

Private Members' Business

When we reviewed that appointment there were members who liked the appointment, others who disliked it and so on. When it was attempted at the committee to propose a motion to the House with reference to the appointment that type of motion was deemed to be out of order by the chairman of the committee.

Under Standing Order 110 our rules are structured right now so that we can review an appointment. However the committee chairman ruled that the committee had no power to make a recommendation about the appointment it had just reviewed. Surely that is a deficiency within our rules.

That is something that needs to be improved upon. There should also be a better procedure in terms of how people are referred to the government for the Order in Council review process.

Right now nothing is very formalized, save some judicial appointments for which the local bars provide nominations and so on. In the case of people like citizenship court judges and others there should be a more formal process.

A constituent who has been a mayor of a town, a prominent individual for 25 years, might retire from that office and might like to be nominated as a citizenship court judge. The person may be very qualified. The person may have the disposition so that one knows he or she is an excellent candidate.

As an opposition member I currently have no way of suggesting that person other than writing a letter to the Prime Minister saying: Dear Prime Minister, Mayor Such-and-Such of this town in my constituency is a great Canadian. How about considering him or her.

There is no other way in which to submit names for such a position. That is a deficiency in our rules at the present time. The same applies to a large number of other positions.

I use the citizenship court judge as an example because it is a ceremonial position. It does not involve decisions that are judiciary or quasi-judiciary in nature, or at least it does not generally do so. I suppose there is an ultimate veto power given to that citizenship court judge but it is

seldom if ever used. It is a ceremonial role, and a necessary one. I am not questioning the necessity of the job. However, certainly the office would have greater credibility if the method by which the people are chosen was improved.

Those are areas on which I would like to concentrate.

On July 12, 1992 I made public a document entitled *Public Sector Ethics and Morals*. I gave this to the national media, and many colleagues from all parties contacted me and asked for copies of it. Chapter 3 of that document refers to those amendments I would like to see made to the Order in Council review process.

I have three recommendations which I have just summarized in the House for the Chair and all hon. members.

Those are the areas on which we should concentrate. Those are the areas in which we need to improve the information that is given to Canadians and the power that this House has over Order in Council appointees.

This is a two-edged sword and I want all members to recognize that fact. If we have the power as a House or as a committee to examine Order in Council nominees and then if we later question the government about those appointees the government from time to time will say that the hon. member had the power to interview and review that appointment and if he had no objection then the appointment was all right. That is not so.

The responsibility for nominating someone always rests with the government and it will always rest there, as it should. The point I am making is that just because those safeguard mechanisms are there in no way should we state, nor should the government state, that the government is somehow no longer responsible for the appointment that it made.

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merriitt): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to speak today to the motion of the member for Annapolis Valley—Hants concerning what we usually call Governor in Council appointments and which unfortunately have become known across Canada as patronage appointments.