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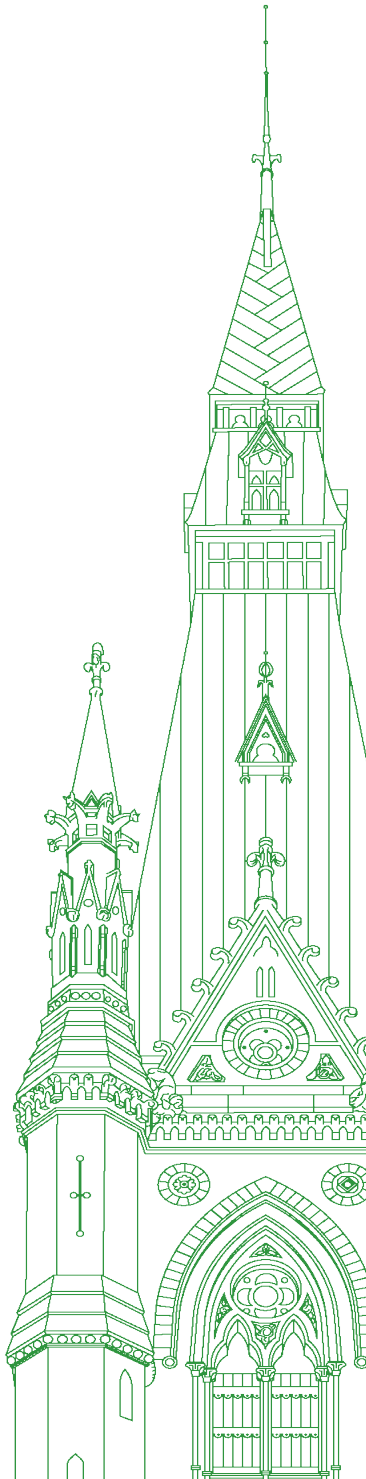

Chair: Lisa Hepfner

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

Tuesday, October 6, 2026

● (1530)

[*English*]

The Chair (Lisa Hepfner (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 45 of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

Before we begin, I'd ask all in-person participants to read the guidelines written on the updated cards on the table in front of you. There are measures in place to help prevent audio feedback incidents and to protect the health and safety of all participants, including and especially our interpreters. You'll notice there's a QR code on the card. It links to a short awareness video.

Please wait until I recognize you by name before you speak. All comments should be addressed through the chair.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted by the committee on April 16, 2026, we're meeting today to discuss the report of the future of sport in Canada commission. This was a report tabled in the House on March 24, 2026.

Before I introduce our witnesses, I would like to draw everyone's attention to our new analyst at the table, Isaac Doucette.

Also, we have to adopt a budget for the two meetings this week on this study.

Can I have someone move to accept this budget for $1,425? Thank you, Ms. Royer.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Good. That's passed.

With us today, we have Andrew Pipe, who is professor emeritus and special adviser to the future of sport in Canada commission.

Welcome, sir. You are here alone for two hours among our illustrious committee members. I hope that it will be time well spent for you as well as for us.

Thank you, sir, for being here. I will now give you five minutes for your opening statement.

Dr. Andrew Pipe (Professor Emeritus and Special Adviser, Future of Sport in Canada Commission, As an Individual): Thank you very much.

I was advised that I had 10 minutes, so I will try to speak very rapidly.

The Chair: We have lots of time, so just go ahead.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you so much.

Good afternoon and thank you very much for the opportunity to meet with you today.

It's a particular privilege to be able to discuss with you the final report of the future of sport in Canada commission, appropriately entitled “Transforming Sport in Canada: Time for Action.” I'm also delighted to be able to affirm that carrying this report for 100 yards is not being categorized as an Olympic event in the near future. I think the size of this volume is an expression of the complexity of the report and the breadth and depth of the consultations that preceded its creation.

I want also to acknowledge the leadership provided to the commission by Madam Justice Lise Maisonneuve, who has returned to her judicial role and, as a sitting judge, is unable to appear before you.

I want to also acknowledge the contributions of my colleague, Ms. Noni Classen, a nationally acknowledged expert in matters pertaining to the well-being and protection of children and youth, whose participation in this process has been precluded by scheduling challenges.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the commission was mandated to examine the sports system and make recommendations to improve safe sport in Canada, including trauma-informed approaches to support sport participants in the disclosure and healing from maltreatment, and improve the sports system in Canada, including but not limited to policy funding structures, governance, reporting, accountability, conflicts of interest, systems alignment, culture and legal considerations.

May I begin by emphasizing the scope and scale of our work. We completed an unprecedented examination of the Canadian physical activity and sports structure. In response to our very specific instructions, we met with more than 1,000 individuals in nearly 600 meetings, consulted with 270 sport or physical activity-related organizations and reviewed more than 1,400 documents and submissions. We spoke with representatives of every provincial and territorial government and had discussions with leaders from sport and physical activity and agencies in Australia, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Our work represents the single most extensive examination of the sport and physical activity apparatus in Canadian history. All of our activities were guided by a victim- and survivor-centred and trauma- and violence-informed framework, and as a consequence, we met with 175 victims and survivors of maltreatment in sport.

Our instructions mandated that we prepare and release a preliminary report to be followed thereafter by a national summit of the sport and physical activity communities, permitting a unique opportunity for a critical review and discussion of our initial recommendations. This approach, I would suggest, is unprecedented.

I would emphasize that our report and recommendations received almost universal affirmation from the sport and physical activity communities at that summit. We are therefore confident that the report we submitted represents the perspectives of those communities and their support for the template that we have prepared for shaping the future of sport and physical activity matters in Canada.

That national summit also represented the first time there had been a meeting of the national sport and physical activity communities to address the challenges posed to the commission. The voices of those with whom we met are a fundamental and important central component of our report.

The scope and scale of our work, to repeat, cannot be overemphasized. It is our hope that the 98 distinct calls to action will serve as a template for the substantial changes in structures and processes that we feel are warranted.

As we noted in the introduction to our report:

> Canada is a sporting nation. Every day Canadians organize and participate in sport and physical activity, whether as athletes, coaches, officials, parents, spectators, administrators or volunteers. These experiences are central to who we are as individuals, families, communities and as a country. They are a vital part of Canadian culture, [and therefore warrant careful, deliberate and thoughtful stewardship] contributing significantly to health, community cohesion, economic growth, and national pride. They foster inclusion, personal development, and social connections across diverse populations.

● (1535)

Given the important and central role of physical activity and sport in Canada, it is essential that the structures and processes which support it are afforded the careful stewardship we call for and reflect a very thoughtful, considered and careful approach to their design and leadership.

Canadians understand the values of physical activity and sport. Sport can stimulate and sustain lifelong physical activity, and physical activity is an important determinant of health. Health care costs linked to physical inactivity were estimated at $3.9 billion in 2022.

Participants with disabilities shared that sport was one of the only places where they felt truly accepted, and sport contributed $7.6 billion to the Canadian gross domestic product. Sport infrastructures can be vital community assets, fostering inclusion and physical activity. Indigenous peoples told us that the value of sport extends far beyond physical activity and viewed sport as a source of healing, cultural connection and community strength.

Let me begin by addressing issues relating to maltreatment in sport. Revelations that preceded the formation of our commission exposed the prevalence of maltreatment across all levels of sport in Canada. During the course of our commission lifetime, victims, survivors and advocates courageously shared with us experiences of abuse, harassment, discrimination and other forms of harm.

Our report emphasizes that maltreatment in sport is widespread and takes many forms. In the absence of profound change, it will persist.

The steady emergence of new maltreatment cases across the country that were reported in the media throughout the commission's mandate further demonstrates that these issues are not isolated incidents from the past. Power imbalances, cultures of silence, failures of governance, an overemphasis on performance, and inadequate complaint mechanisms and prevention measures allow harms to continue. Perversely, the idea that sport is exempt from standards that apply elsewhere in the community, so-called “sport exceptionalism”, has been all too common.

We would also wish to emphasize that the interrelationship between safe sport and the structure, function, number and governance of sport and physical activity organizations is a critical factor, distinctly affecting the well-being of sport participants and sport and physical activity communities themselves.

In addressing maltreatment, it is clear that it is critically important that governments and sport organizations work together to strengthen and align prevention and response measures so that all participants can safely experience sport's benefits.

Federalism is a defining feature of our country. Sustained intergovernmental collaboration has enabled progress and the development of national sport initiatives. It demonstrates that constitutional complexities can be effectively managed through collaboration and coordinated action. In our meetings with government officials from every province and territory, we heard a consistent willingness to collaborate, co-operate and coordinate in the development of a national approach to addressing maltreatment and optimizing the opportunities for safe sport. Such an approach is a priority in terms of safeguarding the fundamental elements of sport. Our report provides guidance for the evolution of that coordinated national approach, which we feel is essential to ensure the optimal prevention of and response to safe sport challenges.

I have been very careful today to speak of sport and physical activity “structures” because it would be inappropriate, in our view, to use the word “system”.

● (1540)

As we noted, it became very clear that the challenges in Canadian sport are profound, from underfunding and governance deficits, duplication of efforts among organizations, an abundance of organizations, fragmentation and a lack of integration of policies and programs, to an unhealthy focus on and high-performance outcomes over participant safety and dignity. Indeed, we wondered whether this apparatus could ever be described as a sport system.

Canadian sport structures are multi-faceted and involve a broad array of organizations, participants and governments. Participants in our engagement process noted the absence of strong leadership and vision from the federal government. They emphasized that the proliferation of sport organizations at all levels has contributed significantly to the fragmentation of the Canadian sport system. They explained that there are simply too many organizations.

Significant structural challenges within national, provincial and territorial and community sport organizations include widespread misalignment, inconsistent priorities and limited coordination at every level. Participants shared concerns about the rapid growth and influence of private, for-profit sport organizations, which can only accentuate the accessibility challenges faced by many Canadian families. The proliferation of organizations and overlapping mandates has led to inefficiencies, duplications, a lack of alignment and confusion.

The second fundamental element of our report highlights the need for the creation of a new mechanism to provide leadership, governance, oversight and careful stewardship of the Canadian physical activity and sport ecosystem. We have described this, in an anodyne fashion, as a new “central sport entity” and strongly recommend that it be created in the form of a Crown corporation funded by and responsible to the federal government.

