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**Official Report  
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(Hansard)**

**Monday 27 May 2002**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Lundi 27 mai 2002**

**Select committee on  
alternative fuel sources**

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

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**

Monday 27 May 2002

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

Lundi 27 mai 2002

*The committee met at 1134 in committee room 1.*

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

**The Chair (Mr Doug Galt):** I now call the select committee on alternative fuel sources to order. The first and only item on the agenda is the tabling of the report. I thought this might be quite simple, in my naïveté, and thought that we'd just poll the committee and that they would be in favour of putting in an English-only, and that the French would come as soon as we could get it translated, when in fact we e-mailed around and the results were pretty well 50-50.

There seem to be developing pressures from both sides as to what to do, so rather than have the monkey only on the Chair's back, I decided to call a full committee meeting to discuss, do you want this tabled as English only, with a French version to follow, and at that time send out all the glossy copies, or would you prefer to ask the House leaders to put a motion in front of the House to extend our deadline of May 31? I'm hoping for the direction of this committee.

I believe it's Dr Bountrogianni and then Ms Churley and Mr Bradley.

**Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain):** I have a question: how much later would the French translation be?

**Clerk of the Committee (Ms Tonia Grannum):** We've put a lot of pressure on them, so I think if we ask for a two-week extension we would be very safe.

**The Chair:** Realistically, what can they do?

**Clerk of the Committee:** They've now said the end of next week, the beginning of the following, but then we also have to get it out to print. Printing is not the issue; it was the translation that was the issue.

**Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** I had that question but also the process by which it's being translated. It's being done in-house, is it?

**Clerk of the Committee:** No. The Legislative Assembly has a contract with a translation company, so we send all our translation to this company. They had a problem meeting our—

**Ms Churley:** I guess my question would be if, under those circumstances, since we didn't nearly complete our budget, if there's a way that we can get somebody else, another company—

**Clerk of the Committee:** We tried two other companies and we said we would pay a premium. We tried everything we could to get this.

**Ms Churley:** So we're talking about a two-week delay.

**Clerk of the Committee:** Yes. That would cover it, I'm sure.

**Ms Churley:** My suggestion would be—and, if necessary, I'll make a motion on this—that we ask the government House leaders to bring forward a motion delaying the filing of the report until such time as we have a French translation.

**The Chair:** I don't think there's any question—as you're referring, Ms Churley, it's maybe high time we looked at those that we're hiring, contracting with, about French translation. This committee worked very, very hard to meet the deadline. We were told by mid-May, to give them two weeks to translate. We were literally finished on the 15th, tied it up on the 16th, and research had those few changes by the morning of the 17th, so they had a full two weeks and they failed to meet that deadline. We met the deadline; they're not.

**Ms Churley:** We worked very hard to meet that deadline, this committee and research, so that's very disappointing. But I think it sets a very bad precedent. I understand the urgency and the concern we have as a committee, because we did work so hard to reach the deadline. It was a matter of pride that we were able to meet that deadline. I think it will be understandable if a motion is put forward clearly outlining that it is to get the French translation completed. I just think it sets a very bad precedent for this committee to allow a report to go forward in English only, when on many occasions we argue that no government reports should be tabled without the French translation. So we just can't do it here.

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** When the sheet was sent around asking our preference, I indicated that in my view we should follow the usual procedure, which was to have it in French and English at the same time. I certainly concur and I think all members of the committee would recognize we worked very hard to meet the specific deadline set. Nevertheless, I don't think the world will end if we don't meet that deadline. I think there's a recognition that it's coming, that the work is completed, in effect. A two-week delay—well, that's an annoyance to those of us on the committee who've worked hard and so on. I think it is good to do that

because when you start setting new precedents as to how you're going to release reports without the French translation, then that sets a precedent for something else happening. I don't think that the committee report will be any less important two weeks from now than it is right now, so I would certainly be in favour of asking the House leaders to delay it for two weeks.

1140

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** I think it is important to recognize what everyone has said: the hard work that committee and staff have done because of the ongoing kind of assurance that we had a unanimous report. I think that may have been important to note.

