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# Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

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Chair: The Honourable Hedy Fry





## Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

Wednesday, November 27, 2024

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair (Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.)):** I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 142 of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

[*English*]

Before we begin, I would like to remind everyone of the rules. You will find the guidelines on the cards on your table, telling you where to place your devices so that we do not cause feedback for the interpreters.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format. I want to remind you of the following things.

Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. For members participating in person, please raise your hand, or if you are participating by Zoom, there is a “raise hand” icon at the bottom of your computer screen that can let you put your hand up.

Also, I want to remind everyone that all comments should be addressed through the chair.

I will give you a 30-second shout-out, a real shout-out. I will yell, “30 seconds”, and you will hear me because I can't count on you looking up to see me giving a time signal. Basically, you'll get warning when you have 30 seconds left to finish.

Pursuant to the order of reference of Tuesday, October 29, the committee will resume its further consideration of the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

Today, regarding that report, I want to welcome our witness. There's only one witness today.

Welcome, Madame Marie-Philippe Bouchard, chief executive officer of TV5 Québec Canada.

You have five minutes, Ms. Bouchard, for your opening remarks. I will give you that 30-second yell when you have 30 seconds left. Then, of course, there will be a question-and-answer period in which people will ask you questions.

Begin, please, for five minutes, Ms. Bouchard.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard (Chief Executive Officer, TV5 Québec Canada, As an Individual):** Madam Chair, members of the committee, my name is Marie-Philippe Bouchard, and I am the

chief executive officer of TV5 Québec Canada, a Canadian independent not-for-profit broadcaster that operates two francophone channels, TV5 and Unis TV, under licence from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. These channels are available across Canada in cable companies' basic service packages, as well as on a streaming platform, TV5Unis. We are the audiovisual operator of the francophonie for Canada. Five years ago, we launched, with the support of our partner TV5MONDE, the global French-language streaming platform TV5MONDEplus, available in 200 countries and territories. Unis TV's mission is to forge ties between francophone minority communities and the regions of Quebec, and to reflect the richness and diversity of audiovisual creation from those communities.

As you may know, I was recently appointed by the Governor in Council to the position of president and CEO of CBC/Radio-Canada for a five-year term as of January 3, 2025. I am very honoured to have this opportunity to serve my fellow citizens as head of the public broadcaster.

• (1645)

[*English*]

For me, it will be like coming back home again, having spent almost 30 years at CBC/Radio-Canada. I had the opportunity to work with great professionals for 12 years, in the law department and in regulatory affairs, in two corporate functions, supporting both English and French media. I had 10 years in French services news and current affairs, in both TV and radio, during which time I co-chaired and co-authored, with my colleague Esther Enkin of CBC News, an ambitious overhaul and enrichment of CBC/Radio-Canada's journalistic standards and practices.

For the last six years of my time with the public broadcaster, I was part of the senior management team of French services, first as executive director of planning and then as general manager of digital services and of music. In each of those leadership roles, I co-piloted several collaborative transformation projects with my counterparts in English services.

I say this not to toot my own horn, although I am very proud of my service, but because I am aware that I was not a public figure up to now and that people may have a legitimate interest in knowing what experience I bring to the job of leading CBC/Radio-Canada.

The organization has changed and has continued to transform since I left almost nine years ago. I know that. That's why I want to take the time to listen to employees, to stakeholders, and most importantly to Canadians, the users and the non-users of the various services CBC/Radio-Canada provides.

Like any incoming CEO, I expect to spend my first weeks in the job listening and gathering and analyzing information so that the strategy we develop and the targets we set are meaningful to Canadians, are empowering to employees and are supportive of partners and stakeholders.

[Translation]

We are living in a fascinating time of changing media consumption needs and habits and evolving ways of producing and distributing content. These transformations and developments provide opportunities to improve service to citizens and support content creators. However, they are also fraught with risks and threats, particularly to our cultural sovereignty, to the plurality of voices and to the public's right to quality, verified, honest and relevant information, both at the local and regional levels and at the national and international levels.

That is why it is so important that the key players in our media environment, of which CBC/Radio-Canada is certainly a part, adapt and evolve to continue together to support the cultural and democratic life of the two official language communities and the indigenous communities that are present everywhere in Canada.

That is the challenge my team at TV5 Québec Canada meets head-on every day, and I will have the honour of continuing to do so with the CBC/Radio-Canada teams.

Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** That was very efficient, Ms. Bouchard. You took less than the time that you were given. Thank you.

I want to start with the question-and-answer period. This is a six-minute round.

I'll begin with Mr. Kurek for the Conservatives for six minutes, please.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you for joining us today, Ms. Bouchard.

I've listened to the minister and Ms. Tait before this committee, and quite often the Liberals, and they seem to think that things are going well at the CBC. Sometimes they identify a few challenges, but I'm wondering if you would share the opinion that things are going well.

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** As I stated in my opening remarks, I think everything is a challenge these days if you're a broadcaster. That's from experience.

I expect that at CBC/Radio-Canada, there are big challenges. I also think there have been big developments that have occurred over recent years, especially in the digital market, and that CBC and Radio-Canada have been leaders in this area. Certainly other

broadcasters have benefited from what CBC/Radio-Canada has accomplished.

• (1650)

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** There's a conversation around the approximately \$1.4-billion taxpayer subsidy that goes to the public broadcaster. Through an access to information request it was revealed that Ms. Tait herself acknowledged that there was momentum growing in the campaign to defund the CBC. I certainly hear that from constituents. Is that something that you have heard?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I've not personally heard people asking me to defund the CBC or asking me what I thought of that issue.

As I said, I'm involved in a French broadcaster that's transnational. I have contacts with my colleagues from France Télévisions and the Belgians and the Swiss. I know there's debate in every democracy about the way forward for public broadcasters. I understand that this debate occurs in Canada, and I think it's a healthy debate. Going forward, there are lots of issues that can be debated on the value of a public broadcaster.

That's all I can say for now, because I don't have a whole lot of inside information, as you understand.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** I'm sure that will change in about 40 days.

One of the primary items that has been brought forward to this committee, and certainly I've heard this in my role as the heritage critic, is that Canadians are extremely frustrated about the \$18 million in bonuses that were paid out to executives, to managers and to out-of-scope employees at the CBC. To put that into context, when it comes to the bonuses specifically paid to executives and members of the executive team at CBC, it averaged about \$71,000 per individual, which is more than the average Canadian makes, at a time when Canadians are struggling.

The current CEO, soon to be your predecessor, and the minister, refused to condemn the paying out of such substantial bonuses at a time when KPIs are generally not being met or are being adjusted so that they can be met. Canadians are sharing what I would suggest is outrage at millions of dollars being paid out to highly paid executives and the existence of a \$497,000 club that was just revealed this week. Seven individuals at CBC make nearly half a million dollars a year.

Do you share the frustration that at a time when Canadians are struggling, those big bonuses are being paid out?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** There are a lot of things in that question.

Let me start by saying that I think it's healthy for any company, public or private—especially a public company—to review its salary practices over time and be able to say they are attached to what the market calls for.

Aside from that, I have no information from inside the company as to who is paid what. It's hard for me to be outraged without information.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** In light of this very public discourse—it's come before this committee—would you be willing to make a commitment today to stop awarding the types of bonuses we've seen over the last number of fiscal years that have caused such frustration for so many Canadians?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I understand the board of directors has called for a study that will be available to me and the board early in 2025. I expect that study will enlighten a lot of decisions, going forward. I would wait to see what the study says.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** One of the challenges with that study is this: The board of directors approved of Ms. Tait's performance, even though, I think, by virtually every objective measure, the last number of years have been a significant challenge for the CBC.

I have one final question in my last 30 or so seconds: As Ms. Tait transitions out and you transition in, would you be willing to state clearly that you do not support a large, taxpayer-funded severance package for the outgoing CEO?

• (1655)

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** As I understand it, there is no such thing as an outgoing package for any CEO finishing their term. That's certainly not my understanding of my own conditions. There will be no exit package when I finish. Although I don't know the details, I don't expect that would be part of the situation at hand.

Second, I would have no influence on that decision, anyway. However, I don't think that's the situation at hand.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** That's very interesting, because, previously, when we've asked that question, there's been a refusal to talk about what that may or may not look like.

However, that's my six minutes, so thank you very much.