Through deliberate centralization, clearer leadership, stronger governance and more robust intergovernmental collaboration, the centralized sport entity will help strengthen trust, reduce redundancies and deliver a more coherent, coordinated and safe sport environment for all Canadians. Its mandate is to encourage, promote and develop sport and physical activity in Canada consistent with the Physical Activity and Sport Act. We also believe that such a structure will allow the insights, perspectives and the dynamic, imaginative and highly competent leadership skills, which are so demonstrably resident within the sport and physical organizations, to find an opportunity for fuller and more complete expression in shaping the sport structures of the future.

The commission urges the Government of Canada and the sports sector to take immediate steps to initiate sustainable change. For this change to occur, shared service models among sport organizations must be established. Sport organizations must amalgamate, and policies must be applied consistently across and through all levels of sport. The commission therefore calls on the Government of Canada to encourage the amalgamation of national sport organizations—horizontal amalgamation—and the amalgamation of national sport organizations with their respective provincial and territorial sport organizations—vertical amalgamation. National sport organizations are, therefore, called upon to take the lead in seeking consistent policies and their application through every level of their sport.

We very specifically identify areas that merit particular emphasis in the redesign of the sports system: leadership, governance, funding, alignment, barriers and addressing the self-identified needs of the indigenous peoples of Canada, in accordance with calls to action 87 to 91 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

● (1545)

Finally and importantly, when we presented our report in March, we presented a road map and timelines to guide the implementation of 98 calls to action. We also called for the appointment of an independent monitor to adjudicate the progress it has made in implementing these calls to action.

Sport and physical activity are poised at a defining moment in Canada. It is clear to us that the status quo is not acceptable. We feel that we have identified a clear path forward and that the time to act is now.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

I want to clarify for the committee that Lise Maisonneuve, former chief justice of the Ontario court, was in charge of this review. She has since returned to the bench and is now a judge again. She could not participate today.

I just wanted to clarify that in case anyone was curious about why we just have you, sir.

It was a very fulsome opening statement. Thank you very much for that.

We will now turn to questions from members, starting with Mr. Kuruc.

You have six minutes.

● (1550)

Ned Kuruc (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, CPC): Thank you.

Thank you, Dr. Pipe. Thank you for being here today.

I'll start with a line of questioning to dig into a few things and get your recount of the report. First, call 35 recommends training on intervention and duties to report child abuse. What shortcomings did your review see in how sport organizations handled this duty?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you for your question.

I think it was very clear to us that many sport organizations do not have the capacity or the competencies—understandably, perhaps—in their present structures and in their governance arrangements to be able to respond to complaints that might have been brought before them about maltreatment and abuse. It was also quite clear that there has been prevalent in sport a culture of silence, which has been fostered or contributed to by many factors. Therefore, we thought it fundamental, in terms of outlining the need for more education and the issues that surround maltreatment and abuse in sport, that people clearly understand that all have a responsibility, if witnessing incidents of maltreatment or abuse, to appropriately report them. The hesitancy, which was so commonly reflected in the comments we heard, needs to be addressed by this kind of approach.

Ned Kuruc: Thank you, sir.

In your vast review of sport in Canada, what kinds of government policies allowed for malpractice and abuse to happen at the scale that it did, if any?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: It's very important we note that we were asked to review the system and make recommendations for the future, and not to find fault or blame. We adhered to that construct very carefully. I think, though, we also do note that sport organizations and sport structures in Canada have evolved in a very ad hoc fashion, typically responding to issues of the day and changes in priorities. We note that in the past 15 years, there have been 10 distinct sport ministers. Priorities have changed, sometimes very rapidly. I think it's important to understand the way in which people with good intent and goodwill proceeded in this ad hoc fashion to respond in so many ways by imposing priorities or new responsibilities in sport organizations.

It's very important to emphasize that since 2005, at the time of our report, there had been no increase in funding to the sport and physical activity systems in Canada, not even to account for inflation. I must very quickly point out that we were very appreciative and heartened by the fact that within weeks of the release of our report, that omission had been addressed.

Ned Kuruc: I can fully respect not looking backwards. I get that. I respect that. Your report reflects a way forward. Generally, history repeats itself. It doesn't matter who was in government. As a government, we have to learn from our mistakes. That's fine. I'll take that.

In calls 41 to 45, you recommended a nationwide sanctions registry. What gaps in sharing sanctioned information did your review find? How could those gaps allow a sanctioned person to move between organizations or provinces?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Quite simply, there was no national registry that existed in any effective manner. That was a lacuna that was very evident, hence the nature of the calls to action that specifically relate to that need.

Ned Kuruc: That's fair enough.

I have one question that's a little bit off. You mentioned funding, and I know your vast history in sport in Canada. I was around when Ben Johnson generally gutted Athletics Canada and all the funding. I was an athlete years after that.

Was there any study in funding or any look at possibly incentivizing corporate sponsorship and all that stuff? That was something that was in Canada during the 1980s right up until Ben Johnson. Did you look at any of that at all?

● (1555)

Dr. Andrew Pipe: We didn't examine the question of sponsorship directly or distinctly, but we recognized the important role that sponsorship plays in supporting sport. We did distinctly express the view that sport organizations and others in the sports system must be diligent in seeking other forms of support in addition to that which is received from government.

Ned Kuruc: A big part of your opening statement was about a Crown corporation. Is there any fear...?

This might not be the right question for you, but we see it on the political side. I'm a former athlete, someone who grew up in Athletics Canada and was Olympic-bound but eventually had to retire due to going to work and having to go make money.

Do you feel that a lot of funding could be chewed up by a Crown corporation? Do you feel that the funding might not get to the athlete? Were you looking in that direction?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: We very specifically recommend the creation of a Crown corporation. We think that a Crown corporation, appropriately governed, can be much more nimble and much more effective in providing overall governance and supervision to the sports system.

We note in our report that as a consequence of a royal commission in 1956, the Massey commission, dealing with issues in the arts and culture communities, the recommendation was the creation of a Crown corporation, which became the Canada Council for the Arts, which I think has demonstrated the effectiveness of such a structure in administering entities and elements of Canadian life, which are vital parts of our [*Technical difficulty—Editor*].

Ned Kuruc: Thank you, Mr. Pipe.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll go to Mr. Al Soud for six minutes.

Fares Al Soud (Mississauga Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair. It's great to be back.

Dr. Pipe, it's great to see you today. You've spent decades advocating for the health and safety of Canadian athletes. On behalf of my colleagues, I thank you for your work and for being with us today.

I'd like to latch on to something that you noted in your introductory remarks on the value and importance of sports infrastructure to communities at large.

I was raised in Quebec. For much of my life, there was a very clear emphasis on sports funding and the value of physical activity at large. I now have the privilege of representing the beautiful riding of Mississauga Centre, but it is clear to me that there is a certain disparity between the two provinces as it pertains to both access and safety.

I have no doubt that there are even greater disparities in other parts of the country, certainly for specific communities across our country. You highlighted the value of a degree of uniformity, so to speak, across policy decisions as well as implementation. Can you speak to the commission's findings to that end, the community infrastructure aspect, as well as the importance of uniformity at large?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

We noted that Canada faces the challenge of an aging sport infrastructure. At a time when we are emphasizing the importance of reconstructing infrastructure across Canada, it is very important to consider the renovation or recreation of sporting infrastructure facilities across the country.

We also noticed particular challenges in the way elements of the sporting infrastructure are disconnected. For instance, some of the most commonly found sport facilities are in schools. Ironically, many of those schools are closed at 4 p.m. and padlocks are put on playing fields. Relationships among boards of education, municipal recreation departments, etc., are complicated by a whole array of—perhaps understandable—considerations, but these preclude the use of the facilities in ways that could benefit the entire community.

If I may digress slightly, I suppose the disconnect among schools, universities and other elements of the sport system is also very evident. We have a situation in which the vast majority of sport facilities are owned by municipalities or communities, and I'm including boards of education. The largest employer of coaches in sport and physical activity is the college and university system, yet there are very distinct disconnects between those elements of the system and national sport organizations, for example. By the way, this is in marked contrast to the kinds of relationships we discovered and are aware exist in other communities and nations.

We require careful, strategic thinking in order to work across governments and the various segments of the sport system to ensure that isolation and fragmentation are reduced to an irreducible minimum.

● (1600)

Fares Al Soud: On the bright side, you also noted that there's an openness or willingness among entities across the board to collaborate and co-operate on the improvement of the sport ecosystem at large.

One of the commission's recommendations is the development of a multilateral sport framework led by the federal government in partnership with provincial and territorial governments. The commission proposes this framework as a first step toward creating more consistent, safe sport standards and programs across the country, ultimately leading to a single, pan-Canadian safe sport authority.

Would you be able to speak to this a bit, and to why the commission landed on this approach in particular?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

What underlies this call to action is, again, the importance of simplicity and consistency across the systems in which safe sport issues and maltreatment are addressed. Many Canadians would make the mistake, if they had an issue with their child's sport organization, of immediately calling up the national sport organization and saying that they have a problem. They are very disappointed to learn that the national sport organization has no ability, no oversight and no stewardship whatsoever of their particular sport in that particular community. What we feel is important is a consistently national approach to safe sport and addressing maltreatment.

The process we outlined in some detail in the report occurs in a couple of phases.

First of all, we need an agreement among governments on funding incentives provided by the federal government—analogous to other models that currently exist—to ensure that provincial and territorial governments adopt safe sport policies that adhere to a number of elements and are therefore consistent.

Proceeding from this, we then suggest the Physical Activity and Sport Act be amended to provide for the creation of a pan-Canadian safe sport authority. Ultimately, provincial and territorial organizations would become part of this overall national structure.

I have probably not explained that with enough detail, but—

Fares Al Soud: It is quite detailed in the report, which is good.

I believe I have time for one final question.

The government has proposed $755 million over five years, with $118 million ongoing, to support Canada's sport system. Could you speak to the importance of predictable, long-term funding in terms of making sports safer and giving organizations the capacity to put athletes' well-being first?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I would very simply state that an underfunded sports system is an inherently unsafe sports system because organizations immediately default to what they see as their most important priorities, and issues that relate to the welfare of their athletes, sport participants at every level, fall by the wayside.

We heard time and time again that 90% of Canada's sport organizations were virtually entirely dependent on federal government funding and that the funding was difficult to predict and sometimes came with conditions that meant the funding was provided and had to be expended in an incredibly impossibly short period of time, which meant that they did not even have the apparatus to respond to that.

