

Such a chamber would be fitted for much more than to be a merely moderating body. It would not be exclusively a check, but also an impelling force. In its hands the power of holding the people back would be vested in those most competent, and who would generally be most inclined, to lead them forward in any right course. The council to whom the task would be entrusted of rectifying the people's mistakes would not represent a class believed to be opposed to their interest, but would consist of their own natural leaders in the path of progress. The best constitution of a Second Chamber is that which embodies the greatest number of elements exempt from the class interests and prejudices of the majority, but having in themselves nothing offensive to democratic feeling."

14. In similar context it has frequently been suggested that general participation by Senators in House of Commons caucuses has not proven helpful to Senators in the impartial consideration of legislation in the Chamber. It might be suggested that if the practice were adopted of the Leader, Deputy Leader, and the Whip, only, of each party, attending caucus and then accepting the responsibility of passing on to their Members the information on policy and other matters, as necessary, it might preserve the political connection without affecting the impartiality of the Senate. In order to weigh legislation in the light of only what is best for the country, it is obviously difficult for members of the Senate to be subject to the direction of the same person who leads their party in the House of Commons.

15. A reform that is within the competence of the Government of the day, and badly needed to enable the Senate to serve a more valuable and, it is submitted, its proper purpose in Parliament, is a change in the concept of a "money bill". Debates and opinions on this matter go back for some three hundred years or more in parliamentary history, but your Committee is convinced that a different application of the definition is now needed, and they believe that there are good grounds, based on historical opinions, to exclude from the definition of "money bill" a Bill introduced, not for the purpose of imposing taxation or for the purpose of spending public funds, but for another purpose which has only some consequential cost of administration or other very secondary financial aspect.

16. There are also conditions or requirements imposed in the past by statute which, in the modern world, may be anachronisms. Among these worthy of re-examination are the property requirements for appointment to the Senate dating from an age of class distinctions and coloured by the character of landowner of Members of the House of Lords and, in particular, those applying to Senators from Quebec; the time consuming and sometimes disruptive procedure for Royal Assent in the Senate Chamber; the fact that deductions are made from the Sessional Allowance for absences from the Chamber while no credit is given for committee attendance even during adjournments showing the lack of recognition of the importance of Senators' attendance at Committees both during the session and adjournments relative to sittings in the Chamber.

17. In matters of procedure there is also room for improvement in the performance of the Senate. This has been suggested in part by the proposed amendment in the number, composition and functions of standing committees contained in the Third Report of your Committee adopted by the Senate on November 19th. This basic restructuring of the Standing Committees has reduced the number of committees from 19 to 11, now strengthened and empowered to call for persons, papers, and records, whenever required, with areas of direct concern such as foreign affairs, national finance, legal and constitutional affairs, banking, trade and commerce, health, welfare, science and transport and communications. In addition, bills of major public interest should be considered in the Chamber in the Committee of the Whole. Further, from time to time, select committees of the Senate should hold committee meetings in the Senate Chamber itself. In this way the public would have an opportunity to see the Senate performing what is undoubtedly one of its most useful roles—the examination in depth of the legislation submitted to it. This is suggested with the thought of enabling more people to appreciate where and how the Senate makes its vital contribution in Parliament. Public opinion properly informed would soon realize that the debates which are listened to from the Gallery in the normal course of our sittings are those dealing with matters of principle only, and in no way encompass the full consideration and careful treatment given to bills that come before our Chamber.

18. Your Committee also gave some consideration to the present status and functioning of the Standing Joint Committees of the