**The Chair:** That's very good. You've gone a little over time, Mr. Kurek, but there you go. We'll allow for that.

**Mr. Michael Coteau (Don Valley East, Lib.):** Good job.

**The Chair:** The next person up is Ms. Lattanzio, for the Liberals. You have six minutes.

Go ahead, please, Patricia.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to thank the witness for appearing today, as an individual, after a highly abnormal House of Commons motion passed by the opposition parties, which called for Madame Bouchard to appear.

Madame Bouchard, you were asked to appear before us today before you've even begun your appointment. As I understand it, that will be on January 3, 2025. You are now being asked to answer questions for a longer amount of time than most individual witnesses. From the last series of questions, it is clear the Conservatives want to entrap you into saying something about CBC/Radio-Canada even before you start your job as CEO.

For the record, Madam Chair, I'd like to state that some of us in this room believe it is ridiculous to ask someone to comment on a situation they haven't even had a chance to be briefed on or on a job they haven't even started working in.

I will ask questions, perhaps, on your past role.

[*Translation*]

If I may, I will continue in French.

I'm going to ask you a question about heading a broadcaster you know very well.

Can you provide us with details on your experience at the head of TV5 Québec Canada, as well as on the projects you were able to oversee as CEO?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I have been the head of TV5 Québec Canada for nine years. It's a non-profit corporation much smaller than CBC/Radio-Canada, which is where I worked previously.

One of the things I've learned in my management roles at this company is the extraordinary agility that can be developed under such conditions, as well as the benefits of having collaborative relationships with other public broadcasters. It's the very nature of TV5 to be in contact with public broadcasters in other countries, such as certain European countries, but also with Canadian public broadcasters.

This means I have relationships with Télé-Québec, the Société Radio-Canada and TFO, amongst others, but also with our minority francophone producer partners and francophone producers in Quebec. It's thanks to this network of collaborative relationships that a small organization can achieve such great results.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** We understand that TV5 is another public service medium. What are the principles of public broadcasting that differentiate TV5, the CBC and Radio-Canada from TVA or CTV?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** The first principle is universality.

We reach an audience by first seeking to be accessible to all and to meet their basic needs in relation to our mandate. We at TV5 have a specific mandate aimed at the francophonie, and we don't produce a daily newscast. However, we broadcast news from our European partners. Our work is therefore complementary to that of other broadcasters, like educational broadcasters such as Télé-Québec and TFO, and, of course, the national broadcaster CBC/Radio-Canada, particularly the Société Radio-Canada. We collaborate on improving services to audiences.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** In your opinion, Mrs. Bouchard, if public service media did not exist and if the viability of private media companies continued to decline, what risk would that pose?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** The risk is already there. There is a risk of a news desert in certain regions because the media's operating conditions, whether it be print, digital or broadcast media, are becoming increasingly difficult. Public service broadcasters provide basic coverage across the country. Frankly, it's vital. However, there is more to it than that. Many communities would not be served at all. I'm thinking in particular of francophone minority communities. We need broadcasters like Radio-Canada, TFO and TV5 to be able to offer news, documentaries, entertainment and children's programs that are in keeping with the rights of the citizens in those communities.

• (1700)

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** There is a party that would like to get rid of CBC/Radio-Canada. Could that mean that thousands and thousands of jobs would be lost?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I don't know what you mean by "get rid of".

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** I mean—

[English]

if we wanted to defund CBC/Radio-Canada, would that not lead to enormous job losses in the thousands?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** CBC/Radio-Canada's current funding model is largely based on parliamentary appropriations. It is also based on a legislative mandate and the conditions of the licences that the CRTC gives to public broadcasters. So this three-part set-up has to work. Funding has to be proportional to the mandate, as well as the CRTC's conditions. If you uncouple one part of the set-up, there is a functional breakdown. The mandate will not be met, or the CRTC's conditions of licence will not be met.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** So, if there is no money, there are no jobs.

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Obviously, a broadcaster—

[English]

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** —has employees that it has to pay. That is one of its obligations enabling it to provide the service. If there are cuts—which a lot of broadcasters are experiencing right now—and if there is a decline in revenue, regardless of the source of that revenue, there will potentially be an impact on jobs, obviously.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** Thank you, Mrs. Bouchard.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Lattanzio.

We'll go to Mr. Champoux from the Bloc for six minutes, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mrs. Bouchard, welcome to your first visit to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. I have a feeling that this won't be the last time we'll see you.

Mrs. Bouchard, finding a person to replace Ms. Tait as CEO of CBC/Radio-Canada was a tall order. According to a number of observers, it seemed that finding a qualified person to fill this position would be a major challenge for the minister or for the government. The world of rebroadcasting is already going through a complicated time, not only because of enormous changes such as the shift to digital and the challenges in terms of advertising revenue, but also because of the threat of a Conservative government that would like to significantly slash the funding of a public broadcaster, i.e., the CBC.

Mrs. Bouchard, after your appointment, certain stakeholders indicated that the trust between employees and management was broken, and that the incoming CEO would hopefully be able to restore that trust. Ms. Brin, from the Centre d'études sur les médias at Université Laval, whom you no doubt know, said that the job was somewhat of a poisoned chalice and that hopes were high.

Mrs. Bouchard, congratulations on your appointment.

How do you see this challenge, with all the apprehension and concern that have been expressed?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I'll let you in on something: I received a lot of messages after my appointment was announced. It's funny, because the selection committee asked me how I thought people would react if I was appointed. I answered that those who crossed paths with me when I worked at Radio-Canada and those who have known me for nine years would probably be reassured, as would the francophone communities, with whom I have a fairly close relationship, because I have a habit of making clear proposals and following through on what I say. I also said that my loved ones would be worried, and they are, because the challenges are daunting.

I am excited about the potential for transformation before us, because we are in an era of transformation, but I am also worried for the entire country, for the employees of CBC/Radio-Canada and for future generations, because I firmly believe that public broadcasting has contributed an enormous amount of wealth to this country, to its people and to many communities that would not otherwise enjoy that benefit today.

• (1705)

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Mrs. Bouchard, I'm going to give you a compliment, but I promise I'll be critical when the opportunity arises. I must admit that I was quite impressed when I looked at your CV. In sports terms, we could say that you are a franchise player. So I hope that once you're out on the ice, you'll rise to the occasion. I'm not much of a sports fan, but I liked the image.

That said, the purpose of this study is to discuss the effects of defunding the CBC. This is a concern for many people around this table and is of great concern to the cultural sector in Quebec, the media sector in general, the news sector and people who are interested in quality news.

What do you think would be the consequences of defunding the CBC? How should we react to that?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Of course, budget cuts have a direct impact on services. The question you're asking is more about the CBC. I don't know how you would stop funding the CBC, based on what I know about the structure of the CBC.

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Let me reassure you, Ms. Bouchard: Those who advocate defunding the CBC don't understand at all how it works either, but carry on.

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Having spent 29 years at the CBC, I can tell you that, unfortunately, there were periods of budget cuts, for all kinds of reasons cited by elected officials at the time. This necessarily had an impact on jobs and services. Today, we see that regional services, in particular, have suffered budget cuts over the years. I know that they've tried to increase resources somewhat, but local service, regional service, is still at risk. If the Crown corporation winds up with fewer resources, I'm afraid it won't be able to meet citizens' expectations when it comes to local news.

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** You were part of the advisory committee set up by the minister to look at renewing CBC/Radio-Canada's mandate—

[English]

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** I'll be quick.

During those consultations, did you make any recommendations? If so, could you share them with us?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I can't speak to that, because those consultations were confidential. It will be up to the minister to make a decision. The advice given by members of that committee and the opinions they expressed remain confidential.

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** I still had to ask you the question.

Thank you very much, Mrs. Bouchard.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I now go to the NDP and Niki Ashton.

You have six minutes, please, Niki.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Thank you.

Ms. Bouchard, it's a pleasure to finally have you at our committee. If your stewardship of CBC/Radio-Canada is anything like Ms. Tait's, I imagine we'll be seeing a lot of each other over the next period of time.

I urge you to do better than what's been done before. With a Conservative Party that is ideologically committed to destroying the CBC and a Liberal Party that may say the right things but whose threat of cuts cost so many people at the CBC their jobs in the first place, Canadians are depending on you to do better.

That means investing in local journalism outside the major cities in our country to end media deserts. People in communities like mine, here in Thompson, have had a CBC station that's been shuttered for years, with the exception of blips of short-term contracts. Our regions deserve our stories to be told by people who are living in regions like ours.

