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Chair: Mr. Ron McKinnon



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• (1535)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 54 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

We will start by acknowledging that we are meeting on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin people.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of November 25, 2021. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application. The meeting is public.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), the committee is commencing consideration of the request by seven members of the committee to discuss their request regarding the need to hear witnesses on the proposal contained in amendment G-4 to Bill C-21.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize our former chair, the late Honourable Jim Carr, and I wonder if we could all have a minute of silence.

[A moment of silence observed]

Thank you all.

We will commence.

Madame Michaud, please move your motion. Then, I believe, Mr. Noormohamed would like to respond to it, and then Ms. Dancho.

[Translation]

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

Before we start, I also want to take a moment to offer my most sincere condolences to our colleagues for the passing of our colleague and friend, Mr. Carr. We had the opportunity to work with him on the committee for a few months. He will certainly be missed by all. Personally, I learned a lot from this gentleman during those few months. My thoughts go out to his family and colleagues.

I also want to thank my colleagues from the Liberal Party and the NDP for supporting my request. I think we all agree on the fact that amendment G-4 is quite significant. Some people did not have the opportunity to be heard on the subject and the impact of this amendment to Bill C-21.

I think it could be beneficial to hear from new witnesses at this stage of clause-by-clause study. I'm given to understand that the Conservatives found my process to be underhanded. Personally, it seemed illogical to follow the same approach I used the day before. Indeed, when I asked for unanimous consent from members to receive experts for two meetings, the response was clearly negative from the Conservative members. That's the reason why I didn't consult them about this request, made pursuant to Standing Order 106(4). However, I noted some open-mindedness from my Liberal and NDP colleagues, which is why I consulted them. I am glad they accepted my request.

I appreciate the fact that the committee can ask officials to answer our questions and help us. However, as they said a few times, they cannot go beyond certain limits.

As I said, and I will say it again, if I propose an amendment to a bill, my colleagues will ask why I tabled such an amendment, what I based it on and why I phrased it that way. So, I'm the one who has to answer those questions. I won't have a few officials at my back to give answers.

I therefore think it's necessary to have independent experts appear so they can shed light on some issues. It's necessary to invite groups who did not have the opportunity to appear, because we think Bill C-21 and amendment G-4 will have broader consequences than what was outlined at the beginning, when we heard from the first witnesses.

That's the request I'm making. I asked my colleagues to be reasonable in their debates. I proposed two meetings. I think that will give us the opportunity to hear from up to 12 groups or so, if we hear from three witnesses an hour. That's close to the norm. So, four hours of meetings seems reasonable enough to allow each party present to hear from the groups they will have contacted beforehand. That is what I propose.

To do this, Mr. Chair, I will table the following motion, which was sent to the interpreters, so that they may read it out in English as I read it out in French. We also sent it to the clerk.

That the Committee temporarily suspend the clause-by-clause study of Bill C-21 and that it allocate two consecutive meetings to study the effects of Amendment G-4, beginning at the next Committee meeting;

That the Committee invite to testify the witnesses and experts that it deem necessary to hear in order to answer the questions raised by the new concepts added by the Amendment G-4 and that the Committee proceed according to the usual routine rules for the invitations of the selected witnesses;

That upon completion of the testimonies, the Committee resume its clause-by-clause consideration where it had been suspended and proceed according to the usual rules pursuant to Standing Order 75 of the House of Commons.

I'd like to hear my colleagues' opinion on the matter.

Thank you very much.

● (1540)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Michaud.

[English]

We'll go now to Mr. Noormohamed.

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

I also want to start by expressing, on behalf of all of us, my condolences to Jim's family. I want to share something with this committee before I get into the substance.

I had the chance to speak to Jim on Thursday after his bill was sent to third reading. He said something that I wanted to share with everyone, because it was actually about us. Jim said that, among his parliamentary experiences, working with this committee was one of his greatest joys. He went on to say that it was because we had managed to figure out how to do complicated things together.

In the spirit of that, I am channelling what Jim said to me: "I know it's tough, but you guys are going to get this done together." I just wanted to share that with everybody. I think that's been a guiding principle for a lot of us in this committee. We've had our differences in how we've come up with things and come through things, but I think it's an important message for us to reflect on as we go into the holidays.

I want to thank my colleagues from the Bloc and the NDP for signing the 106(4) and for all of us coming together to do that. I think it's an important step. I think it channels a bit of what Jim would have wanted us to do.

We've said from the beginning that Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities. We've also said that we want to make sure that hunters, farmers and indigenous communities are not affected in that process. There have been a lot of conversations in the last few weeks about how best to protect Canadians from gun violence. It's an emotional and complicated issue. A lot of people are counting on us to act in the right way to help prevent gun violence and to make sure we're taking dangerous weapons off the streets.

There's been a lot of discussion about the amendments to Bill C-21, and rightly so. I think this, of course, would create the standard legal definition for what constitutes an assault-style firearm. The definition of an assault-style firearm is a complex, technical endeavour. It's not really something that lends itself to broad generalizations, which is how we seem to want to do politics these days. The gun community, gun control advocates and Canadians of all

political stripes have asked for a clear definition so that everyone knows which side of the line they are on.

There's been a lot of misinformation and confusion around this amendment that was presented to the committee. A lot of people have taken advantage of what is not known by others to fan outrage. There's also a lot of misinformation from people who just don't know. I personally had a couple of people reach out to me who said, "Listen, I have this particular gun. I'm concerned that it is now banned." I went back, checked for them and was able to reassure them that it was not. We don't all have that luxury. I think we need to find a way to make sure that we are able to reassure people of whether or not their guns are going to be on this list.

I think the most important part of this is making sure that we're hearing voices that feel they haven't been heard, so we can hear different points of view to help make this better legislation and dispel some of the myths—and, frankly, so that we can do our job, if we can, to improve this legislation and make it even better. When it comes to working through those guns that are on this list that perhaps should not have been, then we should have those conversations together.

I think before us is a motion that allows us to do exactly that. I think this, if passed, will give us the opportunity to hear from new witnesses, which I think is critical. It allows us to consult broadly and take down the temperature. I think we all want to do that. It allows us to listen to different perspectives and actually have a healthy discussion based on facts.

Now, that said, we've heard from a lot of witnesses already. We've had hours of testimony from government officials. They have sought to dispel misinformation or concerns about certain guns with technical expertise. We may not have liked their style, but they did a really good job of going through the guns that people thought were on the list but that actually weren't. They clarified that for Canadians to give people the comfort that their guns were not caught on this list.

What I would suggest, humbly, is that we use this motion to really narrow down our discussions and iron out the specifics of the amendment. Let's call on people who are informed as to how amendment G-4 will impact the public. Let's try not to get lost in partisanship. Let's actually make sure Canadians have the facts they need. Let's do it in a way that allows voices that have not been heard to be heard. I think that's really important.

I know all of my colleagues and I are committed to working collaboratively to make sure that no guns that are commonly used for hunting are captured within the proposed amendment. We have always said that the goal of this is to target assault-style weapons and not hunting rifles.

I know it's going to take work. I know we have to find ways to bridge the gaps together, but we are committed to doing that work together. We are committed to making sure that we pass a good bill to protect Canadians and get guns off the streets that need to be taken off the streets, and that hunters, farmers and indigenous communities do not find themselves unreasonably impacted by this.

• (1545)

I think we can do it. We have a track record in this committee of getting stuff done. I really think that if we can pass this motion today and get on with the work of ensuring that we get this bill right, Canadians will look to us and accept...I think they will respect the fact that we had healthy debate and we had disagreement, but we got something over the finish line that would protect Canadians from gun crime and protect hunters, farmers and indigenous communities and their ability to go and hunt.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Noormohamed.

We'll go next to Ms. Dancho, followed by Mr. Lloyd and then Mr. MacGregor.

Go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

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

I'm glad to be able to offer remarks on my Bloc colleague's motion today. Conservatives were, unfortunately, not able to put any words on the record last week. However, I was quite impressed that Mr. Noormohamed was able to talk for two solid hours last Thursday. That was, by all parliamentary accounts, quite impressive. Well done.

However, it limited our ability to weigh in on this and ask experts further questions. I was hoping to ask them a number of things. Hopefully, we'll have the opportunity again.

I appreciate Ms. Michaud trying to find a pathway forward here.

To address some of the things she said in the last committee meeting, when she put forward her first effort to do that, my main issue with it was that we would have had to go in camera. That means it would have been in secret and beyond the public's ability to view what we would have done. That means, ultimately, that we would have come out of a secret meeting with a plan forward for something that impacts 2.3 million gun owners, and I don't think that's the best approach.

I'm very glad we have the opportunity today to speak about this in public. I would have appreciated the opportunity to review the letter. There is the possibility that we may have signed on to it, as the Conservative team, as well. We're not opposed to more witnesses. In fact, what we would like to see is considerable consultation on this historic long-gun ban that impacts hundreds, if not thousands, of models of commonly used hunting rifles.

Something that's really important for the committee to remember is that the only consultation the Liberal government can currently point to in this regard is from 2018, when they went to Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal and Fredericton, which are all phenomenal cities with phenomenal Canadians in them. However, I think you'd agree, Mr. Chair, that there aren't a lot of farmers there. The density of hunters is likely not as high as in, say, rural Quebec, rural Manitoba, Nunavut or the Northwest Territories. I feel that the main consultation they did on gun control falls very short of the rural and northern constituencies that should be represented at the table.

It's been widely established by the National Post, CBC and CTV that there are numerous commonly used long guns on this ban list that are used for hunting and as protection tools for livestock by farmers and the like. We could also talk about the conservation aspect of this. That's been widely recognized and established. There are countless examples of that.

In fact, the National Post today had an article about a lot of misinformation from the government. They really break down the misinformation. I agree with Mr. Noormohamed that there has been misinformation in this. I believe, contrary to his point, that a lot of it is coming from the Liberal government, which for weeks said, "This isn't a hunting rifle ban; this does not impact commonly used rifles." Of course, now we know it does.

The SKS is a perfect example of this. It's one of the most popular hunting rifles in Canada. It was used in the 1940s. About 70 or 80 years ago, it was used as a military tool, and now it is commonly accepted as a hunting rifle. I guess what they're trying to say is that anything that's ever been used, perhaps even going back to muskets and the Civil War, should be banned in Canada.

I think a lot of hunters.... As it has been established, there are so many long guns that are so common. We're talking classic, wood stock hunting rifles being used that will be banned by this. That's the problem we're coming down to. I don't necessarily see a path forward.

The Prime Minister came out last week and said he will—I'm paraphrasing; this is not his verbatim quote—absolutely not be adjusting the definition in the semi-automatic context. That is one of the biggest problems.

Something the committee may have missed—to Mr. Noormohamed's credit, he asked this question—is that the civil servants who were here made it very clear that the list, which is about 300 pages long, is made up of firearms that fall under the OIC from May 2020 and the ban criteria there. They have 10,000 joules and a 20-millimetre bore diameter. That's what's in those 300-odd pages, with several hundred firearms. In there, 480 of them are brand new. That's what's causing all the uproar.

What people don't understand, and it was confirmed in the last committee meeting, is that the list is actually going to be thousands of models of firearms long, because the semi-automatic definition.... The bureaucrat from the last meeting confirmed that there is not a list that outlines how many firearms there are. That is not encompassed in the hundreds of pages that hunters have been able to see.

• (1550)

Again, Canadians who are impacted by this don't even realize that of the firearms that are being banned, actually thousands more models will be banned. There are so many semi-automatic hunting rifles with magazine capabilities that don't meet the 10,000 joules and don't have the 20-millimetre bore diameter. Those are countless more hunting rifles that we don't even have a list for yet.

That was quite a shocking development. The list that's this big is likely going to be this big. This is just really what we feel is the beginning. They're opening the door.

Of course, a lot of the firearms on that list are lever action, break action and bolt action. A number of those are caught up in this. There are obviously classic hunting rifles as well.

We just feel that with the approach so far, there has been misinformation. Of course, we feel that the government has been leading on that. Even the gun control community has said that they're very disappointed with the government's communication on this.

When we're talking about the witness testimony in particular, while I appreciate the effort, I do feel that with two meetings, we might as well not even have meetings. Two meetings do not even cover the indigenous communities that deserve to be at the table. Remember that we have Métis, first nations and Inuit and we have various regional differences for various indigenous cultures. There are very different issues from region to region. If we're going to even adequately represent the indigenous communities, we would need more than two meetings for those alone, let alone hunting, wildlife and angling associations and conservation associations.

