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Wednesday 9 October 2013

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 9 octobre 2013

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ESTIMATESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
BUDGETS DES DÉPENSES

Wednesday 9 October 2013

Mercredi 9 octobre 2013

The committee met at 1615 in room 151.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): I call the meeting to order. On the last occasion, there was a motion to adjourn, which was carried. At the time of adjournment, an amendment had been tabled by Ms. Damerla. You have that motion in front of you; it is labelled number 3. She had the floor, and she can continue to speak to the amendment.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Thank you, Chair. I would like to actually amend my motion and just wanted to know—

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): You're making an amendment to the amendment. Okay.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Yes. I just wanted your permission.

It's quite simple. The idea is that we want to make this committee go forward and find reasonable accommodation. We've been trying to do that many, many times, so we're going to try one more time to address the concerns and see if we can find middle ground and common ground.

We are suggesting that we take the word "provincial" out of the "provincial funding." The amendment would read—and I'm going to read the entire phrase—that the words "related to the 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Games from January 1, 2010, to October 3, 2013, to the Standing Committee on Estimates by 12 p.m. Thursday, October 17, 2013" be removed and replaced with "from January 1, 2010, to October 3, 2013, related to funding of the 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Games, by Tuesday, November 12, 2013."

So, in a sense—

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): I've got to cut you off at that, because—there was a quorum call, and I had to suspend during the quorum call, but it has now been resolved. So now you can explain it.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: In a sense—

Mr. Rob Leone: Chair, can we have that amendment?

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Yes, it will be given; there has been a request. All it is is the removal of the word "provincial." I don't know; do you want that in writing?

Mr. Rob Leone: I just want to make sure that we're talking about the same thing.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): The only word change that I could see was the word "provincial"—

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Yes, "provincial" has been removed.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): That's the amendment to the amendment: to take out the word "provincial."

Mr. Rob Leone: I must be looking at the wrong sheet of paper here.

Mr. Mike Colle: Do you want a five-minute recess to get the copies?

Mr. Joe Dickson: I just sent over my copy.

Mr. Rob Leone: That's it?

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): That's it. If you want a five-minute recess in order to get it copied with the word "provincial" taken out, we can do it, or if you're satisfied that's all the change is—

Mr. Rob Leone: If I'm assured that this is the only word change, I'm good.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): That's it. You're good, okay.

Then please proceed with your explanation.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I think it's pretty self-explanatory. What we're trying to do is find some common ground. We're hoping that by removing this word, we can all agree on this amendment. At this point, all that this amendment is really doing is asking for a reasonable time frame in which we can ask the Ontario public service to provide us with the documents. That's essentially what we've done, and if anybody has to say something—but that's it.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Are there further speakers to the amendment to the amendment?

Mr. Rob Leone: Chair, I'd ask for a recess just to consider this amendment, if that's possible.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Since you just got it, yes, I guess.

Mr. Rob Leone: I don't need too long; 10 minutes maybe.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Ten minutes, okay. It seems reasonable in the circumstance, a 10-minute recess, because it has just been tabled. We'll take a 10-minute recess so that all committee members can consider the impact of the removal of the word "provincial." We stand recessed for 10 minutes.

The committee recessed from 1619 to 1629.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): The meeting is resumed. Any discussion on the amendment to the amendment? Mr. Leone.

Mr. Rob Leone: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I consulted with my colleagues on the PC side on the proposed amendments to the amendment. My concern, if I'm being perfectly honest and perfectly blunt, is that they've removed the word "provincial" from their amendment. What was added, from the original motion as I understand it, was related to the provincial—"provincial" is now removed—funding of the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games. They've included "related to the provincial funding of." My comments, Chair, are related to the fact that they are, in essence, adding that language, and I'm not sure why, and I'm kind of concerned about it, to be perfectly honest.

I think that in the grand scheme of things, what we've seen over the past is that wording changes, what's written in these motions, actually do matter. They take them quite literally. The spirit of what we're looking for is a complete disclosure of documents, and I don't want any wording change to limit the kinds of documentation that we are requesting in order to get some answers to questions that we have with regard to the costs of the Pan Am and Parapan Games.