That means that if there's a choice between saving jobs or doling out bonuses to the top of the CBC, which are almost twice as big as the salaries of the lowest-paid workers at the CBC, CBC leadership decides to save the jobs.

That means fighting for investments for our national broadcasters so that francophone communities and indigenous peoples can learn what's happening in their communities, in their regions and in their own languages.

Unlike the Liberals and Conservatives, I truly believe that Canadians support the CBC. What they need from you is a CBC that supports them.

Do you think Ms. Tait was wrong to give out \$18 million in executive bonuses while cutting CBC workers' jobs?

• (1710)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Thank you for your question.

[English]

It's not my job to pass judgment on past leadership. I wouldn't presume to do so, because being a CEO is a difficult job. I was a CEO for nine years. I expect that my successor will have to review some decisions that I made in the past, and they may have different opinions, but I would expect them to pay me the respect to say that I tried my best.

I'm sure Catherine Tait tried her best through a very difficult tenure. Don't forget that we went through COVID. This was unprecedented in terms of having to run a public broadcaster with reporters and field crews in a health crisis situation, with people asking for and demanding so much vital information.

I'm not going to pass judgment. I think we should thank her for her service.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** I think what Canadians want to hear is that their public broadcaster is not interested in doling out executive bonuses while it cuts workers' jobs and Canadians are suffering.

Let me move on. I'd like to now present a motion that I have submitted to the committee. It's a motion that I believe is particularly timely.

In recent months, we've heard disturbing information about the unacceptable culture at Canada Soccer. In the summer, our country was rocked by the findings that Canada Soccer officials were using drones to spy on other teams at the Paris Olympics. Since that time, we've had news reports from The Globe and Mail, TSN and Radio-Canada that there is an unacceptable culture at Canada Soccer.

This is an issue for us as MPs. This is about public funding. This is about public money going to national sporting organizations like Canada Soccer. This is about Canada's reputation on the world stage and here at home when it comes to exactly what our national team and our national sporting organization, in the case of Canada Soccer, are doing. This is also about the lack of sport policy.

It is absolutely shameful that we've seen nothing from the federal government, with the exception of a couple of statements early in the summer during the Olympics, when it comes to the scandalous information that's coming out about Canada Soccer. We as MPs have a responsibility to get to the bottom of what's happening at Canada Soccer. Canadians deserve the truth.

In that vein, I am putting forward the motion that I submitted on Monday. I move:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study of no less than 10 hours to study the role of officials associated to the Canadian women's soccer team and Canada Soccer in the creation of an unacceptable culture, including troubling workplace allegations and the use of spying, which has damaged Canada's reputation including in the lead-up to Canada co-hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and that the committee summon, pursuant to Standing Order 108(1)(a) Bev Priestman and John Herdman to appear before committee for no less than two hours, in addition to the chief executive officer and representatives of Soccer Canada and representatives of FIFA, and past or present Team Canada soccer players, and also representatives from the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport; representatives of Own the Podium and the Minister of Sport, and that the committee report its findings and recommendations to the House; and that pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to the report.

I look forward to all MPs, on behalf of Canadians, bringing to light what exactly is happening at Canada Soccer. Canadians deserve the truth.

**The Chair:** Ms. Ashton, a similar motion to this was brought forward and was voted down by the committee on October 17. Once a decision is made by the committee, it cannot be questioned but must stand as the judgment of the committee.

Although this motion is very similar in intent, why is this motion different from the one voted down by the committee the last time you brought it forward? I'd like to know if you have a reason for making this one different, because I have a tendency to think that I should rule this motion inadmissible.

Go ahead, Ms. Ashton. I'm giving you an opportunity to speak to the difference in this motion.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** I can, absolutely. It is different.

In the case of referring to broader allegations, it moves beyond the spying that we know took place at the Olympics. Recent news stories, as I said, from Radio-Canada, TSN and The Globe and Mail have pointed to the fact that we are talking about much more than spying now, and this motion refers to "an unacceptable culture, including troubling workplace allegations".

Anyone who has read the media has heard about the allegations of bullying and harassment. This study is far more than what I brought up earlier, and it is much more timely, I would say, because it reflects the media stories that have come out in recent weeks that have pointed to the fact that there are some real problems at Canada Soccer.

I will also add that this motion has some different witnesses, including Own the Podium, which is a funder of Canada Soccer. Again, where is public money going? Is public money going towards spying? Is public money going towards building a culture of harassment and intimidation?

More notably, this motion also refers to inviting the Minister of Sport, which the previous motion did not. I think that Canadians deserve to hear from the Minister of Sport, from the federal government, what exactly they know and what they're doing to fix the problems at Canada Soccer.

It is substantively different and much wider in scope than the previous motion, which focused on the one issue.

• (1715)

**The Chair:** Ms. Ashton, I think you've made a good point for why this should be allowed, so I will allow this motion.

The motion is on the floor.

Go ahead, Mr. Champoux.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would have expected Ms. Ashton—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Excuse me. I will ask Madame Bouchard to please bear with us.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** I would have thought that Ms. Ashton could at least wait until the second round of questions to allow Mrs. Bouchard to continue testifying. That way, we could ultimately release her if necessary so that we could hold our discussions.

That said, we agree on the importance of the subject, so much so that we are interested in knowing the content of the report published last week.

Sonia Regenbogen led an investigation on the subject, which we should take a look at.

I propose an amendment to Ms. Ashton's motion.



I move that we consult the report and invite Ms. Regenbogen, a lawyer who conducted an investigation on this very topic, to appear before the committee. We could then put our questions to her. We could also hold the meeting in camera to allow Ms. Regenbogen to speak about things she may not have been able to make public in her report or may not say if the meeting were public.

Based on that meeting and the information we are able to gather, we could determine whether we are missing information and whether it is appropriate to continue our fact-finding efforts.

Following the study on safe sport, the Bloc Québécois called for an independent public inquiry. That call is still relevant; it is even more so now, given the information that is currently being published.

If we want to do things in the right order and the right way, the first step is to try to find out more.

Let's consult the lawyer who led the investigation and then decide whether it's appropriate to conduct a study like the one Ms. Ashton is asking for.

We would like to make an amendment to this motion, an amendment that we will send by email to the clerk.

Here is the motion as we would like it to be amended:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee dedicate a two-hour in camera meeting to study the role of officials associated with the Canadian Women's Soccer Team and Canada Soccer in creating an unacceptable culture including disturbing workplace allegations and the use of drones for espionage, which has damaged Canada's reputation in the lead-up to Canada hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup, that in order to do so, the committee first focus on the report "Canada Soccer Association Investigation Report Regarding Women's National Team 2024 Paris Olympics", which was released November 5, 2024, and invite, pursuant to Standing Order 108(1)(a), Sonia Regenbogen of Mathews, Dinsdale & Clark LLP, and that the committee report its findings and recommendations to the House;

[English]

**The Chair:** We will suspend until people get a chance to read the amendment and discuss it.

• (1715) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1725)

**The Chair:** Before we go to Ms. Ashton, remember that we are studying the amendment by Mr. Champoux. It's not the motion by Ms. Ashton but the amendment to her motion.

If you note, the amendment changes the words "undertake a study of no less than 10 hours" to the words "dedicate a two-hour in-camera meeting". Removed from this was a list of the witnesses that Ms. Ashton put forward. In fact, only one witness was put in place—Sonia Regenbogen from the firm Mathews, Dinsdale & Clark LLP—and it added that the committee report its findings and recommendations.

That's a pretty simple amendment, so I will entertain discussion on the amendment.

Go ahead, Martin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** I see some raised hands, Madam Chair.

I want to say that it's important to get to the bottom of this. I think that everyone is in favour of integrity, it's absolutely true. We want athletes, young athletes and professional athletes at all levels, to be able to operate in a safe environment and in a context where the values of Quebecers and Canadians are upheld, that is to say the values of honesty and integrity in sport. We completely agree with that.

However, there are already studies under way here. That's why I'm proposing a two-hour meeting with Ms. Regenbogen to ask her questions about the in-depth investigation she conducted and the report she published last week. I would like us to hold this meeting as soon as possible, i.e., immediately after we wrap up the studies currently under way. I think it is entirely feasible and realistic, based on our current schedule, to make progress in our studies and to plan to start around December 11.

