

judges at the Court of Appeal level and two judges at the Trial Division level. Those increases were in response to long-standing requests by the Chief Justice and the Associate Chief Justice for more judges. Although the addition of these positions has brought about a marked improvement in the disposition of matters by the court, more judges are required, particularly judges instructed in the civil law, if the court is to maintain its present level of service to the people of Canada and is to keep abreast of its continuing heavy case-load.

Honourable senators, when the Federal Court of Canada was created in 1971, provision was made for at least four of the 12 judges of the court to be appointed from the bench or bar of the Province of Quebec, in order to ensure that the court had a sufficient number of judges with a civil law background. Since that time, the number of judges on the court has steadily increased. With the addition of these three positions, it will have more than doubled to 25. It is therefore appropriate to restore, as nearly as possible, the ratio which existed in 1971, by increasing the number of judges required to be appointed from the bench or bar of the Province of Quebec from four to eight. This will guarantee the court a sufficient number of judges to hear cases based on Quebec law, so as to permit these cases to be heard as expeditiously as those from other parts of the country.

Honourable senators, the amendments to the Judges Act are mostly of a technical nature. They provide salaries for the additional positions allocated to the Federal Court of Canada and for a total of 35 other positions already created or proposed under provincial law. Where provincial legislation is not yet in place, the bill provides for the provisions effecting these increases to come into force on proclamation, so as to permit the fullest co-ordination of effort between the federal and provincial governments.

Amendments are also contained in this bill which will amend the National Defence Act to bring the procedures of the Court Martial Appeal Court of Canada more in line with the operating practices of other appellate courts. The amendment will, in particular, permit the disposition of all matters short of an appeal to a single judge. At present, a panel of no less than three judges is required to hear any matter brought before the court.

Honourable senators, this bill will also authorize an increase from 10 to 12 in the number of members of the Pension Appeals Board. Board members are appointed by the Governor in Council from among the judges of the Federal Court, the provincial, superior, district and county courts. The board travels throughout the country and sits wherever the volume of cases justifies it. This increase, which has the support of the Canadian Judicial Council, will permit the board greater flexibility in scheduling hearings, and should permit better regional representation.

Honourable senators, I commend this bill to you for second reading.

**Hon. Joan Neiman:** Honourable senators, since I cannot hope to emulate the flights of oratory of my honourable

colleague, Senator Steuart, you will be happy to know that my remarks will be very brief.

As a member of the Senate, I feel somewhat responsible for at least part of the plethora of legislation, most notably the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which is now being challenged, examined and adjudicated upon in our courts of law.

We have heard that the courts are overburdened and our judges are overworked. Bill C-61 is designed to ease, at least to a certain extent, some of the strain and pain. This is one piece of legislation that our judges will welcome. I endorse it and recommend it to my colleagues for approval.

Motion agreed to and bill read second time.

#### THIRD READING

**The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*:** Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

**Hon. C. William Doody,** with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 45(1)(b), moved that the bill be read the third time now.

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS ACT

##### BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

**The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*** informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-63, to amend the House of Commons Act.

Bill read first time.

#### SECOND READING

**The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*:** Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

**Hon. Orville H. Phillips,** with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 44(1)(f), moved that the bill be read the second time now.

He said: Honourable senators, Bill C-63 amends the House of Commons Act. It essentially establishes a Committee on Internal Economy, very similar to the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration in the Senate. It is interesting to note that because, quite frequently, we hear that our Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration is not operating that well.

However, the House of Commons has experienced some dissatisfaction with its management because the so-called backbenchers were not represented on the committee. This bill outlines the composition of the committee: The Speaker is the Chairman; the Deputy Speaker is a member; as well, two Privy Councillors are members; a representative of the Leader of the Opposition is a member; two backbenchers from the government side and the opposition side are also represented.

The bill was introduced this morning in the House of Commons, and there were two amendments made at that time. The first dealt with section 18 which had previously stated