The importance of long-term funding, with a clear understanding of the mechanisms that underlie the provision of that funding, is of central importance for sport organizations.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Lemire, welcome back. We're pleased to have you back before the committee. You now have six minutes.

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to sincerely thank the members of the committee for undertaking this study, which I believe is an important one.

At the outset, I'd like to note that, although I was the one who drafted the motion, I believe it would have been useful, in practice, to hear from witnesses. I think all parties have recognized that the motion was drafted in a way that would allow for a short study to be accommodated during a week such as this one. As such, the exercise is worthwhile.

Nevertheless, I regret the absence of Commissioner Maisonneuve, even if the reason is understandable. For me, the issue of accountability is absolutely fundamental.

I understand the reasons for that absence. They are the same reasons why, in my view, this report should have been the result of an independent public inquiry conducted under a legislative framework governing consultations, which would have provided greater protection for victims. That's my first criticism of the report. Obviously, that is not Mr. Pipe's responsibility. I'm speaking about the broader context of the study itself. There should have been a much safer framework for victims.

In this context, I have mixed feelings. On the one hand, I feel immense pride. Had I not moved an initial motion regarding Hockey Canada a little over four years ago, it wouldn't have been followed by another motion and then by a fairly extensive committee study into the circumstances surrounding the matter. By virtue of the committee's parliamentary powers, we were able to require the production of documents, from the organization's board minutes to its financial statements, which revealed the existence of a fund used to buy the silence of victims.

All of that made tremendous waves throughout the Canadian sport ecosystem, so much so that it encouraged a number of victims to come forward. They realized that they, too, had experiences that needed to be heard. It was first seen within Sport Canada, but subsequently emerged in other sports as well. Once again, I want to commend those victims for their courage.

In the circumstances, I believe that those who were able to participate in the process are, overall, well represented in the report. However, not all victims were able to find a safe environment in which to speak freely, with safeguards protecting them against the risk of lawsuits or other repercussions. As was noted in the opening remarks, when a sport is inadequately funded, speaking out is always risky, because doing so may mean sacrificing one's career, training opportunities or the reputation of a particular sport.

We know that, for decades, sport in Canada has largely operated on the basis of reputation. The pursuit of the gold medal became the driving force behind funding decisions. I also found it highly ironic that the minister who refused to launch an independent public inquiry on this, Ms. Qualtrough to be exact, had, at various stages of her career, helped shape many of the positions she held within the Sport Canada system.

Mr. Pipe, over the years, you often had occasion to endorse the actions, or more often the inaction, of Hockey Canada. That is deeply concerning to me. Your presence around that table also raised questions for me. Having said that, I nevertheless have great respect for what you presented here today. We can see that there's been genuine progress in the thinking. However, for decades, Sport Canada turned a blind eye and failed to meet its responsibilities. We had created a system in which a culture of silence was allowed to flourish. For me, that was extremely serious, particularly because it was tolerated.

There now appears to be a wind of change. I welcome the idea of establishing a dedicated sport mandate, or even a dedicated government department of sport. The structure itself is not what matters to me. In my view, responsibility for sport should fall not under the Department of Canadian Heritage, but under the Department of Health. One of the fundamental issues should be access to sport for all Quebeckers and Canadians, particularly young people and seniors. Infrastructure is therefore essential.

One of my foremost criticisms of this report is its emphasis on centralization. I do not accept that at all. Quebec has demonstrated leadership in sport and physical activity and is recognized for it. Sport'Aide appeared before this committee, and I would once again like to acknowledge Mr. Croteau's leadership. One concern arising from this approach is that the intellectual property associated with what we have developed and built in Quebec could be weakened by yet another push by Ottawa to centralize.

● (1605)

I will return to the example of Hockey Canada. Ottawa's centralization of the sport system concerns me greatly because, at present, only one Quebecker will be joining Team Canada, and we're no longer even certain that there will be a coach from Quebec on that team.

For years, I've observed a form of systemic discrimination against francophones, and similar issues exist in several other aspects of the sport system. To me, the danger that comes with centralization has a face, and that face is Quebec. I'm very concerned, and I hope that any next steps will be inclusive of the provinces, rather than amount to a levelling down because other provinces are not as advanced as Quebec. That's a major concern for me, and I hope it will be heard. It's urgent to increase funding, once again not just for high-performance sport or programs like own the podium, which merely serve to reinforce an existing system.

I will conclude, Madam Chair. Now that our committee will take note of what has occurred, there will be a tendency to let things slide. As with many other issues, such as doping, where we're engaged in serious reflection, the system will eventually recreate itself because we won't have established the mechanisms needed to protect victims. I'm concerned that these situations will recur, because victims were not placed at the centre of this commission.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I will return to my questions in the next round.

● (1610)

The Chair: Thank you.

[*English*]

Mr. Lawton, you have the floor now for five minutes.

Andrew Lawton (Elgin—St. Thomas—London South, CPC): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Dr. Pipe, for being here, and for your significant work on, as you pointed out earlier, the voluminous report we now have available to us. I greatly appreciate that.

I want to speak for a moment about some of the challenges that are facing women in sports. You have a line in the report that says, "Many women and girls encounter barriers to participating in sport". Specifically, what do you mean by "women and girls"? Whom are you referring to?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I think we're referring to women and girls in communities all across Canada. If I may expand slightly—

Andrew Lawton: No, you've answered the question.

I was asking because this is an issue that has really become very challenging for sporting organizations: when biological males are entering into women's sporting events. I know you've seen this facing the centre that you're the chair and emeritus of, and I know we've seen it in a number of cases. There are numerous studies that have shown the advantage that a male will have over a female based purely on biology and physiology. If you look at power lifting, this can get up to 55% to 65%.

We have also seen cases where the risk of injury is elevated. Rugby Canada looked at this and found that 20% to 30% is the elevated risk of injury from a biological male participating in women's sports.

Would you acknowledge that there is a barrier for women and girls in sports if they are facing a competitive disadvantage and an increased risk of safety because of biological males entering these competitions?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

I would begin, and perhaps conclude, by saying that the rules for eligibility in competition are created by international sport federations and expressed by their national counterparts.

You quite correctly identify that there are differences in the physiology, the size, etc., of males and females. However, I think the issue you raise is a complex one, and it's one we did not explore, precisely because of the challenges that are implicit in that question and also the recognition that we were straying into areas that were the clear and distinct responsibility of international and national sport organizations.

At the same time, I think it's very important to understand that if you're a youngster in a very small community—or maybe not even a very small community—in Canada, and you wish to participate in sport in a way that is comfortable for you, that facility, with the agreement of others in an organization, should be open.

Andrew Lawton: With all due respect, your report is 1,000 pages. You had a lot of latitude. You do actually look at, in your section on 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, the effect of some policies on individuals who identify with those communities, but in your section dealing with women, you don't acknowledge this major issue that athletics have been seized by for the last few years.

Was it a conscious decision to not explore that, or was that a directive given by the government in establishing this commission?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: No, there was no directive in that respect. I will just repeat again that it was the clear recognition and understanding expressed by many in the sport community that the rules and regulations relating to eligibility are the province and domain of others.

● (1615)

Andrew Lawton: Since you've opened the door with a recommendation for a national agency, and you've said that this was a complex issue, do you believe it is worthy of study, that it is worthy of further scrutiny?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I think the sport community is seized with the questions that you raised and is exploring these matters in a variety of ways, in a variety of settings and in a variety of environments.

Andrew Lawton: I appreciate your candour on this, Dr. Pipe. This is a very serious issue. There was a case in June where a 15-year-old female wrestler was sexually assaulted by a biological male opponent. It's interesting that when we raise this issue of women and girls' safety, my Liberal colleagues have been laughing at this subject. I appreciate that you acknowledge the seriousness of the issue and the difference in opinions.

I don't particularly like seeing women and girls getting their heads beaten in rugby matches or being sexually assaulted in wrestling, or finding that they cannot compete fairly because of advantages that someone has purely because of their biology and not through their discipline and athleticism.

I appreciate your work on this. I find it shocking that my Liberal colleagues find this to be a punchline, rather than a serious issue that faces women and girls in athletics.

Thank you, Dr. Pipe.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Ntumba, you have the floor for five minutes.

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba (Mont-Saint-Bruno—L'Acadie, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Pipe, thank you for being here.

Your commission carried out important work in identifying the challenges facing Canada's sport system. Since the release of the report, the government has announced a number of investments relating to safety, participation, athlete support and governance. In your view, which of the commission's recommendations should now be treated as priorities to ensure that these investments bring about lasting transformation in Canadian sport?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: It would be important to state that we would not ascribe a system of priority to our calls to action. As I've noted, the issues that we have been examining are so intertwined that an approach to solving them and addressing these issues requires a broad array of responses, hence the broad array of calls to action. Therefore, I don't think it would be appropriate to identify priority number one, priority number two and priority number three.

Having said that, clearly, as you read through the calls to action, you will recognize, and indeed it would seem the government has recognized, the need to respond to the funding crisis that exists in Canadian sport. We're gratified by the very rapid response to that element of our report. At the same time, we would have misgivings, significant misgivings, if that was interpreted as a return to the status quo. Therefore, it's appropriate that the funding has been restored, but the array of challenges that are reflected in our calls to action remain as, once again, they are interrelated.

The structure of the sports system, the governance of the sports system, has profound implications for the degree to which issues of abuse and maltreatment flourish within such settings. There is a need, as we have emphasized, for a rationalization of the sports system.

Let me give you but one example. In Canada, there are more than 60 national sport organizations. If we go around the world and examine what happens in other countries that might be our competitive equals or competitive counterparts, there are 15 or 20. That fact alone just speaks to the degree to which there has been this expansion, if you will, that has not been part of any necessarily carefully thought through or described central strategy, which is what we're pulling for, and for an apparatus—the central sport entity—that would have responsibility for the creation and the oversight of that vision and of that sport system.

We also make it very clear that we feel it is essential that there be an amalgamation of sport organizations, and that there be a sharing of common services between and among sport organizations. We call upon sport organizations to do their part in assessing their overall level of efficiency, ensuring that they are using resources appropriately and making the careful decisions that are necessary in that regard.

Thank you.

● (1620)

[*Translation*]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba: Thank you very much.

