

Senator David Croll's motion proposing that a Senate committee study the Doukhobor problem deserves a favourable response. . . .

A Senate inquiry might illuminate the problem sufficiently to make a solution possible. What do the Freedomites want that brings them into conflict with society? Why do they employ unlawful means to protest against their grievances when the law is elastic enough to embrace many legal methods of protest without resort to violence? Why do they deliberately and zealously seek martyrdom? In short, what's bothering them?

Only by entering into the minds and hearts of the Freedomites can answers to these questions be found. The Senate is eminently suited to try to find the answers. Its members have no axe to grind, and many senators have wide experience in human affairs. A study of this kind would be profitable to Canada.

That is a considered opinion by a very responsible newspaper.

Now, honourable senators, I appeal to everyone in this chamber not to stand in the way of a humanitarian effort of this kind proposed by the senator from Toronto-Spadina. I have no knowledge whatsoever as to how he will approach the solution of the problem, but I do know that he is prepared to assume the labour and responsibility of such an inquiry, and from a quarter of a century of intimate association with him I can say this, having in mind his character and his outstanding ability, that if he cannot succeed nobody can. For that reason I say let us join in forgetting,

if we can, the tragic and unhappy past of this strange, little understood and troublesome people, but let us not forget the thousand men, women and children who have trekked 300 miles towards Agassiz, and who are now in their mad mission bogged down and facing the rigours of the coming winter. Let us not forget what may possibly occur during these winter months when they face death from exposure and privation. Let us also not forget the welfare of the community in which these people dwell. Something must be done to bring this unhappy era to a close.

This, honourable senators, may be the very moment to strike with what I have called the most potent of all weapons, namely, that of understanding, sympathy and kindness. This may be the very time to do this because these people have been in the open now for weeks and certainly are in a sad condition. This may be the time to strike, and I submit to you that the man to head an effort of this kind is the person who, with your consent, very recently undertook to do it. That man is Senator Croll. I suggest, honourable senators, that we all vote for this measure and let us see what he can accomplish.

**Hon. Mr. Drouin:** Would not all of these people be frozen stiff by the time this committee made its report?

**Hon. Mr. Roebuck:** Perhaps we are even now too late, but that is no reason why we should not act.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Croll, for Hon. Mr. Cameron, debate adjourned.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 3 p.m.