the committee that the House administration support team must conduct technical tests to check the connectivity and the equipment used to ensure the best possible sound quality; and that the Chair advise the committee, at the start of each meeting, of any witness who did not perform the required technical tests.

[English]

The thirteenth deals with linguistic review:

That all documents submitted for committee business that do not come from a federal department, members' offices, or that have not been translated by the Translation Bureau be sent for prior linguistic review by the Translation Bureau before being distributed to members.

[Translation]

Lastly, the 14th motion concerns the appearance of ministers:

That whenever a minister appears before the committee, every effort should be made in order for the meeting to be televised.

[English]

That is the end of my submissions. Those are the propositions that I believe we have the consent of all parties on, so that is what I would propose to be the routine motions to be passed by the committee at this time.

The Chair: Are there any concerns or discussions?

Mr. Virani has moved—

Yes, Mr. Savard-Tremblay.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): I have just one question: Why was the last routine motion in the documents we received, the one on in camera proceedings, not read?

[English]

The Chair: Please go ahead.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Actually, I just had a question about this motion: Why are we talking about unanimous consent rather than a majority vote?

[English]

Mr. Arif Virani: Madam Chair, I'm happy to address that.

My understanding is that all of the parties have agreed to the first 14 propositions. The Liberal Party, in all candour, does not support that last proposition.

[Translation]

I'm talking about the motion concerning in camera proceedings.

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: So, it wasn't proposed today?

[English]

The Chair: No, it is not. Mr. Virani has not moved it, and in fact according to the information that I have, it's out of order on that particular motion. The other ones have all been agreed to by all of the party whips and that's why they were brought forward in that format.

Mr. Hoback.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Yes, Chair, I agree with you. I was told by the folks in our whip's office too that this wasn't agreed upon, and actually when you get into the functionality of this, it actually would be not in order, so it can't proceed.

The Chair: Okay. Everybody's okay with that?

Is there unanimous consent to vote on all of those routine motions with one vote, of course not including the one Mr. Savard-Tremblay was referencing, but simply the ones that have been recognized that Mr. Virani introduced.

Mr. Masse.

• (1605)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): I'm not going to disagree but I want to know why it's out of order. I come from a municipal background where in camera meetings are specifically designated by law, and so I don't understand why the motion here is out of order. If we choose not to do it, that's one thing, but being ruled out of order is another. I want to make that point, because my understanding is that it's not out of order, but I'd like to know why.

The Chair: On page 1089 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, it states that in practice, committees often change from in public to in camera meetings at the suggestion of the chair with the consent of the members. This routine motion could be used more as a guide rather than a strict rule. That's the information I'm getting from the clerk.

Mr. Brian Masse: Sure.

Mr. Randy Hoback: If you look at the—

The Chair: It conflicts with the standing orders that we are basically in the process of adopting.

Mr. Randy Hoback: When you look at it, any motion to go in camera is not debatable, but this is asking for it to be debatable. That contradicts going in camera, so that's the problem with the way it's worded.

The Chair: Yes, that's the problem with that motion.

Mr. Brian Masse: [*Inaudible—Editor*] I just don't think it's out of order. I mean—

Mr. Randy Hoback: You can't debate a motion to go in camera. It's undebatable, yet in here you're asking to debate it before you go in camera. That contradicts itself.

Mr. Brian Masse: Yes. We're choosing the rules right now, though.

The Chair: Everything that Mr. Virani has outlined has been agreed upon by all of the whips. They've given us the direction to...

Let's keep peace moving forward, all right?

All those in favour of the routine motions that Mr. Virani has indicated.

(Motions agreed to)

The Chair: Thank you all very much.

I would like to invite the analysts—

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Madam Chair, I put my hand up virtually.

Congratulations, Madam Chair, and to the vice-chairs as well.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Sheehan.

I was just about to invite the analysts to the table and then open it up for discussion.

Is that okay with you, or do you want...?

Mr. Terry Sheehan: I wanted to draw to your attention that I had circulated a motion in both official languages. I didn't know when the appropriate time was to introduce it or deal with it. We just did the routine motions, so I'm seeking your advice.

The Chair: If you want to introduce it, send it off to the clerk and we'll discuss it with committee business as to where we go.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Very good.

I have circulated it and I believe everyone has received it. I can read it, if you'd like, at the appropriate time.

The Chair: Right now, we're going to invite the analysts, Simon Richards and Bashar Abu Taleb, to take their seats and to put on the camera.

