

Date Printed: 01/14/2009

JTS Box Number: IFES_27

Tab Number: 26

Document Title: CONSTITUTIONAL LAWS OF FINLAND: PROCEDURE
OF PARLIAMENT

Document Date: 1992

Document Country: FIN

Document Language: ENG

IFES ID: CON00071





**CONSTITUTIONAL LAWS
OF FINLAND
PROCEDURE OF PARLIAMENT**

HELSINKI 1992

con/FIN/1992/001/eng

**CONSTITUTIONAL LAWS
OF FINLAND
PROCEDURE OF PARLIAMENT**

**Publish by:
The Parliament of Finland
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Justice**

HELSINKI 1992

CONTENTS

Constitution Act of Finland	3
Parliament Act	20
Procedure of Parliament	44
Ministerial Responsibility Act	60
Act on the High Court of Impeachment	62

THE CONSTITUTION ACT OF FINLAND

(17 July 1919/94)

I. General Provisions

Section 1 Finland is a sovereign Republic. Its constitution is established in this Form of Government Act and in other Constitutional Acts of Parliament.

Section 2 Sovereign power in Finland shall belong to the people, represented by Parliament convened in session.

Legislative power shall be exercised by Parliament in conjunction with the President of the Republic.

Supreme executive power shall be vested in the President of the Republic. In addition, for the general government of the State there shall be a Council of State comprising the Prime Minister and the requisite number of Ministers.

Judicial power shall be exercised by independent courts of law, at the highest instance the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court.

Section 3 The territory of the State of Finland shall be indivisible. Its boundaries may not be altered except by Parliamentary consent.

Section 4 Everyone born of Finnish parents shall have the right of Finnish citizenship. (1 December 1967/518)

A citizen of a foreign State may be granted Finnish citizenship under the conditions and in the manner prescribed separately by Act of Parliament.

II. General Rights and Legal Protection of Finnish Citizens

Section 5 All Finnish citizens shall be equal before the law.

Section 6 Every citizen of Finland shall be protected by law in respect of his life, honour, personal liberty and property.

The labour of the citizens shall enjoy the special protection of the State. If necessary, it shall be the duty of the State to provide a citizen of Finland with employment, unless otherwise prescribed by Act of Parliament. (28 July 1972/592)

Provisions concerning the appropriation of property for public purposes in return for full compensation, shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 7 Unless otherwise prescribed by Act of Parliament, every Finnish citizen shall have the right to live in his own country, to choose freely his place of residence here and to move from one place to another.

Separate provisions shall govern the right of a Finnish citizen to leave the country.

Section 8 A Finnish citizen shall have the right, provided that the law or good custom are not infringed, to practise a religion in public and in private, and also, according to separate provisions on this, the freedom to renounce the religious community to which he belongs and to join another religious community.

Section 9 The rights and obligations of a Finnish citizen shall not depend on which religious community he belongs to or on whether he belongs to any such community. The restrictions prescribed regarding public offices shall, however, remain in force until otherwise prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 10 Finnish citizens shall enjoy freedom of speech as well as the right to publish any written work or pictorial representation in print without prior restraint from anyone. Finnish citizens shall also have the right, without obtaining advance permission, to assemble for the discussion of general issues or for any other lawful purpose as well as to found associations for any purpose not infringing the law or good custom.

Provisions on the exercise of these rights shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 11 The domestic peace of a Finnish citizen shall be inviolable.

The preconditions for searching a home and the manner in which such a search may be performed shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 12 The secrecy of postal, telegraph and telephone communications shall be inviolable unless an exception to this has been prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 13 A Finnish citizen shall not be judged in a court of law other than one having legal jurisdiction over him.

Section 14 The official languages of the Republic shall be Finnish and Swedish.

The right of a Finnish citizen to use his native language, whether Finnish or Swedish, as a party in proceedings before a court of law or an administrative authority, and to obtain from them documents in that language, shall be guaranteed by law with care being taken to provide for the rights of the Finnish-speaking and the Swedish-speaking populations of the country on the same basis.

The cultural and economic needs of the Finnish-speaking and the Swedish-speaking populations shall be met by the State on the same basis.

Section 15 Titles of nobility or other hereditary dignity shall not be conferred in the Republic.

Section 16 What has been stated concerning the general rights of Finnish citizens shall not preclude the prescribing by Act of Parliament of such restrictions as are necessary in times of war or rebellion, or at other times for persons performing military service.

III. Legislation

Section 17 The organisation of Parliament and its duties shall be prescribed in the Parliament Act.

Section 18 Both the President and Parliament shall have the right to propose a new Act of Parliament or that an existing Act be amended, expounded or repealed.

The President shall exercise his right of initiative by submitting bills to Parliament with accompanying legislative proposals. The draft bills shall be prepared by the Council of State. A statement concerning any such draft bill may be obtained, depending on the nature of the matter, either from the Supreme Court or from the Supreme Administrative Court or from both.

The exercise by Parliament of its right of initiative shall be prescribed in the Parliament Act.

Section 19 When an Act has been approved by Parliament, it shall be submitted for ratification to the President, who may request a statement concerning the Act either from the Supreme Court or from the Supreme Administrative Court or from both, depending on the nature of the matter.

An Act shall be ratified in the form in which Parliament approved it within three months of the date when it was submitted to the President for ratification. If the President fails to ratify an Act, it shall be returned to Parliament. An Act which has not been ratified shall nevertheless enter into force if Parliament, in the first regular session following that during which the Act was submitted for ratification, re-approves the Act in an unamended form in the sense prescribed in the Parliament Act. A returned Act which is not re-approved shall be deemed to have lapsed. (26 June 1987/575)
(Paragraph 3 was repealed by the Act of 26 June 1987/575.)

Section 20 It shall be stated in the preamble to each Act of Parliament that the Act has been enacted according to a decision of Parliament and, when an Act has been enacted pursuant to the procedure in force for the enactment of Constitutional Acts, it shall also be stated that this procedure has been complied with.

An Act that has been ratified or that shall enter into force unratified shall be signed by the President and countersigned by the competent Minister. Thereafter, the Council of State shall publish the Act in *The Statutes of Finland*. (15 August 1980/607)

An Act shall make clear the date of its entry into force. If the Act has not been published by the date of entry into force given in the Act, it shall enter into force on the day when it is published. (15 August 1980/607)

Section 21 The right of the President to issue Decrees is prescribed in section 28.

Section 22 All Acts and Decrees, as well as all Government bills to Parliament and the replies, proposals and other communications of Parliament to the Government shall be issued in the Finnish and Swedish languages.

IIIa. Public Referendum

(26 June 1987/570)

Section 22 a (26 June 1987/570) Provisions for the holding of a consultative referendum shall be determined by Act of Parliament. The Act shall contain provisions on the date of the referendum and on the alternatives to be presented to the voters. The State shall inform the voters of the alternatives and support the dissemination of information about them as prescribed in the aforesaid Act.

Everyone who has the right to vote in parliamentary elections according to the Parliament Act shall have the right to vote in a consultative referendum.

Provisions on the procedure to be applied in a consultative referendum shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

IV. Government and Administration

Section 23 (22 July 1991/1074) The President of the Republic shall be elected directly by the people of Finland from among Finnish citizens by birth for a term of six years.

The same person may be elected President for no more than two consecutive terms.

Section 23 a (22 July 1991/1074) The right to nominate a presidential candidate shall be possessed by any registered party from whose lists at least one representative has been elected in the preceding parliamentary election or by any group of twenty thousand people entitled to vote in the presidential elections who have agreed to nominate a common candidate.

Section 23 b (22 July 1991/1074) If only one candidate has been nominated, he shall become President of the Republic without an election.

If more than one candidate has been nominated, the presidential election shall be held on the third Sunday in January. If one of the candidates receives more than half of the votes cast in the election, he shall be elected President of the Republic.

If no one receives the majority prescribed in paragraph 2, a new election shall be held on the third Sunday after the first election. In this election, the candidates shall be the two persons who received the greatest number of votes in the first election. The candidate receiving the majority of votes in this second election shall be elected President of the Republic. If the votes are divided equally the election shall be decided by the drawing of lots.

Section 23 c (22 July 1991/1074) If a duly nominated candidate dies or suffers permanent impediment before the end of the first election, arrangements for new elections shall be made as soon as possible. The same procedure shall be followed if a candidate in the second election dies or suffers permanent impediment before the end of the election or if the President-elect dies or suffers permanent impediment before taking office.

Section 23 d (22 July 1991/1074) The right to vote in presidential elections shall be governed by the provisions on the right to vote in parliamentary elections.

Provisions regarding advance participation in presidential elections shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament. More detailed provisions on the nomination of candidates and the procedure to be followed in Presidential elections shall be established by Act of Parliament.

Section 23 e (22 July 1991/1074) The President shall take office on the first day of March following his election to office.

A President elected in an election arranged due to an event referred to in section 23 c shall take office on the third day after his election as President of the Republic has been confirmed.

The Presidential term of office shall end when the President elected in the following election takes office.

Section 24 (22 July 1991/1074) When the President takes office, he shall make the following solemn affirmation before Parliament:

"I, N.N., whom the people of Finland have chosen as President of the Republic of Finland, hereby declare that in my office as President I shall sincerely and faithfully observe and uphold the constitution and the law of the Republic, and with all my powers, shall promote the prosperity of the people of Finland."

Section 25 (9 November 1956/588) Should the President be prevented from attending to his duties, these shall be attended to by the Prime Minister or, if the latter is also prevented, by the Minister who is acting as deputy Prime Minister under the provisions of section 39. If the President dies or if he suffers permanent impediment, a new President shall be elected as soon as possible. He shall take office on the day prescribed in section 23 e, paragraph 2. (22 July 1991/1074)

If the Prime Minister or another Minister is a Member of Parliament, he may not participate in parliamentary business while he is attending to the duties of the President.

Section 26 The President shall receive an annual salary for performing his duties, the amount of which shall be confirmed by Act of Parliament and shall be neither increased nor decreased during his term of office.

Section 27 (22 July 1991/1074) It shall be the duty of the President to convene extraordinary Parliamentary sessions, to open regular parliamentary sessions and, at the end of the regular electoral period, to declare the parliamentary business concluded for the said electoral period.

On the basis of a reasoned initiative by the Prime Minister, the President may, after consulting the Speaker of Parliament and the various parliamentary factions, and at a time when Parliament is in session, dissolve Parliament by ordering that new elections be held.

Section 28 Unless otherwise prescribed in this Form of Government Act, or unless the said right has been vested in the Council of State, the President shall have the right to issue Decrees on matters that have previously been arranged by means of administrative regulations and also, by Decree, to issue more detailed stipulations on the implementa-

tion of Acts of Parliament, on the management of State property as well as on the organisation and operations of administrative agencies and public services. A Decree shall not contain a provision that would effect an amendment to an Act of Parliament.

The issuing, publication and entry into force of a Decree shall be governed by the provisions on Acts of Parliament contained in section 20, paragraphs 2 and 3. (15 August 1980/607)

Section 29 In individual cases the President may, after obtaining a statement from the Supreme Court, annul or reduce a sentence by granting a pardon. The granting of a pardon to a member of the Council of State or to the Chancellor of Justice shall, however, be governed by separate provisions on this. A general amnesty shall not be granted except by a specific Act of Parliament on this matter.

The President may also allow an exemption from the provisions of the law in those cases where the right to grant such dispensations has been provided by law.

Section 30 The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of Finland, but in time of war he may turn the command over to another person.

Section 31 The President shall have the power to grant the right to Finnish citizenship to a citizen of a foreign State and to release a Finnish citizen from Finnish citizenship.

Section 32 The President shall supervise State administration and, for this purpose, may demand information from the heads or governing boards of State agencies and public institutions and may also carry out inspections.

Section 33 The relations of Finland with foreign powers shall be governed by the President. Treaties concluded with foreign States shall, however, be approved by Parliament if they contain provisions within the legislative sphere or if the consent of Parliament is otherwise required by the constitution. Decisions concerning war and peace shall be made by the President with the consent of Parliament.

All communications to foreign States or to Finnish envoys abroad shall be dispatched through the Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs.

Section 34 The President shall make his decisions in the Council of State on the basis of a presentation by the competent Minister.

In order to enter into force, presidential decisions shall be signed by the President and countersigned by the presenting Minister. This shall not, however, apply to matters referred to in sections 32 and 47.

If a presidential decision concerns the entire Council of State, it shall be countersigned by the competent presenting official of the Council of State.

The presentation of matters of military command and military appointments and the countersigning of presidential decisions on these matters shall be governed by separate provisions.

Whoever has countersigned a presidential decision shall be responsible for the correctness of the document containing the said decision.

Section 35 If a Minister finds that a presidential decision is contrary to law, he shall notify the Council of State of his opinion, which shall then proceed as stated in section

45. If the decision would be contrary to a Constitutional Act, the Minister shall be obliged to refuse to countersign it.

Section 36 (26 June 1987/575) The members of the Council of State must enjoy the confidence of Parliament.

After consulting the various parliamentary factions, the President shall appoint citizens of Finland known for their honesty and ability to serve as members of the Council of State. Should the composition of the Council of State undergo significant changes, the Speaker of Parliament and the various parliamentary factions shall be consulted as to the situation and Parliament shall be in session. (22 July 1991/1074)

The Minister in charge of the administration of Justice and at least one other Minister must be learned in law.

Section 36 a (22 July 1991/1074) The Council of State shall without delay present Parliament with a statement of its programme. The same procedure shall be followed if the composition of the Council of State undergoes significant changes.

Section 36 b (22 July 1991/1074) Upon request the President shall release the Council of State or a member thereof from service and may do so without prior request, if the Council of State or a member thereof no longer enjoys the confidence of Parliament. At the initiative of the Prime Minister the President may also release a member of the Council of State from service for other reasons.

If a member of the Council of State is elected President, he shall be deemed to have resigned his membership from the day on which he takes office as President. After he has been elected President, a member of the Council of State may not, however, attend to any Ministerial duties with the exception of the duty prescribed in section 25, paragraph 1.

Section 37 (21 December 1990/1221) A Chancellor of Justice, who must be eminently competent in matters of law, shall attend the Council of State. The Chancellor of Justice shall be assisted by an Assistant Chancellor of Justice, who shall attend to his duties when necessary. The Assistant Chancellor of Justice shall have a deputy, who shall attend to the duties of the Assistant Chancellor of Justice should the latter be prevented from doing so. The deputy shall be appointed by the President of the Republic for a period not exceeding five years.

Section 38 The Council of State shall include the number of Ministries required for the different branches of administration. Each Ministry shall be headed by a Minister.

The number of Ministries and the scope of their functions shall be confirmed by Act of Parliament, but more detailed provisions on the division of tasks between the Ministries and on the organisation of the Council of State in other respects shall be issued by Decree.

Section 39 (9 November 1956/588) The Prime Minister shall serve as chairman of the Council of State. If he is prevented from doing so, the chairman shall be the Minister whom the President has appointed deputy Prime Minister. If the latter Minister is also prevented from serving as chairman, the chair shall be occupied by the most senior Minister present. Whenever matters falling within the competence of the President are

presented to him in the Council of State, the President shall direct the handling of these matters.

While the Prime Minister or another Minister is attending to the duties of the President pursuant to section 25, that Minister shall refrain from performing his ministerial duties.

Section 40 Matters within the competence of the Council of State shall be considered in a plenary meeting, unless the right to decide matters of a specific type has been delegated by Decree to a Minister serving as head of a Ministry.

Five members of the Council of State shall constitute a quorum.

Section 41 The Council of State shall implement presidential decisions and shall decide both those matters prescribed by Act of Parliament for decision in the Council of State and also all other matters which have neither by this Form of Government Act nor by any other Act or Decree been reserved for the President or delegated to a Minister serving as head of a Ministry or to a lower authority.

The extent to which matters concerning the administration of the judiciary, the University of Helsinki and the Armed Forces have been excluded from consideration by the Council of State shall be evident from specific provisions.

Section 42 If the Council of State considers that there is doubt as to whether the Council of State has the power to make a final decision on a particular matter, the question shall be decided by the President.

Section 43 The members of the Council of State shall be responsible to Parliament for their official acts.

Each member of the Council of State who has participated in the consideration of a matter in the Council of State shall be responsible for the decision unless he has notified his dissenting opinion for inclusion in the minutes.

Section 44 Matters for consideration in the Council of State shall have been prepared by the competent Ministry.

Each Ministry shall supervise the administration under its authority and shall implement Acts of Parliament, Decrees and decisions of the Council of State.

