

GILDAS MOLGAT
Chairman

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

On motion of Senator Molgat, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.

ELEVENTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Standing Rules and Orders, presented the following report:

Tuesday, May 31, 1988

The Standing Committee on Standing Rules and Orders has the honour to present its

ELEVENTH REPORT

Proposals from several organizations requesting the establishment of a standing committee on the environment were referred to your Committee for consideration.

Your Committee examined the proposals and, in the process, reviewed the responsibilities of the present committees in the Senate.

While environmental affairs are under the specific jurisdiction of the Standing Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, it is the opinion of your Committee that the *Rules of the Senate of Canada* are flexible enough to permit the following committees to investigate environmental matters namely, the Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs; Transport and Communications; Social Affairs, Science and Technology; Agriculture and Forestry; and Fisheries.

Your Committee acknowledges that environmental quality is a very important subject. It has concluded however that, in view of the present number of standing, special and joint committees, it is not feasible to create an additional standing committee at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

GILDAS MOLGAT
Chairman

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

On motion of Senator Molgat, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Hon. Henry D. Hicks: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 45(1)(a), I move:

That the Special Committee of the Senate on National Defence have power to sit at seven o'clock in the evening today, even though the Senate may then be sitting, and that rule 76(4) be suspended in relation thereto.

If I have leave, and if honourable senators wish, I will give a brief explanation.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Hicks: This meeting had been set up for some time before it was contemplated or known that the Senate would be sitting for special purposes as a Committee of the Whole at six o'clock this evening. Since the committee has a former Deputy Minister of National Defence coming before it, and since we have put him off for other reasons on at least one previous occasion, I am loathe to do so again. Therefore, I would like permission to sit at seven o'clock this evening to hear this witness.

Hon. Orville H. Phillips: Honourable senators, I am sure that Senator Hicks is aware that it was his deputy leader who proposed that the Senate deal with the Emergencies Bill in Committee of the Whole rather than having it referred to the Special Committee on National Defence. I find it rather strange that the Defence Committee would want to meet at the same time as the Committee of the Whole is sitting.

I suggest to Senator Hicks that we follow the procedure as laid out by his deputy leader last week. He was insistent that the Scroll be followed very closely, and I think we should do that this week.

Senator Hicks: I should like to reply to the Honourable Senator Phillips. It is not a question of the Special Committee on National Defence having decided that it wanted to sit when the Senate was sitting. We chose a time. In the 16 years that I have been in this chamber, I cannot recall the Senate's having a special sitting commencing at six o'clock in the evening. The Special Committee on National Defence has had great difficulty in arranging meeting times. We have had enough trouble accommodating our witnesses. This is a former deputy minister whose evidence we are anxious to hear. It will be difficult for us to rearrange this meeting.

More importantly, let me point out that the mandate of this committee expires in mid-December of this year. We have attempted to follow a schedule that would have enabled us to complete the taking of evidence before the end of May. We are now running up to June 22, because the Minister of National Defence, for whom we set aside a special meeting, was not able to come to that meeting. The next date that he could give us was June 22.

We are going to have little enough time to meet our deadlines, and I am reluctant to dispense with a hearing even though I acknowledge the importance of the Committee of the Whole. May I point out, however, that that meeting starts at six o'clock. We will all have an opportunity to hear the submission that the Minister of National Defence makes in