Would the committee like to discuss committee business at this time?

Go ahead, Mr. Hoback.

Mr. Randy Hoback: I believe there are two motions. Arif has a motion and Terry does, too. They're both very similar. They should probably go to the subcommittee for discussion. There are some terminology problems in both of them; it's not the buy America but the "Build Back Better" legislation that they're talking about.

I have no issue with their motions or doing that type of study; it's the process that we use to get it forward here. It should probably go to the subcommittee. I would be curious to hear if there are any other things that people would like to have before the subcommittee for discussion.

The Chair: The floor is open for that kind of a discussion and to some of the committee business that would then go to the subcommittee at that point.

Mr. Arif Virani: I believe Mr. Sheehan wanted to speak to his motion, so perhaps we could turn it back over to him.

The Chair: Mr. Sheehan, do you want to speak to your motion?

I also see that Mr. Masse's hand is up. Monsieur Savard-Tremblay will go after him.

Mr. Sheehan, go ahead first, please, to speak to your motion.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Thank you very much.

I'll take Randy's friendly amendment and I'll read it in. I move:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee study the ongoing trade challenges faced by Canadian workers and industry in the United States in the light of the harmful Build Back Better and EV provisions and that the committee reports its finding to the House.

As far as how long it should go, that's not in the notice of motion, but I would suggest that we need at least six meetings on this, and probably more. However, I would seek the committee's input on how many meetings we would hold. There should be at least six. We can add more as we need them, when we draw up the witness list, etc., as per usual.

Many of the people around this table I have worked with on similar motions, whether it was the section 232 tariffs, the manufacturing study or the steel study that we did.

I've read it into the record and I welcome discussion on that.

Thank you.

• (1610)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Sheehan.

You're amending your motion to indicate, instead of "Buy America", "Build Back Better", as suggested by Mr. Hoback.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Yes. I accept it as a friendly amendment.

The Chair: All right.

Go ahead, Mr. Virani.

Mr. Arif Virani: I have a couple of points. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Sheehan, for proposing this study. I think most of us would agree—I haven't heard from everyone, however—that this is a very pressing issue to study, so I laud you for proposing it.

I agree with you that the quantum of the meetings makes a lot of sense.

What I would say in respect of what Mr. Hoback raised earlier is that while I appreciate that we've just passed a routine motion talking about the subcommittee on procedure, I think this matter is quite timely. Therefore, for the purposes of getting started with committee business, I propose that we vote on this particular motion now, so that the committee can start its scheduling, preparing witnesses, etc., as opposed to waiting for the subcommittee on procedure to convene.

I think the language could be a bit more elegant, so I'm going to take a stab at it, because I am a lawyer, Madam Chair, and this is what lawyers do. I would say it should read to the effect, "the ongoing trade challenges faced by Canadian workers in industry as regards the United States' Build Back Better legislation, buy America policy, and EV tax credit provisions and that the committee reports its findings to the House". I think that would encompass everything that Mr. Hoback mentioned and be a bit tighter in terms of the grammar.

The Chair: I have to go to Mr. Masse next, then Monsieur Savard-Tremblay and then we'll go to Mr. Hoback.

Mr. Brian Masse: Thank you, Madam Chair. I agree with all of that.

I would also add a component, “and the committee study and report on Canadian EV incentives”. We have our current incentive program—I've written the minister on this—that is actually going to the United States. There are about eight vehicles that they have as well, too. I think that would strengthen the case for the minister and also for information going out to the public that balances what's taking place between both the countries.

The Chair: Monsieur Savard-Tremblay.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: I'm going to digress a bit, but I would like to make it clear in passing that I do, of course, support this study, which concerns us all.

How would you like us to proceed, as I also have a proposal for a study topic? Do you want me to present it now and then we can decide on the order of priority?

[*English*]

The Chair: That was the question, and I got direction from the committee on whether they wanted to discuss committee business. We started with Mr. Sheehan's motion for discussion. Once we have settled Mr. Sheehan's motion—when the committee has given direction on it—then you can introduce any other subjects or thoughts.

It's a general committee business opportunity to talk about the kinds of things you would like to see the committee deal with.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: The order of priority therefore doesn't necessarily reflect the order in which motions are adopted.

[*English*]

The Chair: Well, this is the first motion that was sent to the clerk. We are discussing what we will do with it. Once we have disposed of it, in whichever way we choose to do, then we will go on to whatever items the committee members introduce.

