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Chair: Mr. John Williamson



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• (1405)

[Translation]

The Chair (Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC)): I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 134 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

[English]

It's nice to see everyone, and everyone's summer whites—an ode to the Olympics—and other colourful backdrops.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format pursuant to the Standing Orders. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application.

I'd like to ask all members and other in-person participants to consult the cards on the table for guidelines to prevent audio feedback incidents.

[Translation]

Please take note of the preventative measures in place to protect the health and safety of all participants, including the interpreters.

[English]

Remember, colleagues, to only use the black approved earpiece. The former gray earpieces must no longer be used. Please remember to keep the earpiece away from all microphones at all times. When you are not using the earpiece, place it face down on the sticker, either to your left or to your right, which is there to ensure it is a safe distance away.

I remind you that all committee comments should be addressed through the chair.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), the committee is resuming consideration of Report 1 of the 2024 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada, entitled “ArriveCAN”, which was referred to the committee on Monday, February 12, 2024.

[English]

I'd like to welcome our witness. Appearing as an individual is Ms. Diane Daly.

Colleagues, Ms. Daly will be offering us some personal and I think even, at times, difficult testimony today. It is my intention to have a smooth meeting. I do plan to take a break after the second

round, approximately one hour into the meeting, for about 10 minutes.

Without further ado, Ms. Daly, you have the floor, please.

Ms. Diane Daly (As an Individual): Before I begin, Chair, as you can see, I hit my head on a door this morning.

I'm here to tell the truth, but I am very concerned that if I tell the truth here, I'm going to lose my job.

Good afternoon. I thank the committee for inviting me here as a guest to speak. I thank the chair and the committee for the same time consideration that whistle-blower Allan Cutler was allotted during the sponsorship scandal. I never imagined that I would be named in the House of Commons. I suspect that this is why I've been invited here. I'm happy to answer the committee's questions. I have been muzzled for some time now.

I've been a public servant for nearly 20 years. I currently serve as a supply team leader at Public Works in the real property contracting directorate. In December 2018, I was assigned to CBSA IT services to assist with the procurement backlog, providing administrative support and learning the TBIPS IT professional services commodity. From December 2018 to July 2023, I had no access to the CBSA, PSPC or any other Government of Canada procurement systems. When I seconded to CBSA, PSPC automatically cancelled my contracting authority. CBSA knew I had no procurement authority. CBSA did not permit me access to the CBSA procurement system or contract documentation.

Each department grants PGs the right to sign contracts on behalf of Canada. This permission is revoked when they leave for another position. Without this permission, access to procurement systems and documentation is denied. No one from CBSA, PSPC, TBIPS, clients or security has publicly clarified my lack of procurement authority, leading to public criticism and humiliation. My inability to speak out has been stymied by CBSA and PSPC security investigations.

I resumed procurement contracting duties in July 2023 at PSPC. I went over to CBSA as a PG-05 and I am still a PG-05. I did not receive a promotion.

On April 17, 2024, Mr. Firth mentioned my name in the House of Commons. My great-grandfather was one of the men who cleared the land to build the Parliament of Canada. I did not meet with Mr. Firth in person and communicated virtually due to the pandemic. My role was administrative, coordinating information for various stakeholders. I do not recall discussing IT requirements with Mr. Firth.

From 2020 to 2022, the issues of GC Strategies' very poor documentation, errors with submissions and slow responses to resolution for the errors have been raised with TBIPS PSPC managers and the contractor by me and other CBSA staff. I did not provide advice on RFPs or technical requirements. Only CBSA IT experts could do that. If Mr. Firth sent me any information, I would have forwarded it to the CBSA IT experts. I had no access to draft RFPs, and I'm not an IT expert. Mr. Firth should look at the contracts he was awarded for the signature of the contracting authority who signed it. I did not sign any contracts.

On December 7, 2023, I received an email from Michel Lafleur, CBSA security, to interview as an ArriveCAN investigation witness. I was seeking medical support for a cancer diagnosis, so I declined the optional interview. On December 13 and 14, my director general insisted on meeting me, and told me, in an MS Teams meeting, to give false testimony against my former bosses for CBSA's security interview. The PSPC DG and director offered to attend the security interview with me. During the meeting, my DG implicated the PSPC deputy minister and the CBSA president to pressure me further. I told them I had nothing negative to say about my former bosses. If I had witnessed any improprieties at CBSA, I would have reported them immediately to my director at CBSA or my senior director at Public Works. I would not have waited until I left CBSA.

Reporting serious occurrences to the Government of Canada is a critical responsibility. I have permission to share this with the committee to demonstrate where I reported a serious occurrence to the Government of Canada. In April 2016, a non-security cleared person from the Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, or OCAPDD, Tom Gillespie, went through the back door near the loading dock at the National Archives to strong-arm a signature from Sharlene Cooney, a non-verbal, developmentally disabled woman, to remove her community support services. This action caused the revocation of her provincial transfer funding from Rideau Regional Centre and is against DSO policy. He did not sign in at the security desk at Tunney's Pasture. Tom and other archives staff asked Sharlene to a separate room for an unscheduled meeting. In March 2016 Tom tried to have Sharlene sign a letter to remove herself as an OCAPDD client due to her reaction to a dental infection. His boss, Lisa Somers, and the executive director of OCAPDD, David Ferguson, were refusing the supports she needed and wanted the police to handle it.

• (1410)

Sharlene taped the meeting in March 2016. The previous year, Lisa Somers sent a male employee to Sharlene's emergency medical appointment without permission when she was already there with her long-term worker, who was known to the doctor. Dr. Levitan did not know Mike but let him in. This resulted in Sharlene losing her primary doctor.

On April 6, 2016, Sharlene fled towards the OC Transpo transitway. The Ottawa police told Sharlene not to return to the National Archives program, confirming OCAPDD is not allowed to harass and intimidate people. I reported this incident to the security office at ESDC on July 25, 2016. The federal government has not responded to this day.

When the MCCSS Ottawa received the report about the OCAPDD supervisor's harassment of Sharlene at the National Archives, OCAPDD and the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services revoked Sharlene's Rideau Regional funding, established with the community transfer committee led by the late Dr. Bruce McCreary, and Sharlene received the attached funding for her care.

When reported to David Remington, the acting ADM of MCCSS and MCCSS Ottawa, the ministry moved to protect OCAPDD, an agency that uses multiple law firms with your tax dollars to ensure that the top legal firms in Ottawa cannot be used to advocate for clients, while the former provincial government cut legal aid for clients who are mistreated in this way from care centres, agencies and other not-for-profits. This legal aid cut occurred at the same time the Province of Ontario closed the last institution for special-needs persons.

In Ontario, developmentally disabled persons can only access legal aid for matrimonial dissolution, adoption issues, tenant disputes and criminal charges. These types of abuses towards this population by provincially funded not-for-profits are no longer covered by legal aid support in Ontario.

Registered letters were sent to the current Premier of Ontario's office and the Prime Minister's Office. Neither office cared to reply, or cared, full stop.

The DSO has never restored Sharlene's community transfer funding and has not responded to passport funding application attempts, even though Rideau Regional clients with transfer funding are equally entitled to passport funding for personal needs and programs like Sharlene's communications books.

My former DG's escalating actions regarding the CBSA's security interview raised red flags. Like Sharlene, I felt intimidated and needed a record of the conversation to protect myself. Like Sharlene, investigations have rendered me unable to speak. Despite assurances from my DG and senior director that CBSA was not investigating me, ATIP records show PSPC began investigating me on December 11, 2023. Taxpayers should know that CBSA and PSPC are investigating me for alleged breaches of the CBSA and PSPC codes of conduct regarding procurement. I haven't had federal authorization to do procurement from December 2018 through July 2023. I am currently on administrative leave from Public Works.

I believe this is because CBSA and Public Works did not get the negative narrative expected about two former bosses at CBSA in the January 15, 2024, security interview. My former DG was appointed DG of the new professional services transformative solutions sector on March 27, 2024, two weeks after I was placed on leave. This sector manages TBIPS.

This promotion was likely approved by the deputy minister of PSPC. It should be noted that the current PSPC deputy minister previously worked at CBSA between 2007 and 2016.

Mark Webber, president of the Customs and Immigration Union, emphasizes the need for better protections against excessive discipline and abuses of authority. According to the policy on investigations, allegations must be filed by a manager from the employee's department. If an employee is called for a security interview, their direct manager should inform them, not a higher-level official as my former DG did.

My senior union representative has stated twice that they've never seen anything like this. Senior management and political employees pitting federal government workers against each other to create false allegations and divert investigations from TBIPS issues is akin to a malicious 911 call on a co-worker.

My job is under threat because of what I saw, not what I did. No one wants me to speak about TBIPS. Ongoing Auditor General and OGGO investigations and reports of double-dipping, contracting improprieties and the political pressure on December 15, 2023, has made me realize why PWGSC is trying to keep the focus on CBSA's software application issue and away from PSPC's TBIPS.

PG-06s and PG-05s at PSPC signed or orchestrated the contracting processes for GC Strategies, which CBSA procurement staff were instructed to follow precisely.

- (1415)

TBIPS is a PSPC mandatory tool for federal departments to purchase IT professional services, an online shopping catalogue, like Eaton's, where TBIPS team members pre-qualify contractors and companies like GC Strategies and place them into the government-wide purchasing catalogue. No manager, DG or minister in the federal government is permitted to buy IT pro services from any other source but this TBIPS-designed catalogue. There may be exceptions unknown to me.

On October 1, 2020, I attended a meeting with the senior director of TBIPS, the manager of TBIPS and my CBSA executive director.

I questioned the RFP and SOW processes, as they were more complex than usual government procedures. The senior director of TBIPS stated that it was common for TBIPS to advise clients to ask TBIPS suppliers for IT requirement suggestions. I had never encountered this in the private sector or federal public service. Asking for policy or legal teams about the senior director's instructions would have been seen as insubordination.

The PG-06 of TBIPS trained me on the formatting of documents. She was the primary manager responsible for overseeing and approving these documents. Although I am not part of the CBSA IT department, I acted as a liaison, facilitating the flow of IT requests between CBSA IT, CBSA procurement, and PSPC TBIPS, according to TBIPS instructions. My role involved filling out the necessary forms, but I did not have the authority to generate purchase requisitions, create contract documentation, spend money or sign contracts.

Taxpayers should know that I was unaware that the TBIPS buying unit was housed where the TBIPS catalogue is produced. I found this out in February 2024 through a Google search by several IT consultants. I believe the ArriveCAN app investigation has uncovered a more damning issue outside of ArriveCAN. It's called TBIPS at PSPC. I do not work at TBIPS. The PG-06 manager of TBIPS oversaw my work. At every stage she trained me. If there were issues with my work, she would have informed me and my director, and she should have corrected me.

CBSA procurement was also being guided by TBIPS who were often signatories on the GC Strategies contracts. I'll quote my sister, who currently works in compliance: "This TBIPS issue will escalate CBSA into a Procurement Pox affecting many more departments, Ministers, and DGs throughout the government. It's a financial nightmare. The TBIPS tent should be dismantled and separated, with catalog vetting done independently. No PGs, especially active designated PGs, should be housed in the same vicinity, similar to how Contract Security operates separately from buyers. The appearance or direct conflict of interest is akin to having a Mergers and Acquisitions group in the same area as stockbrokers. There is a reason for the division of duties in an investment house—it's called insider trading."

CBSA and I had been reaching out to the manager and the team of TBIPS regarding ongoing problems with extremely poor documentation from GC Strategies since 2020. In the spring of 2022, the manager of the BTID DGO, the manager's administration officer and I met with both the supply team leader responsible for the \$25-million TBIPS RFP contract and her manager to discuss various issues regarding recurring poor documentation from GC Strategies, noting that there had been no improvement in this matter over several years. Instead, the situation became worse. The manager of CBSA BTID DGO and I asked if the RFP could be cancelled and retendered, given the reporting of this information and the lack of resolution to the ongoing problems with paperwork from GC Strategies.

TBIPS stated that they could not delay awarding the contract to GC Strategies despite the information provided by our team. PSPC proceeded to award the contract to GC Strategies despite the reported issues with the supplier in the spring of 2022. The \$25-million contract was signed by an authorized PG-05 from the TBIPS team, not me.

Thank you.

• (1420)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Daly.

[*Translation*]

I am being told that the interpretation from French to English is not working. So we will suspend the meeting to resolve the problem.