Safety and integrity in sport are central to the commission's report. The government has, among other measures, strengthened the Canadian safe sport program, enhanced the role of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada and Sport Integrity Canada, and increased the requirements imposed on organizations receiving federal funding. What conditions need to be in place for these mechanisms to genuinely restore and sustain the confidence of athletes, parents, coaches and the public at large?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

We think, and our report expresses it, that for any organization that's in receipt of federal funding—assuming they have the ability—we would recommend that they seek and obtain the ability to ensure their policies, processes and procedures are exercised at every level of their sport, from national to community.

We think it's important in terms of safe sport that a number of elements be seen as fundamental: that they adopt universal codes to address and prevent maltreatment and abuse in sport and that the processes, the safe sport processes, apply to all who are involved in their organization and their activities, not just that very small number of people who currently sign a consent to be guided by a national approach or a policy.

We ask that sport organizations identify and appoint safeguarding officers with a specific sole responsibility for ensuring the overall well-being of all who are involved in their sport, from top to bottom.

Many of these mechanisms are demonstrated in other jurisdictions in other sport organizations, so it's not as though these are issues that have not been employed elsewhere.

We call for the implementation of a national screening policy for all who are involved in sport and interacting with children and youth.

These are but a few examples of the elements that we think are important for ensuring a much safer sports system going forward and, of course, ensuring, once again, that there are consistent mechanisms for the recognition, the identification, the management, the resolution and the support of all of those who have been involved in these kinds of unfortunate incidents.

[*Translation*]

Bienvenu-Olivier Ntumba: Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lemire, you now have the floor again for two and a half minutes.

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Pipe, with all due respect, I will give you an opportunity to respond to the points I raised during my previous speaking time.

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

I do understand the points you've made. There were many points that you made, and I do appreciate some of the questions that you raise.

Let me first of all speak to the concept of our commission not being a commission of inquiry. It is abundantly clear that individuals who have been traumatized are very reluctant to come forward and express their views and complaints, in part because the risk of retraumatization is absurdly high, particularly if they are involved in a commission of inquiry where they may be subject to cross-examination.

I would say that we were heartened by the degree to which a trauma-informed process and the opportunity for in camera meetings, in accordance with the wishes of those who wished to appear before us, resulted in an unprecedented number of individuals coming before us. We met with 175 individuals who described maltreatment and abuse in their past.

When you look at the international research literature addressing these issues, it is almost impossible to find a study or a research project that has ever involved anything like that number of individuals. I think we can, with some confidence, say that we very carefully listened to a very substantial number of individuals who were victims or survivors of maltreatment and of advocates for them. As a consequence, and given the consistency of the messages we heard, we are very confident that the recommendations we have made are very appropriate and very necessary.

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire: Going forward, what mechanism should be used to independently examine the decisions and actions of leaders who are aware of the harm suffered by victims but failed to act appropriately? Will they simply be set aside because Canada is now looking only to the future? Do we still look to the past? Do we discredit those who spoke out or intervened in investigations? What do we do about the victims who remain?

● (1625)

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Yes, I think we were very clear, and I repeat again that we were enjoined from finding fault or blame. We are very aware of the gravity of the offences that have occurred. We are very aware of the damage that has been inflicted upon so many in the sports system. Our responsibility was to make recommendations about the future. I would suggest that there are other vehicles and other approaches to respond to and redress the issues that you identified in your question.

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Hardy, I will give you approximately five minutes. If you need a bit more time, that won't be a problem. Today, that won't be a problem.

Gabriel Hardy (Montmorency—Charlevoix, CPC): Thank you for being with us, Mr. Pipe.

I am a kinesiologist. I've spent my entire career working in physical conditioning with athletes and with young people in long-term athlete development. I've always found it striking that, despite the wealth of research and scientific evidence demonstrating the importance of physical activity, we had to wait so long for a report such as yours, which addresses so much of the importance of sport and physical activity. Do you think we're somewhat behind the times? Should this report have been produced earlier?

We need to tell the government and decision-makers that this is urgent and that action is needed. It is high time this happened.

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I'm sorry, but the translation all of a sudden stopped midway through your comment. I think I gleaned that you asked whether we are late in coming to this report.

Gabriel Hardy: Exactly. I was asking you why we would wait so long, like until 2024, to start that kind of report. With all the science that exists right now, we know that it's important. We know that it's working. Physical activity is working for mental health and physical health. Why wait so long? Why wait for an event like this to happen to launch a study like this?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Our responsibility was to look forward and not look back and cast aspersions or cast blame. I completely concur with your views about the importance of sport, and our shared experience, I think, attests to our understanding of just how important sport and physical activity are in our country. Therefore, it's important that a report like this does not sit entombed on a shelf or on a desk.

We began this report by quoting distinctly from the last major examination of issues in the sport system, an examination of which I was a part, the Dubin commission. Mr. Dubin's first paragraph spoke frankly, clearly and distinctly to the issues, the needs and the concerns we have raised in our report.

I recognize that a report of this size and this complexity requires careful consideration and some time to perhaps digest and introduce, but it would be the greatest of tragedies in our view if no action were taken. We have provided a template for the recreation, the reinvigoration and the transformation of the Canadian sport system such that our physical activity and sport apparatus could be seen as global examples, the result being a Canadian population whose commitment to lifelong physical activity and sport participation becomes a vibrant Canadian cultural icon.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Hardy: Would you agree that this initiative is long overdue? You can simply answer yes or no. It is high time that we place physical activity front and centre and recognize it as something fundamental to people's physical and mental health. Rather than looking backward, it's time to move forward and recognize physical activity as part of the solution to people's physical and mental health challenges.

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I want to express my apologies, but my earpiece keeps turning on and off. While you were speaking I was getting....

Gabriel Hardy: Is it okay...?

[*Translation*]

The Chair: You have the right to speak in French, Mr. Hardy. We will make sure that everything is working properly. I'm not going to take away your right to speak in your mother tongue.

● (1630)

Gabriel Hardy: Mr. Pipe, I'll repeat my second question.

You've spent so many years working to improve health, prevent chronic disease and advance this issue. I don't want to dwell on the fact that it wasn't done sooner. As you've said, and as the report makes clear, the focus is on the future. In your view, is it not long overdue for this to happen and for this message to be heard today, advanced and recognized as an important part of the solution for people's physical and mental health? Physical activity must become a central component of the equation going forward.

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you for your question. I apologize for the difficulties I was experiencing.

I couldn't agree more. It is very important that the calls to action and the recommendations in this report are acted upon. We have a unique opportunity. We've provided a template that will allow us to reshape the Canadian physical activity and sport apparatus in a way that can only benefit the Canadian population and all those who become and continue to be active.

At the risk of digressing, Benjamin Disraeli, a politician in another setting at another time, pointed out that the health of the community is the foundation on which every other aspect of a society and economy depends. Given what we know about the importance of physical activity in terms of ensuring and enshrining personal and community health, this is as much a health document, if you will, as it is a template for the recreation of our sport and physical activity systems.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Hardy: I'm pleased that we're discussing this because it leads me to another question.

We talk about longevity and staying healthy as we age. Sport is often associated with performance, elite competition and, quite often, youth. It's almost as though sport belongs only to young people and, once we become adults, we simply watch it on television rather than participate ourselves. Do you believe that findings suggesting that maximal oxygen uptake, or VO_2 max, should be monitored more closely are valid? Do you believe that physical strength should be more widely recognized as an important indicator of healthy aging? Do you think enough is being done to educate people about prevention and health improvement? In Canada, do we place sufficient emphasis on enjoyment and participation rather than focusing solely on performance when it comes to the working age population?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you again.

The audiovisual equipment failed me, but whether we do enough to emphasize the importance of physical activity, I think, was the thrust of your question.

Gabriel Hardy: I can say it in English as well, if you want.

There's a science document explaining that in terms of longevity, if you increase your strength, you're going to live longer. VO2 max is also something that should be better known among the public for longevity. It's not only about living longer, but living well longer.

Do you think that we are focusing enough on and investing enough in making sure people know about it and keep active for life, instead of just focusing on performance?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

Indeed, I think our report speaks directly to that in terms of emphasizing that there must be a restoration of balance between ensuring mass participation and a community level of participation in sport and ensuring a lifelong commitment to physical activity at the same time that we recognize the importance and the significance of high performance in elite sport.

In several places in our report, we note that this equilibrium no longer exists, and it's important that we restore that. If we are to add years to life, it's important that we add life to years, and it's important that we understand that physical activity is the determinant of longevity and health status. We have known for decades that you can be the most accomplished young athlete, but if you stop sport activity and physical activity at a young age and become sedentary, there are no benefits from that.

● (1635)

Gabriel Hardy: The thing is to die young as old as possible.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: That's right.

Gabriel Hardy: Am I done?

The Chair: Yes, but I'm sure we'll get back to you, though.

Ms. Royer, you're next for five minutes.

Zoe Royer (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Lib.): Thank you very much.

Thank you so much, Dr. Pipe. Your passion and your conviction really come through. This is an extraordinary body of work, as you rightly indicated.

I'm thinking about all of the benefits that sport brings, but it is truly rife with maltreatment in its many forms, such as body shaming, physical and psychological abuse, neglect, bullying, hazing, sexual assault, racism and discrimination.

Is this unique to Canada or is it a global epidemic? What are we seeing in developed countries?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you for your question.

These are issues and challenges that have been experienced in an array of communities in national sport and physical activity environments; the challenges are there. There are unique features of sport and physical activity environments that have contributed or made it more likely, perhaps, that these problems can emerge in sport settings.

Again, our report speaks to that: inappropriate governance, a culture of silence and a culture that can be as pernicious as it is pervasive. All of these speak to the need for the kinds of initiatives that we call for: education, governance changes and mechanisms that allow and facilitate the early, prompt identification, examination and resolution of issues as they emerge.

Zoe Royer: Thank you.

The report sets out a phased strategy that begins with a multilateral sport framework and develops into a consolidated federal authority. Why was this approach chosen over the other options put forward in the preliminary report, such as the creation of federal legislation, a federal tribunal or a not-for-profit organization?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Just so that I'm clear, are you speaking about the creation of the central sport entity, or are you speaking about the apparatus to address maltreatment and abuse in sport?

Zoe Royer: I'm speaking about the centralized sport agency.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: All right.

In our preliminary report, we identified potential mechanisms that could be used for the creation of the central entity. Indeed, they were very much the focus of our national summit, which allowed the physical activity and sport communities to comment and express preferences. It was quite consistently expressed, as our final report ultimately reflects, that a Crown corporation is what we feel is necessary because of the advantages, which I may have alluded to a few minutes ago, of Crown corporations, such as flexibility, the degree to which approaches can be more nimble and responsive, a reduction in bureaucracy, and efficiencies, for example.

