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Mercredi 17 octobre 2001

**Select committee on
alternative fuel sources**

Committee business

**Comité spécial des sources
de carburants de remplacement**

Travaux du comité

Chair: Doug Galt
Clerk: Tonia Grannum

Président : Doug Galt
Greffière : Tonia Grannum

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON
ALTERNATIVE FUEL SOURCES**

Wednesday 17 October 2001

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DES SOURCES
DE CARBURANTS DE REMPLACEMENT**

Mercredi 17 octobre 2001

The committee met at 1007 in room 228.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mr Doug Galt): I call the select committee to order. You have before you an agenda. First is a report on subcommittee business. You have a sheet there with that information. The other thing you have before you is a sheet from Bob Gardner dated October 12, three pages. We want to work through that this morning as well.

We were struggling with objectives earlier, and we have a group of objectives before you at this point in time. There is one modification in the discussion that had to do with energy for heating that's not included in this particular list. I don't know if you're comfortable with that breakout of the activities. I was struggling with a way of having a breakout, and I see heating is one more. I was kind of seeing it in the third item, potential use of agricultural products for energy, but you could also have heating in there, or it could be a fifth one. I'm looking for some of your comments, responses.

Clerk of the Committee (Ms Tonia Grannum): What we could do is adopt the report and then we could amend it to add the heating, if you'd like.

The Chair: Can we amend after it's adopted?

Clerk of the Committee: No. You should amend—

The Chair: Make the amendments first. I just thought we'd have some discussion on it before.

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): I think, on objectives, one of the things we ought to be looking at is the potential for job creation and export development of alternative fuels. I've met with a number of people, solar energy being my interest, but people in district heating and the combination of natural gas heating with electricity. We're importing more equipment than we're exporting.

Solar: we could be a major exporter of solar-based energy products. The market had actually started to do that slightly in the mid-1980s, when the feds had their grant. Ontario Energy Corp, as a separate ministry, had energy—I can't think of its exact name, but there were funds set aside from about 1984 through 1988, maybe 1990, for feasibility studies. They were more than just the academic sort. They were actually the installation of product where they use natural gas, as an example. I visited one just recently. It's a nursing home, a seniors'

place, 425 units—it's about five kilometres from here—and it's natural-gas heated combined with electricity to some extent. The savings have been enormous. They got their monies to get started, half a million dollars, through feasibility grants from the Ontario Ministry of Energy. The people from this company were telling me they had to import equipment from the US in the 1994 final phase.

Using that as a prime example—solar; you can see it with our presenters from the Canadian Wind Energy Association; from biofuels—there is tremendous potential in a number of these areas and we need to document them. I think the report's objectives, the committee's objectives, should include that, as to how alternative fuels could have major impacts for job creation across Ontario and, hopefully, Canada. I know it's partly stated in there, but I think it should be made a specific objective.

The Chair: If I may, I think we have, in the subcommittee report—maybe, number one, the heading isn't just the way it should read. Really, what I was working towards there, rather than objectives, is that the committee deal with four broad areas of activity. Then, item 3 would include, after the semi-colon, "heating energy."

If you look on page 2 of the package that Mr Gardner had put together, we have listed possible objectives there, which are not part of the subcommittee report but part of what he had packaged for me for possible objectives after some discussions. Just to continue on your comment, we don't specifically mention jobs, but your point is well taken. If I could just set that aside, I may have misled you a little with the subcommittee report and having used the term "objectives" here. Rather, we were just trying to break the areas of activity into more understandable compartments. Item 1 would read, "That the committee deal with four broad areas of activity," that wording.

The third bullet point: "Potential use of agricultural products for energy; and heating energy."

Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain): May I move acceptance of the subcommittee on committee business.

"Your subcommittee on committee business met on Wednesday, October 10, 2001, and recommends the following:

(1) That the committee deal with four broad areas of activity:

Alternative means of producing electricity;
Alternative energy sources of transportation;

Potential use of agricultural products for energy; and”—an addition—“heating energy”;

Development of an effective and responsive policy framework to encourage innovation in alternative energy, and education on the overall policy issues surrounding alternative energy and fuel.

(2) That a short list of names for candidates for research consultant be provided to the subcommittee at its next subcommittee meeting to be held on Tuesday, October 16, 2001.

(3) That the committee meet to discuss its objectives and to consider its interim report on October 17, 2001, and on October 24, 2001, if necessary.

(4) That the subcommittee give some thought to selecting additional invited witnesses (umbrella groups) to attend at future meetings of the select committee.

The Chair: Thank you for getting that read into the record. Are we comfortable with item 1 now as it was read and moderately changed?

I can report that the committee did meet yesterday. We have worked it down to probably interviewing four candidates next Tuesday afternoon, and will report to committee next Wednesday morning on hopefully one or two that we'd have.

Also, on item 2, just a comment: you'll see the objectives that we have tried to package, and we'll discuss those later.

Item 4: really, we haven't followed up on that totally, “additional invited witnesses,” but we're looking to the committee as to some of the things you want to hear as we move through November.

Having commented on that, those in favour of the subcommittee report? The motion is carried.

Before we move into it, we should have a short discussion as we work on the interim report. Report writing on occasion, maybe generally, is done in camera rather than in open session. We're talking interim report. We're really modifying the summary that was originally put together. What is your wish? A thought might be to operate in open session for interim reports. The final report might tend to get a bit partisan and that might be the time to operate in camera, if the committee so desires. Is there any desire to move in camera for this discussion?

Mrs Bountrogianni: Not on my part. The interim report is objective. I think what we have, the first draft, is very objective.

The Chair: Hearing no motion to do so, then we'll continue? Everybody's comfortable? Maybe we could just take these three pages and we'll work through what has been suggested from research and see if people agree with the direction we're going. In a few minutes we'll get to where Mr Hastings had concerns about objectives. But developing the interim report, any comments on the general direction; summary of the first round of hearings? That general layout has been distributed to you, this package which is a modification of the summary that we had to begin with.

Mrs Bountrogianni: I was discussing briefly with Jerry earlier the possibility of putting subheadings on the

list of public policy issues at the back. They're at the back now.

The Chair: OK.

Mrs Bountrogianni: But putting them under subheadings and possibly moving them to the front as discussion points. Right now they're listed without headings, and we have to search to see under which category the different questions fall. So just from an organizational point of view.

The Chair: Yes, a point well taken.

Dr Bob Gardner: We can certainly do that. The only reason they're at the back is because we were just collecting them as we went along. We can organize that however the committee wants.

I think maybe the key question for you to consider now is whether you want to include any interim recommendations or observations at this point. Jerry has revised the summary to reflect what you heard, and that's easy enough; we can do that quickly for you. It's a question of whether you want to add more to that, whether you want to make some recommendations for things that you would see being done right away, or you don't want to have any recommendations at this point beyond some sense of where you're going next in the report.

Mrs Bountrogianni: I think I made my bias clear last time. I prefer the recommendations to be in the final report. But I'm open to any suggestions from my colleagues.

The Chair: Any comments, Mr Hastings or Mr Miller?

Mr Hastings: You're looking at pages 4 and 5 in the end, or what?

The Chair: Right now just the general overview of the interim report, the categories of grouping rather than the details, kind of what we're looking at. We can certainly get into the detail, and that's important. Right now, does anyone at the table feel that we're comfortable enough with what we've heard that we can start making recommendations to government. It is early? There are a lot of instruments out there and we're about to hire a researcher to look at policy and instruments in other provinces, states and countries. We may find some very significant things.