[*English*]

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): I'm sorry, Chair.

I realize that the witness is reading from some notes. I'm wondering if, while we suspend, we can perhaps get a copy.

The Chair: Ms. Khalid, one thing at a time. I'm trying to get the translation fixed. I'm not suspending. I'm just turning to the clerk right now.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: You just said that you were going to suspend.

The Chair: Just one second, please.

This might be a problem with people who are online.

[*Translation*]

Can the people participating via Zoom hear the English interpretation when I speak French?

It seems to be working.

[*English*]

Ms. Khalid, I believe Ms. Daly is done now. We will begin the first round.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: I'm sorry, Chair.

The Chair: Is this a point of order, Ms. Khalid?

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Yes, it's a point of order.

If that's okay, Chair, I know that Ms. Daly read from notes, and I'm wondering if we can perhaps have copies distributed to the

committee. The regular practice for every witness who comes before us is to provide us with their notes beforehand.

The Chair: As far as I know, Ms. Daly did not provide notes. If they had been provided, they would have been, as is customary, translated and sent out by the clerk. While she might have been reading her notes, they were not provided to the committee beforehand.

Turning now to Mr. Brock, you have the floor for six minutes, please.

Mr. Larry Brock (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Good afternoon, Ms. Daly. Thank you for your attendance.

This is very disturbing evidence, I would use that term numerous times to describe what you just shared with the committee. You used terms such as "speaking out". You were "stymied". You were prevented from doing so. You were "muzzled" by senior management and political appointees. You were "intimidated". You're frightened. You're scared. You're concerned about your job.

This is the making of a Hollywood movie, but this is reality. This is Canada's professional public service and the Government of Canada conducting themselves in a fashion to intimidate other public employees who do not follow the narrative. I think the narrative they're trying to describe is that they're trying to distance themselves from GC Strategies and trying to distance themselves from Kristian Firth. We've had numerous meetings over the past year. We've heard from cabinet ministers who deny any and all responsibility. We've heard from the president of the CBSA, likewise, as well as the deputy minister for PSPC and other senior managers. They are all distancing themselves and who are laying all the blame on two individuals: Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Utano. Is that your impression as well?

Ms. Diane Daly: I never saw Mr. MacDonald or Mr. Utano do anything nefarious. I would have reported it.

Mr. Larry Brock: The question is this: Is it your impression from being within the CBSA and the PSPC—

Ms. Diane Daly: No, it's not my impression.

Mr. Larry Brock: —that these officials are trying to distance themselves?

Ms. Diane Daly: I would say that's accurate.

Mr. Larry Brock: You say that's accurate.

Who are these people, in your opinion? Who are these officials? Who are the senior managers and the political appointees? Name them, please.

Ms. Diane Daly: You know that these are the people who are likely going to get me fired, right?

Mr. Larry Brock: Yes, but you're compelled to answer, Ms. Daly, as difficult as it is.

Ms. Diane Daly: Okay. I have proof, evidence, both email and audio, to demonstrate that I've been intimidated by my former director general.

Mr. Larry Brock: Who's that?

Ms. Diane Daly: Lysane Bolduc.

• (1425)

Mr. Larry Brock: Lysane Bolduc.

What was her position?

Ms. Diane Daly: Director general.

Mr. Larry Brock: What for?

Ms. Diane Daly: Real property contracting.

Mr. Larry Brock: Which department? Which minister?

Ms. Diane Daly: Public Works.

Mr. Larry Brock: Public works. Okay. Who else?

Ms. Diane Daly: She and my senior director made me come to a meeting on—

Mr. Larry Brock: Who is your senior director?

Ms. Diane Daly: My apologies. He is Tom von Schoenberg.

From that meeting, I have a transcript of the audio, if you would like me to quote one of the lines that she stated...Lysane.

Mr. Larry Brock: Was it recorded on consent?

Ms. Diane Daly: It was recorded because I felt that I was being harassed and intimidated.

Mr. Larry Brock: Do you still have that recording?

Ms. Diane Daly: I do.

Mr. Larry Brock: Will you supply that recording to this committee?

Ms. Diane Daly: I will.

Mr. Larry Brock: Thank you. Go on.

Ms. Diane Daly: Would it be okay if I cite one of the quotes from that meeting?

Mr. Larry Brock: Certainly.

Ms. Diane Daly: “Okay, well, CBSA did contact us at the highest level of the department because their investigation is legitimate, and so it came down to us in terms of what we need to do as the procurement department in response to that. But I'm talking about you personally receiving threats of any nature, not in the context of normal business, which, like the CBSA did in reaching out to CBSA or to PSPC, is normal and is expected in the context of their normal business. I'm talking to you about feeling threatened outside normal requests that would be related to your work.”

That was one of the three quotes I got cited on the tape about senior officials.

Mr. Larry Brock: Okay. This was a taped conversation between yourself and Lysane Bolduc.

Ms. Diane Daly: It was with Lysane Bolduc and Tom von Schoenberg on December 15.

Mr. Larry Brock: What other senior managers and what other political appointees muzzled you, which you referenced, and prevented you from speaking the truth? I want names and positions and departments, please.

Ms. Diane Daly: Let me ask the question: Are you asking me to say who is preventing me from speaking the truth?

Mr. Larry Brock: Yes.

Ms. Diane Daly: As far as Lysane Bolduc, it was my deputy minister.

Mr. Larry Brock: Who is that?

Ms. Diane Daly: Arianne Reza.

Mr. Larry Brock: Can you give me an example?

Ms. Diane Daly: I could tell you what my director general said to me. “So, you know, Diane, the matter is up to our deputy minister and their deputy minister, and the direction that I'm getting as a civil servant, and as you know, this is how it goes down. This is not an option. This is what we have to do.”

Mr. Larry Brock: That deputy minister, Ms. Reza, obviously answers to the minister—a cabinet minister of the Government of Canada.

Ms. Diane Daly: She does.

Mr. Larry Brock: Is it your impression that cabinet ministers were aware of the intense pressure and intimidation that you felt to participate in this process?

Ms. Diane Daly: I am going to refer back to one of the committee hearings, which I've reviewed, with the deputy minister. She clearly states that she didn't inform the minister until November. I know the minister, on November 28, took responsibility—well, what he knew of responsibility—in the press.

Mr. Larry Brock: Who was that minister?

Ms. Diane Daly: Minister Duclos. I believe he has tried to do the right thing, but he wouldn't have known what was going on until at least the fall of 2023, because that's what Ms. Reza made comments to in her appearance before either OGGO or public accounts.

Mr. Larry Brock: In your opinion, did he do anything to rectify that?

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Brock. That is your time. We will, I'm sure, come back to you.

Ms. Shanahan, you have the floor for six minutes, please.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Thank you very much, Chair.

I want to thank Ms. Daly for making herself available to answer questions today.

Ms. Daly, you'll have to forgive me. Your opening remarks were very detailed, and I'm not sure that I caught all of it.

I do hope that we will have the benefit of a printout of her remarks, just in case, Chair, not all of it was captured in the translation.

Ms. Daly, we have never met. Is that correct?

Okay.

Have you appeared before committee?

Ms. Diane Daly: I've never appeared before any committee.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Have you met any members of Parliament on this topic?

Ms. Diane Daly: No.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: I did read some testimony from OGGO, from one of the meetings in 2023, where your name was mentioned. Maybe it was the first time. I'm not sure if it was.

• (1430)

Ms. Diane Daly: That would have been Ms. Ritika Dutt on October 26 at OGGO.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Can I ask you what your relationship was with those two people?

Ms. Diane Daly: With Ritika Dutt?

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Yes.

Ms. Diane Daly: There was no relationship.

I'm sorry, but I do have to take water because of my medical condition.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Okay. I appreciate that.

Ms. Diane Daly: I want to be clear. They were names on a résumé that was forwarded to one of the project managers. That project manager at CBSA did the evaluation, sent it back, and in my administrative role, I forwarded that on.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Did you have any conversations with this person?

Ms. Diane Daly: No. I don't recall.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Are you familiar at all with...? She works for Botler. She has a company called Botler.

Ms. Diane Daly: She's a co-owner of Botler AI.

What I do know is that she was seeking payment for some of her...for two deliverables, which I think is what she said. My senior director asked me to make sure she got paid. I made sure that she got paid.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: The communication with the partner at Botler came through your senior director.

Ms. Diane Daly: The communication was submitted through email, and like any other director, they would ask their admin staff to look into it. That was what I did.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: You never spoke to her directly.

Ms. Diane Daly: I don't believe I did.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Okay. I think I'm going to circle back to that.

Can you elaborate, please, on your role in the procurement process and what role Public Services and Procurement had in this pro-

cess, particularly when it concerns the work that was done through Botler and also the work for ArriveCAN? Can you elaborate on your involvement?

Ms. Diane Daly: I was a senior adviser in the director general's office of IT services at CBSA. I had seconded over "at level". I had no procurement access, and that I have proof of. I had no access to procurement in any way, shape or form. CBSA had its own procurement team, and in fact was recognized for putting in place a series of COVID-19 contracts in, I believe, 2021.

The process was that you got requirements. We had a backlog. We would take those requirements and we would package them up in the way that they told us. IT would give me those requirements. I would put them into a format to submit them to CBSA procurement through email. Then they would generate a purchase requisition—

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Ms. Daly, I'll stop you there. You understand that sometimes we have to interrupt to get on with the questions.

Did you meet with anyone in preparation for today's meeting—anyone who would be working for any member of Parliament or anyone here at the House of Commons?

Ms. Diane Daly: I am not allowed to talk to anyone because of the security investigations that are ongoing because I spoke out and said not the negative narrative that they wanted—to accuse two former bosses of false allegations.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Okay.

Have you read the Auditor General's report on ArriveCAN?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: What was your take-away from that report?

Ms. Diane Daly: I would say that there are two things the committee should know.

In 2021, OPO did a report on CBSA's procurement. In that report, in October 2020 the CBSA created something called the contract review board to highlight a review of any and all impactful procurements. What that should have flagged them was all of the steps necessary that the Auditor General identified, including project management, setting up more than one cost centre for reporting, etc., which should have been easily done and should have followed that process, because that was what the—

• (1435)

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: What was the second thing?

Ms. Diane Daly: The second thing was the way that Mr. Moor in the finance group made a statement that it was IT services that actually did the procurement. That was physically impossible.

The Chair: Thank you.

That is the time for Ms. Shanahan.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Sinclair-Desgagné, you have the floor for six minutes.

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné (Terrebonne, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Daly, thank you for your very insightful testimony. I will ask you a number of questions in quick succession.

First, you have mentioned several times that former bosses muzzled you or asked you not to talk about what you had seen. Can you give me their names again, please?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: I'm very sorry. I cannot understand. I don't have the translation working on my earpiece.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Okay. We'll suspend for a few seconds.

Ms. Diane Daly: I'm sorry, madam.

[*English*]

The Chair: It might just be an earpiece challenge. They're checking right now.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Daly, can you hear me in English?

Okay. It seems to be working now.

Ms. Sinclair-Desgagné, please start over. You have six minutes.

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So I will start over.

Ms. Daly, thank you for your testimony. It does take courage to make accusations against your former bosses. With regard to that, you mentioned that you felt muzzled. Can you tell me the names of those former bosses? I think I heard Ms. Reza's name, but who else was involved? Can you give me their names again, please?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: My former director general was Lysane Bolduc, and my senior director was Tom Von Schoenberg.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Thank you very much.

I have several questions. We have heard a number of witnesses mention your name in various contexts and say they had contacted you, whether it was Ms. Dutt, from Botler AI, or Mr. Firth in the House of Commons.

At the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, we received emails showing that you were actively involved in the procurement process that led to the awarding of the contract to GC Strategies. We also have emails that you sent to Ms. Durigan, who raised ques-

tions about the awarding of the contract to GC Strategies. These emails show that you strongly insisted that this contract be awarded to that company.

Did you do that on your own, or were you asked to do it? If so, who asked you to do it?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: The request came down from the senior management team at CBSA. That is what I know.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: When you say senior management, who are you talking about specifically?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: It was communicated to me through my executive director that he was being instructed to go with GC Strategies. We didn't know who GC Strategies were.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: You're saying that Mr. MacDonald was told by someone else to award the contract to GC Strategies and that he was the one who asked you to do so.