I want to repeat that there is also an opportunity to allow for the very dynamic sets of skills that are found in our sport and physical activity communities. There are some remarkable leaders who have insights and perspectives about how the processes and the programs in their sports can contribute immensely, but who have been constrained because they've been working to keep the lights on.

A central entity would allow a fuller expression of the skills and perspectives that are to be found within the sport community.

Zoe Royer: I know that there are much higher rates of sexual misconduct and sexual violence against women and girls in sport. If I could put on my women's caucus vice-chair hat for a moment, if this plan is implemented, what would be a good measure of success so that women and girls could feel safer in sport?

● (1640)

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you for a very insightful question.

Certainly, one of our recommendations is the establishment of a research apparatus, if you will, that will examine all features of sport. One of the challenges is that because so many of these issues have been so poorly dealt with and have been cast aside, buried and left unexamined, the dataset, if I can use that term, is very limited.

We would have the opportunity with some of the recommendations found in our calls to action to quantify the degree to which improvements would be forthcoming. It's our view that by implementing the elements that we have identified in our commission report, we would immediately facilitate reporting, resolution and evaluation in support of those who have been so poorly treated in the past.

“Poorly treated” is an understatement. The devastation that has been inflicted upon many, with lifelong implications, is something that we just cannot allow to continue. The circumstances that have allowed those kinds of behaviours to exist cannot be allowed to continue.

Zoe Royer: Thank you.

The Chair: Mrs. Thomas, you have the floor minutes for five minutes.

Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Thank you.

Dr. Pipe, thank you for giving us your time today.

Chapter 12 of the report states, “Throughout the Commission's engagement activities, the federal government's failure to translate policy commitments into tangible programs and meaningful outcomes emerged as a recurring theme.” The report goes on to explain, “All too often, decision-makers create policies and priorities but take little action to implement them. Consequently, no evidence of meaningful progress follows.”

You've talked about a lot of other things today, but you have not addressed the things that you call “structures” within the system that need to be addressed, specifically at the government level, and the mistakes that were made leading to this report. You state clearly in chapter 12 that there have been big mistakes made by government in terms of implementing various safeguards and policies. I'm wondering what those should have been.

Andrew Pipe: Once again, I want to emphasize that our priority is looking forward and not looking backward.

Rachael Thomas: I'll stop you there. You keep saying this, but in chapter 12 you outlined that grave mistakes were made in the past.

With all due respect, Dr. Pipe, you cannot look forward without first reflecting back. It's why you have a thousand pages in front of you reflecting on the past. I will ask you to please answer the question as I've asked it.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I will just say that over the last number of decades, governments of every kind have overseen the implementation of policies or processes that have not necessarily been followed up on. Let me give you a structural example.

Rachael Thomas: That would be great.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: We have the Canadian sport governance code. The diktat is that every sport organization must now apply the Canadian sport governance code. Has there ever been any monitoring or oversight as to whether sport organizations have been adhering to the Canadian sport governance code?

That is but one example of the kinds of errors that have been made over decades, as we have stood by and watched this adhocracy unfold to create the ecosystem that we currently must address.

Rachael Thomas: Dr. Pipe, in your estimation, is OSIC successful?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: As our report identifies, the responsibilities that were part and parcel of the OSIC apparatus were transferred to Sport Integrity Canada or, as it was previously known, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport. We identified a number of very specific issues that spoke to the shortcomings of that organization.

Rachael Thomas: How would you summarize those conclusions?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Complexity, lack of transparency, inconsistency, failure to respond, failure to support all parties involved in issues that relate—

Rachael Thomas: Thank you.

There have been specific commitments made by the current government since 2015 by their minister of sport with regard to OSIC and seeing it reformed. Were those reforms put in place?

● (1645)

Dr. Andrew Pipe: As I just mentioned, responsibility for issues relating to maltreatment and abuse of sport were transferred from OSIC—

Rachael Thomas: I asked a very specific question. With regard to OSIC, there was supposed to be a transformation that took place. The minister of sport, since 2015, promised the Canadian public that those types of changes would be implemented in order to better protect those who are in Canadian sport culture. Were those changes made to create greater safety?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I would just repeat that there was a transformation of those responsibilities. As a consequence of our meeting with countless numbers of organizations and individuals, there was the clearly expressed view that the situation had improved distinctly as a consequence of moving from OSIC to what is now known as Sport Integrity Canada.

Rachael Thomas: To that end, then, in addition.... I'm sorry. I'll move off that for now.

I'm feeling a little bit frustrated, to be honest, and I think that's coming through, because it feels like you're skirting the question. You came here today to answer questions with regard to a 1,000-page report that is sitting in front of you, and you're refusing to do so. You're giving generalities instead of being able to point out the specifics of the report, which is frustrating for us as members of Parliament who are trying to get to the bottom of this.

Let's figure this out. What is the problem? What is the problem from the past so that we can fix it for the future? That's the goal here today, and you're actually impeding that process.

My question for you is this: The minister of sport at the time promised that a response would be given to this report within six months. Has that response been given?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: No response has been forthcoming at this point.

Rachael Thomas: Okay. When was this report published?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: It was published in March.

Rachael Thomas: How many months is that?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: That is now, I guess, just over six months.

Rachael Thomas: Great. What would you have expected from the minister or the parliamentary secretary of sport?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Now you're asking me to speculate.

Rachael Thomas: What would you have expected? That's not a speculation.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: With great respect, in your question, you asked me to speculate what the response would be.

Rachael Thomas: No. I'm just asking if you would have expected him to respond, since that was the promise made. Would that be a reasonable expectation?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: We would have anticipated a response to this report at some point.

Rachael Thomas: That's excellent.

Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Auguste, you now have the floor for five minutes.

Tatiana Auguste (Terrebonne, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Dr. Pipe, the commission recommends a phased approach that includes immediate, short-term and longer-term objectives extending over a period of up to approximately five years. If you were to appear before this committee again in five years' time, what concrete changes would you expect to see in order to conclude that we had truly transformed the system, or were well on the way to doing so?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: A very straightforward and, I hope, not a simplistic answer to your question is that I would hope to see that the fundamental elements of our calls to action have been adopted over that five-year period. Indeed, the process that we outlined recognizes that many of these issues cannot be addressed immediately. There needs to be a gradual response and approach to responding to these calls to action.

[*Translation*]

Tatiana Auguste: Right now, the Government of Canada is investing in community infrastructure through the build communities strong fund. Several billion dollars are being invested in community infrastructure, including swimming pools, arenas, skating rinks and other facilities that help connect communities across our ridings through sport. Could you speak to the importance of investing in sport infrastructure in Canada? How important is it for communities to have access to these facilities? How can stronger connections be built with national sport organizations?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: As we note in our report, sport infrastructures become very important community resources, above and beyond their use for sport or physical activity undertakings. We also note that there has been a lack of replenishment or rejuvenation of sport and physical activity facilities across the country at every level. One can only say that ensuring communities have access to multi-use sport facilities provides communities with assets that enhance community life, facilitate inclusion, provide young and old alike with opportunities for meaningful forms of physical activity expression and allow us the potential to optimize health and community well-being. For all of those reasons, we emphasize the need, as we are embarking upon approaches to rejuvenate or replenish infrastructure in Canada—

● (1650)

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire: Excuse me, Madam Chair. I must point out that there is no longer any interpretation into French. I believe the witness's microphone was not turned on.

The Chair: Has the issue been resolved now?

Sébastien Lemire: Yes, thank you.

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: [*Technical difficulty—Editor*] infrastructure is important because that infrastructure will not only contribute substantially to a whole array of community issues, but also provide environments that allow us to contribute to an overall national sport environment.

If I may digress, the most successful sport nations are those that emphasize the grassroots participation and development of sport, not the hothousing of elite, high-performance athletes. Community sport infrastructures are central to those kinds of undertakings.

[*Translation*]

Tatiana Auguste: You mention how important participation is, particularly in under-represented communities, including indigenous communities, Black communities and others. You speak about the importance of ensuring that everyone participates, regardless of socio-economic background. Could you elaborate on that aspect of the report?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: We speak very specifically in our report to the need to ensure that the challenges of accessibility that are experienced by many in communities from coast to coast to coast are appropriately redressed. Those challenges are financial. They are cultural, they are programmatic and they reflect the lack of appropriate infrastructure. We speak clearly about the need to very specifically seek to address those kinds of challenges.

One of the realities that are captured in our report is that participation in sport is actually, in many areas and in many ways, declining. There is an exodus from sporting activity as individuals, youngsters, reach the age of 13, 14 or 15. Many of the reasons that are posited for that exodus are cost, accessibility and the degree to which there is an overemphasis on performance at that point, when individuals want to continue to participate in sport for fun and the sheer physical exuberance that can come from playing games and participating in sport.

These are issues that require careful consideration, and the accessibility challenges must be seen as important impediments to achieving the kinds of results we would want in terms of enhancing the physical activity capacities and the health of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Lemire, I'll give you the floor again for two and a half minutes.

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Mr. Pipe, in the circumstances, your study was undertaken as a result of a directive from former minister Qualtrough. The mandate she received from Parliament was to establish an independent public inquiry. A motion to that effect was adopted by a majority of the House of Commons following a debate. That debate stemmed from the work of this committee and that of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, where more than 105 witnesses appeared.

The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage held more than 30 meetings on this issue over a two-year period, which is substantial. The committee also produced a fairly extensive report of 180 pages, including appendices, as well as 21 recommendations and supplementary opinions, including that of the Bloc Québécois.

Did the commissioners review that committee report and take it into account? What influence, if any, did it have on your report?

● (1655)

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you for your question, and thank you for the catalyst, if you will, or catalyzing the process that ultimately resulted in our commission.

Very definitely, the reports you have identified were clearly recognized and clearly reviewed, and our report acknowledges the contributions that are to be found in those particular reports. The contents of those reviews, like the contents of the very significant number of research papers and documents that were submitted to us, and examinations of other studies, all played a very significant role in the creation of our report and the ultimate calls to action.

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you. I'm glad to hear that, regardless.

I had difficulty with one aspect of your commission. Even though I'm the member of Parliament who initiated many parts of this process, I was completely excluded. I even took steps to participate in your summit—as an observer, for example—but my request was denied on the grounds that members of Parliament didn't belong there. I find this regrettable, especially since this process was meant to serve as a summit where important discussions could take place.