Gun shops have been absolutely hammered. This would be the third gun ban they've had to deal with in two and a half years. These are mom-and-pop shops, for the most part. If you take Cabela's out of the mix, all of these are run by families, especially in rural and remote communities. They have been absolutely hammered. We need them represented as well. Of course, there are gun ranges that are widely used by police in the areas as well. Those are privately owned. Those are being hammered by this.

We also have heirloom collectors and World War II enthusiasts who collect memorabilia from the various world wars. We should have them at the table. We've seen the CBC coverage talking about the heirloom aspect of impacting Remembrance Day. A number of the cannons and some of those antique World War I rifles will be banned under this. Of course, there are a lot of Remembrance Day ceremonies and other re-enactments that happen in this country that are very important for remembrance purposes and for honouring how much Canadians sacrificed and what they experienced, to give Canadians a bit of an education of what that was like. They're being targeted by this as well, so they should be at the table. Perhaps we should have various Legions at the table, for example, or at least one.

We also have the Premier of the Northwest Territories coming out and saying that if this passes, people will starve in her community because they use legitimate tools, which are being banned, to feed their families. We have a premier in this country saying that if this passes, people are going to starve in the north. She should absolutely be here, and so should other first nations or Inuit communities in the north as well.

The governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta are expressing great dismay about this. Perhaps we should have folks from their various levels of government come out.

I think I mentioned conservation as well. What is the impact on those with hunting licences and other licensing fees? What is the decrease going to be in that regard? We know that a lot of the con-

servation efforts in Canada are a result of those fees. What impact is that going to have?

We also know that rural and northern communities really depend, in many parts, especially indigenous communities.... Often there will be guides for hunters and often they're American hunters. We have hunting tourism in this country, particularly from the Americans, who will often bring semi-automatic rifles, which will be banned now. The Americans pay tens of thousands of dollars to come here, enriching local, northern and rural communities and indigenous guides. What's going to happen to that source of income? Are the Americans going to see that this is the third ban and they are just not going to bother?

What's that going to mean for areas like Timmins, Ontario, northern Manitoba and other communities where there are prime fly-in hunting lodges and outfitters that really provide the ability to have resources and economies in areas where other industries aren't booming?

I've just outlined a few, Mr. Chair. They're certainly not exhaustive. The idea that we can fit in even half of what I just mentioned in two meetings is impossible.

What's really frustrating for us as Conservatives is that this work should have been done by the Liberal government and their vast resources. As you know, Mr. Chair, this is now the committee's fourth week talking about this. We're going to have to go back and sort of flip-flop through this backwards in this committee process because they didn't do their homework.

• (1555)

Now they're sort of turning it around and saying they'll do it in two meetings. So we have two meetings. We barely scratch the surface of the people who are impacted by this ban—again, the largest hunting rifle ban in Canadian history. We barely scratch the surface.

For people who don't know, two meetings, as you know, Mr. Chair, are about 12 witnesses. I don't think 12 witnesses are nearly enough.

We feel that any suggestion that two meetings are adequate.... I'm going to say that I do feel that it is offensive to the people who are going to be impacted by this. It does not give them the dignity of having a seat at the table, and, like I said, it does not even represent the indigenous communities who need to be at the table, let alone everybody else.

We could not and we will not support two meetings under any circumstance.

Now, recognizing that as many meetings as the Conservatives would want would likely not be supported by all parties, I would say 50 meetings would be adequate, given that's the consultation that should have been done across the country. They should have gone to Nunavut. They should have gone to the Northwest Territories, northern B.C. etc. I'd love to see them go to Churchill.

I'm going to propose a bit of a solution to this, and perhaps it will open up a bit of the discussion.

Again, one of the last points I'll make before I do that is that I mentioned something about the utility of semi-automatics in, I believe, our first committee meeting when the Liberals pulled this amendment. We've seen a number of people come forward who are saying the same thing I am, so it's not just me, Mr. Chair.

The NDP member for Nunavut—I'll give her so much credit—in question period talked about the polar bear threat in Nunavut and how the ban will impact people's safety against polar bears in Nunavut. That was something I raised first off in this discussion, which has not been widely recognized.

Just recently somebody sent me.... Do you remember that I talked about those wild boars? I don't know if committee members of other parties were aware, but I was just sent a video. There are 30-odd wild boars that attacked a group of hunters. Again, they are very fast. They have tusks. They can be very deadly and they do an all-out assault. These hunters are running away for their literal lives from these wild boars.

Again, I feel that we need to have expert testimony to explain the raw utility of having a semi-automatic hunting rifle, because there is one, Mr. Chair. I know this. I know hunters know this. I know farmers know this, and certainly northern Canadians are aware of this.

I don't mean to go on and on, but I have so much to say, and we weren't allowed to talk in the last week, but I will wrap it up.

I will move a subamendment here, Mr. Chair.

Before I do, I should have done this off the top—my apologies. I've been thinking a lot about Jim Carr. It was almost a year we had with him as the chair. When I first came on as vice-chair here, he was the chair. It was his first time chairing, and he did a really phenomenal job. I do have to say it was nice to come to work and to be on this committee.

We worked together for the first time on public safety. We were able to all sign onto a guns and gangs study, and it was pretty unheard of for all parties to agree to policy on guns and gangs. We also did an IMVE study, and we all came together on those. There were no dissenting reports. That is pretty impressive, and I credit a lot of that to Jim.

Mr. Chair, I know you will do a phenomenal job as well. I have full confidence in you, but I am going to miss him a lot. These have been quite emotional 24 hours for all of us.

In that spirit, much like Mr. Noormohamed, I am trying to put forward a good-faith amendment to this motion so we can open the discussion to something more reasonable and just underline that there is no way we will agree to two meetings. It will not do justice

to this, so I'm going to put a proposal out there. People are welcome to counter-propose, but this is the proposal we're putting forward for discussion.

Within this amendment, Mr. Chair, when we were writing this, we thought about the rural and northern Canadians who need to be represented at the table and also how this committee has never travelled in the year that I've been vice-chair of it, so why not take this opportunity and do the homework the Liberal government should have done? I hope that we can come together on this and meet in the middle.

I don't have the amendment in front of me, Mr. Chair, so I don't know where exactly this would be placed, but likely it would start at "two consecutive meetings", and it would say—

• (1600)

The Chair: The amendment has been distributed, I believe. I emailed it this morning.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Okay, thank you very much.

I'm looking at it now. It would say:

That the committee temporarily suspend the clause-by-clause study of Bill C-21 and that it allocate twenty consecutive meetings to study the effects of amendments G-4 and G-46, and that these meetings include committee travel across Canada, as soon as possible, to rural, northern and indigenous communities to hear from impacted individuals.

Then there is another small amendment within this amendment, so I'll just keep reading:

That the committee invite to testify the witnesses and experts that it deem necessary to hear in order to answer the questions raised by the new concepts added by the amendments G-4 and G-46 and that the committee proceed according to the usual routine rules for the invitations of the selected witnesses;

That upon completion of the testimonies, the Minister of Public Safety appear for four hours before the committee resume its clause-by-clause consideration where it had been suspended and proceed according to the usual rules pursuant to Standing Order 75 of the House of Commons.

Just in sum, we're saying let's do 20 meetings, and let's ensure that some of those meetings, if not all of them, involve rural and northern travel, including indigenous communities, and, at the end of all that testimony, we bring back the Minister of Public Safety for four hours to answer our questions.

That is my amendment. I thought that we could discuss it now as a committee and see if we can come together on this, Mr. Chair.

Thank you.

The Chair: That's a massive amendment. Do you have that in writing in both languages, at this point?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: It's only two sentences. It's not actually that big.

The Chair: It seems a lot longer than two sentences.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I reread the whole motion.

The Chair: Okay.

So you're amending the number of meetings to 20. You're also adding—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I'm adding committee travel to rural and northern, including indigenous, and the minister at the end.

The Chair: Okay.

Discussion continues on the amendment.

We will go to Mr. Lloyd, followed by Mr. MacGregor.

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): I believe we're now discussing the subamendment proposed by Ms. Dancho—

The Chair: It's an amendment. It could be a subamendment, but it's an amendment to the motion by Madame Michaud.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Oh, I see.

The Chair: It's complicated. I have a map here.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Yes. Thank you.

You know, I haven't been at the committee for a few meetings, but I've been watching very closely the evidence that's been put forward. I want to thank my colleague Madame Michaud for bringing forward this motion and showing a desire to have additional witnesses to look into what I think is just a massive amendment. I wish my Liberal colleagues would show some humility across the way when talking about misinformation and perhaps recognize that the whole reason we're here today is because of an amendment they put forward that does indeed have massive implications in this country.

Moving forward, I think the amendment put forward by my colleague Ms. Dancho is well placed. I remember earlier testimony on Bill C-21, when we had indigenous witnesses come to this committee. They were very clear that they had not been consulted. They did not feel consulted about this legislation. It kind of disappointed me that we moved into clause-by-clause without taking a step back to recognize that, you know, these are indigenous people in this country who have been disenfranchised by this country for over a century, and they're telling us at committee that they were not consulted. These are representatives of first nations and indigenous communities, and this committee just basically took down their testimony and said, well, we're going to move along.

That didn't sit right with me at the time. I didn't know if I was going to have an opportunity to raise this issue, but I think now is a good opportunity to raise this issue. When we spoke to those witnesses, they said it wasn't good enough just to talk to the chiefs. It was noted that one of the Liberal members said, well, we spoke to a chief about this, and they said they thought it was all right.

That's a big mistake. We really need to get into the grassroots with indigenous communities, with first nations, Métis and Inuit. We also need to approach them on their level. I'm not saying to limit it to those groups, because I think there are lots of other groups we need to hear from on this specific amendment. I'm just speaking about the indigenous witnesses for a moment. It's quite a thing to ask that people come to Ottawa from these rural, remote and northern communities. I know that a lot of times there's financial compensation for people to come here, but it's just not feasible for them. We also know that in this country we still don't have a very strong network of rural broadband, which also eliminates...

This leads to the question of capacity. Where there is no capacity, I don't believe there can be consent. I think it would really be essential for this committee, as a sign of reconciliation and good faith, to actually set aside some meetings for this committee to ac-

tually go into these communities, within reason. We're talking about Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Iqaluit, Churchill, northern Saskatchewan, northern Alberta, Vancouver Island and Labrador, just to name a few places. It may not be all those places, but certainly some of those places. They all have merit.

It's important for us to go into these communities and invite these people within their own communities to come to our committee to have their say and be heard by us. I think that would be a tremendous show of reconciliation in this country. I think it would be a tremendous show of willingness to consult with first nations, Inuit and Métis folk who live in rural areas who hunt and trap for sustenance or for recreation.

I really want to lend further support to my colleague's amendment and suggest that there's room for flexibility here if members have specific places they'd like to go or if they think a specific number of meetings is appropriate. I think setting out 20 as an initial proposal is a strong proposal. I hope this amendment is taken in good spirit by this committee.

Thank you.

• (1605)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Lloyd.

We'll now go to Mr. MacGregor on the amendment.

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

Before I get into my remarks, I also want to add my voice to those of my colleagues about the late Honourable Jim Carr.

It's funny how your relationship with a person changes over your parliamentary career. Jim and I are both from the class of 2015. In the first Parliament I served with him—the 42nd—I was often doing battle with him, in his role as Minister of Natural Resources, because of pipeline projects, which negatively affect the coastal British Columbians I'm so proud to represent.

I got to know a more personal side of Jim as chair of this committee. I think you can summarize him as tough but fair, and a very kind-hearted person. I think the people of Winnipeg South Centre were very fortunate to have him as their representative. I know his prairie colleagues, from all parties, will miss him. If his family is watching this, all I can say is that I offer my sincere condolences. The parliamentary family is going to miss him.

Rest in peace, Jim. You were a great chair.

Mr. Chair, I know those are big shoes to fill, but you have our confidence. It's not an easy committee to manage. I think you will be the first to admit that.

Colleagues, we have now had six meetings, at this committee, for clause-by-clause, and we are still stuck on clause 1. We're still stuck on the very same amendment we were six meetings ago. That's hardly a tale of parliamentary efficiency, or an effective use of tax dollars. I think the Canadian public rightly understands that.