We'll get back to you, Mr. Savard-Tremblay, once we've completed the discussion on this.

Mr. Hoback.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Thank you, Chair.

I'm trying to think of process and procedures in this. Again, I don't think anybody has a problem with this study; it's whether this is the first or second study that we do, with what my colleague from the Bloc is trying to make. That's why we have a subcommittee, though. I don't think we can short-step that subcommittee at this point in time.

I think what would be a good use of our time is—I know what Terry has proposed and how you've amended it—to have them bring forward one item to the subcommittee, instead of amending it on the fly, because there's been no talk about travelling to the U.S.

and having meetings in the U.S. I would think that would be part of committee travel that we should be considering.

Again, I think it needs to be fleshed out a little bit more.

Today they announced negotiations on the U.K. deal, so we've got ASEAN, we have the U.K. We have other things coming up. We still have softwood lumber sitting in the background, which looks like it needs some work. There are lots of things that have priority. While the Liberals view EV as a huge priority, and I agree with them, there are other sectors that are saying they're a priority too and asking where we have been.

I think that's where it has to come back to the subcommittee, and then we can figure out what to propose for a calendar to the committee of the whole. Otherwise, we will go around this table six times, with 10 different ideas on what we should do first. I think that's the power of the subcommittee. Let's try to get it done on a calendar at the subcommittee, and then bring it back. If you want to have a subcommittee meeting quickly this week, I'd be more than happy to accommodate that, for sure.

• (1615)

The Chair: Mr. Arya.

Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I have two things. On the amended words from Mr. Virani, I would like to suggest that before the word “legislation”, we should include “proposed legislation” or “the legislation currently under consideration”.

Mr. Randy Hoback: I have a point of order.

I'm sorry, Chandra.

This is the problem I see, Chair. We're going to start debating one debate and we have other people in other areas talking about different things. It's just not going to function properly if we do that.

The Chair: It all has to go to the subcommittee.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Yes, I believe it does.

If you want to meet tomorrow morning at eight o'clock on the subcommittee—

The Chair: How about today?

Mr. Randy Hoback: Yes, I'd be glad with that.

Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC): Just rise right now and you guys can [*Inaudible—Editor*].

The Chair: We'll let you all leave and—

Mr. Randy Hoback: To be fair to everybody here, I'm sure the Bloc and NDP have some ideas they'd like for studies, so let's get them all in the basket. If we need a day or two to get them to the clerk and then you have everything to look at, then we can sit down to figure that out.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Randy Hoback: I have no problem having that done relatively quickly.

Mr. Chandra Arya: I'm sorry, I had a second point.

I agree with Mr. Masse's suggestion on including the Canadian policies that can be considered because the Prime Minister has already said that Canada is willing to align its EV incentives with those of the U.S.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Madam Chair, I had my hand up, too.

The Chair: Mr. Sheehan.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Thank you very much.

This is proposed legislation that's before the Americans right now. That's why I wanted this motion dealt with today. It sends a clear message at our first meeting about our concern that this ought to be a priority. We know this is potentially going to affect Canadian workers and Canadian businesses. I really think we should pass my motion with the Arif's amendments about including both Build Back Better, Buy America and the EV. We can work out, as we've done before in committee when undertaking studies in the past... Randy will recall that we have, as we studied things, decided to take a trip to various places, including to Washington, to discuss our concern about the section 232 tariffs. We were very successful in that team Canada effort.

I think it behooves us to work expeditiously right now. It's certainly going to send that signal to our Canadian workers, as well as to American legislators, that we're very concerned about it. I think we should do it right now at 4:18 today and not waste a second.

The Chair: Thank you.

I have Mr. Hoback and then Mr. Virani.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Sheehan, I'm not trying to delay it at all. In fact, if this committee wants to come back to sitting here between Christmas and New Year's Day and all through January to do this, I would think the Conservatives would be in line with doing that and would be happy to do that because we recognize the importance of it. However, to throw it in front of the committee today the way it's been thrown out, seeing the amendments that have been done to it, and still having no consideration for other members of the committee and their priorities is just wrong.

