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Chair: Salma Zahid



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• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre—Don Valley East, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 36 of the Standing Committee on Science and Research. We are meeting today to resume our study on Canada's dual-use and defence research needs.

I would like to make a few comments for the benefit of all the witnesses and members. Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those on Zoom, at the bottom of your screen you can select the appropriate channel for interpretation: floor, English or French. I remind you that all comments should be addressed through the chair.

I would like to welcome our three witnesses for our first panel. Today, we are joined by Jean Belzile, acting executive director, research, representing École de technologie supérieure, by video conference. Our next witness for this panel is Sonya Shorey, president and chief executive officer, representing Invest Ottawa, joining by video conference. Our third witness for today is Anita Pawluck, president and chief executive officer, representing RaceRocks. She's here in person. Welcome.

All witnesses will have five minutes for their opening remarks, and then we will go the rounds of questioning.

We will begin with Mr. Belzile.

Welcome. You will have five minutes for your opening remarks. You have the floor. Go ahead.

Jean Belzile (Acting Executive Director, Research, École de technologie supérieure): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[Translation]

I thank the committee members for this invitation.

You may not be familiar with the École de technologie supérieure, or ETS, as it's a school specializing exclusively in engineering. However, it's the second-largest engineering faculty in Canada. For a number of years, we have been working to transform research-based technologies into concrete solutions, in collaboration with industry and in response to operational needs. It is precisely in this transition from innovation to deployment that a strategic challenge for Canada in the areas of defence and dual-use technologies is currently being played out.

The main challenge facing Canada is the difficulty in rapidly adopting and integrating research-driven innovations into concrete

capabilities, particularly in the areas of defence and dual-use technologies. Canada already has a recognized innovation system, but current mechanisms do not always allow for these innovations to be deployed and adopted quickly enough, within time frames compatible with operational needs. This challenge is concentrated in the critical phases—prototyping, testing and integration—where current mechanisms remain slow, fragmented and ill-suited.

In concrete terms, technologies developed in Canada take too long to reach the field or are deployed more quickly abroad. Consequently, Canada bears the costs of research without always reaping the benefits. The result is a loss of strategic and economic value and increased reliance on external solutions. This directly affects our technological sovereignty and our ability to take action.

This is not due to a lack of research capacity. It's not about rebuilding; it's about activating what already exists. It is precisely in this critical zone between research and integration that applied research models strongly integrated with industry, such as that of our institution, are found.

At ETS, a number of researchers have been working for many years on projects related to security, defence and dual-use technologies, in collaboration with industrial and institutional partners. My own career as a professor is based on these collaborations. These activities are supported by an integrated ecosystem that links research, validation and technology transfer to industry.

For example, the vast majority of research conducted at ETS translates directly into technology transfers to industrial partners. We work in close partnership with major companies such as Thales, Safran and CAE. Our partnerships notably include fields such as critical communications, aerospace and embedded systems. We develop and test technologies in real-world or near-real-world conditions.

At the same time, our technology incubator, Centech, supports emerging companies developing dual-use technologies in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and autonomous systems. This ecosystem is reinforced by environments like Ax.c, a collaborative platform that directly connects operational needs with incubators, emerging companies, established companies and researchers.

These capacities are already being mobilized in concrete projects, in collaboration with industrial partners and in response to operational issues, particularly through federal programs like the IDEaS program. Our prototyping platforms enable us to rapidly mitigate technology risks and prepare them for integration into existing systems. This model is already significantly reducing the time between research and its practical application.

The challenge today is not to create new capabilities, but to expand and further connect this type of model to defence needs, ahead of requests. It is by strengthening this network among researchers, industry and end-users that we can sustainably accelerate the deployment of innovations on the ground.

Canada already has the capabilities it needs to act. The main challenge today is not a lack of research, but our ability to better connect these capabilities to real-world needs from the very beginning.

At ETS, our applied research model, developed in partnership with industry, enables us to develop, test and transfer innovative technologies quickly to users. This model works. The challenge now is to deploy it more widely, particularly to address defence needs.

Therefore, the priority is clear: connect existing capabilities, integrate defence end-users from the outset, and enable rapid testing and validation cycles. Otherwise, Canada will continue to develop technologies that it does not deploy, to the benefit of others. Canada has the means to act. It must now put them to use.

• (1110)

Thank you very much.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now go to Ms. Shorey, president and chief executive officer of Invest Ottawa.

Please go ahead. You will have five minutes for your opening remarks.

Sonya Shorey (President and Chief Executive Officer, Invest Ottawa): Thank you, Chair and members of the committee.

Canada is at a defining moment.

[*Translation*]

The global security environment is shifting rapidly—and with it, the expectations on Canada to build sovereign capability, strengthen our armed forces and contribute meaningfully to our allies.

[*English*]

We are facing a once-in-a-generation opportunity. With the Government of Canada committing 5% of GDP to defence, the question is not simply how much we spend; it's how we leverage that investment. This is about execution and impact, and this depends on one thing: how well we mobilize our national ecosystem.

Canada has extraordinary assets: world-class universities, colleges and hospitals; a highly skilled workforce; federal labs; industry; ambitious entrepreneurs; start-ups and scale-ups; Canadian an-

chors and multinationals; and our investment and innovation landscape. They must work together to achieve a shared vision and shared goals.

These assets cannot operate in parallel. They must be a fully coordinated system at the scale of this investment—from programs to platforms, from inputs to outcomes, from fragmentation to integration. Defence, investment, innovation, research, procurement and economic growth are one system. This is how every dollar of the 5% delivers maximum national value.

The first recommendation is to have a national inventory and strategic alignment. We must conduct a capability assessment across industry, academia, government and the investment and entrepreneurship ecosystem—not a static report, but a living, dynamic map of Canadian capability. This would enable us to identify where we can lead globally and to target investments where we punch above our weight. This is how investment delivers global leadership, not just participation, aligning research, funding and procurement to mission and ensuring the 5% GDP investment is directed with precision and purpose.

In Canada's capital region, we have taken this approach. Ottawa-Gatineau has a concentration of defence assets, expertise and innovation that does not exist anywhere else in the country. Through our global defence innovation hub strategy, we are putting them to work. We are pursuing \$3 billion in collective investment to unlock 18,000 new jobs and \$9 billion in GDP, while strengthening sovereign capabilities. We are ambitiously pursuing moon shots, from the headquarters of the Defence, Security and Resilience Bank to the spinoff of the Canadian Photonics Fabrication Centre into a commercial compound stand-alone semiconductor fab. Every region in this country has distinct strengths. Combine them regionally. Connect them nationally. That is the blueprint.

Recommendation two is to leverage and integrate core infrastructure. Canada has already made major investments that are critically important in NRC, granting councils, academic research programs, regional development agencies and initiatives like BOREALIS, NATO DIANA and the forthcoming national AI strategy. The opportunity is to connect them and layer in new investment where opportunity exists and where we can punch above our weight. We must capture both funded and unfunded concepts in a national innovation pipeline so they can be connected, recombined and deployed as priorities evolve. New defence spending can't simply add volume. It must build an integrated, cohesive, collaborative national ecosystem.

Recommendation three is to accelerate lab-to-deployment and procurement pathways. The success of this investment will be measured by one thing: what reaches our forces and allies. In Canada's capital region, we're advancing this through Area X.O, developed by Invest Ottawa—our ITB-qualified R and D complex and NATO DIANA test centre serving dynamic companies—with integrated testing, direct DND and Canadian Armed Forces end-user engagement, and procurement vehicles enabling early-stage deployment.

The pathway must be consistent and continuous: research, test, validate, procure and scale. Procurement must be integrated from the outset. We must support multi-company consortia as well, because defence customers don't buy components. They buy integrated systems. Consortia allow us to build mission-ready capability, compete globally and export to allied markets.

Recommendation four is to further invest in and deepen industry-academic-government research collaboration. We must simply double down on collaboration and the investment required to scale it. We applaud the \$1.6 billion in budget 2025 for research. We must build on this to keep pace with other nations and maximize our impact where the opportunity is greatest. This means more applied collaborative research, stronger industry-academic partnerships, accelerated commercialization and a relentless focus on homegrown capability. We must also attract trusted, values-aligned capital from allied nations, ensuring global investment strengthens our sovereignty.

Our post-secondary institutions here—Algonquin, Carleton, La Cité and uOttawa, which is a U15 research-intensive university—are already delivering. They are training future tech and trades leaders, collaborating with entrepreneurs, DND and global partners, and harnessing deep expertise in autonomy, drones, quantum, aerospace, cyber, AI and Arctic solutions. Research-intensive universities, colleges and hospitals are core engines of innovation and infrastructure.

We have the talent, the capability and the investment. Every dollar must strengthen our forces, protect our country and serve our allies. Let's build the strongest, most sovereign Canada together.

• (1115)

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we will proceed to Ms. Pawluk for five minutes.

Please go ahead.

Anita Pawluk (President and Chief Executive Officer, RaceRocks): Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Anita Pawluk. I'm a proud Métis woman from St. Louis, Saskatchewan—Treaty No. 6 territory—and CEO of RaceRocks, an indigenous-owned, women-led technology company with over a decade of experience in the defence sector. We have delivered over \$20 million in training systems to the Royal Canadian Navy and generated over \$40 million in industrial technological benefits with major defence primes.