So I'm concerned at the onset with the original amendment where they added that additional wording to the point where they might be using that language to exclude some of the information that we might be able to receive. Frankly, eliminating the word "provincial" from that, as the amendment to the amendment does state, does not negate that initial fear that adding that language is going to limit the kinds of documentation that we're able to receive.

So on the basis of that, Chair, I would suggest that this amendment to the amendment and the amendment itself—I'll probably speak to the amendment later—are not acceptable. I would suggest that, if members want to move ahead expeditiously on this, we have a vote on the main motion that I presented. I would be happy to talk about changing the date when we're requesting the documents. I know that we have been engaged in this discussion for some time. A week has passed since we first presented this motion. If we want to move that date a week further back, I'd be happy to entertain a discussion on that.

But at this point in time, Chair, I think we're dealing with the minutiae of amending for amendment's sake to waste time, to filibuster and to delay. What we should be doing is asking serious questions about the Pan Am and Parapan Games, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. His officials are here today to help us get some answers to questions that we have.

On the basis of that, I would say, Chair, that I am not in favour of this amendment to the amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Ms. Damerla.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Chair, I take exception to the fact that there have been suggestions made that we're filibustering. If anything, we've been trying very hard

with amendment after amendment to find common ground—

Mr. Rob Leone: You've got to be—

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Let me finish. What happened on October 2 was completely inexcusable—

Mr. Rob Leone: You've done far worse.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: There were four recesses asked for in a two-hour period. The opposition spoke for over—

Interjections.

Mr. Rob Leone: Point of order, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Hold on. The floor belongs to Ms. Damerla.

Mr. Rob Leone: And I have a point of order.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Point of order.

Mr. Rob Leone: According to standing order 23, I believe that member is impugning motive on other members of this committee, and I think she should withdraw those comments.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): I'm sorry, I was briefly disengaged from what was—I didn't hear what was said. If the member has said something that imputes motive, it should be withdrawn, but I cannot say that I heard it because I was speaking with the researcher as to the purport of what was being suggested, what it meant. I leave it to you, Ms. Damerla. I did not hear it, so if you feel you have imputed motive, then please withdraw it. If you feel you have not, please continue.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Chair, I did not impute any motive. I'll just continue to say that we have been trying very, very hard to make this work, and it's really important to find common ground. So we have broadened the scope by saying "all funding." If you just leave it very vague, then anything with just the word "Parapan" or "Pan Am"—that's millions and millions of documents. It's not a reasonable request. We're trying to find some common ground.

It was quite disappointing, I am going to say, on October 2, the way things dragged on, but that's done; let's move forward. If we need to vote on this amendment to the amendment to the amendment, well, we'll vote on it.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Any further discussion on the amendment to the amendment to remove the word "provincial"? That's all we're voting on. All right?

Okay. Not seeing any further discussion, all those in favour of removing the word "provincial"? Opposed? All right.

My discussion with the researcher, I think, has to be part of what I say here because the researcher was asking, I think quite legitimately, does removing the word "provincial" broaden the mandate of the committee and what the committee is asking for? My answer to him and my answer to you is, it broadens the mandate of the amendment; it does not broaden the mandate of the main motion. It actually limits the main motion. Because it limits the main motion, I don't see how I can support it. I can't because it's running contrary to what the main

motion is saying. I can't, so it fails. The amendment to the amendment fails.

So the amendment is now the subject, and the amendment will be "provincial funding." Further debate on the main amendment, on your papers number 3?

Seeing none, I'm going to call the question. All those in favour of amendment number 3, please signify. All those opposed? The vote was 4 to 3.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): No, he did not vote. He did not. I'm sorry, he did not. The vote was 4 to 3, so that amendment fails.

We're on to the main motion.

Mr. Joe Dickson: Excuse me, Mr. Chair. I did have my hand up.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Excuse me—

Mr. Joe Dickson: If there's a certain height I should raise it, I'd be pleased to.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): I looked over there. It was very clear that there were three hands up, and I looked back and asked for those opposed and then there were four hands up. I did not see your hand. I saw your hand after they had voted. I saw your hand up at that point.

Mr. Joe Dickson: I'm not pursuing it, Mr. Chair. I'm just speaking to it.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): All right. You've made your point on the record. I did not see your hand up, nor do I believe it was up.