That's all I wanted to add. We think this is a very important subject and we can see its relevance, but I think the right thing to do is to start by meeting with the author of the report.

• (1730)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Martin.

Now I will go to Mr. Kurek.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll keep this very brief.

I certainly support getting some answers on behalf of young athletes and whatnot. It's unfortunate that it was moved at the beginning of this meeting, but I hope it can be dealt with expeditiously so that we can get back to our witness, who is patiently waiting.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Ms. Gainey is next.

[Translation]

**Ms. Anna Gainey (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I agree with my colleague Mr. Champoux.

[English]

I would start by highlighting that, as he said, the committee has a number of things on the docket. While this is important, we would have to prioritize what we've already undertaken before we embark on what's being proposed in that amendment.

I would also highlight that the minister did cut funding immediately for the coaches during this investigation, and the organization is committed to the changes that are outlined in the report. Nonetheless, I do think it's worth having the author here and having an opportunity to speak to them about what is in the report, so we will support the amendment.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Ms. Ashton.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Let me be brief and very clear: I find it outrageous that the Bloc is gutting our motion on something as critical as a range of scandals that have now come out of Canada Soccer. This is about the abuse of public funding. This is about Canada's reputation, which maybe, for the Bloc, doesn't really matter, but the reality is that we, as MPs, have a real—

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Chair, I have a point of order.

I don't want to infringe on my colleague's freedom of expression, but I just said very clearly that we take this subject very seriously. We think it's important to study it and, at the very least, give it the attention it deserves. My colleague is spewing nonsense and uttering completely unfounded insults towards me and the Bloc Québécois. She knows that very well. She discusses this issue regularly with my colleague Mr. Lemire. She knows full well that this is an issue that is also close to his heart. We're trying to make room in the committee's schedule, and her reaction is to hurl insults. I just wanted to put that on the table. I never said that the issue was not important and that it should be treated lightly. On the contrary. I would ask her to be a bit more serious, please.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Champoux.

Ms. Ashton, have you finished?

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** No, I have definitely not.

I take issue when a male colleague refers to me having to be serious. There is no place for that kind of—

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** One moment, Madam Chair, one moment, please.

[English]

**The Chair:** Order, please.

Ms. Ashton has the floor.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** If I can continue, what I will say is that—

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Chair, I have a point of order.

[English]

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Ms. Ashton; we have a point of order.

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Chair, I ask that you demand that Ms. Ashton withdraw the comments she just made. She insinuated that as a male colleague, I was being sexist, but that has nothing to do with what I said. It's a total insult to my integrity, my intelligence and my values.

I would ask you to ask her to withdraw her comments about me. This is unacceptable. It's disgusting.

[English]

**The Chair:** Ms. Ashton, you heard Mr. Champoux. He's making a point that what he said did not refer to your gender at all, and he would ask you to withdraw that statement.

Please, let us be collegial at this meeting. Let's not carry on with fighting. Come on.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** What I will say, Madam Chair, is that I don't want to impugn my colleague's motives, but I do have concerns with the phrasing that was used. I expressed that as somebody who's been doing this work for 16 years, but let me get to the point here.

What I know is important for Canadians is to get—

**The Chair:** Ms. Ashton, I think Mr. Champoux asked for you to withdraw your statement about his being a sexist. Will you please deal with that issue first?

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** If Mr. Champoux believes that I called him "sexist", certainly that was not my intention. I took issue with the comment that he made, which I find deeply troubling, but let me get back to the point here, which is the gutting of this motion by the Bloc, and now we're hearing support from the Liberals.

I don't know why the government is so keen to hide what's happening at Canada Soccer. We know that the recent report is not on the workplace culture; it is simply on the spying scandal. We know from allegations and recent media reports that the problems at Canada Soccer go far beyond that report. By gutting this motion, we are doing a disservice to finding out where Canadians' public money has gone, what kind of culture they're supporting at Canada Soccer and why we haven't heard more from the minister.

More importantly, how can we fix the problem at Canada Soccer, especially as Canada sets up to co-host the world's largest sporting event, the 2026 FIFA World Cup? Canadians deserve the truth, and we cannot support the gutting of a motion that seeks to do that in short order. Canadians deserve better.

• (1735)

**The Chair:** Ms. Ashton is speaking against the amendment.

Now I want to go to Mr. Noormohamed.

Go ahead, Taleeb.

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

There are a couple of things.

Obviously we have our witness here, and everybody seemed very keen to have this meeting—

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Chair—

**Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** There's a point of order, Madam Chair.

[English]

**The Chair:** Your microphone is cutting in and out, Taleeb.

**Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed:** I'm sorry.

I was going to say that everybody wanted this meeting to happen. We have Madame Bouchard here. Let's focus on the conversation that we're here to have.

[*Translation*]

We agree with Mr. Champoux. His amendment is entirely reasonable.

A study has already been done on this matter. We're going to speak with the author of the study. After that, the committee can decide what it wants to do.

[*English*]

We are absolutely in favour of what Mr. Champoux has proposed. It's reasonable, it's thoughtful and allows us to have a thoughtful conversation about this. Everybody in this room takes this issue seriously.

I think it's important that we get this conversation with Madame Bouchard back on track, but also that we speak to the authors of this study, as Mr. Champoux has proposed. That affords us the opportunity to decide what we want to do next.

We will be voting in favour of Mr. Champoux's amendment.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

On the amendment, I have Mr. Coteau.

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Is it possible that we can do it in an hour and then maybe squeeze something else in?

**The Chair:** We can't just let this go if anybody puts up their hand to speak. Mr. Coteau may continue the debate.

If no one does, we will go to the vote.

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** Wait, wait. I was actually saying something.

**The Chair:** You asked a question about whether it was possible to do something.

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** Yes, I'm talking about the report. We have the witness in for two hours. The lawyer is coming in and talking about the investigation for two hours. Why don't we just make it one hour and then continue to do something else with the second hour?

I actually think that it's a good motion or amendment, because it'll give us a good understanding if we should go further on pursuing this, based on what we hear in the report.

Would an hour cut it? I don't even need an answer. It's up to the mover of the amendment if he wants to make the change, but I'm supportive of the amendment.

**The Chair:** All right. You're supportive of the amendment.

Mr. Champoux, I don't see you moving to change it to one hour, so I will call the vote on the amendment.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 10; nays 1[*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** We can move on now to voting on the motion as amended. I see no hands raised to speak.

Please go ahead, Clerk.

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 10; nays 1)

**The Chair:** We will go back to the order of the day, which is the testimony of Madame Bouchard.

I now have a second round to begin. It's a five-minute round for the Liberals and the Conservatives, and we begin with Mr. Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm sorry, Mrs. Bouchard. This is parliamentary procedure. It was a rather unusual and unfortunate situation. The NDP members might be a little embarrassed. You can ask them.

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment. You are the first francophone woman to hold the position of president and CEO of CBC/Radio-Canada.

As the official languages critic, I am delighted with your appointment.

Mrs. Bouchard, I understand that you haven't taken up your position yet, but you will become the new president and CEO next January.

As president, what is your opinion on the use of the performance bonus tool?

I would like to hear your comments on that.

● (1740)

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Generally speaking, business compensation policies use mechanisms such as fixed compensation, short-term variable compensation, long-term variable compensation and flexibility. In short, there are a variety of tools.

The truth is that compensation specialists are looking at these issues, at what the best practices are—

**Mr. Joël Godin:** I'm sorry to interrupt you, Ms. Bouchard.

I want to know what you think about governance, as the future president and CEO.

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I'm explaining it to you.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Can you summarize, because I have limited time?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Okay.

I think these practices evolve over time and it's important to keep pace with what good practices tell us to do to achieve the desired results. We need to be able to attract and retain talent in the positions we are looking to fill while having fair and transparent practices.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** I understand, Mrs. Bouchard.

The way I interpret what you said is that performance can be achieved using other tools. Is that correct?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Individual performance is driven by all sorts of factors.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Thank you.

Mrs. Bouchard, you used to work for CBC/Radio-Canada.

Did you ever get bonuses?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** In some of the positions I occupied, yes, there were variable compensation policies at the time.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** There were performance indicators in your salary agreement, and if you met your targets, you got a bonus. Is that correct?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** It was corporate policy, based on the corporation's overall performance, the performance of the division and individual performance.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** In response to one of my colleagues earlier, you said that CBC/Radio-Canada had gone through tough times in the past, including job cuts.