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: That is correct.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Do you think someone else ordered Mr. MacDonald to do so?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: That's what I was informed of. I wasn't in the C-suite, so I don't know who would have instructed him. I was just a PG-05, a mid-level, low-level employee doing what I was told to do.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Okay.

However, Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Utano, as well as your colleague Mr. Ailapperuma, received invitations. They were familiar with GC Strategies. They would have had personal reasons for wanting to award a contract to GC Strategies. They participated in whisky tastings and golf tournaments, and they received gifts from GC Strategies. They may have wanted to award that company the contract.

Why do you think someone else instructed them and it wasn't their own decision to award the contract to GC Strategies?

• (1440)

[English]

Ms. Diane Daly: I have a copy of what I found on the Internet, which was an ATIP on Reddit. It's a 2022 ATIP. It clearly identifies that the decision for GC Strategies, which was made at the highest level—and I'm happy to provide that to the committee—was made through one of the offices of the acting CFO, who said it came out of her office. I'm not sure where this was generated or how GC Strategies, which is a two-person company, was involved.

Again, I'm just a low-level employee doing her job.

[Translation]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: When you were writing your emails where you strongly insisted, by raising arguments, that the contract should be awarded to GC Strategies, did you ever say to yourself that you were doing something that was not right? Did you sound the alarm at that time?

[English]

Ms. Diane Daly: I was aware of who GC Strategies was. I never met Kristian Firth personally. It was COVID. I have a vulnerable woman who lives with me. I didn't work outside of the home most of the time. I remained virtual pretty much during COVID because I have people who depend on me, including a brother who is in the system in Ontario, a developmentally disabled autistic brother. My ability to meet anyone or even meet suppliers was done online.

[Translation]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: I'm sorry, but the question must have been misunderstood. I was simply asking you whether, when you wrote those emails, dated March 30, 2020, in which you insisted that the contract be awarded to GC Strategies, you said to yourself that you were responding to orders that seemed wrong to you and whether you sounded the alarm at that time.

[English]

Ms. Diane Daly: Well, I was informed in writing by Angela Durigan that GC Strategies had to be a pre-qualified supplier on the TBIPS catalogue. That TBIPS catalogue is not determined by me, nor do I have access to it...including the fact that it's a two-person company. Any and all decisions were not mine to make. I had no access or no right to make decisions.

Senior management at CBSA has a contract review board. They have a series of executives at CBSA and at that time, they would have instructed.... As you know, as Lysane said in her audio, it comes down to you are a soldier and you are to do as you're told. I'm a unionized member. For doing my job...and if I'd seen anything, I would have reported it.

I didn't know who this pre-qualified supplier was. I want to make that very, very clear. I didn't decide. Angela Durigan confirmed that they are a TBIPS supplier. I have it in writing with me and can prove that Angela Durigan said "I'm getting ready to send the draft contract to GC Strategies" in the time frame you're mentioning, Madam.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[English]

Up next is Mr. Desjarlais.

You have the floor for six minutes, please.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais (Edmonton Griesbach, NDP): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much, Ms. Daly, for being present for these questions today.

What were your roles and responsibilities during your tenure at the CBSA?

Ms. Diane Daly: I was a senior adviser in the IT group. My role was administrative. I was a facilitator back and forth between multiple stakeholders to get answers, to have people fill things out and to put together packages for procurement requests, privacy impact assessments or anything the DGO needed help with. I worked with other people who worked in the DGO, including their own finance person. The finance manager made sure the coding was fine. We would send that off to the CBSA procurement inbox. We treated it just like we would anything else.

• (1445)

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Have you ever communicated with any contractor using your or their personal emails or phone numbers?

Ms. Diane Daly: I don't remember anything like that.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: We have evidence submitted to this committee that references an email, that on November 11 you sent an email to a Coradix representative's personal email address. Do you recall the November 11 email?

Ms. Diane Daly: No, I do not.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: It stands to reason—we have a copy of the email—that you did in fact communicate with a contractor using your or their personal email addresses, however. Would you agree?

Ms. Diane Daly: Anything is possible.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: You were the former procurement manager for the CBSA where misconduct allegations from Botler AI were brought to you. Is that correct?

Ms. Diane Daly: I was never a procurement manager of anything. I was not a procurement manager at CBSA, and I have proof of that.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Okay. You said, however, that your only role then, besides not being a manager, was to pay Botler. Is that correct?

Ms. Diane Daly: No. I just made sure...as any administration, as any unionized employee, is instructed to follow management's requests. This email came in to my direct report. I was the direct report to the executive director. What I've been accused of is incorrect. She had sent an email to him asking for payment for two deliverables. I have that in writing, by the way. I just did the right thing—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Could you supply that?

Ms. Diane Daly: —and I got her paid. I made sure of that, because people should be paid.

Now, I want to give some context—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: [*Inaudible—Editor*] to take payments?

Ms. Diane Daly: I don't remember what.... I didn't know about Ritika Dutt until she got to the October 26 OGGO meeting, to be honest with you, to be very honest with you.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Was that even though there had been communications between Botler AI and yourself?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes, and part of that was the payment. She thanked me for it, which I have evidence of.

I was instructed by the human resources branch at CBSA that because of COVID, they could no longer continue with the contract. Those were sent to the main contractor, not Ms. Ritika Dutt, who was not the main contractor—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: That confuses me. Explain why you feel that COVID is the reason the contract didn't persist, when in fact it's been accused that Botler attempted to erase these allegations with you. Then, the result of those allegations wasn't an investigation; however, it was the termination of Botler's AI contract, which seems to me like intimidation or retaliation at the very least.

Ms. Diane Daly: Botler never had a contract with us. They were a subcontractor. In other words, they had a separate agreement with, I believe, GC Strategies. They themselves were not the contractor on record. Let's be very clear. Any business arrangement is outside the purview of any Government of Canada employee to deal with them. I made that very clear in writing—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: This is the problem, Ms. Daly, where Botler has no.... You're saying that they were a subcontractor. How could you be a subcontractor without knowledge of being a subcontractor? When it came to light that Botler was in fact a subcontractor through GC Strategies, they raised that concern with you directly. That concern, via email, constitutes a misconduct report, according to the CBSA's policies. Why is it, then, that the misconduct report wasn't investigated by you or wasn't flagged for investigation?

Ms. Diane Daly: It did not deal with misconduct. Let's be very clear. She had some personal issues with her relationship with, I think, Coradix and GC Strategies, if I'm not mistaken. To be clear, I offered to say, "If you're not happy with this relationship, Ms. Dutt, I'll be happy to contact Dalian and tell them to remove you from the TA."

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Then you did have direct contact with these contractors.

Ms. Diane Daly: We did.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Why would you say the opposite?

Ms. Diane Daly: I didn't say the opposite.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: I asked you at the very start. I said, "Have you ever communicated with any contractor using your or their personal emails or phone numbers?"

Ms. Diane Daly: Email addresses.... I said I don't remember.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: You said no, and then I gave you evidence of one. How much don't you remember about the communications between these companies, like GC Strategies and the subcontractors, when it seems to me that you obviously had a relationship with these contractors—

Ms. Diane Daly: Relationship, sir—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: —so much to the extent—

• (1450)

Ms. Diane Daly: No. I had no relationship, sir.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: —that they were terminated.

Ms. Diane Daly: No. Sir, let me revisit what you said. Let me answer exactly what you asked me.

Do I remember having communicated through a personal email with a supplier? Is that not correct?

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: That's correct, and you said no. Then I gave you evidence of—

Ms. Diane Daly: I don't remember any is what I said.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Okay, you don't remember. That's fair enough.

Let's go on now to a different issue, which is that you did in fact speak to Kristian Firth in an email. You literally said in the email that you spoke with GC Strategies. That was on September 28, and you wanted to be very clear with those—

Ms. Diane Daly: [*Inaudible—Editor*] the right to be paid for the deliverables that they gave.

The Chair: Order.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: But they weren't aware of the fact that they were a subcontractor.

Ms. Diane Daly: That's a separate....

The Chair: Mr. Desjarlais and Ms. Daly, the time is—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: That's the misconduct we're talking about.

The Chair: Mr. Desjarlais, the time has more than expired. We'll have to come back to this. You will have another opportunity.

I'm going to begin the second round.

Mr. Genuis, you have the floor for five minutes, please.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Ms. Daly, your testimony today is explosive and brutal. You've compared this to the sponsorship scandal. You said that you've been muzzled and that you are at risk of being fired for your testimony.

Why do you think you are at risk of being fired by the Government of Canada for telling the truth to this committee? What exactly is motivating those who don't want you to speak about grave problems in this government's contracting practices?

Ms. Diane Daly: This is the first thing I was informed of when I met with my former director general. She said that, no, they would only want to talk to me as a witness. Then she went on to make the intimidation. She had been contacting me on a regular basis via MS Teams, via email and via setting up separate meetings to sort of stalk me. That's the way it felt. I continued to go to work because I had done nothing wrong.

However, my name began going out in the press from the October 26 meeting at OGGO. She said that the deputy minister of PSPC and the president of the CBSA were asking that I attend this meeting and that she and my senior director could attend if I wanted so that I wouldn't feel like a fish in a crocodile's mouth, or something to that effect. They wanted to ask me if I was being intimidated, threatened in any way, etc., and I told her that, no, there was no threatening going on by the two individuals she was talking about, who were my two former bosses. I'd say quite—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: It was MacDonald and Utano.

Ms. Diane Daly: That would be Cameron MacDonald, the director general, and Antonio Utano, my senior director.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Yes.

We're a bit tight for time, so to move our timeline forward, you're here today giving, I think, really explosive testimony before this accountability committee, and you're afraid that the things you say, the information you reveal, could result in your potentially being fired. What are the present data points that are pointing you toward that conclusion?

Ms. Diane Daly: Well, it's the two investigations. I wasn't supposed to be investigated. Now I'm being investigated by CBSA and Public Works. I have that in writing.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Fundamentally, that was the result, on your account, of you not giving the answers they were looking for with respect to MacDonald and Utano. They were looking in December, if I have the timeline right, for you to say certain things about them. You didn't, and subsequent to that you were subject to investigation.

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes. Let me be clear that the December 7 email I received from Michel Lafleur said it was an optional meeting. I was seeking support, medical support, for my cancer diagnosis. Let's be very clear that I let them know that I was seeking support. I gave them a very fulsome statement. It was optional.

When I said this to my director general and when I said this to Tom von Schoenberg, they were like, "Well, you have no choice. It's coming from the top. We have our marching orders."

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Right.

Here's the timeline as I see it.

On November 7 Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Utano appear before the government operations committee. They give very critical testimony of the government. They do not support the line that this committee had been given by other senior officials. Later that month, they find out they're being investigated.

In November, part of the testimony we heard was that Minister Mendicino had been looking for someone's head on a plate. That's a direct quote. Minister Mendicino was looking for someone's head on a plate in relation to the ArriveCAN issue.

On November 7, they don't give the testimony that maybe other senior officials wanted them to. Then they are subject to further investigation, which they find out about later that month.

You're ordered to go to an interview. You don't give the answers that maybe they were expecting. Then you find yourself also suspended and also under investigation.

Moving forward, we then have the Auditor General's report. Among other things, the Auditor General's report says in paragraph 1.56 that there was a case of GC Strategies being involved in developing requirements with officials. Kristian Firth comes to this committee on March 13 and refuses to say who that official was, but on April 17 he was ready to offer four names—

• (1455)

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: I have a point of order, Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Genuis, I have a point of order from Ms. Shanahan.

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: I'm sorry to interrupt, Garnett, but you referred several times to this committee and to people appearing before this committee. I don't believe it was in front of this committee.

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

Mr. Genuis, you can take that under advisement. I'll turn it back to you. You have about 30 seconds.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you.

I did misspeak. The March 13 testimony of Mr. Firth was before the government operations committee. It wasn't before this committee.

In any event, Ms. Daly, in this series of events, a number of people who have not supported the narrative that government officials and Minister Mendicino perhaps wanted are then subject to investigation.

Why do you think Kristian Firth specifically named you in the House on April 17 in relation to what the Auditor General said in paragraph 1.56? Why was the finger pointed at you?

Ms. Diane Daly: That's a very good question. I don't know why Mr. Firth made that statement. I do not recall, and Mr. Firth knows this, any conversation about IT requirements. Mr. Firth would know that any IT requirements I had received, if I had received any, would have been forwarded to people who actually worked in IT. That's because, again, I'm a procurement person. I have Geek Squad at home for residential help desk issues. I'm not the go-to for IT. Mr. Firth worked directly with CBSA IT staff on.... I don't even know what they were doing.