Section 45 If it happens that a decision of the President, which the Council of State has to implement, conflicts with the law, the Council of State shall be obliged, after obtaining a statement on the matter from the Chancellor of Justice, to propose to the President that the decision be withdrawn or amended and, if the President nevertheless persists in his decision, to notify him that the decision cannot be implemented.

Section 46 The Chancellor of Justice shall supervise public authorities and officials in their observance of the law and fulfilment of their duties in such a way that no person's legal rights are violated. (21 December 1990/1221)

In the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court, the Chancellor of Justice shall represent the body of public prosecutors and shall otherwise oversee the interests of the State in addition to prosecuting charges in other courts, or having them prosecuted, when he deems this necessary. As the supreme public prosecutor, the

Chancellor of Justice shall also supervise the public prosecutors, who shall be bound to comply with his orders.

The Chancellor of Justice has the right to attend sessions of the Council of State and of all courts of law and government agencies, and to obtain information from the minutes and records of the Council of State, its Ministries, the courts of law and other authorities.

Section 47 If the Council of State or a member thereof, in an official act, proceeds in an unlawful manner, the Chancellor of Justice shall object to this and at the same time state what is unlawful about the procedure. If the objection is not heeded, the Chancellor of Justice shall have his opinion entered in the minutes of the Council of State. He shall also have the right to submit a report on the matter to the President. If the unlawful act is such that charges against the member of the Council of State may be brought on its basis in the High Court of Impeachment referred to in section 59, and if the President orders the charges to be brought, then the Chancellor of Justice shall serve as prosecutor. If the President considers that there is no reason to bring charges, then the Chancellor of Justice may notify Parliament about the matter. If the President orders charges to be brought against the Chancellor of Justice, the charges shall be prosecuted by a person appointed by the President.

Should the President, in an official act, proceed in an unlawful manner, then the Chancellor of Justice shall object to this in the manner stated above. If the Chancellor of Justice or the Council of State consider that the President has committed high treason or treason, then Parliament shall be notified of the matter and, if Parliament, by three fourths of the votes cast, decides that charges are to be brought, then the charges shall be prosecuted by the Chancellor of Justice in the Supreme Court, and the President shall refrain from exercising his functions while the matter is pending. In no other case shall charges be brought against the President for an official act.

Section 48 Each year the Chancellor of Justice shall submit a report both to the President and to Parliament on the course of his official duties and his observations on how the law has been complied with.

The Chancellor of Justice shall submit information and statements to the President and the Council of State upon request.

Section 49 (26 April 1957/176) During a regular parliamentary session, following the procedure provided for the election of the Speaker of Parliament, a person distinguished for his knowledge of the law shall be elected to serve as Parliamentary Ombudsman for a term of four years. The Parliamentary Ombudsman shall, pursuant to instructions given to him by Parliament, oversee the courts of law and other authorities as well as civil servants performing their duties, public employees and other persons performing public duties in order to ensure that they comply with the law and fulfil their obligations. If the Ombudsman dies or resigns from office before the end of his term, Parliament may elect a new Ombudsman for the remainder of the term. The same provisions regarding election procedure and term of office shall apply to the Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman, who shall be elected to assist the Ombudsman and, if necessary, to attend to his duties, and also to a deputy, who shall attend to the duties of the Assistant Ombudsman when the latter is prevented from doing so. (21 December 1990/1221)

The Parliamentary Ombudsman shall have the same right as the Chancellor of Justice to attend sessions of the Council of State, the courts of law and government agencies, to obtain information from the minutes and records of the Council of State and its Ministries, the courts of law and other authorities, and to prosecute charges or have charges prosecuted for any error or negligence which he finds in the activities under his supervision. If the Council of State or a member thereof, in an official act, proceeds in an unlawful manner, the Parliamentary Ombudsman is empowered to object to this, and he shall at the same time state what is unlawful about the procedure. If the objection is not heeded or if the nature of the matter so demands, the Parliamentary Ombudsman is empowered to report the matter to Parliament. (21 December 1990/1221)

Each year the Ombudsman shall submit a report to Parliament on the course of his official duties and also on the standard of judicial practice and any defects that he has noticed in legislation.

If the Ombudsman, in an official act, has proceeded in an unlawful manner, Parliament may order charges to be brought against him. (21 December 1990/1221)

Section 50 For general administration, Finland shall continue to be divided into provinces, population register districts and municipalities.

Any changes in the number of provinces shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament. Any other changes in administrative division shall be determined by the Council of State unless otherwise prescribed by Act of Parliament.

In any rearrangement of the boundaries of administrative districts, care shall be taken that, where circumstances permit, the districts are monolingual, either Finnish-speaking or Swedish-speaking, or that their linguistic minorities are as small as possible.

Section 51 The administration of a province shall be headed by a governor.

The administration of municipalities shall be based on self-government of the citizens according to specific Acts of Parliament on this matter. The manner and extent of the application of self-government of the citizens to administrative districts larger than the municipalities shall likewise be prescribed by law. When determining the boundaries of such districts, the provisions of section 50, paragraph 3 shall apply.

Provisions on the participation of foreigners in municipal administration shall be prescribed by law. (30 December 1991/1717)

Section 52 Specific provisions shall govern the agencies that exist or are to be established for different branches of State administration.

V. Courts of Law

Section 53 The Supreme Court shall exercise highest jurisdiction in general legal proceedings and shall, in addition, supervise the administration of justice by the judiciary and by execution authorities.

Section 54 The Supreme Court shall comprise a President and the requisite number of Supreme Court Justices.

Matters of judicial administration assigned to the Supreme Court by specific provisions shall be prepared by that Ministry of the Council of State to which matters of judicial administration have been assigned. The head of this Ministry is to be present in the Supreme Court when the said matters are considered.

Five members of the Supreme Court shall constitute a quorum unless a greater or lesser number of members is separately prescribed by Act of Parliament. However, a minimum of three members shall be required to constitute a quorum. (2 February 1979/105)

Section 55 Provisions on general courts of appeal and of first instance shall be prescribed by law.

Section 56 With certain separately prescribed exceptions, the Supreme Administrative Court shall exercise the highest appellate jurisdiction in the field of administrative law and shall oversee the exercise of judicial authority by lower officials in the sphere of administrative law.

Section 57 The Supreme Administrative Court shall comprise a President and the requisite number of Supreme Administrative Court Justices. The provisions of section 54, paragraph 3 regarding the Supreme Court shall apply to a quorum in this Court.

Section 58 It shall be the task of the Supreme Court or the Supreme Administrative Court, when they consider it necessary that an Act of Parliament or a Decree be amended or expounded, to propose to the President that such legislation be initiated.

Section 59 (21 December 1990/1221) If charges for proceeding in an unlawful manner in an official act are brought against a member of the Council of State, the Supreme Court or the Supreme Administrative Court or against the Chancellor of Justice, the Assistant Chancellor of Justice, or his deputy, or against the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman or his deputy, then the matter shall be heard in a special court, the High Court of Impeachment, which shall be governed by a separate Constitutional Act of Parliament.

If Parliament has decided to have charges brought against a member of the Council of State, the Chancellor of Justice, the Assistant Chancellor of Justice or his deputy, the charges shall be prosecuted by the Parliamentary Ombudsman. Charges against the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman or his deputy shall be prosecuted by a person appointed by Parliament.

Section 60 Provisions on special courts other than that referred to in section 59 shall be prescribed by law.

No temporary courts shall be established.

VI. State Finances

(22 July 1991/1077)

Section 61 (22 July 1991/1077) Provisions on state taxation shall be prescribed by an Act of Parliament containing provisions on the basis of tax liability and its extent as well

as on the legal safeguards of the taxpayer.

Section 62 (22 July 1991/1077) Provisions on the general bases for dues payable for the official functions, services or other acts of State authorities and the general bases for their amount shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 63 (22 July 1991/1077) Provisions regulating the competence of and procedure for exercising State control in companies where the State has a controlling interest shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament. Likewise, it shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament whether parliamentary consent is necessary for the acquisition or relinquishing of control in a company.

Section 64 (22 July 1991/1077) The taking of a State loan shall be based on the consent of Parliament, which shall make clear the maximum amount of new loans and of the national debt.

A State surety or a State guarantee may be given on the basis of an Act or of the consent of Parliament.

Section 65 (22 July 1991/1077) State agencies and institutions may be established within the limits of the State budget after the general grounds for them have been prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Provisions on the general bases for the operation and finances of State business enterprises shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament. In connection with the deliberation of the State budget, Parliament shall approve the principal service purposes and other operational aims of the enterprise.

The terms and conditions of service of civil servants may be determined by public sector collective bargaining agreements as prescribed by Act of Parliament. The competent special Committee of Parliament shall approve the collective agreement on behalf of Parliament insofar as Parliamentary consent is necessary. By Act of Parliament the Committee may also be assigned the task of approving on behalf of Parliament, as grounds for a State subsidy, the terms and conditions of service upon which the amount of the subsidy by law depends.

Section 66 (22 July 1991/1077) For each financial year Parliament shall determine the State budget, which shall be published in The Statutes of Finland.

The Council of State may furnish Parliament with a long-term plan for State finances in the form of a report or a statement.

Section 67 (22 July 1991/1077) The State budget shall contain estimates of annual revenues and appropriations for annual expenditures as well as the proposed use of the appropriations and other reasons for the budget. If so prescribed by Act of Parliament, estimated revenues or appropriations may be included in the budget in the form of the difference between closely related revenues and expenditures.

The revenue estimates included in the budget shall cover the appropriations included therein. Any surplus or deficit in the final accounts of the State may be taken into consideration in covering appropriations in the manner prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Revenue estimates and appropriations of State business enterprises shall be included in the budget only to the extent prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Revenue estimates and appropriations corresponding to closely related revenues and expenses may be included in the budget for more than one financial year in the manner prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 68 (22 July 1991/1077) Any decision approved by Parliament on the basis of a budget motion shall be conditionally included in the State budget. The President shall decide on the ratification of the conditional decision within two months of publication of the budget. If the President does not ratify the decision, the matter shall be returned to Parliament, which shall make the final decision on inclusion of the conditional decision in the budget.

Section 69 (22 July 1991/1077) The budget proposal and the other Government bills related thereto shall be submitted to Parliament well before the beginning of the financial year.

If the publication of the budget is delayed beyond the beginning of the financial year, the budget proposal of the Government shall be complied with as an interim budget in the manner decided by Parliament.

If changes in the budget are unavoidable, the Government shall submit a supplementary budget proposal to Parliament.

Section 70 (22 July 1991/1077) Appropriations shall be included in the State budget as fixed appropriations, estimated appropriations or transferable appropriations. An estimated appropriation may be exceeded and a transferable appropriation may be carried forward in the manner prescribed by Act of Parliament. Unless permitted by Act of Parliament, a fixed appropriation and a transferable appropriation may not be exceeded and a fixed appropriation may not be transferred.

Unless this has been permitted in the budget, an appropriation may not be transferred from one budget item to another. The transfer of an appropriation to another item with a closely related purpose may, however, be permitted by Act of Parliament.

Authorisation may be granted in the budget to make expenditure commitments during the financial year for which the necessary appropriations will be included in the budgets for the following financial years. The authorisation shall be limited with regard to both amount and purpose.

Regardless of the budget, everyone shall have the right to receive from the State what is due to him by law.

Section 71 (22 July 1991/1077) Parliament shall oversee the finances of the State and supervise compliance with the budget. The State auditors shall be appointed for this purpose.

The State auditors shall be entitled to obtain the information and documents they require from the authorities. Provisions regarding the right of the State auditors to obtain from elsewhere the information necessary for their work shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

For the purposes of auditing State finances and compliance with the budget there shall be a State Auditing Agency.

Section 72 (22 July 1991/1077) The currency of Finland shall be the markka.

Provisions on the determination of the foreign exchange rate of the markka shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 73 (22 July 1991/1077) The Bank of Finland shall function under the guarantee and management of Parliament and under the supervision of Governors elected by Parliament.

The Bank of Finland shall be managed in a manner prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Parliament shall decide on the use of the profits of the Bank of Finland for the needs of the State.

Section 74 (22 July 1991/1077) The conveyance or mortgaging of State-owned real property may take place with Parliamentary consent or in a manner prescribed by Act of Parliament.

VII. The Armed Forces

Section 75 Every Finnish citizen shall be under an obligation to participate or assist in the defence of the country in the manner prescribed by Act of Parliament.

As far as possible and unless he himself otherwise desires, a conscript shall be assigned to a unit whose ranks have the same native language as the conscript, either Finnish or Swedish, there to receive instruction in that language. The language of command in the armed forces shall be the Finnish language.

Section 76 If the armed forces are to be mobilised, the mobilisation order shall be issued by the President in the Council of State. When such an order has been issued, the Council of State shall take steps to meet the expenses thereby incurred and Parliament, if not in session, shall be convened.

VIII. Education

Section 77 The right of self-government of the University of Helsinki shall be maintained.

New provisions on the organisational basis of the University shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament, but more detailed provisions on the University shall be issued by Decree, in both cases after the University senate has provided a statement on the matter.

Section 78 The State shall support research and higher education in technological, agricultural and commercial science as well as in other disciplines of applied science, in addition to the practice of the fine arts and higher education therein, where these are not represented in the University, by maintaining and establishing special institutions of higher education or by subsidising private institutions established for this purpose.

Section 79 Educational institutions for advanced general learning and the advanced education of the people shall be maintained or, where necessary, subsidised at the expense of the State. The organisational basis of State educational institutions shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 80 Provisions on the organisational bases of primary school education and on

the obligations of the State and municipalities to support schools of primary education together with general provisions on compulsory school attendance shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Instruction in schools of primary education shall be available to everyone free of charge.

Section 81 Educational institutions for the technological professions, for agriculture and related occupations, for trade and navigation as well as for the fine arts shall be maintained by the State or, where necessary, subsidised with State funds.

Section 82 Provisions on the right to establish private schools and other private educational institutions and to organise teaching therein shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Instruction given in a home shall not be subject to official supervision.

IX. Religious Communities

Section 83 Provisions on the organisation and administration of the Evangelical Lutheran church shall be prescribed in the Church Code.

Other existing religious communities shall be governed by the provisions enacted or to be enacted on these communities.

New religious communities may be established in the manner prescribed by Act of Parliament.

X. Public office

Section 84 (28 July 1989/724) Only a citizen of Finland may be appointed to the offices of Chancellor of Justice or Assistant Chancellor of Justice of the Council of State, or to the office of a judge, of Commander of the Armed Forces or to the office of a member of the board of governors of the Bank of Finland, or may be elected to the office of Parliamentary Ombudsman or Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman.

The other offices to which only a citizen of Finland may be appointed shall be governed by provisions prescribed by Act of Parliament or by other provisions or stipulations issued under the authorisation of an Act of Parliament.

Section 85 The academic qualifications required for appointment to a State office shall be confirmed by Decree, insofar as these have not been prescribed by Act of Parliament. For special reasons a dispensation from the requirements issued by Decree may be granted by the Council of State, except in the case of appointment to a judicial office.

Section 86 The general grounds for promotion in State offices shall be skill, ability and proven civic merit.

Section 87 The President shall appoint:

- 1) the Chancellor of Justice and the Assistant Chancellor of Justice;
- 2) the Archbishop and the Bishops as well as the Chancellor of the University;
- 3) the Presidents of the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court and,

upon nomination by the Supreme Court, the Justices of the Supreme Court and the Presidents of the Courts of Appeal and, upon nomination by the Supreme Administrative Court, the Justices of that Court;

4) the Justices of the Courts of Appeal as well as the Professors of the University and the University of Technology;

5) the directors general of the central State agencies and the provincial governors, upon nomination by the Council of State, as well as the other senior civil servants of the central State agencies pursuant to specific provisions prescribed on these appointments by Act of Parliament or by Decree; (20 April 1990/343)

6) the head and the presenting officials in the Office of the President of the Republic and, upon nomination by the competent authority, the presenting officials in the Council of State, the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court; as well as (23 December 1987/1098)

7) the Ambassadors and consuls by career, upon nomination by the Council of State.

Section 88 The district court judges, chief judges of the city courts and justices of the land courts shall be appointed by the Supreme Court.

Pursuant to the provisions on these appointments, the following specific official appointments shall be made by the authorities specified:

1) judicial offices by the Supreme Court or the higher court to which the office is subordinate, and offices in the Supreme Administrative Court by that court; as well as

2) offices in administration and educational institutions by the Council of State, the Minister, the provincial administrative board or the governing board of the agency to which the office is subordinate.