The corporation's funding has not been cut in the last nine years. However, the outcome was a 50% drop in the CBC's audience, and it was recently announced that 800 jobs would be cut.

Funding is not necessarily linked to performance. They don't necessarily go hand in hand. Would you agree?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** We have to agree on one thing: When we talk about performance, we're not just talking about television, but also radio and digital content. Many factors go into assessing the overall performance of the corporation in relation to its mission and mandate, on the one hand, and in relation to the various sectors of the organization, on the other. There is no equivalence between the two.

In addition, I would remind you that CBC/Radio-Canada's funding is not only public. There is also commercial revenue from advertising. Anyone could tell you that the market has been challenging for everyone in recent years. I can tell you more about TV5.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Indeed.

As you know, when it comes to the advertising pie, there is a difference between the private sector and the public sector. The public sector is subsidized while also getting a slice of the advertising pie. The private sector has to make do with advertising alone. I feel that there is unfair competition between the two. I come from that background.

Mrs. Bouchard, will you cancel the performance bonuses at CBC/Radio-Canada when you become its CEO?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** When I take up my position, I will read the analysis that was commissioned. I will assess, together with the board of directors, what future policies need to be put in place to be fair to our employees and, at the same time, to ensure the sound governance of our compensation regime.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** If I understand correctly, you're not opposed to it.

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** What I want you to keep in mind is that I have no preconceptions and will rely on the facts.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Personally, what I understand is that you're not opposed to the idea.

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** What I'm going to do is look at the study.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Mrs. Bouchard, I understand, but—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Monsieur Godin, you're running out of time. You have one second left.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Coteau, you have five minutes.

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you so much for being here. I join my colleague opposite in congratulating you on this extraordinary opportunity to look for ways to strengthen not only the organization as a whole but also the perception out there.

As you know, over the last several months, we've been meeting with CBC through this committee process and talking about some controversial issues, such as performance pay, or "bonuses", as some refer to them. I believe you have an opportunity to go in there and review processes to better align with where Canadians are at. I've said that from the very beginning. There is an opportunity to...

Madam Chair, there are a lot of people talking while I'm talking.

• (1745)

**The Chair:** I'm sorry. The clerk and I are trying to figure out the number of rounds we have left.

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** Can you pull back 20 seconds? I'll start from there.

Congratulations. I think you have a great opportunity to review some of the processes to better align with where Canadians are at. However, you have a huge challenge in front of you.

CBC, to me, is the number one asset owned by Canadians. It helps promote our culture. It preserves our heritage. It educates. It fights against disinformation and misinformation. This is a huge asset for Canadians. I'm a big supporter of it.

However, I know there are a lot of people out there—maybe 20% or 30%—who would like to defund the CBC. If you google “defund the CBC”, the first thing that pops up is the Conservatives' website. They're fundraising off the issue. They are playing to a base. They're raising money off this issue, because there are Canadians out there who would love to defund it. However, the majority of Canadians want the CBC here. They want to support it. You have an enormous task in front of you.

Here is my first question: You've been at TV5 over the last several years and have spent much time at CBC, but what have you learned outside of CBC that you think can apply to CBC, based on your experience outside of it?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I have learned many things. I think I alluded to some of this earlier.

One of the biggest learnings from my time at TV5 is how you can go much further when you collaborate. CBC is a big organization. It's deep, and there are always challenges for collaboration inside. Sometimes I think it could benefit from being more connected to more components of our ecosystem. It is already very much connected, and I'm not saying this is a new idea. However, going forward, with the challenges we have as a country and as different peoples—francophones, anglophones and first nations—there's so much risk of losing our culture that we need to collaborate better.

I also think there's a depth of resources and expertise at CBC/Radio-Canada that could benefit the whole ecosystem, so I'll be looking for ways to better connect the corporation with other pieces that support Canadian culture and journalism.

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** Governments' budgets have become tighter over the last two decades. Things have become more challenging for governments, not only in Canada but around the world, when it comes to supporting public broadcasters. There may be, potentially, future governments that would like to defund the CBC. They said this. The Leader of the Opposition said that he would do this.

Why did you decide to take this job, considering the enormous challenges you have in front of you?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I have public broadcasting at heart. I've been doing this for a long time. To be frank, when the search for candidates started, I was approached and I said no. Then I volunteered for the minister's expert committee because I thought, “Okay, that's going to be my contribution. I'm going to go and give back my ideas and benefits from what I've learned through my contacts internationally.”

Then it started working in my head that there are so many opportunities, and it's so precious for all Canadians and for future generations that we, together, figure out this problem. There's a limit in resources—I understand that—and we have to be really efficient, but there's an incredible wealth in this idea of a broadcaster, a medium, that belongs to the public and whose first focus is the audience.

• (1750)

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** I wish you all the best. I hope that your vision, once implemented, eventually wins the hearts of even more Canadians and maybe even our colleagues opposite.

Thank you so much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Coteau.

I now go to Monsieur Champoux for two and a half minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Two and a half minutes is quite short.

Mrs. Bouchard, I want to ask you to tell us a little about Radio-Canada's essential impact on the entire cultural sector in Quebec and on francophone Canada as a whole.

What impact can the French public broadcaster have on the work of our technicians, creators, producers and artisans?

What would be the main repercussions of reducing the public broadcaster's funding on cultural workers and the cultural industry?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** It's vital. This is so important because the entire media sector obviously suffers from a lack of funding. In addition, Radio-Canada has a presence in all regions and in all artistic fields. Music in particular is an area I'm familiar with. I used to run music radio.

Without Radio-Canada, it would be extremely difficult and challenging, if not impossible, for many artists to have a career. Emerging artists from all genres receive support, whether in classical, jazz, French chanson or what have you. By that I mean that the public service's mission is to support arts and culture, and without CBC/Radio-Canada, our cultural sector would be in woeful shape.

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Correct me if I'm wrong, but Radio-Canada's mandate is to tell our stories. I imagine that cutting funding would also have a terrible impact on variety shows, which in Quebec are particularly high quality productions. They are admired.

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I am involved in exporting our content at TV5MONDE, and I can tell you that Canadian content, particularly francophone fiction, is extremely successful on the platform. We account for almost 30% of what's available on the global platform. Over all the territories and all the national languages, we get about 25% of views. The content is in French, subtitled in various languages.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Our content is successful internationally. It just goes to show how amazing our artisans are.

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** From what you say, I imagine that over the course of your mandate, your objective will be to further increase visibility. You will take advantage of all the available platforms and use your experience to continue to help our stories and productions get wider attention.

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** We also have to make them accessible to the public here, since discoverability is a major challenge we have to tackle.

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Okay.

Thank you very much, Mrs. Bouchard.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Martin.

Now we go to Ms. Ashton for two and a half minutes, please.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Thank you.

On Monday, Ms. Tait promised no job cuts between now and the end of the fiscal year. Employees of our national broadcaster should know where their next paycheque is coming from, but the question remains, what about the next couple of years? What size do you foresee CBC/Radio-Canada being, in terms of a workforce, in the coming years?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I have no idea how to answer your question, honestly. I don't even know what the budgets look like, so it's premature for me to even guess at workforce size. I don't know how to answer. I'm not in the job.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** It's the concern with the cuts.

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I understand your concern, and I share the concern.

I just want you to know that I am quite aware of how hard it is to balance a budget and how heart-wrenching it is to actually announce to people that they won't have a job. I have done that—have had to do that—and I don't look forward to having to do that again. If I could avoid that altogether for the rest of my life, I would be the first to sign in.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Okay. I appreciate that feedback.

With regard to the question around media deserts, I've spoken on numerous occasions about how the CBC here has failed our region and has shuttered our studio, which has had extremely intermittent short-term contracts. It has actively contributed to creating a media desert in this part of the country.

We know that there are many media deserts as private broadcasters shutter stations, cut back jobs, etc. We are not here to rely on Winnipeg or Toronto to tell our stories. They should be told by people here in regions like ours, and that is part of the CBC's mandate.

How do you envision CBC/Radio-Canada's role in investing in local and regional broadcasting and in acting on putting an end to media deserts that exist across our country?

• (1755)

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I couldn't agree with you more that part of the essential job of the public broadcaster is to be close to people's concerns. That's how you build trust: by being in their community and reporting on issues that they need to know about.

Then you build from there to have national news and to have international news that they trust.

