

presented to the Governor General for assent only after at least 60 sitting days had elapsed since transmission of the Senate amendments to the House. At the end of the 60-day period, the House would again vote on the amendments and on the bill. This rule would also apply to bills on which the House had rejected some Senate amendments while accepting others.

- (e) In computing the 60-day periods referred to above, only days when either House is sitting would be counted.

We decided to use sitting days rather than calendar days to avoid the distortions due to holidays and recesses. In practice, and depending on the time of the year, the maximum length of the delay would be between seven and nine months.

The business of supply has unique importance in our parliamentary tradition. A simple delay in voting the estimates can paralyse public administration for months. We regard this possibility as unacceptable. To give the Senate even a suspensive veto in such a vital area would amount to giving it a disguised power to overturn the government. We therefore propose that the Senate have no power over appropriation bills (including the main, interim and supplementary estimates).

At present, money bills cannot be introduced in the Senate first. We believe this prohibition should be maintained, with exceptions being made for the Senate's own budget and for bills dealing with elections to the Senate and its internal organization. In these three matters, the Senate should have the power of initiative to ensure its independence. For the same reason, it is essential that the Senate have full control over its own budget. Senators would continue to have the power to introduce bills other than money bills.

The double majority

To ensure additional protection for the French language and culture, we accept the argument of a number of witnesses that legislation of linguistic significance should be approved by a double majority in the Senate. Two methods of calculating such a majority were proposed to the Committee. One called for a majority of both francophone and anglophone senators. The other called for an overall majority of all senators that would have to include a majority of the francophone senators.

The second method would, like the first, protect the francophone minority against legislation that they believed threatened them. In addition, it might be easier to get Senate approval of legislation that the francophone minority considered desirable, because the second method would require a larger proportion of anglophone senators — if they were to vote without francophone support — to defeat it than just the simple majority of anglophones required under the first method. Since Senate rejection of such legislation could not be overridden by the Commons, there is an argument for making that rejection by the majority language group more difficult. Because the second method does that, we tend to prefer it.

Such a voting procedure would achieve its purpose only if the Senate veto on these matters were absolute. In other words, a bill or a portion of a bill having linguistic