Other State officials shall be appointed by the Council of State unless the right of appointment has been reserved for the President or assigned to another authority.

Section 89 (24 October 1986/754) Appointments to the offices of Appeal Court Justices and of Professors in institutions of higher education as well as to the offices specified in section 88, paragraph 1 shall, unless otherwise prescribed in section 90 and after being declared open for application, be made from the three applicants nominated by the authority where the vacancy has arisen as most deserving according to established standards. The Supreme Court shall make a statement regarding nominations for the office of Appeal Court Justice.

Provisions regarding appointments to offices other than those referred to in paragraph 1 shall be prescribed separately by Act of Parliament or by Decree.

Section 90 (30 June 1947/539) Special provisions shall govern appointment procedures to offices in institutions of higher education, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Greek Orthodox Church, to the offices of chief judge or member of a city court or a city administrative court and to offices in the Bank of Finland. (10 July 1987/639)

The officers of the army and the navy shall be appointed by the President. Separate provisions shall be prescribed regarding promotion in military rank and military training.

Section 91 All judges shall have the right not to be removed from office except on the basis of lawful trial and judgment; nor may they be transferred to another office without

their consent except when the transfer is due to a reorganisation of the judicial system.

Provisions on the obligation of a judge to retire from office on reaching a certain age or suffering loss of working capacity may be prescribed by Act of Parliament. (24 October 1986/754)

Separate provisions on the right of other officials to remain in office and on the bases of the conditions of service of judges and other civil servants shall be otherwise prescribed by Act of Parliament. (24 October 1986/754)

(Paragraph 4 was repealed by the Act of 24 October 1986/754.)

Section 92 Under threat of sanction there shall be strict compliance with the law in all official functions.

If a provision in a Decree conflicts with a Constitutional Act or another Act of Parliament, a judge or other official shall not apply it.

Section 93 A civil servant shall be responsible for any measures which he has undertaken or which he has supported as a member of a collegiate office. A presenting official shall likewise be accountable for any decision made upon his presentation unless he has stated a dissenting opinion for inclusion in the minutes.

In the manner prescribed by Act of Parliament, anyone who has suffered a loss of rights or damage due to the unlawful act or omission of an official shall have the right to demand that the official be sentenced to a punishment and ordered to compensate the damage, or the right to report the offence for the initiation of charges.

Specific provisions shall govern whether and to what extent the State is responsible for damage caused by an official.

XI. Concluding provisions

Section 94 The first presidential election shall be carried out by Parliament, and the election shall take place immediately upon the entry into force of this Form of Government Act. If, in the election by secret ballot, any candidate receives more than half of the votes cast, he shall be declared elected. Otherwise another election shall be carried out immediately and, if nevertheless no candidate receives an absolute majority, a further election shall be carried out between the two candidates who received the greatest number of votes in the second election. Should the votes be divided equally, the election shall be decided by the drawing of lots.

Section 95 This Form of Government Act shall be in all respects an irrevocable Constitutional Act of Parliament, and it may not be amended, expounded or repealed, nor may exceptions to it be made, except according to the prescribed procedure for Constitutional Acts in general.

The Constitution of 21 August 1772 and the Deed of Association and Security of 21 February and 3 March 1789, as well as all provisions in other Acts of Parliament and Decrees which in conflict with this Form of Government Act are hereby repealed.

The provisions necessary for the implementation of this Form of Government Act shall be enacted by Act of Parliament.

PARLIAMENT ACT

(13 January 1928/7)

Chapter 1 General Provisions

Section 1 The people of Finland are represented by Parliament, convened in session.

Section 2 Parliament shall be unicameral and shall comprise two hundred representatives.

Section 3 (30 June 1955/335) Parliamentary elections shall be held every fourth year at the same time throughout the country. Provisions on the participation of Finnish citizens abroad in parliamentary elections shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

If the President of the Republic has ordered new elections pursuant to the Constitution Act, the next election shall be held when the regular electoral period ends four years thereafter, unless Parliament is dissolved again before that time. (22 July 1991/1075)

The authority of a representative shall begin when he is declared elected and shall continue until the next election has been held.

Section 4 The representatives shall be elected by a direct and proportional ballot, for which purpose the country shall be divided into no fewer than twelve and no more than eighteen electoral districts.

However, if local conditions require an exception from electoral proportionality, one electoral district or several electoral districts may be formed, in addition to those referred to in paragraph 1, for the election of one representative only.

The suffrage of those enfranchised shall be equal in the elections.

The right to vote may not be exercised by proxy.

More detailed provisions on electoral districts and on the timing and manner of the elections shall be enacted in a special Act of Parliament.

Section 5 Anyone who, by enticement or pressure, disturbs the electoral freedom shall be sentenced for *disturbance of the electoral freedom* to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months. If violence or threat are employed in disturbing the electoral freedom, then the offender shall be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of not less than one month and not more than one year. (8 September 1989/793)

(Paragraph 2 was repealed by the Act of 8 September 1989/793)

Any employer who does not afford those enfranchised persons working for him an opportunity to exercise their right to vote shall be punished with a fine.

Section 6 (12 May 1972/357) Regardless of domicile or gender, every citizen of Finland who has reached the age of eighteen years before the year of the election shall be entitled to vote.

However, a person who has been convicted of buying or selling of votes in parliamentary elections or of attempting to do so, of voting in more than one place or

of disturbing the electoral freedom by violence or threat shall be disqualified from voting until the end of the sixth calendar year from the date of final sentencing.

Provisions on the compilation of electoral rolls of those entitled to vote shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Section 7 (10 November 1971/744) Regardless of domicile, every person entitled to vote and not under guardianship shall be eligible for Parliament. (3 June 1976/455)

However, a soldier may not be elected a representative, with the exception of a person serving his term of military conscription.

Section 8 (10 January 1969/4) If an elected representative loses his eligibility for office, his parliamentary mandate shall expire.

If an elected representative is elected President of the Republic, his parliamentary mandate shall expire on the date when he takes office as President. However, after having been elected he may not participate in parliamentary business. (22 July 1991/1075)

A parliamentary mandate shall not expire due to the conscription of the elected representative for service in the armed forces or for non-military service after the election. (7 July 1970/454)

If, after the election, an elected representative has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment for an intentional offence other than those referred to in section 6, paragraph 2, Parliament shall have the authority to determine whether he may still be permitted to serve as a representative. When the nature of the offence or the manner of its commission indicates that the offender is not worthy of the trust and respect required by his parliamentary mandate, Parliament may, after having obtained a statement on the matter from the Committee for Constitutional Law, revoke his parliamentary mandate by a decision supported by not less than two thirds of the votes cast, unless the offender himself has petitioned Parliament for such a discharge. This provision shall be complied with after the Court of Appeal has issued its decision, though it be not yet final. However and notwithstanding the right of appeal, Parliament shall take up the matter for consideration following, and on the basis of the decision of the lower court, if the decision of Parliament to this effect is supported by not less than five sixths of the votes cast. (18 March 1983/278)

Section 9 (18 March 1983/278) The Chancellor of Justice, the Assistant Chancellor of Justice, a Justice of the Supreme Court or of the Supreme Administrative Court, the Parliamentary Ombudsman and the Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman may not hold the office of representative. If a representative is appointed to one of the aforesaid offices or elected Parliamentary Ombudsman or Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman, his parliamentary mandate shall expire.

Section 10 A person who has been declared an elected representative pursuant to the Elections Act shall not be discharged from his duties, unless he can show some lawful impediment or other reason approved by Parliament.

The duties of a representative shall be suspended for the period he is in the service referred to in section 8, paragraph 3. During this period he may not participate in parliamentary business. (6 March 1992/205)

Section 11 In performing his duties a representative shall be bound to serve the interests of justice and truth. He shall be bound therein to comply with the Constitution, and shall not be bound by any other regulations.

Section 12 A representative shall not be prevented from entering Parliament and attending to his duties there.

Section 13 (3 November 1944/771) No representative shall be indicted or deprived of his liberty on the grounds of the opinions which he has expressed in Parliament or of his conduct otherwise in the consideration of any business, unless Parliament has consented to this by a decision supported by no fewer than five sixths of the votes cast.

Section 14 (30 April 1987/457) A representative may not be apprehended, detained or subjected to a travel ban without the consent of Parliament before the charges against him have been taken up for consideration, unless he has been caught in the act of committing an offence for which the minimum penalty is a period of imprisonment no shorter than six months.

The Speaker shall be immediately informed of the apprehension and detention of a representative.

Section 15 If a person, either in the course of a parliamentary session or while a representative is travelling to or from Parliament, abuses the representative by word or by deed, in the knowledge that the person so abused is a representative, or if a person assaults a representative after a parliamentary session because of the manner in which he has carried out his duties, the fact that the victim of the offence was a representative shall be deemed to be a seriously aggravating circumstance.

The provisions of this section regarding representatives shall also apply to parliamentary secretaries and to other parliamentary officials and ancillary staff.

Section 16 (6 May 1955/209) A representative shall receive a salary from State funds. In addition, he shall be reimbursed for the costs of his travel to and from Parliament.

The bases for the salary and the reimbursement of travel costs shall be determined by law, the proposal for which shall be considered following the procedure prescribed in section 70.

The said law shall also prescribe the basis of the salary to be paid, following the interruption or closure of a parliamentary session, to the members of the special committees and to the representatives whose duty it is to verify the replies and communications of Parliament and the resolutions of the Parliamentary session. (22 July 1991/1078)

The right of a representative to a pension shall be prescribed by law.

Section 17 If a representative does not arrive in time for a parliamentary session or if, without the permission of Parliament, he fails to appear and has no acceptable excuse, Parliament may impose as a sanction the forfeiture of the whole or a part of his salary. If the representative does not thereafter amend his conduct, Parliament may revoke his mandate.

If a representative is serving a sentence of imprisonment, he shall forfeit his salary for the same period.

Chapter 2

Opening and Closure of Parliamentary Sessions and the Dissolution of Parliament

Section 18 Parliament shall convene in the capital city of the State, except where this is impossible or jeopardises the safety of Parliament due to enemy incursion or other special cause. In these cases the President of the Republic shall determine the place where Parliament shall convene.

Section 19 (18 March 1983/278) Regular parliamentary sessions shall convene annually on the first day of February, unless Parliament has, during the preceding regular session, specified another date on which to convene.

A regular parliamentary session shall continue with or without interruptions until the following regular session is convened. However, the final session of a regular electoral period shall continue until the President of the Republic, after Parliament has decided to close its session, declares the business of Parliament concluded for the electoral period in question.

The Speaker of Parliament shall have the right to convene Parliament for the continuation of an interrupted session.

Section 20 (26 June 1987/576) If the President of the Republic orders a new election during a regular session, Parliament shall decide the date when it closes the session. After the election Parliament shall meet in a regular session on the first day of the next calendar month which follows a period of ninety days counted from the date of the election order, or on an earlier date as determined by the President.

Section 21 The President of the Republic shall have the right to convene an extraordinary parliamentary session, and to determine when such a session shall be closed.

An extraordinary session may be ordered to convene at the earliest on the third day after the summons was issued. It may not continue beyond the last weekday before the beginning of a regular session. (18 March 1983/278)

During an extraordinary session Parliament may consider only those matters for which it has been convened or which otherwise have been presented to Parliament by the government, as well as matters that are inseparably connected thereto.

Section 22 (18 March 1983/278) The orders of the President of the Republic referred to in sections 20 and 21 shall be published in The Statutes of Finland, following the procedure prescribed for the publication of Acts of Parliament and Decrees. An order referred to in section 18 shall be published in The Statutes of Finland, if the President so decides.

Section 23 On the day before the day when Parliament shall convene for the first time following an election, at noon, all of the representatives, in the order specified in an announcement, shall present their credentials to the person or persons whom the President of the Republic has appointed to inspect the credentials. In the inspection it shall be determined whether the credentials have been issued by the competent official and whether they are in the prescribed form.

An alphabetical list of representatives who have shown themselves to be duly authorised shall be presented to Parliament before noon on the following day.

Credentials presented later shall be inspected immediately, as provided in paragraph 1, and following approval, shall be shown to the Speaker. This and the other changes in the composition of Parliament shall be entered in the list referred to in paragraph 2.

Section 24 If the credentials of a representative have not been approved, Parliament shall have the right to determine whether he shall in any case serve as a representative by virtue of the credentials.

If, during a parliamentary session, an objection concerning the eligibility of a representative is filed pursuant to this Act, it shall also be investigated by Parliament, unless the same objection has been filed or may still be filed with the competent official as an electoral appeal.

In no other case shall any question of the validity of a parliamentary election be considered by Parliament, unless the objection has been filed on the grounds that either in the election or in the election procedures there has been obvious criminal misconduct or a clear error in the determination of the election result. In such cases, if it is clear that the offence or the error may have affected the election result and rectification may no longer be obtained by any appeal route, Parliament shall have the right to rectify the election result so that it is consistent with the provisions of the Elections Act.

A representative whose right to hold office has been questioned shall, however, remain in office until declared ineligible for office.

Section 25 At noon on the first day of a session, Parliament shall assemble in a plenary sitting beginning with a roll call of the list referred to in section 23. In this plenary sitting Parliament shall elect a Speaker and two Deputy Speakers from among its members. However, during an extraordinary session the Speaker and Deputy Speakers of the immediately preceding regular session shall serve as Speakers. (18 March 1983/278)

The Speaker and Deputy Speakers shall be elected by secret ballot. In each election a representative who receives more than half of the votes cast shall be elected. Otherwise a new election shall be held immediately and if, nevertheless, no candidate receives an absolute majority, a further election shall be held in which the representative who receives the most votes shall be elected. Should the votes be divided equally, the election shall be decided by the drawing of lots. (18 March 1983/278)

After the election the Speaker and Deputy Speakers shall, each in turn, make the following solemn affirmation before Parliament:

"I, N.N., affirm that in my office as Speaker I will to the best of my ability defend the rights of the people, Parliament and the government of Finland according to the Constitution."

Until these affirmations have been made the representative most senior in years shall serve as Speaker.

The terms of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers shall last until the end of the parliamentary session. However, the terms of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers elected for the final session of an electoral period shall last until new elections have been held. (18 March 1983/278)

If the Speaker or a Deputy Speaker dies or resigns from office during a parliamentary session, a new Speaker or Deputy Speaker shall be elected without delay.

Section 26 The President of the Republic shall cause the time of the opening of a parliamentary session to be announced. The opening shall be ordered no later than on the third weekday after Parliament has convened. At the said time, following a holy service, the representatives shall assemble in the Parliament Building, where the President shall deliver a welcoming address to Parliament and declare the session open. The Speaker shall reply to the opening address on behalf of Parliament.

Section 27 (18 March 1983/278) For the conclusion of parliamentary business, in the last session of a regular electoral period at a time determined by the President, following a holy service, the representatives shall assemble in the Parliament Building, where the Speaker shall bid the President welcome on behalf of Parliament. Thereafter the President shall declare the parliamentary business concluded for that electoral period.

Chapter 3

Initiation of Matters in Parliament

Section 28 (18 March 1983/278) Government proposals shall be submitted to Parliament by the President of the Republic.

The President of the Republic may withdraw a government proposal when there are grounds for so doing.

The Speaker shall notify Parliament of the receipt of government proposals, as well as of Decrees and of government resolutions or ministerial decisions presented for parliamentary inspection. He shall also notify Parliament of the withdrawal of a government proposal.

Section 29 (8 February 1985/152) In all regular parliamentary sessions, within three months of the opening of the session, a report shall be presented to Parliament on the measures the government has undertaken on the basis of the decisions of Parliament, as well as on other matters of significance in State administration and relations with foreign powers.

Section 30 A proposal for the State budget for the following financial year shall be submitted to Parliament in all regular parliamentary sessions. (22 July 1991/1078)

A report on the management and condition of State finances shall also be presented to Parliament in all regular parliamentary sessions.

The State auditors elected by Parliament shall submit a report to Parliament pursuant to the provisions governing such reports.

Section 31 Parliament shall have the right to consider an initiative that has been duly submitted by a representative. Such an initiative may be:

1) A bill, containing a proposal in legislative form for the enactment of a new Act of Parliament or for the amendment, expounding or repeal of an existing Act of Parliament,

or a proposal for an Act of Parliament regarding a matter that had previously been governed by administrative provisions;

2) A budget motion, containing a proposal for an appropriation or other decision to be included in the budget or for a budget amendment immediately connected with a supplementary budget proposal by the government; (22 July 1991/1078)

3) A petitionary motion, containing a proposal for Parliament to petition the government to undertake measures on a matter within its competence.

