

significance could not become law unless it had been passed by a double majority in the Senate. To identify those bills or parts of bills that should be subject to the double majority, it would be necessary to adopt a workable definition and a procedure for resolving disputes.

We propose that, at the time of swearing in, senators would be asked to declare whether they consider themselves francophone for purposes of the double majority.

Ratification of appointments

We believe that order in council appointments to federal agencies whose decisions have important regional implications should be subject to Senate ratification within a period of perhaps 30 sitting days. If the Senate did not reject an appointment within that period, it would be deemed to have ratified it.

Internal organization of the Senate

Under section 34 of the *Constitution Act, 1867*, the Speaker of the Senate is appointed and removed by the Governor General, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. The provision, probably modelled on the practice in the British House of Lords, means that the administrative management of the Senate is the responsibility of a person who may not be the choice of the majority of senators. We feel that the independence of the Senate would be increased if it could elect its own Speaker after each triennial election. This would parallel what happens in the legislative assemblies of practically all democratic countries.

The reasons that justify election of the Speaker by senators apply with even greater force to the election of the leaders of the political groups in the Senate. Those responsible for organizing Senate business should not be selected by the party leaders in the Commons. For these reasons, we believe that the government and opposition supporters in the Senate should elect their officers.

We considered the question of whether senators should be eligible for membership in the Cabinet. Some members of the Committee attached importance to the government being able to choose senators as ministers in cases where there are no members of the House of Commons of the government party from a particular province. We feel, however, that appointment of senators to the Cabinet should not be used to overcome the failure of political parties to elect representatives in some provinces. The majority of Committee members also believes that if ministers are drawn from the Senate, cabinet solidarity would prevail over their responsibility as regional representatives. We also consider that the possibility of becoming a minister and the presence of ministers in the Senate would impair the ability of senators to represent effectively the interests of their regions. We conclude therefore that senators should not be eligible for cabinet office or for a position as parliamentary secretary.

The effect of this prohibition would be to make it difficult to introduce and defend government bills in the Senate. We therefore propose — as Senate rules already allow — that ministers appear in the Senate and in its committees to explain and argue for