I think we need to flesh that out. If you want to do it tonight or tomorrow morning, I'm more than happy to do it quickly, but you need to give time for all the members of the committee to get that in here if we're going to start deciding which studies we want to do. If we want to start sitting next week, then let's start sitting next week. We are members of Parliament and this is a big issue. It's been mishandled from day one, so if we can come in as a committee to fix it, I think that's a good thing. I think the Conservatives would be more than happy to do that.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: On that note, Madam Chair, listening to Randy and the other people, I think we can solve both these issues today by just passing this notice of motion and bringing it to the planning committee to prioritize on a calendar along with other things that the subcommittee may want to do. I would be in agreement with passing the motion and then sending it to the subcommittee to be placed on a calendar with whatever else that subcommittee decides ought to be studied first, second or third.

That, I think, is a way we can satisfy everyone's concerns.

Thank you.

• (1620)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Sheehan.

Chris.

Mr. Chris Lewis: Madam Chair, is it possible to suspend for just 45 seconds or a minute?

The Chair: I was thinking I would do the same thing.

Mr. Chris Lewis: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Five minutes can solve a lot of problems, even without coffee. Thanks for suggesting that, Chris.

• (1620)

(Pause)

• (1625)

The Chair: I call the meeting back to order.

Mr. Virani.

Mr. Arif Virani: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, there have been discussions among the parties and I believe that if you seek it you'll probably find some support for passing a motion that relates to a study, and then the filling out the details and contours of that study could be done at a later date by the subcommittee on procedure. With your permission, Madam Chair, I will perhaps ask Mr. Hoback to suggest what that proposed language would be and that it would maybe be a friendly amendment to Mr. Sheehan's original motion.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Hoback.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Terry, hopefully you are listening.

Basically we're going to try to keep it very simple. We're asking the committee to entertain a study on Build Back Better and the impacts it will have on the electric vehicle industry here in Canada and manufacturing, and that the study be reported back to the House when it's completed. We won't put deadlines in it as far as the number of meetings, timelines, witnesses, or travel are concerned at this point in time. We can decide that as a committee as we get into the study, but we will do what Mr. Sheehan wants and that's to send a message to the U.S. that this committee has unanimous consent that it's a big enough issue that we want to study it.

The Chair: Absolutely.

Okay, is everybody good with that?

All those in favour of Mr. Sheehan's motion as amended?

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

The Chair: You know, you're going to be a great group of people. We'll get a lot of stuff done if we can just keep on working with each other.

Mr. Savard-Tremblay.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: I would still like to say that it would be nice if we could agree so that, when we return—

[English]

The Chair: I'm sorry, the translation was delayed.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: It would be nice if we could agree on a topic to study when we return. That way, we wouldn't start with a subcommittee meeting. In other words, everything should be in place when we come back after the holidays.

[English]

The Chair: Madam Clerk, would you come over here for a minute?

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: So I appeal to all of us to agree to have a topic to study in January, after the holidays. It would be nice to resume our work with a topic ready to be studied, which we would have already chosen, instead of having to hold a subcommittee meeting.

[English]

The Chair: Any additional suggestions from any of the committee members of work that you might like to start should be sent over to the clerk. At the first opportunity that we have we will have a meeting of the subcommittee.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Me too, I would like to propose a motion concerning a topic of study. Is this the right time?

[English]

The Chair: Yes, please go ahead.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: I have paper copies for everyone. I'll give them out in a moment.

Should I read the proposal, or would you prefer that everyone be free to read it in the language of their choice?

[English]

The Chair: Yes, I think it's probably good to read it into the record.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Everyone will have the wording, so I'll just tell you that I think the softwood lumber issue and the forestry issue need to be looked at urgently. So, if possible, I would like to see this motion passed today.

Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: We have Mr. Hoback.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Again, I have no issue with this. It's just the process. What we are going to use for new studies coming for-

ward and how we do that is the only concern I have. Again, I have no issue with this study. I think it's a great study.

The Chair: Technically it would be referred to the subcommittee.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Yes.

Chair, do you want to have each party put forward three or four ideas or motions for us to consider in subcommittee before January? I'm just asking the question.

The Chair: I think it would help to have an idea of where the different members are coming from and what their thoughts and suggestions are, and then it's going to be up to the subcommittee to evaluate which ones prioritize which study we're going to do. We're going to start with Mr. Sheehan's, maybe Mr. Savard-Tremblay's will be the second, and somebody else's will be the third. That will come forward with the recommendations.

The sooner we know where the ideas are.... As in politics, new things always hit on the horizon very quickly, which then get added on to the overall.