I haven't had a chance to put my voice on the record on this, so I'm going to ask colleagues to indulge me for a bit, because I have a few things I want to get on the record.

What I would like to say first is this: In politics, as in life, trust is easily broken, but it's extremely hard to repair. The way this amendment landed has, frankly, been a complete and total abuse of process. The reason why we're hung up here is because we, as committee members, with our limited resources—especially on the opposition side—are now being asked to do a tremendous amount of extra work on a bill that should have been done on the government side.

To land this amendment in our laps at the eleventh hour, after we completed witness testimony.... I had no chance whatsoever to tailor my committee strategy based on an amendment that will affect long guns. I will tell you this. The irony is that—because I know how important Bill C-21 was to this government—if this amendment hadn't been dropped at the eleventh hour, we would be having a very different conversation right now.

We would probably be talking about how Bill C-21 was sent off to the Senate, and we would be conducting important work on Bill C-20. That's being held up by this mess of the government's own creation. Bill C-20 is an important piece of legislation that's going to create much-needed oversight, transparency and accountability in the RCMP and CBSA. That's something we've been talking about for seven years now.

I know there's frustration on all sides, but this was brought about by the government. It should have been anticipated, because it's like the Newtonian laws of politics: For every action, there's going to be an equal and opposite reaction.

I have to tell you that, correspondence-wise.... I have talked to colleagues from all parties, but some members of my caucus had not received one single piece of correspondence on Bill C-21 until this amendment dropped. Now, it's making up half their correspondence. The way it was rolled out is going to be a textbook example, for future generations, of what not to do when amending your own bill, of communication strategy, etc. The list is long.

I need to get on the record about how displeased I am, because I think it took for granted the important work we have been able to do at this committee.

● (1610)

To underline, Mr. Chair, just how egregious this was, as soon as the amendment came to our attention, I had my legislative assistant contact the Library of Parliament, because we wanted to get a sense of how amendment G-4 was going to impact firearms models. We also wanted to get a sense of how the scheduled list was going to compare with the May 2020 OIC. Our analysts, to their immense credit, produced a pretty amazing document. It was a very long Excel spreadsheet. However, they warned us that it was going to be incomplete, because they checked right away with the justice department and they confirmed that there was no such analysis to share with the Library of Parliament.

Here you have a government dropping this amendment in our laps, and its own department has not done an impact analysis. We're

expected to suddenly take this work up with our limited resources as the opposition. That is a simple no-go.

In fact, Mr. Chair, I want to reference this, because when Bill C-21 was introduced on May 30, Minister Mendicino—I think it was in an exchange with reporters—made mention of an amendment they were thinking of bringing to the bill. This begs the question why the bill had to be introduced on May 30 if, already at that point, they were thinking of an amendment.

In the very first meeting we had, we had the minister for the first hour and we had departmental officials in the second hour. I have it right here, Mr. Chair. I asked the assistant deputy minister, Talal Dakalbab, in the last minute of questioning I had about the May 30 announcement of the amendment. I asked:

Can you inform this committee what specific section of Bill C-21 you're seeking to amend and what it is going to look like, so we have some heads-up notice on this?

His response was:

The only thing I could say is that you heard the same thing I did from the minister on TV. I can't comment any further on that one. I'm sorry about that.

An assistant deputy minister, on square one, at the very first meeting, was unable to comment on what was eventually going to be a huge amendment to a bill.

After that, given that the assistant deputy minister, a pretty high official in the department, was unable to provide details to me as a committee member—and I'm supposed to do my due diligence on a bill—and was unable to provide that information, I dropped it. I did that because there were other things in the bill—tangential things that I could see and comment on—that I had had the chance over the summer of this year to speak to my constituents about.

I made the effort this summer to visit the Victoria Fish and Game Protective Association. I had some very frank conversations with people about the handgun freeze and what that would mean, and I took their comments back with me to try to make some fixes based on that feedback. These are law-abiding constituents who simply want to be able to practise their sport.

At no time, Mr. Chair, did I talk to people about their hunting rifles or their hunting shotguns, because again, that wasn't in the bill. It was not defended by the Minister of Public Safety during his second reading speech. I did not have the opportunity during questions and comments to ask the minister about that. I did not have the chance during my own second reading speech to talk about these things, because they were not in the bill. It is a complete abuse of process.

I have to say, I sit on three committees, and I've seen this happen in other committees, especially with consequential legislation. I'm going to cite Bill C-7 from the last Parliament. That was, of course, the amendments to our medical assistance in dying regime, which added track two for people whose death was not reasonably foreseeable.

In the debates on that, the first version of Bill C-7 included a continued prohibition for persons who had a mental illness as a sole underlying condition. The government even introduced a charter statement with Bill C-7, explaining why that prohibition should continue, because there was not enough knowledge and there were still some gaps in whether treatments would be effective.

What happened in that process, Mr. Chair, was that the Senate amended Bill C-7. They got rid of that prohibition and introduced a sunset clause, and then the government accepted it. They accepted it, so it became part of Bill C-7, and then they established a committee afterwards. Again, it put the cart before the horse so that we, as a committee, could study something that's already part of the law.

• (1615)

That's exactly what we are being asked to do at this committee. It is a proposed amendment to a very consequential bill and now we're being asked to do it after it's been proposed, again, having had no chance to speak to Canadians, having had no chance to speak to our constituents or any affected group. You can see why there's a strong reaction to this bill. The way it has been rolled out.... Honestly, I think I've said enough on that point.

I will also say that we've had some very helpful testimony from officials here, and they certainly have done their utmost—and I want to salute them—to walk this committee through many of the technical questions. The frustrating part of it is that they are limited to technical questions about the wording of the bill. If I want substantive questions answered about impacts, how this was developed or whether there are other options, they cannot speak to those parts of the questions.

There has certainly been a fair amount of misinformation, and I'll acknowledge, as Mr. Noormohamed has said, that some concerns out there about whether this make or model of shotgun will be on the list have been refuted. But, again, it goes to communication and rollout. The government should have done this from the get-go, to make the Canadian public understand exactly what its intention is.

The other thing, Mr. Chair, is that for some makes and models, after the May 2020 OIC was launched.... By the way, let's face it, the section of the Criminal Code that allows for those orders in council has been used by both Liberals and Conservatives, and we do have extreme policy lurches on both sides. For some people who might have owned a firearm that escaped the May 2020 OIC, afterwards they probably said, "My firearm is safe. The government didn't take it." A lot of these are non-restricted firearms that are now being moved to prohibited. They're skipping a step: They're not even going into the restricted category; they're going straight to outright prohibited.

The government never explored other options. This is kind of the sledgehammer approach. There were never any other options explored. This could have been the homework that was so crucial to be done before the amendment was proposed. Could we have explored options such as tighter licensing requirements for semi-automatic firearms? I understand the concern that's out there. A semi-automatic firearm can discharge ammunition at a much faster rate than a lever action or a bolt action rifle can. I understand there are concerns and yes, there are some makes and models that have been

used in horrible crimes. You could find a lot of non-restricted firearms that you could say the same thing about.

There's a requirement, Mr. Chair, for restricted firearms. Handguns all have to be registered. Did the government ever explore that as an option over the concerns that people have with some semi-automatic firearms? Again, we never had the chance to explore a middle ground here to find a compromise, and that's what we, as a committee, are now being forced to do.

There's another thing I want to put on the record, because I think last week's announcement by the Assembly of First Nations was a game-changer. For a government that has, in the seven years that I've been here, talked about how no relationship is more important than that with first nations, the unanimous resolution from the AFN should serve as a wake-up call.

I want to remind committee members that it was in the previous Parliament that we finally passed an act of Parliament to bring Canada's federal laws into harmony with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. If you look at some of the articles of the declaration, it says:

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Again, this goes to their relationship with the land, the resources that are on it, and the fact that hunting is not just something they do for fun. These firearms are tools and they provide for their families with them.

• (1620)

There are many other articles that establish that states, like the Canadian state, have a duty to consult whenever they are implementing changes that affect that relationship and affect the way indigenous peoples can practise their traditions on their lands. We're being asked to do the consultation after the fact.

If we look at the actual law that was passed in the previous Parliament, it states that under the act, the Government of Canada will work "in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, [to] take all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration", as well as "prepare and implement an action plan to achieve the objectives of the Declaration", and develop annual reports on the progress and submit them to Parliament.

I would submit to this committee that, given the overwhelmingly negative reaction we have seen from indigenous groups, that has not been done. In the House today, when a specific question was asked of Minister Mendicino about the AFN resolution last week, he mentioned that he had spoken to them. That's not consultation with indigenous peoples. I'm sorry, but it's not. You don't announce a policy—an amendment to a bill—and then consult. It happens the other way around. That was obviously not done.

The other thing I want to mention is that we know that Canada, as a state, has a duty under the UN declaration. I don't think that has been met in this case. We haven't had a charter statement issued. I know that for the previous bill, Bill C-21, which was introduced in the 43rd Parliament, the government introduced a charter statement.

Given how expansive this amendment to the bill is—the fact that it is widening the net of what's going to be impacted—I would submit, Mr. Chair, that a charter statement is also needed for this additional section. I don't think a charter statement requirement for this amendment nor compliance with the declaration has been met.

There's been talk about the number of witnesses we need. I absolutely think two meetings are not enough. I think 20 might be too high.

As we've approached this meeting, I've been wondering, what if this had been a stand-alone piece of legislation? If Minister Mendicino felt so strongly about this amendment that he had taken the time to make his case in a 20-minute second reading speech, where we would have 10 minutes of questions and comments to ask him about that and where he could stand in the House to defend why this is a strong idea and why it should be passed in principle and sent to the committee, if that had been the case, then I expect we would have allocated the same number of meetings to such a substantive expansion of firearms legislation as we did to Bill C-71 and Bill C-21.

I would land on eight as a minimum. With eight meetings, I believe we would land somewhere in the neighbourhood of 60 witnesses. You'd have to check my math.

We would want to hear from many of the witnesses we've already had on Bill C-21, because again, we never had the chance to ask them about the impact on long guns. We would want to hear from as many indigenous groups as possible. At a bare minimum, we're talking about the Assembly of First Nations, the Métis National Council and ITK representing the Inuit up north. I know there's been mention of a premier. We want to hear from many of the provincial indigenous groups, as well.

We never had the chance to talk to the various police forces that were here about what their opinion is about this. In their experience in law enforcement, is this a massive problem? Is the way this amendment is worded going to help them do their job, etc.? The answer to that might be yes, but we never had a chance to get that on the record.

I would want to have people from my own riding. I was talking with a constituent today on the phone. He's owned firearms for most of his life. He's just bewildered by the fact that his firearm is suddenly appearing on this scheduled list. All he wants to do is have his firearm to be able to go out and hunt. He's ex-military. He knows how to handle a firearm.

• (1625)

It goes to the fact that we've never had the chance, as representatives—in our own ridings and across this country—to talk to people. I understand the intent behind the amendment, but it's an abuse of process to go about it this way. If you have an idea as substantive

as this, and you're sure it's the right way to go, then do it the right way. Submit it to the parliamentary process, where it goes through a second reading and a full range of committee meetings, so we have the chance to adequately study it, with the runway to do so—where we can consult with legislative counsel, after hearing from witnesses on whether there might be some appropriate subamendments.

Mr. Chair, I would like to move a very small subamendment.

I agree with the Conservatives that travel will be necessary. I think this committee could benefit from having a lot of that hands-on knowledge. I would keep everything related to travel. My only change, Mr. Chair, would be that we change the number 20 to eight. That would be the bare minimum, because it's giving this substantive amendment the same respect we gave the previous bill, Bill C-71, and the current Bill C-21.

I will close there. I think I've put everything on the record that I needed to. Honestly, we are stuck in the mud right now, in our seventh meeting, precisely because of how this was rolled out. I'm sorry to my Liberal colleagues, but the blame for that lies squarely on their shoulders. They created this mess, and they have to find a way to fix it. It's not our responsibility, as the opposition. We're trying our best with our limited resources, but we do not have the vast and powerful resources of a national government with two departments—Public Safety and Justice. We don't have the ability to create broad, national surveys or go out and talk to people. I have me and my legislative assistant—two people. My caucus has less than 10% of the seats, and we're trying our best to find a way forward.