I just think if it was introduced, it would allow, in the context of the broader debate on electricity, for this to be a reference point in question period. In fact, there may be those who say it doesn't go far enough, it goes too far, whatever. I think it would be nice to engender that debate in respect to the work that this all-party committee has done.

I'd just like some reassurance from staff that we could set a drop-dead date for introduction, because we have no assurance of the translation process. I'd like to make sure that we don't miss the opportunity and this committee doesn't have to reconvene; that if we come out of this waiting for a period of time, which I'll acquiesce to staff to determine, the report would then be introduced, giving full respect to the initial intent of the committee to have it in the two languages. Could I have some response from staff that if the drop-dead date was two weeks from today, then we would go ahead, if that wouldn't be a middle ground for the committee to reach some agreement on? Because otherwise we have no assurance now that we won't be back here again. If it's introduced in the whole potential of the House not being in session, it becomes kind of a moot point.

**Ms Churley:** We're going to be out in two weeks?

**Mr O'Toole:** No, no, but I'm saying if it isn't in by the time the House is recessed, what are we going to do then? Meet again to talk about the same issue, or do we say, "This is the date," and we'd have to go forward?

I'd like to see something on this report mentioned in the budget. The work that's been done and the suggestions that have been made on tax policy and other areas would be important. I'm trying to engender some response. I would like to see two weeks from today being the drop-dead date. In that term, I'd be respectful of the unanimous intent of this committee to have it in the official languages, but we don't want to miss the budget and we don't want to miss the importance of this debate being a reference point. So could I have some response to that?

**The Chair:** Mr O'Toole, are you referring to two weeks from now or two weeks' extension?

**Mr O'Toole:** Two weeks from now.

**The Chair:** June 10?

**Mr O'Toole:** Yes. I think that's roughly the budget week.

**The Chair:** I think an interesting point has been brought up, the fact that we have so many items in here that could be helpful for the Minister of Finance, meanwhile all of this is confidential information and we're unable to take good advantage of a budget that is coming up. That is one logical reason why we should move ahead, but I am at the committee's direction. Anyone else?

**Mrs Bountrogianni:** As long as the clerk thinks it's reasonable, I don't mind supporting Mr O'Toole's recommendation, as long as he drops the drop-dead clause. Just make it, "This the deadline"—I think that's good; deadlines are important—as long as it's a reasonable deadline.

**Ms Churley:** I can't support the motion as it's been put because it implies that if the French translation is not complete at that date, we would go ahead and table it without the translation. What I understand we have is a deadline from the company that's doing the translation. What is that deadline again?

**Clerk of the Committee:** It's May 31 or June 3. And then I can do the printing overnight.

**Ms Churley:** I can't support the motion as it's worded now, that we table the report whether or not the French translation is complete. I would support a motion that the English and French versions of the report be tabled in the Legislature no later than June 3, but I would want to say in both—

**Clerk of the Committee:** You're saying tabling by June 3? We could table by June 6. So we could table on the Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

**Ms Churley:** So no later than June 6. But I would change the motion to say that the English and French versions of the report be tabled in the Legislature by no later than June 6 and make it very clear to the translating service that we have to have it in to you no later than June 3.

**Mr Bradley:** Whether you agree or not with the principle, if you follow the principle of tabling only when you have French and English copies, then whether you're doing it now or two weeks from now, you violate it. I think there's a very good chance that we're going to have it ready. Certainly, from the indication the clerk has given, it's going to be ready no later than June 3. It can be tabled June 6.

Anybody who believes that the government doesn't know what's in this report is living in dreamland because the government monitored the hearings we had. We all know governments do that. That's their job, to monitor the hearings and the deliberations. They may not be privy to the final contents of the report, but certainly they're privy to the Hansards of this. Suggestions have been made and so on. I know the government, if it's going to put anything in its budget, is probably going to put it in the budget whether this report is out or not. It would be nice for the government to give the appearance of responding quickly to this report—I understand that from a political point of view—but I'm sure the government has a pretty good idea what the final report's going to

say. If they don't, I would be the most surprised person around this table.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** That would be consistent with your reaction many days in this committee—quite surprised by the government.