Innovation is at the core of everything we build and deliver. It is what makes our products and services effective in the field. The defence industrial strategy rightly identifies dual-use technologies as central to Canada's defence commitments. This is precisely the space we operate in, and I want to show you what that looks like in practice.

The Canadian Coast Guard, western region, has built strong partnerships with over 70 coastal nations on domain awareness and security. Together, they've built the framework for an integrated marine workforce.

RaceRocks is the technology partner behind CSR, a coastal security readiness system. A shared governance structure gives coast guards, coastal nations and commercial operators their own advisory boards, with observer seats across them, in order to keep mariner standards aligned. There are three outcomes: workforce development, coastal security and Canadian export capacity. That is what dual-use looks like when it works. It's our experience navigating these innovation programs first-hand that has taught us the most important lessons we bring to the committee today.

The existing architecture has gaps, some specific to indigenous businesses and some undermining Canada's ability to build sovereign industrial capability.

First, eligibility criteria are built around established firms, existing IP, revenue history and access to private capital for cost sharing. These are barriers that compound for indigenous SMEs that may have the capability and proven track record but not yet the balance sheet.

Second, when flexibility is communicated to indigenous businesses, it is not designed into the program. At a PacificCan RDII session, a government slide explicitly stated that indigenous-led businesses may be offered more flexible funding terms. When we followed up, we were redirected to the standard online application. No criteria were listed. No indigenous pathway was described. The commitment in the communication was there, but it was never designed into the program.

Third is what I most want the committee to understand. Current innovation systems have no bridge between validation and commercialization. RaceRocks delivered a fast-boat full-motion simulator with VR headset to the Royal Canadian Navy through the innovative solutions Canada testing stream. The navy rated it five out of five stars. It was validated and is still in use today. However, the navy had no procurement budget. Without a contract to purchase the technology, commercialization could not proceed. That is not a technology gap. That is a systems design gap, and it is costing Canada the sovereign industrial capacity it is trying to build.

Indigenous business owners in Canada represent an extraordinary range of backgrounds, structures and relationships. Some offer this independent of community structures. We have proven federal delivery track records, and we have demonstrated capability. The government counts us towards its 5% indigenous procurement target, but it does not extend that same recognition when we apply for innovation support. That is not a gap in intent. That is a gap in design.

We are asking for one thing: consistency. If the government counts on indigenous businesses when it spends, we ask that it count on us when it invests. A clear indigenous business pathway, evidenced by completed federal contracts, technical validations and indigenous business directory certification, is a chance to close that gap.

Canada cannot meet its NATO commitments through large primes alone. Dual-use R and D distributed across indigenous SMEs is exactly the kind of industrial base the defence industrial strategy calls for.

Indigenous businesses are ready to be part of Canada's defence commitments. We are asking for a system that is ready for us.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pawluk.

With that, we will go to our rounds of questioning.

Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls—Niagara-on-the-Lake, CPC): Madam Chair...

• (1120)

The Chair: Yes, MP Baldinelli.

Tony Baldinelli: Before we begin, I'll ask for a point of clarification.

I was hoping you could share with us, publicly, the status of committee invitations to the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Industry, the Minister of Public Works and Procurement, the Secretary of State for Defence Procurement and the CEO of the Defence Investment Agency.

The Chair: I will share it, but the email was sent out to all members. I hope everyone got the email.

Tony Baldinelli: For the public at home—for Canadians, who are our taxpayers—I would like that information to be made known, Madam Chair. If you could share that with us publicly, it would be greatly appreciated.

The Chair: Just to clarify, invitations were sent to the Minister of Industry, the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Public Safety for the current study on Canada's dual-use and defence research needs. The clerk has sent me the information that all ministers were invited to appear for Monday, May 4, and Tuesday, April 28.

Minister McGuinty responded on April 28, saying, "Thank you very much for this invitation and the committee's interest in National Defence. Unfortunately, Minister McGuinty is unable to appear at SRSR at this time."

The Minister of Public Works and Procurement responded for the April 28 meeting, saying, "We have received the message from our Minister's office that they are respectfully declining the invitation. However, given the subject matter of this study, the committee may wish to invite Secretary of State (Defence Procurement) Fuhr." After consultation with the member who submitted the witness, an invitation was sent to Secretary of State for Defence Procurement for Thursday, May 7, who responded, "Minister Fuhr is away next week and unable to attend. The Minister's office is considering the other dates in June and we will get back to you once his office confirms his availability."

The Minister of Industry responded on Thursday, April 30, saying, "Unfortunately, Minister Joly is unable to appear at [the science and research committee] on May 4th. She will be appearing at INDU at the same time." Another invitation was sent to Minister Joly on May 5 for Thursday, June 11. We haven't received a response to that.

These were the responses we had, and the email was sent to all members.

Tony Baldinelli: As a quick point of clarification, have we received a response from the CEO of the Defence Investment Agency?

The Chair: Wait one second, please. Let me check with the clerk.

I will let you know. The clerk is looking into it.

We will begin our rounds of six minutes each with MP Ho.

Vincent Ho (Richmond Hill South, CPC): Do I get a full six minutes?

The Chair: Yes.

Vincent Ho: I'd like to thank the witnesses—

Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

Would time not have been taken off, given you had already started the next round? You started the first round of questioning, and there is no such thing as a point of information. Technically, the time should have been running.

The Chair: We didn't start it, so we will see how we can compensate other members, obviously.

Taleeb Noormohamed: In that case, I have a further question for you. Perhaps we could also clarify for the viewing public that the ministers who were named by my friend opposite were not part of the request in the original motion. Is that correct?

The Chair: Yes. I can read the motion.

Vincent Ho: While we're searching for the motion, my understanding is that those individuals were requested to appear as witnesses.

The Chair: I'm sorry for that. I'm just pulling up the motion.

On Monday, February 9, the Standing Committee on Science and Research adopted the following motion:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(i), the Standing Committee on Science and Research undertake a study on the role of universities and colleges, the National Research Council Canada, industry experts and federal departments in supporting Canada's dual-use and defence research needs as a component of NATO spending targets; that the committee hold at least four meetings; and that the committee report its findings to the House and request a government response.

The names of the ministers were not mentioned, to clarify.

Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

• (1125)

Taleeb Noormohamed: For avoidance of doubt, as is process, a number of witnesses were requested by the committee, some ministers, some CEOs and others. No one is compelled to attend unless a motion calls for them to attend. Is that correct? I want to be sure, because what I don't want is a bunch of misleading clips to say that ministers deliberately didn't come to committee.

The Chair: To clarify, they were not included. I read the motion as it was adopted by this committee. These ministers were part of the witness list that was submitted to the clerk. We invited them, and I have given the responses that were received.

MP Baldinelli, go ahead.

Tony Baldinelli: To my colleague's point, yes, they weren't specifically mentioned, but in the study, we do mention federal departments. Ministers of the Crown are, by right, the heads of those federal departments. Given the simple fact that the government is

going to increase its defence spending, over the next five years, to almost \$82 billion, with about \$6.6 billion of that over five years for a defence industrial strategy, we thought it was incumbent, as part of this study, to invite ministers of the Crown with regard to the specific portfolios and federal departments that we indicated.

I was simply asking for clarification on the status of those invitations asking the ministers to come forward to speak to what I would think would be a relevant study.

The Chair: Thank you for the comments.

We have witnesses, and we should be mindful of the time our witnesses have taken to contribute to the study.

Invitations were sent, and of course we give them two days, but we should all understand that the ministers are busy. If a minister already has an appearance before another committee, it is very difficult to reschedule things. We can check once again and see what the status is.

I would request that we proceed to the rounds of questions. I think we've had enough discussion on this. We have witnesses, and we should proceed to the rounds of questioning.

Vincent Ho: I have one final comment on this subject matter. We requested a number of ministers. To be clear, is not a single one available? I mean, this study, with two break weeks and all that.... Is not a single one available with a month's notice?

The Chair: I have given clarification. I really cannot comment on why they were not available.

We should proceed. I think we've had enough discussion on that. We should start our rounds of questioning.

MP Blanchette-Joncas, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski—La Matapédia, BQ): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Would it be possible, when you speak with members, not to speak over them? I understand that you want to move the meeting along, but it's difficult for the interpreters. We couldn't get interpretation.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now proceed with the rounds of questioning. I think we've had enough discussion.

MP Ho, go ahead for six minutes.

Vincent Ho: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses who are here today.

We're here at this committee, and we have this study today on the Liberal defence industrial strategy. This is a Liberal study, by the way. It was commenced by a Liberal member, and it's very unfortunate that we can't get a single Liberal minister here. I understand that there are scheduling conflicts, but with well over a month's notice, we'd expect maybe one Liberal minister or high-priced Liberal bureaucrat to show up. Apparently, all of them—

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

The Chair: There is a point of order. We will stop the clock.

Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: I think it's really important that if we're going to have conversations in this committee, we don't brand non-partisan public servants as "Liberal bureaucrats". We are now crossing a ton of lines.

Vincent Ho: They are literally—

The Chair: Please, MP Ho, you should be mindful of our bureaucrats.

You may go ahead.