You have to understand that the reaction you're seeing, not only from members of the opposition but also from the public, is precisely because of how this landed. My Liberal colleagues have to wear that and take responsibility for that.

I'll close with that, Mr. Chair. I just want to make sure my subamendment was, in fact, moved.

• (1630)

The Chair: Thank you.

I acknowledge your subamendment to change “twenty” to “eight”.

The discussion now is on the subamendment.

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

The Chair: Go ahead on your point of order, Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I believe he said “at least eight meetings”. It wasn't “eight” definitively, but “at least eight meetings”. I believe that's what the member said.

The Chair: Is that correct?

Okay. That is the subamendment before us.

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Badawey.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Are we not to vote on the amendment first, and then, if that doesn't proceed—

The Chair: We're allowed to go one deeper. We're allowed to go to a subamendment.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Okay.

The Chair: We'll vote on the subamendment, except that we have more people who want to discuss it.

We are now engaging in discussion on Mr. MacGregor's subamendment to Ms. Dancho's amendment to Ms. Michaud's motion.

Next, we have Mr. Motz, followed by Mr. Shipley and Ms. Michaud.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I won't necessarily speak directly to Mr. MacAllister's subamendment. However, I will say that I agree we need a minimum number of meetings. Two certainly weren't sufficient.

I have some confusion about the travel. I agree we need to travel and meet some of the people. Asking all of them to come to Ottawa would be unreasonable for their resources, as well. Are we talking about eight meetings in which we travel? We also need meetings here. There are going to be groups and organizations that will want to come to Ottawa and meet here.

I think we need some clarity around that. I guess “a minimum of” would suffice. When I'm done with my intervention, I would certainly like to have some clarity from Mr. MacAllister on that. I would—

The Chair: Actually, it's Mr. MacGregor.

Mr. Glen Motz: Did I say “MacAllister” again? I'm so sorry. I can't believe it.

It's Mr. MacGregor.

The Chair: Is it Gregor MacAllister or Alistair MacGregor?

Mr. Glen Motz: Could you turn your name tag, so I can actually see it? I apologize.

I want to thank Mr. MacGregor for his amazing intervention. He took a lot of the things I was going to say. I will repeat some of them, because I think they're worth repeating.

First, the Liberals need to wear this mess. That's the bottom line.

How in the world did we get to the point where we've spent six meetings on a government amendment to a bill they were so proud of? There are 140-plus amendments to this bill, and they're not all opposition amendments. Many of them are the government's. G-46 is a good indication. Of that 140, they have 46 amendments to their own bill, which was supposed to be so perfect. That should speak to—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I raise a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Chair: Go ahead, Madame Michaud, on a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: My understanding was that Mr. Motz requested clarification from Mr. McGregor on his subamendment. Perhaps he could answer before Mr. Motz continues to make his point? That could clarify things.

[*English*]

Mr. Glen Motz: Sure, I apologize.

Go ahead.

The Chair: Mr. MacGregor, if you wish to respond to the question, go ahead.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Can I just have the question repeated?

Mr. Glen Motz: Which one? I had lots of questions.

The Chair: I believe the question was whether the proposed travel was part of the eight meetings or not.

Mr. Glen Motz: It is a minimum of eight meetings.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: To clarify, I did not change the travel portion. It was only the number of meetings.

The amendment that Ms. Dancho moved, that is still part of it. My subamendment only amended the number of meetings.

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you for the clarification.

Before I was point-of-ordered, I was going to ask the question, why are we in this mess? Why did we have six meetings to study—

The Chair: I'm sorry. There's a point of order from someone.

Mr. Doug Shipley (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): He point-of-ordered himself.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Motz.

• (1635)

Mr. Glen Motz: Why are we discussing this motion for about the seventh meeting now? It's because of the mess of the Liberals' trying to pull a fast one on Canadians.

Let's back up just a little bit.

Why did we have this done, and how did Bill C-21 get to this place? It was discussed in the House, and it was debated as a handgun freeze. It was debated as a need to involve the improvement of red flag laws. We saw that it was going to impact sport shooters and many other communities. That was the intent behind what the government said they were trying to do.

When the bill came here, again many people debated it, and all parties were able to debate this bill in the House. None of us were under the impression that it was anything more than what was presented to the House and to Canadians. Then, at the eleventh and a half hour, during clause-by-clause, the Liberals tried to pull a fast one on Canadians. They tried to—

The Chair: Mr. Motz, I will interrupt.

I know everybody has a lot on their chest that they want to get off, but we have less than an hour to finish this off; otherwise, we're going to have to meet and settle it on Thursday, probably.

I would urge everyone to stick to the amendments: not to how we got here or the shortcomings of the bill but whether or not we should meet to discuss having more witnesses, how many meetings that should be and whether we should travel.

I will certainly give you as much latitude as I have given everyone else, but I would encourage everyone to focus on the matter at hand to help us get through this.

Go ahead, Mr. Motz.

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you, Chair.

As I said, we are here because of the Liberals not following, as was already indicated, due process. They're bringing a significant amendment to a bill that was already contentious to many Canadians. They've now added a whole new scheme to this bill.

I firmly believe that the Liberals did not decide to throw this amendment in at the last minute. I believe very strongly that when Minister Mendicino made these comments back in May, there were already conversations and already plans in the works to try to manipulate and pull a fast one on Canadians, and now, because of the enormous response from Canadians and from the opposition, they're trying to backtrack and save face. This is a complete sham, to be honest with you.

Firearms have dominated a lot of my email correspondence over the last several weeks. I think we're above 6,000 already. I have not had one in favour of what this government has tried to do—not one. In fact, the majority of the phone calls we've received and the thousands of emails we've received have suggested many things, most of which I can't repeat here. The ones I can repeat are asking this: If the government is so intent on going after hunters, why don't they propose a stand-alone bill? Pull this right from Bill C-21. Let's have the conversation about what Bill C-21 was intended to do, which was to deal with handguns, and let's go back to it.

As Mr. MacGregor indicated in his subamendment, and I agree, we need a substantial number of meetings. I don't want it to be prescribed and remain at eight. Ms. Dancho in her amendment to this bill proposed 20. If the government doesn't have the good common sense to pull this amendment on their own, then the committee has to do the consultative work this government failed to do.

As a result, I don't think eight meetings will suffice either. There are multiple groups from across this country—hunting and sporting groups, industry, indigenous Canadians, you name it—and we're not going to get them all in eight meetings, which will only be 16 hours. Even with two different groups per hour, that won't be a sig-

nificant number of groups. We'll be able to hear only about 30 groups speak. I think we'll just be scratching the surface.

There's a reason why Canadians don't trust this government. There are many reasons, actually, but this is just another example of trying to manipulate or pull a fast one—or whatever name you want to call it—to get Canadians to buy into something that is their ideological agenda.

Again, I will have more to say on this as we get to the regular amendment. Suffice it to say that while I agree that we need more than two meetings—many more—I am certainly not favourable to trying to get everybody in within a process of eight.

• (1640)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Motz.

Before I go to Mr. Shipley, let me stress to everyone that we really need to stick to the amendments and the subamendments in our discussion so that we can vote. The question on the table is whether or not we should accept Mr. MacGregor's subamendment. I hope we can address that directly. As soon as there is no discussion on the subamendment, we can vote on that. Then we can go back to the amendment and carry on that discussion.

Go ahead, Mr. Shipley.

Mr. Doug Shipley: Thank you, Chair.

I did have many notes here, but seeing as how you're being very cognizant of the clock today, I will be also, even though not everybody here has been. I'm definitely not one for overspeaking my turn in here, and I think everybody would agree with that.

I just have a few quick things to say. I came into this a little excited. This was going to be my first clause-by-clause review. That excitement has been somewhat removed from me. We've gotten bogged down in a quagmire here, quite frankly. We're now in our seventh meeting. We've had six and we really haven't accomplished a lot.

I'm just going to cut to the chase. I have a lot of notes here, but I know we want to move on. We're going to try to get this thing moving. The only thing I'm going to say is this.

I have heard the term “misinformation” so much lately; it's crazy. Every time someone says something anywhere now, it's just misinformation. You're saying misinformation. You're spewing misinformation. Everything is misinformation.

So let's go to the heart of it. Let's have these meetings. Let's stop the misinformation. Let's go out there and get the real factual information from the people who are using these hunting rifles that an attempt is being made to ban here. Let's stop with the misinformation.

You use that phrase a lot, Mr. Noormohamed, but let's go out there and get the facts. I don't think we can do that in two meetings. There are a lot of facts out there. Every side will want to get the facts. Let's go get them.

As I said, I did have many other notes here, but I know we're being aware of time, so I will cede my time. That's all I'll be saying today. I'm in favour of more meetings. We have to get the facts on this and move forward.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Shipley.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Michaud, you have the floor.

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

I would like us to come to a decision on the motion before the end of the meeting.

Each party expressed their opinion on the number of meetings. We must acknowledge that we've been stuck on amendment G-4 for six meetings. It's rather exceptional to call witnesses back in, but the amendment that was tabled was also rather exceptional, and it seemed like a reasonable solution to me.

For the Conservatives to say it's reasonable to hold 20 meetings, including four hours with the minister, and travel from one end of Canada to the other, seems a little over the top to me. It was the government's job to hold cross-country consultations before tabling the bill. It's not necessarily ours.

It is indeed necessary to hear from people who will experience the potential impacts of amendment G-4. I think it's reasonable to hold two additional meetings to hear them. I understood that the Conservatives did not want to accept eight meetings, as proposed by our NDP colleague. I propose that we vote on this subamendment and on the other. That's what Mr. Motz just said.

I propose that we pass the motion and make a decision before the end of this meeting. I therefore request a vote.

[*English*]

The Chair: We can't vote until no one wishes to speak to the subamendment. We can't call the question, as it were.

We go now to Ms. Dancho and then Mr. Lloyd, on the subamendment.

• (1645)

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you very much.

I appreciate Mr. MacGregor's remarks very much. On this week four, it's nice to hear from him. Mr. MacGregor is quite level-headed but I've never seen him so fired up. I did appreciate the passion in his remarks. It's certainly how I've been feeling. I think that's been evident over the last number of weeks, and this is obviously a very personal issue to many of us who have this experience in our communities and the like. I appreciate the passion coming out of this committee, and frankly from all sides. It's an important issue to debate and talk about.

In response to Ms. Michaud, I take her point, but the government hasn't done the consultation. That's the problem. That is why we're

suggesting and we put forward an idea that since they haven't done their homework—they don't want to go across the country and they don't want to talk to northern Canadians, rural Canadians or indigenous Canadians—then we will do the work.

I won't repeat all of Mr. MacGregor's remarks, but he made a very clear argument, as we have done, that we're only in this mess because the Liberals brought this forward in the eleventh hour. We wouldn't be here in this extraordinary circumstance had they not done that.

That's why we proposed 20 meetings. Included in that would be travel to rural and northern indigenous and non-indigenous communities. I think it's more than reasonable. Again, if it were up to me, there would be 50 meetings. That's what the government should have done, at a minimum, before they launched this on the committee at the eleventh hour.

Just to speak to the subamendment quickly, because I know we're running out of time, I would say that eight meetings is okay. I was hoping that perhaps we could meet in the middle, but I know I can't amend a subamendment. I'm not overly keen on eight. I would have said maybe 12 would have been more reasonable, but I don't believe I can amend a subamendment. I think that eight, with the minister included in that, means only seven, and I just don't feel that's enough, Mr. Chair.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Dancho.

Go ahead, Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I'll make this brief.

I really appreciate Mr. MacGregor for bringing up this subamendment, and I am hearing the concerns from Madame Michaud very clearly.

I think I could accept eight meetings, but, if we're going to be travelling, we have to understand that they aren't going to be the two-hour meetings that we usually have here in Ottawa. If we're going to go to a place like Whitehorse, we'd be having a meeting substantially longer than two hours, because we need to have an opportunity for witnesses to be heard if people are going to be coming in from the community.

We need at least eight meetings. If the committee finds, at the end of seven meetings, that we feel that we've left out important groups and that we need a couple of additional meetings, then I think we're leaving that open in this amendment by saying "at least eight" and we can add to those meetings at a later date.

I hope, with the understanding that they'll be longer than two hours, that "at least eight" is acceptable and that, if needed, we could add additional ones if the committee wants.

I'm going to end my remarks there, and I hope we can get the committee's support for this, because it is important to get consultation on this, and I think it helps rebuild trust with Canadians.

