

still growing, such as the approval of appointments made by the President, appointments of judges, ministers and ambassadors which are often subjected to rigorous inquiries by the U.S. Senate.

Ratification of international treaties is another major executive power held by the Senate within the American system. The American presidential system is efficient in that, among other things, the Senate produces prestigious members well known for their legislative skills, and let me remind you that they are elected by the people, which is not the case in Canada. They are elected by the people.

The U.S. Senate alone has attracted the most talented minds of the nation and constitutes an intellectual centre of indisputable superiority compared with the legislative dynamics of the Canadian Senate.

The United States Senate has really brought to the fore, through a real and constant practice of politics, the spirit of wisdom and reason which inspired people from antiquity when they set up the early senates.

Let us talk about the Bundesrat. As for the German Bundesrat, or Federal Council, it is another Senate-like democratic institution, but contrary to the Canadian Senate, it works. The Bundesrat, which was created by the Constitution of the German Empire in 1871, was a major legislative body of the Empire. It was originally an assembly of ambassadors from member states. It is the ancestor of the second German House, the Assembly of the Landers' Executive members or, if you prefer, of the federated provinces representing the various territories, either provinces or regions.

Simply to explain how the Bundesrat works, it is formed by 45 members of the government of Landers and each Land is allowed at least three votes. To illustrate the process, when a bill is introduced, for instance, it must be submitted to the approval of the Bundesrat, the equivalent to our Senate, which has a veto it can use within one week, provided there is a majority of two thirds of the votes. The head of the government of a Land automatically becomes a member of the Bundesrat. The central government designates as many ministers as the number of votes the Lands are entitled to.

I should add that the approval of the Bundesrat is required when an issue deals with administrative or financial interests of the Landers, the equivalent of the provinces and regions in Canada.

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In Germany, federalism finds its true meaning. Eleven Landers are directly represented by the members of each Land's government. Therefore, Canadian federalists cannot decently

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talk in Quebec or elsewhere of the merits of a viable federalism that does not even respect its own components. Federalism has never existed in Canada. There is a central government that tried by all means to grab as much power as possible at the expense of provinces and regions. The Canadian Senate plays no significant role in the defence of regions and minorities, one of the reasons why it was created, which leaves the Executive of the House of Commons a maximum of powers.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe):** We must admit it is not easy to deal with two legislative houses in a British type of parliamentary system. Parliamentary systems, clearly dominated by the executive, give their Upper House very limited if not meaningless powers. Given that such is the system in Canada, the Senate is reduced to an anachronism since it has no weight in the country's political balance and lacks legitimacy because its members are not elected but simply appointed by the Prime Minister. Since the executive is accountable only to the House of Commons, the Senate loses any influence it might have over the government. The parliamentary system requires that the Lower House have greater powers than the Upper House because the government comes from the former and is elected and, therefore, is accountable only to it.

That problem does not exist within a presidential system like the one in the United States since the executive is politically accountable neither to the House of Representatives nor to the Senate. The separation of powers is more strictly established in a presidential system than in a parliamentary system like ours where the Senate is useless.

In the third part of this demonstration, I would like to touch on the question of administrative responsibilities associated with the allocation of \$26.9 million for the operation of an Upper House within the Canadian parliamentary system and, with your permission, I will explain how the Canadian Senate is unable to accomplish various tasks which, in theory, are part of its obligations.

For example, it is difficult to justify the existence of an Upper House based on the principle of legislative review. The idea that the Canadian Senate could reflect soberly on the legislative measures of the House of Commons flows from the conservative prejudices that existed earlier under the monarchy. The Canadian Senate is a remnant of a traditional and elitist representation opposed, in a way, to the monopolistic embodiment of a democratic legitimacy already more than 200 years old in the western world. The Canadian Upper House, the Senate, accepts its secondary role by undertaking activities that have nothing to do with its legislative role. In fact, senators are named by the