Mr. Arya, did you have your hand up?

● (1630)

Mr. Chandra Arya: I agree with what Mr. Hoback said, that all parties can pull in their three or four ideas, and the subcommittee can evaluate and bring the short list back to the committee, which we can discuss in detail.

The Chair: Yes, okay.

Mr. Masse.

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Hoback is right. This was the compromise related to Mr. Sheehan's motion. Let's now get everything else to the subcommittee and go from there. I think that's where we're at. This is a good idea. I think we're clear on that.

I want a proposal of something more broad because there are so many trade issues with the United States now too. We went after just one little...as a compromise, and maybe we can go through the subcommittee for the rest of the stuff.

The Chair: For Mr. Savard-Tremblay's motion, is the direction of the committee to refer it to the subcommittee?

Mr. Arif Virani: Madam Chair, I would agree with what's been proposed by Mr. Masse, Mr. Arya and Mr. Hoback, that it be referred to the subcommittee.

The Chair: Any other additional motions that anybody wants to move today would all be referred to the subcommittee for discussion whenever we're able to arrange for that to happen. For now we have Mr. Sheehan's motion adopted and moving forward as soon as we come back. The first opportunity that we can have a meeting of the subcommittee, that will happen.

Okay, everybody is okay with that.

Any ideas or thoughts you might have, please refer them directly to the subcommittee. That should be all right.

Mr. Savard-Tremblay.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Why is it that all the motions are being referred back to the subcommittee, when the first one seems to have been adopted more clearly and decisively?

Why can't we adopt the other motions in the same way, in other words, keeping some flexibility in their application?

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Savard-Tremblay, you've introduced your motion, and you're asking that we vote on that motion today. Is that correct?

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: That's what I would like. If it was offered to handle the previous motion this way, why not do the same with this one?

[English]

The Chair: Each motion is of course calculated differently and examined differently. You've moved your motion. It's been introduced.

He's moved his motion, and he's asking for a vote on that motion. Madam Clerk, is everything in order for Mr. Savard-Tremblay's motion to be voted on? He didn't have to give advance notice for it either. Correct? I'm just making sure procedures are being followed here.

Mr. Randy Hoback: On a point of order, Madam Chair, we all talked and agreed that we would just deal with the one motion today, and the rest would all go to subcommittee. That was agreed upon, so to have this come forward now kind of breaks what we originally agreed on. I have no problem with this; it's just that we should not deal with it today. Let's deal with it in subcommittee.

The Chair: Exactly.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: However, in the agreement we reached on the first motion, priority wasn't an issue. We agreed that we were interested in the subject, but there were no firm terms.

According to what has just been said, though, the subject of the first motion would be studied as a priority. I think there is a problem of understanding what has been adopted and that this would need to be clarified.

[English]

The Chair: It was the decision of the committee that the committee would adopt this, given the urgency of this particular issue—the EV issue and Canada and the U.S. Any other motions that were introduced would be referred to the subcommittee for further discussion and prioritization at the first meeting of that subcommittee.

That was my understanding of everything.

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: However, in the discussion we had, it was clear that we were adopting the principle, the theme, the idea, but that we were not restricting ourselves to a specific formula. This means that this topic was not necessarily going

to be studied first. We did not determine that it would be. We didn't set a timetable.

• (1635)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Virani.

Mr. Arif Virani: During the brief adjournment, Mr. Hoback, Mr. Savard-Tremblay, Mr. Masse and I had a discussion. My understanding and takeaway from that—and I invite others to speak up—is that we would proceed with passing a single motion, which is the motion we've passed that was proposed by Mr. Sheehan and amended by Mr. Hoback, because of the pressing importance of the electric vehicle credits being proposed in the build back better bill by the United States Congress as it's currently formulated. My understanding is that future matters would be tabled for the subcommittee on procedure to outline. I think that's the proper procedure to follow in this case.

With respect to what Mr. Savard-Tremblay has proposed, he's hearing from other members of the committee that there's a lot of interest in that type of study because it is also an important issue. The most pressing issue at this point in time is the EV credit one.

I would propose we proceed on that basis, which is that the Bloc, the NDP, the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and the members therein propose other ideas as well that can be provided to the subcommittee. If Mr. Savard-Tremblay wants to have that looked at sooner rather than later, we can have that meeting of the subcommittee on procedure as early as possible, including this week.

I do not agree with having a vote on that right now because that was not what was agreed to by the parties.

