

research and exhaustive analysis; and fifth, investigators can work on for many years, immune from the vagaries and demands of the electoral process. The work procedures of the Senate committees are far better than those in the House, and ensure that witnesses are given the time to present their case and are questioned carefully. Competence, freedom from competing demands on energy, low partisanship and an absence of fresh pressures of time and fears about re-election are the keys to successful Senate investigations.

I believe that there is a spirit of renewal in this place. Perhaps a small indication of this spirit at work is the fact that the Progressive Conservative Senate caucus elected its own leader by secret ballot. We are fortunate, and proud, to have Senator John Lynch-Staunton as our leader, and I believe that we will be able to work with senators opposite to make meaningful changes in this place. In short, the time has come to move on internal reform.

I want to outline for you some of the topics that this new Senate working group on renewal, that would be drawn up by Senator Lynch-Staunton and the Leader of the Government in the Senate, could canvass during its study. These topics include improving the legislative timeline and a consideration of whether pre-study should become a more regular part of the legislative process. Also, the working group could study improvement of the method for selecting subjects of investigation by a committee. When an investigative committee is struck, it should immediately develop and adopt a work plan and a communication plan for the study.

The Senate should also take the lead in government program evaluation. A procedure should be developed for selecting those programs which are to be studied each year. Consideration should be given to having the Auditor General or Comptroller General make recommendations as to appropriate methodology. The Senate, through its committees, should undertake at least three specific program evaluations a year.

Another area for the working group is the establishment of a Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages to which the annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages would automatically be referred for study and analysis.

The Senate should institute a disallowance procedure for statutory instruments, as recommended by the Standing Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on the Scrutiny of Regulations. A regulation disallowed through this procedure could not again be advanced until six months had passed from the time of disallowance.

The Senate, through its legislative and investigative work, could act to ensure the enrichment of Canadian values of bilingualism and multiculturalism.

A standing committee on Human Rights should be established to which the annual reports of the Human Rights Commission, the Status of Women Minister and the minister's report on senior citizens could automatically be referred for careful study and analysis.

There should also be the establishment of cross-party regional caucuses inclusive of independent senators. This would provide an opportunity for the Senate to work at its best.

In conclusion, honourable senators, I strongly urge the Leader of the Government in the Senate to establish immediately, in conjunction with the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable John Lynch-Staunton, a special committee on Senate renewal made up of members from both sides, which I referred to above. It could, for example, have a four- or five-month mandate to produce significant recommendations on renewal that could be debated by the Senate in Committee of the Whole. The Honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate can be assured of our cooperation and of the willing support of our caucus for such an endeavour.

On motion of Senator Hastings, debate adjourned.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE VETERANS HEALTH CARE REGULATIONS—ORDER WITHDRAWN

Hon. Jack Marshall: Honourable senators, before I move the motion, I want to make an amendment pursuant to rule 31 to modify the motion to add on the record the following:

That the committee report no later than October 31, 1994.

When I originally presented my motion, I did not include the date for reporting.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators is Senator Marshall's addition accepted? Is it agreed?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Hon. Earl A. Hastings: Might I have the amendment again, please?

The Hon. the Speaker: I have received it.

Senator Marshall: I do not know the wording, but I did not include in my motion a date for reporting by the committee. I simply want to add that, namely that the committee present the report no later than October 31, 1994.

Senator Hastings: Honourable senators, I would just point out to Senator Marshall that the amendment puts a time limit of October 31, 1994, while the second paragraph reads:

...on all other matters concerning veterans affairs which may arise from time to time.

From what times to what times?

• (1620)

Senator Marshall: From when the committee is struck until October 31, 1994.

Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, this is really for my edification. We see a number of these motions which ask a committee to target a specific topic, but then the words are added: "...and on all other matters," et cetera, which is, in effect, a very wide open authorization.