

an extra two weeks in asking for the end of January. We may have to ask for another slight extension, although it will depend on how soon we are reconstituted and how quickly we can come to an agreement.

Hon. Duff Roblin (Acting Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would offer no obstacle to the proposal of Senator Molgat that the life of this committee be extended. I am not quite sure of the rules and regulations, but offhand my opinion is that we will have to have this resolution reintroduced at the new session because prorogation usually cancels everything that is at hand in the old session. Senator Molgat is probably just giving us warning that he is not going to have his report ready at the time originally anticipated. When we come back with the new session, he will probably be introducing a resolution to confirm the authorization which I think we are prepared to offer today.

I think that January 31 may prove to be an optimistic date. I, for one, do not want him to rush this report. It should be one of considerable significance. There are many vexatious questions to resolve when completing a final report of this nature, but if he needs the extra time to make sure he gets it right, I am prepared to agree, particularly if he has taken into sufficient account the very detailed statement I made before his committee in Winnipeg on October 4.

Hon. Richard A. Donahoe: God forbid!

Senator Roblin: If my friends would let me continue—

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): You are in your own ranks.

Senator Roblin: They have never made any secret of their views, as I have made no secret of mine. My only fear is that my view may be the minority one because there have been a lot of good presentations made before this committee dealing with all subjects. If this resolution is presented to us at the next session, I hope that my colleagues will allow me to say that we will agree to any reasonable extension of time that is then requested.

Hon. Sidney L. Buckwold: Honourable senators, I am delighted to hear that the deadline for submission of the final report is to be extended. Like the Acting Leader of the Opposition, I certainly think there is opportunity for careful, as there must be, consideration of all the aspects. To date, I have not heard of the committee's going to Australia to look at the operation of proportional representation in an elected Senate. My visit to Australia, along with other honourable senators, was an eye-opener. I saw its operational possibilities modified to suit the Canadian scene. I suggested, in my presentation to the committee, that it would be only fair if, at least, a subcommittee go to Australia, which is a country that has the same type of government as ours, and see how proportional representation could fit into the Canadian scene as part of an elected Senate.

I should like to say to the chairman of the committee and the committee members that I certainly hope there is an opportunity before a final decision is made, to see how that system operates in that country. Seeing how their system

operates is quite different from hearing descriptions of it. I think that it is unfair for the committee to report without, at least, giving some of the committee members an opportunity to see how proportional representation works in Australia.

Hon. Jack Marshall: Why is Senator Buckwold confining that to the members of the committee? There are many honourable senators who are not on the committee who would be interested in going to Australia.

Senator Buckwold: I am all for that. I am sure that Senator Marshall at his own expense would be delighted to take a trip like that.

Senator Marshall: How about by way of Florida?

Senator Frith: How about by way of Hawaii?

Senator Buckwold: I might even suggest that some of you may want a one-way ticket.

● (1220)

Hon. Robert Muir: Honourable senators, I enjoyed the comments of Senator Buckwold, but I cannot agree with him that we should send the committee to Australia. Some of our brilliant experts from this chamber went over previously. I cannot understand the implication that they are second-rate people.

Senator Frith: Brilliant.

Senator Muir: Senators Roblin, Frith, Buckwold and other bright lads came back having been completely sold a bill of goods. I am ready to run for election next week, next month or six months from now because I know I would be elected—unlike some others around here.

In any event, during my recent visit to Australia, I happened to be at a luncheon with a member of their present administration. After introducing ourselves, he said, "Oh, you are a member of this House of Conscience." I said, "You could call it that; we get called a lot of things." He went on to say, "It's bloody awful over here with the situation we've got. It is not working out at all." I wasn't even asking for information. He told me that we had a better system in Canada with a "House of Conscience." Perhaps it was a senator on our delegation who told him it was called the "House of Conscience."

I cannot agree with Senator Buckwold because some of the most imaginative brains possible have already been to Australia. They have made their report and outlined it in this chamber. There is not much left for the committee to do.

Senator Frith: Senator Muir has talked us out of it.

Hon. C. William Doody: That is the story of my life.

Hon. H. A. Olson (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the report discusses and, in fact, recommends that the deadline for reporting, which was set at December 1, 1983, be set back. Of course, we can, by accepting this recommendation, deal with that.

Within the time available the committee actually has done a great deal of work. A large number of meetings were set up in Ottawa and in various places across the country. All the