On to the main motion: Is there any further discussion on the main motion? Ms. Damerla?

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Chair, I'd like to propose an amendment to the main motion.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): It is your right to do so. Please proceed.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I move that the words "related to the 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Games, from January 1, 2010, to October 3, 2013, to the Standing Committee on Estimates by 12 p.m. Thursday, October 17, 2013" be removed and replaced with "from January 1, 2010, to October 3, 2013, related to the costs of the 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Games by 12 p.m. Tuesday, November 12, 2013".

I'm going to give the Clerk copies of the amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Thank you. We're just going to take a moment. The Clerk had to go to make an additional copy. We want to make sure everybody has them.

All right? I've discussed this very briefly with the Clerk. It seems to me that the difference in the wording between motion 3 and what is now amendment 4 is that the word "costs" has been substituted for the words "provincial funding" and/or "funding." That seems to be the only significant difference. I am not sure whether this, in itself, qualifies for a significantly different amendment, and I am going to seek advice from the Clerk herself as to whether or not this is a significant enough amendment to qualify as different from the previous amendment, upon which we have already voted.

We will take a 10-minute recess while we consult with the Clerk to see if this proposed amendment is in order. We stand recessed for 10 minutes.

The committee recessed from 1641 to 1651.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): We'll call the meeting back to order again. Unfortunately, the Clerk was not available so I'm going to have to make the decision on my own, based on the actual wording. What has been substituted for the wording "funding," or "provincial funding," is "costs." Funding, in my mind, means from whence the monies come—whereas the cost relates more to where the monies are being expended. So you have two different sides. You have the first motion, which was saying where it's coming from, and now you have the new one, to where the money is going to be expended or spent. Therefore, I would have to say that they are different and would therefore, on number 4, ask Ms. Damerla to proceed.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Thank you, Chair, for that ruling. Again, this amendment has been brought forward to try and find a common ground and reasonable accommodation. It's a reasonable amendment that is responsive to the concerns raised by the members of the committee. Mr. Leone had expressed that our date range of January 2012 to October 2013 was too limited, so in this amendment, as in our last one, we've modified this to reflect the original time frame. We still think it's unnecessary to have such a broad time frame, given that this committee should be looking at this year's estimates. However, we are trying to work with the members of the opposition.

The other issue is the scope. The Chair has suggested that perhaps the wording "provincial funding" in our last amendment was too narrow, so we've modified this to say "costs" of the 2015 Pan Am Games. This should alleviate concerns of members of the committee, while still keeping the motion focused on what this committee is looking at, and that is the estimates of the ministry. Mr. Leone's request for all correspondence related to Pan Am is overly broad.

Chair, I'm going to make a simple analogy to just try and explain what the concern here is. Let's just take random MPP X. When we want to get all the correspondence related to MPP X, we ask for correspondence that relates to MPP X as an MPP, but if we were to ask for all correspondence, that would mean your happy birthday email to your grandmother or your niece. That's irrelevant to the task at hand. To just ask for all correspondence is very unreasonable and to me suggests that the opposition doesn't know what they want. It truly is a fishing expedition.

The other issue is the time frame. Speaking of fishing expeditions, any fisherman knows that patience is the key to good fishing. If, indeed, all that the opposition is doing is fishing, looking for something—just fishing—well, have some patience and give the Ontario public service the time frame they need to do a good job. It's really costly to just say "all correspondence." Think about it: Anything with the words "Pan Am" would be captured

by this. What purpose does this serve? How does this serve the taxpayer? My suggestion is, if you don't know what you're looking for, think about it and come back with a more reasonable proposal, or work together. That's what we're trying to do.

As I've already said, the October 17 deadline is unreasonable. I think even Mr. Leone has now agreed that that is not a reasonable deadline; he suggested that earlier. That's the reason we are proposing November 12, a much more reasonable time frame. I think it is really, really important that we know what we're looking for, ask for it, and if after that, you still need more, we can always come back. The committee can always come back to ask for more.

But this is just unreasonable, the way the original motion was worded. I hope that this will be viewed as reasonable accommodation, and we can move forward. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Further debate? Mr. Leone.