Separate provisions shall apply to the enactment of the Church Code.

Section 32 (18 March 1983/278) An initiative shall be submitted in writing. It shall include the grounds on which the proposal is based. Disparate matters shall not be incorporated in the same initiative.

A bill may be submitted when Parliament is in session.

A budget motion may be submitted during the period beginning when Parliament has been notified of the arrival of the State budget proposal and ending at noon on the fourteenth day thereafter. A budget motion relating to a supplementary budget proposal may be submitted during the period beginning when Parliament has been notified of the arrival of the supplementary budget proposal and ending at noon on the third day thereafter. (6 March 1992/205)

A petitionary motion may be submitted in regular parliamentary sessions during the period beginning at the opening of the session and ending at noon on the fourteenth day thereafter in the first regular session of an electoral period, or at noon on the seventh day thereafter in other regular sessions. (22 July 1991/1078)

An initiative may be withdrawn when there are grounds for so doing. All of those who signed the initiative must sign the letter of withdrawal.

Section 33 Separate provisions shall govern the right of the Åland Legislative Assembly to submit initiatives.

Section 34 A statement from Parliament on a matter which the government may determine without the participation of Parliament may be requested in a government proposal.

Section 35 If the consideration of a matter has not been concluded by the end of a regular parliamentary session, it shall be continued, with the exceptions referred to in sections 36 and 37, in the following regular session, unless parliamentary elections have been held in the interim.

Section 36 If the Council of State wishes to submit to Parliament an unscheduled statement or notification on a matter of State administration or of relations with foreign powers, it shall be presented to Parliament and deferred to a later sitting. When debate on the matter has been formally concluded, the Speaker shall submit to Parliament a motion to proceed with the agenda, with the following wording: "Having been notified, Parliament shall proceed with the agenda."

Parliament may approve of proceeding with the agenda either in this ordinary manner, or with a statement of the reasons presented during the debate. It may also decide to send the matter to the competent committee. If the matter is sent to a

committee, the committee shall propose that Parliament proceed with the agenda, giving a statement of reasons for this, the final content of which shall be decided by Parliament.

The Council of State may submit an unscheduled report to Parliament on a matter referred to in paragraph 1 above. The report shall be presented to Parliament and deferred to a later sitting. When the debate has ended, the report shall be sent to a committee for preparation, unless Parliament decides to proceed with the agenda without sending the report to a committee. Having considered the report the committee, in its report, shall propose the wording of the statement to be issued on the report of the Council of State. Parliament shall decide on the final content of the statement and shall proceed with the agenda. While a report is under consideration, no motion may be submitted nor decision made concerning the confidence that the Council of State or a member thereof enjoys. (23 March 1989/297)

The consideration of a statement or notification from the Council of State shall not be continued into the following parliamentary session. Neither shall the consideration of a report of the Council of State be continued into the following parliamentary session, unless otherwise decided by Parliament. (30 November 1990/1056)

Section 37 If a representative wishes to put a question to a member of the Council of State on a matter within the competence of the member, he shall submit the question in writing and worded in precise terms to the Speaker, who shall forward it to the member of the Council of State. A question may also be asked when the parliamentary session has been interrupted. The member of the Council of State shall respond to the question either orally or in writing at a time agreed upon with the Speaker, unless he considers that due to the nature of the matter the question may not be answered. In this case Parliament shall be notified of the reasons for the refusal. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 93, paragraph 2, a response or the corresponding notification shall be given within thirty days of receipt of the question. If the parliamentary session is interrupted, the response or notification shall be issued in writing. No debate shall be permitted on such a matter. (13 March 1987/316)

If a representative wishes to address an interpellation to a member of the Council of State on a matter within the competence of the member, for consideration in Parliament, the representative shall submit the interpellation to the Speaker observing the provisions of paragraph 1 in respect of form and content. After the interpellation has been presented in Parliament and deferred to a later sitting, and if no fewer than twenty representatives, including the interpellators, have joined the interpellation in writing, the Speaker shall forward the interpellation to the competent member of the Council of State without a debate in Parliament. The member of the Council of State shall respond to the interpellation within fifteen days of receipt thereof, at a time agreed upon with the Speaker, unless the Council of State within the same period notifies Parliament that due to the nature of the matter no response shall be given. In this case Parliament shall be notified of the reasons for the refusal. When a response has been given or Parliament has been notified that none shall be given, and debate on the matter has been formally concluded, the Speaker shall submit to Parliament a motion to proceed with the agenda, with the following wording: "Having heard the explanation that has been given, Parliament shall proceed with the agenda."

Parliament may approve of proceeding with the agenda either in this ordinary manner, or with a statement of the reasons, presented during the debate. It may also decide to send the matter to the Committee for Constitutional Law or, if the nature of the matter so requires, to another committee. If the matter is sent to a committee, the committee shall propose that Parliament proceed with the agenda, giving a statement of reasons for this, the final content of which shall be decided by Parliament.

The consideration of an interpellation may not be continued into the following parliamentary session. (18 March 1983/278)

Section 37 a (4 March 1966/117) A representative shall have the right to put a short oral question in Parliament to a member of the Council of State on a matter within the competence of the member, provided that the matter is one of consequence. (13 March 1987/316)

A representative who intends to ask an oral question shall submit the question to the Speaker in writing. If the question fulfils the requirements prescribed in paragraph 1, the Speaker shall forward it to the member of the Council of State without delay. A representative may ask only two questions during any one week.

The member of the Council of State shall respond to the question in the next sitting in which oral questions are considered. However, he is not required to respond earlier than on the third weekday following receipt of the question. On the basis of the reply the representative asking the question may take the floor no more than twice. At his own discretion the Speaker may also allow other representatives a single opportunity to speak on the subject. The member of the Council of State shall have the right to respond to the comments made. He shall reply immediately to any additional questions asked during the comments. No further debate on the matter shall be permitted. The response and other comments shall be brief. Specific provisions on the response and comments shall be prescribed in the Procedure of Parliament. (13 March 1987/316)

If the member of the Council of State considers that due to the nature of the matter no response to the question shall be given, he shall notify Parliament of this in the manner indicated in paragraph 3 and shall at the same time also give the reasons for the refusal. No debate shall be permitted concerning such notification.

Parliament shall make no decision on matters referred to in this section. (18 March 1983/278)

Section 37 b (23 March 1989/297) A question may be put in Parliament to the Council of State on a current issue in State administration or relations with foreign powers, provided that the matter is one of consequence and within the competence of the Council of State. The question shall be submitted to the Speaker in writing and signed by no fewer than four representatives.

The Speakers' Council shall decide on the questions to be forwarded to the Council of State. All other questions shall lapse.

At the next sitting at which time has been reserved for questions to the Council of State a response to the question shall be given on behalf of the Council of State by the Prime Minister, or at his behest, by the member of the Council of State within whose competence the matter lies, or by another member of the Council of State. The first signatory of the question shall have the first right to take the floor on the basis of the

reply. At his own discretion the Speaker shall allow other representatives and the members of the Council of State to speak on the matter. No further debate on the matter shall be permitted. When all the requests for the floor have been granted or when the Speaker considers there has been sufficient debate, he shall formally conclude the debate. A response to a question to which no response has been given when the Speaker concludes the sitting shall be given in a later sitting at which time has been reserved for questions.

Parliament shall make no decision on matters provided for in this section.

More detailed provisions on the asking of questions and on responses and other comments shall be enacted in the Procedure of Parliament.

Section 38 Provisions on the right of Parliament to inspect the legality of the official acts of the members of the Council of State and of the Chancellor of Justice and on the consideration of such matters shall be prescribed in a special Act of Parliament.

Section 38 a (22 July 1991/1078) The provisions on the consideration of the State budget shall apply to a supplementary budget, unless specifically otherwise prescribed.

Chapter 4

Preparation of Matters

Section 39 (18 March 1983/278) Within five days of the opening of the first session of an electoral period Parliament shall appoint no fewer than forty-five electors, and deputies for them numbering no fewer than one third of the number of electors, for the election of the committees and the other organs of Parliament.

Parliament shall elect the electors by proportional ballot, unless the appointments can be determined by agreement. The term of the electors shall last for the electoral period, unless on the proposal of the Speakers' Council Parliament decides that the electors shall be re-appointed.

Section 40 (30 November 1990/1056) In the first session of an electoral period, within seven days of the opening of Parliament, the Committee for Constitutional Law, the Committee for Ordinary Law, the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee and the other standing committees provided for in the Procedure of Parliament shall be appointed.

The Committee for Constitutional Law, the Committee for Ordinary Law and the Foreign Affairs Committee shall have no fewer than seventeen members, the Finance Committee shall have no fewer than twenty-one members and other standing committees shall have no fewer than eleven members. A standing committee shall also have deputy members, who shall number no fewer than one fourth of the number of members.

Parliament may appoint a temporary committee for the preparation of a specific matter. A temporary committee shall have no fewer than eleven members. It shall also have deputy members, who shall number no fewer than one fourth of the number of members.

If a committee perceives a need to increase the number of its members or deputy members, it shall submit to Parliament a motion to this effect.

Section 41 (18 March 1983/278) If Parliament is unanimous on the election, it shall elect the members and deputy members of the standing and temporary committees. If no consensus can be reached, the election shall be performed by the electors.

If the electors do not reach a consensus on the election of the members and deputy members of a committee, it shall be conducted by proportional ballot.

The term of the members of a standing committee shall last for the electoral period, unless Parliament, on the proposal of the Speakers' Council, decides that the committee shall be re-appointed.

The term of the members of a temporary committee shall last until the committee has fulfilled its task. Such a committee may also be re-appointed during an electoral period.

Section 42 (30 November 1990/1056) In the first session of an electoral period, within seven days of the opening of Parliament, it shall appoint a Grand Committee. The Committee shall have no fewer than twenty-five members. It shall also have deputy members, who shall number no fewer than one third of the number of members. The provisions on the election and term of the members of a standing committee shall apply to the election and term of the members of the Grand Committee.

Section 42 a (18 March 1983/278) In a regular session, within seven days of the opening of Parliament, it shall elect from among its members five revisors and a deputy revisor for each revisor. If Parliament is unable to agree on those elected, then the election shall be conducted by proportional ballot.

In an extraordinary session the revisors and deputy revisors elected in the previous session shall serve as revisors and deputy revisors.

Section 43 (30 November 1990/1056) Regardless of any interruption or the closing of the parliamentary session, the Foreign Affairs Committee shall meet at the request of the government or on the initiative of the chairman of the Committee, or if no fewer than one third of the members of the Committee so request of the chairman in writing.

Other committees shall meet during an interruption of the parliamentary session on the initiative of the chairman of the committee, or if no fewer than one third of the members of the committee so request of the chairman in writing.

Section 44 A member of the Council of State may not serve as a member of a Committee.

A person, whose official acts are being inspected in a committee or who has a personal interest in the matter, may not participate in the consideration of the matter in the committee.

Section 45 The electors, the committees and the revisors shall each elect from among themselves a chairman and a deputy chairman for the duration of their terms. (18 March 1983/278)

The first meeting shall be convened by that member of the electors, of each committee, and of the revisors who is most senior in years. He shall serve as chairman of the meeting until a chairman has been elected. (18 March 1983/278)

For the purpose of a specific matter a committee may elect one or more presenting members from among its members to present the necessary information when the matter is under consideration in a plenary sitting of Parliament or in the Grand Committee.

Section 46 The Committee for Constitutional Law shall prepare the matters sent to it relating to the enactment, amendment, expounding or repeal of a Constitutional Act or to legislation that is in close substantive connection with a Constitutional Act.

The Committee shall also examine the proposals sent to it relating to the enactment of the Procedure of Parliament, the Election Rules of Parliament and the regulations for the Parliamentary Ombudsman. (18 March 1983/278)

The Committee shall likewise examine the government report referred to in section 29, and submit the motions warranted thereby.

The matters arising from the fact that Parliament has the right to inspect the legality of the official acts of the members of the Council of State and of the Chancellor of Justice shall also be prepared by the Committee for Constitutional Law.

The Committee for Constitutional Law shall settle differences between Parliament and the Speaker, when the Speaker has refused to take up a proposed matter for consideration or to present a matter for voting.

Section 47 The Committee for Ordinary Law shall prepare the proposals sent to it relating to the enactment, amendment, expounding or repeal of a general Act of Parliament.

Section 48 The Foreign Affairs Committee shall prepare the matters relating to the ratification or introduction of a treaty, or otherwise to the administration of foreign affairs. However, a matter relating to the ratification or introduction of an ordinary treaty that lies substantively within the competence of another committee may be sent to that committee for preparation. (22 March 1991/548)

The Committee shall receive a report from the government on relations with foreign powers as often as circumstances warrant. If the Committee deems it necessary, it may issue a statement to the government on the basis of the report.

The Committee shall also examine the report referred to in section 29 if it pertains to relations with foreign powers, and submit the motions warranted thereby.

The members of the Committee shall observe whatever secrecy the government deems necessary in view of the nature of each matter.

Section 49 The Finance Committee shall have access to all the accounts and documents relating to State finances. In its report on the condition of State finances and on the report of the State auditors the Committee shall express its opinion as to how the State budget has been complied with and the State finances managed, and submit the motions warranted thereby. (22 July 1991/1078)

The government proposal on the State budget, the other Government proposals relating to State finances and the budget motions shall also be sent to the Finance Committee. In its report on the budget proposal the Committee shall consider all of the issues to be decided in the budget. In the same report the Committee shall propose the means to collect the funds needed to defray the expenses. (22 July 1991/1078)

The Finance Committee shall serve as the committee referred to in section 65,

paragraph 3 of the Constitution Act, and may submit its decision for confirmation by Parliament. After debating the matter Parliament shall either accept or reject the decision. (6 March 1992/205)

The Finance Committee shall, through the competent member of the Council of State, monitor negotiations on the conditions of service referred to in section 65, paragraph 3 of the Constitution Act, and the preparation of decisions relating to these conditions. The Council of State shall submit for the approval of the Finance Committee collective bargaining agreements on official salaries, as well as decisions of the Council of State or of the Commission for Local Authority Employers concerning conditions of public service. (6 March 1992/205)

The Committee shall also examine the proposals sent to it relating to the issuing, amendment or repeal of the regulations for the State auditors.

Section 50 The management and condition of the Bank of Finland, the actions of the Governors and the Board of the Bank of Finland and the condition and management of the funds under the supervision of Parliament shall be inspected by the standing committee to which these duties are assigned by the Procedure of Parliament. The committee shall submit a report on these matters to Parliament. (22 July 1991/1078)

The committee shall submit the necessary motions on the enactment, amendment or repeal of the Act on the Bank of Finland and the regulations for the Governors, as well as on the issuing of other regulations and orders relating to the Bank of Finland. It shall prepare all the government proposals and other motions relating to these matters. A decision on the use of the profits of the Bank of Finland may not be made before the committee has issued a statement on the matter. (22 July 1991/1078)

The committee shall likewise prepare the matters sent to it relating to the banking and monetary system of Finland.

Section 51 Each committee shall meet within two days of its appointment. As soon as a matter is prepared a report warranted by the nature of the matter shall be submitted to a plenary sitting of Parliament.

If a member of a committee is prevented from attending the consideration of a matter, a deputy member shall be summoned to take his place. A committee shall not constitute a quorum unless no fewer than two thirds of the members are present.

If a member of a committee, with neither valid excuse nor special permission, fails to attend a meeting of the Committee, Parliament may impose as a sanction the forfeiture of his salary, either in whole or in part, as provided in section 17, and, if the failure occurs more frequently, may declare him to have forfeited his position as a member of the committee.

A member who disagrees with the decision of a committee shall have the right to append a written protest to the report provided that he does not thereby delay the report.

Section 52 The members of the Council of State shall have the right to participate in the meetings and discussions of the committees, unless a committee otherwise decides in a specific instance.

The Speaker and the Deputy Speakers shall have the right to attend the meetings of the committees.

All of the members of Parliament, the secretary of Parliament and other parliamentary officials appointed by the Speaker shall have the right to attend the meetings of the Grand Committee.

A committee may declare its proceedings open to the public to the extent that is necessary for collecting information for the preparation of a matter. (30 November 1990/1056)

Section 52 a (22 July 1991/1079) The Sámi shall be heard in a matter of special consequence to them, as further provided in the Procedure of Parliament.

