

The Constitution

The situation has been different when the majorities in the two Houses were not the same. Let us just see what has happened. The Senate proves troublesome when the majority in the Senate is not similar to the majority in the House. Then it seeks to block or delay Bills unduly passed by the House. In 1913, two years after Sir Robert Borden obtained a mandate for change from the people following 15 years of Liberal rule, the Liberal-dominated Senate vetoed the naval Bill. In the 1920s, disagreements between Mr. King's Government and the Conservative majority in the Senate were fairly numerous. Between 1921 and 1930, 32 government Bills adopted by the Commons failed to pass the Senate, among them the old age pension Bill of 1926. In 1961, three years after Mr. Diefenbaker received what was then the largest mandate in Canadian history, the Senate, with a large Liberal majority after 22 consecutive years of Liberal rule, refused to proceed on a Bill to remove James Coyne as Governor of the Bank of Canada, a Bill which had been adopted by the House of Commons. In the same year, the two Houses clashed over a change that the Senate majority proposed to a Bill to amend the Customs Act.

● (1240)

This is what emboldens the little group of wilful Liberal Senators up there now to adopt this kind of conduct. This cabal, encouraged by the 1961 precedent, believes that in 1985 it can act in the same manner—a group of appointed persons who have not been authorized by the people of Canada to do anything. In fact, the people of Canada would like to see them disappear; they indicated that last September 4. But these Senators think they are in a legal position to checkmate the House of Commons and the government majority, and these examples from 1961 encourage them. Well, let them try it. That is the purpose of this resolution, and I expect the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition will have a change of heart and join us in putting this through today. That is what should be done.

The last time the Senate interfered with or opposed the House of Commons was in 1961, 24 years ago. In all the time since, the Liberal majority in the Senate tamely went along with whatever was proposed by Liberal Governments in this House. Three months after the present Government received the largest mandate ever in Canadian history, the Liberal-dominated Senate sought to frustrate the will of the Commons. Bill C-11, an Act to provide borrowing authority, was sent to the Senate on December 21, 1984, after being passed by the House of Commons with unanimous support. Unanimous. Unanimity. In other words, all three Parties in this Chamber supported the borrowing authority Bill. It went to the Senate and it had to be passed because of expenditures authorized by the previous Liberal Government. We had to do the borrowing in order to carry out obligations entered into by the Liberal Government, yet the Senate refused to pass the borrowing authority Bill passed unanimously by this House. The majority who refused to do that are members of the caucus of the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition. They returned from Christmas recess and still postured for 37 calendar days before they passed Bill C-11 on February 27, 1985. That long delay had

serious financial implications for the Government of Canada; it created uncertainty in the capital markets. The financiers of the world wondered who was in control of the Government of Canada. Should they listen to the Government when the Government tells them that it wants to borrow money? Or did they have to deal with Senator MacEachen? Senator MacEachen was the Minister of Finance whose record was, of course, terrible in the Budgets of 1981, 1982 and 1983 which he brought up; he did not even bring them down. Is this Senator MacEachen—

Mr. Marchi: What happened in 1979, John?

Mr. Crosbie:—now to be the person with whom the people who lend money have to deal? The people of Canada suffered because of 1979, that is for sure, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Tell us about your Budget, John.

Mr. Crosbie: The question is: Do the lenders of the world have to deal with Senator MacEachen and Senator—who are some of the other queer names up there? They have never put themselves on the line, most of them; they have never run for election. Senator Grafstein never ran for anything but orange juice at a political meeting. Senator Kirby, the famous machiavellian of the Constitution. Senator Kenny.

Mr. Rossi: Hnatyshyn.

Mr. Crosbie: Senator Sinclair. When did any of them ever run for elective office? I do not believe one of them has ever run for anything, and if they did they were certainly never elected. This is the Trudeau swat team, or the Turner swat team, and what happened?

Mr. Rossi: You never made it.

Mr. Crosbie: You can shout all you like but you—we were wondering where Mr. Rossi was. There he is. Whenever you hear a loud noise you know where that honourable gentleman is, Mr. Speaker.

I have a letter here from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) which says this:

—the Senate delay in passing Bill C-11 forced the government to postpone several planned borrowing operations because there was insufficient Parliamentary Borrowing Authority outstanding to authorize the raising of new funds. It is estimated that this interruption in the borrowing program cost the government about \$15 million due to interest rate increases that occurred before the postponed operations could be rescheduled.

That is the calculable cost, \$15 million, of this obstinate Senate's delay in passing a borrowing authority Bill which was necessitated by the previous Liberal Government's actions, and which all Parties in this House agreed should be enacted. The Minister goes on to say:

There were also indirect costs associated with the Senate delay. Although these costs are difficult to measure, it is clear that any interruption in the government's borrowing program will introduce some confusion and uncertainty into financial markets, if only because the federal government's position in the market forces all other participants to plan around the federal borrowing schedule. On this occasion in particular, however, it should be noted that the