Vincent Ho: Well, if they're friends of the Liberal Prime Minister and they've known each other for a long time, I'd say they're Liberal bureaucrats. If they're former Liberal staffers, then I think it's a fair characterization.

This committee is supposed to be holding the government to account to investigate and produce documents, but what we get are witnesses who are Liberal insiders; corporate lobbyists; sometimes registered lobbyists who are really representing their own special interests; special interest groups; or former Liberal staffers. They're just cheerleaders for the government.

We want some criticism of the government. I understand that we're not here to always criticize the government. We're here to work with the government if the government wants our advice, but they're just singing its praises most of the time. Sometimes we have organizations at this committee that are receiving millions or tens of millions every year. I think their opinions might be a little biased, because their very existence is dependent on....

We have an organization here today on this panel that has received millions of dollars every year since the Liberal government took power in 2015. I don't know if their testimony is going to be a little biased toward the government. I can't help but notice that they're going to be singing the praises of the Liberal government, because, again, their existence is dependent on multi-million-dollar consulting contracts—

• (1130)

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

Vincent Ho: Is my time stopped?

Taleeb Noormohamed: Your time stops every time.

The Chair: MP Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: The member opposite stated or implied inaccurate—

The Chair: I think we are getting into debate.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Madam Chair, if we're going to talk about the mandate of the committee, I'll note there was an implied comment there. There was a very clear assertion of what this committee does. In fact, the mandate of this committee is absolutely not what the member opposite has said.

We need to be very clear when we are referring to matters of content with respect to the specific nature and mandate of the committee. They should actually be clear, not misleading, so that when we are posing questions and doing studies, they are, in fact, within the scope of the committee.

The Chair: Let's not get into debate. Thank you.

We will go back to MP Ho.

Vincent Ho: I'm sorry. How much time do I have left?

The Chair: You have three minutes and 28 seconds.

Vincent Ho: This is a democratic body. MPs are democratically elected. This is a committee of Parliament, so it's a democratic body. It seems that the facts are too inconvenient for the Liberal member.

I've been interrupted multiple times in my six-minute round. It's an unprecedented number of interruptions.

What I will do right now is spend the rest of my time moving my motion, the motion that was put on notice on May 5. I'd like to speak to the motion as well.

You don't know which motion I'm referring to. I'd like to speak to the motion. Is that a point of order?

I'd like to distribute copies of the motion. Would that be okay?

The Chair: Yes, please. Can you move your motion?

Vincent Ho: I have copies of the motion to distribute.

I move:

That the Standing Committee on Science and Research undertake a study of the Government of Canada's space procurement practices, including how federal departments and agencies acquire space-related infrastructure, technologies and services;—

I have some copies for all members, including the clerk and analysts. It was put on notice on May 5.

—That the study examine the effectiveness, transparency and value for money of these federal procurement practices, including the use of public funds, contracting models and risk-management frameworks;

That the study also assess the extent to which federal space investments support the retention of intellectual property, commercialization of Canadian innovation and long-term growth of Canada's space economy;

That the committee consider whether current procurement approaches adequately prioritize domestic capability, industrial development and the safeguarding of Canadian-developed technologies;

That the committee invite the president of the Canadian Space Agency, the chief science adviser, the Minister of Industry, the Minister of National Defence, relevant departmental officials, representatives from the Canadian space sector and any other witnesses the committee deems relevant;

That the committee hold no fewer than four meetings; and

That the committee report its findings to the House.

It sounds like a pretty reasonable study, well within the mandate of the science and research committee.

I think copies have now been distributed to everyone, just for their reference. I know that a number of motions were moved by a number of members on May 5, so now you know which one I'm referring to. I believe it's been translated into French as well.

In light of the government's space bill—I believe it's Bill C-28—procurement is very important, and in light of the \$200-million gravel pit procurement that ended up being a money pit, on which, of course, the Liberal members of this committee had shut down any debate in previous meetings....

I would now like to move on to debating points on how important procurement is.

Before I even get into procurement, it's the job of the legislative branch of government. We live in a country where there's a separation of powers in our democracy. There's the judiciary, the legislative and the executive. The legislative is there to put in safeguards and restrict the powers of the executive, but what we see with the Liberals, time and time again, including in Bill C-28, is the opposite. They give more powers to the executive branch. They remove safeguards and remove the checks and balances to give themselves more power.

The executive branch has 400,000 and some bureaucrats. We've lost track of how many there are. It has grown so much. It's grown by a magnitude of 50% in the 10 years since this Liberal government has been in power, which, by the way, has grown faster than the rate of population growth in Canada. It really has ballooned on a per capita basis.

Instead of keeping these 400,000 unelected bureaucrats.... Many of them are doing good work. Many of them are good people. We're not trying to alienate this group of people, who are hard-working and facing the affordability challenges that the Liberal government has put them through and facing the immigration crisis and the public safety crime crisis that the Liberal government has unleashed on them in the last 11 years.

That's why we're talking about procurement. The executive branch needs to buy things and contract. There's nothing wrong with procurement, but we need to investigate when procurement is not working.

A case in point is the gravel pit in Nova Scotia for \$200 million. The firm involved in the contract had a registered lobbyist who is a former Liberal staffer. It was not even buying the gravel pit. It was just a 10-year lease for \$200 million. It wasn't like it was a fully developed space pad. It was a gravel pit, so you still have to spend money to develop it.

All we want is the production of documents to see what the contracts are. There's nothing partisan about that. We understand that the Liberal ministers.... There are something like 40 of them. I've lost track of how many there are, because the size of the government has grown so much. We're talking about Liberal members of this committee who are not ministers of the Crown. It's incumbent on you to investigate, to produce those documents.

• (1135)

I understand that sometimes, a bureaucrat might make a bad procurement decision, and it might not immediately be the fault of

elected Liberal members. You folks have to deal with constituents' concerns and advancing your constituents' interests. There are a lot of noble, admirable things, and you don't have the oversight to watch over 400,000 bureaucrats every minute, but guess what. Instead of investigating these procurement failures, you decide to hide them under the rug. You sweep them under the rug. Instead of finding the truth, you block the truth from being investigated.

Maybe we can find out the truth. So that we don't have to point any fingers, we can say, "Look, maybe there was a bad apple in the army of 400,000 bureaucrats", but what we saw was the shutting down of debate on the space pad procurement fiasco not once, but twice. First, it was to turn off the cameras. There was a vote. Every Liberal member voted to turn off the cameras and turn off the ability to have transcribed—

Taleeb Noormohamed: On a point of order, Madam Chair, we have less than 20 minutes left in this round. We have witnesses who are waiting. If this is going to go on, perhaps we can do the courteous thing and ask the witnesses to leave and invite them back to a different meeting. It's disrespectful to them.

It's clear that Mr. Ho has a number of things he thinks are important that he would like to share with us.

The Chair: Thank you, MP Noormohamed.

We'll continue because this panel goes until 12 o'clock.

Let's not get into debate. We'll have one person at a time.

MP Ho, please go ahead.

Vincent Ho: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We have to be mindful of the witnesses' time. We wouldn't be here if we were able to investigate.

We have this motion that we're debating today about space procurement, which is a very important one in light of the fiasco that happened weeks ago in Nova Scotia that we learned about and in light of Bill C-28. It's a bill. I don't want to get into too much debate on that. I know it's being studied at the transport committee. Arguably, it should also be studied here at the science committee. If we're not talking about space at the science committee, what else are we going to talk about?

• (1140)

Taleeb Noormohamed: Science....

Vincent Ho: Yes, science, and you mean Liberal talking points. It seems like we're just spinning over and over again.

It just sounds like this is not a new government at all. The Liberals like to say, “This is a new Liberal government.” It’s really a re-branding exercise. It’s the same as we saw with PrescribeIT, which is being held up in the health committee. We have seen it here with the space pad money pit for \$200 million. It’s the same type of Liberal scandal, Liberal corruption and Liberal cover-up that we saw in the last Liberal government under the last Liberal prime minister. It seems that nothing has changed.

We talk about rockets, satellites, launch capacity, our sovereign access to space and Canada’s role in the frontier of science and technology. These are all noble pursuits, well within the purview of the science and research committee, but when you look beneath those glossy Liberal press releases, which are quite....

I know that members opposite are going to say, “You can’t say that’s partisan. How can you say that of press releases from the minister’s office?” Okay, let’s take a look at the budget in 2025, the costly credit card Liberal budget that’s smacking billions and doubling our deficit. You thought that Justin Trudeau, the last Liberal prime minister, had an inflationary spending problem. Well, the new Prime Minister, who touts himself as the economist, has managed to double the deficit. We didn’t think that would even be possible in the Canadian imagination, yet they did that.

Let’s look at the cover of the two Liberal propaganda booklets. One is called “Canada Strong for All: Spring Economic Update 2026”. What is the Liberal Party’s slogan? It’s “Canada Strong”. If you go to the Liberal Party convention, which is a partisan activity—of course, every party has its own convention—they literally have “Canada Strong” as their slogan, so now we’re conflating party lines with the government.

Of course, the Liberals love to blur lines. They blur the lines of partisanship and government, which should be separate. They blur the lines of private interest and public interest to the point where NGOs, these public sector organizations, as they call them, are really just funded by the public. You think they’re private—some of them are privately owned—but they’re fully dependent on handouts from the Liberal government, and they’re staffed by former Liberal staffers and former Liberal MPs, which blurs the lines. They also blur the lines of the executive branch and the legislative branch.