Section 53 (30 November 1990/1056) If, for the preparation of a matter, a committee requires access to official documents gathered by an official or a public service not subject to parliamentary control, or needs to receive oral or written information from them, then the Prime Minister or the competent Minister shall, at the request of the committee, take steps to have the required documents or information presented to the committee without delay.

The competent Ministry shall present a committee with an account of any matter within the competence of the committee requested thereby. If necessary, the committee may provide the Ministry with a statement arising from the account received.

Section 54 The Speaker of Parliament, the Deputy Speakers and the Chairmen of the committees shall form the Speakers' Council.

The Speakers' Council shall submit proposals on the organisation of parliamentary business. If necessary, the Speakers' Council shall also submit motions to Parliament relating to the enactment of legislation on parliamentary officials, the Procedure of Parliament, the Election Rules of Parliament and the regulations for parliamentary officials. (31 December 1987/1254)

Chapter 5

Consideration of Matters in Plenary Sitzings and in the Grand Committee

Section 55 The Speaker shall issue the summons to plenary sittings, present the matters and preside over the debates therein, submit proposals for decision, maintain order in sittings and otherwise oversee that nothing contrary to a Constitutional Act is taken up for consideration. The Speaker shall also conclude a sitting.

The Speaker shall not participate in a debate or a vote. Neither shall he propose anything other than what is necessary for the enforcement of the Constitutional Acts, the decisions of Parliament or the Procedure of Parliament.

When the Speaker is prevented from attending to his duties, then the first Deputy Speaker shall take his place. If the first Deputy Speaker is also prevented, then the second Deputy Speaker shall attend to the duties of Speaker.

If the Speaker and Deputy Speakers are prevented from attending to the duties of

Speaker, then the plenary sitting shall be chaired by that member of the Speakers' Council most senior in years present in the sitting. In this case only notices shall be considered and the time of the next plenary sitting announced in the sitting. Decisions relating to other matters shall not be made, unless especially compelling reasons otherwise warrant. (18 March 1983/278)

Section 56 The consideration of matters in plenary sittings of Parliament shall be open to the public, unless Parliament otherwise decides in a specific instance.

Section 57 (6 November 1964/534) In a plenary sitting each representative shall have the right, subject to the exceptions referred to in sections 59 and 60, to take the floor in the order in which he has requested it. However, a representative may be given the floor in a different order in order to give a short reply to a comment made by another representative, as further provided in the Procedure of Parliament.

However, when the State budget, a statement, notification or report from the Council of State, an interpellation or another matter of consequence is under consideration, the representatives may be given the floor notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 in the order provided in the Procedure of Parliament. The provisions of sections 59 and 60 on giving the floor shall also apply in these cases. (22 July 1991/1078)

Each representative shall have the right to speak freely and express his opinion, to be recorded in the minutes, on all matters under consideration at the time and on the legality of everything taking place in the parliamentary session.

No one shall speak before being given the floor, nor without being recorded in the minutes.

Section 58 A representative shall conduct himself seriously and with dignity. No one shall use offensive, derisive or otherwise improper language about the government or private persons. If someone infringes this provision, the Speaker shall call him to order, and if he fails to heed the call, the Speaker shall deny him the floor. Otherwise it shall be for Parliament to investigate whether a representative who has contravened the order is to be admonished and warned by the Speaker or banned from attending the sittings of Parliament for a fixed period not exceeding two weeks, or whether charges are to be brought against him in a court of law, or whether the matter shall be allowed to lapse.

Section 59 The members of the Council of State and the Chancellor of Justice, as well as the Parliamentary Ombudsman, shall have the right to attend the sittings of Parliament and to participate in the debates. They shall not have the right to participate in the decisions, unless they are Members of Parliament. If one of them requests the floor, it shall be given to him before anyone else.

Section 60 (18 March 1983/278) The chairman of a committee or, when the committee has elected the presenting member referred to in section 45, the presenting member shall have the right to be given the floor before the other representatives, in order to present a report.

Section 61 Only those professing the Evangelical Lutheran creed shall participate in the consideration of proposals pertaining to the Church Code of the Evangelical Lutheran Church or to any other ecclesiastical business arising from the Evangelical

Lutheran parishes.

Section 62 A representative may participate in the debate of a matter in which he has a personal interest, but may not participate in the decision on such a matter.

Section 63 (18 March 1983/278) Before their final consideration in plenary sitting the following matters shall be prepared in a committee:

- 1) Government proposals;
- 2) Bills;
- 3) Budget proposals and petitionary proposals, unless they are dismissed immediately; (22 July 1991/1078)
- 4) Decrees, government resolutions and ministerial decisions which have been submitted for the approval of Parliament;
- 5) Reports; and
- 6) Matters relating to parliamentary decisions conditionally entered into the budget and not ratified by the President of the Republic. (22 July 1991/1078)

Section 64 (6 March 1992/205) Unless a matter referred to in section 63, when presented for sending to a committee, is unanimously sent thereto, it shall be deferred until a closely following sitting. In such a sitting the matter may not be deferred again. However, a matter relating to a budget motion or a petitionary motion may be deferred, if Parliament so decides.

Section 65 (30 November 1990/1056) When first presented, the report of a special committee shall be deferred. When it is presented again for the first reading, it shall be deferred again, either following or without a debate, if two members so request. When a matter is again taken up after deferral in the first reading, it may no longer be deferred.

The provisions of paragraph 1 shall not apply in the second reading. However, when first presented, a report of the Grand Committee shall be deferred if two representatives so request.

Section 66 If the report of a committee pertains to the approval or dismissal of a legislative proposal, the matter shall be taken up in plenary sitting for three separate readings. (30 November 1990/1056)

In the first reading the report of the special committee shall be presented and the Members of Parliament shall be given an opportunity to express their opinions on the matter. When the debate on the matter has been formally concluded Parliament may, without making any further decision, send the matter to the Grand Committee. In its report the Grand Committee shall submit the proposals it deems necessary. (30 November 1990/1056)

In the second reading the report of the special committee or, if such has been submitted, the report of the Grand Committee shall be presented (again). Parliament shall examine the legislative proposal and make a decision on each of its various points. If the proposal of the Committee is approved in full, the second reading shall be formally concluded. Otherwise the legislative proposal shall be sent to the Grand Committee in the verbal form that Parliament has approved for it. The Grand Committee may recommend that the proposal be approved as it stands or with amendments, or that it be

dismissed. If the Grand Committee has proposed alterations, Parliament shall decide whether they shall be approved or rejected, after which the second reading shall be formally concluded. (30 November 1990/1056)

If the committee report includes a legislative proposal, no motion to dismiss the proposal may be submitted in the second reading. (30 November 1990/1056)

During the second reading of a matter Parliament may request a new statement from the special committee that has prepared the matter, or from another special committee. The Grand Committee shall have the same right.

In the third reading, which may take place no sooner than on the third day after the conclusion of the second reading, the matter shall be presented for a final decision. At that time Parliament may either approve the legislative proposal in the unamended form decided in the second reading, or dismiss it.

A legislative proposal that has received a majority of the votes cast in the third reading may, however, be left in abeyance if the proposal concerns a law which will reduce the statutory legal protection of incomes and does not concern the levying of taxes or the approval of a stipulation contained in an international treaty. A motion to leave a legislative proposal in abeyance shall be submitted before the decision to either approve or dismiss the proposal has been presented for voting, and if the legislative proposal is not dismissed in the vote, then the matter shall be deferred to the following plenary sitting. If at that time the motion to leave a legislative proposal in abeyance is supported by no fewer than one third of all of the Members of Parliament, then the legislative proposal, in the verbal form accepted in the third reading, shall be left in abeyance until the regular session of Parliament taking place after the following regular session of Parliament. However, a legislative proposal that has been left in abeyance during the last regular session of an electoral period shall remain in abeyance until the first regular session of Parliament following the election. (28 August 1992/818)

(Paragraph 8 was repealed by the Act of 28 August 1992/818)

(Section 66 a was repealed by the Act of 28 August 1992/818)

Section 67 In order to be adopted as a decision of Parliament, a proposal on the enactment, amendment, expounding or repeal of a Constitutional Act shall, after following the procedure laid down in section 66, be approved by a majority of the votes cast in the third reading to be left in abeyance until the first regular parliamentary session following an election. In the said session the proposal shall be approved in an unamended form by a decision that has received the support of no fewer than two thirds of the votes cast.

However, if a proposal relating to a Constitutional Act is declared urgent by a decision made in a plenary sitting that has received the support of no fewer than five sixths of the votes cast, then the matter shall be resolved and a decision on the adoption of the proposal made, as provided in paragraph 1, without leaving the matter in abeyance.

The above provisions on Constitutional Acts shall apply to the special privileges of the Estates.

Section 67 a (28 August 1992/818) The proposal for an Act of Parliament containing provisions essential for the alleviation of an imminent severe disturbance in the national economy by the supervision and regulation of foreign trade, foreign payments, prices,

rents, wages, interest rates and dividends, where the Act shall remain in force for no longer than two years, shall, if the matter concerns a Constitutional Act, be approved in the third reading by a decision that has received the support of two thirds of the votes cast without being declared urgent.

(Section 68 was repealed by the Act of 28 August 1992/818)

Section 69 A legislative proposal relating to the approval of legislative provisions contained in a peace treaty or any other treaty between Finland and a foreign state shall be considered according to the provisions of section 66. If the matter concerns a Constitutional Act, then the legislative proposal shall be approved in the third reading by a decision that has received the support of two thirds of the votes cast without being declared urgent. (28 August 1992/818)

A proposal that Parliament approve a treaty provision whereby the State undertakes to maintain certain legislation for a fixed period, as well as a proposal that Parliament approve a non-legislative treaty or treaty provision that, according to a Constitutional Act or otherwise on the request of the government, is to be approved by Parliament, shall be considered without heed to the procedure provided for in section 66, and a decision on the matter shall be made by a majority of votes. However, a proposal on a boundary change including a reduction in the territory of the State shall be deemed to have been approved by Parliament only if it has received the support of no fewer than two thirds of the votes cast.

Section 70 (28 August 1992/818) A legislative proposal relating to the salaries of the representatives shall be considered according to the provisions of section 66. The proposal shall, however, be deemed to have lapsed unless it has received the support of two thirds of the votes cast in the third reading.

Section 71 Parliament may also send to the Grand Committee matters not referred to in sections 66 and 67, section 69, paragraph 1 and section 70. In such cases the provisions of section 66 shall apply in such a way that the matter is considered in only two readings and decided in the second reading. (28 August 1992/818)

Parliament may decide that a matter which has not been sent to the Grand Committee shall be considered in two readings and that the decision on the matter shall be made in the second reading. In such a case the second reading may take place no sooner than on the third day after the first reading.

(Paragraph 3 was repealed by the Act of 28 August 1992/818)

(Section 72 was repealed by the Act of 28 August 1992/818)

Section 73 (26 June 1987/577) A legislative proposal left in abeyance or approved to be left in abeyance shall be taken up for consideration in the parliamentary session until which the proposal was left in abeyance.

After the competent committee has submitted a report on the matter the legislative proposal shall be either approved or dismissed without substantive amendment. However, a proposal for an Act of Parliament requiring the consent or approval of the Åland Legislative Assembly may only be approved in an unamended form.

A decision on the approval of a legislative proposal left in abeyance shall be made by a majority of votes. A decision on the approval of a legislative proposal approved to

be left in abeyance shall require the support of no fewer than two thirds of the votes cast.

Section 73 a (26 June 1987/576) An Act of Parliament which the President of the Republic has failed to ratify shall be taken up for consideration in the next regular parliamentary session after the Act was presented for ratification. After the competent committee has submitted a report on the matter the Act shall be approved in a substantively unamended form or dismissed. This decision shall be made by a majority of votes. However, an Act requiring the consent or approval of the Åland Legislative Assembly may only be approved in an unamended form.

Section 73 b (26 June 1987/576) If Parliament has not approved in an unamended form the report of a committee referred to in section 73, paragraph 2 or section 73 a, then the matter shall be returned to the committee, which shall issue a report containing a statement on the decision made by Parliament.

If the committee has concurred with the decision of Parliament, the decision shall be adopted as the final decision of Parliament on the matter. If the committee has proposed amendments, Parliament shall either approve these or shall hold to its prior decision.

Section 74 (26 June 1987/576) The leaving of a legislative proposal in abeyance, the approval of a legislative proposal to be left in abeyance or the failure to ratify an Act of Parliament do not preclude the submission of a government proposal or of a private member's bill on the matter to which the legislative proposal or the Act of Parliament relates. If Parliament has approved a new Act on the matter on the basis of such a proposal or bill, then the legislative proposal in abeyance and the unratified Act that has been returned to Parliament shall be deemed to have lapsed.

Section 75 (22 July 1991/1078) A proposal relating to the levying of a new State tax, the alteration of an existing tax or the extension of a fixed-period tax shall be considered in Parliament as a special item even when it is a part of the statements in the State budget proposal.

A proposal to authorise the government to take out a loan and for the approval of the conveyance of real property, the issuing of a State surety or a State guarantee and the acquisition or relinquishing of a controlling interest of the State in a corporation shall be considered following the same procedure as the State budget proposal even when the proposal is not included in the budget proposal. A proposal for a decision of Parliament on the provisional application of the budget proposal shall also be considered following the same procedure.

A proposal made by a representative concerning the inclusion in the budget of an appropriation or another decision not included in the government proposal may be considered when determining the budget only if the matter has been initiated with a duly submitted budget motion.

Section 76 (18 March 1983/278) Unless Parliament has approved in an unamended form a report of the Finance Committee relating to a proposal for the State budget, the matter shall be returned to the Finance Committee. In its report the Committee shall issue a statement on the decision made by Parliament. (22 July 1991/1078)

If the Finance Committee has concurred with the decision of Parliament, the decision

shall be adopted as the final decision of Parliament on the matter. If the Committee has proposed amendments, Parliament shall either approve these or hold to its prior decision.

If the President of the Republic does not ratify a decision of Parliament that has been conditionally included in the budget, Parliament shall be immediately informed of the return of the matter. After the Finance Committee has submitted its report on the matter, the conditional decision of Parliament shall be approved in an unamended form or dismissed. If no decision on the matter has been made before the end of the financial year, then the matter shall be deemed to have lapsed. (22 July 1991/1078)

Section 76 a (22 July 1991/1078) If the publication of the State budget is delayed beyond the beginning of the financial year, the Finance Committee shall in its report propose to Parliament how the government proposal for the State budget is to apply as a provisional budget. Where applicable, the proposal of the Committee shall be considered following the same procedure as the budget proposal.

Section 77 No matter under debate may be presented for decision before Parliament, on the proposal of the Speaker, has formally concluded the debate.

Section 78 (18 March 1983/278) When the debate has been formally concluded, the Speaker shall present a summary of the proposals submitted. If an objection is offered to the summary and the Speaker considers the objection justified, he shall rectify the summary. If, in the opinion of the Speaker, the objection does not warrant a change in the summary, Parliament shall decide the matter.

After the summary the Speaker shall present a proposal for the voting order of the proposals. If a change in the voting order is demanded and the Speaker does not consider that the demand is justified, Parliament shall determine the voting order.

After the voting order has been approved, the Speaker shall present the matter for voting in such a manner that the reply *yea* or *nay* expresses the decision of Parliament. If there are several proposals for the decision, one shall be presented for voting against another, until all of the proposals have been thus voted on.

No further debate on the matters referred to in this section shall be permitted. Also, a vote on whether a vote should be taken shall not be permitted.

Section 79 Anyone who does not concur with a decision shall have the right to enter his dissenting opinion in the minutes. However, no further debate on such an opinion shall be permitted.

Section 80 The Speaker shall not refuse to take up a matter that has been presented for consideration nor to present a matter for voting, unless he considers it to be contrary to a Constitutional Act, to an ordinary Act or to an existing decision of Parliament. In such a case the Speaker shall state the grounds for his refusal.

If Parliament is not satisfied with the action of the Speaker, the matter shall be submitted to the Committee for Constitutional Law. The Committee shall without delay issue a statement, including grounds, on whether the consideration of the matter or its presentation for voting is contrary to a Constitutional Act, to an ordinary Act or to an existing decision of Parliament. The statement of the Committee on the matter shall be

complied with.

Section 81 A decision shall not be changed in the process of examination.

The remarks of a representative and the debate ensuing from these remarks can, with the consent of the representative and of Parliament, be deleted from the minutes during the examination thereof, unless a decision has clearly been based on the remarks.

