

being had to population, there was a certain purpose in view: it was that we should represent, not a small section of the population, but the provinces from which we come; and I would ask my honourable friends if, in reading the Quebec resolutions and the federal compact, they do not notice that the financial clauses of the contract play a most important role. If they do play an important role and if we are here to see that the letter and spirit of that agreement are maintained, does it not follow logically that we have a special duty to watch over the financial administration of the country?

I recognize that, though we may have equal powers with the House of Commons, they should be exercised by us in a different spirit. We have equal powers, but we have not the same mandate. If the Commons, when acting according to the letter and spirit of the constitution, have a clear mandate from the country, their authority should go unchallenged in financial as in other matters. Our duty, I surmise, is to assure ourselves that the Commons have that clear mandate. If in this respect the Senate fulfils its duty seriously, it can play an important, a paramount part in the safeguarding of the Federal treasury. I claim that very often we have been individually convinced that the Commons, in disposing of the money and the credit of the country, has not given sufficient consideration to the general interests of Canada, and, in common with many of the most prominent citizens of Canada, who are concerned over the proper administration of the country, and who watch its expenditures with a careful eye, we have felt that the House of Commons was at times quite improvident. It is natural that we should see such things. When most of the members of the House of Commons are interested in obtaining votes of money for their constituencies, and when through pressure brought to bear upon the Cabinet or the Finance Minister they have succeeded in getting a share of the appropriation, how can they turn around and criticize similar expenditures, amounting in the aggregate to an extravagant sum? How can they criticize when they have been parties to that extravagance? Such things happen in times of prosperity, when the treasury is buoyant and members feel that they can strengthen their position in their own constituency by obtaining a money vote for some questionable expenditure. Such things have happened in the granting of railway subsidies, which within my mem-

ory have hardly ever been opposed in the House of Commons. Bills to grant subsidies have been brought in during the last days of the session and millions of money have been voted in the last forty-eight hours of the session, the Opposition, whether Liberal or Conservative, remaining dumb; and the public saw those immense sums of money being voted without any serious inquiry as to the need for the appropriation, because, I suppose, there were too many counties that could be influenced and to which it would be dangerous to deny those votes. This is what we have all been witnesses of; and I wonder if under those circumstances the Senate would not have been only doing its duty to the country in asserting its right to tackle those big money votes and to moderate them. We have often seen those votes being made in the last session of a Parliament. If the Senate had decided that, inasmuch as there was to be an election shortly and the people would have a chance to pronounce upon the votes proposed, they should be deferred until the first session of the new Parliament, perhaps those sums of money would never have been voted. The Senate should thus be enabled to relieve the pressure exerted upon the Minister of Finance and the Cabinet by their followers.

These are the few remarks which I desired to add in support of the resolution and of the memorandum which accompanies the report, in which I fully concur.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Honourable gentlemen, I rise, not to make any observations upon the constitutional aspects of the question, but rather to make an observation or two upon the good purpose which I hope this report will serve. It is unnecessary to say that this question has agitated the Senate for a considerable length of time. From Confederation down to the present time, scarcely a session has passed without a discussion arising as to what the constitutional powers of the Senate are with respect to money Bills, and from session to session appeals, by way of points of order, have been made to the Speaker for the time being to rule upon this very important question. There has not been that uniformity or consistency which is desirable on the part of the different Speakers in the rulings which they have made as to how far the Senate might exercise its authority in dealing with financial questions. There has been a great deal of misconception on this subject, not only in the