Thank you.

The Chair: He has the—

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Is it possible to know exactly what was adopted earlier, word for word, please?

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Savard-Tremblay, it's already been dealt with. The committee already made a decision on what we were going to do—

[Translation]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Yes, but I would like confirmation of what that decision was, because obviously we didn't all understand it in the same way. I would like it to be read out word for word what was adopted, please.

[English]

Mr. Arif Virani: Perhaps then we just have to read back into the record what Mr. Hoback suggested for the text of the motion on electric vehicles.

[Translation]

Mr. Savard-Tremblay, you want to know what decision we've made regarding electric vehicles. Is that correct?

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Obviously, this motion, which was the subject of a compromise, was not understood in the same way. I would like it read again word for word, please.

[*English*]

The Chair: Mr. Hoback, do you have...?

Mr. Randy Hoback: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Again, what's been explained to me by my colleagues from the NDP and the Liberal Party is that there is an urgency—and I agree with them—to actually send a message to Washington. I said that if we're going to do that, then we should just keep it as vague as possible, but still get that message across. This would give the committee, in the future, the flexibility to shape that study as it sees fit, but we only do that one today. The reason we only did that one today is that I want the subcommittee to be struck and actually deal with all the motions in committee. For example, I have no issue with this one here, but if we force it today and we vote no, then how do we deal with it?

I'd prefer that you table it and let it go to the subcommittee first. I promise you that at the subcommittee it will probably be one of our top priorities for studies going forward. I think we can get you where you want to go, but the process is perhaps a little different than what you'd expect.

The Chair: Mr. Masse.

Mr. Brian Masse: Yes.

I'd hate to see this motion fail today just because it didn't go to subcommittee, so I agree. I think there are some things I'd like to add to the motion.

My understanding of where we're at is that we already passed a motion to give us some way to move as a committee and then we can get reorganized at the subcommittee. I see this as item number one to deal with. I'd hate for us to vote no on something right now and then it is the priority at the subcommittee. The other one is already there, so it already is de facto number two.

That's where I would say we go, if there is support for that.

The Chair: Mr. Savard-Tremblay.

Mr. Brian Masse: I'd just say, Mr. Savard-Tremblay, that it's our priority at subcommittee. We already passed something. It is the priority. It's done.

This is, de facto, number two no matter what. But it can be number one in the subcommittee for us to deal with if we just move it where it goes, because I think there's more robust discussion now have on this. You're hearing a lot of good support for it. It's just process, really, at the end of the day.

The Chair: I just want to make sure Mr. Savard-Tremblay's got it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: If that is the way to proceed, I have no problem with that.

I was asking you, however, to read back the motion that was adopted. As Mr. Hoback has just confirmed, we were keeping the first motion vague. Nowhere does it mention that it must necessari-

ly be considered first. If that's the case, there are some things that we have misunderstood each other about.

Therefore, I repeat my request: Can someone read what was adopted please?

● (1640)

[*English*]

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Madam Chair, if I could just chime in, too.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: As the mover of the motion that was amended, we wanted to send a strong message to our workers here in Canada from all the parties that we have their back, especially in this situation, and a strong message to American legislatures. That has just happened. We passed that unanimously from my understanding.

I agree with everyone that the softwood lumber dispute is extremely important, and I think Mr. Savard-Tremblay has achieved that today by having each party say so. When it goes to subcommittee, from my listening to the people who are going to be members of the subcommittee, it's going to be prioritized at the very top. It has been underlined and highlighted here in public. I think that has been accomplished as well.

That's my input at this time. Thank you.

The Chair: We have one further comment from Mr. Arya.

Mr. Chandra Arya: Madam Chair, on another point, Mr. Sheehan's motion was submitted to the clerk in advance, it was circulated and it was available to all of us. Mr. Savard-Tremblay's motion was placed here on the table. My colleague, Mr. Sheehan, who is not here, who is virtual, may not have received a copy of this motion even to look at this.

The process that was adopted—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: I would like to mention that it's not my problem if you don't know the rules that we do not have to send a motion before the election of the chair.

[*English*]

Mr. Chandra Arya: In any case, Madam Chair, all this is moot due to the motion we adopted. After that first EV study, anything else will go to the subcommittee first, and that way it could be discussed.

The Chair: Yes.

Does everybody understand Mr. Savard-Tremblay's motion?