At this point in time we've had four days of hearings, 60-some presentations, along with the various ministries. It may be premature to be making recommendations at this time.

1020

Mr Hastings: One of the things that ought to be included in the interim report is that once the researcher is hired, I think we should get that researcher to focus to some extent on outcomes of alternative fuels from other jurisdictions. I think it would provide a useful guide for us in terms of moderate success or failure for, say, wind energy.

I went through the material Jerry provided regarding the German government's aim to convert nuclear to wind by 2025. The minister for the environment over there has

been in this position for three years, and yet the report indicates, if it is true, that there doesn't even seem to be a pilot in operation as to charting how you're going to get to 2025. You just have announcements, like all governments seem to do. We should be finding out.

I'm not picking on wind energy, but that seems to be their focus for looking at the Danish experience. Maybe we would have some successful policy outcomes on how much it saved in the production of electricity, how air emissions have improved, how much the Danish government has expended over a decade, if they have, in providing incentives to the wind energy industry and that sort of material. You can't have it on all of them, I'm sure, but where there's some substantial experience as a guide, using wind as an example and Denmark as the lead in that area in Europe, it might be interesting to find out, if that researcher can dive in, drill down and see. What did the Danish government do? When did they start? Are there any stats available on air emission reductions, expenditures put up, jobs created and electricity efficiency improved, and those sorts of things? There could be other categories, I'm sure, but it would be very interesting to see where you can find those.

Then we can use those experiences to some extent as a policy guide for the interim report. You can't do it for every industry because we don't have the experience, but in this case I would find that one quite useful. When we do the follow-up hearings in January, we could ask some very pointed questions to the people who come in from the various groups and from the financial community, if we get them.

The Chair: Dr Gardner, you wanted to make a comment?

Dr Gardner: We have set out some scope notes, a request for proposal, for the specialized research consultants that the committee will retain. One of the issues we want them to look at is exactly that: has there been research on the outcomes of the various public policies to support the different kinds of energies? So we will be looking for that kind of detail from any research that we do.

The Chair: Just as you were speaking, it was running through my mind that once we finish with the researcher—and we were looking at how many interim reports and final reports etc. Mr Miller, what we are looking at in research is coming up with what policy makes green energy work in other jurisdictions around the world. That may make for a neat second interim report as a package: this is what other countries are doing. Then we look to a final report as to our specific recommendations.

Maybe the two reports are two packages of information. We are looking at the first interim now. The second is what we are finding out in other jurisdictions from a policy point of view. After we get feedback on our first interim, we do some more hearings in probably February or March. Then we come in with our recommendations from those two reports. We have that basis to work from. I'm flying by the seat of my pants, so to

speak. That was coming to mind as Mr Hastings was speaking.

Mrs Bountrogianni: That makes a lot of good sense. Now is a good time to say that I was successful in getting an intern who's very interested in this committee. She will definitely be helping me in summarizing what I find, outside of Ontario and within Ontario. I'm sure she would like to help other committee members as well, if they wish. That does make sense. I don't know if you even want to call it an interim report; it could be just a summary of other jurisdictions. It doesn't have to be a formal interim report.

The Chair: It could be, as was suggested earlier, like a letter. It would be a rather thick letter, whatever we want to call it at the time, but it is information that we feed. By the way, I have an intern as well—he's sitting here—Peter Hargreave.

Mrs Bountrogianni: Oh, hi. Lyndsey and you can work together.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Hastings; good information.

Mr Hastings: One point, Mr Chairman, on the natural gas conversion I was talking about. That nursing home was formerly heated by electricity, the whole thing, which led to very dry air in the place. The stats are probably available, but the anecdotal impression of the administrator was from 20 years ago. The degree of incontinence of patients may have declined when they switched to natural gas because it reduced the dryness in the air etc. Interesting. That's a prime example from Ontario government policies over the last 15 years. The researcher could be looking into how effective that has been in terms of the monies put in and the savings out the other end. They claim \$160,000 annually during the early to mid-1990s. I don't know about the last year.

The Chair: In the beginning of the report or summary, there are about eight or nine bullet points on things that the Ontario government has been doing to promote green energy. We might be criticized because we depended totally on nuclear for so long for electricity, but there are some interesting points in there. One thing I would suggest is that in the interim report the committee should be listed.

Clerk of the Committee: Yes, that's done.

The Chair: I took it for granted that it wasn't.

Clerk of the Committee: Yes, in the final version.

The Chair: Maybe we'd better promote the committee a little bit.

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): I'm just subbing here today, so I haven't had the opportunity to see a lot of the submissions that were made to the committee, but I gather from your grid here that you're looking for some input as to what the focus of this committee should be. Some of the things I think are important are some of the long-term goals, like hydrogen fuel cell applications. I think it would be wonderful. I know that's something that's very near and dear to Mr Gilchrist. I've had private conversations with him where he says he'd like to see no more internal combustion

engines in 10 years, just all hydrogen-powered vehicles in Ontario. I think that's a very worthwhile goal for us to be heading toward. Of course, there would be huge benefits.

Small-scale hydro facilities: I think that's very important.

1030

If there are possibilities of using gas from landfill sites, or alternatives to landfill sites generally, that would be very beneficial. My own personal feeling about landfill sites is that they're ticking time bombs. However we can get rid of them and have some benefit from them, we should be looking at ways of doing that. I'm including things such as incinerating garbage, if it's done in other jurisdictions of the world—I don't know, I'm just throwing that idea out, and perhaps somebody has already come before this committee to talk about that—where you can incinerate garbage and generate electricity. The reason that makes sense, at least to look at it, is that with incineration you can at least measure the damage you are doing to the environment at the time you are doing it and generate some positive benefit from it, whereas with a landfill site, we bury it for future generations, to contaminate their water supplies, and we know how important water is to this province. Those are just some ideas off the top of my head in terms of some things that I think are important.

The Chair: Certainly what we've been hearing from delegations has been extremely intriguing, some of the thoughts and ideas of what can be accomplished. One day we had a demonstration of solar energy here, and when the committee first started these hearings in late August, we had a demonstration of a vehicle with a combination of electricity, gasoline and solar power. We had a fair number of them here on that occasion.

I wonder if we could look at the possible objectives that have been laid out for the committee on the bottom of page 2. I think Mr Hastings had a comment as it related to jobs earlier. His point is well taken. Let's go down them one at a time. Are you comfortable with them? Do you want to read them all, just to double-check? This was an attempt at fleshing out the mandate. It would be helpful for our researcher, as well as helpful for the committee. We might even consider the objectives as some action items for the committee. Is there anything there that jumps out at you, that is flashing, that we shouldn't be doing, or is there something that's missing, like Mr Hastings mentioned on job creation?

Mr Hastings: Another thing that would be interesting to see is that the finished product should be a clearly communicated, coherent, understandable piece of material that people could pick up and go through very quickly and get a quick education. As part of the objectives—not a specific objective—perhaps the researcher or the group could start looking at packaging and formatting the material for every alternative fuel source. Would it be possible to do not necessarily a matrix but a column or some sort of bar chart that would show how long it would take to move from, say, the internal combustion engine to

a hydrogen- or solar-based car or tractor? How long would it take? Six years? Ten years?

