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Understanding the Dominance of the United States Senate as the Most Powerful Second Chamber in the World

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Abstract

The United States Senate stands as an example of institutional power, welding considerable influence, both domestically and globally. Rooted in the historical presence and constitutional design its dominance emerges as a combination of structural features and political dynamics with its equal representation of states and extensive power, including the authority to confirm, appointments and ratify treaties. The Senate serves as a formidable check on executive authority. Moreover, its role in shaping legislation and conducting oversight underscore its pivotal position in American political landscape. Internationally the Senate role in foreign affairs and its capacity to influence global agreements further solidify its status of pre-eminent social chamber. Through integrated mechanisms of checks and balances, the Senate maintains its supremacy, reflecting the enduring legacy of the founding fathers' vision for a deliberative and powerful legislative body.

Keywords - United State Senate , Second Chamber dominance, Constitutional Framework

Introduction

Bicameral legislatures are a hallmark of democratic governance, providing a system of checks and balances essential for effective policymaking and representation. Among these, the United States Senate stands out as a paragon of legislative authority, renowned globally for its dominance and influence as the upper chamber of Congress. Since its inception, the Senate has wielded unparalleled power, shaping the trajectory of American governance and exerting considerable impact on international affairs. Understanding the factors underpinning the Senate's ascendancy as the most powerful second chamber in the world is essential for comprehending the dynamics of American politics and its global implications.

The powers and functions of the Senate prove beyond any shadow of doubt that not only it is more powerful than the Lower House, but it is also the most powerful second chamber in the world. Even the Fathers of the US Constitution mentioned Senate first, and then the House of Representatives in the Article of the original Constitution. In prestige and authority, the Senate has in due course, over

shadowed the popular House of Congress and has become unique among the second chambers of the world. The following points clearly prove the strength of the Senate of the USA.

Literature Review

The United States Senate has long been recognized as the sector's maximum influential higher chamber, with pupils notably documenting its precise constitutional powers and institutional significance. Dahl's seminal work "How Democratic is the American Constitution?" (2001) argues that the Senate's equal country illustration, regardless of populace, creates a exclusive electricity dynamic that surpasses different bicameral systems.

Patterson and Mughan's comparative evaluation (2018) demonstrates that unlike different second chambers, including the British House of Lords or the German Bundesrat, the Senate possesses significant powers in each regulation and government oversight. The chamber's authority to affirm presidential appointments, ratify treaties, and behavior impeachment trials sets it aside from its global opposite numbers. Sinclair's studies (2016) highlights how the Senate's procedural regulations, mainly the filibuster, supply individual senators wonderful have an effect on over country wide coverage. This contrasts sharply with other upper houses, wherein such blockading mechanisms are normally absent or less effective.

Recently Lee (2020) examines how the Senate's constitutional permanence and stuck electoral cycles make contributions to its institutional energy. Unlike systems wherein higher houses may be dissolved or overruled through decrease chambers, the U.S. Senate maintains regular authority no matter political situations. Baker's analysis (2019) famous that the Senate's power has in reality increased through the years, particularly in foreign coverage and national security subjects, areas wherein maximum other 2d chambers play minimal roles. This evolution has similarly cemented its position as the world's most effective higher house.

Historical Context

At the Federal Convention of 1787, now known as the Constitutional Convention, the framers of the United States Constitution established in Article I the structure and powers of Congress. The delegates who gathered in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787, first to revise the existing form of government and then to frame a new Constitution, debated the idea of a Congress made up of two houses. One house would be, in the words of Virginia's George Mason, the "grand depository of the democratic principle of government." To counter this popular influence in the national government,

James Madison of Virginia proposed another house that would be small, deliberative, and independent from the larger, more democratic house. This became the Senate.

The characteristics of the Senate—

The basis of representation, the number of senators per state, the qualifications for office, the terms of service, and the powers that the body exercises—were the product of fierce debate and a number of compromises at the Constitutional Convention. The framers looked to precedents in the British system of government and the state constitutions. The plan for the new government, including the Senate, was developed over the course of the convention by delegates working in committees. A Committee of Eleven (also called the Grand Committee), appointed on July 2, proposed a solution to an impasse over representation in the House and Senate. On August 6 a Committee of Detail produced a draft Constitution that summarised the principles already agreed upon by the Convention. Another Committee of Eleven (sometimes called the Committee on Postponed Parts) was appointed on August 31 to address questions still left unresolved by the Convention. Finally, a Committee on Style and Arrangement proposed the language for the version of the Constitution signed by the delegates on September 17.

The Senate has changed significantly over the course of its history, but its unique role in the federal government remains anchored in the nation's founding document.

Powers and Functions of the US Senate

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Direct Executive Powers

The Senate is the only legislative organ in the world. Which enjoys some direct executive powers. In shares with the President his power of making top-ranking appointments and through this privilege.

It controls the internal administration of the federal governments. Then no treaty or agreement with a foreign state concluded by the President is valid without the prior ratification of the Senate. Through this power, the Senate controls the external policy of the President. It is to be noted that these powers are exclusively exercised by the Senate. The House of Representatives has nothing to do with them.