Section 82 A representative who was not present when the decision on a matter was made shall have the right to enter into the minutes afterwards that he has not participated in the making of the decision, but shall not have the right to object to the decision.

Chapter 5 a

was repealed by the Act of 22 July 1991/1078.

Chapter 6

Measures Relating to the Bank of Finland, the Social Insurance Institution and the Library of Parliament

Section 83 (22 July 1991/1078) Parliament shall appoint nine Governors to supervise the administration and activities of the Bank of Finland and the administration of the funds for which Parliament is responsible. Parliament shall issue regulations for the Governors.

Three Governors shall constitute the ordinary Governors' Committee, which shall consider all the matters that according to the regulations are not to be considered by the nine-member extended Governors' Committee. Six Governors shall constitute a quorum of the extended Governors' Committee.

If a member of the ordinary Governors' Committee is prevented from attending to his duties or resigns, a Governor from the enlarged Governors' Committee shall take his place.

The Governors shall be elected in the first regular parliamentary session following a parliamentary election. Their term shall begin as soon as they have been elected and shall continue until new Governors have been elected. The election shall be performed by the parliamentary electors. In the election it shall be determined which three Governors shall constitute the ordinary Governors' Committee and which two Governors, and in which order, shall if necessary replace each member of the ordinary Governors' Committee. If no consensus can be reached in the election, it shall be conducted by proportional ballot.

Every year, and in the same manner as provided in paragraph 4 for the election of the Governors, in a regular parliamentary session, the parliamentary electors shall elect five auditors to perform the audit of the accounts for the current financial year regarding the management of the Bank and the aforesaid funds, which is to be performed after the end of the year. The electors shall also elect one deputy for each auditor.

Section 83 a (31 May 1937/249) Parliament shall appoint twelve trustees to supervise the administration and activities of the Social Insurance Institution and shall issue regulations for the trustees.

The trustees shall be elected in the first regular parliamentary session following a parliamentary election. Their term shall begin as soon as they have been elected and shall continue until Parliament has performed a new election. Two deputies shall be elected for each trustee.

The election shall be performed by the parliamentary electors. If no consensus can be reached in the election, it shall be conducted by proportional ballot.

Section 83 b (20 August 1948/626) Provisions on the Library of Parliament, which shall be a public service under the maintenance and supervision of Parliament for which Parliament shall also issue regulations, shall be prescribed by Act of Parliament.

Chapter 7

Measures Ensuing from the Decisions of Parliament.

The Summation of a Parliamentary Session

(18 March 1983/278)

Section 84 (26 June 1987/576) An Act approved by Parliament shall be presented to the President of the Republic for ratification and issuing as an Act of Parliament. If the President does not ratify an Act, Parliament shall be notified of the return of the Act within four months of the date when it was presented to the President. If Parliament is not in session at the time, it shall be notified after it has convened in session.

Section 85 (18 March 1983/278) The decision of Parliament on a government proposal shall be issued in a parliamentary reply. However, the decision of Parliament on the State budget shall be given in a communication of Parliament. The same shall apply to other decisions of Parliament and to notifications by Parliament.(22 July 1991/1078)

A reply of Parliament and a communication of Parliament intended for the government shall be delivered to the Council of State for presentation to the President of the Republic.

A summation shall be compiled for each parliamentary session. The summation shall contain a list of the decisions that Parliament has made during the session. The summation compiled for the last session of an electoral period, as well as for an extraordinary session, shall also contain a list of those government proposals, Decrees, government resolutions and reports, as well as ministerial decisions and reports, the consideration of which has not yet been concluded.

The government shall be informed by a communication of Parliament of those matters in the summation referred to in paragraph 3 above which have lapsed. If a report has been submitted by an authority other than the government, that authority shall be similarly informed.

Section 86 (18 March 1983/278) The replies and communications of Parliament shall be drafted and the summations compiled by the office of Parliament under the supervision of the revisors.

The revisors shall approve a reply and communication of Parliament before it is issued. However, Parliament shall approve the communication which pertains to the election of the Speaker and the Deputy Speakers.

The replies and communications of Parliament shall be signed by the Speaker and the Secretary-General of Parliament. The summation shall be signed by the Speaker and the Deputy Speakers. (13 March 1987/316)

Parliament shall decide on the publication of the State budget in The Statutes of Finland. (22 July 1991/1078)

Chapter 8

Miscellaneous Provisions

Section 87 Government proposals shall be given priority both in plenary sittings and in the committees.

Section 88 The Finnish or Swedish languages shall be used when matters are under consideration in Parliament.

The reports and opinions of the committees, as well as the written proposals of the Speakers' Council and the office commission, shall be prepared in both of these languages.

The written notifications from the government to Parliament shall also be drafted in both Finnish and Swedish.

Section 88 a (22 July 1991/1078) In the first session of an electoral period Parliament shall appoint no fewer than five State auditors from among its members. The State auditors shall be elected by the parliamentary electors. If no consensus can be reached in the election, it shall be conducted by proportional ballot. An equal number of deputies shall be elected following the same procedure. Parliament shall issue regulations for the State auditors.

Section 89 The office of Parliament shall function under the supervision of the office commission. The office commission shall consist of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers, as well as four representatives, who shall be elected by Parliament by proportional ballot, unless a consensus can be reached on the election.

The term of the representatives elected to the office commission shall continue for the electoral period. (18 March 1983/278)

If necessary, the office commission may convene during an interruption of the parliamentary session, or after the session has been formally concluded, or after the dissolution of Parliament. (18 March 1983/278)

(Paragraph 4 was repealed by the Act of 31 December 1987/1254.)

Section 90 (18 March 1983/278) Parliament shall issue its own Procedure and

electoral rules, as well as regulations for the parliamentary officials.

Further provisions on the number of the electors and of the members and deputy members of the committees, as well as on the work of Parliament, shall be issued in the Procedure of Parliament. (22 July 1991/278)

Section 91 (18 March 1983/278) The minutes of the plenary sittings of Parliament and the parliamentary documents referred to in the Procedure of Parliament shall be published in print.

Section 92 All parliamentary expenses shall be met from State funds.

Section 93 (18 March 1983/278) Should any fixed day or the last day of any fixed period provided in this Act fall on a holiday, Independence Day, May Day, Christmas Eve or Midsummer Eve, or on a Saturday, the following weekday shall be considered to be the fixed day or the last day of the fixed period.

The fixed period provided in this Act for a measure to be performed in Parliament shall not include any period while Parliament is not in session. When a parliamentary session is interrupted, the remainder of any such fixed period shall be counted from the date when Parliament reconvenes.

Chapter 9

Concluding Provision

Section 94 This Parliament Act shall repeal the Parliament Act of 20 July 1906, as amended by the Acts of 31 December 1917, 29 May 1918, 22 October 1918 and 17 April 1919. This Act shall in all respects enter into force as a Constitutional Act, and may not be amended, expounded or repealed, nor may exceptions from it be made, otherwise than following the prescribed procedure for Constitutional Acts in general.

The legal provisions governing the Estates of Finland shall, unless otherwise provided in this Parliament Act, apply to Parliament as composed according to this Constitutional Act.

PROCEDURE OF PARLIAMENT

(Decision of Parliament 19 December 1927¹)

Organisation of a Session

Section 1 When Parliament assembles for the first time after an election the representatives shall take their seats in the assembly hall in alphabetical order. This arrangement shall be observed until Parliament otherwise decides.

Section 2 (DP 18 February 1983) When Parliament has assembled in plenary sitting on the first day of a regular session, the member of Parliament most senior in years shall take the seat of Speaker and have the roll called.

After the roll call the elections of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers shall be held. The President of the Republic shall be notified of the election results with a communication of Parliament.

Section 3 In the first plenary sitting of the first session of an electoral period the roll shall be called according to the list referred to in section 23, paragraph 2 of the Parliament Act.

In the first plenary sittings of later sessions of the same electoral period the roll shall be called on the basis of the said list as it was at the end of the preceding session. After the roll call the speaker of Parliament by right of seniority or the Speaker shall note the names of the members who have failed to attend the session. (DP 18 February 1983)

If, after the beginning of the first session of an electoral period, a representative has presented his duly inspected credentials to the speaker of Parliament by right of seniority or to the Speaker, or if the representative has during a later session of the same electoral period announced himself to the speaker of Parliament by right of seniority or to the Speaker, then the speaker of Parliament by right of seniority or the Speaker shall notify Parliament of the same. In these cases the representative shall not take office before he has presented his credentials or announced himself to the speaker of Parliament by right of seniority or the Speaker.

The Speaker Corps, the Office Commission and the Office of Parliament

Section 4 The Speaker and the Deputy Speakers shall form the Speaker Corps.

Section 5 (DP 18 February 1983) In the first plenary sitting of the first session of an electoral period Parliament shall elect to the office commission the four members

¹ The Procedure of Parliament, and amendments thereto, have been issued as decisions of Parliament. In the following references a decision of Parliament will be abbreviated to 'DP'.

referred to in section 89 of the Parliament Act. If Parliament is unable to agree on those elected, the election shall be postponed and conducted by proportional ballot.

Section 6 (DP 13 February 1987) The Speaker shall serve as Chairman of the office commission. When the Speaker is prevented from so serving, the first or second Deputy Speaker shall take his place.

Five members of the office commission shall constitute a quorum. If the votes are divided equally then the vote which was cast by the Chairman shall decide the matter. However, the office commission may decide a matter with only four members present, if the decision is unanimous.

The Secretary-General and the administrative director of Parliament, as well as those officials in the office of Parliament appointed for the purpose by the office commission, shall serve as presenting officials in the office commission.

Section 7 (DP 13 February 1987) In addition to the duties separately provided for it, the office commission shall:

1) manage, supervise and develop the administration and finances of Parliament and consider any plans and suggestions for development pertaining thereto;

2) decide the proposals on the administration and finances of Parliament to be submitted to Parliament;

3) with the exception of the position of Secretary-General, decide on permanent and interim appointments to permanent and temporary official positions in the office of Parliament, as well as on the discharge and dismissal of officials;

4) decide on leaves of absence of the officials and employees in the office of Parliament, as well as on the performance of their duties during such leaves of absence, unless otherwise provided in the regulations for the office of Parliament;

5) resolve all other matters pertaining to the administration and finances of Parliament, except those subject to the decision of the Speaker or an official in the office of Parliament;

6) submit a suggestion on the seating of the parliamentary factions in the assembly hall; and

7) arrange the private interpretation referred to in sections 18 and 40.

If a matter within the authority of the office commission may not, due to its urgency, be presented to the office commission, the Speaker shall make a provisional decision on the matter on the presentation of an official serving as a presenting official in the office commission. A provisionally decided matter shall be presented for the decision of the office commission as soon as possible.

Section 8 (DP 15 February 1991) The office of Parliament shall contain the following official positions:

Secretary-General of Parliament, assistant Secretary-General of Parliament, administrative director, senior parliamentary secretary, parliamentary secretary, heads of bureaux, committee secretaries and other permanent official positions.

Temporary officials and employees may also be engaged in the office of Parliament.

Section 9 The Secretary-General of Parliament shall serve as the secretary of Parliament. (DP 13 February 1987)

The Secretary-General of Parliament shall be elected by Parliament, after the Speaker has declared the position open for applications and the office commission has made a statement on the applicants. If there are several applicants for the position, it shall be filled according to the provisions on the election of the Speaker. (DP 25 March 1966)

If the position of Secretary-General is vacant or if the holder of the position is prevented from attending to his duties, the assistant Secretary-General of Parliament shall perform the duties of Secretary-General. If the position of assistant Secretary-General is also vacant or if the holder of the position is prevented from attending to his duties, then the speaker of Parliament by right of seniority or the Speaker shall summon the senior parliamentary secretary, or another person whom he deems suitable, to attend to the duties of Secretary-General until the position has been filled or until the holder is no longer prevented from attending to his duties. (DP 13 February 1987)

The Electors, the Committees and the Revisors

Section 10 (DP 18 February 1983) The committees of Parliament shall be the Grand Committee and the committees. The committees shall comprise the permanent and temporary committees.

In addition to the committees referred to in section 40 of the Parliament Act, there shall be the following permanent committees: the Administration Committee, the Transport and Communications Committee, the Agriculture and Forestry Committee, the Defence Committee, the Culture Committee, the Committee for Social Affairs and Health, the Economy Committee, the Committee for Labour Affairs and the Environment Committee. (DP 30 October 1990)

The Economy Committee shall consider the matters prescribed in section 50 of the Parliament Act. (DP 30 October 1990)

Section 11 (DP 18 February 1983) The electors shall comprise forty-five members and sixteen deputy members.

Each permanent committee shall have seventeen members and nine deputy members, except the Finance Committee, which shall have twenty-one members and nineteen deputy members. (DP 30 October 1990)

When Parliament decides to appoint a temporary committee it shall also, on the proposal of the Speaker's Council, decide how many members and deputy members the committee shall have.

The Grand Committee shall have twenty-five members and thirteen deputy members. (DP 30 October 1990)

(Paragraph 5 was repealed by a DP of 25 February 1992.)

Section 12 (DP 18 February 1983) At the beginning of a session Parliament shall elect the revisors and deputy revisors referred to in section 42 a of the Parliament Act. If Parliament is unable to agree on those elected, the election shall be postponed and conducted by proportional ballot.

Section 13 Anyone who has already been elected onto two committees shall have the right to decline membership of additional committees, with the exception of the Grand Committee. The same provision shall apply to a person who has been elected onto one committee and to serve as a revisor. It shall be for Parliament to decide whether a member of a committee may be discharged from his duties in a committee or as a revisor for another reason.

Section 14 The electors, the committees and the revisors shall elect their chairmen and deputy chairmen in the manner prescribed for the election of the Speaker. The other elections shall be conducted by secret ballot, unless a consensus is reached on another procedure. In other matters the decision shall be made by the voting procedure considered most suitable. However, an open vote shall be taken on the basis of the roll call, if the Chairman considers it necessary or if a participant in the vote so demands. If the votes are divided equally lots shall be drawn to resolve the matter. (DP 18 February 1983)

The chairman, or when he is prevented from doing so, the deputy chairman shall convene the electors, a committee or the revisors. When possible, the summons to a meeting shall be posted on the parliamentary bulletin boards. (DP 18 February 1983)

Parliament shall be notified of the result of the elections of a chairman and deputy chairman.

Section 14 a (DP 18 February 1983) If the chairman and the deputy chairman of a committee are disqualified from the consideration of a matter or if the committee must consider a matter urgently while the chairman and the deputy chairman are otherwise prevented from attending, then the committee shall, under the direction of the attending member most senior in years, elect a temporary chairman who shall then preside over the consideration of the matter.

The election of a temporary chairman of a committee shall be conducted in the same manner as the election of the chairman.

Section 15 (DP 5 December 1974) The secretaries of the committees shall be appointed by the office commission, after it has heard the committee in question. The assistant Secretary-General shall serve as the secretary of the Grand Committee. If the position of assistant Secretary-General is vacant or if the holder of the position is prevented from attending to his duties, another person appointed by the office commission shall serve as the secretary of the Grand Committee.

The secretaries of the electors and the revisors shall be appointed by the office commission.

Section 16 (DP 5 December 1974) A committee may hear expert opinions and entitle them to participate in a debate.

When considering a legislative proposal or another matter which especially concerns the Sámi, a committee shall, unless specific reasons otherwise warrant, give the representatives of the Sámi an opportunity to be heard. (DP 22 October 1991)

Section 17 (DP 5 December 1974) If a member of a committee has failed to attend a meeting of the committee without an acceptable impediment or special permission, the

committee may notify Parliament thereof. On the basis of such notification Parliament may take the steps referred to in section 51, paragraph 3 of the Parliament Act.

Section 18 Each member of a committee shall have the right to use either Finnish or Swedish in the committee. It shall be for the committee to decide whether or not interpretation is necessary, in what form and to what extent.