Thank you.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Can I do a quick point of order, just for clarification?

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Dancho, on a point of order.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Perhaps the clerk can answer this. If we do go to Yellowknife or somewhere, would it be a two-hour meeting, as I'm thinking it would be, or would it be all day? That does change things.

The Chair: Well, that's an open question.

It should also be noted that we wouldn't be able to travel before April.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Anything's possible.

The Chair: I think that's something....

Go ahead on a point of order.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I understand that committee travel has been finalized for prior to March 31, I believe, but I think that if we have consent from the whips of all parties, we could bring forward emergency funding to support a trip.

When the decision on committee travel was made, back in October, we had no idea that this amendment was coming. For the government to drop an amendment at this late stage, and then say, "too bad, so sad, you can't travel to—

The Chair: I think we're going beyond a point of order here.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I just wanted to make a point of order that, with the agreement of the whips of all parties, we could travel before March 31.

Thank you.

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

The Chair: We have Mr. MacGregor on a point of order.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I think there might be some confusion over how I amended the amendment.

Everything that Ms. Dancho moved stands, except for the number 20. I only replaced the number 20 in her amendment with "at least eight" meetings. There were questions about the minister, but nothing else in Ms. Dancho's amendment changes. That's still part of it. The only thing I changed was the number 20 to "at least eight".

I just wanted that clarified on the record.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. MacGregor, for the clarification.

That being the case, and seeing no one wishing to speak, we will have a vote on Mr. MacGregor's subamendment.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I raise a point of order, Mr. Chair.

Conversations or discussions are happening on the sidelines, so to speak. Could we suspend the meeting for a brief moment?

[*English*]

The Chair: We'll suspend for five minutes.

• (1650)

(Pause)

• (1700)

The Chair: This meeting has now resumed.

We were at the point where we were going to take a vote on Mr. MacGregor's subamendment, which is to modify Ms. Dancho's motion to change the words "twenty consecutive meetings" to "at least eight consecutive meetings".

Is this on a point of order?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I think it's relevant.

The Chair: Okay. Go ahead.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I think we should put the conversation on the record, because folks who are watching weren't able to be aware—

The Chair: Okay. So we're going to carry on with the discussion on Mr. MacGregor's motion.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I'll be brief. I'm not looking to drag this out.

As you know, Mr. Chair, committees are about collaboration. Right now, we're really looking at either two meetings or eight or more, and with travel. That's what we've put forward. Again, the proposal was two, and then we put forward 20, plus the minister, and within that 20 we would do rural and northern travel, including first nations. The subamendment is saying "at least eight", so it cuts it down from 20 to at least eight.

With consultations from the Bloc, and she can correct me if I'm not saying this correctly, we would.... I know we can't amend a subamendment, but I think we can agree as a committee that this is what we're implying by the subamendment. We would say that it would be eight meetings, not "at least eight". This is what we need to get a consensus on here. That's why this is important. So, eight—

The Chair: I am going to suggest—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Would you just allow me to finish quickly?

The Chair: I'm just going to suggest that if we vote on Mr. MacGregor's amendment—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Right, but as you said, we're running up the clock, so—

The Chair: —then you could amend the amended motion.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: What we've done in the past is that we've just agreed.... It is on the record, so we can reference it if anyone ever wants to cause problems, but just for the sake of efficiency, what I've talked to the Bloc about is whether she would agree not to "at least eight", but to "eight" specifically.

We're not quite aligning on the travel. Rather than what our original vision was, which was to do notable trips, many trips around B.C. and Atlantic Canada, etc., and up north, it's that we commit as a committee to doing one stint up north, since that's really the most disadvantaged for travel and resources and is just very far away.

That's what we've talked about, so I'm just putting that out there—

• (1705)

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Ms. Dancho, there is a point of order.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I am on a point of order, so can you point-of-order a point of order?

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: On a point of clarification, what does a "stint" mean?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I assume it would be one week when we go up north. We'd go to Nunavut, Yellowknife, maybe Churchill, just going across the north. Again, they're at the most disadvantage to travel to Ottawa.

I think Mr. Lloyd's point was very clear. We want to make sure we're not just doing a strictly colonial approach to this and expecting everybody to come to Ottawa. I think we should go into people's communities and give them the respect they deserve.

I think we've compromised a little bit. Rather than doing a lot of travel, we would do one trip up north and then the rest, for other regions, we'd be expected to do regional.

I think I've made that clear. Of course, she is welcome to correct me, but I believe we can have a consensus on that.

The Chair: I'll just clarify with Mr. MacGregor whether he agrees.

Mr. MacGregor, your motion was to change Ms. Dancho's motion to read "at least eight" meetings. Do you agree to change that to "eight" precisely?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I agree with what Ms. Dancho is proposing. I think there was a lot of work during the suspension we had to try to hammer out something where we can come together, so I agree with what's being proposed.

The Chair: What I'm proposing now is a vote on the amendment. Your amendment is to change the word "twenty" to "eight", and that's it.

Is there any further discussion on that?

Mr. Noormohamed, go ahead.

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

I think we all agree that there is still work to be done on this. I think there are a lot of conversations yet to be had. There are a lot of people to hear from.

What I am struggling with is how we say, on the one hand, that we want 50 meetings or we need 20 meetings to be able to hear everybody properly, but now we can condense that into eight. Somehow, that's the magic number that's going to satisfy everybody.

As Mr. Motz noted, we supported Madame Michaud's original proposal of two meetings because, perhaps—I think we've heard this before—there should have been a different process for consultation undertaken previously, but the work of the committee is to consider the bill. We have agreed to suspend to discuss—all of us—the amendment we have before us.

I'm trying to figure out how we limit very specifically the conversations that we have in respect of the specific amendment before us. If we take this approach that we want eight meetings on this particular amendment, what's to say that at the next amendment they say that they're not comfortable? Some parties may come out and say that they actually don't like the whole bill. Instead of coming out and saying that they don't like the whole bill and they want to vote it down, they're going to—I will get to my point, Mr. Chair—get to a place where it becomes 106(4) on amendment upon amendment.

I appreciate what Mr. MacGregor has said. I appreciate sincerely that there is a need for further consultation. I'm not clear on whether we achieve that objective by taking one trip to one part of this country. Then we'll hear accusations from folks saying we ignored this part or that part and we still rushed through it.

The Chair: I think you're speaking to the broader amendment.

The question on the table right now is whether we do the eight meetings, in Ms. Dancho's amendment, or 20 meetings, which is how it stands now. All this other stuff about travel and stuff is part of Ms. Dancho's amendment. Once we've finished Mr. MacGregor's subamendment, we can speak meaningfully to that. I'm going to ask if you would like to speak first on that amendment after we have the vote.

Mr. Lloyd, go ahead.

• (1710)

Mr. Dane Lloyd: On a point of clarification, you said "consecutive" earlier. I didn't hear anyone say "consecutive". My understanding of "consecutive" is continuous meetings back to back—

The Chair: Ms. Dancho's motion says "consecutive".

Mr. Dane Lloyd: That was Madame Michaud's motion.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

The Chair: Mr. Badawey, go ahead on a point of order.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Can we deal with one amendment at a time here? We have a subamendment on the table. Can we deal with that and then—

The Chair: I dream of this.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Let's go one at a time here.

The Chair: Let us have the vote on Mr. MacGregor's subamendment, which is merely to change the word "twenty" to "eight".

Are we in favour of that subamendment?

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

I'm sorry. This may be a silly question, process-wise. We're basically switching the 20 to an eight. Is that correct? Does that not affect the entirety of the motion, or are we just amending...?

The Chair: We're changing only that one word.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Okay, thank you.

The Chair: All right, I think we're clear. I'm hoping we're clear.

Are all in favour of Mr. MacGregor's subamendment, which changes "twenty" to "eight"?

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Can we get a recorded division, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Yes. Absolutely.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Could I have clarification on that, please, Mr. Chair?

You said "eight meetings". Does that include travel, as well?

The Chair: The only change—

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: The only word I'm changing is "twenty" to "eight".

We'll get to the amendment after this vote.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Thank you.

The Chair: Okay, let's go ahead with the vote.

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

The Chair: The discussion now is on Ms. Dancho's amendment, as amended by Mr. MacGregor. I'm not going to read it, but it's eight consecutive meetings, as opposed to 20.

Is there any discussion on Ms. Dancho's amendment, as modified by Mr. MacGregor?

Mr. Lloyd, you have the floor.

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

I have some questions about the meaning of the term "consecutive". My understanding is that the literal definition of the word means back-to-back meetings. I don't think that's what this committee really wants to have. If we had eight back-to-back meetings, that would be at least 16 hours of testimony. I just want to get clarification on that, perhaps from the clerk.

Speaking more substantively to the motion, I think it would be appropriate for this committee to consider a travel component to these eight meetings. As I said, there are a lot of communities that lack the capacity to come to Ottawa or participate in meetings, either physically or through rural broadband, which, as we know, is very poor. Even in my region, which is next to a major metropolitan area, people can't get access to high-speed Internet. I think it would be critical—on the side of reconciliation with indigenous peoples,

specifically—for this committee to entertain at least one trip to northern Canada.

I'm always willing to work with other committee members to find something acceptable, but I think having a number of open meetings so witnesses in northern Canada can participate in their own communities would be very important for this.

I'm in support of this motion and would like some clarification on "consecutive".

• (1715)

The Chair: I would interpret "consecutive" to mean "one after the other without any breaks", although, oftentimes, we need to intersperse it with breaks, because of estimates or whatever. That's how I interpret it.

We'll now go to Mr. Noormohamed.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I raise a point of order, Mr. Chair.

I can clarify the intent behind the word "consecutive," because I'm the one who moved the motion.

I didn't want to hold two meetings, one after the other, on the same day. I just wanted to make sure that both meetings included in the committee's normal schedule would happen during the same week. So, we would hear from witnesses on Tuesday, then more witnesses on Thursday in the same week, not three weeks later. I just wanted to include those meetings in the committee's regular schedule.

Does that clarify my proposal?

[*English*]

The Chair: Yes, my interpretation of "consecutive" would be just that.

If someone wishes to get rid of the word "consecutive", that could be a subamendment.

I can't believe I'm soliciting subamendments, at this point.

We'll now go to Mr. Noormohamed.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Thank you.

If I am correct, we are now debating the amended amendment, which was Madame Michaud's original—

The Chair: Madame Michaud's motion has been proposed to be amended by Ms. Dancho's amendment, which has been modified by Mr. MacGregor. We are speaking to Ms. Dancho's amendment, as modified by Mr. MacGregor's subamendment.

If anybody is confused, it's me. That's why we have clerks and analysts here.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Okay.

It's a short motion. Can somebody read out the correct language so that we know what the heck we're talking about? We've had lots of good discussions today. I just want to make sure we don't waste time talking about something that's not—

The Chair: Okay. I will do so.

The amendment as it stands, the one we're discussing right now, is as follows:

That the committee temporarily suspend the clause-by-clause study of Bill C-21 and that it allocate eight consecutive meetings to study the effects of amendments G-4 and G-46 and that these meetings include committee travel across Canada, as soon as possible, to rural, northern and indigenous communities to hear from impacted individuals.

That is the result of Ms. Dancho's amendment as modified by Mr. MacGregor.

Do you have any further—

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: I do. I have many thoughts and many questions.

As I understand it now, we are proposing eight meetings, with no clear definition, in terms of this particular motion, of how much travel we are prepared to do. That's not on this page. Basically, right now, effectively, we could travel for all eight meetings. In theory we could.

I'm not even—

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): I have a point of order, Chair.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms. Damoff, on a point of order.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I'm sorry to interrupt my wonderful colleague.

Could the clerk explain to us, please, when travel is allowed to happen and whether this “urgent matters” travel actually exists? I think we need an explanation on that. It's 5:19 p.m. now. Could he please explain when travel would be possible and if urgent matters travel actually exists?

The Chair: I would invite the clerk to do so. However, I have been advised that this would have to be settled by...I forget which committee, which probably won't meet again until February. As a practical matter, we probably can't travel until at least April.

Mr. Clerk, go ahead.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Simon Larouche): The standard procedure for a committee to travel is that it has to go through a process to submit the travel purpose to the subcommittee on the committee's budget. Afterwards, it has to go back a second time, after the purpose, to present the budget for this travel. Then it has to be adopted in the House. The House has to authorize the trips.