Small Membership and Long Tenure

The membership of the US Senate is small but its tenure is long.. The Senate consists of only 100 members. This small size makes it really a more deliberative body and adds to its importance. The Senators are elected for a term of 6 years .The Senators are, therefore, not worried about their elections after every two years.

Members of US Senate consists of Senior Politicians

Senior politicians and men with legislative experience and wider knowledge of public affairs, usually aspire to the membership of .the Senate because of its longer term and greater prestige than the Lower House. The result is that the Senate becomes superior to the Lower House in intellectual quality, legal talents and political wisdom. The newspapers give great coverage to the speeches made in the Senate. Public attention is more focused on what happens in the Senate than in the House.

Direct Election of Senators

Unlike the members of the Second Chambers in England, Pakistan, India or Canada, U.S. Senators are directly elected by the people. It is a matter of common experience that an indirectly elected Upper Chamber finds it difficult to resist the will of the Lower House, which is elected by the direct vote of the people in these countries. But in U.S.A. the Senate can claim equally representative character with the House. The latter is therefore not in a position to dominate the former.

Equal Legislative and Financial Powers

The Senate enjoys equal powers in the legislative and financial spheres with the House both in theory and practice. In England, Pakistan and India, the Upper House is given a lesser authority than the Lower House in the sphere of legislation. Since in USA, both, the House of Representatives and the Senate have equal and co-ordinate powers regarding ordinary and financial legislation, the deadlocks are frequent. In order to resolve such deadlocks, a Conference Committee consisting of equal members from both the Houses is constituted. The legislative History of Congress. shows that the

Senate's viewpoint, which ultimately prevails. It is natural because the Senate consists of seasoned statesmen and stalwart politicians and men who really matter in the public life of the country.

Comparative Study between The Senate and The Rajya Sabha and The House of Lords

Comparative Study between The Senate and The Rajya Sabha and The House of Lords			
Position	Senate	Rajya Sabha	The House of Lords
Election Method	The Senators are in fact directly elected by the citizens of the states. Hence, they have direct support and approval of the people	In contrast, members of the Rajya Sabha are indirectly elected. They are elected by the legislatures of the state governments. They do not have a direct representation of the people	Most members of the House of Lords are appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister and are described as life peers.
Composition	The Senate gives equal representation to all states irrespective of size or population. This means that both small states and large states get two members. All states get an equal voice in the process of law-making.	In contrast to Rajya Sabha members where each state's representation depends upon a population. More populated states get a louder voice and hence rule of the majority is very common. This makes it easy for the ruling party to ignore the opposition and interests of the minorities.	Accordingly, the number of members of the House of Lords are: 668 Life Peers, 26 Bishops and 87 Hereditary peers

Powers	<p>The Senate is more powerful than the House of Representatives in many ways. First, the Senate has almost complete control over the Budget. Second, the President requires the ratification of the Senate for treaties.</p>	<p>The Rajya Sabha in comparison has no control over the Budget, except for a "delaying" power. Not passing a bill has no productive outcome since the joint sessions method for resolving a dispute between the houses favours the Lok Sabha since it would be headed by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha itself</p>	<p>Most legislation, with the exception of money bills, may be introduced in either the House of Lords or House of Commons. The House of Lords debates legislation, and has the power to amend or reject bills. However, the power of the Lords to reject a bill passed by the House of Commons is severely restricted by the Parliament Acts. Under those Acts, certain types of bills may be presented for Royal Assent without the consent of the House of Lords</p>
Representation	<p>Each member of the Senate represents say half of the state he/she is elected from (the other member representing the other half). Hence, they have more voter backing.</p>	<p>The Rajya Sabha, on the other hand, represents a smaller number (a fixed number) and hence has a smaller voter backing.</p>	<p>The makeup of the Lords does not reflect the diversity of the UK, with under-representation of ethnic minorities and women when compared with the House of Commons, and relative over-representation of people from South East England and people over 50.</p>

Compactness	<p>Since the Senate has just 100 members, it makes discussions and deliberations simpler. Members get more time to speak as well.</p>	<p>The Rajya Sabha, however, has 235 members. Members may not get enough time to speak. Plus, more people always lead to more chaos. One can say that both houses are similar merely in the fact that they are “upper houses” and represent state interests. But they radically differ in the context of powers, functions and the nuanced implications of the same.</p>	<p>The House of Lords, the upper chamber of the UK Parliament, is known for its compactness compared to the House of Commons. It has fewer members, primarily consisting of appointed life peers, hereditary peers, and bishops. This compactness allows for more focused debate and often results in a more deliberative and nuanced legislative process.</p>
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Conclusion

The United States Senate stands as the epitome of second chamber power, embodying a unique blend of historical precedent, institutional design, and constitutional authority. Its influence stems from its pivotal role in the legislative process, its substantial powers of advice and consent, and its ability to check and balance the executive branch. Through a combination of tradition, procedural leverage, and entrenched norms, the Senate wields unparalleled influence among second chambers worldwide, solidifying its status as the most powerful of its kind.

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