Let's be very clear. I could not and would not put together a package that didn't come from CBSA IT staff. I wouldn't know what to put in there.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Genuis. That is your time. I'm sure we'll come back to you.

Ms. Yip, you have the floor for five minutes, please.

Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agingcourt, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

I appreciate that you gave committee members reasonable notice regarding the timing of this meeting, especially after our colleagues on the status of women committee were not afforded the same courtesy.

Although I'm disappointed that we are meeting on an exceptional basis when the House is not in session, I just want to remind everyone that there was consensus during our last subcommittee meeting to not meet before September. I hope we are able to get back to our regular work reviewing the Auditor General's reports in the fall.

That being said, here we are, virtually and in person, and I'm glad we have the chance to speak to Ms. Daly.

On that note, Ms. Daly, my first question is this: Why did the two directors general ask you to give false testimony?

Ms. Diane Daly: The correction I should make is that my former director general and my senior director were at that meeting. It's not two directors general, just to be clear.

On December 15, my director general had been on vacation. She insisted that the title of the meeting be "Meeting with CBSA". I have in writing, from an ATIP, that they had started receiving information from CBSA on December 11, I think it was. They had asked that I attend this meeting because it was extremely important. It was on a Friday, if I'm not mistaken. She called me and told me I had no choice but to go. I went because she was my director general. Again, I'm a mid-level to low-level employee.

If you listen to the tape—I'm going to provide a copy because Mr. Brock asked for it—you will hear for yourself that she says, "Oh, Diane, Diane, are you being threatened? Oh, do you feel intimidated?" She said, "Well, we can attend that meeting with you, but you have to go. It's not an option."

• (1500)

Ms. Jean Yip: You had to go, but it's not the same as asking you to give false testimony. Is that right?

Ms. Diane Daly: [*Inaudible—Editor*] said is, "They have created...." I can actually quote from the tape if you'd like.

Ms. Jean Yip: That would be great. Thank you.

Ms. Diane Daly: Let me find that. You'll have to bear with me because it's several pages long.

The Chair: Ms. Yip, if you're agreeable, I'll stop the clock. I'll give Ms. Daly a few seconds to find it, but I'll stop the clock for you so it's not cutting into your time.

Ms. Diane Daly: I do have that, Ms. Yip.

The Chair: The floor is yours, Ms. Daly.

Ms. Yip, you have about two minutes and 20 seconds left.

Ms. Diane Daly: "They're investigating two individuals—not you—within the organization. As part of the story, because you're involved, your name pops up many, many times, but there are no—not necessarily in some of the stories that they're developing—there's holes, and there's not necessarily documents that are associated to those holes. So they need, and unfortunately, you have an obligation to respond, and we'll get to how we're going to support you, because we're going to have to respond. They will need to interview you and to fill in those gaps in information that they have in the story. Can I just say that? Yeah."

I said, "So the information I have via email from CBSA clearly states it's an option." "Why? Really?" "Yes, so it's an option." I said, "Respectfully, I decline." "Okay, I didn't know that." "I have it in writing," is what I replied to her. "Okay, I'm very uncomfortable with who they are and they"—my former DG and my former senior director or executive director at the CBSA, Antonio Utano and Cameron MacDonald, who were at OGGO—"are honest, transparent, integrous people. I worked with Cameron when he worked at Public Works, for instance. You can ask anyone in real property who he was."

I say about Ms. Dutt, in answering a former committee member's question, this woman came to OGGO with these things. I don't even remember her name. It was a name on a task authorization, by the way. This was a TA amongst many TAs. That was in The Globe and Mail, me asking for somebody who had already been paid to pay this person, which was perfectly fine.

"Tom and I discussed that," is what the DG said. I replied, "Yeah, so I try and do the best by everybody. I'm telling you, I'm advised that I know that Minh Doan was known in the IT group."

Minh Doan, I was told, by the way, decided to go with GC Strategies. I don't know that for a fact, which I informed the CBSA of in my email. I said, "They asked me to reconsider, and I did not respond after I had already made a fulsome statement."

My DG said, "As an option, you know what, Diane? I'm not going to argue with you. Would you be comfortable sharing the information?"

She said, "Well, I think, like, first of all, I think it would be fair, I do not...what I was going to suggest to you today—and this is all new information that was presented as an option to you—was that we as your employers support you through the process. We would be there to make sure you don't feel like, I don't know, like a fish in a crocodile pond when you're interviewed by the CBSA. They're just doing their job, is how they [*Inaudible—Editor*] information got presented to me and Tom. Like, they have a job to do. They're the equivalent of the departmental oversight branch."

"The departmental oversight branch does internal reviews here within the department. This is what they were doing there. However, given the profile of this file, and I'm sure you've responded to audit questions before in your career as a public servant, this feels different." I said, "I can just imagine they are a police force unto themselves, so I do not trust what they have to say, to be clear."

"Okay, so in order to make you feel comfortable, what I'm going to suggest to Michel is that one of us management sits with you through this process, because the way things were presented to me, despite what they wrote to you, was it's an obligation.

The Chair: Ms. Daly, I'm going to ask you to pause it there. I think you have a lot more to say, but I do need to move on and try to keep some sense of balance here as well. If Ms. Yip has questions, she will come back to you, I'm sure.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Sinclair-Desgagné, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

• (1505)

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Daly, have you been contacted by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, yes or no?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: No, I have not been contacted by the RCMP.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: You have mentioned Ms. Dutt several times, whose company, Botler AI, was to receive a contract from the Canada Border Services Agency. When Ms. Dutt discovered that her signature had been forged so that her company would be forced to subcontract to GC Strategies or the joint venture between Dalian and Coradix, she mentioned this misconduct and said that you were aware of it. As a procurement officer, you should know that forging signatures is a criminal offence.

Why did you not raise the issue of misconduct at that time, Ms. Daly?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: You'd have to refer back to the timeline I was there. I was at CBSA only until July 2022, if not June 2022. I believe, if I'm not mistaken—and I'd have to go back to the OGGO committee.... When did Ms. Dutt raise that specifically to CBSA?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: I have the information in front of me. Ms. Dutt provided that information in 2021. So you were there, and she contacted you, unless everything was made up, which would be strange. The first allegation of misconduct was raised on September 27, 2021, and you were contacted by Ms. Dutt at that time. Why did you not report this case of misconduct?

You mentioned earlier that it wasn't your problem if someone became a subcontractor. For that to happen without their knowledge, however, their signature would have to be forged. You were made aware of this problem. Why didn't you mention it? Why didn't you bring it up?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: First of all, I'd have to see the email that you are talking about. I don't recall receiving that specific email.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Ms. Dutt testified a long time ago before the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. All of that information is public.

We do have two conflicting accounts of the situation. You say that you remember that Botler AI became a subcontractor without its knowledge, but that you don't remember Ms. Dutt raising the issue.

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: Well, that's not true. Let me step back here. Let me explain things as I recall them. This seems to be confusing a lot of people.

My role was senior administrator. I received an email from my executive director that Ms. Dutt had sent asking for payment for two deliverables that had been delivered to the CBSA human resources branch. I called CBSA finance to find out whether Dalian, in a joint venture with Coradix, which was the contractor on record, had actually been paid. They confirmed they had. I said, "Well, why aren't you paying the people on the task authorization?" "Oh, well, GC Strategies"—I believe it was GC Strategies, but I could be wrong—"was supposed to pay them."

I contacted GC Strategies to make sure they had the capacity and the fortitude to do the right thing and pay their subcontractor. Most PGs don't do that, just so you know. As Michael Mills said at OGGO, they don't get involved in the payment of subcontractors. That's not right. I like to make sure that people who deliver things get paid. That was what I was doing.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[English]

Mr. Desjarlais, you have the floor for two and a half minutes, please.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Daly, I find several instances of your testimony today troubling or creating gaps in some of the issues pointed out by the Auditor General. The Auditor General herself has suggested that CB-SA officials—including, and potentially could be, you yourself, especially named by Mr. Firth to be you—were involved directly in forged signatures and even instances of failed résumés, or résumés that were forged for the purpose of ensuring that GC Strategies and any potential layers of subcontractors would be eligible for what was an IT contract, and presumably an important contract, that was supposed to ensure that Canada and taxpayers got the best outcome possible.

Was it ever a question in your mind that a two-person company like GC Strategies was maybe not the best fit for this? Did you ever at any point question how a two-person company in a basement could have even possibly been the prime contractor for such a massive project? Something isn't adding up.

• (1510)

Ms. Diane Daly: Can I answer your question about TBIPS? Do you remember that I was talking about the TBIPS catalogue?

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Yes.

Ms. Diane Daly: That is only available to PGs who have access to something called the TBIPS catalogue or the centralized professional services system, CPSS. The separation between people who create the catalogue and those who should not be signing contracts for those same suppliers is part of this issue.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: I understand that part—

Ms. Diane Daly: I'm saying I had no access to that catalogue.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: [Technical difficulty—Editor] informed you? I understand what you're saying. You're saying this catalogue is the evidence to inform you as to why GC Strategies was the contractor. Is that correct?

Ms. Diane Daly: I wouldn't know that GC Strategies was a two-person company. I wouldn't know that.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: You would have just seen them on the list. You've said they're on the approved list, somebody verified it, and therefore—

Ms. Diane Daly: [Technical difficulty—Editor] that I had, but from Angela Durigan, who had to say we're not doing anything with a sole-source contract until we can provide—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: When a misconduct report was submitted to you by Botler to suggest that GC Strategies isn't who they say they are and maybe they shouldn't be on this preferred contractor list, why is it, then, that you failed to ensure that there was a misconduct report that was actually investigated and pursued? Rather than an investigation into who GC Strategies really is and how they got onto the TBIPS list, why did it result in what actually happened, which was the outright termination of Botler when they tried to sound the alarm bells? Who directed you to do that—or was it you yourself?

Ms. Diane Daly: First of all, you're asking about the cancellation of the task authorization with Ritika Dutt and her partner. That decision—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Why did that become the result rather than an investigation?

Ms. Diane Daly: Can I answer the question? Am I allowed to?

The Chair: Yes, Ms. Daly. You have the floor.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: That's the question. I want you to answer that question.

Ms. Diane Daly: I'm trying to.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: You decided to terminate the contract—

Ms. Diane Daly: It's a contract.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: —rather than ensure that there was a misconduct report—

Ms. Diane Daly: Chair, I'm trying to answer the question.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: —when a misconduct report was given to you.

I need you to hear the question, Ms. Daly.

Ms. Diane Daly: I'm trying to.

The Chair: All right—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: You're not letting me. Did you hear what I said? You're interrupting me.

I would claim my time, Chair, in order to get an answer to my question.

The Chair: I appreciate that, Mr. Desjarlais. There's just a bit of audio in the background.

Please pose the question as clearly as you can. Then we'll give Ms. Daly an opportunity to answer, after which we'll move on.

Thank you.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: I will.

Botler claimed that they were an unknown subcontractor to GC Strategies. When they came forward with allegations of misconduct, they raised that misconduct report with you. The result of them raising the misconduct report did not result in you initiating an investigation of that potential claim of misconduct. What in fact happened was that Botler AI's contract was terminated. That seems like retaliation for what is a very clear instance of someone trying to raise an issue of misconduct.

Why is it that you decided not to ensure an investigation but to then terminate instead?

Ms. Diane Daly: You're referring to the initial request for payment. The initial request for payment had attachments of correspondence between Ms. Dutt and, I believe, other people. I had no right as a PG to interfere with what are business relationships outside of the Government of Canada contract. We're not allowed to do that. Therefore—

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Is that even when it's claimed that misconduct has happened?

The Chair: Thank you. We can pick this up again, Mr. Desjarlais.

The answer might not be complete, but I've given you both time. We'll come back to this, I'm sure.

Mr. Barrett, you have the floor for five minutes, please.

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Ms. Daly, how many times did you meet with or communicate with Kristian Firth of GC Strategies?

• (1515)

Ms. Diane Daly: I honestly don't know. When a soldier is told to go make something happen.... I can tell you that most of what I corresponded with Mr. Firth, now that I know it's a two-person company, which I had no access to know, explains the level of ineptitude and the very poor documentation received at the CBSA for things like invoices, time sheets and delays in responding to us. There are multiple things we had to coordinate for a package, and if I'm told that this invoice came in and that it's not right, then I would have to reach out to whoever the supplier was to get it fixed.