They also blur the lines of the judicial branch of government. I don’t want to get into that, but for example, 20% of federal judicial appointments are Liberal Party donors. Given that fewer than 1% of all Canadians donate to a political party at all, which is pretty high, something like 1% of donors, according to the study, are Conservatives who are judicially appointed.

Conservative donors who get appointed to judicial benches seem to match up with the public.... Fewer than 1% of Canadians donate to any political party. Fewer than 1% of them are Conservative donors, and 20% of judicial appointments are Liberal Party donors, so they are literally paying into the re-election funds of Liberal members of Parliament and the Liberal Party, and then they get a judicial appointment.

I’m not saying that they’re getting it in return, but one can make that characterization if they connect those dots. They blur the lines of the judiciary, which is supposed to hold this government to ac-

count. They put in activist judges. I have a great respect for judges, as I’m someone who is a lawyer by training, but not when they’re staffed by activists and they’re decided by political appointments.

• (1145)

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

The Chair: Just wait one second. We have a point of order by MP Noormohamed.

Taleeb Noormohamed: Under the Simms protocol in the PROC report from the 42nd Parliament, I would like to use my prerogative to intervene and ask questions while the member has the floor. This doesn’t require Mr. Ho to cede the floor, but it does give me right to speak and, indeed, address some of the points that he has made.

The Chair: Give me just one second. I need to—

Vincent Ho: It’s my time. This is my time.

Taleeb Noormohamed: We can look it up.

The Chair: MP Noormohamed, let me just check. Just give me one second.

The clerk is checking on it. If we can just wait, I need clarification. The clerk is checking on the point of order that has been raised by MP Noormohamed. I will suspend the meeting so that we can look into it.

The meeting is suspended.

• (1145)

(Pause)

• (1210)

The Chair: I call the meeting back to order.

Thank you for your patience, especially our witnesses. I apologize for all of this and what’s happening.

On the question raised by MP Noormohamed, I would like to provide exactly what that Simms protocol says:

A. The Simms Protocol—Interventions When a Member has the Floor

At its 55th meeting, on 21 March 2017, the Committee developed a convention allowing a member to raise a question or comment related to the topic immediately at hand, without the speaker formally ceding the floor or losing his or her place on the list of speakers. Once the intervention is concluded, the speaker once again has the floor and the existing list of speakers continues unimpeded. It is up to the member who has the floor, along with the Chair, to decide whether to permit the intervention. The original speaker may also take back the floor at any time and resume speaking. The Committee named this convention the Simms protocol, after Mr. Scott Simms, member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, who first employed this convention at the meeting on 21 March 2017.

Based on this, I will ask Mr. Ho if he would allow what MP Noormohamed said about questioning.

• (1215)

Vincent Ho: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I respectfully decline his request. He can speak when he puts his hand up and gets the floor. Every member has the right to speak when they have the floor. I'd like to continue on with the point I was making.

The Chair: Okay. MP Noormohamed is not here right now, so you have the floor. Please go ahead.

Vincent Ho: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I will get back to procurement.

Part of the procurement we see with the Liberal government is the issuance of Liberal press releases. It's a rebranding exercise. That's where I left off. If we look deeper into it, it's something familiar. It's Liberal spending. There's almost always—I won't say “always”—a Liberal insider involved. There are more Liberal excuses for why the problem exists. They can't look at themselves in the mirror. They have contempt for taxpayers and the everyday Canadians who are struggling to get by. They are giving a significant percentage of their hard-earned money to the federal government as taxes.

I'll go back to the example I was using. The Liberal government announced a 10-year, \$200-million agreement to lease a dedicated space launch pad at the space port in Nova Scotia, near Canso. It is operated by Maritime Launch Services, which has a former Liberal staffer for a lobbyist. The government says that the facility will support the Department of National Defence—which is why we want the defence minister to come—as well as the Canadian Armed Forces and wider federal needs. It will support the defence industrial strategy, which is why we want the Minister of Industry to come. They say it's about sovereign launch capacity to address Canada's future needs in space.

Of course, sovereignty matters. I want to be very clear: As Conservatives, we support sovereignty. We also want to make sure we play a meaningful role in Canada's future in space. We support sovereignty to the point where we introduced a Canada sovereignty act as a motion a couple of months ago. It was voted down by every one of the Liberal members. We support Canadian science, but, again, we've seen our motions voted down at this committee, time and time again, by each and every Liberal member. We support Canadian research, but, of course, we see Liberals injecting their ideology, like DEI requirements.

It's gotten so bad now that it's about not just DEI requirements but also DEI quotas. If you're not a specific race or gender, you cannot apply. Explicitly excluding people on the form is a discriminatory hiring practice. The Liberals say they want to promote research excellence. How can you have research excellence if you're excluding a significant chunk of the population? How are we going to compete with other global actors in the space race?

Of course, we support real Canadian industry. Under the Liberals' own buy Canadian definition, which the government sets, you can say “buy Canadian” and put the buy Canadian label on something even if the vendor to the government, which is taking taxpayer money, is foreign-owned. How is that buying Canadian? Is it just because there is a domestic presence?

By the way, we've seen in contribution agreements that “domestic workers” doesn't mean hiring Canadian citizens. Let's say there's

a foreign-owned firm that has a branch in Canada. We've seen this with many manufacturing contracts and contribution agreements the government has done. Not only is the firm foreign-owned, but it doesn't even have to hire Canadians. It just has to hire workers in Canada, so it can hire non-citizens—temporary residents or temporary foreign workers. The Liberals call that “buy Canadian”. The ownership is not Canadian, and the paycheques are not going to Canadians. That is something—

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

The Chair: We have a point of order from MP Deschênes-Thériault.

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Madam Chair, I don't see the relevance of what my colleague is saying, especially since we are in favour of the motion. We are all in agreement. He's just running down the clock. We have witnesses waiting.

• (1220)

The Chair: I'll ask the member to keep his remarks relevant to the motion.

Vincent Ho: Madam Chair, they're very relevant. The point I was making just now was about buying Canadian, and this is about procurement. It's—

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

The Chair: Let's have one person at a time. MP Ho has the floor.

Vincent Ho: We're talking about space procurement, procurement for the space economy. I'm talking about a buy Canadian rule that the government allegedly implements. How is that not related? It's very related. Of course, sovereignty means not being dependent on foreign countries for our space capabilities. That's something worth pursuing.

The Liberal Prime Minister gave a glowing speech, a very vague speech, at Davos, pretty much taking a swipe at what he calls “hegemons” without really mentioning which countries he's referring to and keeping it vague so he can play both sides. I'll leave it to the Liberal Prime Minister to discuss that, or maybe the Liberal members know which countries he's referring to.

Space matters. It matters for a number of things—for our defence, for our Arctic, for things like communications. It matters for disaster response, for things like agriculture, navigation, weather forecasting, telecommunications and national security and of course for the future of our economy. When we talk about the economy, we mean we want to talk about the Canadian economy for Canadians, not for a select few hand-picked projects that benefit Liberal insiders.

Canada has a proud history in space. We built the Canadarm. We helped define robotics in orbit. Canadian astronauts have inspired generations of young people to look at the stars and imagine something greater than themselves. Canadian scientists, engineers, machinists, programmers and entrepreneurs have made real contributions to humanity's exploration of space. Parts designed and made by Canadians are in the International Space Station, which is still orbiting Earth.

We should not be anti-space and shut down things like the \$200-million space pad, which wasn't really a space pad. We thought we got a launch pad, but taxpayers ended up getting a gravel pit, which some are characterizing as a money pit.

This motion is not anti-science, although Liberals have accused us of being anti-science, and it's not anti-research. It's very much pro-research. We want to make sure the research money is not going to waste.

It's not anti-innovation. It is very much pro-innovation. It's also pro-accountability. "Accountability", of course, is a word that does not exist in the vocabulary of Liberals. As a matter of fact, that word needs to be removed from their vocabulary before they buy their Liberal Party membership card. It's pro-taxpayer, making sure that for taxpayers—everyday Canadians who are working day in and day out to keep our country afloat—tax dollars are spent properly.

We also want to make sure we have results to deliver for Canadians, because what we've seen instead is a lot of Liberal rhetoric. It's pretty egregious. The current Liberal Prime Minister sings a lot of rhetoric, even more than the last Liberal prime minister, but he has nothing to show for it. I mean things like pipelines, for example. There is a lot of rhetoric on energy and infrastructure, but not a whole lot of results.

He seems to eat his own words. On trade, at first it was elbows up. Then it was elbows down, and who cares? Then it was, "Our relationship with the United States is a rupture, a weakness." Then it was, "We're stronger together." That was a lot of rhetoric from the self-proclaimed master negotiator, but not a whole lot of results. There's still no trade deal. Tariffs have doubled and tripled, and our manufacturing sectors and workers are being hit. Nobody on the Liberal benches seems to care, because they collect their paycheques regardless.