Usually, this process takes several weeks. We have already passed the deadlines for the next months' trips. If the committee would like to travel, according to the normal procedure, it would be for travel starting next April. That's the standard procedure.

• (1720)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

Mr. Noormohamed has the floor. Then we have Ms. Damoff, Madame Michaud, Mr. Badawey and Ms. Dancho. I'm fearful that we're not going to get through this list. I suspect that we're going to have to suspend this meeting until Thursday, at the end of the day.

Mr. Noormohamed, you have the floor still.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Before I get into it, I want to clarify something with the clerk.

If we're saying that we cannot actually travel until April, are we then saying that we are literally going to be sitting in abeyance until such time as we are able to travel and complete whatever these meetings are supposed to complete? If that's the case, then what is the committee going to do between now and then? I think it's a question that would help me consider how I'm going to vote on this.

The Chair: That's a very good question.

My expectation is that if we are required to travel, we would not be able to resume clause-by-clause until after we have made at least one trip. That would, I guess, put us into the territory of hearing testimony on Bill C-20 and potentially finishing the Russia study, should we need to fill in some time. It's kind of a mushy area. I'm not exactly sure where we're going to go with that.

That was a point of clarification. Do you still want—

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Yes, I do. Thank you.

I'm struggling with the idea that we would now do eight meetings with an unlimited potential amount of travel, which may or may not begin until April, with then three weeks left to potentially—if we are satisfied with the consultations that we will have had on one amendment—try to figure out how, over the course of the next three weeks of the session, we're going to pass critically important gun legislation that I believe very strongly the majority of Canadians want us to get done.

I think we are all in agreement that it's important to get some more consultation and try to address a lot of the challenges, a lot of the issues, a lot of the concerns that have been raised. Nobody is disputing that point. But to say that we now want to effectively hold up.... How we got here is a different conversation for a different day. How we get to a solution is, I think, what Canadians are looking for here.

The idea that we would now sit, effectively, unable to move this legislation, at the very least until we return from whatever travel in April, and then try to spend three weeks to do this.... I just don't understand how we, in good conscience, can actually go back to our constituents and say that because we decided we wanted to go on trips, we're going to hold this legislation back until April at the earliest.

I am not saying that we shouldn't consult with communities in the north, in Atlantic Canada, in British Columbia, but we have learned over the last two years—my goodness, we managed to conduct Parliament virtually—that there are ways to try to do this in a way that is actually efficient and gets to where I think people want to go, which is to have heard voices and to be able to deal with misinformation—yes, I'm going to use the word “misinformation”—which, as Mr. MacGregor has rightly noted, is out there. I think it addresses some of the gaps perhaps in how people might have wanted this to have gone differently.

The fact that we would say, let's not get this over the finish line, in whatever form that ends up being, with everybody's input.... I've said this many times: There is no monopoly on good ideas. I have said this to every single one of my colleagues on this committee. I am open to hearing different ways of doing things. We are all open to that. The minister said this. The Prime Minister said this.

Let's get past the fact that there may be a difference of opinion as to how we got to where we are today. I don't know how we can say we're going stop all work completely until we have managed to do trips. Travel is important. Looking people in the eye is important, absolutely. But we've managed to do it for two and a half years. We've managed to consult with people in ways that use technology.

I am really quite worried about what we do when we go back, regardless of what party we belong to, and how we can go back in good conscience and say, look, we decided we weren't going to have active debate on anything past clause 4 of this bill until the entire year has run out and then maybe we'll take it back up again.

Canadians demanded of us that we pass gun legislation. The NDP, the Bloc—

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I raise a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

The Chair: Madame Michaud, go ahead on a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I have a question about the clerk's clarification. Travel seems like a complicated process. We have four minutes left to make a decision, and it seems that there's a consensus to hold eight meetings.

Suppose we pass the motion, but without the travel component. During our first meeting after the holidays, it will be possible to propose adding travel to our eight meetings. For example, the Conservative Party could present a motion for the committee to hold consultations throughout the country for a week.

Today, however, we could simply decide to hold eight meetings. It seems like there's a consensus on that. Would it be possible to proceed that way?

[*English*]

The Chair: The amendment before us specifies travel.

But I think we are out of time. I'm going to suspend until Thursday. We can resume from where we left off.

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

If the House rises tomorrow, how does that work for Thursday?

The Chair: We're allowed to carry on.

The only thing that messes it up is prorogation and dissolution.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Sorry, I have another point of order.

Perhaps all committee members will be very excited to meet on Thursday. That's completely fine, if I'm off base here. Perhaps, given that the China committee was usually at this slot coming up, and I think that was the reason we couldn't go late during this committee's slotted time....

What I'm saying is, I believe the resources are available if we want to go a little longer just to round this up. If committee members are very excited to meet after the House rises tomorrow, I will be there. It's just a suggestion.

The Chair: I was hoping to go home myself.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: We have five or 10 minutes left with the resources that are available to us.

Mr. Noormohamed, go ahead.

Mr. Glen Motz: I have a point of order, Chair.

The Chair: I just recognized Mr. Noormohamed.

Was that on a point of order?

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: I still had the floor, but if Mr. Motz has a point of order....

The Chair: Mr. Motz, please go ahead on a point of order.

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you, Chair.

We can solve this whole mess if the Liberals would just agree to get rid of amendment G-4.

The Chair: That's not a point of order.

We're out of time.

Mr. Noormohamed is in full sway here. I feel he has more miles left to go.

We will suspend at this time and resume from where we left off.

When we resume on Thursday—I don't know if there's any other time available; our regular slot is Thursday morning—Mr. Noormohamed has the floor, followed by Ms. Damoff, Madame Michaud, Mr. Badawey and Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, I'm sorry. Before you clang the gavel, I'm just wondering if you could answer my question about whether we have time to finish this up now.

Why don't we just go another half an hour?

The Chair: It's because we don't have time for that. We don't have resources to go past five more minutes.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: But we do—

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Is this on the same point of order?

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: No, it's a different point of order. We still haven't dealt with the previous question that was asked in the previous point of order that Madame Michaud had raised. We have a whole bunch of things in flux here that predicate whether or not....

First of all, there's the question of a meeting on Thursday. There's the question whether we have an actual answer to understand the problem we're trying to address. I think we're in a bit of a spin and now we're entirely out of time, but—

• (1730)

The Chair: On everybody's point of order, when we come back on Thursday, if you wish to make a subamendment about travel or such, that would be appropriate.

At this point, we're out of time.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: I will have the floor again and will pick up where I was on that point.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I just have one more point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Ms. Dancho, go ahead on a point of order.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: If we're not going finish today, I think the committee should be made aware. What happens if we don't finish on Thursday?

The Chair: We would probably suspend again until the next opportunity.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: When would that be?

The Chair: I don't want to speculate. I think we should deal with Thursday and hopefully get it done on Thursday.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: There's no guarantee.

The Chair: There's no guarantee. This is the Wild West we're in right now.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Liberals.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Chair, can I move to adjourn the meeting?

The Chair: There has been a motion to adjourn, as opposed to suspend.

An hon. member: I'd vote for that.

The Chair: I hadn't gavelled yet, so it's in order.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: I raise a point of order, Mr. Chair.

What is the difference between adjourning the meeting and suspending it? If the meeting is suspended, will we be able to continue

discussing this request under Standing Order 106(4)? If it's adjourned, will we be unable to do so? In both cases, will we be able to continue the discussion at the next meeting, regardless of when it happens?

[*English*]

The Chair: That's correct. If we adjourn, this matter is closed and we carry on with another Bill C-21 clause-by-clause next time.

A motion to adjourn has been made.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Could we have a recorded division?

(Motion negatived: nays 6; yeas 5)

The Chair: The motion to adjourn is denied.

We will suspend until Thursday.

[*The meeting was suspended at 5:33 p.m., Tuesday, December 13, 2022*]

[*The meeting resumed at 9:35 a.m., Friday, February 3, 2023*]

The Chair: I call this meeting to order.

Welcome back to meeting number 54 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

We resume once again, acknowledging that we are meeting on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin people. I am calling from the traditional unceded territory of the k^wik^wəłəm people and the shared traditional territory of the Katzie, Tsleil-Waututh and Stó:lō people who have called this land home since time immemorial.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format pursuant to the House order of November 25, 2021. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application. The meeting is public.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), the committee commenced consideration of the request by at least four members of the committee to discuss their request regarding the need to rehear witnesses on the proposals contained in amendment G-4 to Bill C-21.

I remind you that our last meeting on December 13, 2022, was suspended; therefore, no new notice was published and distributed.

The debate on December 13 was suspended on the amendment as amended, moved by Ms. Dancho on the original motion of Kristina Michaud.

The text of the amendment and where we are in the subamendments was distributed by email yesterday afternoon.

I see, Mr. Noormohamed, that you have your hand up. I believe you have a point of order.

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

On a point of order, I'm going to seek unanimous consent of the committee for the following motion. I move:

That in relation to clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), amendment G-4, currently under consideration by the committee, be deemed withdrawn; and that amendment G-46, which has not yet been moved, be deemed withdrawn from the package of amendments.

Just to be clear, it is not our intention to move amendment G-46.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair. I'm seeking guidance from you and the clerk. Is it admissible to move a motion on a point of order? I don't believe that it is allowed under our committee rules.

The Chair: Strictly speaking, to move a bare motion on a point of order is not allowed; however, he's asking for unanimous consent. As you know, we can do many things with unanimous consent that we couldn't do otherwise.

It is up to the committee whether or not to give such consent. I ask for that determination at this time.

Is it the will of the committee to grant unanimous consent to the request by Mr. Noormohamed?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Could Mr. Noormohamed read it into the record one more time? It's just that the point of order blanked out the last part of that. I just want to make sure I'm getting it clearly.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: I'd be happy to.

The Chair: Absolutely, go ahead.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Just to be clear, Mr. Chiang would have done this, but his headset is not working. I just want to make sure that's also stated. It reads as follows:

That in relation to clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-21, An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms), amendment G-4, currently under consideration by the committee, be deemed withdrawn; and that amendment G-46, which has not yet been moved, be deemed withdrawn from the package of amendments.

It is not our intention, as I noted, to move amendment G-46.

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

Given the significance of this amendment and the impact on several million people in Canada, I would ask that it be provided in written form and translated, and that a hard copy be given to all members of this committee immediately.

If that's agreed to, then we will provide unanimous consent from the Conservatives.

The Chair: I believe that's possible.

Mr. Clerk, I wonder if you could arrange that.

The Clerk: It's possible. I just need to receive it.

The Chair: Ms. Dancho, do you require that distribution to occur before we have the decision on unanimous consent?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Just a commitment that it will happen in the coming minutes....

The Chair: Very well. I understand that it is in progress, and Mr. Clerk will follow through as soon as time permits.

Mr. MacGregor, go ahead on this point of order.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Thank you, Chair.

I do have a copy. I appreciate the clarification. My understanding is that it is G-4 and G-46. I am definitely prepared to give my consent to that.

As members of the committee know, I also was going to move a motion today to refer this matter to the Speaker to get a ruling on the admissibility of these amendments procedurally. I appreciate the Liberals' taking this step, and I will give my consent to this motion.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. MacGregor.

We have Ms. Dancho on a point of order, followed by Madame Michaud.

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

I just wanted to put on the record what we're talking about in case those watching who are impacted by this are not entirely familiar with it. It's a bit inside baseball when we say "G-4" and "G-46".

In very short order, G-4 was the amendment brought forward by the Liberals that created a new definition of a firearm that would be prohibited, notably, the semi-automatic rifles or shotguns with magazine capabilities of greater than five cartridges. It also, in essence, would codify the May 2022 OIC definition of prohibited firearms: notably, a 20-millimetre bore diameter, and a firearm capacity of 10,000 Joules or greater.

Notably, amendment G-46 would have codified every prohibited firearm that has been permitted over the last 30 years. As well, it included building on the May 2020 OIC. It included adding about 400 new models to that list, along with a number of other firearms that did not fall under the May 2020 definition but were added to the list nonetheless. Again, that was the amendment that was several hundred pages long, with several hundred models of firearms that were newly banned, in addition to those that had been banned in the last number of decades.

That's just to be clear to those who may not have the inside baseball information about what G-4 and G-46 were.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Dancho.