I see Hydrogenics has signed an agreement with General Motors. GM is going to buy 30% of that company, similar to what's happening with Ford and Daimler-Chrysler with Ballard. They say they're going to do some of this by 2004. Three years ago, they were saying it was going to be 2023 in the Daimler case. So you keep moving out a year and a year and, before long, it's 2014 and you see your first real solar-operated or hydrogen-operated cars. I'm wondering if the researcher could have a transition chart of some sort as to where we are now with internal combustion vehicles. Will they still be around in 2005 or 2010? Will we have even 10% of motorists using solar, hydrogen, natural gas or some other type of alternatively operated vehicle by 2020? And not only how long it will take, but what would be the cost to government, how many jobs would be displaced and that sort of charting?

Everything has to go through a transition. If you are going to introduce it with government incentives or however it is done, it would be interesting for the reader to see: OK, it's going to actually take another 15 years before we have a solar-operated tractor out doing soybeans in southwestern Ontario. Or will it be 2030? That kind of transitioning, the most idealistic years out to the more probable. They're all estimates, granted, but that's something we could put in a chart, like you have on the back of this material, how you do the questions.

The Chair: What I think I'm hearing from you is that if we find in California or Denmark, this is what they have implemented—

Mr Hastings: Or here in Ontario.

The Chair: —as a policy, and if we were to adopt that policy here, how would it change in Ontario X number of years down the road? Or if we were to take a combination of those policies, or possibly even come up with a new one, how quickly would that turn it around? It is a guesstimate, but you want a fairly specific outcome by 2020 or 2025, or in that range, that this probably would happen if this instrument was brought in—

Mr Hastings: Or if it wasn't brought in, what would happen? And how many jobs will be lost when you move from the internal combustion engine to solar- or natural-gas-operated vehicles? It's like the VCRs. There was VHS and Beta. The technicians said Beta was the best product for videotape, but how much Beta do you see today, except maybe in commercial videotape?

The Chair: Your point is sort of like with the digital cameras. Look at what happened to Polaroid.

Mr Hastings: Precisely. It gives a warning to some companies that maybe aren't awake, or they're awake but the transition seems to be very quick in some and much longer in others. How many jobs would be lost? How many new jobs would be created in a given area? We've had some of that indication from the submitters already.

The Chair: Any comments from the other side?

Mrs Bountrogianni: I think that could be easily summarized in a possible objective of the economic fallout or

economic implications of our more technical recommendations, where that information exists. I'm sure there are a lot of processes right now all around the world. Perhaps the implications aren't well known, but where they are well known, they should be documented.

The Chair: Should we have this as another bullet point in our objectives or should it be something that we request of our researcher? The fact that it is in the objectives, I guess that gives guidance to a researcher.

Dr Gardner: How about if we try and do such a chart or matrix and see how it works? There are certainly an awful lot of unknowables. The estimates are going to be awfully vague for some things. It is probably a useful tool to summarize the huge amount of material you've been hearing. Jerry did a nice, comprehensive background report when he got started. You've also had the summary. You've got hundreds of pages of stuff—thousands, probably. If we can do some charts like that—in a sense, it really is filling out the chart that we've given you, the Chair's idea of trying to build up some matrices by time frame, by potential impact on electricity or heating or whatever and by the particular technologies. We will see if that's a useful tool to help get a handle on these very complicated issues.

The Chair: Mr Richmond, I think you had your hand up there a second ago, or is it covered?

Mr Jerry Richmond: All I was going say, as a suggestion to the committee from some of the reading I've done, is that if you're contemplating travelling in January, one useful jurisdiction that would potentially focus in on Mr Hastings's concern, like the future of fuel cells, is California. With their air resources board, for the last 20 years they have attempted to move to alternative fuel vehicles. My sense is that the development in the auto industry has lagged behind. They've had to back off on their requirements that a certain percentage of their fleet there should be alternative fuels or electric or whatever. One suggestion may be to try get an answer in January. California has almost led the world with their standards. You may want to go out there and meet with California government officials and get a direct sense, because they've probably been on the forefront, from my reading of it, because of the air pollution problems in the LA basin, to get to alternative fuel vehicles, but they haven't been able to deliver because the technology and the economics have been behind the regulatory aspect. My suggestion is that it may be an excellent thing to go there, if the committee travels.

1040

Mr Miller: That sounds like an excellent idea. I'd like to be subbed in when you go to California in January.

The Chair: That's a very thoughtful suggestion. We can speak to Mr Gilchrist on your behalf.

Mr Miller: With California, for years they've had targets they've been aiming for specifically in terms of electric vehicles. I think you're absolutely correct that they've been ahead of the industry and it really hasn't worked that well. I guess you could almost argue that they were pushing electric vehicles, which just moved the

pollution out of California to where the coal-fired generating plants in other states were located. They have really had a focus on setting targets for electric vehicles specifically, but were ahead of what the industry is doing. But certainly, just about all the automakers have prototype hydrogen vehicles operating at this time. I don't know what's involved before they actually become viable on a commercial basis, but that seems to be a technology that has real possibilities for the future.

The Chair: Just looking at these possible objectives, Mr O'Toole, on page 2 of the three-page report that Mr Gardner has put before us, does anybody feel uncomfortable with any of the six bullet points that are on that page? Is there anything that should be scratched? Is there anything there that is not consistent with our mandate?

I think we should try and incorporate a bit of what Mr Hastings has been saying, which connects outcomes and job creation. You might put that in where we're talking about cost-effectiveness. Maybe that fifth bullet point could be rewritten to incorporate it.

Dr Gardner: Yes. We'll recast the fifth bullet point to include those points.

The Chair: Is everybody comfortable with that, rather than a seventh? I think if you get too many bullet points, the objectives start to weaken. I'd like to keep it within six if we can. Are there any here that should be pulled together?

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I apologize for being late. I was at a meeting this morning with one of the transportation industries, the motor vehicle association. It does fall into the four broad categories outlined in the subcommittee report under item 1, alternative means of producing electricity.

Emissions trading is a huge issue under MOE. It's been designed going in to favour OPG and this sort of fragmenting of the producer side of the business and competition coming in. We need to have a really good understanding. I read the research paper on emissions trading and it was very broad, but the current emissions trading regime—the regulations are about to be published, and it's slanted completely in favour of OPG entering the competitive market. No one can get credits for generation, cogeneration and a huge amount of the emissions issue, which is what we're really dealing with, the trading regime, and I think this committee should have a position on that. It may fall under one of the objectives of reliance on fossil fuel resources or the broader one, which is producing electricity. By and large, it's the greater producer of all the manufacturing and industry sectors, with the exception, probably, of the petroleum industry.

I don't know how that fits in here, Doug, but we really have to be able to assess the emissions trading regime. You see, it's a huge economic argument. If we don't protect the fossil generation assets today, they'll be stranded. If you bring on new cogeneration, whether it's power cells, water or wind, you'll strand those old assets, like \$5 billion, \$6 billion, \$8 billion. I'm convinced that's why it's being designed. So how does that fall into this?

If we're dealing with emissions, ultimately at the end of the day this is about emissions and a clean environment—I think the researchers might pick up on what I'm talking about.

The Chair: A couple of things quickly come to mind. One is that maybe we should set aside one or possibly two days of hearings to address emissions such as these.

Mr O'Toole: Yes, because they are the largest producer issue. We talk about cars and we talk about industry, but if you're not talking about changing the power generation side, you aren't dealing with the whole NO_x and VOCs issue at all, period, or CO₂.

The Chair: There are some things we'll be able to deal with, and down the road we'll have to decide there are some things we can't handle that are beyond the ability of the committee's time frame.