That's the thing between the private sector and the public sector. In the private sector, if your business fails and doesn't do well because there's no market for your idea or your product, you don't succeed. You go bankrupt or you have to close down. However, under Liberal ideology, the Liberals just keep printing money at the expense of taxpayers. They keep borrowing at the expense of taxpayers. They keep printing money—

• (1225)

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting, MP Ho. Just one second, as one of our witnesses has to leave.

Thank you, Ms. Shorey, for appearing before the committee. I know you have to leave, as you have other commitments. I'm sorry for this. You are free to leave.

MP Ho, go ahead, please.

Vincent Ho: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Going back to my point, our motion is pro-space and space exploration. If Canada is going to be serious about the space sector, we need a serious government, but we don't have a serious government. I've listed some examples of how the government is not serious. It can't be built on Liberal press releases, a house of cards, insider arrangements and a \$200-million blank cheque to a Liberal-connected firm for what's being currently described as a concrete pad, a gravel lot.

This is for a promise of "someday, maybe". Using the words of the Prime Minister, it is possible but not probable, and then it's probable but not quite possible. He has a good way of playing on words so he can speak out of both sides of his Liberal mouth and somehow try to put up these illusions. Canadians can see through the smoke and mirrors, these illusions that the Liberal Prime Minister is trying to put up. Again, it's for this prospect that maybe Canada will be able to launch rockets from home.

This is real money. This is not Monopoly money. I know the Liberals are trying to devalue our currency so much that our currency sometimes feels like Monopoly money to some spectators, because our currency isn't worth much when there are no investments in Canada and no exports from Canada. They're killing our industry. What drives the valuation of our currency to appreciate, which may help bring down the cost of living, is if other countries buy our exports and have to sell their currencies to buy Canadian dollars to buy our exports, or if they invest in Canada. Again, they have to buy Canadian dollars—which would drive up the value of our currency—in order to make investments in Canada and create jobs.

Of course, Liberals are very keen to pass anti-job, job-killing, anti-growth policies that drive away investment, which drives away businesses and thwarts exports. It's a vicious cycle, as we've seen, with the dollar so weak now compared to the U.S. dollar for prolonged periods. This is not just some fluctuation year to year. It has been 11 years of our Canadian dollar being so weak.

This \$200 million is not just Monopoly money, to come back to my point. It's taxpayer money. It's money collected on the backs of families who are already struggling to afford groceries, food, rent, mortgage payments, gas and heating—all the basic necessities of life. For families with young children, it's money for baby formula, diapers and other essentials.

What are taxpayers getting? What are they actually getting? That is the basic question about—

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

The Chair: MP Nathan has a point of order.

Juanita Nathan: Madam Chair, I want to know what the Conservative member for Richmond Hill South is going on about. We have spent so much taxpayer money to bring so many witnesses from around Canada, yet we have not asked a single question of them about the study we are currently doing. He is going on about a study that we are in agreement with that's to come—

The Chair: That is debate. Thank you.

MP Ho, go ahead.

Vincent Ho: First of all, I don't believe that's a point of order, but she said what she said already.

This is very relevant to the discussion, because we're talking about procurement using taxpayer dollars—money taxed on the backs of Canadians. We want to talk about the human element of this. It's not some abstract spreadsheet. These are real people, real families.

I have lots more to say, but I understand we have only limited time and resources, so I'll give up the floor so we can move on to some of the other members of the committee and allow them to speak to the motion. Then they can all get a chance to discuss how important space procurement is, or procurement in general—real procurement, not procurement where taxpayer money is siphoned for Liberal insiders.

• (1230)

The Chair: Thank you, MP Ho.

I have four people on the speaking list.

MP Deschênes-Thériault, you are next.

[*Translation*]

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: I'll be brief, Madam Chair.

I deplore my colleague's behaviour today. This shows a lack of respect for our work and for the witnesses, who have travelled from far away at the taxpayers' expense. We are conducting an important study on Canada's needs regarding dual-use research and defence. My colleague's motion could have been resolved in a few minutes. We are in favour of the motion.

I have nothing further to add on that point. We've already wasted enough time today.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Next I have MP Eyolfson.

Doug Eyolfson (Winnipeg West, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to echo the previous comments. We have already indicated that we are in support of this motion. We have wasted enough of our witnesses' valuable time. I think it has been an embarrassment that committee time has been used for no good purpose. The member from Richmond Hill has been spending a tremendous amount of time talking as if we're going to oppose this motion when we have said we're going to support it.

This has been a tremendous waste of our witnesses' time.

To the witnesses, I apologize.

The Chair: Thank you, MP Eyolfson.

I have next MP Baldinelli and then MP Noormohamed.

Tony Baldinelli: Madam Chair, for the sake of brevity, I would like to see us get to the vote as quickly as possible.

The Chair: Go ahead, MP Noormohamed.

Taleb Noormohamed: I would agree with my friend opposite. We would have gladly supported this motion—we didn't need the YouTube video—and we're happy to get to a vote.

The Chair: Next is MP Rana.

Aslam Rana (Hamilton Centre, Lib.): I would like to go to a vote. We have already seen lots of wasting of time. Our honourable colleague wasted a lot of time.

We apologize to our witnesses. We've wasted their time, and we've wasted our nation's time.

Please, go to a vote.

The Chair: Thank you.

MP Ho, go ahead.

Vincent Ho: That's fine. I'd like to go to a vote. I wish the Liberals would apologize every time they speak for two or three hours on something. I think this is very important to Canadian taxpayers. I don't think it's a waste of time. The Liberals should be apologizing to taxpayers, but I'm happy to cede the floor now and move to a vote.

The Chair: With that, the list of speakers is exhausted, and I will ask the clerk to take the vote on MP Ho's motion.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: For the last panel, we started the six-minute round with MP Ho. After that, we were not able to finish the first round. Because of the time now, we have three witnesses for the second panel, so I suggest that we get the opening remarks from all three and then proceed with our first round. The Liberals and the Bloc are left in the six-minute round. Then we will see what time we have.

One of the witnesses from the first round had to leave. Now all of them will be here for these rounds of questioning.

I will welcome our three new witnesses for our second panel.

We are joined by Dr. Ian Church, associate professor, department of geodesy and geomatics engineering, University of New Brunswick. He's here in person.

We have Dr. Robert Huebert, professor, Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary. He has joined us by video conference.

We also have Mr. Ken Doyle, executive director, representing Tech-Access Canada, here in person.

We will begin with Dr. Church.

Please, go ahead. You will have five minutes for your opening remarks. Thank you.

• (1235)

Ian Church (Associate Professor, Department of Geodesy and Geomatics Engineering, University of New Brunswick, As an Individual): Hello, Madam Chair.

I'm here today to offer the perspective of a researcher who has been working in dual-use technology and application development. As an associate professor in geodesy and geomatics engineering at the University of New Brunswick, where I run the Ocean Mapping Group, I focus on measuring the depths and features of our oceans using sonar systems and on applied ocean physics simulations in ports and harbours. Both have a dual-use focus.

My research involves collaborating with other researchers, industry partners and government agencies across Canada, with a specific focus on the Arctic and lately the Antarctic. This work has enhanced navigational safety and advanced our knowledge of the ocean environment, providing a foundation for ocean science, maritime operations and sovereignty.

Today, my statement will address three actionable priorities. The first is improving collaboration among ocean dual-use technology stakeholders. The second is securing targeted funding to fill gaps in the technology readiness levels. The third is integrating effective training at every stage of the research-to-operations process.

Connections between industry, academia, federal science departments and the Department of National Defence need to be improved. This includes establishing focused consortia that bridge these organizations to align with specific military priorities, ensuring that the specialized expertise found within these groups is fully integrated into our national defence strategy.

Accessible funding programs that prioritize dual-use technology can address these gaps. Ideally, these programs should be integrated into foundational initiatives at the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council—NSERC—and provincial funding agencies. A short-term goal could be to create a dedicated dual-use initiative within the NSERC alliance program.

In my experience, DRDC—Defence Research and Development Canada—is often not involved in these projects, making engagement challenging for many researchers. Although DRDC delivers vital scientific contributions, its broad mandate can lack domain-specific focus, leading to a disconnect between research and operational systems.

In the marine sector, to better connect DND, DRDC, academia and industry, Canada could look to the U.S. Office of Naval Research, the Naval Research Laboratory and the Naval Oceanographic Office as a structural model for funding, development and operationalization of marine dual-use research, data and technology.

Rather than replicating this model, however, Canada should seek to improve upon it by ensuring that innovations are mission-ready for military applications and contribute to national economic growth. Importantly, integrating first nations and Inuit priorities into research can transform defence-related projects such as Arctic

sea-floor mapping into collaborative efforts that reinforce both sovereignty and community well-being, which will surpass the U.S. approach.

Infrastructure and facilities that support both classified and unclassified joint research are essential. While the defence innovation secure hubs have demonstrated this approach, it is important to ensure that these facilities remain accessible to all researchers and are supported by additional programs that address a range of current and emerging technologies and needs.

For instance, the Royal Canadian Navy's Arctic and offshore patrol ships could be considered secure hubs and could be equipped to collect critical marine operational data by installing an ice-protected multibeam sonar system, for example, as implemented on the Canadian Coast Guard AOPS. They could then be used to support innovative dual-use marine research and improve situational awareness.