I would like to further clarify your clarification. The G-4 wasn't proposing to prohibit firearms that were capable of taking larger magazines, but those that were designed originally to accept larger magazines.

Madame Michaud, go ahead, please.

[*Translation*]

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

I thank my colleague, Mr. Noormohamed, for tabling his motion. The proposed amendments were problematic. We said so from the beginning. The Bloc Québécois is always in favour of prohibiting military-style assault weapons. However, our opinion is that the proposed amendments went beyond the scope of Bill C-21.

We're still determined to cooperate on this bill, which deals with handguns. However, it would be useful to hear from additional witnesses. They could tell us, for instance, how we could proceed with prohibiting ghost guns and maybe military-style assault weapons. However, that might go beyond the scope of Bill C-21.

I am inclined to be cooperative as we move ahead. I'm looking forward to restarting study of this bill, once we've heard from additional witnesses.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Michaud.

[*English*]

Seeing no other interventions on this point of order, I would ask if—

I'm sorry. Go ahead, Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I just have a clarification on how the rest of the meeting is going to roll, so if the clerk and the chair can weigh in, and perhaps other members if there are any other plans.... Again, the Conservatives just found out about this minutes before the meeting was scheduled to start. We're just processing the magnitude of this as well.

Mr. Chair, I have a question for clarification and then just a follow-up comment. If this is moved, this unanimous consent motion, if we all provide UC and the Liberal motion to withdraw G-4 and G-46 is passed, it would mean that G-4 would be completely withdrawn and that G-46, the long list, would not be moved at any point. That's the clarification I need.

Following that, my understanding is that we would return to the debate on the 106(4) motion originally brought forward at the last meeting by Ms. Michaud to call for testimony—which was quite a long time ago—and we were debating that. The Conservatives wanted 20 meetings and travel. There was a lot of back-and-forth, and I believe we settled on a subamendment from Mr. MacGregor to the 20-meeting amendment, which said eight meetings and travel.

Just so I'm clear, if this passes, G-4 is withdrawn, G-46 will not be moved and we resume debate on witness testimony of those very amendments that are going to be withdrawn. Then we will resume the debate of what those meetings would look like, if any. Is that correct?

The Chair: Yes, irrespective of whether this unanimous consent motion is carried, the meeting today is to carry on the debate that we suspended back in December. We will continue where we left off.

As mentioned earlier, the current state of affairs on the motion as amended, as subamended, has been distributed to everyone. Once we finish this point of order we will resume that debate.

Mr. Noormohamed will have the floor, followed by Ms. Damoff, followed by Madame Michaud, followed by Mr. Badawey, if he were here, followed by you, Ms. Dancho. That's where we are. Where this debate goes at the end of the day is really up to the committee.

I will ask at this time if there is any dissent on—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Chair, I had just mentioned that I wanted you to come back to me after you answered my question.

The Chair: Fair enough. Go ahead.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I went through the speaking order. After this passes it goes to the Liberals. There are several Liberal speakers, and then I believe you said Kristina and then it goes back to the Conservatives. Is that correct?

The Chair: Yes, we are continuing the speaking order as it was at the time we suspended the meeting.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: That's right. We have less than an hour to do that. Is that correct?

The Chair: Yes, we will be impinging on question period if we don't break early, I believe. If necessary, we will have to suspend again.

In any case, if we can get moving on Mr. Noormohamed's unanimous consent motion, then we can proceed into the body of this debate as before.

Is there any further intervention on Mr. Noormohamed's point of order?

Seeing none, I'll ask if the committee is in agreement with Mr. Noormohamed's point of order. I will ask if there is any dissent. If there is anyone who does not give consent to Mr. Noormohamed's unanimous consent request, please indicate.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We have unanimous consent on the motion as requested by Mr. Noormohamed. Thank you all.

As said, the text of the motion, as amended by Ms. Dancho, as further amended by Mr. MacGregor, has been distributed. Mr. Noormohamed has the floor, followed by Ms. Damoff, followed by Madame Michaud. I don't believe Mr. Badawey is present, but if he were present, he would come later. Then we have Ms. Dancho.

Having said that, I give the floor to Mr. Noormohamed to carry on the debate on the motion before us.

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

I wish everybody a happy return back to nice, warm Ottawa.

I want to draw attention to a couple of things, and then I'm going to stop talking.

When we talk about the withdrawal of G-4, which has now happened, it's important to know that references to ghost guns were in that amendment. I really do hope we can find ways through our conversations over the next little while to bring that back. We had unanimous support for it. That is an important piece for us to get right. Law enforcement demands it of us, requires it of us, in order to keep Canadians safe. That is the type of thing that we really should be doing, and I know we can get that done together. I just want to put that out there, something that I know is a joint objective for everyone on this committee.

We have had a long history on this committee over the course of this session of working together to solve problems. I want to read something that I said on December 13. It is that, in order to get this bill right, Canadians need to know that we heard them, and it's important for us to hear those voices that have not been heard and hear some of those voices that have been heard in the past. We have to get this over the finish line in a way that respects victims but also respects hunters, farmers and indigenous communities.

I really hope that through the conversations we're going to have in these additional meetings we will find ways to bridge these gaps together and that we remain committed to finding the right solutions for Canadians. The important thing here is to make sure we get information from others that have not been heard to get this right and to make sure this is done in the right way. I am very hopeful we'll be able to work together to achieve that, to make sure we pass responsible legislation that has a positive impact on the lives of all Canadians.

In respect of that, we had been having conversations about the number of meetings.

[*Translation*]

I know that my colleague, Ms. Michaud, is also tabling a motion.

[*English*]

I am going to stop talking now, so that we can get to hearing Madame Michaud's proposal on how we might move forward. I am going to stop there.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Noormohamed.

We go now to Ms. Damoff.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you, Chair.

I am going to cede my time to Ms. Michaud.

The Chair: Okay.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Michaud, you have the floor.

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

At this stage, it's still extremely relevant to hear from witnesses who have not yet had the chance to be heard on the bill. So, I propose a subamendment that follows up on Ms. Dancho's amendment to my original motion, meaning the famous request under Standing Order 106(4).

I move that the amendment be amended by replacing the words "eight consecutive meetings" with the words "four consecutive meetings", in the first paragraph. I also move to delete the words "and that these meetings include committee travel across Canada, as soon as possible, to rural, northern and indigenous communities to hear from impacted individuals." Finally, we would replace the words "for four hours", in the third paragraph, with the words "for one hour". Here's the proposed text, which you will receive as I read it:

That the Committee temporarily suspend the clause-by-clause study of Bill C-21 and that it allocate four consecutive meetings to study the effects of Amendments G-4 and G-46;

That the Committee invite to testify the witnesses and experts that it deem necessary to hear in order to answer the questions raised by the new concepts added by the Amendments G-4 and G-46 and that the Committee proceed according to the usual routine rules for the invitations of the selected witnesses;

That upon completion of the testimonies, the Minister of Public Safety appear for one hour before the Committee resumes its clause-by-clause consideration where it had been suspended and proceed according to the usual rules pursuant to Standing Order 75 of the House of Commons.

That is the version you received, but we can change it as well. Since amendments G-4 and G-46 were withdrawn, we could simply replace the text that mentions them to "study the content of these amendments", for example. I'm open to suggestions, but we could leave the amendment as is.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Michaud.

[*English*]

I believe the amendment is in order.

We will carry on debate on Madame Michaud's original motion, amended by Ms. Dancho and further amended by Mr. MacGregor, which is now under the subamendment of Madame Michaud. That's where we are.

Do we have anyone who wishes to speak to this motion?

The Clerk: I see Mr. Lloyd, Ms. Dancho and Mr. MacGregor.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I have a point of order for clarification and then a comment when I'm on the list, if I may.

The Chair: With the original speaking order, I think we were down to you, Ms. Dancho. We have a clean slate now on this subamendment.

Do you want to go ahead of Mr. Lloyd?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I just have a point of order for clarification on the subamendment, if I may.

The Chair: It's over to you on a point of order on the subamendment.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: So that I'm clear on this, the subamendment will provide two things. The subamendment is proposing four meetings with no travel, specifically for the purposes of inviting expert witness testimony to provide feedback on the amendments that were just unanimously withdrawn. Those are G-4 and G-46.

That's my first question. Is that correct?

The Chair: I believe that's correct. The intent here is to examine the concepts that were contained in those.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you very much.

Procedurally, unless Mr. MacGregor withdrew his subamendment, my understanding is that when you propose a motion, you can amend it and then subamend it, but you can't subamend a subamendment, or did I miss something?

The Chair: That is correct, except that Mr. MacGregor's subamendment was passed, so we are back to a point where we are dealing with another subamendment of your amendment. We're not amending the subamendment.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Okay.

The Chair: We'll carry on. We're going to Mr. Lloyd, please.

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

It was quite a development this morning on this issue. I don't think a lot of us were expecting what happened earlier. I'm pleased that my colleague from the Bloc still sees the value in having meetings, because one thing that we've seen throughout the past couple of months is that this is a wide-ranging and impactful piece of legislation, even though these particular amendments have been pulled. There were communities of interest that were not specifically... I am thinking of indigenous first nations, Métis Canadians, as well as the fur trapping community.

I will be pleased to have an opportunity to bring back expert witnesses to talk about things that we're still dealing with in this bill, and the general impact of this kind of legislation on a very important part of Canada's heritage and a current part of our economy, as well.

I guess my question would be, if we can get it answered, regarding the one hour versus the four hours. Are we talking about four consecutive meetings of one hour each? I'm just seeking clarification on that one point.

On another point, should this subamendment pass, are we planning on starting these meetings immediately at our next scheduled meeting on Tuesday? Given that we have a weekend, Monday and Tuesday, so it's only a few days away, will there be an opportunity to get a witness list and give our witnesses time to plan to be here to speak to this legislation and the amendments?

Those are my two questions out of the gate. I know we have a speaking list. It's not a back-and-forth, but I'd be interested in hearing the perspectives of how we could move forward on this. Thank you.

The Chair: I'll jump in here. The logistics of what happens if we pass this, depending on what amendment we end up passing, will have to happen once we figure out what we're doing.

In the event that a motion of the kind we're talking about here does pass today, I would probably propose a deadline of, say, Tuesday evening for witness lists. We would have to figure out what to do on the following meeting day. I'd propose to start witness testimony the following week. The clerk needs time to contact the witnesses, in any event, and to arrange technical support and, of course, witnesses would need time to deal with that.

I believe your intervention is done, Mr. Lloyd, so we'll go on—

Mr. Dane Lloyd: There was just one additional point I was seeking clarification on. It was the four hours versus one hour amendment.

Mr. Chair, did you have any clarification on that?

The Chair: My understanding of the amendment was that, instead of four hours being allocated to hearing from the minister, there would be one hour to hear from the minister. That is my understanding. I am prepared to stand corrected if anyone wishes.

Next, we have Mr. MacGregor.

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

First of all, thank you to my Liberal colleagues. Amendments G-4 and G-46 really derailed any kind of progress that we could have made on Bill C-21. I have never seen such a groundswell of opposition coming from everywhere, really, all at once. There were some big questions about the procedural admissibility of expanding the original scope of the bill. With today's developments, we can get back to some constructive dialogue in looking at the original Bill C-21.

When you look at the package of amendments that we still have to go through, we still have a lot of work ahead of us. I agree with Mr. Noormohamed: We absolutely have to get ghost guns right. This is an increasing problem for law enforcement.

There are also some really important amendments that we have to debate—and, hopefully, pass—with respect to the yellow flag and red flag provisions of the bill. We know that the airsoft community is waiting patiently as well.

When I agreed to the 106(4) meeting, of course, we were at that time wondering about amendments G-4 and G-46 specifically. That's why it was important to have—in my opinion at the time—eight meetings and travel, so that we could get consultation, the consultation that we weren't able to have as a committee. With those being withdrawn, I still think it's going to be valuable for us to have additional meetings. It might help flesh out some of these concepts for us, so I will agree with what Ms. Michaud is proposing.

For Mr. Lloyd's benefit, the reference to the one hour was amending the original part that is a specific reference to the minister. Rather than four hours with the minister, it's one hour.

I think we're arriving at a consensus here. I will leave it at that, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. MacGregor.

On the list that has been passed to me by our honourable clerk, I believe we have Ms. Damoff, followed by Mr. Noormohamed, who will be followed by Mr. Motz.