It's really been a hardship that, as a country, we haven't been able to support more local journalism, not only at the CBC but in private outlets as well. That's a very big concern, and that would be a very big focus for me.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Do you have any more questions, Ms. Ashton? No.

We'll go to Mr. Jivani for the Conservatives for five minutes.

**Mr. Jamil Jivani (Durham, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Madam Bouchard.

The issue of bonuses has come up a few times already. Certainly, because I think the issue has plagued your predecessor, it's generated a lot of conversation in the media. People from the political left and the political right have condemned it. Even former big-name CBC personalities like Peter Mansbridge have commented on the issue.

I'd like to give you an opportunity to concisely clarify your position. Will you commit now to banning the sorts of egregious bonuses to executives that have been in the news? Is that a position you're able to articulate today?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I have respect for the board of directors, which has asked for a report, and I will take this report into consideration. I will consult with the board of directors, and then we will decide what we do.

However, I can't commit to one way or another at this stage. I don't have enough information on the way forward, because it's one thing to say that you're going to ban something, but how do you go forward? What do you do with the employees who have their contracts? What do you do in terms of fair compensation? I need a plan in order to commit to something.

**Mr. Jamil Jivani:** If I may suggest, I think that a lot of the reason the bonuses have become such a hot topic of discussion is because of feelings that there is a lack of CBC accountability to the taxpayer.

You said earlier that you want to be close to people's concerns and understand our country and the people of our country. I certainly would hope that it's not breaking news to you to suggest that a lot of people in our country are concerned about affordability, about things like paying a mortgage, paying rent and putting food on the table. When they see an organization that they are funding—a taxpayer-subsidized, billion-dollar organization—dishing out large bonuses at a time when viewership is in decline and overall ad revenue is in decline, it certainly feels to many Canadians that the CBC is tone-deaf and not accountable for what is happening within the organization and is tone-deaf to the broader context of what's happening in our country.

That is why I think it would be fair to assume that you might have an opinion on giving out large bonuses, even prior to all the things that you just mentioned. With your coming into your role, it would be fair for us to pose this question to you: Do you think those bonuses are fair, and would you, as the next CEO of the organization, commit to banning such practices?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Certainly, going back into your question, I'm not tone deaf, I think. I certainly heard all of your questions loud and clear.

This is part of what I will take in at the beginning of my mandate, but I need a plan. I can't devise that plan or...it would be irresponsible for me to commit to alter this system one way or another without having a plan on how to do it. I need the information and I need to work with the people inside to get them on board for something that all of us will be comfortable with.

**Mr. Jamil Jivani:** As you're aware, your predecessor, Ms. Tait, has been before this committee five times, I believe, in this calendar year. One of the things that I've heard from Canadians in terms of their concerns about what Ms. Tait has said is a lack of any sense of where the bonuses become absurd.

When you look at some of the numbers that I have in front of me, overall ad revenue, including TV and digital, is down 6.4% from 2023 to 2024. Audience share is dropping from 7.6% when Ms. Tait started in the role to 2.1% in prime time now. You have a Reuters study that showed that from 2018 to 2022, trust in the CBC dropped 17%.

You look at these numbers and you see that this is an organization with some real challenges. It had a real problem connecting with the people of our country. At that same time, the same Canadians who are seeing that information are seeing large bonuses given out to executives.

Can you empathize with why that seems absurd to the average taxpayer?

• (1800)

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Certainly I can't comment on the numbers that you are providing, because I know that they are partial. They are partial in that they refer to a segment of the activity of CBC/Radio-Canada—

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** There's radio. There's digital. There are all sorts of services that you can measure that you haven't talked about. They—

**Mr. Jamil Jivani:** Those numbers are all public.

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** —encompass the performance of the corporation as a whole.

**Mr. Jamil Jivani:** Some of these numbers do come from the CBC annual report.

We cannot live in a state of denial in which we can't acknowledge that the organization is struggling and failing. These bonuses have been a real trigger for taxpayers.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Mr. Jivani, but your time is up. Thank you.

I now go to the Liberals.

Ms. Gainey, you have five minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Anna Gainey:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome, Mrs. Bouchard.

[*English*]

It's lovely to meet you. Congratulations on your nomination. Thank you for being here today.

[*Translation*]

How did you handle working with an independent board of directors like the one at TV5, and how will that influence your governance approach at CBC/Radio-Canada?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** That's a great question, because there's quite a learning curve in working with a board when you've never done it before. I have found it a privilege to work with the board of directors of TV5 Québec Canada, which is an independent board. The board is made up of members appointed by various stakeholders and members chosen by the board of directors. It's quite a balancing act.

The administration handles management. The board of directors deals with strategy issues. It is also there to advise management and be attuned to certain realities. I think that's true in public broadcasting in general, and I expect to develop similar experience with the chair and the members of the board of directors at CBC/Radio-Canada. There will be balanced discussions around strategies, management oversight and implementation, which is the responsibility of the administration.

[*English*]

**Ms. Anna Gainey:** On another topic, a number of times in this committee we've addressed the challenges for the sector writ large of misinformation and disinformation, with our kids being online, and really just how important, in this context, a public broadcaster is. I actually do believe that CBC/Radio-Canada is trusted by Canadians. I take your word "precious" that you used earlier. I think it is precious and it is something we really do need to protect and reinforce.

I'm curious to know your thoughts on that trust and how you see your role in reinforcing it, and not just with our generation. I'm also a mother of three and I think about their future and where they're going to get their information.

I'm curious about your thoughts on that.

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I talked a little earlier about the discoverability issue, but it's true in news as well. It's true in all sorts of information and education for media. It's really important that we figure out a way to connect with young people and ensure that they have access to their culture and to the information that they need as they grow up and as they develop their habits of media consumption.

It's also true for newcomers in the country. They need to be able to integrate into our society with access to trusted news. That's one of the fundamentals of a public broadcaster and it's certainly something that's going to be a focus for the strategies that we develop.

**Ms. Anna Gainey:** Right.

As you mentioned earlier, we agree that there are challenges in the sector, and certainly challenges at CBC/Radio-Canada. Which of the challenges are you most looking forward to sinking your teeth into and really getting to work on?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Obviously, I'll be working on making sure that we have a system that's transparent and that people can trust in our administration and management of public funds, especially in the context of compensation. This will be a focus. I'm not trying to go around it.

As I said, rebuilding our local news is something that I really want to work on. I think it's timely and it's important and it's urgent, because so many other media are having so much difficulty maintaining service.

My objective is not to have CBC as the sole voice. I think it's important to have a diversity of voices and different sources of news. We have to figure out a way to not only rebuild our regional services but also support other regional and local broadcasters and media.

• (1805)

**Ms. Anna Gainey:** With TV5, you worked collaboratively, I think, with APTN, the NFB, CPAC and others. How was that collaboration and those relationships? What can your experience there bring to this new role that you're embarking on?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I think it was a necessity with TV5 because it was so small. It's also in its DNA. It comes from a partnership. It was created by many media that thought they were more efficient together in providing that particular niche service.

There's a lot of benefit in working together. You also have to drop the egos a little bit. Sometimes the target is more important than who gets there.

That's what I bring to this job.

**Ms. Anna Gainey:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Anna.

Since we started at 42 minutes to the hour, we have time for one last round.

I'll begin with Mr. Waugh.

Kevin, you have five minutes, please.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

It's refreshing that we actually have a Canadian leading the CBC instead of someone coming out of New York. Thank you and congratulations.

It's interesting; you left after 29 years at CBC. As you know, CBC is not a non-profit. They get \$1.4 billion in funding, plus \$400 million in advertising, and now, through Bill C-18, they get almost another \$100 million through Google. You're getting quite a bit. You're not a non-profit organization.

Why did you decide, when you did leave CBC, that you would go to a non-profit like TV5—I come from the private sector—when the CBC is the motherlode of organizations?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I alluded to my path through the CBC. It was an incredible opportunity to discover all sorts of different areas, different types of jobs and work, and different teams. When the headhunter came knocking at my door nine years ago, it seemed like being a CEO of a small company was the right thing for me. I loved the mandate, and it allowed me to expand on my experience. That's why I went.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** Your timing was interesting, because CBC really left television and radio when you left. They focused more on digital, where you were. They have pumped millions of dollars into digital in the last nine years. They have done more in digital than they have television and radio.

What are your thoughts here? You were in charge of digital when you left.

