

Senator Marshall: When we say, "a task force of the Committee of the Whole," does that mean representatives of the whole committee, or would the task force constitute the whole Senate?

Senator Frith: No, they would be delegated.

Senator Marshall: Could it be any number?

Senator Frith: The number eight is stipulated.

Senator Doody: Five Tories and three Liberals!

The Chairman: The task force will report back to the Committee of the Whole.

Honourable senators, perhaps we should consider things in order.

There has been a suggestion that we might drop the second last paragraph regarding the question of the committee operating during prorogation. I believe Senator Frith suggested he would be prepared to recommend that.

Senator Frith: Yes, I would be prepared to make such a recommendation.

The Chairman: Is it agreed, honourable senators, that the second last paragraph be deleted?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Chairman: On the question of the budget, my understanding is that if you look at paragraph 5, which reads:

That the rules and procedures applicable in committees apply to the Task Force;

I presume that would mean that the budgeting procedures would be the normal budgeting procedures for committees—that is, if this is approved, then the steering committee will approve a budget; the budget will be submitted to the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration; if and when the budget is approved by that committee, it will come back to the Senate for approval; and then we can proceed.

Senator Doody: Are those the rules that apply to a standing committee or to a special committee? As I remember it, we have two sets of budgetary rules in the standing orders. One set of rules applies to standing committees and one set applies to special committees, or even a committee that takes on a special project. Surely this is a special project that is being taken on by the Committee of the Whole which falls into neither category. I am not trying to obstruct the proceedings.

The Chairman: Honourable senators, at this point can we agree to the following procedure: Once this motion is passed, a budget will be prepared and presented to the steering committee; if the steering committee agrees with that budget, it will then be presented to the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration; and then it will be presented to the Senate for approval. Is that an agreeable procedure?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Chairman: I believe that follows the rules we have for special committees.

Senator Doody: I would agree on the understanding that this does not constitute the Committee of the Whole as a special committee, that we are not going backwards into a new parliamentary procedure.

The Chairman: No, this is a procedure to cover this particular decision of the Committee of the Whole. Is that an agreeable procedure?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Chairman: Are there any other comments on the report?

Senator Frith: I move that the report be adopted.

The Chairman: It is moved by Senator Frith, seconded by Senator Lucier, that the report be adopted. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to.

The Chairman: Is there any further business before the committee?

Senator Frith: I think not. I move that the committee rise, report progress, and request leave to sit again.

The Chairman: It is moved by the Honourable Senator Frith, seconded by the Honourable Senator Langlois, that the committee rise, report progress, and request leave to sit again. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, the sitting of the Senate is resumed.

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat: Honourable senators, the Committee of the Whole, to which the Meech Lake accord and texts subsequently agreed to were referred, respectfully presents the following report:

The Committee of the Whole to which was referred the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord and texts subsequently agreed to, recommends that a Task Force of the Committee of the Whole, to be known as the Senate Task Force on the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord and on the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, be established to hear representations thereon;

That the Task Force be composed of eight Senators, three of whom shall be nominated by the Leader of the Government in the Senate and five of whom shall be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate;

That the Task Force be authorized to send for persons, papers and records; to examine witnesses; to report from time to time, and to print such papers and evidence from day to day as may be ordered by it;

That the Task Force be authorized to engage the services of such clerical, technical and other personnel as it deems necessary;