Mr. Michael Barrett: You would do that by phone or by email.

Ms. Diane Daly: I would do it by phone or by email, never in person.

Mr. Michael Barrett: We've heard evidence about government officials receiving hospitality from Kristian Firth, so not solicited, but by him arranging virtual whiskey tastings and sending whiskey to people's homes. Were you ever afforded any of that hospitality?

Ms. Diane Daly: No.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Were you invited, in your role, to any dinners that were provided to any of your other colleagues in government? We heard testimony that in some cases they met at bistros, coffee shops and steak houses. Were you given any invitations to those events?

Ms. Diane Daly: No.

Mr. Michael Barrett: You didn't partake in any of them.

Ms. Diane Daly: No.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Did you know any of these events were taking place?

Ms. Diane Daly: No. If I had, I would have said something.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Are you aware now that your supervisors were taking part in that hospitality?

Ms. Diane Daly: From testimony, I am. Yes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: When Mr. Firth appeared at the government operations committee, he refused to name the individual who was helping him and GC Strategies to write their own contracts. That refusal to give the name was one of the reasons he was found to be in contempt, and it saw the matter elevated to him being called to the bar of the House of Commons to answer questions. Why would he hide your name from Canadians in his testimony knowing that he would be found in contempt?

Ms. Diane Daly: That's a good question. It's kind of like the question I have about why I am being investigated to try to give false testimony about two former bosses. Why am I being investigated and being put on administrative leave? I didn't do anything wrong. I continue to go to work. I would ask that question of those in the CBSA management team and of those in the PSPC management team who decided to investigate me.

Mr. Michael Barrett: What changed between his appearance at OGGO and his appearance in the House when he refused to name you and then when he did name you?

Ms. Diane Daly: I have no idea.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Do you agree you are the correct person for him to have named in relation to them being assisted in creating that contract?

Ms. Diane Daly: I did not have the expertise to know what an IT anything was, so if Mr. Firth sent me anything, it would have been forwarded on to IT services.

Mr. Michael Barrett: The Auditor General made reference to GC Strategies having a government official assist GC Strategies in writing a contract that they were ultimately awarded. Who was it if it wasn't you?

Ms. Diane Daly: I don't know, but I want to tell you again, and I'll reiterate what was in my statement. Myself, the manager of BTID DGO and her administrative officer were sick and tired of the very poor documentation from GC Strategies. I want to make it very, very clear that we asked if we could cancel this request for proposal. We did. We booked an MS Teams meeting, and we asked that GC Strategies not be awarded that.

Mr. Michael Barrett: This is my last question. Do you think you were singled out by CBSA officials to take the fall for this, that it was communicated to Mr. Firth in between his appearance at OGGO and his appearance in the House and that's why your name was given to him? Ms. Daly, how would he even remember you, if you'd only communicated one time and if your name wasn't given to him by your superiors in an attempt to clear their own names?

Ms. Diane Daly: I don't know what people are up to. I don't get into this political back and forth. All I know is that I dealt with Kristian Firth on multiple occasions for incorrect invoices. It wasn't just me, but also CBSA and DGO admin staff. This shows why there were so many problems. It's a two-person company. You would have to go back to TBIPS and to how they do their catalogue and their vetting to really say if this is the tip of iceberg.

• (1520)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Next up is Ms. Bradford.

You have the floor for five minutes, please.

Ms. Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witness appearing today.

I want to clarify a few things that I find a little confusing.

Were you suspended? You mentioned you were put on administrative leave. I just wondered if you asked for administrative leave. Did they say you were going on administrative leave?

Ms. Diane Daly: I received an email from the special investigations unit of PSPC on March 13, and I was told I was under administration leave. This was from my former director general, Lysane Bolduc. I would be happy to provide the committee with a copy of that.

Ms. Valerie Bradford: Was Cameron MacDonald supervising your work?

Ms. Diane Daly: No, he wasn't.

Ms. Valerie Bradford: All right.

Looking now at your interactions with Kristian Firth, do you recall when the first time you came into contact with him was?

Ms. Diane Daly: It was with Angela Durigan.

Ms. Valerie Bradford: When was the first time you met, and what was the meeting pertaining to?

Ms. Diane Daly: First of all, there would be.... I'd never met the man personally that I can recall. I don't remember meeting him, but this was in the time period of COVID. We were given instructions, as I was told, to see whether or not it was possible to put a sole-source contract to address some sort of software requirement at the time. I remember getting something from Mr. Firth regarding rates—a rate card—but as I said to him, it would have to go through PSPC's appropriate commodity team, called TBIPS, in order to be able to do anything. I advised the CBSA IT group that everything has to go through CBSA procurement and then PSPC's TBIPS. Angela Durigan—and again, I have a copy of this email—said she would have to check and see whether GC Strategies was on the pre-qualified list. They were. I have no access to that, so for

me, that was the first I'd ever heard of GC Strategies. It was through Angela Durigan.

Ms. Valerie Bradford: Mr. Firth has provided testimony that he met with you prior to the contract being awarded to GC Strategies. During that meeting, he provided three suggestions for requirements for the contract, which ended up having 220 requirements.

Do you agree with that statement?

Ms. Diane Daly: I do not recall—and I'll keep going back to what I said—any conversation on IT technical requirements from Mr. Firth. If Mr. Firth had given me anything, it would have been forwarded on to the IT department, which sets the technical requirements.

Ms. Valerie Bradford: Okay.

Getting back to your leave, is it medical leave that you're on now or just—

Ms. Diane Daly: No. It is administrative leave, and that comes as a result of my former director general, Lysane Bolduc.

Ms. Valerie Bradford: Thanks for clarifying that for us.

Because this is the public accounts committee, I want to get back to the AG's report on ArriveCAN.

You said you read the report. Do you agree with her findings and recommendations?

Ms. Diane Daly: Absolutely. That's why I go back to the October 2020 answer in the OPO report from November 2021, which states the CBSA has a contract review board. In the contract review board, they are supposed to review the impact to the agency. That would mean planning for projects and planning for finance. That would mean more than one cost centre would be set up. Does that make sense?

Ms. Valerie Bradford: Yes.

Were you interviewed by the AG's office?

Ms. Diane Daly: No.

Ms. Valerie Bradford: You weren't.

In reviewing the report, can you outline any things that you might have found concerning?

Ms. Diane Daly: I don't know if the AG has received all documentation related, such as what I found on Reddit, the 2022 information about CBSA's presentation to the committees, the answered questions, and things like, "Well, my office made the decision to go with GC Strategies."

This was a public servant and as a unionized employee they were very concerned about this. The public service should be very concerned that its management team, who makes decisions and then tries to blame unionized members at a lower level for decisions made at the highest level, is a real threat. It's a real reprisal, and I'm a walking example of that.

• (1525)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Daly.

That is the time. That ends the second round.

I'm going to suspend for 10 minutes, and we'll come right back.

Thank you.

• (1525)

(Pause)

• (1535)

The Chair: I bring the hearing back to order.

Mr. Brock, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Larry Brock: Ms. Daly, I want to do a deeper dive into the circumstances surrounding the CBSA interview. You referenced an audio tape that you're going to provide to the committee.

I understand there was a series of email exchanges as well, which you've referenced. These email exchanges involve you and who else?

Ms. Diane Daly: I have them here. Can I pull them out? Then I'd be more accurate.

Mr. Larry Brock: I want you to ultimately file all of those emails. Can you just identify the names of the people who were communicating with you?

Ms. Diane Daly: The people communicating with me were my director general, Lysane Bolduc, and Tom von Schoenberg, my senior director.

Those were the people involved in communicating—

Mr. Larry Brock: What about Mr. Lafleur?

Ms. Diane Daly: You're correct, Mr. Brock.

On December 7, he sent me an invite for an optional...as a witness to come—

Mr. Larry Brock: [*Inaudible—Editor*] the initial piece of communication?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes, it was on December 7.

Mr. Larry Brock: In addition to the audio phone call and in addition to the emails, were there other phone calls that took place to get you at that particular interview that you did not take?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes. I was shocked when I—

Mr. Larry Brock: How many?

Ms. Diane Daly: I honestly don't know.

Mr. Larry Brock: Thank you, Ms. Daly.

You referenced some important details in that audiotape conversation between you and the DG.

Are there other damning, more significant pieces of that conversation you want to share with us right now?

Ms. Diane Daly: Certainly. This is a conversation that Lysane had with me.

She said, "I'll seek clarity on the mandatory versus non-mandatory", but before she said that, she said, "I think that you should feel

comfortable having Tom or I present at that upcoming meeting. I think that would be a good idea for you as well, so I'll get back to Michel." She's referring to Michel Lafleur. "I'll seek clarity on the mandatory versus non-mandatory, but like I said, I've received my own marching orders, and my feeling is that he's probably received his own marching orders as well on his side as well."

Mr. Larry Brock: By inference, she's misleading you as to whether there's a confusion between optional and non-optional.

Ms. Diane Daly: That's correct. She said.... I wasn't told it was optional on the tape.

Mr. Larry Brock: You clearly had no choice.

Ms. Diane Daly: I had no choice.

Mr. Larry Brock: You were compelled to attend.

Ms. Diane Daly: She told me I had no option.

Mr. Larry Brock: Okay. Let's talk about the interview itself. How long was it?

Ms. Diane Daly: It was 13 minutes.

Mr. Larry Brock: The interview—

Ms. Diane Daly: The interview with CBSA. Is that what you mean?

Mr. Larry Brock: Yes.

Ms. Diane Daly: It was three and a half hours.

Mr. Larry Brock: It was three and a half hours. Where did it take place?

Ms. Diane Daly: Virtually.

Mr. Larry Brock: Did you get a break?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes, I did.

Mr. Larry Brock: What was the tone like in that particular three and a half hour interview?

Ms. Diane Daly: It was hostile.

Mr. Larry Brock: Give me examples.

Ms. Diane Daly: Marie-France Leduc, who was the manager or the acting manager, started off being confused that I wasn't procurement. She would throw random emails at me, would read from them and would not let me see them, and then she asked, "What do you mean you're not procurement?"

Mr. Larry Brock: They had a narrative that you would not agree with. Is that fair to say?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes, and I think they were literally confused that I wasn't procurement.

Mr. Larry Brock: Was that meeting recorded? Was that meeting transcribed?

Ms. Diane Daly: It was transcribed.

Mr. Larry Brock: Was it recorded?

Ms. Diane Daly: It would have been, yes.

Mr. Larry Brock: Did you get a copy of that recording?

• (1540)

Ms. Diane Daly: No, I did not.

Mr. Larry Brock: Were there any issues with the transcription of that interview?

Ms. Diane Daly: My sister attended with me because I had advised them I had just received cancer treatment five days before, and that's in writing, by the way.

They said to me.... January 15 was the date of the meeting. Kasandra Michon, who was the senior investigator on that, had very poor English, or she was trying to transcribe something that I did not say at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Larry Brock: Can you verify that?

Ms. Diane Daly: Sure.

Mr. Larry Brock: Do you have any information with respect to the allegations surrounding Minh Doan deleting four years' worth of relevant emails?

Ms. Diane Daly: I know nothing about that.

Mr. Larry Brock: Nothing.

Ms. Diane Daly: Nothing at all.

Mr. Larry Brock: You must have heard that in the press.

Ms. Diane Daly: I heard it in testimony.

Mr. Larry Brock: Have you ever dealt with Minh Doan in your capacity at CBSA?

Ms. Diane Daly: No.

Mr. Larry Brock: Okay.

When did the CBSA interview take place?

Ms. Diane Daly: It was January 15.

Mr. Larry Brock: Was it January 15 of 2024?

Ms. Diane Daly: That's correct.

Mr. Larry Brock: When were you suspended?

Ms. Diane Daly: It was March 12.

Mr. Larry Brock: How were you suspended, verbally or by a letter?

Ms. Diane Daly: I received a letter.

Mr. Larry Brock: Do you have a copy of the letter?

Ms. Diane Daly: I do.

Mr. Larry Brock: Will you submit that to the committee?

Ms. Diane Daly: I will.

Mr. Larry Brock: What was the crux of the allegations against you?

Ms. Diane Daly: May I read it?

Mr. Larry Brock: Yes.

Ms. Diane Daly: I like to read stuff so that people know that I'm actually....

Mr. Larry Brock: Go ahead.

Ms. Diane Daly: My apologies. Perhaps you could give me a moment to look for it.