Mr. Rob Leone: I am having a lot of difficulty here, Chair, I have to admit, believing anything that's being said. Frankly, I'm quite disgusted that we're sitting here talking about these little amendments and wasting time—wasting the minister's time—and we're being accused on our side of delaying.

We've had how many recesses in the course of a motion that's very simple, that's rudimentary, that we've passed several times in this committee, and here we are, talking about yet another minor amendment after the member who just spoke, last week, was complaining about delaying and stalling. She's doing the very same thing here in this committee.

I can't understand, Chair, why we are even doing this. We expressed our position last week that the reason we were doing what we did was so that we can actually ask the minister some questions about the documents that we're about to receive. We made that plainly clear to people. What's not plainly clear to us is why, today, we're sitting here doing these little amendments that could have been taken care of in one shot, yet "provincial funding" wasn't good enough so we'll take out the word "provincial." Well, "funding" was there. We voted that down, so we're going to use the word "costs."

Are we serious about what we're doing here? Do we really want to ask questions of this minister or not? That's what I want to get a sense of from the government. Why are they delaying? What do you have to hide? At the end of the day, we could simply get on with the business of doing this, yet I suppose that if we don't vote for this amendment, there will be another amendment coming forward. I do want to strengthen this motion. I very much believe it could be strengthened. In essence, every one of these amendments is limiting the scope of what we're trying to do, and that is unacceptable to me.

This is a committee that's supposed to get to the bottom of the costs of the Pan American Games and the Parapan Am Games, and every time we hear another amendment, it's an attempt by the government to limit

that scope, to limit that deliberation, to limit our ability as the opposition to get to the bottom of things. So why would I entertain another amendment that simply does the same as the previous ones? This is getting beyond any sense of—this is just ridiculous, plainly ridiculous.

Interjection: Games.

Mr. Rob Leone: My colleague said these are games; they are games. The minister is here. He's clearly upset that he's not being able to answer the tough questions we have for him, and that's solely the responsibility of the governing party.

Minister, if you really want to answer some questions today, I think you have to look across the way and talk to your MPPs to get to the bottom of what's happening here—

Hon. Michael Chan: Are you having a question for me?

Mr. Rob Leone: I don't have a question for you.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): No, no. Mr. Leone does not have a question for you. It may be a rhetorical question, but we're not going to get into this.

Mr. Rob Leone: I didn't ask a question. I said—

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Please, Minister, you do not have the floor. At this point, you do not—

Mr. Rob Leone: I said "if." There's a big if there, Minister.

Mr. Mike Colle: That counts against the time.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): No, it does not count against the time. It was a rhetorical question, and it needs to be ignored by the minister.

Mr. Rob Leone: I would hope, at the end of the day, that the government party has some real, serious issues that they'd like to talk about. I don't see any acknowledgement that that's the case. I sat here in estimates last year when the governing members time and time again proposed amendments, called for 20-minute recesses—we went for months—

Interjection: Months.

Mr. Rob Leone: —months, and that's what the Liberals did in the estimates committee last year, to avoid any accountability on the gas plant scandal and, yesterday, we know why. We have an Auditor General's report that simply states the reason why they didn't want to tell and let us get to the truth. I think the same thing is happening here. There's a—

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Chair, point of order.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): On a point of order, Ms. Damerla.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I believe Mr. Leone is straying from the issue by bringing in extraneous subjects. So if you could stick to the topic—

Mr. Rob Leone: I'm just getting to the costs, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Well, then get to the costs quickly because the issue here—if there's a one-word change and the word is "costs"—

1700

Mr. Rob Leone: I'm just getting to the costs, just warming up to it.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Okay.

Mr. Rob Leone: Chair, the issue here is that in estimates last year, we asked where in the budget the cancellation costs for the gas plants were. We didn't get an answer to that very question, and we had to go to extraordinary lengths to get it. I think the governing party is delaying by putting "funding" and "costs" because the costs we're going to uncover through this emails are going to far exceed what they've already detailed.

But we don't know, as you stated earlier, whether that's the inputs or the outputs, the money coming in or the money coming out, where the money is coming from, whether it's one budget, two budgets, three budgets, four budgets. We have no idea what that is. We have to have the documentation to allow us to find out exactly what's happening, because the simple questions simply aren't being answered.