Mr O'Toole: Actually the terms of reference of this committee are specifically for when the market opens, and the market is power generation. That's the market we are talking about. That's the purpose of this committee. We can talk about growing more corn for ethanol and all that kind of stuff, but it's a very small part of the equation. We're looking at 10% of the problem, and 90% of the problem is on the generation of electricity side.

The Chair: The mandate is a very open mandate. Just coincidentally, we're to report at the time that the market opens up; it's not specific to that. It's extremely broad, but I appreciate the point you're making, that a lot of the concern is that a significant amount of the pollutants do come from the production of electricity.

I think maybe we should make note of your comments so we can maybe spend a day or two to zero in on this particular issue. Maybe we should be doing it before Christmas. I'm open as the Chair.

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): I don't know if this off topic or not, but I remember reading last weekend—I can't give you exact details—that the US environmental is unhappy with our pollution credit systems. I can't remember the exact details.

Dr Gardner: I think there was a note to that effect in the research memo that we provided to the committee. We can certainly have our researcher who did that memo come back and talk to you, but it may be that you want to hear from the various sides of this debate directly.

Mr O'Toole: I agree. I hate to extend it but I really think it's important, if we're at the high level here, where we're going to spend the most time for the most results. To have an understanding of what is a foregone decision, if it's a policy decision, it's already been made by MOE and the government to favour traditional forms of generation for the sake of economics and the rest of it. If we know that going in, then we don't need to spend a lot of time looking at windmills or wind generation, whatever you want to call it. Do you follow me, though?

Mrs Bountrogianni: I follow you.

The Chair: Some of what we may be discussing here—you're talking about decisions that have been made for today. This committee is looking at decisions to be made in the short term and long term and to make

recommendations to aim toward something, whether it's for 2015 or whatever, to start making policy changes to make those kinds of conversions. What they're dealing with to quite a large extent is for right now, and I think we're looking further out than right now.

Mr O'Toole: Yes. They're going to commit capital and resources which are longer-term. Those kinds of investments are 10-year or 15-year windows. If you write the right signals in terms of credits or rapid depreciation allowances and all those kinds of tax tools and incentives—but the regulations are to be published shortly under those emission guidelines. They are on the EBR, or draft forms are about to be put on the environmental posting, and it's my understanding that we're moving strongly toward capping, that that's not harmonized with the US and that will not favour competition for the cleanest form of production.

I won't go on about it because the experts are sitting up there and not over here. I've made my point. We should hear about it, and before Christmas.

Mr Hastings: I think Mr O'Toole is on to something very significant, and that is about these draft regulations regarding capping. If we're going to look at the financial side of alternative fuels and how you need economic incentives to pump prime, some of them—and we're looking at air quality. Is air quality one of our objectives here?

1050

The Chair: All pollutants are, yes: air, water and land.

Mr Hastings: If it is, then I think we'd better be looking at what are the positive-versus-adverse implications of capping for tradable emissions. If you look at the American experience, they have clearly gone in the other direction. They've created an economic system around them. They actually trade these emissions—the NO_x and VOCs—I think on the Chicago board of commodities. It might be a good area that we get a video conference with whoever originated that system that the EPA has mentioned. It'll give us a good education on how tradable emissions are working in the US, at least in those states that have huge high-sulphur coal generating facilities: West Virginia, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan. They are trading among some of those companies and there is an economic value to them. We don't need to know all the intricacies, but I think we need to get a picture filled in that, in my mind, is blank right now compared to the capping, which these draft regulations favour. I think it would be an interesting contrast to see where we have capping in other situations. The Americans, I think, had capping in Michigan. Why did they move away from it, if they did, and go to this more open, competitive system? I know the critics say, "You're just trading one chunk of dirty air for another," but we need to be looking at this situation for down the road.

The Chair: The term "emissions trading" has a kind of negative connotation to it, but certainly—

Mr Hastings: Credits.

The Chair:—to mean cleaner, you need to move in a stepwise fashion, and that's a methodology as we—

Mr Hastings: Tradable credits; whatever you want to call it.

Mr O'Toole: If I could, I think we have perhaps gone into the minutiae of the discussion.

I will say there are really three tools to deal with mitigating emissions. One tool is voluntary emissions and standards by sector, whether it's the petroleum, the auto, the manufacturing, the mining.

The next tool is the economic incentive, which is the trading tool, and it isn't a one-to-one. If I reduce by so many pounds or volume of NOx, I don't get a one-to-one credit, but if I do reduce, I might get 100 reduction, but I only may get 60 or 70 credits. They use various incentives. They also use incentives for capital depreciation. If I'm putting in a new furnace that's friendlier, the credits I get help to fund it capially and it will also improve the depreciation.

The third one is the regulatory one. The regulatory one is the enforcement one and it's the capping one. That's the one we're moving to. It puts overall aggregate thresholds on the whole economy, and you've got to meet them and there are no incentives to meet them. When a company, a large producer, is saying, "OK, I'm going to produce something in the Ontario context," and I corporately look at it and I say, "Well, gee, Mexico's a developing country. I'm just going to put all my new investment there because there are no rules, capping or trading"—so we lose the jobs. We reduce the emissions; we reduce the economy.

I think it's a loser. I, personally, am going to be bringing it up in the Ministry of the Environment estimates. We're working on the question now. I'm not happy about it and I need to have the resources. A few things you've given me have been helpful, but—

The Chair: I think, Mr O'Toole, you've summarized very nicely the three groupings of instruments, and most, if not all, do fall into the policy—

Mr O'Toole: It's what we're talking about: policy-level stuff.

The Chair: I think it's kind of neat to point that out, maybe in the overall preamble, that they do fall into that.

We need to move on. Possible objectives: I'm hearing that item 5 should be modified. After that, I think we can continue and we'll have a look at item 5 later. So I trust that the committee is comfortable with that.

The organization: we've talked a bit about that. On page 3: "Recommendations and Organization of the Interim Report." Other than some of the suggestions that have been made, is the general grouping in order? At the back there's a whole bunch of public policy listings, and it's been suggested by Dr Bountrogianni that there be subheadings there, just so that at a glance you can find which ones relate to what without having to go back to the body of the report or to walk down through the different bullet points. I guess I mentioned—and it was going to be automatic anyway—getting the committee in there and that information.

Is there anything else, without getting into the detail of the report—we can talk about that in a few minutes—in

the overall layout of it, with the preamble and with the fact that we're talking about the different ministries at the beginning and then we're talking about electricity and then going through in those groupings? OK, let's move on then.

How do you see some of the detail in there, some of the public policy questions? Some of the thinking is that this report would be tabled in late November. It could be tabled sooner, I guess, if everybody's in agreement. We could get it polished up and then we could move on to other things. There are a lot of questions in there in public policy. Is anyone uncomfortable with some of the positions that staff have put us in? Do you like what's there? Do you dislike it? Do you want to look at this in more detail for a meeting in a week's time?

Mrs Bountrogianni: I'm certainly open to changing it, but I think it's perfect for the stage that we're in, in this committee. In other words, we're asking the questions. We're still open and we're asking the questions. I think they're very well written. They will certainly help me in future hearings or future conferences in what to look for, what to ask for. I think it would be premature to answer them, so I think the report is—

The Chair: So you're reflecting the fact that we're still in the searching stage—

Mrs Bountrogianni: Information gathering.

The Chair:—information collection. This on a Web site. This is an interim report that can be distributed to those who will be making presentations to us later on.

Mr Parsons, any thoughts on it?

Mr Parsons: No. I agree with my colleague. These don't say anything at this point and they shouldn't say anything. I see them provoking thought at this instant and that's what they should do.