Furthermore, the minister had access to the report before the members of Parliament. There's a process that I don't like and that I found biased. We could have played the role of a watchdog, but we did not. A lack of transparency remains, which I believe undermines the sports industry, despite the report's hundreds of pages of nonetheless valuable content. Some bias is still evident here, which leaves a lingering issue regarding the process.

My time is up. I'll let you respond, but it will be up to the chair to decide.

The Chair: We won't have any more time for the other committee members.

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: May I make a comment in response, Madam Chair?

The Chair: Sure.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I thank you for your so clearly expressed perspectives, and I understand the points that you have raised. It is important to understand that there was a very clear expression from across the sport community that individuals would not be willing to speak candidly in a summit if they felt that they were being.... Well, they wanted this to be about, from, of and by the sport and physical activity community. There were many clear expressions saying, "Gee, if politicians are here, or if there are individuals from this ministry or that, we are not going to speak our minds because we are concerned about what might be the repercussions for organizations or funding or so on."

I completely understand the point of view that you express, but I'm very confident that the approach that was taken ultimately served the sport and physical activity community, and it fulfilled the responsibilities that we had to be able to provide a very candid, clear report to the federal government.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Kuruc, I think you're next.

[*Translation*]

I think that you'll be sharing your time with your twin.

[*English*]

Ned Kuruc: I'm the original model. He's the 2.0.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ned Kuruc: Thank you again, Dr. Pipe.

I touched on the private sector, but I have a question that may or may not be in the scope of your report. Seeing as how you have such a past in this and it really is a lot of your life's work, I have to ask you this.

We have, like my colleague here, kinesiologists, strength and conditioning coaches, gyms—we know that six million Canadians use gyms—and certified trainers. I feel they play a very big role and are often under the radar. Athletes train there for many years before they even enter Sport Canada or some organizations. In your report, did you meet with these types of structures that are not per se under government control? If you did, would they be viewed as great partners?

● (1700)

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

Once again, we met with, I think, virtually every element of the sport and physical activity community writ large. We attended various conferences. We met with professional organizations. We received submissions from individuals in a variety of sport settings, sport facilities and sport organizations.

I do think that we also make very specific mention of private sport facilities in our report, not necessarily in the context as you have described them, but in the degree to which, increasingly, access to sport is through private, independent organizations or entities, which are beyond the reach, the stewardship or the oversight of sport organizations or national sport organizations. We were very much aware of that sector of the community, and hopefully we reflected the expressions of the sport and physical activity community writ large.

Once again, I would underscore the consistency of the views relating to the structures, the orientation, the approach and the rejuvenation.

Ned Kuruc: I guess it would be safe to say that the private side of it, or maybe the for-profit side of it, wasn't necessarily consulted as much as the governmental side of sports and things like that?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: We made every effort to reach into every nook and cranny of the Canadian sport and physical activity community, and we extended invitations to everyone.

Ned Kuruc: That's fair enough.

Would you say that sector has a big role in the development of an athlete in some way? For someone like me, who was in an underfunded system his whole life, I had to go to that side. Yes, that did cost me money, but that's the side that developed me further in a sport, when you get to nutritionists and this and that. That's the question I'm trying to get out.

Do you see a value in the private side working closely with Sport Canada, with government or anything like that?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I think all of the elements of the sport and physical activity community or apparatus have a very important part to play in contributing to the overall levels of the physical capacity and sport performance of Canadians—absolutely.

Ned Kuruc: Thank you, Dr. Pipe.

I'm done.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Hardy: Thank you.

I would like to follow up on the question asked by my colleague. Out in the community, I hear a great deal about the children's fitness tax credit, one of the initiatives launched during the Harper era. I know that this was indeed addressed in the report. Perhaps you can tell me whether it works or doesn't work. However, many parents talk to us about it. As the cost of living rises, access to sports remains quite difficult given the expense.

Is there a way to ensure that the cost isn't a barrier, to get our community moving more, to make this more widespread, to really boost participation and to make sure that cost isn't always the factor that prevents parents from letting their children play the sport of their choice? Yes, people can be active outdoors. They can go jogging, running or walking in nature. All these things are great. However, young people who enjoy physical activities often want to do them with friends, through organized sports, and so on. In your opinion, what's the best way to get a large portion of the population moving more, to place more emphasis on having fun and to ultimately develop more athletes?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you for your question.

We do note in our report that we wish government to examine alternative approaches to the funding of mass participation in community-level sport, and we cite a couple of examples. We make no specific recommendations. We talk about how various tax revenues might be applied to support sport and physical activity undertakings.

We also note that one of the most significant developments in terms of physical activity and sport over the years was the degree to which physical education became a meaningless part of school curricula from coast to coast to coast. School sports and physical education were most typically the most common form of entry into sport and physical activity. That's an issue which I think plays into responding to the question you have raised.

We call upon both government and sport organizations themselves to begin to think about the ways in which they can develop new revenues and optimize support for their activities. We also identified—and I digress—that there were some things we did not specifically examine in our report, but that we feel merit very significant consideration. Sport gambling is one of those, and I will say no more.

● (1705)

The Chair: We have a bill to study that coming up at this committee, and I'm sure we'll get there.

Ms. Hirtle, it's over to you for five minutes.

Alana Hirtle (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon, Dr. Pipe. It's lovely to have you here. Your comment a little bit ago was—if I wrote it down correctly—that if we're going to add years to life, we need to add life to years. I love that.

It got me thinking, then, about seniors. I know how popular pickleball is in my riding, not just with seniors. That seems to be the overwhelming activity these days. I'm wondering how we encourage seniors to get involved in sports if it's not something they've done throughout their lives.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: It's a very interesting question. If I may default in responding to this—and this is not necessarily to be found in my report—as one who's been involved in addressing the pathophysiological consequences of physical inactivity, my first focus is fun. The degree to which physical activity can be made fun, enjoyable and accessible is the secret to ensuring that people continue to be physically active.

That challenge is made all the easier if in fact we have a sport and physical activity system that allows people to develop life skills and lifestyles that can easily be expressed throughout the life spectrum. Once you have begun to enjoy the exuberance that can come from being physically active, one seeks to maintain that throughout all stages of one's life.

Alana Hirtle: Thank you for that.

Now I'm going to, I think, tag on to something that Mr. Hardy asked or...to encapsulate that. You mentioned schools and how gym classes withered away and are not really what they should or could be. I guess my question is this: How can governments, schools, sports organizations and community groups...?

There's all this activity going on. How do we get everybody to work together to strengthen Canada's sport ecosystem?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

One thing that struck us, in terms of our examination of sport systems and sport structures in other countries, was that many sport organizations have specific individuals on their staff whose sole responsibility is to develop and grow their sport at the community level. When individuals have specific responsibilities in those areas, they're able to catalyze and synthesize the kinds of relationships that are necessary at the community level.

Here I want to underscore one of the other important features of our report. We salute the thousands upon thousands of Canadians who are active in volunteering in sport and who make profound contributions to community well-being and to individual and community health as a consequence of those activities. The challenge is to ensure that those kinds of activities are married with the other players within the sport system so that you have a situation in which the sum is greater than the total of the parts, if you will, particularly at the community level.

I once again pay credit to those within our sport system. There are some very gifted, imaginative individuals within the sport system who, given the resources and the ability to exercise their skills and apply their perspectives, can provide transformational leadership across and throughout the sport and physical activity structures.

● (1710)

Alana Hirtle: Thank you for that.

I have a minute left, so I'm going to ask this: We touched a bit on diversity and indigenous issues. What role can and should sport play in social inclusion and reconciliation?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: We very specifically identified the need for responding to calls to action 87 to 91 in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report. We also recognize that, with approaches to sports in indigenous communities, it's important and essential that we follow the leadership of indigenous peoples themselves.

We also recognize that there are opportunities for all sport organizations to learn from and to listen to indigenous peoples and to seek ways in which, in their own particular sport organizations, they can capture the skills, perspectives and values that are found in sport and physical activities as they are practised in indigenous communities.

Alana Hirtle: That's my time. Thank you very much, sir.

The Chair: You're right on time—good job.

Mr. Lawton is next for five minutes.

Andrew Lawton: Thank you very much.

Dr. Pipe, I just want to touch on something you said earlier when we were discussing eligibility in sports. You said this was really an issue for regulators and other levels to deal with. However, your chief recommendation is that we need to have a national agency because there's too much fragmentation among these different bodies.

Is that not a convenient way out of having to deal with an issue, when you're really proposing a national agency that's going to have to deal with, as you have said, all aspects of sport?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Yes, you're completely correct, but I would posit that the same kinds of challenges.... There would be a recognition within the sport community that the decision that there are six players on the ice is the province of an international hockey federation, and the decision as to who those six players might be is also the province of an international sport federation. I apologize if I'm being pedantic about this, but those challenges are to be found within other provinces—not geographical or constitutional provinces but within other spheres of the sport system.

Andrew Lawton: That's wonderful. Thank you very much.

With respect to the committee, we have some housekeeping to attend to here. We are trying to set out our agenda as a committee, moving forward, and the things we need to prioritize. I know, as members, that we've all discussed in the past, in different discussions we've had here, the idea of Canadian identity. This is something that's incredibly pertinent now more than ever. There's a need to assert our sovereignty and respect the history of this country and the way in which we honour that history.

We have seen, in the last five years, a rash of vandalism and destruction of public monuments, statues and historical landmarks that I believe this committee is best positioned to deal with. Today I'm giving a notice of motion that reads as follows:

> That, given the prevalence of vandalization, destruction and removal of public statues, monuments and historical landmarks across Canada in recent years, the committee undertake a study, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), on these incidences and the important role these public symbols play in shaping Canadian heritage and identity; and that the committee dedicate at least four (4) meetings to this study and prepare a comprehensive report with their findings and recommendations.

This is a motion that I will move, when permitted, at a future meeting. It's incredibly vital right now, as we try to find ways that we as a country can wrap ourselves in the flag, understand the importance of these monuments and celebrate them.

On this issue, I will say that there should be vast support from across the aisle. I know that in neighbourhoods very close to some of my colleagues', they have seen some of this vandalism and destruction of statues in the past. We have had founding fathers of this country, such as John A. Macdonald, covered up, even by levels of government. As a country, I think we should do a much better job of protecting these sites. As a committee, I think we have an important role to play, as it is so central to Canadian heritage.