That's why I think the change to the word "costs" is equally problematic, as it limits the scope of the original motion, and we should be defeating it. I think we should do our best, Chair, to ensure that we're doing what we're supposed to on this committee, which is to get to the bottom of what happened in the Pan/Parapan Am Games.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Further debate? Mr. Colle.

Mr. Mike Colle: I think the member is speaking against himself. He just said he wants to get to the costs, and the motion, very specifically, talks about getting to the costs, and that's a pretty wide-ranging spectrum. Anything to do with costs should be brought forward to the committee, and I think that's what the estimates committee is about: costs. I can't see how the member could object to saying that we want all the material relating to costs.

If we really want to get on with it, I think this is a pretty obviously helpful amendment, because it widens the scope, and the fact is that it does take out "provincial." I agreed with you at the beginning; I didn't want to see the word "provincial" in it, because I know that a lot of the costing relates to the federal government's \$500 million and also to the province and all the 12 municipalities. I'd like to see some of that information too, because that relates to costs. That's why I think, if you really want to get on with it, that this allows the committee to get all the information going back to 2010—everything relating to costs.

What is it that would be of interest to the committee that didn't relate to costs? That's what I don't quite understand. That's my two cents.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Further debate? Ms. Damerla.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I just wanted to say that I was perplexed by Mr. Leone, because he seems to contradict himself. On one hand, he said these are really minor amendments. Well, if they're so minor, just vote in favour and let's get on with it and we will—

Interjection.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: That's the point. You, yourself, said they're minor amendments. It's clear that the opposi-

tion isn't sure what they're really looking for. I think we made some very reasonable suggestions. MPP Colle spoke very eloquently as to why we need to limit it to costs. I'll go back to that old example: Do you really need that email wishing your niece a happy birthday? That's the kind of email you're seeking when you say "all correspondence." We've got to limit it. We've got to scope it out. That's all we're trying to do. There's the saying that people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. I quite object to anybody saying that the government is obstructive.

Mr. Rob Leone: Yes, you are.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Clearly, the evidence suggests that, as we speak, the opposition is not allowing us to find common ground.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Mr. Leone.

Mr. Rob Leone: Chair, through the duration of deliberations on the gas plants scenario, we found out that the government used code names. They used Project Vapour, Project Fruit Salad, Project Apple. These are certainly project names that we did not know beforehand. Who knows? Maybe the name of the Pan Am Games mascot is a project: Project Pachi the Porcupine. How do we know?

What the member is suggesting that we can get to the bottom of this by maybe limiting what we're doing. In fact, the opposite is true. I'm suggesting, contrary to what Mr. Colle had said, that we don't know where the costs are, we don't know where the funding is coming from. We need to know all of it, and both motions limited the intent of the original motion. There was no contradiction whatsoever on either by myself. I know we like to change words, play on them and so on and so forth, but the reality of it is, unless we have a broad scope, we can't actually determine where these costs are.

I'm certainly of the opinion that we should get going on this, Chair, and I'm not going to say any more on this amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Any further debate? Ms. Damerla.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Chair, we'd like a 20-minute recess ahead of any vote.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): It is in order. But before I recess, Ms. Damerla, may I ask a question? If your motion passes, then we'll go on to the main motion. If it doesn't pass, do you have other ones? I have staff and a minister sitting here very patiently who probably have a whole lot more important things to do than listen to what I consider, at best, an arcane debate—at best.

Hon. Michael Chan: Me too.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Chair, that's what we need the 20 minutes for.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Yes, okay. You need the 20 minutes to determine what you're going to do next, if this doesn't pass?

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): All right. Well then, I cannot dismiss the people here today until we find that out.

We are recessed for 20 minutes. Please be back here at 5:26.

The committee recessed from 1706 to 1726

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): We will call the meeting to order. We recessed for the purpose of allowing members to consider the motion for 20 minutes. We will now proceed to the vote. We have a vote before us that I marked as number 4. The operative words that have been changed—it's the motion that says "the costs." Okay? So everybody knows the motion you're dealing with?

All those in favour, would you please signify? I see you this time, Mr. Dickson. All those opposed? I can only accept one vote from the NDP.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Yes, okay. All right. Here we are, tied again.

