

vote directly for the Prime Minister as such. He runs in a specific riding and is elected to the House as the representative of its citizens. This can, in questions of national importance such as Canadian unity, make the Prime Minister's role difficult. He cannot, like an American President, claim a clear personal mandate to resolve the issue.

Another important feature of parliamentary-cabinet government is the principle of collective responsibility. A President's cabinet functions basically as a group of advisers. The Prime Minister has a dominant role in the Canadian Cabinet, which derives from his position as party leader, but the Cabinet stands as a unit.

The Senate bears little resemblance to the American Senate, except in name. It was created mainly to assure a conservative upper house as a check on the House of Commons and to award the major regions of the country equal representation regardless of their size or

population. Canadian Senators are appointed by the Government of the day and are normally party-patronage positions that last until retirement at age 75. All bills must pass through the Senate, but today this is largely a formality. Senators may also initiate minor legislation not involving expenditure of public funds, but their most useful contributions often are in committee work and commissions of inquiry, and in "refining" legislation.

The committee system in both houses is much weaker than in their American counterparts. Canadian committee appointments are sometimes for less than one session of Parliament and the committees have little professional help. They therefore do not enjoy the weight of influence and power that their counterparts exercise in the United States Congress.

Two major political parties have vied for parliamentary power throughout Canadian history. The Liberal Party has dominated the Federal Government for most of the twentieth century, while the Progressive Conservative Party has generally been the official opposi-