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I was indeed in charge of digital when I left, and I'm glad that CBC/Radio-Canada has invested in digital, because that's where Canadians are. It's important that we stay current with Canadians' practices in terms of media consumption.

However, I would not say that they've left radio and television. As an avid consumer of radio, I can tell you that the quality and depth of programming that is available to me on both talk radio and music radio is as good as when I left.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** Yes, but that's not so in television.



**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Well, I would dispute that with Radio-Canada. I'm not a big consumer of CBC because I've been so immersed in French programming in the last nine years, but I can tell you as a viewer that the programming and depth of programming available on Radio-Canada TV, but also on tou.tv and other services, is of high quality.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** What were the criteria for bonuses when you were at TV5, when you were the CEO there?

There must have been criteria for bonuses. Nobody leaves the corporation after 29 solid years to go to a non-profit. There has to be some incentive there.

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I'm not sure I understand your question.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** When you were there, what were the criteria for bonuses?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Whose bonuses?

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** Did you have a bonus built in to TV5 when you got there?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** At TV5, I have a base salary, and there's a variable pay program. It's standard.

• (1810)

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** Is that something that you would continue to have a voice on when you get to the new job on January 3 at CBC?

Is that something you would talk about—taking it from a non-profit, TV5, to CBC—when you do come?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I'm not sure I follow your question. I'm sorry. I really am trying.

What does TV5 have to do with the question?

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** I think people look at the bonuses. You've heard it around the table here. It's been a hot issue. You knew that coming here. You sat and visualized the new mandate of the CBC. You were there for weeks talking about it. You must have heard the public talk about the bonus structure. That's what has upset most Canadians in this country about it.

What are your thoughts on that?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** The discussions we had at the expert committee were really on mandate and governance, not about internal policies regarding compensation.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** How are you going to turn the trust around?

You talked a little bit about trust.

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** How are you going to turn the trust in the public broadcaster around?

You have seen it erode in this country. How are you going to turn the trust in the CBC around with the general public?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I can tell you, because I talk with my colleagues in Europe, that all public broadcasters see the trust issue as something central to our mission and mandate.

There are different currents of opinion, currently, worldwide, on the issue of public broadcasting. It's not something that's specific to

the CBC or to Canada. It's a challenge for all of us public broadcasters to maintain that trust and to earn it, honestly. It's about earning it. You never take it for granted.

**Mr. Kevin Waugh:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I'll go to the Liberals.

Mr. Anthony Housefather, you have five minutes, please.

**Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*Translation*]

Thank you, Mrs. Bouchard, for being here with us today. We are pleased to welcome you here to the committee.

I feel I need to emphasize the importance of CBC/Radio-Canada's work in Canada's linguistic minority communities. Some people say all anglophone services could be reduced and Radio-Canada's quality francophone services outside Quebec could be maintained.

From what I understand, the two services are often combined. For example, the CBC and Radio-Canada could use the same camera operators, journalists, trucks or cameras elsewhere in Canada.

Could you explain that?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Obviously, I don't know how things have been organized for the last nine years, but I do know how it worked before, and I have no reason to believe that it has fundamentally changed to completely separate the divisions.

English and French services are housed in the same building and have a lot of resources in common. The fact that footage and news sources are shared means that each news desk can create its own news segments, whether online or on air, on radio or TV. You can see that on air, and it would be shocking if that wasn't the case.

It's clearly very interconnected, and all support services outside Quebec are actually provided by English services. Without that support, there is no service. The services are highly integrated.

**Mr. Anthony Housefather:** That's my understanding.

When I am outside Quebec doing an interview, I notice that the same resources are used by the anglophone network. The vast majority of people who watch the CBC outside Quebec are anglophones, particularly in some provinces.

You certainly wouldn't have the same lease and you certainly wouldn't have the same services available to francophones if an anglophone service wasn't offered as well.

[*English*]

I'm going to switch to English now.

For the minority language community—the English-speaking community in Quebec—if you were to cut the English CBC, wouldn't there be a huge gap for English-speaking Quebecers if the CBC didn't exist? I have been throughout the province of Quebec, and in many parts of Quebec, outside of Montreal, the CBC is the only local news available to the English-speaking community, whether it's on radio or on television.

• (1815)

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I would like to not think about the CBC not existing. Obviously, CBC News in Quebec and in Montreal has a long history of doing investigations, doing local reporting in Quebec City and doing all the reporting on the political side.

Again, I don't know what happened in the last nine years in detail, but I know how essential it is to the English-speaking community.

**Mr. Anthony Housefather:** For example, if I visit New Carlisle in the Gaspé, or if I go up to the coast of Labrador on the north shore, or even if I'm in Quebec City or in Trois-Rivières, the CBC is my only conduit to English-speaking local news. There are no daily English papers, and there's no other radio station or television station that is local and that is dealing with my news in my municipality.

To me, the CBC is an essential service, nationally. You're coming into an incredibly important job. If you could give me your number one priority, what would that be?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** The number one priority is to get close to Canadians, to understand where their hearts are, where the beat is, and to make sure that we serve responsibly to the mandate that we are given. I know it's a big task, but that's the essence of it. It takes many different steps and strategies, but that's the essence of it. That's what we need to do.

**The Chair:** That's 30 seconds. That's it. Thank you. You were right on the button, Anthony.

**Mr. Anthony Housefather:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** I now go to Martin Champoux.

Martin, you have two and a half minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mrs. Bouchard, in your discussion with Ms. Gainey earlier, you addressed the issue of CBC/Radio-Canada's responsibility for protecting and developing regional news services. It wasn't just about the services of the public broadcaster. It was also about local news businesses.

I find the idea that was raised very interesting. We haven't talked about it very much, but I think it's excellent. The idea would be to share resources and infrastructure with small regional news businesses, which have few resources, particularly community radio and television stations, or even weeklies, which can't afford to make the digital transition.

Do you think that CBC/Radio-Canada could, in fact, share resources and infrastructure to enable these small essential news media to cover regional news?

Do you think that could be part of the role you play as a public broadcaster?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** The challenge I see is that we have to take a holistic approach. We have to think about the interest of the community as a whole and ensure a diversity of voices.

Then, we have to ask ourselves what solution will meet the needs of each type of media organization that is struggling right now.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Can digital infrastructure be shared? Can other types of resources be shared? Do these media need visibility?

You know, the problem is often that the media want their independence. They want their voice, but they lack access to audiences to be able to showcase their products and generate revenue.

Perhaps CBC/Radio-Canada can play a role in supporting business models.

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** What Mr. Housefather said a few minutes ago about the CBC in Quebec serving anglophone Quebecers is also true for francophones outside Quebec. The media that serve these populations, which are not the public broadcaster, are even more vulnerable right now than the media in majority official language markets.

The public broadcaster could very naturally become an essential support for these small media. That would help fulfill CBC/Radio-Canada's role in covering regional news.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds, Martin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** I'm going to ask you one last quick question.

Would you be in favour of phasing out advertising, at least in news and public affairs programming, and increasing public funding for CBC/Radio-Canada?

Do you think that's the solution we should move towards?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** With regard to advertising, keep in mind that the Quebec market is small and vulnerable and that original advertising content depends on the media to broadcast and distribute it.

If we remove Radio-Canada from the equation of the francophone Quebec advertising market, aren't we going to end up in the situation we were in decades ago, when the advertising we were exposed to had to be translated and adapted and did not at all reflect the culture?

That kind of ad offends people, because—

• (1820)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Bouchard.

I will now go to Niki Ashton for two and a half minutes.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Thank you.

We know that defunding CBC/Radio-Canada will have dire consequences for francophones across this country, for northerners, for rural Canadians and for indigenous communities. CBC/Radio-Canada is often the only newscaster willing to tell these communities'—our communities'—stories from our perspectives.

We saw how the threat of Liberal cuts led to job losses for CBC/Radio-Canada, to the point that the workforce is closer to what it was during the Harper era. What would be the effects of more cuts and more defunding from either the Liberals or the Conservatives, who are both happy to do it? What would that do for these communities that depend on the CBC and Radio-Canada?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Any cut in funding means a diminishment in service. There's a limit to efficiencies that you can generate. If there's a significant reduction in funding, there's going to have to be an impact. It's unavoidable, especially in the current market, with commercial revenue being so difficult and so challenged. Any reduction in budget is going to have a direct impact on jobs and on service.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** I just wanted to end off by thanking Ms. Bouchard for coming to our committee, and even before her mandate begins.