That is the motion. I look forward to hopefully being able to get to that study sooner rather than later.

● (1715)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Lawton. I'll note that you've just put that motion on notice. I don't think we're debating the motion, at this point.

Andrew Lawton: We're not unless there's unanimous consent to move the motion.

An hon. member: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

The Chair: We'll move on to Mr. Myles.

You have the floor for five minutes.

David Myles (Fredericton—Oromocto, Lib.): Was that the end of Mr. Lawton's time?

The Chair: Yes.

David Myles: Okay. Thank you very much.

Thanks, Dr. Pipe, for being here. That's really impressive. It's obviously a lot of work. Thanks for all the work you've done.

I wanted to speak to what Mr. Hardy was speaking about too, because it seems very central to the theme of this. That's the idea of a balance between a competitive sporting environment and one that is inclusive and participatory. It seems to me that a lot of this behaviour over the last number of years was a cultural problem that was tied to some sort of acceptance, based on highly competitive environments, that there was almost a necessity for cruelty, if you will.

You've worked in very highly competitive environments. How do we move the narrative culturally towards an environment where we appreciate competitive athletics, but we also build a system that is inclusive and safe? I have young kids. I want them to play sports. I want them to play sports well. I want them to play at the highest levels.

You've played at the highest levels yourself. What has been your experience in that shifting narrative? It seems quite fundamental to this. I think Monsieur Hardy rightfully pointed to that in terms of just creating that balance between these two narratives.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

I have had the great good fortune to have been exposed to exceptional leaders in sport in the form of coaches who espoused an approach to sport that was absolutely magnificent.

I think the challenge of which you speak is a very significant one, and it's all about changing culture. It's all about changing culture within sport. Certainly the structures—now I speak to the governance structures of sport—can be very important in terms of assuming responsibility for leading those transformative kinds of processes. That's why we focus particularly on the need to ensure that sport organizations have governance of the highest standard, so that individuals are able to express that kind of thoughtful stewardship for the growth, development and oversight of sport, recognizing the intrinsic values of sport and physical activity. It's a need for appropriate leadership. It's a need for appropriate governance. It's a need for a reordering of priorities, if you will.

I'm 112 years old, so I can remember when the Physical Activity and Sport Act came into being. It came into being because of a concern for the declining levels of physical capacity and physical activity of Canadians at that point. Very innovative, nifty and good things happened.

Over the years, there has been this—my term—creep, such that high-performance sport came to be increasingly emphasized. Not surprisingly, if you're a sport organization and you have responsibilities for a national team, and there are expectations that are being placed upon you in association with conditions of funding that speak to those particular elements, then the orientation of the organization becomes skewed to focus in that direction. This is why the report calls for a rebalancing, for an equal emphasis on the community-level and developmental level of sport—which is not anti high-performance or elite sport.

In fact—I think I made this point earlier—you can make a very strong case that if you want to contribute most profoundly to enhancing performance at the elite level, increase the number of people who play your sport at the grassroots. All of a sudden you have opportunities for talent identification, etc., which are exponentially larger than was the case before. I would draw attention to the fact that in our conversations with individuals from other nations—Norway in particular—it is quite evident that an approach that emphasizes community development of sport has profound implications for, ultimately, high performance internationally of sport.

● (1720)

David Myles: That was exactly what I wondered. I think that for a long time we saw them as being exclusive to one another, but in other countries and jurisdictions and now, hopefully, for us as a country, we are going to be able to lead that.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Yes.

You won't necessarily find this in the report, but it's certainly voiced. I think I've already voiced it here. Trickle-down theories of sport development are about as applicable as trickle-down theories of economic development. The idea is that if we just have two or three really high-performance, high-profile athletes then the streets will be flooded tomorrow with kids going out to emulate their activities. I completely understand that there's an element of that, but it does not have the power that many people would ascribe to it.

David Myles: That's very good. Thank you.

The Chair: You're very quotable today, Dr. Pipe.

Thanks very much.

[*Translation*]

I'll now give the floor to Mr. Lemire for two and a half minutes.

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Pipe, as I delve deeper into the answer that you gave me earlier, I'm convinced that no opposition member—who acted as a watchdog, whose role was to encourage victims to speak out in a safe space such as Parliament and whose actions here may have provided some form of redress—could have hindered people's ability to voice their opinions. Of course, perhaps the presence of a minister as well, along with past positions, may have had that impact.

You made your choice. It's your decision. However, what I find most troubling is that these mechanisms, which I feel lack transparency, led to findings that promote centralization. Generally speaking, centralization also leads to structures that become less transparent and more opaque.

There has been little discussion—in my view, not enough—about Sport Canada's accountability, particularly over the past 20 years. How has that organization contributed to this system? Sport Canada was supposed to act as a watchdog for the various national sports organizations. However, it failed to fulfill its duty. There have been abuses. Yet the main recommendation is a centralized structure where Sport Canada would again be asked to act as the watchdog. Furthermore, the players that gave a voice to the voiceless have been removed. I find this extremely concerning.

I can give you some examples. Many people spoke before this committee—and I want to acknowledge them—as well as before the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. They didn't participate in your commission's work specifically because they didn't trust it and specifically because there wasn't any watchdog—as I have been for them—on your commission.

As a result, what mechanisms will be implemented in the future to better protect victims, rather than—in many cases—senior executives who have turned a blind eye to abuses committed by others? How do we increase accountability if your main solution is more centralization? By definition, centralization means moving away from the foundation and from the power of the people working on the ground.

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you very much. I very much appreciate the concerns you raise.

I would just say once again, perhaps, that consistency is very important in terms of the mechanisms that are introduced and applied across Canada across all sport organizations at all levels. Our report outlines the elements of the mechanisms of the processes that should be in place to ensure, exactly as you have identified, that athletes, parents, families and communities foretrust in the system, and that system must be transparent; it must be fair. That system must reflect best practices, and we have identified some of those best practices.

I would also make the point that a central national organization can benefit from the leadership and the demonstrated examples that are to be found in other areas of Canada and that have shown how approaches to safe sport can be introduced and applied in their jurisdiction. We have acknowledged the leadership that has been shown in some of those settings.

At the end of the day, we must ensure that the mechanisms that are in place are best in class; are evidence-based; reflect all the principles of justice, confidentiality and due process; and are trauma-informed and victim-centred. If we do anything less, we have failed all those individuals who have spoken to you and to us and have expressed the damage they have experienced, the trauma they have undergone and the devastation that has been introduced in their lives as a consequence of the degree to which there have been inadequacies across the system for reasons that we identify in our report and that I hopefully have articulated to some extent this afternoon.

● (1725)

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you.

The Chair: I'll now give the floor to Mr. Hardy for five minutes.

Gabriel Hardy: Mr. Pipe, today's conversation has been truly wonderful in so many ways.

Obviously, as a kinesiologist, physical activity is key for me. It's actually one of my reasons for getting into politics. I want to try to change the message surrounding physical activity.

We know that every dollar invested in prevention can save between three and twenty dollars, with an accepted average of thirteen dollars. Is this a scientifically recognized fact that you often see?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Absolutely, sir. We know that physical activity is a profoundly important determinant of health.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Hardy: We were just talking about finding all the necessary ways to increase the number of people who engage in physical activity. We were told that this could potentially have an impact on the physical and mental health of the public. In the long run, we'll surely have more high-level athletes given the number of people participating.

We also spoke earlier about tax credits, approaches and incentives. How can we commend people who make the right decision to take charge of their health? I don't know whether this appears in your report or is even something that you have studied.

Let me explain. People often say that health falls under both provincial and federal jurisdiction. We talk about health transfers and so on. However, at its core, health is a personal matter. How can we praise and encourage physical activity by showing appreciation for people who spend money to get active? One way to recognize them could be a tax credit or a health-related monetary benefit. What can we ultimately do to improve this activity, this practice?

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you for your question.

I know that we have a common understanding of the importance of the issues that are the focus of our discussion today. Forgive what seems like a bromide, but one of the great challenges is to make sure that healthy choices are easy choices. Impediments to making healthy choices, which can include cost, accessibility and perceptions about the degree to which you are welcome, etc., are all issues that we must challenge.

Our report does call both on government and on sport organizations to examine ways in which financial support for sport and physical activity can be enhanced. There is a variety of mechanisms that can possibly find application in there.

Yes, it is a challenge to try to ensure that healthy choices are the easy choices. I think one of the great strengths of many sport organizations, and indeed many sports, is the degree to which sport can be inexpensive. All you require are space and some minimal equipment, etc.

[*Translation*]

Gabriel Hardy: Do you think that this is an urgent matter? Every year, we talk about health transfers to the provinces, which are asking for more. We talk about skyrocketing hospitalization costs, sedentary lifestyles and the rise in chronic diseases. Is there an urgent need to recognize that a change of course is necessary?

Clearly, given the high level of sedentary behaviour—with people moving less and less and spending more and more time glued to their screens—we're heading for a massive increase in spending on treatments. So we need to change course. We need to really shift gears to make sure that doesn't happen. Is there an urgent need to take action?

● (1730)

[*English*]

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Yes, I think there is. That's the whole thrust of our report and our calls to action. The time is now. Unless we make the transformative changes that we recommend in our report, situations are only going to worsen.

The Chair: Mr. Kuruc.

Ned Kuruc: Thank you.

Dr. Pipe, I have one question here.

In your interpretation of a Crown corporation being in the sports entertainment industry, do you see it as something that's completely funded by the taxpayer, or are there revenue streams in terms of TV contracts or everybody coming under that sponsorship? Do you see it that way to generate...? Is it a revenue-generating entity, or is it a tax-funded entity? How do you see that, sir?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Thank you.

Certainly, we make the point that the Crown corporation should be supported by the federal government, but we also very specifically note one of the responsibilities of that Crown corporation is to look into alternative approaches to the support and funding, etc., of sport and physical activity in Canada—

Ned Kuruc: Do you find it a problem if all sports come under that umbrella, and they have possible TV contracts or this or that? Would you envision any of those problems moving forward? In some sports sectors, those become big problems. Did your report even look into that? It's more of an inquisitive question than anything.

Dr. Andrew Pipe: I'm not sure I completely understand the question, but what we are proposing in terms of the central entity is a Crown corporation that is responsible for the oversight, the stewardship and the governance of sport, and to which national sport organizations and other sport organizations would respond. The degree to which dynamic leadership could be provided to the governance of that Crown corporation is the degree to which imagination and innovation could run free.