The Chair: Mr. Brock, I'll allow this, but this will conclude your questioning.

Mr. Larry Brock: Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: I will give Ms. Daly a few seconds to find that.

Ms. Diane Daly: I'm very sorry. I'm looking for it. I have a lot of paperwork here, so you'll have to bear with me. I apologize.

Mr. Larry Brock: Nevertheless, will you supply that to the committee?

Ms. Diane Daly: I will.

Mr. Larry Brock: Okay.

Ms. Diane Daly: It essentially says that I did not adhere to the CBSA and PSPC codes of conduct for procurement. It was something to the effect—I'm saying this from memory—that I had not adhered to the values and ethics of the public service. Those were the allegations.

The Chair: Thank you.

I think that will suffice. If Mr. Brock wants to make a point of it, we can come back to it.

Ms. Khalid, I believe you're next. You have five minutes, please.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Daly, for appearing here today.

I will point out at the outset that we are not here as a tribunal to find charge or to find guilt in any way. We are trying to figure out what went wrong and how we can ensure that it doesn't go wrong again in the future.

Ms. Daly, I'll start off by asking who hired you.

Ms. Diane Daly: My offer came from Tony Utano, but the CBSA—

Ms. Iqra Khalid: What was his position?

Ms. Diane Daly: He was an executive director.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Who will fire you, as you had indicated in your opening statement?

Ms. Diane Daly: Who would fire me? Well, that would probably be my deputy minister or my former director general. You see, in the policy on investigations, it is actually, as I said in my statement, the at-level manager or director who needs to start an investigation. At Public Works, that would have been Lysane Bolduc at the time.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Right.

You also mentioned in your opening remarks that Minister Duclos, who was the minister responsible at the time, "tried to do the right thing". Can you elaborate on that? What exactly did you mean by that?

Ms. Diane Daly: I'm referring to what Ms. Reza said in one of her committee meetings. I'm not sure whether it was OGGO or public accounts. You'd have to look it up. I believe it was in January. She was asked a question specifically regarding when she had informed—I think it was Mrs. Block who asked this—the minister of the ArriveCAN thing. She said it was, like, October or November of 2023, when he started. He started in the summer. The same month, or a month later, he came out and said in *The Globe and Mail*, I believe, “We recognize there's a problem and we're trying to do something about it in the House of Commons.”

That's where I'm getting this information from.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Thank you.

Help me to understand this. From the over 20-plus meetings and the increased politicization of this issue, I'm getting the vibe that what's at issue here is how middle management is conducting themselves, especially during the COVID time, when things were very fluid and a lot of things needed to get done in a very short time. Do you think we need to micromanage our public service?

• (1545)

Ms. Diane Daly: I think you need to take a good look at the TBIPS method of supply. In fact, look at it from an auditor's standpoint. I would suggest that the Auditor General actually go into the professional services unit and look at how....

TBIPS was established in the way forward in 2005, from what I read in a business journal that I have with me. It's an article from 2009, which says that TBIPS needs to be reformed. We need to look at what we put in place before and reform it.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: How much of what has happened here, which, if I'm going to put it into context, is there was too much money spent on an app to try to help people to be mobile during COVID in a safe way, and a lot of that led to overspending. Where do you think the accountability really lies with the spending of that money? We realize no ministers signed off on any of these contracts. Where is that accountability?

Ms. Diane Daly: I go to the Financial Administration Act. Where does it come down from?

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Do you think that ministers need to sign off on every single contract in order for the public service, which we rely on significantly, to be able to do its work? Do ministers need to sign off on every single contract and micromanage how our public service does its work?

Ms. Diane Daly: I think you need to take a look at what is obviously...this goes back to the OGGO meeting where PSPC's Madam Poulin had indicated there could be a widespread problem in the government with different departments impacted by the poor way that methods of supply are set up. It's the methods of supply.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Thanks for that.

It seems to me, based on your testimony today, that everyone in the public service seems to be tripping over themselves to find out who is the person most responsible. The Conservatives are trying to tie this in some way to a minister or to some political operative here.

From your point of view, do you think that the elected officials need to have more oversight on these contracts and procurement in general so that we can prevent these kinds of acts from happening in the future?

Ms. Diane Daly: I'll tell you what I understood from Public Works. They, I believe, either have put in place a chief procurement officer.... Maybe that should be considered as an independent office not in finance, but working with finance as a separate entity. Part of this is your financial management system and people knowing what goes in and how it's done. We in the government love red tape. We don't do the how-to guides or this is the process of what this means. We don't do enough of that, yet we ask, through Treasury Board as the employer, for reports about what we're doing. We make it so hard on ourselves to deal with the simplest things when we could have oversight bodies watching what people are asking for.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: I have one more question, Chair, if you would oblige me.

The Chair: Ms. Khalid, your time is up, but there are more slots coming for you and your members, so we'll come back. It did go well over, Ms. Khalid.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Sinclair-Desgagné, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Daly did you threaten Ms. Dutt of Botler AI, on behalf of Canada, to get her to send all documents and evidence of misconduct in her possession to the Canada Border Services Agency or GC Strategies, yes or no?

Ms. Diane Daly: No.

[*English*]

We asked for everything associated with the two deliverables because of the turnover in project representatives from the human resources branch. Part of the issue for Botler was that they were complaining there weren't people there to get the deliverables done. Let me be very clear. You could find that with documentation or emails, but what we did was to ask for everything associated as part of the terms and conditions laid out in 2035, part of the higher complexity template and the supply acquisitions clauses and conditions, where Canada has the right to audit and ask for those documents.

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Why did you ask Botler AI to provide all the documents and all the evidence of misconduct in its possession, knowing that, normally, you should have sounded the alarm and reported the problem to your superior, who would ultimately have told Mr. Doan? Did anyone ask you to do that, or did you do it on your own?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: First of all, I corresponded with Ms. Dutt through email. I had to do what she had requested. She was looking for my support to find out when the human resources branch...and the work to continue so she could deliver her deliverables.

I was told—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: That's not an answer to my question.

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: No, no. I'm trying to lead up to it. I'm trying to explain that—

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: I'm sorry, but my time is limited and you're not answering my question.

I want to know why you didn't raise the alarm when there was evidence of misconduct, instead of asking for that evidence to be provided to the very people who were accused of that misconduct. That makes no sense, Ms. Daly.

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: Again, I will refer back to my role as a senior adviser. We in the government must adhere to the terms and conditions of contracts. Do you agree?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: That's not my question and it's not—

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: No, but I'm asking the question because we have a duty to correspond only with the contract of record. In this case, that was Dalian in joint venture with Coradix.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: That is precisely why Botler AI executives criticized you. They were supposed to do a contract directly for the Canada Border Services Agency, but their signature was forged so that they would become subcontractors. That was Botler AI's first allegation of misconduct. That's exactly it. It's not normal. This allegation of misconduct should have been reported to your superiors.

Ms. Daly, I think you're telling the truth about a lot of things. However, I think that misconduct has been committed and that there are two possibilities: Either you were asked to turn a blind eye, or you yourself did not raise the alarm as it was your duty to do.

So what happened?

[*English*]

Ms. Diane Daly: First of all, if they had said that they had forged résumés, I don't remember receiving any correspondence from Botler AI in 2021 about forged résumés. I want to be clear about that. I'm not even sure that this is what they said at committee. I could be wrong.

Second, if they had said to me that it was a forged résumé, I would have gone back to the contractor and asked what was going on. The contractor, Dalian in joint venture, said in committee that they received the résumés from their subcontractor.

I don't know what their business is between other suppliers when they make arrangements. It's not my business. My business is to make sure—

[*Translation*]

The Chair: That's all for now.

[*English*]

Thank you, Ms. Daly.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Sinclair-Desgagné, you will have an opportunity to continue in a few minutes.

[*English*]

Mr. Desjarlais, you have the floor for two and a half minutes. You'll have another opportunity after this one as well.

It's over to you.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to continue on with the line of questioning from my previous round related to the misconduct.

Ms. Daly, I agree with you, largely, in your comments, but I don't agree with your summation of what qualifies as misconduct and what your responsibility is, whether you're a low-level public servant, as you called yourself, a medium public servant or even a deputy minister. The responsibilities under CBSA policy require that, if any instance of a misconduct report is made to any person, including you in your position, it should be reported. You failed to report it.

I'm not saying that you're responsible, of course, for the gross negligence that took place, including at TBIPS. I agree with you that we need to conduct a very serious review of TBIPS and how companies like GC Strategies, a two-person company, could have gotten on that list. I'm saying that this is a very good example of systemic corruption where small pieces and the firewalls between them have isolated public servants to the position of not knowing whether or not something is misconduct. It's clear from your testimony today that you don't actually see this as a level of misconduct. Failing to report a serious allegation to a superior didn't in your mind meet the threshold to report a misconduct.

That's not your fault alone. It's the fault of your managers. It's the fault of the managers above them. Ultimately, it's the fault of whatever is happening at TBIPS that would have initiated this level of corruption.

That is my summation of what we've heard today. I fully take your recommendation that there should be a serious review of the TBIPS list and how suppliers got on that list. But there also has to be accountability with regard to the fact that there are policies in place that govern public servants, all public servants, and that, in the instance of a serious allegation like that, of a contractor not knowing they're a subcontractor and only finding that out after raising the alarm that they're not getting paid, it directly resulted in this issue and in why you're here today.

I fully appreciate your testimony, Ms. Daly. Your recommendations I also appreciate. What I ask is that this committee take serious consideration as to how GC Strategies was able to continue in this relationship when misconduct was in fact raised and the policy failed to be adhered to, wouldn't you agree?

• (1555)

Ms. Diane Daly: I would agree that everybody should get paid for the work they do, and honest efforts were made with the contractor of record, which is Dalian in joint venture. This was offered to Ms. Dutt, if I'm not mistaken, and you'd have to go back to what I left on the GCdocs.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Did you confirm any of the details as to whether or not GC Strategies had subcontractors?

Ms. Diane Daly: Honestly, it's way above my pay grade. The people working with GC Strategies were the CBSA IT people.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: The policy, you do know, counts subcontractors.

The Chair: Mr. Desjarlais, I will come back to you. You'll have another opportunity, but your time has ended.

Mr. Barrett, you have the floor for five minutes, please.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Ms. Daly, have you reviewed the testimony of the government officials related to ArriveCAN?

Ms. Diane Daly: I have reviewed some of it.

Mr. Michael Barrett: What about Cameron MacDonald? Are you familiar with his testimony?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Do you find it to be credible?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: What about Anthony Utano?

Ms. Diane Daly: Yes.

Mr. Michael Barrett: What about CBSA president Erin O'Gorman?

Ms. Diane Daly: I do find it interesting that, in a January 18 committee, Ms. O'Gorman was asked by Ms. Vignola of the Bloc, I believe, whether she knew of any person who was being investigated or was facing reprisals for whistle-blowing. She said she did not know. I'm paraphrasing here, but Ms. O'Gorman made that statement, and yet, here I sit.

Mr. Michael Barrett: We'll circle back to that.

Former CBSA president John Ossowski also testified. Are you familiar with his testimony?

Ms. Diane Daly: I saw one of his testimonies.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Did you find it to be truthful?

Ms. Diane Daly: I really don't know.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Mr. MacDonald told committee that the testimonies of both the current and former CBSA presidents, Ms. O'Gorman and Mr. Ossowski, were not truthful.

Do you have any further insight other than your personal example of a whistle-blower reprisal that's being exacted against you?

Ms. Diane Daly: I have heard at committee that there is a CBSA employee currently being put under investigation, and it has something to do with missing emails.

Mr. Michael Barrett: All right.

Ms. Diane Daly: I'm sorry I don't know more than that.

Mr. Michael Barrett: That is Minh Doan.

Does that relate to Ms. O'Gorman's testimony and its veracity?

• (1600)

Ms. Diane Daly: If you're an auditor, and I'm just going to speak to what I am familiar with in being audited, you have to separate duties and responsibilities. Contracting security is not in the same group as buyers. If you mix the two, like mergers and acquisitions with stockbrokers, you get insider trading. If she wasn't part of the investigation, instead of assuming anything, because I don't know Ms. O'Gorman and I don't know what's going on, how would she know or not know if people were facing reprisals? I'm just asking the question.