As I said, it's very clear that our committee cares deeply about the future of the CBC. I think most Canadians want to see a stronger CBC, but a CBC that's also accountable, that doesn't dole out executive bonuses while cutting jobs, that invests in local and regional broadcasting in our communities and that looks at acting on investing in media deserts, like so many that are growing across our country. We hope that in your tenure you will turn a new page and bring—

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** —these priorities to the fore, because ultimately, Canadians deserve a strong CBC and a strong Radio-Canada.

Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I now go to the Conservatives.

Mr. Kurek, I understand you're sharing with Mr. Godin. Is that correct?

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Yes.

**The Chair:** You're sharing five minutes in total, please.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

It's interesting. You come with 29 years of experience at CBC. You've spent nine years in the private sector working for a not-for-profit, and now you're coming back, after having participated in this renewal mandate panel with the minister. You've mentioned a

few things about that, but you said the report is going to the minister.

You've referenced a few times that you want to hear the Canadian story and you want to hear what Canadians have to say about the CBC, so I'm going to go back to the question of bonuses, because I think this is where many Canadians see a massive disconnect between \$18 million paid out to executives and managers and the challenges that Canadians are facing; they are seeing just a massive disconnect that exists there.

I think my question.... I'd really like to nail this down, because it comes down to the issue of trust and making sure Canadians can, in fact, trust the leadership at the CBC, an organization they largely pay for one way or another through a \$1.4-billion subsidy, and trust that it's not going to go to bonuses for executives in downtown office towers who have very little to do with telling the Canadian story.

Again, I want to nail this down. You talked about reviewing the bonus structure. You're hearing from elected members of Parliament—and this is not unique to Conservatives, although maybe our solutions are a little different—that we want to nail down specifically that bonuses need to be a thing of the past, certainly as they're structured today at the CBC.

Is that something you can commit to before this committee?

• (1825)

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Thank you, Madam Chair, for the invitation of the member to commit to something.

I will commit to studying the matter very seriously. I'm not tone deaf. I also need a plan in order to make sure that all employees are compensated fairly, that there is a system in place that's transparent, that is fair, that's not arbitrary, that doesn't change conditions of service or of employment in mid-course without explanation or without some system.

That's all I can commit to: to study the matter with the benefit of expert advice and with the counsel of the board of directors, in order to put something forward that is going to be trusted both inside and outside the corporation.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

You now have two minutes, Mr. Godin.

[Translation]

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mrs. Bouchard, you will understand that, as elected officials, it is rather hard for us to defend \$18 million in bonuses when people are lining up at food banks. It's really hard to defend.

On another note, I'd like to hear your opinion on the following. There is disinformation saying that Radio-Canada would cease to exist if a Conservative government were ever to come to power. That is what the polls show, but we can't predict the future. We have heard members say that the service is lacking.

Don't you think that if you and your board of directors analyze the situation and develop a plan, Radio-Canada could provide a better forum for francophones across Canada?

**Mrs. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** That's a pretty theoretical question.

I inherited a legislative mandate called the Broadcasting Act, now the Online Streaming Act. The mandate provides for a service that meets the needs of Canadians in both official languages and in indigenous languages.

Until Parliament changes that mandate, I can't really comment on what may or may not be possible.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** You talk about the needs of Canadians, when English Canadians aren't tuning in because North America is an anglophone environment—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry; the time is up, Mr. Godin. That's what happens when you guys try to share time. Somebody always goes over your time.

Thank you. Now I go to the final question, and that's from the Liberals.

Ms. Lattanzio, you have five minutes, please.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Madame Bouchard, for being patient and answering all our questions today. We have a couple more.

With regard to the employees, how would you approach engaging with employees of CBC/Radio-Canada to make sure that their voices are being heard and that your decision-making style is reflecting and incorporating the best ideas from the whole organization?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** I think I have a leg up with that task if I compare it with what was before some of my predecessors, because I already know the corporation and the structure and who does what. I don't necessarily know the people who work there everywhere today, but I plan to travel a fair amount and be available to talk to employees from all levels.

I obviously also want to talk to the senior executive team as well, and to hear from unions and hear ideas on all sorts of situations. This is a really incredible organization. There are so many bright people working there with an incredible depth of experience. I think we have a great benefit in listening to them.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** When you think about the challenges that are facing the news and the media sector today as a whole, what do you think about the CBC/Radio-Canada's place in the market? More specifically, what do you think of the idea of it being competitive with the others? Is that something that you should seek to do or not?

• (1830)

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** If you're a reporter, your life is about breaking news. It's about breaking a story or breaking an investigation. There's natural competition in the work of a reporter, but that doesn't mean that we have to have businesses that are fighting one against the other. The businesses themselves can have an approach to the market that is a more beneficial to the entire community.

The nature of the competition doesn't have to be on a business side as much as it naturally is on the story side. When it is on the story side, that's when the public benefits the most, because then reporters are breaking stories. They are bringing new information to the front, and people are better informed.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** We all have observed that people get their information today differently than they have in the past. How do you think that this has affected the perception of traditional news and information sources?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** That's the stretch that we're in as media organizations.

There is still an audience for traditional news. They are very much attached to that service, and we can't just disregard their needs. At the same time, there are all sorts of people getting their news from Facebook and other social media. That's a big challenge, because we have to be where people consume their information.

That means that all media organizations—and that's true for TV5—have had to stretch their resources to maintain the service, because there is still an audience there, and it's loyal. Then we have to expand the service, and there's a limit to our resources, so we have to be very efficient. We have to find new ways. We have to think about how we can collaborate with each other, what infrastructure we can share and what resources we can share in order to meet all of those needs and to be relevant to all generations.

**The Chair:** You have 11 seconds.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** What factors do you think will play into whether people keep trusting CBC/Radio-Canada or not?

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** The factors are its presence, its standards and its ability to live up to them, and its listening abilities. That is what I would like the corporation to be known for—not just that it has a microphone or an ability to publish, but that it has an ability and a talent for listening.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** Thank you very much. I wish you good luck.

**Ms. Marie-Philippe Bouchard:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Now, Mr. Champoux, I think that you have something you want to say.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would actually like our clerk to be able to work without undue pressure.

An additional meeting is listed on the calendar, to be held on Monday, December 2. The meeting, similar to the one we held in the afternoon this week, would deal with the report we are currently studying, but also with our study on freedom of expression.

The meeting is scheduled from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. I wanted to make sure that our clerk had all the tools and all the information she needed, as well as the support she needed to call the witnesses, or if there were any questions about Monday's meeting.

I wanted that to be dealt with today.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Clerk, and answer the question. It concerns resources for that meeting. We don't know if we have resources for the afternoon meeting on Monday.

We've not had a response. Let us imagine that we do have them and that we're going to have that meeting. Would you like to answer the question? Is that all you need? Do you need help in getting witnesses for freedom of expression, or are you good?

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Danielle Widmer):** As always, I like to receive the names of additional witnesses. It's always greatly appreciated. Some have trickled in, but more is always better to assist in the securing of these witnesses.

The request has been made for additional resources for Monday from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

• (1835)

**The Chair:** Will that be with coffee?

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Clerk:** It will ideally be with coffee. We're waiting for confirmation of all the services available to accommodate that meeting on Monday, December 2, from 3:30 to 5:30, in addition to the Monday meeting from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**The Chair:** That's when we will have the three expert CBC witnesses requested by the motion. If we finish that on Monday morn-

ing, the analysts can go ahead and write a report for us to get ready to table in the House in the time allocated for us.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** No pressure.

**The Chair:** There's no pressure. They're great. They can do it. They can do this in their sleep. They're pretty good and they feel pretty confident that they can get it done. I don't think it's going to be an enormous report.

We will have to deal with that, and then we want Martin to finish his freedom of expression study because we don't know when the House will actually rise.

Is that okay? Yes, that's good.

With there being no further information—

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** [*Inaudible—Editor*]

**The Chair:** I was going to thank her, Martin.

I would like to thank Madame Bouchard for coming and for being extraordinarily patient while we had that little segue into a motion and a vote, etc. Thank you very much. It's a tough thing for you to come and appear before us when you don't really have a plan and you haven't been in the job yet, so you don't know where the washrooms are. Thank you very much for coming.

This meeting is adjourned.

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