The Chair: It could also be argued that it says a lot. I'm teasing you a bit. There's a tremendous amount of information in there; I know what you're saying.

Mr Parsons: But you're wrong again. We don't know if you can put that in Hansard.

The Chair: Everything is in Hansard. You wanted to say something, Mr Richmond? Did I catch you out of the corner of my eye, there?

Mr Richmond: I've got a sense here of what you've agreed to and some suggestions in terms of revision of this. Would it help if I ran through that? Then if we had any other items on the table—

The Chair: I'm getting a feeling that maybe we're closer than I thought earlier. We talked about mid-November and tabling it at the end of November. I don't see any reason to hold it up that long. Maybe what we need to do is aim to table it at the end of October and have a good discussion. Today is the 17th; the 24th and then the 31st. Can the committee get a good look? I guess I'm concerned about what staff have put forward as public policy considerations. As I glanced over them in the short period of time we've had this week, I'm comfortable, but some of the committee may identify things as a bit out of line. I don't know.

Mrs Bountrogianni: Right in the preamble, it says, "This report is presented as a discussion paper to facilitate more intensive public debate in the new year." Nowhere in here does it say that anything is engraved in stone. Perhaps that paragraph can be made stronger, if that will make some people feel more comfortable. I understand your point, Dr Galt: perhaps setting ourselves up in the public's mind, because there is a lot of information here, a lot of possibilities; perhaps more of a disclaimer that these are, at this point, discussion points, that we are not tied to any one of these, except what the objectives guide us to look at that. I don't know if that makes any sense to the researchers.

1100

Dr Gardner: As Jerry was saying, we've heard what you want to do from here. We'll strengthen those points in the preamble; we'll adjust the objectives to add the job creation export development; there won't be any observations or recommendations at this point; we'll pull out the public policy questions that have been identified. One thing you might consider—and we'll explore this for you—is whether an executive summary might be effective: a short executive summary, with the policy questions at the start. We'll pull them and we'll group them.

We can do all that. Then you look at that one more time, I think, following the Chair's concerns that you're really happy with the policy questions, and then that's it.

Mrs Bountrogianni: I really liked that last suggestion from the research department, and I like the idea of an executive summary. I think the general public who are interested would go to the executive summary. Those who are interested technically or in policy would go to the body of the report. That way, everyone who wants to get educated on this can.

The Chair: Good. Other comments?

Mr Miller: Mr Gardner's suggestion sounds good to me. The executive summary sounds like an excellent idea. His recommendations all seem to make sense.

The Chair: To some extent, the preamble does what an executive summary might be—how long are you thinking, in terms of executive summaries? Two or three pages?

Dr Gardner: Leave it to us. We'll figure something out.

The Chair: Sure.

Mrs Bountrogianni: I have another point of business, but not to do with this.

The Chair: OK. Anything else in the detail? I may be pushing you just a little much here. I just want to give staff as much guidance as we possibly can and not send them off—they have been phenomenal so far in following the direction that we're looking for and packaging this. It's a pretty extensive report.

I guess we'll move on, if no one is seeing anything. But I think we need to have one two-hour session; we need to go through it with a fine-tooth comb, almost page by page, and make sure everybody's comfortable. So

would we aim for the October 24 to do that? That's a week from now.

Dr Gardner: My recommendation, actually, would be to meet in two weeks, mainly just from the logistics of our doing the revisions and then getting them in your hands in enough time to look at them. I think you want them in your hands for a good couple of days. You're incredibly busy and you need to balance this with other things.

The Chair: We need it in our hands for a week.

Dr Gardner: Yes. So that gives us a few days. There aren't many changes, but we'll play with the executive summary to make sure that's a good, effective communications tool for you, because that's what you would be using down the road to hand out to constituents or to interest groups: a short piece. We'll work on that. Then, as you say, you've got a good full week to look at the questions and make sure you're comfortable with them.

The Chair: Basically, the committee has this in their hands, and what's going to be added is an executive summary. So there's no reason to wait until you get the executive summary to start reading the whole thing.

Dr Gardner: No. Good point.

The Chair: Let's say you have two weeks. We're going to go through this line by line on October 31 and then we're going to table it. Am I pushing too hard? Then we'll get on in November with moving the next step of the researcher—

Mr O'Toole: Yes. I haven't read this, but seeing that much of what I've talked about is in here, we're looking at policy alternatives. There's a great deal in here that I wasn't aware had already been done.

The Chair: There are two things we might want to meet for on October 24: one is to confirm or to adopt the recommendations of the subcommittee on the researcher. The subcommittee plans to do the interviews next Tuesday afternoon. Then the researcher can get started, if that's approved. The other would be that we could look at the other part of this report and save the executive summary until October 31, and if there's anything you want changed in the existing report, it could be done at that time. Then all we'd have to approve on October 31 is the executive summary. Is that in order?

Mr O'Toole: Yes. If we're going to be using that as a constituent document to be handed out, I think that's a good format, and we should make sure it's friendly, readable, and addresses what we think needs to be communicated; short-, medium- and long-term. It will become a sort of issue-based document sometime in the next two years. Hopefully it doesn't just get shelved.

Mrs Bountrogianni: So will we meet, Mr Chair, next week?

The Chair: I suggest that we at least plan to meet for an hour. If we can get a researcher approved, then maybe we can semi-approve—if that's a legal terminology—most of this report and do the executive summary on October 31, and on the 31st we still have one more crack at the bulk of this if people didn't get a chance to get over all of it and they identify something in the meantime.

Leaving it all for one two-hour period might be longer than is necessary.

You had something else?

Mrs Bountrogianni: I have a question for the committee. I have been fortunate enough to get an intern who's very interested in this committee, as I know you have, Dr Galt. My intern's name is Lyndsey Saunders. My question is: provided that it's approved by the clerk and the Chair, and provided that Lyndsey wishes to—I haven't even asked her if she wishes to—if there's a conference that she is interested in going to, may I send her from my part of the travel budget, provided the conference is approved by the clerk and the Chair?

The Chair: My understanding is that there is some money in their budget to travel. When it comes to a conference—

Mrs Bountrogianni: Oh, OK. It wouldn't be extra money; this would be from whatever each member is allocated.

The Chair: Alternative staff—

Clerk of the Committee: Our travel budget is specifically for committee members. Usually we don't even cover staff, or anybody else.

Mrs Bountrogianni: OK. I was just asking. I know now. I'm glad I didn't ask her if she wanted to go, then.

Clerk of the Committee: I can double-check as well.

Mrs Bountrogianni: Please check. If not, that's fine. I was thinking along the lines of her professional development as well as my time constraints, but that's fine.

The Chair: I would suggest it might be considered if we're taking a bus, plane or whatever and there are empty seats. Then, I think, maybe the committee could reconsider. I'm speaking—

Clerk of the Committee: I have some experience with that. Every charter plane or charter bus that is staffed, as long as the committee agrees, you can bring her on.

The Chair: Then the intern would be responsible for accommodation, or at least their budget.

Mrs Bountrogianni: Again, it's my first time having an intern, so I'm sorry, I don't know.

The Chair: You may find out that several of us have interns. I'm quite sure Mr O'Toole does, and I think Mr Gilchrist does. There may be several interns keen on the same thing.

Mrs Bountrogianni: Excellent. As I mentioned earlier, she is very keen on this committee. She'll be key in summarizing what I've learned for the committee and what I've gathered.