Mr. Michael Barrett: You mentioned earlier that you were just a soldier accepting your marching orders. Where did those orders come from? Did they come from Mr. MacDonald or Mr. Utano? Did they come from Ms. O'Gorman or Mr. Ossowski? Did they come from a deputy minister? Did they come from the minister? Where did they come from?

Ms. Diane Daly: Usually when unionized employees are working, they'll get it from their manager, their director or their colleagues. In my case, I worked with CBSA IT managers and CBSA IT directors. I dealt with them all, and I just put into place a package that was sent over from their IT technical requirements and over to CBSA procurement.

Mr. Michael Barrett: What would be the most senior level that would have given you direction on any of these matters?

Ms. Diane Daly: It would have been a director, a senior director or an executive director. Sorry.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Okay. Who do they report to?

Ms. Diane Daly: They probably report to the DG.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Who does the DG report to?

Ms. Diane Daly: They report to the VP of that branch.

Mr. Michael Barrett: The VP reports to the president. Who does the president report to?

Ms. Diane Daly: They report to a minister.

Mr. Michael Barrett: They report to the minister. Okay.

I find it so interesting that the Liberals have put forward this narrative that all of this \$60-million fiasco is the fault of the public service, and that some would like to say that it's your fault.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Yes, Ms. Khalid.

Mr. Michael Barrett: I can't wait.

The Chair: You have a point of order, Ms. Khalid.

Mr. Michael Barrett: I can't wait.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Sorry, Chair. Do you know what? Mr. Barrett can continue.

The Chair: Pardon me?

Mr. Larry Brock: She has withdrawn it.

The Chair: You've withdrawn it. Thank you.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: I'll take it back, Chair. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Barrett, you have 40 seconds left.

Mr. Michael Barrett: I'm delighted she found a copy of the green book.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: I'm sorry, Chair. I'm not sure why Mr. Barrett needs to make such snide remarks. [*Inaudible—Editor*] comments.

An hon. member: Is this the point of order?

The Chair: All right, let's—

Mr. Michael Barrett: Maybe she didn't find a copy of the green book after all.

The Chair: Ladies and gentlemen, we're getting through the meeting. If we stay on track, we'll have everyone out of here very shortly.

Mr. Barrett, you have 40 seconds.

Mr. Michael Barrett: It's fascinating that Ms. Khalid wants to paint a picture—

Ms. Iqra Khalid: No, no, no, you can't—

The Chair: No—

Ms. Iqra Khalid: No, Mr. Chair, he can't be representing me at this—

The Chair: Hold on.

Ms. Khalid—

Mr. Michael Barrett: [*Inaudible—Editor*] she knew.

The Chair: Ms. Khalid, Mr. Barrett can tee off his questions to the witness however he likes. You were the one who stuck your neck out a little bit. While I appreciate your withdrawing your point of order, Mr. Barrett has the floor for a short 40 seconds, which is longer than we've been discussing this point for.

Mr. Barrett, you have 40 seconds, please.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Ms. Khalid wanted to make the point, Ms. Daly, that it's just the public servants like you who are solely responsible for this—

Mr. Larry Brock: I have a point of order, Chair.

The Chair: Yes. I am—

Mr. Larry Brock: I have just witnessed Ms. Khalid, under her breath, use the words “eff you”. I'm not going to use the full term for that, but it was very, very clear to me. I can look at her, literally within five feet, and I'm asking her to reflect on what she said, apologize and withdraw.

The Chair: Ms. Khalid, I did not catch anything. Do you have any comment you'd like to make?

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Mr. Chair, I'm not sure if you want to consult Hansard or what the testimony has been or what's been recorded, but I think Mr. Brock is getting a little bit ahead of himself.

Mr. Larry Brock: Oh, come on.

The Chair: Mr. Brock, your member has the floor.

Mr. Larry Brock: You're prone to doing these things, Ms. Khalid.

The Chair: Ladies and gentlemen, I know it's warm in Ottawa. This meeting has been proceeding exceptionally well. I would like to get through Ms. Daly's testimony. She has come in here today to talk about her experience.

Mr. Barrett, you have 30 seconds. The floor is yours.

Mr. Michael Barrett: Well, let's back it up to the start of the interruptions, and we'll take the full 45.

Ms. Daly, Ms. Khalid has gone to great pains to try to say that it's not her government that's responsible for the \$60-million fiasco of arrive scam, which saw Liberal insiders getting paid while Canadians had to pay for it. They want to lay the blame at the feet of yourself and other public servants at your level.

Is the minister not ultimately responsible for what happens in the department—yes or no?

• (1605)

Ms. Diane Daly: A minister is accountable to Parliament for the actions of their department or agency—

Mr. Michael Barrett: Thank you very much, Ms. Daly.

That, Chair, is exactly why this Liberal government needs to be held accountable. That's what our function is here, even if Ms. Khalid and her Liberal colleagues don't like it.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: That was quite a long stretch there.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We will now turn to Ms. Hepfner.

You have the floor for five minutes. It's over to you, please.

Ms. Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

I want to thank our witness, Ms. Daly, for being here.

I know that this has been a bit of a difficult experience for you overall. You talked about being humiliated and publicly called out. You talked about dealing with cancer. I just want to appreciate that you're here giving us testimony despite what a trying time it's been.

You mentioned also that you are being investigated with regard to the code of conduct under the procurement process. Could you describe for us or maybe just summarize what that code of conduct says?

Ms. Diane Daly: I couldn't just off the top of my head. It has to follow along the lines of integrity, client service and that sort of thing that PGs must adhere to. I wasn't in a PG role at that point. I was a senior adviser in an administrative role.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: Would you be able to tell us whether any values or ethics training is available to officers or to staff members in a procurement office?

Ms. Diane Daly: There used to be. Treasury Board used to have an actual training program for procurement designation. Treasury Board may want to look at that again. I believe they disbanded that a year or two ago, maybe in 2021. It might be worth insisting that it become a mandatory program, but not just for PGs. I want to make this clear—not just for PGs. It would be good for managers who actually deal with contracting, because a lot of what we learn as PGs is that most of the issues are in the contract management stage.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: You wouldn't have had any values or ethics training.

Ms. Diane Daly: I've had values and ethics training every year.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: Is it valuable, would you say?

Ms. Diane Daly: I would say that some people who have issues with the values and ethics should take an in-class version of that.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: Do you think Public Services should have more authority or oversight?

You mentioned a couple of times in your testimony that you didn't give advice, but do you think you should have been able to give advice?

Ms. Diane Daly: It wasn't my role. They had opportunities. Everybody within CBSA has the ability to go to CBSA procurement to ask questions.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: Can you explain to this committee what ghost contracting is?

Ms. Diane Daly: I've never heard of that before. That doesn't exist.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: Thank you.

What are the rules around subcontracting, as far as you're aware?

Ms. Diane Daly: That's a business rule, and this is the contention. In industry, if they decide to go into business together, that is outside the purview of the Government of Canada. Maybe the Government of Canada might consider looking at that as an issue for procurement and consulting industry on how best to manage that, since this is contentious.

Ms. Lisa Hefner: Right.

You have mentioned a couple of times, and I think you've given us a little insight into the fact that TBIPS—I'm sorry, but I don't know all these acronyms.

Ms. Diane Daly: It's the IT professional services.

Right now, just so we're clear, task-based informatics professional services are task-based contracts. They are pre-qualified every year. There's problem number one.

If you were to have audit processes.... In committee, there has been raised—I think it was Mr. Genuis who actually raised it with ISC, Indigenous Services Canada—a question about consultation about indigenous firms, which is a big thing for procurement, and I truly believe it is very important. There should be a checklist and an audit of those firms that indigenous organizations are involved with in the consult to establish it and how—

• (1610)

Ms. Lisa Hefner: That's great insight.

What do you think it would take to make those reforms? Is it something that can be done quickly? Is it something that can be done cheaply, or is this going to take a lot of time and a lot of effort?

Ms. Diane Daly: You have a lot of different people not talking to each other. A way forward—and I'll use that as former government—would be for people to start talking to each other and working on projects specifically geared with a terms of reference.

A terms of reference would be established for things like if you're having a problem with the indigenous firms being confirmed as indigenous firms.

What would indigenous organizations want to see from indigenous procurement? Then, you'd have indigenous companies on that committee. We don't do enough of a check-in to see what's going on. When we do, we don't ask the right questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

To begin the last round, Mr. Genuis, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thanks, Chair.

Ms. Daly mentioned previously that her interview with investigators was recorded but that she has not received a copy. It seems that it is a crucial piece of evidence.

First off, if there's agreement, I'd like the committee to order a copy of that recording from the government.

Is there agreement to do that, Chair?

The Chair: I'll pause the clock here. You're asking for...

Mr. Garnett Genuis: I'm asking for agreement to order from the government a copy of the recording which has been referred to as part of the investigation involving Ms. Daly. It has been referred to frequently.

I saw nods all around, I think.

The Chair: Mr. Genuis, if you're posing a motion, you can do that.

Let's get the testimony from Ms. Daly, and we can swing back around. If you want to put forward a motion, you can, but we're—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: This is normal process. We asked for a lot of documents—

The Chair: Well, I see heads shaking all over the place, so—

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Who's shaking their heads?

The Chair: Do you want a roll-call vote?

Mr. Genuis, you have four minutes, 40 seconds in your time. Go.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Sure, we'll take a vote—

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Sorry, Chair, but we don't know what we're voting on. We'd love to see a motion.

The Chair: No, Ms. Khalid, there is no vote. I paused the clock.

Mr. Genuis, you have the floor.

If you're moving a motion to get documents, you can do so.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Is there agreement of the committee to order that recording? If there's agreement of the committee, we don't have a problem.

Mr. Michael Barrett: On a point of order, Chair, the witness has already volunteered to offer the information.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Exactly. She doesn't have...we're talking about the recording of her interview that she does not have, that the government has.

An hon. member: They actually recorded the interview.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: It's requesting information from the government, not from her.

The Chair: Yes, Ms. Khalid.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Chair, I'm not exactly sure what recording we're talking about. If Mr. Genuis could be more clear in a written motion, I'd be more than happy to review it and provide my support or lack thereof, but I do need to see it.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Genuis, you do not have consent.

You have four minutes and 30 seconds to go. It's over to you, please.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: With all due respect to my Liberal colleagues, I think it's pretty clear what recording we're talking about. It's been repeatedly referred to in these hearings.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: No, it hasn't.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Ms. Khalid doesn't want that produced. We'll certainly be following up on that.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Chair, I take exception to being named.

The Chair: Mr. Genuis, I've stopped the clock.

Ms. Khalid, you can take exception.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: Chair, I know—

The Chair: There's another government spot remaining.

Ms. Iqra Khalid: I have a point of order, Chair.

The Chair: Ms. Khalid, what is your point of order?

Ms. Iqra Khalid: My point of order is specifically with respect to following a procedure that you have outlined and Mr. Genuis is not continuing to follow it. I would appreciate if you could ensure that Mr. Genuis does follow your ruling.

The Chair: That is not a point of order. I made my ruling. I think it was one the committee would broadly agree with.

Mr. Genuis has the floor. If he wants, he can now...it's his comment.

Your side will have an opportunity to respond to Mr. Genuis afterwards and whoever does that can address it. Then that person will have the floor, and I will do my best to keep Mr. Genuis from interrupting that person.

Mr. Genuis, you have the floor for four minutes and just under 30 seconds, please.

• (1615)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you, Chair.

We have seen throughout how Ms. Khalid has been repeatedly unruly and trying to disrupt this investigation into Liberal corruption. I think that's revealing, but I'll press on here.

Ms. Daly, you talked about being under investigation. When did it become public that you were under investigation?

Ms. Diane Daly: It never became public that I was under investigation.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: I suppose until today.

Ms. Diane Daly: You got it.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Okay. The fact that Kristian Firth would have named you in the House of Commons might suggest he had access to information about whether you were under investigation or it might not, but it underlines the strangeness of the fact that he named you, a relatively more junior employee.

Now, we have an internal investigator at CBSA who's investigating the same situation. That internal investigator reports within the CBSA hierarchy and up to the minister. They're not independent. That's one of the concerns that we've raised, the lack of independence for this investigation. That investigator reports to people who they might well potentially be investigating.

Just for clarity, is this the same person who's investigating you as well?

Ms. Diane Daly: No.

There are two things. There was the witness request from Michel Lafleur, who was the CBSA...I think he's an executive director over there of the investigations unit. The second is another director of the special investigations unit at PSPC. However, the letter to me, from both CBSA and PSPC, indicated me not adhering to the procurement code of conduct for both agencies.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Thank you.