This is becoming very difficult. I am trying to be a fair and rational Chair. I am trying to look at everything that is being said and everything that is being done. I'm looking at the original motion that was made by Mr. Leone and I'm looking at the amendments. This amendment is limiting to Mr. Leone's motion; I'm absolutely clear on that. So the decision is, does it limit it to such an extent as to make it less relevant to what the committee's operation is and what the committee is supposed to do?

In my view, this committee is supposed to look into all aspects of the ministry that's under question, everything that is contained within the estimates and all of the facts relating to those estimates. I am mindful of what Speaker Levac had to say when this committee sent the request to the House that potentially the then Minister of Energy might be in contempt because he was not willing to release the facts.

We do not have that case of this minister refusing any such facts at all, so I want to draw that this is very different. But what Speaker Levac said, relying in part upon Speaker Milliken from the House of Commons, was that the committee has an unfettered right to all documentation. What I see here is an attempt to fetter the request for all documentation, and it does run somewhat counter to the motion—I think very much counter to the motion—that Mr. Leone has put forward.

This is not simply a matter of a date. If it was a matter of a date, I wouldn't have a problem, but I think I want to err on the side of caution here to follow what Speaker Levac had to say. Therefore, I am going to vote no.

Mr. Rob Leone: Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Mr. Leone.

Mr. Rob Leone: I realize that the date—

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): That's all I have to state. Therefore, the motion fails. Okay. Go ahead.

Mr. Rob Leone: Chair, I realize the date, October 17, 2013, is obviously about to pass, because we've been delaying and deliberating, so I'm going to propose to amend this motion to—

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): You're amending your motion—

Mr. Rob Leone: I'm amending the motion—

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): —because that's the only one we have before us at this point.

Mr. Rob Leone: —to remove the date "Thursday, October 17, 2013" and insert the words "two weeks after the motion passes."

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Does everyone require a written copy? Ms. Damerla, do you want a written copy?

Dipika Damerla: Actually, Chair, I was going to suggest something else, which was: Clearly, we on all sides want to come up with a workable motion. My suggestion would be, in a minute—and I'm going to explain why, so I'm going to ask—

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): We have a motion that's duly made. I can't entertain something else until we've disposed of that.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Is this a procedural thing you want to suggest?

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Yes. Well, you'll let me know if that is.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): With your indulgence, I want to hear her procedure, because if we can get ourselves out of what has quickly become some kind of a Gordian knot on actually us doing—you all know about Gordian knots? No, and it doesn't matter.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I have a proposal to solve the Gordian knot, and that might be to seek adjournment and work out a solution outside of the committee that all parties can work together, have our staff working together to come up with something that we can all live with, and then move the committee forward, because trying to amend through this process of voting each other down and the theatre that goes with it—perhaps committee business is best served if you get into a room and—

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Okay. The purpose of an adjournment, I cannot comment on. But if you are seeking to move an adjournment, and you have already stated your purpose, that is in order, and it would supersede the motion made by Mr. Leone, just as his motion superseded yours yesterday. Is that what you wish: to move an adjournment?

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Yes. But it's really important that we get on the record the reason. We're not doing this to delay anything—

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): No. It's not debatable. We heard you the first time. You stuck it in. It's not debatable as to the purpose. If you are seeking an adjournment for today, then we have a motion of adjournment. It's not debatable.

All those in favour of adjourning today? All those opposed?

The job of a Chair, quite frankly, is to facilitate continuing. That's what I'm supposed to do. I'm always supposed to err on the side of continuing the debate and getting the committee's work done, so I cannot support the motion to adjourn. I think it was a valiant try, and there is some merit in what you're saying, so we'll see what happens to this. If this does not happen, I would

allow someone to entertain a recess for a few minutes to see whether it can be accomplished today before we go on.

Mr. Leone does have the floor, and he has duly moved an amendment to his own motion. Do members require a hard copy of his amendment?

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Okay. Then we will recess for five minutes while a hard copy is made and is photocopied and is in the hands of all members. We stand recessed for five minutes.