My second question based on that is: there is a conference I have mentioned that I would like approved that I intend to go to. I will confirm very shortly, I'm just waiting for the political situation a little bit. That is the annual Renewable Energy Summit in Europe, November 20 and 21. Can I have approval so that, in case something happens and I'm either not at a meeting or whatever and I need to make travel arrangements, I can start looking into it?

The Chair: At this point in time you do not have that approval, so maybe we can do it at this meeting?

Mrs Bountrogianni: Yes. I don't have the approval.

Clerk of the Committee: Do you want to move it as a motion?

Mrs Bountrogianni: Is that what I have to do? OK. I move the motion to allow me to attend the annual Renewable Energy Summit in Brussels, November 20 and 21, 2001.

The Chair: Do you have any feeling on overall cost?

Mrs Bountrogianni: It's an expensive conference. It's about \$1,500 for the conference alone. The flight is \$800, and two nights' hotel.

The Chair: So \$3,500, that kind of thing. OK, just so staff have something to work on the budget. Discussion? Those in favour?

Mr Miller: What? Sorry.

The Chair: There is a travel budget for the committee of \$80,000 travel and \$20,000—

Clerk of the Committee: Accommodation.

The Chair:—yes, accommodation—I was just trying to remember my zeros for a second there—that's already been approved by the Board of Internal Economy. It can be used on a vote by the committee.

I have one more here to put before the committee that's been presented to me by Mr Hastings. I don't know if you'd like to make that motion, Mr Hastings.

Clerk of the Committee: We haven't voted.

The Chair: We didn't vote on it. My apology. Further discussion?

1110

Mrs Bountrogianni: It is an expensive conference and I almost didn't go because of that. That price, believe it or not, is with the 30% government tax rate; it's 30% less. But it does cover a lot of Mr Hastings's concerns about the financial implications of implementing a lot of these new energies in Europe. Again, you can't generalize completely to North America, but that's a good starting point as well. I think it will be very useful.

The Chair: Further discussion?

Mr Miller: If you go to a convention like that, do you then report back to the committee on what you learned?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr Miller: That sounds very worthwhile.

The Chair: It's something the committee had discussed earlier. One of the things committee made a decision on was to direct it to the Chair to make all the decisions on approvals to go. The Chair felt, with some added information that came forward later, a little uncomfortable giving those approvals, so I've asked that it simply come before the committee.

Absolutely, they must bring a report back to the committee. I might not sign their expenses if we don't get such a report back. I've got an axe, a big hammer here.

Those in favour? Those opposed? Motion carried.

I have one before me from Mr Hastings. Would you like to present it or do you want me to run over the summary of your letter?

Interjection.

The Chair: Mr Hastings is requesting to attend the International Solar Energy Society 2001 Solar World Congress, being held November 25 to December 2 in Adelaide, Australia. Do you have any feelings on cost or an over-and-upset amount that it might evolve to, Mr Hastings?

Mr Hastings: I'm looking at the conference costs at mid-term, which is about now. It looks like it will be about \$700 to \$800 in terms of registration. There are also a number of additional things they've tagged on which will probably set it pretty close to what Marie is talking about. I estimate the cost between \$5,000 and \$6,000.

The Chair: In total?

Mr Hastings: In total. I'm looking at reasonably lower-priced hotel accommodation to keep it within range. If it's a lot less, I will make sure it is. But I want you to know that that's looking at the figure I've spotted in terms of accommodation. I haven't looked into the flight yet, but we're probably looking at, I would think, about \$1,400, from what I've seen on those flights before.

The Chair: Particularly if you can get one of the charters, but it may be more like \$2,000 by the time you actually—

Mr Hastings: I'll work on the best prices and the most affordable.

The Chair: Traditionally, what the others have been doing is putting forth their own motion. Would you like to move that you attend that conference?

Mr Hastings: I would like to have the committee approve my attendance at this conference of the International Solar Energy Society in Sydney, November 25 to December 2, 2001.

The Chair: And report back to the committee.

Mr Hastings: And to report back with substantial detail on the hearings and recommendations.

The Chair: Any further discussion? Those in favour? Those opposed? Motion carried.

I don't mean to be nasty with this next comment, and it's just for all those who are travelling: it would be very nice for the report to come in at the time the expense account comes in. I think it's very important that we don't get away from getting a report. One of the reasons I'm not asking to travel is that I don't know when I'd find time to write a report to bring back to the committee. So I think I'll wait until after Christmas at least.

Is there anything else the committee would like to bring up at this time before we adjourn? Staff, have I missed anything that should have been covered?

I think then it's coming out, as I'm sorting and listening, that we've got the 24th to approve a researcher and then look at as much of this as we can. Please read it and come up with any suggestions. I think we're awfully close to having this, and maybe we can get it tabled the first week in November. We'll finalize it on the 31st. There might be a couple of pieces of wordsmithing that have to be done at that time, and then maybe the first meeting—

Clerk of the Committee: Are we going to have it translated?

The Chair: I hadn't even thought about that question. The clerk has asked me about translation. I think that's standard, that it's required. Does that mean it'll be held up for tabling?

Clerk of the Committee: Yes. If we don't want to incur costs for having it done on an expedited basis, it's at least six business days.

The Chair: Oh, six days. OK.

Mr O'Toole: May I comment on that? There have been reports presented that are awaiting translation, or will be translated. So that's how I'd present it. It would be understood that at some time it would be filed in the other official language, if that's more efficient.

The Chair: Actually, I don't know if they'd like to do it that way, but I think most of this report is almost there, so if they wanted to start and then make the minor changes—but I have no idea of the workload or what the procedure is.

Clerk of the Committee: No, we have to wait until the final report.

The Chair: Until it's final, OK.

Mr Hastings: At the next meeting, could we start looking more at fleshing out the second round of hearings, if we're going to have them, and the timelines—late January or early February, or only one week, all in Toronto. We don't need specifics right now, and I see you're still looking for some umbrella groups for submissions. So that is something we should have pretty well finalized if we're going to do it, the timelines and the days and if it's going to be only in Toronto, so the people who want to submit can be notified and they're given 40 days plus, whereas perhaps they weren't in this first round.

The Chair: That's something I should have been thinking of as the Chair. Maybe what we could do is ask the clerk to look at these umbrella groups that we haven't heard from and some that during the hearings we said, "Maybe we should hear from you in more detail." Maybe you could make a list for us and put it in front of us for the 24th meeting. Then, once we have a list before us, we can say aye or nay to the list and to some of the items in it. That would get us moving along. Would that be in order? Any objections?

Mr Hastings: One specific group we should add: I see a heading there for the Canadian renewable energy—I've forgotten the name, but there's an article that Jerry attached, I think, from Richard Brennan about the committee. The head of that group should probably be included as one of the umbrella groups for January.

The Chair: To be of assistance to our clerk, would members of the committee, if you strongly feel that you want certain groups to come before us—and we're talking umbrella groups right now; we're not talking individual companies, but rather the provincial organizations of whatever—please let Ms Grannum know. I think that would be helpful to her, and if she can have something before us in our hands next Monday, then we

can discuss it as a third item on the agenda of that day. Thank you for bringing that one forward.

The other one is the promotion of the committee, and we can start looking at some of those possibly after constituency week, in late November or early December. We still seem to have so much in the news about terrorists. It's almost impossible to get good news on, such as what this committee is doing, but we'll get some of those things rolling as we move down the road.

Mr O'Toole: I really have two questions. One is to find out if we have a list provided somewhere—I think we do—of the current people who have made requests to appear.

Clerk of the Committee: Yes.

Mr O'Toole: Could you verify if the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers' Association is on there?