Ned Kuruc: Thank you, Dr. Pipe. I appreciate it.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kuruc and Mr. Hardy, for your time and everything else. You're just like real twins; you share everything.

Mr. Myles, you have five minutes, and then we'll wrap up our questions.

David Myles: Thank you very much.

This follows a little along the questioning around the centralized entity. Maybe you can describe some of the other versions of this central entity that are in Norway, Australia and New Zealand. It was mentioned in the report.

What has that provided in those jurisdictions? What can we learn from them?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Let me just cite the example of Australia. You have a Crown corporation-type structure for Australian sport that is one step removed from government. It is responsible to government and under the oversight of the minister, etc., but it makes all the substantial decisions about sport and physical activity in Australia. It has proven to be very effective and works very well. There's a lot we can learn from Australia.

In Norway, you have a similar structure. It is not necessarily a Crown corporation, but you have the Confederation of Sports, which is an organization that receives national governmental support and is an agglomeration of all of the national sport organizations, with an administrative structure, etc. It's not too hard to see how that, in many ways, parallels the creation of a Crown corporation that would be responsible for the stewardship of sport and physical activity in Canada.

In the United Kingdom, you have a situation that's a bit different because UK Sport oversees high performance only. However, Sport England, Sport Wales and Sportscotland, etc., are all unique entities that have very specific responsibilities for grassroots, up to.... The relationship between and among those organizations is, as you might anticipate, one that's very constructive. Once again, you have an entity in each of those jurisdictions, whether it's the United Kingdom or the individual nations, that is removed from government, which demonstrates that these structures are workable. Not only are they workable, but they can produce some very significant results.

New Zealand is another example.

● (1735)

David Myles: It's great to hear the examples. Are there metrics in terms of participation? In terms of some of the goals that are outlined here and some of the goals that we're talking about in terms of physical activity, have some of these centralized entities addressed that basic participation, physical activity and some of those challenges?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: Absolutely. Let me cite the Norwegian example and let me provide you with some elements from the Norwegian sport system that are completely unknown to most Canadians. When children play sports in Norway, they don't keep score until they're nine or 10 years old. Children are not allowed to travel from community to community to play sports until they're 12 or 13. Children are encouraged to play a variety of sports up until the age of 12 or 13. The idea that you're going to hothouse eight-year-olds in a AAA hockey team is just so foreign. It's so alien. From the age of 12 or 13 onward is when individuals who have the interest or show an ability can now specialize in sport.

Levels of daily physical activity are probably highest in the Norwegian population, out of all of the OECD nations. It is the most successful Olympic nation in terms of international competition. It has demonstrated that it is possible to have this balance in the community level of sport, ensuring the careful nurturing of youngsters in sport and providing them with the life skills and lifestyles that will allow them to enjoy sport throughout the rest of their lives.

If you step onto a streetcar on a Sunday in Oslo, you will find it very difficult to get on amidst the grandparents, uncles, aunts, parents, brothers and sisters, all of whom are carrying their cross-country skis as they make their way to the Holmenkollen. I'm painting a picture that is not necessarily captured in our report. Examples exist elsewhere.

I want to emphasize that we did not make a comparison with or an examination of the U.S. sport system. That is because it is a system that is dominated by a university and a professional sport system. The level of public support for physical activity in sport is virtually non-existent in the United States.

The Chair: In the Norway example, that was started with a drug problem, as I understood. Is that right, or am I totally off base? Is that how they knew?

Dr. Andrew Pipe: This is a country whose culture has emphasized and embodied physical activity. They have ensured that physical activity and sport are such a central part of their culture that they have mechanisms, etc., to ensure it. I would say, to your point—and again, I'm stepping outside of our report—in terms of antidoping approaches and so on, Norway led the world back in the 1980s as a reflection of a sports system that looked at all of the other issues that surround sport above and beyond issues of mere performance and competitive excellence.

The Chair: I love your observations about the fun and inclusivity of sport. Thank you very much for your testimony today, sir. I learned a lot. Many of my colleagues did as well.

I have one point for members before we rise. We have Bill S-211 coming before us the next week that we meet, after we come back. We need two days to study that bill. If everybody's okay with that, maybe start sending your.... Do we have a deadline for witnesses on that?

Just as soon as you can, get us some witnesses for Bill S-211. We'll do two hours in total of witnesses on that bill, one hour for the sponsors and one hour for the line-by-line examination of the bill.

Go ahead, Mrs. Thomas.

Rachael Thomas: Could you maybe just repeat that? I'm sorry. I thought that at our last business meeting....

With Bill S-211, it was my understanding that we were going to bring forward the mover of the bill and that we were then going to move into clause-by-clause for the second half of that meeting. Now there's discussion, or it seems to be indicated, that we're going to move to two meetings.

Can you just break down why that is and what those two meetings will entail?

● (1740)

The Chair: I believe there are a lot of witnesses who really want to have their say, so we want to give people an opportunity. That is what I've understood, but maybe Mr. Myles is a better person to answer those questions.

David Myles: Primarily, it is because we have some amendments. I figured that once we have amendments, you'll have amendments.... Well, you have one simple amendment. I think once we're into line-by-line, the two people and the amendments, we're already into a second meeting. We can choose whether we want to go with witnesses, if we want to fill out that second two-hour slot with witnesses, but we weren't able to actually discuss that part, so I wasn't aware whether we were going to bring....

Given that we have amendments, I suspect we are going to be moving into a second day. I think we're all clear that it's not going to be moving past a second day, but I had a sense that if we were going to go line by line and have the presenters of the bill plus amendments, we were going to be into a second day. What we do with that second day, we could do the amendments and.... I just want to be able to wrap it up in the second hour, but if there's a desire to add witnesses as well and do that, we can do that.

Rachael Thomas: I understand. However, it does seem a little bit out of order if we're going to allow the mover of the bill to come, then we're going to move into line-by-line and then, potentially, in the second meeting hear from witnesses. Usually you would hear from witnesses first. We're not actually expanding the time, then, to give more time for amendments. We would actually be expanding the time to hear from witnesses.

The Chair: It is our understanding.... I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Rachael Thomas: Then, to your point, Mr. Myles, we are potentially expanding it yet again to a third meeting if those amendments need more than that one hour. I think we can get it done in an hour, but I just raise that.

David Myles: I agree. I think if we wanted to add witnesses, we could potentially do one hour for the sponsor, one hour for witnesses and, at the second meeting, line-by-line and amendments. I'm amenable. My thinking is that if we're going to get into amendments and line-by-line and the presenters, we're going to be into a second....

I'm certainly not trying to drag this thing on either, but we do have amendments so I wanted to have a chance to discuss them.

Andrew Lawton: I'm also on the justice committee, where we do 16-hour meetings sometimes, so I'm a little bit biased. Could we not just extend the first meeting by even an hour so we can still move...? Are resources not available? If we get them, we could do it all. We have a lot that we need to get to in general beyond the bill.

The Chair: Mrs. Thomas, did you have your...?

Rachael Thomas: I understand that resources can be finite and sometimes difficult; however, this is a parliamentary committee. Parliamentary business does take precedence in this place, and we do have to be able to work.

It's not impossible to acquire those resources. It's just a matter of whether we will pursue that. I think what Conservatives are suggesting is that we're ready to work. We're happy to be here for the additional hour that it would take to get this bill discussed, to hear from witnesses, to be able to put forward amendments and to conclude it.

The Chair: Would members like to invite witnesses? We can maybe schedule two days, and then, if we can't finish in two days, extend the second sitting to finish the line-by-line so that we don't have to ever go to a third meeting. I'm just putting that as a suggestion.

There are lots of people who have reached out who really want to testify on this bill. They've reached out to our committee. I thought it would be nice to give them an opportunity, but we don't have to.

Go ahead, Mr. Myles.

David Myles: My hesitation with the three hours—and I appreciate the desire to work because I have the same desire, my friends—is that it causes conflicts with some of the other members with other committees timing-wise. It feels, again, like two hours is going to be too short. The witness part, to me, is not a deal breaker. If there are no absolutely crucial witnesses, we can get them to submit witness testimonials in writing.

I'd be curious to know, Mrs. Thomas and Madam Chair, having been in the committee longer, if two hours is a reasonable amount of time to get through that amount of work.

● (1745)

The Chair: Well, it depends on whether we hear from witnesses.

David Myles: No, I mean without witnesses.

The Chair: I think we can get through the bill in two days.

We don't have anything in stone or written in ink on the following day. It was a day that we left open to study draft reports. If we finish after one meeting, we can then go back to the draft report on the second day. Does that make sense?

David Myles: Yes, that makes sense to me—as long as we have something to fill the time with.

The Chair: Shall we invite witnesses? Is anybody opposed to inviting some witnesses, to seeing if they are available on the two days that we have set aside for this study? Is everybody okay with that? We can schedule two days. We may not need the second day. We can invite witnesses. They may or may not be available on those days.

Rachael Thomas: Will we invite witnesses for the Tuesday?

The Chair: We could do it for both days if we have them already set aside.

Rachael Thomas: I think we're saying just the first day.

The Chair: Do you mean just the first day for witnesses?

We may not need two hours to go line by line through the bill. It's not super complicated.

Rachael Thomas: That brings us back to square one, though, whether we have an appetite to bring forward witnesses. It was previously discussed that we didn't.

If I may, I think there are people who have requested to come before this committee, and I think that they have good things to say. However, when I read what they have to say, it's beyond the scope of this legislation. This legislation is very pinpointed in the sense that it discusses advertising of sports betting and laying out a framework with regard to that, which ultimately comes under the jurisdiction of the provinces. The provinces are going to have to come to the table and have a conversation. The results of that conversation are then going to be reported to the minister and to Parliament.

It's a great initiative in terms of prompting a discussion, but most people who have asked to come to testify at this committee actually want to speak about the impacts of sports betting, which has nothing to do with this legislation. I think we're opening up a can of worms by going further in depth on a topic that this legislation doesn't deal with.

The Chair: Mr. Myles, do you have any response to that?

Rachael Thomas: Unless your focus is on pulling together provinces for discussions...?

David Myles: Can we suspend for two seconds? I just want to talk to the group for a second. I'm sorry.

Thank you.

The Chair: We can come back on Thursday. Why don't we come back on Thursday?

I'm going to adjourn for today. We'll come back and discuss it again on Thursday.

Thank you.

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