

government can be democratic which gives absolute, uncontrolled, power to any legislative body for set periods of time.

A specific instance will show its undemocratic working, a bill to make the water power of the United States available for industry has been blocked by the Senate throughout the last two sessions of Congress. And, although it has been twice passed by the Representatives and has the support of the President, to this hour it is unpassed nor is there any power known which can force the Senate to yield to the people, either on this or on any other measure. Thus the American Senate is most undemocratic in theory, composition and operation.

The Senate cannot be directly compared with the British House of Lords because their functions are different. The Senate, as I have shown, has equal legislative power with the Representatives, beside having important executive and judicial functions while the English Lords is but a suspending and revising body not in any sense equal in power to the Commons, yet its functions are most democratic. To illustrate: Suppose a bill has just passed the Commons for the third reading and is sent up to the Lords. If they believe that the bill has the support of the people they pass it at once, but if they are in doubt, they refer the matter to the people themselves by calling for a general election on the question,—nothing could be more democratic. Suppose, however, that the people express their approval by returning the same party again to power and yet the Lords hesitate to pass the bill. They are forced to obey the people's will, either by the creating of new Peers, or by the Commons refusing to vote supplies or by the prerogative of the Prime Minister. To prove that this is so I have only to refer to the reform bills of 1832 and 1885, both of which the Lords were forced to pass by a mere threat of creating new Peers. This is much more democratic than the workings of the United States Senate as seen in the Conservation bill. This bill has been under consideration for the last two years and has been twice passed by the Representatives yet the Senate stubbornly refuses to pass it. The Lords can be forced to yield to the people, the Senate cannot. Moreover, by calling for a general election on all vital questions, it forms an indispensable check to hasty legislation by the Commons. This fear of being turned out of office makes the Commons most zealous in carrying out the people's will. Again, the Lords are democratic in that they are completely in the hands of the people