Clerk of the Committee: Yes.

Mr O'Toole: That's good. Then I don't need to follow up.

The Chair: There is a list someplace.

Mr O'Toole: Yes, I think I'd seen it, but I wasn't sure.

The Chair: Maybe Ms Grannum could just send that out again.

Mr O'Toole: She just verified that. Is it in the report?

The Chair: No.

Mr O'Toole: But is there a list of deputations?

Clerk of the Committee: That we've heard from? It's in there.

Mr O'Toole: Yes, I thought so. It may have been in here.

Clerk of the Committee: But additional people are on a list. You've seen it before, and I updated it.

Mr O'Toole: Yes, I have it. Good.

The second question I had was that one of the researchers mentioned California. In light of my education at this point on the issue of emissions—and my initial intention was to look at something like ITER, a very highly technical futuristic kind of project; it's more of an economic thing than an actual energy producer—I may be more interested in the point you made this morning, which was that California has been struggling both with regulating generation and the whole issue. As I'm getting more educated, I'd probably be more interested in looking at that jurisdiction because it is newsworthy, it is being watched. They have been pushing on the auto side, the emissions side, the power generation side. They are looking at some of what I think we should be looking at, more short-term, mid-term. I would ask you to maybe find out for me what relevant conventions or other forums are available between November and, say, February. I'd be more interested in looking there than at ITER or wind. I think wind is out there in the future. John's looking at solar, so he's in Australia; he can look at wind too. As you come out of Sydney airport, there are two huge windmills. Each one is five megawatts, huge, bigger than the CN Tower. Can you follow up on that for me, just research that for me? Thanks.

1120

Mr Parsons: Further to what John's just suggested, I'm sensing you're asking in that one particular area. I'm wondering, though, the researchers on a day-to-day basis are probably coming across conferences or interesting sites, if they could maintain a current list of all the areas. I'm finding biomass particularly interesting. So I'm wondering if you could just weekly or every couple of weeks, if you're aware, produce a new list.

The Chair: On that one, there is a biomass conference in Florida, December 17 through December 21 or 20. It was moved from September because of the terrorist attack. It might be a neat one to go to.

Mr Parsons: I would have some interest in that, yes.

The Chair: The other thing that's going through my mind, keeping us abreast of conferences and activities and thinking through what Mr O'Toole was commenting on and our researchers earlier, I'm wondering if between our researchers and Ms Grannum we could put together visits to other provinces and possibly California that the full committee could take. Maybe looking ahead, we'll say the first week of February, we could get a small charter that would be more reasonable. I thought that one we did from Ottawa-London-Toronto was rather expensive, but it was very short notice.

Mr O'Toole: The one we did on the agricultural committee I was on was—but I don't know if that's possible.

The Chair: It was a natural resources plane there. We need something a little larger to take the whole committee. But if they could look at the logical points to visit in Canada and California—I think California, from what I've heard, is a place to go to see a lot of North American activity. If that can be afforded with the travel that individual members are or are not doing—I don't know if every individual committee member is going someplace, but certainly several will be. So if you could bring that before us as a package.

Mr O'Toole: I would be very happy to be part of the dynamic of a group, whether it's the whole or most of it, that kind of thing. If there was some way of being more efficient and maybe one or two members didn't go—how many eyes can see the same thing?—I think we should still try to press for that.

I think Alberta is the leading resource-based generator. Their baseload is coal. Can you believe it? They have the most natural gas and we're fighting for natural gas. It's unbelievable; I don't get it. But there are infrastructure questions that I'm very interested in. What are the economic trade-offs? If I would pick two places, I'd be very interested in energy production, emission and tax strategies dealing with capital and investment. I'd like to look at Alberta and I'd like to look at California. They're the two leads. They're connected in policy and direction. They are dealing with free trade issues. The language under NAFTA says that in all cases we must supply—that's what NAFTA says—the United States. It's a fascinating area.

The Chair: If we're doing that kind of a briefing, BC with Ballard might be another stop, and there may be

others that staff will identify. Like yourself, if we can do it with the group dynamics, I think there's a lot of advantage there.

Mr O'Toole: I'd enjoy that, because we would be talking while we're travelling.

The Chair: On the Premier's Task Force on Rural Economic Renewal, we were able to make two two-hour meetings each day that we were out in significantly different provinces and states. By having a small charter, the efficiencies of getting around and seeing are so much greater, provided that what we want to see isn't too far from an airport. If we land at Malton and you have to go down to Darlington, a lot of time is lost. But anyway, staff will have a look at it and maybe bring it before us to look at either on the 24th or the 31st.

Mr Hastings: A subject for the subcommittee to look at, as you mentioned, is the promotion. Since you are looking for umbrella groups for your later second round of hearings, probably the last round, one of the items a subcommittee should look at is having something on the screen in the next week or so that talks about the umbrella groups and have it saying, politely, that the select committee is looking only for those umbrella groups that have not had an opportunity to present. I think we should have the date of the next round of hearings settled after next week so they can be posted on a number of the channels around here that don't get a lot of use. Let's post that on one of the channels for January, if the committee agrees to the second round. Then that can be on there all through November and December, with a final notice to submit by January 10, or whatever the day is. That's the best promo tool you have.

The Chair: I think there are two things going on here. One is that we want to hear from some of these umbrella groups before Christmas, in late November or early December. We'll do it right here. Then, with this interim report out and with the information we get from research on policy, having all of this out on the Web site, we'll have hearings probably in late February or early March. I don't know if you want to set those dates at this point in time.

Mr Hastings: No, I don't think you should, but in the next couple of weeks we should have some stuff settled that can be put up on the screen that says a second round, or however you phrase it, will be held as a result of the interim report. The interim report—I know that's not settled yet—will probably be out or published by December 30. If you can't do that, I wonder if Bob could think about these questions that have been posed. Could some of them be posted on the screen, if not on the Web site?

The Chair: I think from what we've been hearing, the discussion here is that when we talk to these umbrella groups, it won't interfere or change our interim report. I think we're going to get the interim report out in early November. We'll hear from these people while the research is going on and find out from the umbrella groups anything that we've missed getting into the interim report. Maybe that could be part of a second one,

when we bring out the information the researchers found on policy in other areas. Most of my understanding, when we're meeting with these umbrella groups, is it would change the first interim report, and then we'll go out for hearings for anybody who wants to speak to us in late February or early March, responding to what we put on the Web site as it relates to our interim report and possibly a second interim report or letter, or whatever you want to call it. OK? That's my understanding of where we're going. But putting it on the channel to advertise it—

Mr Hastings: In the past, only notices of hearings have been put on. What I guess I'm asking is, when the interim report is completed, can some of those questions then be posted on here, or is that beyond our normal possibilities?

The Chair: Or once we have it on the Web site, direct them to a Web site?

Mr Hastings: Yes, either way.

The Chair: We're looking at November 21, November 28, December 5 and December 12. What I'm looking at right now are four Wednesdays when we could have these umbrella groups come in and present to us. November 14 is constituency week and the 7th is the first week in November, so I would say we should be able to cover and give adequate time to those groups. I guess a half-hour?

1130

Mr O'Toole: I'm not interested in constituency week. I've got everything booked.

The Chair: No, no. I'm just saying—

Mr Hastings: Are those dates for the hearings approved by the subcommittee or by the committee?

The Chair: I guess ultimately they're approved by this committee, but the subcommittee must come in with recommendations.