However, a member with insufficient command of the Finnish or Swedish language may have the proceedings of the committee privately interpreted, if he so desires. (DP 11 February 1987)

Section 18 a (DP 18 February 1983) When Parliament sends a matter to a committee for preparation, it may at the same time instruct another committee to issue a statement to the preparing committee concerning the matter or a part thereof. (DP 22 October 1991)

On its own initiative a committee may request a statement on a matter which it is preparing, or a part thereof, from another committee. (DP 22 October 1991)

Within thirty days of the date when the budget proposal was sent to the Finance Committee, another committee may, on its own initiative, issue a statement to the Finance Committee on a matter included in the budget and within the competence of the committee. (DP 25 February 1992)

Section 18 b (DP 18 February 1983) In general, a committee shall take up the matters sent to it for consideration in the following order: (DP 10 November 1987)

1) Matters pertaining to proceeding with the agenda with a statement of reasons;

1 a) Matters pertaining to the statement to be issued on the basis of a report by the Council of State; (DP 29 March 1989)

2) The statements referred to in section 80 of the Parliament Act;

2 a) Matters pertaining to Decisions of Parliament taken conditionally into the budget and not ratified by the President of the Republic; (DP 25 February 1992)

3) Statements to be submitted to Parliament, the Grand Committee or another committee on matters referred to in subparagraphs 4–7; (DP 22 October 1991)

4) Legislative proposals in abeyance and unratified Acts;

5) Government proposals;

6) Reports;

7) Decrees, government resolutions and ministerial decisions submitted for the inspection of Parliament;

8) Statements to another committee regarding private member's bills;

9) Bills; and

10) Petitionary motions.

The budget motions sent to the Finance Committee shall be considered in connection with the budget proposal or a supplementary budget proposal. (DP 25 February 1992)

A committee shall consider urgently the matters referred to in paragraph 1, subparagraphs 1, 1 a, 2 and 2 a. The committee may, if necessary, consider the other matters in an order other than that prescribed in paragraph 1, having regard to the provisions of sections 21 and 22. (DP 29 March 1989)

Section 18 c (DP 18 February 1983) The committees shall meet regularly on weekdays

other than Monday and Saturday.

Section 19 (DP 5 December 1974) Each matter shall be given two readings in a committee. In the first reading the committee shall make a preliminary decision on the content of the report or statement. In the second reading the committee shall make the final decisions on the basis of a draft report or statement prepared by the secretary.

In both readings, before the beginning of the detailed consideration, each member shall be given the opportunity to express his opinion on the matter as a whole. Expert opinions shall be heard in the first reading, unless the committee for special reasons otherwise decides.

In the first reading, if two members so request, the matter shall be deferred once to a later committee meeting. At other times the matter may be deferred, if the committee so decides.

A protest to be appended to a report and a dissenting opinion to be appended to a statement shall be announced in the second reading of the matter and given in writing to the secretary within a period determined by the committee. The protest or dissenting opinion shall correspond to the position taken by the member in the decisive reading.

A committee may entrust the examination of a report or a statement, as well as that of the protests and the dissenting opinions, to special revisors and to the secretary.

The members participating in the decisive reading of a matter shall be noted in the report or statement as having participated in the reading of the matter. If a member of a committee has participated in the decisive reading only partially, then this shall be noted in the report or statement. (DP 18 February 1983)

The provisions in paragraphs 1–5 above may be deviated from, if the committee unanimously so decides.

Section 20 (DP 18 February 1983) A committee may appoint a section from among its members to prepare a matter under its consideration and to compile a draft report or statement for the committee.

The provisions of section 19, paragraphs 1–3 and paragraph 7 shall apply to the consideration of a matter in a section.

Section 20 a (DP 30 October 1990) If the same matter is under consideration in several committees, they may hear expert opinions in a joint meeting. The committee chairman most senior in years shall preside over a joint meeting, unless otherwise agreed.

Section 20 b (DP 30 October 1990) If, pursuant to section 52, paragraph 4 of the Parliament Act, a committee has declared some part of its proceedings open so that outsiders are allowed to attend the meeting, the chairman shall maintain order in the meeting observing, where applicable, the provisions of sections 57 and 65.

Photography, tape recording and other recording and transmission of images and sound in the meeting by technical means shall be permitted with the consent of the committee.

Section 20 c (DP 30 October 1990) A parliamentary faction without a seat in a

committee or a section thereof shall on request have the right to obtain a copy of the documents received or prepared by the committee or a section thereof during the consideration of a matter, except for secret documents.

Section 21 (DP 18 February 1983) Government proposals and private member's bills concerning the same matter shall be considered together and a joint report on them shall be submitted, unless special reasons in a specific instance warrant a different procedure. In any case the committee shall take care that the report on a Government proposal is not delayed for this reason.

Section 22 (DP 18 February 1983) If Parliament or the Grand Committee, in the instances referred to in section 66, paragraph 5 of the Parliament Act, or Parliament otherwise has issued specific instructions for a committee on the performance of its duties, the committee shall comply with the instructions.

Section 23 (DP 18 February 1983) A committee shall draft its reports and statements on the matters under its consideration in a concise manner.

In a report the proposals of the committee shall be presented in the form of resolutions. The proposals in a protest shall be presented in the same manner, unless the protest is limited to the expression of a dissenting general view.

Section 24 When, pursuant to section 45 of the Parliament Act, a committee has elected one or more presenting members, this shall be noted in the report.

Section 25 (DP 18 February 1983) Minutes shall be kept of the meetings of the electors, the committees and the revisors. The members who attended, the experts who were heard and the motions, votes and decisions that took place in the meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.

Section 26 The documents prepared by the electors, the committees and the revisors shall be signed by the chairman and verified by the secretary.

Section 27 (DP 18 February 1983) The Grand Committee shall assemble when a matter has been sent to it for consideration. (DP 30 October 1990)

Meetings of the Grand Committee shall be announced in a plenary sitting of Parliament or in newspapers, in the manner prescribed in section 31 for the announcement of plenary sittings of Parliament. In addition, the agenda of the Grand Committee shall, if possible, be posted on the parliamentary bulletin boards well in advance of each meeting.

Unless otherwise provided in the procedure that the Grand Committee has approved for itself, the provisions of the Parliament Act and of this Procedure of Parliament regarding the consideration of matters in a committee shall apply to the consideration of matters in the Grand Committee. (DP 30 October 1990)

In the meetings of the Grand Committee each member shall speak standing at his seat after having been given the floor. If the Chairman of the Grand Committee wishes to participate in the debate, he shall give up his place to the deputy Chairman.

Section 28 (DP 18 February 1983) The revisors shall assemble when necessary.

For the purpose of performing their duties the revisors may divide into two or more groups. A specified examination task may also be entrusted to one revisor.

The Speaker's Council

Section 29 In addition to the duties prescribed in the Parliament Act and in this Procedure of Parliament, the Speaker's Council shall:

- 1) Make proposals on the organisation of parliamentary work;
- 2) Issue, where necessary, general instructions for the work of the committees;
- 3) Approve regulations for the secretaries of the committees;
- 4) Make a proposal on the appointment of a temporary committee or make a statement on a proposal to appoint a temporary committee; and
- 5) Make a statement on any initiative of a representative concerning an amendment to the Procedure of Parliament. (DP 18 February 1983)

If the votes in the Speaker's Council are divided equally, then the vote which was cast by the Speaker shall decide the matter.

Section 30 (DP 18 February 1983) At the request of the Speaker, the chairman of a committee shall present the Speaker's Council with an account of the progress of a matter under consideration in the committee.

Plenary Sitzings

Section 31 (DP 5 December 1974) Plenary sittings shall generally take place on each Tuesday and Friday. When the consideration of matters so demands, plenary sittings shall also be held on other days of the week. (DP 29 March 1989)

The summons to a plenary sitting of Parliament shall, if possible, be posted well in advance of the sitting on the parliamentary bulletin boards and announced in the major newspapers of the capital city, as further determined by the office commission. (DP 18 February 1983)

If an election is to be conducted in the plenary sitting, this shall be stated in the summons.

Section 32 (DP 5 December 1974) The agenda of a plenary sitting, containing a list of the matters to be considered in the sitting and of the documents pertaining to them, shall, where possible, be posted on the parliamentary bulletin boards well in advance of the plenary sitting.

Section 33 At the beginning of a plenary sitting the roll shall be called. When several plenary sittings are held on the same day, the roll call may, at the discretion of the Speaker, be omitted and the representatives present in the earlier plenary sitting may be

noted as present in the later sittings. (DP 18 February 1983)

A representative who does not arrive at the plenary sitting within fifteen minutes of the roll call shall be noted in the minutes as having been absent at the roll call. A representative who arrives at the plenary sitting thereafter shall be noted in the minutes to have been present from the time when he announced himself to the Speaker by handing in his name-slip. (DP 29 March 1989)

A roll call shall not be held in a plenary sitting convened to consider the matters referred to in sections 37 a and 37 b of the Parliament Act. (DP 29 March 1989)

Section 34 A private member's bill shall be submitted to the central bureau. (DP 18 February 1983)

A motion by a representative to appoint a temporary committee shall be presented in writing to the Speaker well in advance of the plenary sitting, wherein it shall be considered as a separate matter. (DP 18 February 1983)

If a representative desires another matter lying within the competence of Parliament to be considered in a plenary sitting, and provisions on the initiation of such a matter have not been elsewhere separately prescribed, then he shall submit a written proposal on the matter to the Speaker well in advance of the sitting. The matter and the proposal of the representative shall be stated concisely in this proposal. Only in exceptional cases may a matter be taken up for consideration without such a written proposal.

Section 35 (DP 18 February 1983) In a plenary sitting of Parliament, before beginning the detailed consideration of a matter, the representatives shall be given an opportunity to express their opinion on the matter as a whole in a general discussion.

Section 36 (DP 18 February 1983) In a plenary sitting a representative may request the floor by giving or sending his name-slip to the parliamentary clerk (a written request) or orally, by standing up at his seat (an oral request). An oral request shall not be permitted while another representative is speaking.

In a general discussion of a matter on the agenda, a representative may also request the floor in advance by personally handing in a name-slip to the senior secretary in the central bureau or to the person attending to his duties. The request shall be made no sooner than three hours before the beginning of the sitting.

If requests for the floor are presented at the same time both in writing and orally, the written requests shall be given priority. If several people request the floor at the same time either in writing or orally, the Speaker shall determine the order of speaking.

On a request made during or immediately after a comment the Speaker may, at his discretion, allow a representative the floor for a reply from his seat taking no longer than two minutes, to be given in advance of an earlier request for the floor. For a special reason the floor may also be given for such a reply to be made before the replies requested earlier. A reply may comprise only clarifications and corrections of the previous comment and a rejoinder to a claim made therein. (DP 29 March 1989)

In addition, the provisions of sections 59 and 60 of the Parliament Act shall be observed in giving the floor.

Section 37 (DP 25 February 1992) For the purposes of a debate during the consideration of the State budget proposal or the report of the Finance Committee on the State

budget proposal, as well as of a statement, notification or report submitted by the Council of State and of a response or notification on the basis of an interpellation, the requests for the floor presented in advance of the sitting in question shall be sorted according to guidelines established by the Speaker's Council so that they rotate from one parliamentary faction to another from the largest to the smallest. A corresponding procedure shall be followed, if the Speaker's Council so decides, when considering a proposal for a supplementary budget or another matter of consequence. However, after a response or a notification on the basis of an interpellation the floor shall be given first to the first signatory of the interpellation. After the beginning of the debate in the plenary sitting the requesting and giving of the floor shall comply with the provisions of section 57, paragraph 1 of the Parliament Act and section 36 of this Procedure of Parliament.

Section 38 (DP 18 February 1983) After having been granted the floor each representative shall speak standing at the podium positioned for the purpose in the assembly hall. A representative may speak from his seat only for the purpose of a short comment, taking no longer than two minutes. If the representative wishes to continue his comment for a longer time, the Speaker shall exhort him to take the podium. However, if the Speaker considers it necessary, he may exhort the representative to take the podium regardless of the extent of the comment, or for a special reason allow a comment from the seats regardless of its duration.

Section 39 Each representative shall keep strictly to the matter under consideration. If he digresses from the subject, the Speaker shall remind him to keep to the point. If the representative fails to heed the reminder the Speaker shall deny him the floor.

Section 40 (DP 18 February 1983) After a comment in Swedish in a plenary sitting, a summary of its content shall be presented in Finnish.

The account of the Speaker regarding the motions submitted and the notification referred to in section 80, paragraph 1 of the Parliament Act shall be presented in Finnish and Swedish. If the Speaker considers it necessary, his other announcements shall also be presented in Swedish as well as in Finnish.

The content of the comments made in Finnish, the Speaker's proposals for the voting order and his announcements given only in Finnish shall be interpreted to those Swedish-speaking representatives with an insufficient command of Finnish, if they so wish.

Section 41 (DP 18 February 1983) Unless otherwise provided in the Parliament Act, a matter shall be deferred, if Parliament so decides.

A statement, notification and report submitted by the Council of State and an interpellation may not be deferred after the debate on them has begun. Provisions on the postponement of the decision on the said matters are prescribed in section 52.

Section 42 (DP 18 February 1983) If, after the debate on a matter has begun, a motion for its deferral is submitted, or some other motion is submitted, the approval of which would interrupt the substantive consideration of the matter, and the motion has been seconded, then the next representatives to take the floor shall, at the behest of the Speaker, confine their statements to commenting on this motion. A decision shall be

made on the motion before permitting debate on the matter proper. If the motion is not approved, the advance requests for the floor which, before the motion, had not yet been granted shall be granted first when the debate resumes.

If the consideration of a matter is begun or resumed after the matter has in a previous sitting been removed from the agenda or deferred, or its consideration has been interrupted, the advance requests for the floor that, due to the said reason, had not yet been granted shall be granted first.

Section 43 (DP 18 February 1983) If a matter referred to in section 63 of the Parliament Act is presented for the purpose of sending it to a committee, and controversy arises regarding to which committee it should be sent, the issue shall be resolved without deferring the matter, unless a request that the matter be deferred is submitted.

Section 44 (DP 18 February 1983) A motion submitted by a representative in a plenary sitting, which is not included in the documents of the sitting, shall be submitted to the secretary in writing to be given to the Speaker, if the Speaker considers this to be necessary.

A motion to amend a legislative matter in its second reading, which is not included in the documents of the sitting, shall, if possible, be handed in to the central bureau, in writing and without a statement of reasons, no later than three hours before the plenary sitting. The motion shall be duplicated and distributed to the representatives before a decision on it is made in the plenary sitting. For a special reason the Speaker may present a motion for voting even if it has not been submitted following this procedure.

The provisions of paragraph 2 shall correspondingly be applied to a motion concerning a parliamentary petition or a statement of reasons for it, which is to be submitted in the third reading of a legislative matter or in the only reading of a matter other than the State budget. (DP February 1992)

If, during the consideration of the State budget, a representative wishes to submit a motion to amend the report of the Finance Committee, the motion, even if it forms part of a protest appended to the report, shall be handed in to the central bureau at a time determined by Parliament, in writing and without a statement of reasons, for duplication and distribution to the representatives. The distribution shall take place before the beginning of the consideration of the main division or section concerned or of the general statement of reasons for the budget. An amendment motion that has not been handed in to the central bureau within the time referred to above shall not be considered, unless for a special reason the Speaker considers this necessary. (DP 25 February 1992)

When a Finance Committee report on a supplementary budget is under consideration, the provisions of paragraph 2 shall correspondingly be applied to an amendment motion, unless Parliament otherwise decides. (DP 25 February 1992)

A motion which has not been seconded shall not be presented for voting.

Section 45 (DP 18 February 1983) Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot. A ballot paper shall state only the name and, if necessary, the profession of the selected candidate. This information shall be expressed sufficiently clearly that no uncertainty about the intended person can arise.

Section 45 a (DP 4 December 1980) In matters other than those referred to in section 45 the vote shall be taken using the voting apparatus (mechanical voting), by standing up or by open ballot. The Speaker shall announce the mode of voting. No debate on the mode of voting shall be permitted.

A mechanical vote shall be performed, regardless of whether a vote has already been taken by standing up, if the Speaker considers this to be necessary or if, in the opinion of the Speaker, the vote taken by standing up was inconclusive, or if a representative so requests.

Ballot voting shall be used if the mechanical vote announced is, for technical reasons, impossible or if the result of the mechanical vote is, in the opinion of the Speaker, unreliable, or if the votes are divided equally. However, if the votes are divided equally in a vote which does not concern the final decision of Parliament for the reading in question, then the mechanical vote shall be performed again. Ballot voting shall then be used if the votes are also equally divided in the second mechanical vote. The ballot vote shall be conducted according to the roll call, using ballot papers of different colours. Only the name of the representative and either the word *yea* or the word *nay* shall be printed on the ballot. The ballot papers shall be read aloud and counted. (DP 29 March 1989)

After the vote the Speaker shall state the result of the vote. If the vote was taken by standing up, the result shall be announced by stating the majority or the minority.

Section 45 b (DP 4 December 1980) A ballot paper that does not comply with the provisions of section 45 or section 45 a, paragraph 3, shall be rejected.

