

In 1993, the House of Commons Standing Committee on House Management recommended that legislation be introduced in the house at least three months prior to the government's moving to have it passed by the house. In December 1985, the House Committee on Procedures and Organization produced a report entitled "The Canadian Budgetary Process: Proposals for Improvement." This report dealt with and recommended a financial timetable. It also recommended a timetable of five months in which to move legislation through the House and the Senate.

These studies and our efforts at Senate renewal all stress the need for cooperation between the House and the Senate regarding the legislative process. This issue crosses party lines, and its resolution will need the cooperation of us all.

The Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce was denied the opportunity to do a thorough review of Bill C-91 because of an artificially imposed legislative timetable. This committee, through its report to the Senate, has served notice that we will not be denied this opportunity again. I hope other committees will join in this desire to have an orderly legislative calendar developed and put into use.

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

FIFTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the fifth report of the Committee of Selection.

Hon. Jacques Hébert moved the adoption of the report.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, it is moved that the report be adopted now. Is it your pleasure to adopt the motion?

Hon. Marcel Prud'homme: Honourable senators, I will be much more specific.

[*English*]

I know that Senator Robertson has looked into the possible contribution of independent senators. I assure you that I am not begging on my knees. I am not complaining. I am just saying that it is regrettable that the Senate cannot use all of its talent, if such talent exists. I have to conclude that talent may not exist.

I had the honour to serve in the House of Commons on this very committee. I regret that Senator Stanbury is not sitting again, because he was my chairman. He could always depend on me. I was very faithful. I never missed a meeting. I always had opinions, some of which were accepted and some were rejected.

It is regrettable, honourable senators, that we cannot find a way to involve the independent senators. We are three in number, although I am not speaking for the other two. They can speak for themselves. One of them used to sit on many committees. I could come back tonight with a file of independent senators, from Olson to Everett to Lang, who sat on committees.

I am a patient man. I will wait until June 21, 1998. Again, however, let me say that I think it is regrettable that people who have served their country in the other chamber are not called upon to serve on committees in the Senate because they happen to be independent.

Any senator can sit in on the meetings of any committee. In attending every committee, you end up knowing on which one you could be the most useful. I am not saying I would love to be on this committee, but I will attend its meetings.

Honourable senators, the leadership in the Senate should put their heads together and consider whether certain senators could not help deal with legislation referred to certain committees in light of their particular experience rather than the fact that they may or may not be a member of a particular party or a certain group. That has nothing to do with the efficiency of the Senate.

• (2120)

I want to go on record as saying that I find it appropriate that an old institution like this one should be composed of men and women of experience who can relax and give especially of their time. I repeat, some day, I will go further. I know that those senators who were appointed will be dutiful. I will pay close attention to the list which was submitted to us tonight.

Within a year I will return to see who was most active on that committee.

Honourable senators, I will certainly speak with Senator Robertson. I know there was deliberation as to the role of independent senators. Surely, there is a role for us to play. I try to play out that role and that is why I am on my feet too often. However, I do cooperate with Senator Graham who is a gentleman. I do not think I have turned down one of his requests. He consults, which is the way I think we should behave in this honourable chamber.