For any other motions, please, could you prepare them and get them off to the clerk so that the subcommittee can have a meeting as quickly as possible and start to move forward on our future work that the committee would like to do.

Mr. Hoback.

Mr. Randy Hoback: If we've parked that issue, then I would like to get to know the Liberal members of the committee. Could they just introduce themselves and go around the table, so we know where they're from and who they are. This committee is quite a bit different from what it was before.

We could do that now or a little later.

The Chair: That's a great idea, Mr. Hoback.

Let's start—

Mr. Chris Lewis: Let's start with you.

Mr. Randy Hoback: My name's Chris Lewis.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Randy Hoback: No, I'm Randy Hoback. I come out of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. I've been on the trade committee and chaired that committee in the past. I love this committee; it's a great committee. I look forward to working with each and every one of you.

Mr. Chris Lewis: I'm Chris Lewis, from Essex, down by Windsor, and am neighbours to my dear friend Mr. Masse. I'm really excited about this first study. Obviously we are the automotive capital of Canada, so I'm looking forward to that. I'm happy to be back on this committee and seeing many familiar faces, and I'm also happy to see some new faces, so I'm looking forward to it. Thanks.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): I am Richard Martel, and I represent the riding of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. I used to be on the Standing Committee for National Defence. Now, I am highly motivated to be on the Standing Committee on International Trade. I must say that aluminum and softwood lumber are important in my region.

[*English*]

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): I'm Jeremy Patzer from Cypress Hills-Grasslands, the southwest corner of Saskatchewan, a large agriculture and energy riding. I'm looking forward to it. This will be a good one.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: I am Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay, MP for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, in the Montérégie region. I look forward to working with you, too.

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Masse: I'm Brian Masse, MP for Windsor West. About 40% of Canada's trade goes through my riding to the United States.

I've been on this committee before. I'm also on INDU. I'm excited to be here because there's a lot of crossover and some really good work we can do.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

• (1645)

Ms. Anju Dhillon: I'm Anju Dhillon, member from Dorval-LaSalle. I'm very happy to be here. I'm glad we're all pretty much here in person actually. It's good to be off of Zoom.

I look forward to working with all of you.

Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.): I'm Wilson Miao. My riding is Richmond Centre. I'm a newly elected member here. This is the first committee I'm on. The other one is veterans.

I really do look forward to working with every one of you. Since my riding also has a big channel with international trade, that really just interests me a lot.

Thank you.

Mr. Chandra Arya: I'm Chandra Arya, member of Parliament from Nepean in Ottawa.

I have been a member of this committee since the last Parliament.

Mr. Arif Virani: Welcome, Wilson. Awesome. It's great to have you.

I'm Arif Virani, the member of Parliament for Parkdale-High Park. This is my third term, and not my first committee meeting.

I'm very much looking forward to working with all of you. Some of you guys I've served on committees with before, and I've know some of your predecessors. I did some work with David Anderson a couple of Parliaments ago. For Mr. Hoback's edification, I will note that I actually once ran a carnival in Prince Albert in 1993 with Conklin Shows. I learned a lot about everything.

I'm looking forward to working with all of you.

[*Translation*]

Thank you very much.

[*English*]

The Chair: That's wonderful.

It's my interest, always, for everybody to enjoy the experience of being on committee. We'll have some fun. I don't know about the lobster, but I'll work on it.

We all care about the same issues, namely, advancing our country as the thing most important to all of us by working together in a joint way. In the same way that we solved some problems today, communication amongst all of us is the most important thing.

I want to thank you all for your—

Mr. Brian Masse: I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

People don't know that I'm number 10 overall in seniority, which I mention because you are actually number five, I believe, in seniority in the House of Commons. You are one of the more experienced members. You weren't going to say it, so that's why I'm introducing it with a point of order, and I'm now going to get ruled out of order.

The Chair: I, for sure, wouldn't have said anything about it.

A voice: I'm sure Terry has his screen...

Mr. Terry Sheehan: It's Terry Sheehan.

The Chair: Where is he?

Terry, I'm sorry, I'm not used to the screen business here.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: I already spoke a lot today.

I'm Terry Sheehan from the Soo, steel town, and on the border of the United States.

The Chair: You have to hold up your name tag.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: For Mr. Masse, it's home of the Soo Greyhounds, the best team in the Canadian hockey league.

A voice: Just hit the delete button there.

The Chair: Delete. They don't give me any control here. I'd like to have that for a few things.

