

cent ad valorem on a certain article. It is the privilege of any member of the House of Commons to have that reduced to 34, 33, and so on, but it is not his privilege to say that instead of the suggestion of the Government it should be 36 per cent. He has the privilege and the right to reduce, but not the right or privilege to increase. Suppose the figure is reduced, and that Bill is sent to the Senate for endorsement, we have no more right than the members of the House of Commons to increase the tax proposed by the Government; but we have an equal right with the members of the House of Commons to reduce that taxation, and that is the point made by the able senator from Middleton (Hon. W. B. Ross). The right of the Senate has been ignored under false pretenses of authority that are dead and gone, under political necessity, under party exigency; but when we examine the situation from an unpartisan point of view, we must admit that the Senate of Canada for the past fifty years has been cutting its own wings, so much so that it is unable to fly any distance. It is time that a halt was called to the cutting off of our powers, rights and privileges, not for our own honour and glory, but in the interest of the people. Why should the Senate of Canada abdicate its rights and powers when the British North America Act does not exact it? I am glad to see that the honourable the leader of the Government has gone a considerable distance in the direction of democratic government, and also that the honourable senator from Middleton has taken such an honourable stand on behalf of this Senate. I do not propose to take any objection to any provision of this Bill; if I made any protest, it would be that the Minister of Finance did not make the tax heavier on those who should bear the burden. It is not my intention to oppose any provision for the raising of taxes to keep our boys fed, clothed and munitioned at the front; if I made any objection, it would be that the Bill does not go far enough along that line.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: We have proceeded up to this date on the assumption that our powers were analogous to those exercised by the House of Lords, and we have been proceeding on the traditions of the British Parliament and citing May and Baurinot as to the practice.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY: Even the first clause of the rules of our Senate say that we should follow those of the House of Lords as far as they can be applied to our proceedings.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: We have proceeded on that assumption. If we turn to the British North America Act and limit our view to the powers therein granted, it may be that the conclusions of the honourable senator from Middleton are correct. If so, I do not agree with the honourable the leader of the Government as to the right of the Commons to originate and maintain the whole of its vote. The honourable leader has said that our sole right is to reject the Supply Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: I said we had not the right to reduce, that is all.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: But if we take the text of the clauses cited by the honourable gentleman from Middleton, Nos. 53 and 54, it seems to me that all that remains with the Commons is the right to initiate. Now, if we have the right to reject in toto, have we not the right to cut in two? It will be for the Commons to say if that amendment suits them; if it does not, then the Bill returns to this House and the Senate decides whether it will stand by its amendment or allow the Bill to fall. So much as to the interpretation of the British North America Act.

Now as to the tradition of the House of Lords, when we assumed the right of the Senate to amend money Bills which contain money clauses, and to reject some of those clauses, we based our action upon good precedent. I cite May, 12th edition, of this year, page 519:

The right of the Lords to reject a Bill for granting aids and supplies to the Crown has been held to include a right to omit provisions creating charges upon the people, when such provisions form a separate subject in a Bill which the Lords are otherwise entitled to amend. The claim of privilege cannot, therefore, be raised by the Commons regarding amendments to such Bills, whereby a whole clause, or series of clauses, has been omitted by the Lords, which, though relating to a charge, and not admitting of amendment, yet concerned a subject separable from the general objects of the Bill. On the 30th July, 1867, it was very clearly put, by Earl Grey and Viscount Eversley, that the right of the Lords to omit a clause, which they were unable to amend, relating to a separate subject, was equivalent to their right to reject a Bill which they could not amend without an infraction of the privileges of the Commons.

That is why I claim that we could not ask from the Chair a general opinion as to what are our rights to amend a Bill containing money clauses until a question is put to the Chair on the concrete point in the form of an amendment.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY: How does the honourable gentleman explain that phrase;