Going back, in Cameron MacDonald's testimony at the end of last year, he said, "On August 28, 2023, I received a letter from Minh Doan telling me that Minister Marco Mendicino wanted someone's head on a platter..."

Minister Mendicino wanted someone's head on a platter. Based on what we've heard today, Ms. Daly, it does look like someone has proposed your head to be the one on the platter. Now, for all I know, you may have done things wrong—I don't really know—but you are relatively junior compared to most of the officials who have come before this committee.

Unlike many other officials, you were not given gifts, hospitality, anything like that. While Kristian Firth lavished senior government officials who were involved in decision-making with all kinds of apparent gifts, and presumably he had reasons for doing so, he gave you nothing. You were the beneficiary of none of this hospitality. Then he out of the blue accuses you of being the one involved in discussing technical requirements on April 17. The whole thing looks very odd, frankly, very rotten. We're continuing to try to get answers on this corruption scandal. Minister Mendicino wants a head on a platter. What we're looking for is answers, and yet, people who are frank and try to give answers seem to be subject to retaliation.

Mr. Chair, I'd like to propose a motion in light of the fact that we haven't gotten agreement to do these things more consensually. The motion is:

In light of the testimony and evidence provided by Diane Daly, the committee order the production of the recording which Ms. Daly referenced in her testimony and call the following people to appear before the committee on ArriveCan and particularly to respond to the new information Ms. Daly has presented: Lysane Buldoc, Tom von Schoenberg, Arianne Reza, Kristian Firth, and Erin O'Gorman.

I will send the slightly revised version to the clerk.

The Chair: Mr. Genuis, I believe you already have a translated copy, but you have made some changes to it. Could you please send that in right away?

I'm going to send it right away, Ms. Shanahan.

I'm going to suspend for a few minutes.

• (1620) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1620)

The Chair: I'm bringing this committee hearing back into session.

The motion has been sent around.

Mr. Genuis, do you want to speak to it briefly? If not, I'm going to turn to other members who have signalled a desire to speak to it.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Yes, Chair, I'll make a few comments about it. Thank you for the opportunity.

This is a motion following Ms. Daly's explosive testimony today. It seeks to invite people her testimony implicates or addresses to come before this committee and respond to the important points she made. It's also about seeking material information that we need as part of our investigation.

Here is the context as I see it. What are we trying to do here at public accounts?

This committee is looking for the truth. We want to get accurate information to get to the bottom of what happened in the arrive scam affair. We clearly have different members or factions within the senior public service who are criticizing each other, accusing each other of lying, of covering up information, of trying to cover people at the political level, etc. We have these very serious accusations flying back and forth between senior officials within the Trudeau government. It's all a mess. Money has been wasted. There are accusations of intimidation, of cover-up, of reprisal that this committee has to get to the bottom of. This compounds the concern about the arrive scam affair itself, the tens of millions of dollars that were spent, the broken system of government contracting, but also the lying, the corruption, the cover-ups, the reprisals and the accusations back and forth between different officials to that effect.

Ms. Daly has had the finger pointed at her. She has come back and provided a number of points to counter that, including evidence about various senior officials and things they have said to her. Also, she has referenced a recording—a lengthy recording—involving her and people who were investigating her. I think that recording is critical for us in understanding whether or not she's faced intimidation, the tone of that, the expectations. What she has told us as a committee is that she was expected to point the finger at Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Utano. When she didn't do that, that led to a kind of aggression and pressure. We need to hear that recording to get to the bottom of whether or not her testimony in this regard is credible.

Here's how I see the process having unfolded. On November 7, Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Utano were before OGGO. At that time, they delivered critical testimony of the government. They called leading government witnesses liars. They gave scathing testimony. They identified that as part of the response to the ArriveCAN affair, Minister Mendicino had been seeking someone's head on a platter. He wanted someone's head on a platter. Later that month, these two—Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Utano—got letters indicating further investigation for bad behaviour, right after their committee testimony strikingly, and they were later suspended without pay.

Ms. Daly was brought in in December. She was, according to her testimony, asked to point the finger at Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Utano. She said no. Later that month, they started investigating her. Now you have another public servant, a third, who's under investigation, who appears to be brought under investigation in the same month where they were refusing to play ball with the government's narrative. This raises big questions.

On February 12, the Auditor General put out her scathing report on the arrive scam affair in which she said, among other things, that GC Strategies worked with government officials discussing the specifications of a contract they would then bid on, and obviously, that's a problem.

Kristian Firth came to OGGO on March 13. He refused to say who he sat down with, which officials were being referenced in the Auditor General's report. He was so committed to refusing to give that information that he was called to the bar of the House and admonished in order to give responses.

This brings us to late April, April 17. At that point, he readily gave the name of Diane Daly, a relatively junior public servant who already was under investigation, although he's not supposed to know she's under investigation.

The whole thing begs the question: Why did Mr. Firth give Diane Daly's name at that point? Maybe, after having covered up for so long, he finally decided to do the right thing. That's one explanation. He just decided at that point he was going to do the right thing. Another possible explanation is that Mr. Firth had decided to support the Liberal government's efforts to pin the blame for the arrive scam fiasco on a few officials while absolving others; that he was supporting efforts to help achieve Mr. Mendicino's sought after head on a platter by facilitating efforts of some in government to point the blame at other senior officials and effectively try to cauterize the wound to keep the discussion from actually digging all the way through to the answer. This really exposes a sharp division among senior public servants about who is responsible.

• (1625)

For what I think are obvious reasons, I am deeply suspicious of anything and everything that Kristian Firth has said in committee, in the House and in public. I certainly don't think we should take at face value his claims about Ms. Daly. I think we need to investigate them further, which is why, in the interest of answering the questions we need answered and in the interest of getting to the truth, I put forward this motion to bring in key witnesses who can respond to Ms. Daly's testimony, and to also get that recording.

I think this should be a fairly simple matter. This is about getting to the truth. These witnesses and that recording will allow this committee to get to the truth: Was Ms. Daly, in fact, someone who was deeper into this than her testimony suggests, or are other people within this Liberal government trying to point the finger at her to protect themselves from blame splashing back on them?

We want to get to the truth, and this motion will help us do that.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Genuis.

I am going to turn now to Ms. Shanahan.

I also liken myself to the European football referee. The clock is ticking here.

Ms. Shanahan, you do have the floor. There's no limit to how long you have to speak, but if you get my hint, I would like to hear from people before the clock does run out.

• (1630)

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan: Chair, your hint is well taken. Thank you very much.

I was looking forward to my speaking slot in this meeting, but here we are speaking to this motion. I would like to refer to the talk of a narrative, that it's a Liberal narrative and a government narrative and so on.

I'm wondering if the witness is aware.... She is an experienced civil servant. I was going to ask her how she felt about her testimony, which is heartfelt and has been very detailed, and of which I still have questions regarding some of the responses, dates and conversations that don't seem to line up. I was looking for clarity on those responses, yet I wonder how the witness feels about her testimony being used to basically be a Twitter feed for members of the official opposition.

I say that if that's the case, and if the witness's name is dragged into that kind of partisan narrative, I would deeply regret it if that were to happen. I think the witness, as an experienced civil servant, can see what has been going on here today.

That being said, regarding this motion, it is one that I also have difficulty understanding, because the public accounts committee is not an investigative body. We're certainly not an investigative body doing deep dives into wrongdoing. That is the work of the Auditor General. We review the reports of the Auditor General, and then we go into detail about those reports, which is what we have been doing here, even though at many times, actually, it's quite redundant in the testimony that we hear and the hearings that have been called for.

This topic, and what we have heard today from the witness, is already part of an internal investigation. I would be very reluctant, and I wonder if the witness feels the same way, for us to interfere with that investigation. I don't know how it would be helpful.

As for Kristian Firth, who has not appeared before this committee, though we've seen much of his testimony both in OGGO and in the House, I'm not sure what else we can get from him.

It's very weird that we are here today and it's very bizarre to be going down this rabbit hole and subjecting, quite honestly, the witness, who has been forthright, to being accused of not being forthcoming in her testimony here today.

That's all I have to say. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Daly, those questions are all rhetorical. Once we move a motion, we debate the motion, and questions are not posed to the witness.

On that, because I am running out of time, I do want to thank you, Ms. Daly, for your testimony and participation in relation to the study on the report on ArriveCAN. You can send any information that was requested from you today that you agreed to surrender to the clerk. Any questions you might have about how to do that can go to the clerk as well.

Ms. Daly, thank you. You can remain there, or you can gather up your things and excuse yourself if you like. The choice is yours.

In the meantime, I'm going back to Mr. Desjarlais for some comments on this motion, again recognizing that we are pressed for time.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I'll attempt to be brief.

I agree with the motion. Before Ms. Daly leaves, however, I was wondering if you could pose a question on behalf of our committee for us to enhance this motion.

In the testimony that was presented today, several times Ms. Daly mentioned a very credible problem within the public service that I feel our committee could largely get answers to related to the TBIPS program, that verified list and whoever operates that list and how a two-person company in a basement like GC strategies could have even gotten onto a list of preferred contractors. Ms. Daly's testimony did highlight that as a credible issue related to the ongoing systemic corruption that does exist.

I'd like to see if we can get a friendly agreement by the mover to include—I'm not trying to exclude; I'm trying to include—another representative in the list of witnesses. If Ms. Daly has a recommendation as to who that person is or otherwise, I would just ask the clerk to include the highest-ranking public servant in the TBIPS program to also bear witness to our questions, if that's possible.

Mr. Chair, that's my first point—

• (1635)

The Chair: I'm going to address that, and I'll come right back to you, Mr. Desjarlais.

Ms. Daly is here. She's heard your request. If she would like to submit something in writing, I will allow that, but I'm not going to turn to her because that violates the debate on the motion which is where we are now. Ms. Daly, should you wish to respond to Mr. Desjarlais' question, you can do so overnight in writing if you like.

Mr. Desjarlais, you have the floor, please.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank my colleagues for their time today and they're good questions. I'd implore that we vote in favour of this motion. There are reasonable grounds to suggest there is more information that's been brought to light that requires proper testimony and proper questioning, particularly of those witnesses who have not yet been present. I recognize there could be some debate among my Liberal and Conservative colleagues as to the list itself, but I implore you to ignore the obvious issues that could be presented, both in schedule and time, to having that many witnesses present. I do in fact think, for the purpose of good governance and our role here in

public accounts, there is credible reason for us to invite these witnesses again.

I want to mention that the amendment I'm requesting is a friendly amendment. I think Mr. Genuis would agree that having a representative from TBIPS would be important to the continuation. That was part of the included information that was made by the testimony today. Ms. Daly did present, and fairly presented, a very credible and important assertion that there ought to be relevant investigations as to how groups like GC Strategies and others could even have been made a preferable contractor. I find credibility in that question and I think it's worth us asking TBIPS in order for us to better understand how, in fact, GC Strategies got through the door.

My hope is that we can find unanimous consent to do that.

Mr. Chair, I seek your advice as to whether or not we could do that by way of consent of the mover, rather than having to have an amendment and a debate.

The Chair: Normally I would perhaps say yes, but there's a time constraint I am under, and I would like to hear from Madam Sinclair-Desgagné.

Ms. Khalid, you have a question, but I was communicating with Madam Sinclair-Desgagné online. She put her hand up. I'd like to finish with her, and then I'm going to adjourn the meeting because I am out of time.

In the meantime, Mr. Desjarlais, you can consult with Mr. Genuis.

Mr. Blake Desjarlais: Sure.

The Chair: Madam Sinclair-Desgagné, you have the floor, please.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nathalie Sinclair-Desgagné: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will try to be brief so as not to exceed the time during which resources are available.

I am in favour of this motion and the amendment proposed by Mr. Desjarlais regarding the attendance of the senior official responsible for the program, which has been mentioned several times here. Major deficiencies in the federal government's procurement process have been demonstrated.

However, it seems to me a bit inappropriate to reinvoke Mr. Firth, as I think his testimony is complete, be it in parliamentary committee or in the House of Commons.

So I would propose an amendment to make two changes. First, Lysane Bolduc's name needs to be properly spelled out. Spelling her name correctly is the least we can do. Second, I would remove Mr. Firth's name, as I don't think we can glean anything more from another appearance.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I'm out of resources. This meeting is adjourned. We'll see you back here tomorrow at 10 a.m.

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