When we met recently I made some observations about the committee structure of the House and you invited me to put them in writing, my suggestions are as follows.

Firstly, we should allocate the chairs of committees in the same way as they do in the House of Commons, that is between parties on an agreed formula worked out in the usual channels. My view is however that like the House of Commons they should be constituted for a full parliamentary term and that the chair and membership of these committees should also serve for the full parliamentary term.

Secondly, I believe that some sort of system similar to the Commons should be introduced whereby the chairperson and members of committees are elected within the House and should not be an object of patronage by the Whips. In my view both of these reforms represent us coming to terms with the spirit of the age.

Thirdly, my view of Question Time is that it is increasingly becoming a very unpleasant display of bad manners, if it were left to me I would ask that the Speaker be given some power of who should speak. The present rather undignified scene of virtually the same people shouting over each other is not conducive to anything at all other than giving us a bad name. I would certainly like a review of how we conduct Question time.

Fourthly, I would like to see a small committee set up, not of senior members of the House but of ordinary members, to look at the way in which the rules for members of the House of Commons and those for the Lords have drifted apart over the years with a view to recommending to the Lord Speaker's committee any changes that might be desirable in bringing the two sets of rules more closely into line, or of modifying the rules in the light of developments and experience since they were last reviewed.

May 2018