It is essential to address the entire pipeline, from research to operations, including comprehensive training as a key element. Supporting dual-use projects requires establishing sustainable research programs rather than isolated projects. Within these programs, we can recruit and train students who will remain in the field and advance into leadership roles within collaborative organizations.

When recruiting highly qualified personnel, it is important to provide clear career pathways to attract suitable candidates for graduate positions, including those eligible for Canadian security clearances. In my experience, adequate funding for these positions is a critical factor in successfully recruiting Canadian candidates. There are also opportunities to tailor educational programs for dual-use applications, as demonstrated by long-standing degree programs in the department of geodesy and geomatics engineering at UNB for the DND mapping and charting establishment.

Dual-use research should serve as Canada's competitive advantage. By modernizing funding mechanisms, infrastructure, inter-agency collaboration and training, Canada can develop a strategy that transforms research into operational capability and economic growth.

Thank you.

• (1240)

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now go to Mr. Huebert.

Please go ahead. You have five minutes for your opening remarks.

Robert Huebert (Professor, Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, As an Individual): Thank you very much, Madam Chair and members of the committee.

As a political scientist, I'd also like to thank you for giving me some first-hand observation of parliamentary procedure.

The Chair: It's Parliament in action.

Robert Huebert: Yes.

Canada has a fundamental problem when it comes to understanding defence economics, dual-use and all of the issues that we are now focused on. We simply do not have the capability—and I'll get into the reasons in a moment—to critically evaluate and understand defence economics in Canada.

The community of scholars who are able to watch this is very small. I can list the five. There's Craig Stone, who is now retired; Dave Perry, who is the head of a think tank; Phil Lagassé, who's over at Carleton University; Richard Shimooka, who you heard from and who is also a member of a think tank; and Elinor Sloan. The list pretty well ends at that point. We don't have a robust community and an ability to actually examine and provide the arm's-length analysis of what we're trying to do in this particular context.

There are three reasons for this. The first one, of course, is that our major funding agencies have not chosen to make defence politics and defence economics a priority. When we look at both what SSHRC provides for and what the Canada research chairs provide for, it's literally almost impossible to find any acceptance or studies being conducted in this context.

In fact, when we look at the Canada research chairs—and this is my quick examination of this—I can find only two who really have defence orientations. They are, of course, very good people. They're Dr. Stéfanie von Hlatky, over at Queen's University, and Whitney Lackenbauer, over at Trent. You're not going to find anybody else on the CRC, so there has not been support for the individual and intellectual foundations we need.

When we look at DND's MINDS program, we see that it is a robust program. I have to acknowledge that I am a co-director of one of the networks, but the networks are only three years in duration, so you spend your first year setting it up, you spend the second year doing the research, and the third year, you're again thinking about the renewal. This creates difficulties for any longevity.

The third problem is universities themselves. They have not made defence studies a priority. As a result, hiring is reflected in this.

I'm constantly producing students who I think would make very good contributions to understanding defence economics, but unfortunately, they don't find positions within academia. For example, Tim Choi—a very brilliant mind—who is now working for Treas-

ury Board on the shipbuilding strategy, was not able to find anything within a university. Another name that you will see all the time in the press is Heather Exner-Pirot, one of Canada's leading experts on critical minerals and mining policy. Again, the difficulty of ensuring that these very bright minds are brought in is very limited.

This leads me to my second major point, and that is the research impact. When we look at our attempts to understand Canada's policies—both successes and failures—when it comes to defence economics and when we talk about dual purposes, we have absolutely no lessons learned.

Let's look at successful defence procurement projects, such as the C-17s. Where are the open studies to tell us how we got that right, how we were able to move that up and how we were able to bring that under budget? We can also look at the frigate modernization as a success. Where are the studies on that to allow us to ask how we were able to bring it in on time and provide for a very successful follow-up?

Likewise, on the negative, when we look, for example, at “Strong, Secure, Engaged”, which was brought forward in 2017 as Canada's defence policy, there was considerable attention given to it as being fully costed. Where are the studies to say how successful it was, or, if it was not successful, what are the failures?

I'll end on two last points. We also have the difficulty of access to information. It's very hard to interview you folks now to really get to the bottom of when mistakes are made and when there are successes. Documents are very difficult. I'm currently researching and looking at our overall maritime strategy. I've spent the last four months trying to get access to the Canadian shipbuilding strategy—not the government report and not what the government says it says, but the actual report.

• (1245)

Now, it may be an indication that I'm just not a good researcher on this, and perhaps that's why I can't find it. I've gone through access to information. I've used my contacts through MINDS. I can't get a handle on that document, which means that either the document doesn't exist—and I'm hoping that's not the case—or it has been hidden so well—

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting, Dr. Huebert. Your time is up, so if you can, please wind up.

Robert Huebert: In conclusion, the question I leave you with, as a committee, is this: How can we actually say we're going to have a dual-use strategy when we don't understand where we have succeeded and where we have failed and when the community is not able to properly access this, as any of the other G7 countries are able to do?

Thank you—

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting. Your time is up. Maybe you can talk further on that when we go into the rounds of questioning.

Now we will go to Mr. Doyle for five minutes.

Please go ahead.

Ken Doyle (Executive Director, Tech-Access Canada): Thank you for the invitation to join you again for this very timely study.

The traditional dual-use model is familiar. Technologies developed for defence, like GPS, the Global Positioning System, eventually find civilian applications. More recently, commercial technologies with roots in defence, like drones and Starlink, are increasingly being adopted for operational use in conflict zones. Rather than relying on these slow and opportunistic evolutions, we have an opportunity to make dual-use innovation intentional, demand-driven and deployment-focused.

Canada spent decades pushing innovation into the world, hoping someone would find a use for it. Meanwhile, our men and women in uniform are facing real problems in real time. What if we flipped the model? What if we started with the Canadian Armed Forces' operational challenges and pulled the best of Canadian innovation toward them, fast? This isn't about building more innovation; it's about aiming it properly and delivering when it matters.

At technology access centres, we don't start with a technological solution looking for a problem. We start with the problem. What are the operational challenges on the ground, at sea or in the air right now? Then we ask, what technologies already exist in Canada that can help solve them? That's a demand-pull model. We act as scientific troubleshooters and innovation problem-solvers. We don't just ask what's possible; we ask what works and how fast we can deploy it.

Importantly, this isn't theoretical. A recent independent federal evaluation of the college and community innovation program found that technology access centres are delivering measurable economic and innovation impacts across Canada. The evaluation found that firms working with TACs improved productivity, accelerated time to market, strengthened their competitive position and increased revenues and hiring. In fact, small firms that worked with a TAC experienced average increases of 143% in sales and 69% in employment following engagement with a TAC, compared to companies that did not. That's not innovation theory; that's deployment at work.

We've done this before in automotive, in energy and in other sectors during moments of disruption or transition. We've helped companies modernize operations, adopt technologies, stay alive and remain competitive, not by advising from the sidelines but by working shoulder to shoulder to implement solutions. We take things

that normally take years for companies to figure out internally—technology adoption, validation, deployment—and compress those timelines dramatically. We're a force multiplier. More importantly, we're a time compressor.

With that in mind, I want to propose two practical near-term actions—not studies and not strategies, but deployable actions.

The first is dual-use technology assessments. Under this model, Canadian SMEs would work directly with technology access centres to adapt, prototype, test, validate and accelerate dual-use technologies, while ensuring those same companies retain their intellectual property and commercial upside. Fuelling the work would generally fall into three streams: first, existing defence technologies that require an objective validation and refinement; second, civilian technologies with potential defence applications; and third, entirely new solutions to operational challenges identified by the Canadian Armed Forces. Some projects could be completed within six months, others within 12 to 18 months, but the point is speed. While others are still capability mapping, we're already in the field.

The second is supplier modernization for defence readiness. If we're serious about readiness, we need to strengthen the backbone of the supply chain—our tier two and tier three manufacturers and suppliers. These are companies that need to adopt robotics, automation, specialized equipment, advanced manufacturing techniques and digital systems to increase productivity, meet OEM quality standards and participate in defence supply chains. If we can help upgrade the shop floor, we can help unlock the supply chain.

Canada has done this before. The British Commonwealth air training plan demonstrated what this country can accomplish when infrastructure, talent and mission align around a common purpose. During the Second World War, Canada helped scale the production of the De Havilland Mosquito, a versatile platform adapted into reconnaissance, fighter, bomber and transport roles, with multirole capability, rapid adaptation and industrial coordination. Somewhere along that way, that industrial muscle atrophied. Rebuilding it won't be easy, but applied R and D and rapid commercialization are part of that rehabilitation process.

Technology access centres are a turnkey pan-Canadian network of applied R and D and commercialization centres. We share a common operating model. We're embedded in industry, and we already have the infrastructure—simulation labs, environmental testing facilities, pilot scale manufacturing capacity, robotics platforms and specialized testing equipment—distributed across the country. We do not need to build a new system; the system already exists. The need has finally aligned with this capacity, so turn us loose.

If you want evidence, we can point to the more than 50,000 Canadian SMEs that have worked with a technology access centre since 2012—and I'm willing to go further. I'm willing to be held accountable for performance, outputs and outcomes, because this is not about more innovation; it's about deploying what we already have when it matters most.