When the votes are divided equally, the result shall be determined by the drawing of lots, unless a qualified majority or minority is required for the approval of the proposal.

Section 45 c (DP 4 December 1980) If a qualified majority or minority is required for the approval of a proposal, if the Speaker considers it necessary, or if no fewer than twenty representatives so request by standing up immediately after the result of a vote has been declared, the vote of each participant in a mechanical vote or a ballot vote, as well as which representatives were absent from the voting, shall be recorded in the minutes. No debate on the matter shall be permitted.

Complete voting results of all votes taken shall be recorded. The requested information on them shall be given to anyone desirous thereof.

Section 46 (DP 5 December 1974) A ballot vote and an election shall be performed using two ballot boxes, except for the elections of the Speaker and the Deputy Speakers, where one ballot box shall be used. (DP 18 February 1983)

The representatives shall bring their ballot papers to the ballot box in the order in which their names are called. The ballot papers shall not be brought to the ballot box in any other order.

After the roll call the four representatives whom the Speaker has requested to assist in the voting or the election shall come to the Speaker's rostrum. Two of these representatives shall assist the Speaker in the inspection of the ballots and in the announcing of the votes cast, and two, together with the secretary, shall record the votes cast.

Section 47 (DP 18 February 1983) The minutes of the plenary sittings shall be examined by the Speaker Corps.

Section 48 (DP 5 December 1974) A concise record of decisions shall without delay be drawn up for a plenary sitting.

Section 49 A copy of the statement of each commenting representative shall be sent to him for examination from the record bureau. If he wishes to correct something in his statement, he shall note the corrections on the copy and sign his name to certify that he has approved the statement. A commenting representative shall, if possible, return the copy to the record bureau or examine his statement there within twelve hours of the end of the sitting. The statement shall otherwise be considered approved as it stands. (DP 5 December 1974)

(Paragraph 2 was repealed by DP 5 December 1974.) If a commenting representative has made substantive alterations to his statement, especially if the alterations concern points that have been contested or supported by other representatives, the examiners of the minutes shall remark on this to the commenting representative and, if no agreement on the matter can be reached, the examiners shall also notify Parliament thereof.

Section 50 No debate shall be permitted on an election to be performed by Parliament, unless the matter concerns the filling of a vacancy that has been declared open for applications.

Section 51 The motion to declare a matter urgent, required by section 67, paragraph 2 of the Parliament Act, shall, unless it has been submitted in the report of a committee, be submitted in the third reading of the matter, before the debate has been formally concluded.

Section 52 If, in cases referred to in section 36, paragraph 2 or in section 37, paragraph 3 of the Parliament Act, a decision is to be made on a motion other than simply to approve of proceeding with the agenda or to send the matter to a committee, then after the debate has concluded a decision shall first be made on the motion to send the matter to a committee.

After the debate on the matter has been formally concluded Parliament may, in cases referred to in sections 36 and 37 of the Parliament Act, postpone until the following plenary sitting the decision to proceed with the agenda or to send the matter to a committee. The motion to postpone the decision shall be submitted before the debate on the matter has been formally concluded.

Section 52 a (DP 18 February 1983) The written question referred to in section 37 of the Parliament Act may be withdrawn by its first signatory before the competent member of the Council of State has been notified of the question.

Section 52 b (DP 18 February 1983) Oral questions and the responses and notifications arising from them shall usually be considered in the plenary sitting held each Thursday. If necessary, another special sitting may be held for the consideration of the said matters.

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 38 the representatives shall present their questions and comments from their seats and the members of the Council of State their

replies, responses and notifications from the seats reserved for them in the assembly hall. (DP 13 February 1987)

When, in a plenary sitting, there is no time to consider a question forming part of the agenda of that sitting, or if the member of the Council of State has not been able to attend in order to respond to the question, the consideration of the matter shall be postponed to the plenary sitting referred to in paragraph 1. If a representative is not present to ask his question at the time reserved for him, although the member of the Council of State has attended in order to respond to the question, then the question shall lapse unless the member of the Council of State wishes to respond to it at once. (DP 13 February 1987)

The response to an oral question shall take no longer than three minutes and any other comment pertaining thereto no longer than two minutes. (DP 13 February 1987)

A question may be withdrawn before the competent member of the Council of State has been notified thereof.

Section 52 c (DP 29 March 1989) The plenary sitting for questions to the Council of State shall usually be that held on the first Thursday of the month. If necessary, another special sitting may be held for the consideration of these matters.

A question to be put to the Council of State shall be presented to the Speaker no later than one week before the plenary sitting referred to in paragraph 1. The Speaker's Council shall without delay decide which questions shall be forwarded to the Council of State.

A response shall be given to a question regardless of the absence of its first signatory.

The response to a question shall take no longer than five minutes and any other comment pertaining thereto no longer than one minute. (DP 22 September 1989)

The provisions of section 52 b, paragraph 2, shall, where applicable, apply to a plenary sitting for questions to the Council of State.

Section 53 (DP 10 November 1987) In the first regular session of Parliament following an election the Speaker's Council shall prepare for presentation to Parliament a list of the legislative proposals approved by Parliament to be left in abeyance and at the same time shall submit, for the decision of Parliament the matter of which of them shall be deemed to have lapsed according to section 74 of the Parliament Act.

The Speaker's Council shall also propose to which committee those legislative proposals which have been approved to be left in abeyance and which Parliament has not considered to have lapsed in the manner provided in paragraph 1 shall be sent for reports.

Section 53 a (DP 10 November 1987) In those regular sessions of Parliament, to which Parliament has left legislative proposals in abeyance pursuant to section 66, paragraph 7 of the Parliament Act, the Speaker's Council shall prepare for presentation to Parliament a list of the legislative proposals left in abeyance until the said session and at the same time shall submit, for the decision of Parliament the matter of which of them shall be deemed to have lapsed according to section 74 of the Parliament Act.

The Speaker's Council shall also propose to which committee those legislative proposals which have been left in abeyance and which Parliament has not considered to have lapsed in the manner provided in paragraph 1 shall be sent for reports.

Section 53 b (DP 10 November 1987) The notification by the President of the Republic, referred to in section 84 of the Parliament Act, shall be presented to Parliament.

In those regular sessions of Parliament during which the consideration of an Act not ratified by the President shall according to section 73 a of the Parliament Act be initiated, the Speaker's Council shall submit a proposal to Parliament concerning whether an Act that has been returned to Parliament unratified shall be deemed to have lapsed according to section 74 of the Parliament Act.

The Speaker's Council shall also propose to which committee an Act that has been returned to Parliament unratified and which Parliament has not considered to have lapsed in the manner provided in paragraph 2 shall be sent for a report.

Section 53 c (DP 10 November 1987) The notification by the President of the Republic, referred to in section 76, paragraph 3 of the Parliament Act shall be presented to Parliament without delay and, in a plenary sitting held soon thereafter, the matter shall be sent to the Finance Committee for a report.

Section 54 (DP 18 February 1983) If a Government proposal or a private member's bill is withdrawn, the consideration of the matter shall be discontinued.

Section 55 In the cases referred to in section 35 of the Parliament Act the consideration of a matter shall be resumed from the stage at which its consideration was interrupted during the previous session of Parliament. If, in the previous session of Parliament, the consideration of a matter was interrupted in a committee, it shall be for the committee to decide, having regard to the provisions of section 19, from which stage the consideration of the matter shall be resumed.

(Paragraph 2 was repealed by DP 18 February 1983.)

Section 56 (DP 5 December 1974) A plenary sitting shall not be continued after 11 pm, unless the Speaker considers this necessary for a special reason.

Section 57 Clamorous expressions of approval or disapproval shall not be permitted in a plenary sitting of Parliament.

Section 58 If the Speaker considers a matter to be of such a character that it is not to be considered in a sitting open to the public, or if twenty-five members of Parliament have requested that a matter be considered in a closed sitting, the Speaker shall have the galleries cleared and shall present for the decision of Parliament whether or not the matter is to be considered in a sitting open to the public.

The agenda of a sitting closed to the public shall not be made available for public inspection.

Miscellaneous Provisions

(DP 18 February 1983)

Section 59 (DP 15 February 1991) Matters shall be considered in Parliament on the basis of a Finnish-language text. The Swedish bureau shall draft a Swedish-language version of the text, the final wording of which shall, with the authority of Parliament, be determined by the revisors referred to in section 42 a of the Parliament Act.

Section 60 (DP 18 February 1983) In addition to the minutes of the plenary sittings of Parliament and an abridged version of the minutes in the Swedish language the following documents of the parliamentary session shall be published in print: Government proposals and letters of withdrawal pertaining to Government proposals, the list prepared by the Speaker's Council, referred to in sections 53 and 53 a, the notification by the President of the Republic and the proposal of the Speaker's Council, referred to in section 53 b, the notification by the President of the Republic, referred to in section 53 c, Decrees, government resolutions and ministerial decisions presented for the inspection of Parliament, reports, statements and notifications by the Council of State, unless they are published with the minutes of Parliament, reports and statements of the committees, replies and communications of Parliament, private member's bills, questions put to the Council of State, written questions and the summation of the parliamentary session. (DP 15 February 1991)

The office commission shall issue further guidelines for the printing.

Section 61 (DP 18 February 1983) The revisors referred to in section 42 a of the Parliament Act shall remain in office until they have fulfilled their duties.

Section 62 (DP 18 February 1983) When an election to be performed by Parliament or by the electors is to be conducted by proportional ballot, it shall be performed according to the provisions in the Election Rules of Parliament.

Section 63 (DP 5 December 1974) If Parliament has declared a representative ineligible for service as a representative or sentenced a representative to forfeit his mandate, if Parliament has discharged a representative from his position, or if Parliament has been notified of the death of a representative, then the secretary of Parliament shall notify without delay the central election committee of the appropriate electoral district of the decision of Parliament or of the death.

Section 64 If a representative desires a leave of absence from parliamentary business, he shall request it of Parliament. No leave for a period longer than one week shall be granted, unless the representative presents a compelling reason for the request.

Section 65 Those listening to the debates of Parliament in the galleries shall comply strictly with the rules for the maintenance of order and with any ordinances that the office commission may issue for the purpose. Such regulations shall be suitably posted for public information.

In case of disorder the Speaker shall have the galleries cleared.

Section 66 (Paragraph 1 was repealed by DP 18 February 1983.) If a representative wishes to submit a motion for the amendment of the Procedure of Parliament, he shall present a written proposal thereof to Parliament. If Parliament does not dismiss the proposal, it shall be sent to the Speaker's Council for a statement.

Section 67 (DP 18 February 1983) A decision of Parliament on the amendment of the Procedure of Parliament shall enter into force at the time determined by Parliament.

The Procedure of Parliament and amendments thereto shall be published in The Statutes of Finland.

Ministerial Responsibility Act¹

(25 November 1922/274)

Section 1 (21 December 1990/1222) Parliament shall have the right, according to this Act, to examine the lawfulness of the official acts of the members of the Council of State, the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman, and of the Assistant Chancellor of Justice, the Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman and their deputies, and to make decisions arising from such examination.

The provisions of section 2, paragraphs 1–3 and sections 3–7 of this Act concerning a member of the Council of State and the Chancellor of Justice shall apply correspondingly to the Parliamentary Ombudsman and also to the Assistant Chancellor of Justice and the Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman and their deputies.

Section 2 When considering matters under preparation, the Committee for Constitutional Law shall, whenever there is cause for this, investigate the lawfulness of the official acts of the members of the Council of State and the Chancellor of Justice.

If another committee finds cause to complain that a member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice has proceeded in an unlawful manner in an official act, the matter shall be submitted to the Committee for Constitutional Law for consideration.

A complaint concerning the unlawfulness of an official act of a member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice may also be filed in Parliament. Such a complaint shall be submitted to the Speaker in writing and signed by no fewer than five representatives. On presentation of such a complaint the matter shall be sent to the Committee for Constitutional Law without discussion.

A statement submitted to Parliament by the Chancellor of Justice pursuant to section 47 of the Constitution Act, or by the Parliamentary Ombudsman in accordance with section 49 of the Constitution Act, concerning the unlawfulness of an official act of the Council of State or a member thereof, shall likewise be sent to the Committee for Constitutional Law without discussion.(21 December 1990/1222)

Section 3 If a complaint is filed concerning the unlawfulness of an official act of a member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice while a matter is under consideration in the Committee for Constitutional Law, and the Committee considers that the matter is worthy of attention, or if a complaint against a member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice has been sent to the Committee for Constitutional Law, the Committee shall give him an opportunity to submit a written or oral explanation within a certain period of time.

Section 4 If a complaint has been filed against a member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice, the Committee for Constitutional Law shall consider whether

¹ This title is a translation of the regularly used Finnish “short” title. The full title of this Act translates as *The Act on the Right of Parliament to Inspect the Lawfulness of the Official Acts of the Members of the Council of State, the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman*. The title was amended by the Act of 21 December 1990/1222 to include the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

the member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice has proceeded in an unlawful manner, and shall submit a statement on the matter to Parliament, unless the complaint was filed in the Committee for Constitutional Law and the Committee found it to be unjustified.

Section 5 No fewer than seventeen members shall be present when a complaint referred to in sections 3 and 4 is considered in the Committee for Constitutional Law. If controversy arises on the question of whether or not a member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice has proceeded in an unlawful manner, and the votes are divided equally, then he shall be deemed not to have done so.

Section 6 After the Committee for Constitutional Law has submitted its statement, Parliament shall be empowered to decide whether charges under this Act are to be brought against the member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice in the High Court of Impeachment, or whether the matter is to be dismissed.

If Parliament does not immediately decide that the matter is to be dismissed, then the member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice shall be requested to submit a written or oral explanation to Parliament. The explanation shall be submitted within ten days of receipt of the request.

Section 7 The following shall be considered unlawful acts for which charges under this Act may be brought against a member of the Council of State or the Chancellor of Justice:

If, in an official act, he has aided or abetted manifest unlawfulness;

If he has intentionally abused his official position to manifestly harm the country, and the abuse is to be deemed an offence in office; or

If he has otherwise, in some official act, proceeded in a manifestly unlawful manner.

Section 8 This Act shall enter into force as a Constitutional Act. It shall not apply to official acts engaged in before 17 June 1918.

Section 9 This Act shall repeal the Act on the Right of the Parliament of Finland to Examine the Lawfulness of the Official Acts of the Members of the Council of State and the Procurator (17 June 1918/42).

Act on the High Court of Impeachment

(25 November 1922/273)

Section 1 (21 October 1955/421) The High Court of Impeachment shall hear charges brought against a member of the Council of State, the Chancellor of Justice, the Assistant Chancellor of Justice, the deputy Assistant Chancellor of Justice, the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman, the deputy Assistant Parliamentary Ombudsman or the President or a member of the Supreme Court or of the Supreme Administrative Court, for proceeding in an unlawful manner in an official act. (21 December 1990/1223)

The High Court of Impeachment shall comprise the President of the Supreme Court as Chairman and, as members, the President of the Supreme Administrative Court, the three most senior Presidents of the Courts of Appeal and a Professor, learned in law, of the Faculty of Law of the University of Helsinki, elected together with his deputy by the Faculty from among its members for a period of four years, as well as six other members, elected together with their personal deputies by the parliamentary electors for a period of four years. If the electors do not reach a consensus on the election, it shall be conducted by proportional ballot. If the President of the Supreme Court or of the Supreme Administrative Court is prevented from attending the hearing of a matter, the most senior member of that court shall be summoned to take his place. When a President of a Court of Appeal is prevented from attending, he shall be replaced by the most senior President of a Court of Appeal, who is not a member of the High Court of Impeachment. If necessary, an elected member shall be replaced by his deputy and the Chairman by the President of the Supreme Administrative Court. (18 March 1983/282)

Section 2 When bringing charges in the High Court of Impeachment under sections 47, 49 or 59 of the Constitution Act, the Chancellor of Justice, the Parliamentary Ombudsman or a person appointed for the purpose by the President of the Republic or by Parliament shall request of the Chairman of the High Court of Impeachment that the person charged be summoned to answer the charges. Thereafter the Chairman shall take steps to convene the High Court of Impeachment in order to hear the case in proper legal order. (21 December 1990/1223)

At the conclusion of its hearing the High Court of Impeachment shall pass judgment on the matter, applying general law. No pardon shall be granted in such a case unless so proposed by the High Court of Impeachment.

Section 3 This Act shall enter into force as a Constitutional Act.

ISBN 951-47-7333-0