Mr Hastings: If they are, then can those hearing dates be posted on here? That would be a good—

Clerk of the Committee: The subcommittee meets to hash out the dates and who they want to invite and then it's reported back, and if that's the recommendation and it's carried, we can post them on the Internet, the Ontario parliamentary channel. We can use Canada NewsWire to get some information out there as well. So there are lots of opportunities.

The Chair: Make it a point for the subcommittee next week on October 23 to pull that together. OK?

We've covered a lot of things I wasn't even thinking about.

Mr O'Toole: These are housekeeping-type items. I'm finding the information I received very useful. You said earlier the amount of time is—I've been kind of reading it, so I'm changing my focus.

Questions that I've read here in Dr Galt's response from the Ministry of Transportation: how did those questions formally get recorded and formally responded to? I want to know the process because I have questions that have been posed, in my view, and haven't been

responded to, unless I haven't read everything, one of which is full cost pricing.

I'd like the Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology to tell me what "full cost pricing" means, what it includes. Does it include contaminated waste, the cost of doing that, closure of nuclear plants? They tell me it's four cents a kilowatt. That's baloney, because they aren't pricing the cost of decommissioning and all these other nuclear things.

So how do I go through to ask those kinds of questions and have a formal response from the people who are responsible?

The Chair: I'll turn to the clerk for a response there.

Clerk of the Committee: The ministries have been responding to the questions that we sent out to them based on the first round of hearings. So they've responded. If you feel they've missed, committees have in the past invited the ministries back in.

Mr O'Toole: I want it written. I don't want to have the general—

Clerk of the Committee: Then you can just send a letter.

Mr O'Toole: Just formally write it to you?

Clerk of the Committee: Yes.

Mr O'Toole: Send it to you, and you'll send it, and then that gets back.

Clerk of the Committee: We can send it off, and then they'll respond, yes. It's documented and exhibited for the committee.

Mr O'Toole: That's right. Yes.

The Chair: You'll note in this package the first question was mine, but the other four were Mr Gilchrist's.

Mr O'Toole: Well, I know I've raised full cost pricing and I've raised emissions trading. I believe that it's not deliberate, and I'm not saying anything here. I just want to know the process. I'll be writing to you, or the Chair I suppose is probably the best, and they'll be questions that I want answers to.

Clerk of the Committee: The ministries are given the Hansard as well and told to double-check the Hansard in case we missed anything.

The Chair: It may not have been clear enough in the committee hearings. Mine, I just specifically asked, "Could you get that information?" You should be able to ask in the committee hearings.

Mr O'Toole: I thought I was.

The Chair: Put it in writing, and then there'll be no question.

Clerk of the Committee: Put it in writing, we'll send it off, and they'll respond.

Mr O'Toole: Yes. Good. Thank you.

The Chair: Other points that need to be covered at this meeting?

Dr Gardner: Just to fill that out a bit, Mr Chair, we'll work with Tonia to go back to the list of questions that were posed to the ministries and see what they've answered so far, and if there are any gaps, that may help to speak to Mr O'Toole's point.

Mr O'Toole: Excellent. Very productive.

Mr Hastings: I certainly remember the question Mr O'Toole asked about the emissions.

The Chair: Sorry?

Mr Hastings: I recall when we had all the—

The Chair: It sounds familiar. But I just got my answer today.

Mr O'Toole: Yes, I see that. That's why I was asking. Yours come first, as usual.

The Chair: I just mention this to the clerk: I think with today's discussion we have pretty well laid out a road map from now until next May, more or less. I've asked her to rough out a proposed schedule that we're headed down so we have it in front of us. It's been quite a struggle with this committee just getting—and I say that collectively, for all of us—a handle on where we're going. We started out with some hearings just to give us a baseline. I think we're now evolving. I'm starting to feel pretty good about the direction that we're headed into. My apologies maybe for not giving a little more direction, but it is the committee's decision, not mine. I think it's starting to jell here.

Mrs Bountrogianni: I think it's excellent, Chair, and I really want to thank the legislative research department. I think they're key in steering us in the right direction.

The Chair: Exceptional.

Mr Hastings: I'd also like to ask Bob if there's any ministry that wasn't before—correct me if I'm wrong, but we had those initial hearings last summer in the Superior Room of the Macdonald Block across the way, and I think a couple of us asked for ministries that were not there. For example, I don't recall the Ministry of Health being there. I guess they were, but I don't—

Clerk of the Committee: No, the Ministry of Health was there.

Mr Hastings: What ministries did we miss that weren't there that day, that were asked by either myself or Mr Ouellette?

Clerk of the Committee: Economic development and trade, housing—

Mr Hastings: Yes, housing by Ms Churley.

Clerk of the Committee: We have that on the list, so we've got that on record.

The Chair: I thought all the ones invited appeared.

Clerk of the Committee: They did.

Mr Hastings: Yes, but municipal affairs and housing weren't there.

Clerk of the Committee: We didn't invite them.

Mr Hastings: Ms Churley wanted them to review energy conservation efforts, and also economic development and trade.

The Chair: There were two or three ministries that came to mind afterwards that maybe we should have invited but didn't.

Mr Hastings: Municipal affairs was one for sure, and economic development and trade.

The Chair: That was one that wasn't invited.

Mr Hastings: Those two weren't there and we need to hear from them; a couple of hours or half an hour from each of them.

The Chair: OK, we could pick up some of the ministries. Maybe we should hear from the ministries that came to mind afterwards that we didn't invite at the time. Good point, Mr Hastings.

Mr O'Toole: I'd just like to file a recent press release from the Globe and Mail—today, actually—on the ITER project. I think other members should see it. It's the project I've talked about. It's a good article. It's not by a politician; it's by Peter Barnard.

The Chair: General information may be interesting. I've asked research to look into an article in the Globe and Mail in August suggesting that maybe all oil and gas are not necessarily fossil fuel in origin, that maybe down deep in the earth micro-organisms and/or other chemical reactions create methane, which can lead to natural gas, which can lead to oil. It's rather an intriguing philosophy. I'm not sure there may be that much out there, but I've asked them to look into it anyway. Maybe the term "fossil fuel" is not totally accurate, just to toss some confusion into what we're working on.

I don't have anything else. Thank you for the discussion and where we've gone. I think we've helped to get this road map in place of where we're headed. It's much appreciated.

Mr Bradley, do you have any comments?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I do not. I had somebody monitoring this meeting. Unfortunately, I had another meeting today.

The Chair: Yes, I'm quite aware of that. We appreciate your coming in.

Mr Bradley: Too many conflicts.

Mr O'Toole: Just administratively, I'd like to introduce Nathan Fisher, who is one of the legislative interns who will be joining my support staff, and I think Mrs Bountrogianni has someone as well. You may see Nathan around. He's a PhD candidate, so he'll be a wonderful research resource for us to use.

The Chair: I think as a committee we may be in trouble, with all the interns monitoring us.

Mr O'Toole: I might be.

The Chair: We may have a rough road over the next few months. It's great to have them with some of the members of this committee and we look forward to their input and their ideas of where this committee is going.

If there is nothing further, we'll adjourn until next Wednesday. Just to summarize, we have a few specifics we'll be looking at next Wednesday. We'll be looking at approval for a researcher, we'll be looking at some of this report at that time and we'll be looking at some other things that research have had time to put together: possible travel arrangements later on and a list of possible umbrella organizations that we should hear from. Please get through this report and be ready to comment on anything you're uncomfortable with next Wednesday morning. Then we'll try to finalize it on Halloween day as we look at the executive summary.

The committee stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1140.

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