I would support a motion that requires the tabling by June 6, but I am extremely concerned that we've got two conflicting principles here. One of them is an order of the House. I would remind the members opposite that if we defeat this motion, the Chair must support the status quo, and the status quo is that we've already voted to table on May 28. You don't have much of a bargaining position, first off.

Second, I think it's deplorable that having met the timetable we're now subject to the vagaries of someone else not showing due regard for the deadlines that we were told were appropriate. I am concerned. Speaking for myself, I can assure the member opposite that I haven't spoken to, nor have I given any of the information to the Minister of Finance or anyone associated with her. It would be a shame if we missed the opportunity to have a lot of our recommendations included in this year's budget, because the member will recall that many of our timelines are extremely tight and if they are to be met, they have to be announced soon.

I will support June 6, but I want it clearly on the record that if that is the motion on the floor right now, we're recognizing the failure to meet the deadline for which the committee had been operating, that the original motion to table on May 28 by this committee stands. So I would ask the—

**Mr Bradley:** Unless there's another motion.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Unless there's another motion, in which case I can assure you that I will be voting against a further extension. I think we have ample precedents where reports were tabled in one language with the alternative to follow. It may be controversial, but in this circumstance we're faced with a genuine loss for the people in this province if we're following some other procedural nicety because it contradicts a procedural nicety, namely, the order of the House that we report by May 30. I want it clearly on the record that I will go for an extension to June 6, but I will not personally support any extension beyond that because I believe that would compromise the ability of the Minister of Finance to include any of our recommendations in her budget this year.

**Mr Bradley:** I believe the assurance. We've had the assurance that no later than June 3 is when we're going to get the report. On that basis, I think June 6 is reasonable because what the clerk has indicated to us is that they have said they will have it ready no later than June 3. That assurance is there. They probably won't see any Legislature business if they don't meet that deadline, I would think. So June 6 is all right with me because I think we'll be ready with it.

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** I'm comfortable with June 6, which is past the beginning. I want as much as anyone to see this tabled. There's some very good material in there that I think would truly

benefit the province. But my concern, if it's not ready on June 3rd for the 6th, is that we've got two different aspects. We've got the internal aspect of a government committee operating, and there's problems on that. But if I look at the other picture, which is the rights of citizens in Ontario, the francophone community has equal rights for services. It's not a privilege; it's not a gift; they have a right to it. I don't believe that if we give them a right, we're really giving them a right if we say, "You can get it two weeks later." "Separate but equal" has been shown to be a fallacy. So I feel strongly now that we need to table both languages at the same time. I believe it's a fundamental right for the citizens.

1150

**Ms Churley:** I would like to reiterate Mr Parsons's remarks that there's a reason why we have this procedure in the Legislature, that is, to table in both official languages. We have had occasions where government has tabled reports not translated, or attempted to. There were usually very good reasons why governments liked to table a report at a particular time, but we have argued ferociously in opposition to that. I would do so again here.

I would like to make a motion. I think there's a little bit of a difference of opinion here, because my motion says very clearly that the report be tabled in both official languages, in both French and English, on June 6 in the House, which of course makes very clear that the report would have to be tabled in both languages. I stand by that motion. I have made such a motion, and perhaps others would like to speak directly to it, but that is my motion: that the report be tabled on June 6 in the Legislature in both French and English.

**The Chair:** I wasn't accepting any particular motion. I was just trying to get the lay of the land here in discussion. Once we find a motion that will go through, then I'll accept an official motion. I think basically everybody's talking the same line here.

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North):** I have two questions first. One, who is doing the translation? Is it in-house, is it out-sourced, or is it a combination?

**Clerk of the Committee:** The Legislative Assembly has a contract with a company called Société Gamma, and they're responsible for it.

**Mr Hastings:** What does the contract provide for when there's a so-called unavoidable delay?

**Clerk of the Committee:** I don't have the details of the contract. I'd have to talk to our purchasing department to find out the details of the contract. I don't know that.