The ask is simple. Unleash us, and let's move at the speed that this moment demands. While others are still discussing frameworks, we should already be validating technologies. Our goal should be to have the first wave of projects completed within 180 days of the D-Day anniversary, before December 31 of this year.

• (1250)

Thank you.

The Chair: Thanks to all the witnesses for their opening remarks. We have combined panels one and two, so we have two witnesses from the first panel and three witnesses from the second panel.

When we went to the debate on the motion by MP Ho, MP Ho had completed the six minutes of his first round. We will now proceed to MP Rana for six minutes.

Go ahead, MP Rana.

Aslam Rana: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to all the witnesses for your time and for your patience.

My question is for Dr. Church.

As we expand our defence surveillance, particularly in northern and remote areas, do we have the opportunity to improve the data of the Canadian geological survey?

Ian Church: This is a good question.

It's about a combination of operational assets that exist that can help collect and improve our data in the Canadian Arctic. The Royal Canadian Navy has a big interest in operating in the Canadian Arctic. They've built the Harry DeWolf-class Arctic and offshore

patrol vessels, but there's an operational limit to working in the Arctic.

Right now, very little of the Arctic is mapped to modern standards, which means that it's very difficult to operate in that environment. As the area becomes more and more ice-free, it becomes more and more challenging to police to limit what other vessels are going up there. There's a huge need to collect more and more data. A lot of that data is not going to be collected by the Royal Canadian Navy. It's going to be collected by the Coast Guard in collaboration with other federal departments, like Natural Resources Canada, the Geological Survey of Canada and specifically the Canadian Hydrographic Service.

Having a maritime situational awareness collected and managed by the Coast Guard and working together with the Royal Canadian Navy and other federal departments are really going to add a lot of capability to the system.

Aslam Rana: Thank you very much.

Ms. Pawluk, RaceRocks works across defence, aerospace, marine and coast guard training. Where in the shift from R and D to operational training do you see the most room for collaboration?

Anita Pawluk: Collaboration would be working on the relationships already built between the Canadian Coast Guard and the coastal nations. There's a workforce there that's ready to be developed. It's actually already developed. All we need now are some shared standards to include them in an integrated workforce that will help with workforce development and coastal security.

After talking to Dr. Church, they could also be collecting data as another source, another group, to support the lands and waters that they know best.

• (1255)

Aslam Rana: What has your experience been navigating the procurement and innovation ecosystem, and how do you expect the DIS to improve access for companies like yours?

Anita Pawluk: When I spoke earlier to innovative solutions Canada's testing stream, the validation to commercialization was the biggest challenge for us, knowing that the two programs work sequentially. When you start into one, you know that your path will not be disrupted by procurement or the lack of funds in the department that's requiring your services or goods, which ensures that you can start a program and complete it and not have money removed from that budget.

Aslam Rana: What opportunities do you see for provinces and territories building out the training and workforce components of the DIS?

Anita Pawluk: I'm sorry; can you repeat that?

Aslam Rana: What are the opportunities for the provinces and territories to collaborate with the DIS?

Anita Pawluk: With training, you can build it once and deliver it often. I think the ability to collaborate among different industries with different training platforms is there for us.

Aslam Rana: Mr. Chair, I would like to share my time with my colleague, please.

The Vice-Chair (Tony Baldinelli): You have two minutes and 15 seconds.

Doug Eyolfson: Thank you.

Dr. Church, you've done some work demonstrating how technologies that are developed for civilian use can be adapted to military use. In today's environment, how would you advise us to shorten the gap between the research side in universities and operationalization at a military level?

Ian Church: One thing we can focus on is trying to develop pathways within focused areas. We can have some of the networks we've seen developed within ideas, but from a broader perspective. If we can have more networks that are focused on bringing people together within the same community, within the same research areas, then we can start to see real advancement. They are not hugely broad organizations that bring everybody together. They're not just focusing on very specific things like quantum or something like that, but focusing more holistically in specific areas. I think that will have a big impact.

Doug Eyolfson: Thank you.

How much time do I have left?

The Chair: You have 46 seconds.

Doug Eyolfson: Thank you.

Mr. Doyle, there are communities that have military and civilian facilities close by as part of the same economy. In Winnipeg, we have a large air force base, 17 Wing. We also have Boeing. We have StandardAero. These civilian companies, of course, are providing a lot of products that are used in the military. Do you see the defence industrial strategy we're putting forward as helping to facilitate this and have it work more seamlessly?

Ken Doyle: I do. In fact, one of our centres in Winnipeg is co-located with a defence company, Magellan Aerospace, and with Bristol Aerospace. We try to act almost like WD-40 to get some of that friction out of the picture and make the connections between industry and the end-user, the Canadian Forces, that much more expeditious. We're able to co-locate with private sector partners and share resources and upskill personnel—that kind of thing—with the goal of maximizing efficiencies.

The Chair: I'm sorry for interrupting, but your time is up.

Doug Eyolfson: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now proceed to MP Blanchette-Joncas for six minutes.

Please go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to welcome the witnesses who are with us today. I thank them for their understanding of the situation we've been experiencing since the beginning of this committee meeting.

My first question is for Mr. Doyle.

Are college centres for technology transfer, or CCTTs, and colleges often the essential link between research, small and medium-sized businesses, prototyping and the actual adoption of technologies?

Ken Doyle: Yes, absolutely. It's a mature network with a proven track record. The model works. Our Canadian model is based on CCTTs in Quebec. The evaluation of the program, which was released yesterday, provides all the details on the strength of this model.

• (1300)

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you.

I want to ask you a question about a contradiction on the part of the federal government.

The government is announcing new investments in defence. At the same time, a number of programs that support colleges, CEGEPs and CCTTs are undergoing cuts. The college and community innovation program, in particular, is being undermined.

Are we at a risk of weakening precisely these structures that transform research into concrete innovations while we are investing record amounts in defence?

Ken Doyle: Thank you for your question.

That's absolutely correct. The program underwent cuts on April 1. However, in last week's spring economic update, funding was announced for the college and community innovation program, or CCI, which supports technology access centres and CCTTs.

I think that the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, NSERC, now has the financial resources it needs to solve the problem of differing funding levels between centres in Quebec and those in the rest of Canada. Grant amounts are also being updated to ensure that they are ready to assist when major issues are being faced, such as in defence.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you.

Can you just confirm that this was the full amount that was missing for the program? After all, we were talking about cuts of about 30% to the college and community innovation program.

Ken Doyle: Yes. With last week's update, those cuts have been resolved. NSERC will now have, for the next five years, the financial resources it needs to maintain the appropriate level of funding for the entire sector.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Mr. Doyle, I think we have here compelling evidence that the opposition's work is playing off, as I was the one who asked Minister Joly about this, right here at this committee.

Ken Doyle: Thank you for that on behalf of all our members in Quebec.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Mr. Doyle, centres like SEREX, in Amqui, in my riding, and Innovation maritime, affiliated with the Cégep de Rimouski, directly support small and medium-sized businesses and innovation in the region.

Do you think we are underestimating the strategic role of this infrastructure in our industrial and technological sovereignty?

Ken Doyle: I think so, because the infrastructure has been built up over the years through public investments to support SMEs that lack the internal capacity to handle commercialization.

Our role is to provide support, and it's really important to ensure that the centres can work together to solve a problem a company is facing. It's important to combine the strengths of the different centres, based on their expertise. For example, SEREX, which has expertise in forest products, works well with Innovation maritime, or IMAR, to support the industry in the Rimouski area.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you, Mr. Doyle.

I want to ask you a question about concentration.

In the current defence research strategy, we see that the government wants to focus its efforts on the major universities.

Are we at risk of missing out on the entire applied research component, including in terms of what we just discussed, such as prototyping, testing and transfer to small and medium-sized businesses?

When it comes to applied research, you are the experts.

Ken Doyle: Yes, thank you.

I don't think it's a one-size-fits-all model. I think universities and government labs will have a role to play in the future in projects lasting two, three, four years or longer. On our end, we have a unique role, which is to carry out incremental innovation projects lasting five, six or 12 months to quickly meet industry needs.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: I'd like us to talk specifically about the small and medium-sized businesses you support. Do they actually have access to federal public contracts or do they too often get stuck at the prototype stage?

Ken Doyle: It seems that there are difficulties related to the size, history and revenue of the business or things like that. There are minimum requirements for spending public money responsibly.

At the same time, 99% of businesses in Canada are really small businesses. In the past, they were not equipped to actually win contracts.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you.

In a crisis or a supply chain breakdown, do you think the local capacity to quickly produce, test, adapt and repair technologies becomes as important as basic research itself?

Ken Doyle: Yes.

We receive many requests from companies seeking assistance with their supply chains because they are not yet able to purchase goods from the United States.

We can help them find alternatives at the same price, or even slightly cheaper, and adopt technologies to replace people who can't always be hired.

• (1305)

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you.

Should a portion of new investments be set aside for concrete initiatives led by your members? I'm thinking of colleges, CCTTs, small and medium-sized businesses with goals of prototyping, testing and even actual adoption.

Ken Doyle: Yes, absolutely. I think there's currently a significant gap in the system. That has been the case for decades. We need something tailored to us so that we can do what we do best. That would be a good idea.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

With that, the first round comes to an end.