The committee recessed from 1732 to 1739.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): I call the meeting back to order. Everyone now has a copy of the motion made by Mr. Leone. I know exactly what Mr. Leone is trying to do, but I feel that as the Chair, I must insist that there be either a friendly amendment made by someone or an editorial change, because you cannot state that it come to the Standing Committee on Estimates by 12 p.m. two weeks—12 p.m. what? And might I suggest, what you're trying to say is "by 12 p.m. on the date which falls two weeks after the motion passes"?

Mr. Rob Leone: I'm good with that.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): So if you would make that friendly amendment yourself; otherwise, the motion doesn't make any sense. I know what you're trying to do.

Mr. Rob Leone: So, Chair, I have a friendly amendment to suggest: "by 12 p.m. on the date that falls two weeks after the motion passes."

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): And you're making that your own friendly amendment?

Mr. Rob Leone: A friendly amendment to my own amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Does everybody understand what he has done? Okay.

So we have an amendment. Discussion on the amendment. Mr. Leone.

Mr. Rob Leone: It was the spirit of the original motion. We're delaying. So I would suggest a floating date, and two weeks is consistent with what we've asked for in the past and is what we're suggesting here. That's all.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Ms. Damerla.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: I really do feel that the proposed two weeks is inadequate time. I would dare to suggest that if somebody were to ask MPP Leone to produce all the correspondence he ever received in the past three years, every Christmas card, every email, every bill, every invoice, every friendly note he passed to his seatmate, in two weeks, I daresay he wouldn't be able to produce it himself. So to expect the Pan Am secretariat to produce every piece of correspondence in just two weeks, it's plainly unreasonable. It makes no sense.

I'm going to suggest, Chair, that we have a 20-minute recess in which we can come to a motion that we can all agree on and discuss it outside.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): This is not an automatic recess, but I'm willing to put your request to a vote, if that's what you wish.

All right. There is a request here for a 20-minute recess in order to try to facilitate some kind of dialogue to see whether we can get through this impasse. If there is a 20-minute recess, though, it takes us past the hour of 6 o'clock, so it is in effect adjourning to another date, just so you understand what happens if the motion passes.

We have a motion for a 20-minute recess in order to dialogue to see if we can make changes that will accommodate all parties. All those in favour? All those opposed?

Again, I can't support this because it takes us beyond the date, and I'm not sure that dialogue is possible at this point. If it was five minutes, I might have said yes, but it's not five minutes, it's 20 minutes, which means that we can't continue for the balance of the day. We've been here all day to resolve absolutely nothing, and as the Chair, I can't vote yes.

Mr. Rob Leone: Chair, can we call the question, please?

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Is there any other member who wants to debate? Seeing none—

Mr. Mike Colle: Could I call a recess before we vote of 10 minutes?

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): Yes, yes. You have a 20—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): No, no. As soon as somebody asks—are you requesting a 20-minute recess? He's entitled to a 20-minute recess before we vote. Those are the rules of the Legislature. It's not debatable and it's not votable.

Mr. Mike Colle: I'm calling for 20 minutes because that clock is wrong.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): I have 17 minutes to. I think the clock is close enough.

Mr. Mike Colle: I'm calling for a 20-minute recess.

The Chair (Mr. Michael Prue): He's entitled to it. All right. Then there is a 20-minute recess, and we will vote on this as the first item of business on the next date, which would be two weeks from yesterday, 13 days from today, which will I think be the 22nd at 9 o'clock in the morning. We would ask the minister and the staff to come back on that date, which is Tuesday morning, nearly two weeks from now, because we are on a constituency week next week and the committee cannot meet. Okay. Meeting is de facto adjourned until that date.

The committee adjourned at 1743.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 9 October 2013

Committee business..... E-177

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Chair / Président

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York ND)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

Mr. Taras Natyshak (Essex ND)

Mr. Mike Colle (Eglinton–Lawrence L)

Mr. Joe Dickson (Ajax–Pickering L)

Mr. Michael Harris (Kitchener–Conestoga PC)

Mr. Rob Leone (Cambridge PC)

Mrs. Amrit Mangat (Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud L)

Mr. Taras Natyshak (Essex ND)

Mr. Rick Nicholls (Chatham–Kent–Essex PC)

Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York ND)

Vacant

Substitutions / Membres remplaçants

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Ms. Dipika Damerla (Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville L)

Mr. Rod Jackson (Barrie PC)

Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock PC)

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