Ms. Damoff, please go ahead.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to my colleagues and, in particular, to Ms. Michaud for bringing this forward.

I like your timeline, Chair, in terms of witnesses. I think it would give us the opportunity next week at a meeting that we could have on Tuesday to finish off our Russia study. We probably all have forgotten where we even were with it, but if I recall, we had only about an hour or two left to finish that.

Then we could listen to organizations put forward from all parties to make sure we're listening.

We hear you. We think it's important to get this bill right. There are a lot of really good things in Bill C-21, but even the gun lobby has made comments about what the definition of a "military-style assault weapon" is. I would like to hear from people with suggestions on that. Is there a way forward to make sure that we're getting this right?

This is a big step forward, and I think we need to be listening to each other. I hope Canadians are heartened when listening to the conversations around this table, where all four parties are agreeing to work together, co-operate and actually listen and hear each other. I can't guarantee that we're going to agree on everything moving forward, but we certainly are agreeing on where we are today.

I again thank Madame Michaud for the changes and, in addition, for having the minister come for one hour, because I think that's adequate to where we are.

Thank you to everybody.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Damoff.

We will go to Mr. Noormohamed, who will be followed by Mr. Motz.

Mr. Noormohamed, go ahead.

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

Speaking to Madame Michaud's subamendment, I think the change in respect of the time with the minister from four hours to one hour is important. This is about hearing from Canadians. I know the minister would love to come and spend four, 16 or 32 hours with us, as he is wont to do, but this is about hearing from Canadians.

As Ms. Damoff said, we have to do this in a way that gives comfort to hunters, indigenous communities, sport shooters and the air-soft community, but also to those who have been victims of gun violence. It's to make sure that we come to this in a way that gives everyone some degree of satisfaction not only that they have been heard, but also that the process that was followed was a good one.

Mr. MacGregor and I have had many conversations about this. Process is important and doing things the right way to make sure we can solve the problem that we are trying to solve in a thoughtful, considered manner is what Canadians deserve. My hope is that, through the work that Madame Michaud has proposed in the subamendment, we will move a long way down that road.

As we've said, there are provisions we know we can all agree on. It's important for us to find the time and space to do that. We're not going to agree on everything and that's okay. Nobody expects us to agree. If we all agreed, there would not be a government and an opposition. It is important to make sure that we hear those points of

view from the folks we disagree with on both sides of this conversation.

I said earlier that we were committed to doing this properly, getting this right and doing it in a way that respects people's rights. I remain committed to that. I know all of us in this room are committed to that. My hope is that, through these conversations, we bring forward witnesses that will share thoughtful and meaningful perspectives and we try to make this process as non-partisan as possible.

What we are trying to do is consequential to the lives of Canadians in a variety of ways. At the end of the day, it is about keeping our streets and communities safer and about making sure that we don't create hardships for people.

I want to make sure that we do this right. I want to make sure that we as a team—all of us—do this in a way so that, whatever the outcome at the end, we can all say the process was a good one and the conversations were meaningful and fruitful. Whatever side of this debate people are on, they should feel that their voices were heard and well represented in these conversations.

If we can do that, I think we will end up with good legislation that may not fully satisfy everyone but satisfies the expectation that Canadians should have of us of being able to deliver good-quality public policy that may not always be perfect, but that is very strong and very good.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Noormohamed.

We'll go now to Mr. Motz.

Go ahead, please.

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you for the comments.

I think it's important that Canadians understand.... I just heard Mr. Noormohamed, and I trust that he was genuine in moving forward on this bill, but we need to look back at why we had this in the first place.

It's because the Liberals did exactly the opposite. They failed to respect people's rights. They failed to consult indigenous people. They failed to consult with farmers and hunters. They failed to do any of that, and they tried to push some legislation through that didn't go through debate in the House at all. It didn't get studied at committee. It was thrown in at the 11th hour during an amendment in the clause-by-clause phase of this bill. I don't think Canadians will forget that.

I hope there is no iteration of any of what was in G-4—other than ghost guns—and G-46 that comes back under Bill C-21 again. This is because Canadians—where I come from and across the country, and I've heard from thousands of them—have lost trust in this government on this issue and many others. I believe them. I believe these people. I've seen for myself.... I struggle with trusting the motivations behind what comes out of this government's legislation.

If we're talking about true public safety, I don't think there will be any opposition in this committee on matters that actually make a difference for public safety and that target those who are committing crimes in our country. Namely, these are criminals who smuggle their firearms in and use illegal firearms, not those who are part of Canada's law-abiding firearms community.

As we go back into Bill C-21, I am hopeful that we keep in mind the sport shooter community and the airsoft community on some of these amendments that have to happen. I am hopeful, as you said, Mr. Noormohamed, that there is a spirit of co-operation on this committee moving forward on that.

The other thing that I'm struggling with is why we wouldn't want the minister here for a two-hour meeting. I don't think an hour is enough. He's had a significant role to play in this. It's reasonable that he comes to explain why we find ourselves in this spot, and why G-4 and G-46 were pushed forward in the first place.

I don't hold fellow committee members from across the way in contempt because of it. They're doing what their party asked them to do. However, I think the minister needs to answer for what happened and why G-4 and G-46 were put into this bill at the time that they were.

The last thing I would add is that I also support the idea of making good use of our time on Tuesday and Thursday until we can get witnesses here to continue on with this study. The Russia study, as you said, Ms. Damoff, would be an appropriate use of our time.

I think we're going to be hard-pressed to get the witnesses who have to be here in four meetings. There are a lot of them, on all sides of this issue, and I think there will be some great witnesses whom we need to hear from. I'd personally like to see more than four meetings and, certainly, two hours with the minister, not one.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Motz.

We go now to Mr. Lloyd. Go ahead, please, sir.

Is Mr. Lloyd not there? Do we have any other speakers?

Mr. Shipley, please go ahead.

Mr. Doug Shipley: Thank you, Chair.

It's nice to see everybody back after our long absence.

It has been a relief to see what's taking place this morning because, when I was back in my riding, I heard a lot about Bill C-21. I was just talking with my staff this morning about the number of emails we are still getting about it.

I have multiple questions about how we got here. I'm happy we got here; don't anybody get me wrong. There must have been some light that went off or a moment of realization during the holidays.

Mr. Noormohamed discussed before we came in today that he went in and got his PAL. I hope that's not a secret, Mr. Noormohamed. I'm breaking your bubble on you, but there it is. Maybe you learned something there or maybe you heard from the hunters in that room as to how happy or unhappy they were about this. I was

certainly hearing it day in and day out. Good for you for educating yourself on that issue.

I also know that the minister did a large, cross-Canada tour discussing it with many hunting groups. I saw many of his pictures. It looked like he was definitely dressed up for the weather in many of them. I read some of the clips. I don't think he was received warmly at all of his stops. It sounds like he was perhaps getting a bit of an earful.

I agree with my co-member here, Mr. Motz, about the two hours to have the minister in, because I would like to hear about some of those discussions he had. We've talked about doing a Canada tour. Our members opposite weren't too keen on that. Your minister did that for us, which was interesting because before Christmas we were all told that the tour would not be beneficial. It was interesting to see the minister do such a large tour. That's the exact same thing we wanted to do.

Once again, it's nice to see this getting taken out. There will be a lot of hunters and farmers, not just in my area but across Canada, who will be relieved to see this.

I do believe we need to have the minister here for two hours. One hour just isn't enough. We see what can happen with time, like this morning. We had problems getting our equipment set up. That could easily turn into half an hour.

Mr. Motz, you mentioned it, but I think we need a subamendment. You didn't put it in the subamendment. Did you?

Mr. Glen Motz: I did not yet.

Ms. Kristina Michaud: You can subamend it.

The Chair: As a matter of process, we can't. We are in a subamendment. We can't do another subamendment at this time.

Mr. Doug Shipley: With that, I will cede the floor.

I think Mr. Motz has some more things to add.

Thank you.

The Chair: Please go ahead, Mr. Motz.

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you very much, Chair.

This is just a matter of curiosity. When we left in December, Mr. MacGregor from the NDP proposed a subamendment and changed the amendment to eight meetings. The committee made a decision on the number of meetings.

Now this new subamendment seeks to change the committee's previous agreement on the number of meetings. I'm just wondering if the clerk or the chair can rule on whether this subamendment is actually in order, given that we already agreed on this back on December 13 or somewhere around there.

The Chair: I would be happy to.

We passed Mr. MacGregor's subamendment, as said. However, time has gone by and events have gone by. In any event, this is a substantial amendment. It is in order. I have already ruled on that. We can subamend one by one as long as we want. We can't do repetitive things, but this is not such a case. It is in order.

I see no further speakers on the list. Are we prepared to vote on this amendment?

The Clerk: It seems that we are.

The Chair: Seeing no further speakers, we should call the vote on this subamendment.

(Subamendment agreed to: yeas 7; nays 4)

The Chair: Are there any further amendments to this motion as multiply amended?

Seeing none, that concludes our business. I am wondering though if—

Ms. Pam Damoff: Mr. Chair, on a point of order, we voted on the subamendment. Do we not have to vote on the actual motion as amended now?

The Chair: You are quite correct. I thank you for your intervention.

Yes, Madame Michaud's subamendment has passed. If there is no further subamendment, we will now go to Ms. Dancho's amendment as amended. Ms. Dancho's amendment is fundamentally superseded by this subamendment. However, we do have to go through the form and vote on Ms. Dancho's amendment as subamended.

Are there any further interventions on this?

Mr. Glen Motz: For clarification, can we have an understanding that the minister will come at the very end of witness testimony? Would that be appropriate?

Ms. Kristina Michaud: It's in the motion. It's at the end of the—

Mr. Glen Motz: It's in the motion. Yes, it's "upon the completion".

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Seeing no further interventions, I will ask the clerk to call the vote on Ms. Dancho's amendment as subamended by Madame Michaud.

(Amendment as amended agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

It seems we are hurtling toward an agreement here.

Mr. Lloyd has a point order. I'm sorry. It doesn't have to be a point of order. At this point, we're open to.... We passed Ms. Dancho's amendment as amended by Madame Michaud. We are back to the final vote.

Is there any further discussion on where we are?

Go ahead, Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: No. I'll cede the floor.

We're at the final vote right now. Are we doing another vote?

The Chair: If there's no further debate, that is correct.

Ms. Damoff, did you have an intervention?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Chair, we're finished with the vote.

I wanted to talk about what we're doing moving forward, such as a deadline for witnesses, finishing the Russia study—

The Chair: We have one more vote. We have to vote on the original motion as amended multiple times.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Okay. I apologize.

The Chair: As we unwind ourselves from this bunch of amendments, we have this final vote.

The final vote is on Madame Michaud's original motion as subamended, and so on and so forth, to the point where we just passed all the subamendments.

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Thank you, all. We seem to have reached a resolution on this matter.

At this point, I propose to the committee that you all have your witness lists available to the clerk by the close of business on Tuesday. I ask Mr. Clerk to do his best to arrange our first witness testimony on this matter the Tuesday of the following week. That will give roughly a week for the witness lists to be sorted through, for the witnesses to be contacted and for the necessary technical matters to be undertaken.

Thank you, all.

On Tuesday, I propose that we finish up the Russia study. That leaves Thursday of next week in the air somewhat. If there are any suggestions for what we should do at that meeting, I would appreciate them.

I see Ms. Damoff has her hand up. Please, go ahead.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you.

It's Friday, actually, not Thursday.

We talked about having the correctional investigator come to talk about his report. If we have an extra meeting.... If we get the Russia study out—which is obviously our priority—and finish it on Tuesday, that might be an option.

I would have to go back through my notes to see what we were thinking of doing prior to getting into Bill C-21, but I know that was one of the things we talked about doing.

The Chair: Thank you. That's a helpful intervention.

Is the committee in favour of doing so?

I think it's going to depend. If we get back to the Russia study on Tuesday, we should carry on until we finish it, even if that is on Friday. For the meeting on Friday, if available, I suggest that we follow Ms. Damoff's advice and carry on with that other matter.

Is the committee in agreement with this process? I see a lot of thumbs up.

That being the case, I thank you all for your patience and steadfastness in carrying us all through this. I know we all have some passionate viewpoints on these matters, and I appreciate you all sharing them with us with some vigour and enthusiasm.

Thank you, all. We are adjourned.

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