I see Mr. Savard-Tremblay has his hand up.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Excuse me, I will move on to serious things.

I would still like to mention that, at the very least, an agreement should be reached and there should be a clear commitment that the subcommittee will hold a meeting soon.

For my part, I came here with four proposals for topics, but I still targeted one that was urgent. In fact, arguments were used about electric vehicles to show that this would be the priority topic. I find this funny, because these arguments can all be applied to the issue of wood, whether it's workers or the need to send a message to Washington.

Also, I have asked three times to have the wording of the motion to read back to me, and it hasn't been done. I think that as a member of this committee, if I ask you to read something again, I should be entitled to it. But that hasn't been done. I find this turn of events extremely disappointing.

I would urge the committee to at least commit to a meeting of the subcommittee quickly.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Savard-Tremblay.

I'm sorry. We have to make sure that Mr. Savard-Tremblay knows exactly what that motion was, possibly during the meeting.

Mr. Virani, would you ensure that Mr. Savard-Tremblay and his staff know exactly what the motion was so there are no misunderstandings, so that we move forward.

I'm ready to have a subcommittee meeting in 10 minutes. If the rest of the members of the subcommittee are ready, I'm ready.

I will speak with the members and the clerk and see how soon we can sit down and go over some of the suggestions that we have and go forward.

We have Mr. Arya, and then I think we can adjourn.

Mr. Chandra Arya: I appreciate that you are eager to convene the meeting of the subcommittee. However, we need some time to submit some ideas. Otherwise, the subcommittee will be meeting to consider just one idea. That would not be fair.

The Chair: Of course not. There's no sense to having a meeting unless we have a few motions from the members. Once we have

those motions in, and they are in both official languages, we can then call a meeting.

● (1650)

Mr. Arif Virani: Madam Chair, vis-à-vis the concern that was outlined by Monsieur Savard-Tremblay and what you just mentioned to me, perhaps it would be beneficial if the clerk read back what Mr. Hoback suggested 30 minutes ago so that it's clear for Monsieur Savard-Tremblay.

The Chair: She does not have it written down, Mr. Virani, so we would need you to read it.

Mr. Arif Virani: I will do it to the best of my recollection.

Mr. Hoback is the one—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: In the end, no one remembers the wording we voted on, do they?

[*English*]

The Chair: This is all recorded, but the clerk did not take down the notes. The analysts and the clerks will have the exact wording that was referred to earlier.

Mr. Randy Hoback: You just need to get it.

The Chair: We just need to get it.

Mr. Arif Virani: My recollection of what Mr. Hoback said was “to conduct a study on the Build Back Better bill and the impact it will have on the electric vehicle industry and manufacturing here in Canada” and report back to the House.

With all due respect, Madam Chair, I shouldn't be the only one who's writing down these things when they are happening in real time.

The Chair: Agreed, but today—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: I understand. Still—

[*English*]

The Chair: —is the first meeting of our new committee, and we all have to have a bit of extra patience with each other.

I think Mr. Lewis was—

Mr. Chris Lewis: Thank you, Madam Chair.

In the interests of time and simplicity, perhaps the clerk can go back, or somebody can go back, through the video, capture that video clip, put it into both official languages and distribute it around the table—not right now, but at a later date when they get a chance—so that my colleague can see it for himself in both official languages.

I don't think it's something that needs to be—

The Chair: Yes. I agree.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Chris Lewis: —chatted about right now.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: It seems to me that there was nothing in the wording of the motion that presupposed that this was necessarily going to be the first item to be considered in January.

[*English*]

The Chair: It was made very clear that this was an urgent issue for the country at the moment. It's the hottest issue and needs immediate discussion by all of us.

That was the reason, and the motion was adopted.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Madam Chair, does the motion state that it will be the first topic to be considered?

[*English*]

The Chair: It was that we would deal with that immediately, if I remember, because it's an urgent issue. The committee understands

that we adopted that motion with the intent of immediately moving forward on Mr. Sheehan's motion.

Mr. Randy Hoback: It was assumed that—

The Chair: Everyone assumed the same thing.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Yes.

The Chair: Mr. Tremblay, I'm sorry that there was some confusion for you.

Is there any other discussion?

Thank you all very much. Please get your thoughts and ideas together, and we will have a meeting of the subcommittee when it's practical.

I will move adjournment, if I have the permission of the committee.

The meeting is adjourned.

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