**Mr Hastings:** Before we leave here today, if you're going to have a motion that moves this date, I'd like to know to what extent the proposer is interested in ensuring that there is a specific reason, not a vague generalization, as to the delay in the date.

**Clerk of the Committee:** You want to know the reason they gave us for not having the—

**Mr Hastings:** Yes. What's the reason?

**Clerk of the Committee:** They didn't have their staff available. They normally have three people translate our reports. Two of them were unavailable, so they only had one person translating. After going back and forth with them, I said, "This is unacceptable. You are under contract with us." They were able to find an additional person to translate, which pushed back our deadline. Initially they said June 15; I said, "That's not good enough."

**Mr Hastings:** I would like to know whether Ms Churley is interested in stating what the explicit reason is for the unintended delay, however that's phrased, dealing with staff shortages at the company that the Legislative Assembly contracted with. Otherwise you end up with a motion made by the House leader that just says "unavoidable delays." To me, whatever the reason is, where is the follow-up consequence therefrom? It seems to me that on a committee report as significant as this—it could be any other report—there ought to be some kind of financial consequence to the company for this delay and how that's invoked within the contract that this company made with Assembly purchasing. There's no doubt in my mind that we need to have an equal facility recognizing the importance of French as an official facility in this province and it should come out the same as it would with English. But I'm very dissatisfied that we're going to sort of gloss it over and there isn't any financial consequence and, second, there's no official statement within the motion made as to—unless Ms Churley will consider stating whatever the specific reason is.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Let me just clarify. Ms Churley actually now has two motions on the floor. The first one she read into the record was that she wanted the government House leader to introduce a motion to extend the deadline for the tabling of the report. That is the one I said I would support. If you want to add "in both official languages," that's fine. I will not vote to amend the original recommendation by the committee. I will be prepared to vote for something that says, "The members of the committee unanimously request the House leaders"—plural—"to table a motion to extend the deadline of the tabling of the report by the select committee on alternative fuel sources, in both official languages, by no later than June 6, 2002."

**The Chair:** Is that something that's kind of comfortable that we can put on the table officially?

**Ms Churley:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Let's get on with it then.

**Ms Churley:** Wait a minute. Just in response, I did move a motion. Actually that wasn't a motion the first time. I was suggesting it could be put into a motion.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Then there now is a motion on the floor.

**Ms Churley:** There now is a motion on the floor and I just wanted to respond to Mr Hastings's comments. I have no problem with having something in the motion that suggests the delay has to do with the fact that the French translation was not available for the original deadline.

**Mr Gilchrist:** That's not necessary.

**Ms Churley:** If that is an issue for people—

**Mr Gilchrist:** Let's keep this as positive as possible and let's move on.

**Ms Churley:** I would agree—

**Mr Gilchrist:** We've all agreed we want to do this so let's do it.

**Ms Churley:** Steve, I was responding to one of your colleagues' questions, and if that is important to him, I'm just suggesting to him that I would be amenable to that.

**The Chair:** What I would suggest we do is get this reflected, whatever Mr Gilchrist has said, as a motion to make sure everybody understands and we put the reason in the letter: "This is the motion and this is the reason." Then the House leaders can deal with it as they see fit.

**Ms Churley:** OK.

**The Chair:** Can we have how the motion is worded just so that we have it technically correct?

**Mr Gilchrist:** The members of the select committee on alternative fuel sources unanimously petition the House leaders to present a motion to extend the deadline for tabling the report by the select committee, in both official languages, to no later than June 6, 2002.

**The Chair:** Is everybody comfortable with that? Any further discussion? Those in favour?

**Mr Hastings:** What's the reason?

**The Chair:** The reason will go in the letter.

**Mr Hastings:** Right in the motion as well?

**The Chair:** No, just in the letter.

All in favour? Motion carried. Adjourned.

*The committee adjourned at 1159.*



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### SELECT COMMITTEE ON ALTERNATIVE FUEL SOURCES

#### **Chair / Président**

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Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain L)

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines L)

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth ND)

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