We will start our second round of five minutes and two and a half minutes. The floor goes to MP Mahal for five minutes.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal (Edmonton Southeast, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to all the witnesses for being here.

Dr. Huebert, I want to start with you.

Defence procurement should not be a politically driven topic. Canada should buy the best tool for the job, full stop. As many defence reviews have shown, the F-35 is the best equipped, by every measure, to fulfill the Royal Canadian Air Force requirements. Do you agree, yes or no?

Robert Huebert: Yes, I agree.

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Thank you for the brief answer, Doctor.

Robert Huebert: I can go on if you'd like.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: Thank you.

By politicizing this issue, the Liberals are failing to secure Canadian skies. How can Canada credibly claim to defend its sovereignty if it allows political considerations to delay the aircraft? Its own defence assessments have repeatedly identified it as the best option.

Robert Huebert: Thank you for the question. You've just helped me make my point about our dearth of understanding regarding how the process goes.

We could actually track the length of time we have spent on trying to make a decision on the best selection from a strategic and warfighting capability, and this selection isn't just my assessment. We've seen this come out of DND. We've seen this come out of the air force. We've seen this come from almost all of the serious academics who have looked at this issue.

The question applies over both Conservative and Liberal governments: Why can't we be like Denmark? Why are we not able to make the decision? The Danes, following the beginning of the Ukrainian war in 2014, changed their decision not to have a fighter aircraft, and within two years, they made the decision to get the F-35s.

My question, of course, is this: Why is the political process, from both Conservative and Liberal governments, so long that we have not been able to emulate our Nordic allies and friends? It comes to the point of our understanding, because I don't have an answer for you. I can't point to any study that says why it's happened, and I'll connect it to a question for Dr. Church.

The Senate report that came up in 2005 said that we had 1% of the Arctic charted to modern standards. Today, that number is 17%. I come back to you and say that the Coast Guard has always been saying that it wants to do multibeam sonar missions so that it can map when it goes and does anything, but the political decision—and again, this goes across Conservative and Liberal governments—has been to not provide the funds to the Coast Guard to allow it to do the mapping. At a 17% increase over 20 years, that means in another 20 years we'll be at 34%.

My question to you is, why don't we understand why political decisions have not been made for something that, at least for most of us, would seem quite obvious?

Jagsharan Singh Mahal: I think you would agree with me that this Liberal government has been in power for the last 11 years now and the demographics have changed quite drastically in these 11 years. I think you have already answered that it would be more incumbent upon the government to make quick decisions and not to prolong or delay these procurements so this needed equipment can be provided to the military and air force in a timely fashion.

Dr. Church, I will come to you now. Across three oceans, Canada has the largest coastline in the world. Can you describe the unique challenges that Canada faces when it comes to securing our coast and port infrastructure?

Ian Church: We have a lot of unique challenges. All of our infrastructure is really focused on the east and west coasts and has historically not been focused on our largest and probably most strategically important area, which is the Arctic.

I started working in the Arctic in 2005 on board the Canadian Coast Guard ship *Amundsen*, doing science and mapping up there when it was the only vessel that was equipped to collect data on the seabed within our Arctic environment. We made do with the facilities we had, but it's been excellent to see investments come in for improving our Coast Guard infrastructure and the ships and port infrastructure in the Arctic in order to make sure we are surveilling those areas.

It is concerning to see the Royal Canadian Navy talk about operational needs in the Arctic and not having the capacity to actually operate in most of the Arctic because of the ice conditions. They're going to be relying heavily on the Coast Guard. I think now is the time to think critically about how those two groups are going to work together and balance both military interests and scientific and sovereignty interests in that area.

• (1310)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Church.

The time is up for MP Mahal.

We will now proceed to MP Deschênes-Thériault for five minutes.

Please, go ahead.

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Thank you.

Dr. Church, you're the primary investigator on a project that will enhance security and support the growth and productivity of the port of Belledune and port Saint John in New Brunswick. You've received some funding through our defence industrial strategy for this project.

I would like to hear how this project is a great example of how we can, at the same time, protect our critical infrastructure and support our economic growth.

Ian Church: We're very proud of that project, and we're really looking forward to seeing how it can evolve.

We have two ports in New Brunswick that are fantastic opportunities. They're locations with huge growth potential, but also big operational challenges. Port Saint John, for example, is the most interesting port oceanographically in the world, in my opinion, with the tides of the Bay of Fundy and the Saint John River, the different modes of operation and the history within the port. However, it's a reality that in most ports across the country and the world, we know very little about what's going on underneath the water. That's a scientific and operational concern for the port, but it's also a security concern for understanding the subsea environment.

If we can learn more about monitoring, predicting and simulating what's going on in those ports and can monitor things from a defence perspective knowing what's happening with them, while at the same time ensuring that the exact same simulations we're running and data we're collecting are used to help the ports bring vessels in and out and improve the logistics of the ports, it is the perfect example of crossing that boundary.

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Thank you.

I would like to hear how our defence industrial strategy, especially the research component, is an opportunity for a university such as UNB, knowing that there's already some expertise in defence at UNB and that UNB is located near the Gagetown military base.

Ian Church: It's a huge opportunity for universities like UNB. UNB is unique in that we're not in the U15, but we have had a huge focus on defence for a long time. We've invested in having people collaborate with the defence side of things, with base Gagetown being right there.

There's a huge opportunity for training specifically, but there are also a lot of opportunities to take the amazing research happening there, which is quite unique—and it's not just UNB where this is happening—and consider some of the defence applications of it and build it into those pathways.

Guillaume Deschênes-Thériault: Thank you.

I will pass my time to MP Nathan.

Juanita Nathan: Thank you so much to my colleague.

I want to ask this question of you, Anita.

As a Canadian indigenous-owned company operating in a dual-use space, what barriers do you face in moving innovation technologies from development to federal procurement and deployment?

Anita Pawluk: Mostly, it's about the capital to move the project from a concept to commercialization. Also, it's about the infrastructure to support that. Technical infrastructures are getting more expensive. Hopefully there will be funding available for that. Also, security and cybersecurity are really hard for a small business to keep up with and are very expensive.

Juanita Nathan: Canada's defence industrial strategy emphasizes sovereignty and domestic capability. What specific investments or policy changes would help Canadian companies like RaceRocks scale and compete globally while supporting Canada's national security needs?

• (1315)

Anita Pawluk: The ITB program is a really great program to support small and medium-sized businesses. Working alongside a defence prime, learning from them and having the support of their infrastructure is definitely something that I have found to be very advantageous and supportive for RaceRocks in the last 10 years.

Juanita Nathan: If you could recommend one concrete action this committee should prioritize to strengthen Canada's dual-use innovation ecosystem over the next five years, what would it be?

Anita Pawluk: To Mr. Doyle's comments, it's definitely investing in small to medium-sized businesses and supporting them to work together. It's also working with the larger defence primes, but definitely seeing where their technologies can work with other small to medium-sized businesses.

Juanita Nathan: How much time do I have?

The Chair: You have 30 seconds.

Juanita Nathan: I'll give that time up so someone can ask questions.

The Chair: We will now proceed to MP Blanchette-Joncas for two and a half minutes.

[Translation]

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Thank you.

Mr. Doyle, in your opinion, is enough being invested in the capacity to design products here?

Ken Doyle: From the early 1960s to the 1980s, that was the case. However, I think that, with globalization and other factors, there have been incentives to move production elsewhere. Now it will be a major challenge to rebuild the capacity we had 50 years ago.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: By weakening regional applied research and technology transfer infrastructure, are we increasing our dependence on foreign technologies and suppliers?

Ken Doyle: I think so. Technology access centres and CCTTs in urban areas, but also in rural areas, function as an anchor, as a base. In the past, large international companies would come to a region and attract supply chains. Now, technology access centres play that role. There are now SMEs that can innovate, create and market their products locally to export them elsewhere, and the benefits flow back to Canada.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Mr. Doyle, what specifically is missing from the defence industrial strategy, in your view, for your members, for all the members we have talked about—such as CCTTs and SMEs—and for the applied research sector?

Ken Doyle: I think there is a lack of support at the pre-procurement stage, where technologies, prototyping, simulations and testing can be validated. We need to reduce the commercialization risk for SMEs so they can grow and enter the federal procurement system.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Okay.

As I understand, federal mechanisms are not adapted to the type of business operated by members of your organizations. They don't fit the same profile, in particular.

Is that correct?

Ken Doyle: Yes, we try to collaborate with companies at their level and according to their timeline.

There are programs where the decision on a project grant may take nine or 10 months to be made. By that time, the company no longer exists. Programs need to move faster. Even though risk must be mitigated because these are public funds, things have to move more quickly.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: What is the government saying about your requests?

Ken Doyle: There is support. We just have to wait until mechanisms are in place. I think that's being studied right now.

Maxime Blanchette-Joncas: Okay.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

I would like to ask members if they would like me to end this panel here or if they would like to go on, with five minutes for the Liberals and five minutes for the Conservatives. What is the will of members?

An hon. member: Just end it.

The Chair: Okay.

I would like to thank the witnesses for appearing before the committee and for their patience. I'm sorry we went over the time, but that's how committees work. I'm really sorry for all the time you had to sit here.

With that, this panel comes to an end.

The meeting is now adjourned.

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