

## *Executive Branch*

### *Prime Minister*

- is the leader of the political party with the most seats in the House of Commons
- as the leader of the federal gov't, the PM has many duties:
  - head of gov't
    - asks the GG to name new judges and senators
    - chooses the best time to call an election
    - chooses/changes cabinet members
    - final say in creating gov't policies
  - national leader
    - represents Canada internationally
    - works with premiers to coordinate and share responsibilities
  - party leader
    - acts as a spokesperson for his/her party

### *Cabinet*

- made up of MPs chosen by the PM
- each is designated a minister for a certain portfolio
  - very difficult jobs here
    - Minister of Finance, for example
    - responsible for their department and all their staff
- the Cabinet is supposed to reflect racial/sex/linguistic differences from all over Canada
- in private meetings, these MPs can argue about whatever they want, but in public they must show **cabinet solidarity**
  - they MUST publicly show full support of the PM, no matter what

- this solidarity is so important, parties choose a **party whip** who ensures that everyone attends important votes
  - whips have the power to discipline members who talk against their party and can demand their resignation

### *Public Service*

- often referred to as the civil service or bureaucracy
  - do all the small jobs that enable the gov't to run
- these are the people that most citizens deal with
- they do many jobs:
  - gather statistics
  - write details for laws
  - collect taxes
  - etc.

### *Judicial Branch*

- this group has the power to interpret and administer laws
- in democracies, this is a separate branch of gov't than the other two
  - makes sure they have to obey the law
    - eg. courts, judges, and police
- because every CDN citizen (gov't or not) is under the rule of law, this branch is especially important to keep the gov't accountable
- interestingly enough, judges are appointed by the PM
- some people see this as a breach of this separation

## The Passing of a Bill

- this is a complex process, but is important b/c it lays out the duties of many levels of gov't in Canada
  - bill – idea for a law
  - legislation – a completed law
- first step, any MP or Senate member can propose a bill, but it has to have Cabinet's support
  - they decide which issues need addressing
- if it's a good idea, the bill gets passed on to gov't lawyers
- the written bill gets discussed **in caucus** (party-wide meeting) and members voice opinions
- if its agreed upon, the bill is introduced into the House
- any federal bill must pass **three readings** in the House of Commons and the Senate before it can be signed into law
  - **first reading** – just a formality
    - bill is introduced without debate to opposition and the media
  - **second reading** – where the bill is debated
- when this is passed, a multi-party committee examines each law clause by clause - the public can take part
  - **third reading** – the House rejects or accepts the bill
- if this passes, the bill is sent to the Senate where it undergoes the same process
  - very rarely do laws ever get rejected by the Senate
- lastly, the Governor General gives **royal assent** and the bill becomes legislation (law)

## *Provincial and Territorial Gov'ts*

- like the federal gov't, provincial and territorial gov'ts have the exact same three branches
  - legislative, executive, and judicial
- here is how many of the roles are similar:

<b>Fed. Gov't</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Prov/Terr Gov'ts</b>
Governor General	Rep the monarch	Lieutenant – Governor
Prime Minister	Leader of the party in power	Premier
Cabinet	Ministers chosen for portfolios	Cabinet
House of Commons	Elected reps make and change laws	Legislative or National Assembly
Senate	“Sober second thought”	[No Equivalent]
Public Service	Daily business of gov't	Public Service

- the major difference (other than some names) is the lack of the Senate provincially
  - once a law has passed three readings, it goes to the lieutenant-governor
- from earlier notes, some of their jobs are also different
  - education, environment, health care, transportation

- each province has to constantly negotiate with the federal gov't for funding and jurisdiction
  - together, they share in certain areas
  - equalization payments also help to even out provincial funding
- if the fed. or prov. gov'ts don't get along, they can go to court to decide what should be done

### ***Local Gov'ts***

- this is the lowest level of gov't in Canada
- the leader can have many different names
  - mayor, reeve, chairperson, overseer, or warden
- this is an elected position, and they are responsible for their citizens
- other elected members are called councilors or alderpersons
- over the years, these roles have changed
  - now they focus on urban development

### ***Aboriginal Self-Government***

- many Aboriginal communities have local gov'ts that provide for the needs of their people
  - usually band councils or elders
  - sometimes chiefs are present
- more and more often, these councils are discussing with gov'ts more than mayors or reeves ever do
- as time goes on, these councils are gaining more power