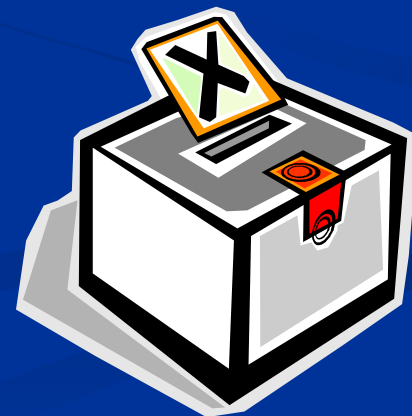
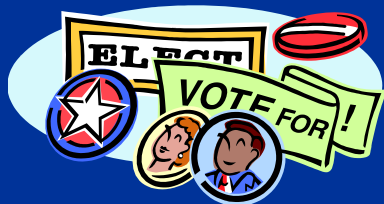


CANADA'S GOVERNMENT



Representative Democracy

- **Democracy**, which means "rule by the people," was practiced by ancient Greeks who partook in voting as a means of making decisions on elements affecting society (This was known as a **direct democracy**).
- In our society citizens partake in **representative democracies** where elected representatives make decisions on our behalf.



The Constitution: The Supreme Law of Canada



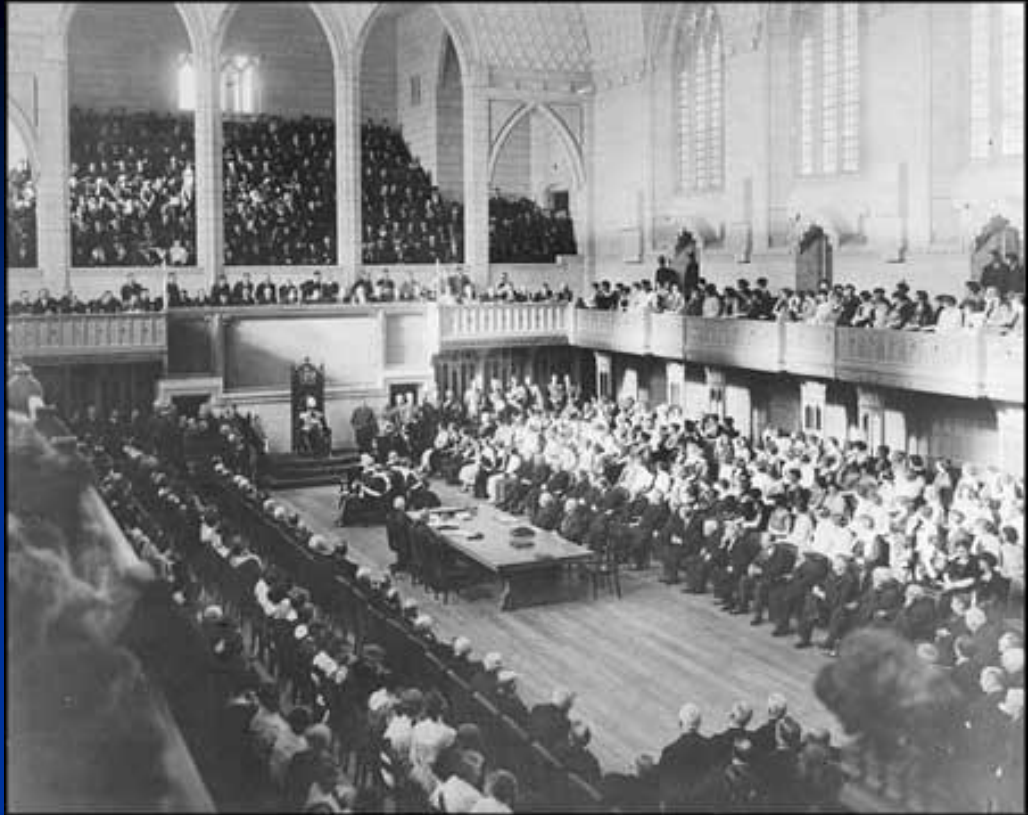
- No large-scale society can operate without clear-cuts rules. The Constitution is the authority that exists to which citizens and governments can appeal in order to settle disagreements in a peaceful and legitimate way. It is the "Supreme Law in Canada".
- It outlines how our system of government operates. It lists the powers held by the government and the rights and responsibilities of individual citizens.

- **BNA Act:** later renamed the **Constitution Act, 1867**-->listed powers of federal and provincial governments and detailed the workings of Canada's government institutions. Government power is ultimately derived from the Crown or its Canadian representative, the **governor general**.
- However, the crown must act only on the advice and with the consent of the **Prime Minister** and the **Cabinet**, who hold power only as long as they have the support of a majority of the elected representatives.
- These representatives in turn are responsible to the **voters**.





The opening of Canadian Parliament



- Canada's written Constitution has three main parts:
- A description of the powers of the provincial legislatures and Parliament, as well as their parts and authority
- A Charter of Rights and Freedoms that outlines the basic rights and responsibilities that all Canadians possess
- An amending formula, which sets out ways in which the Constitution may be changed or altered.
- This formula requires that the federal government and seven of the 10 provinces must agree on the proposed amendment (change). The seven provinces must make up at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total population of Canada.

Canada's Federal System

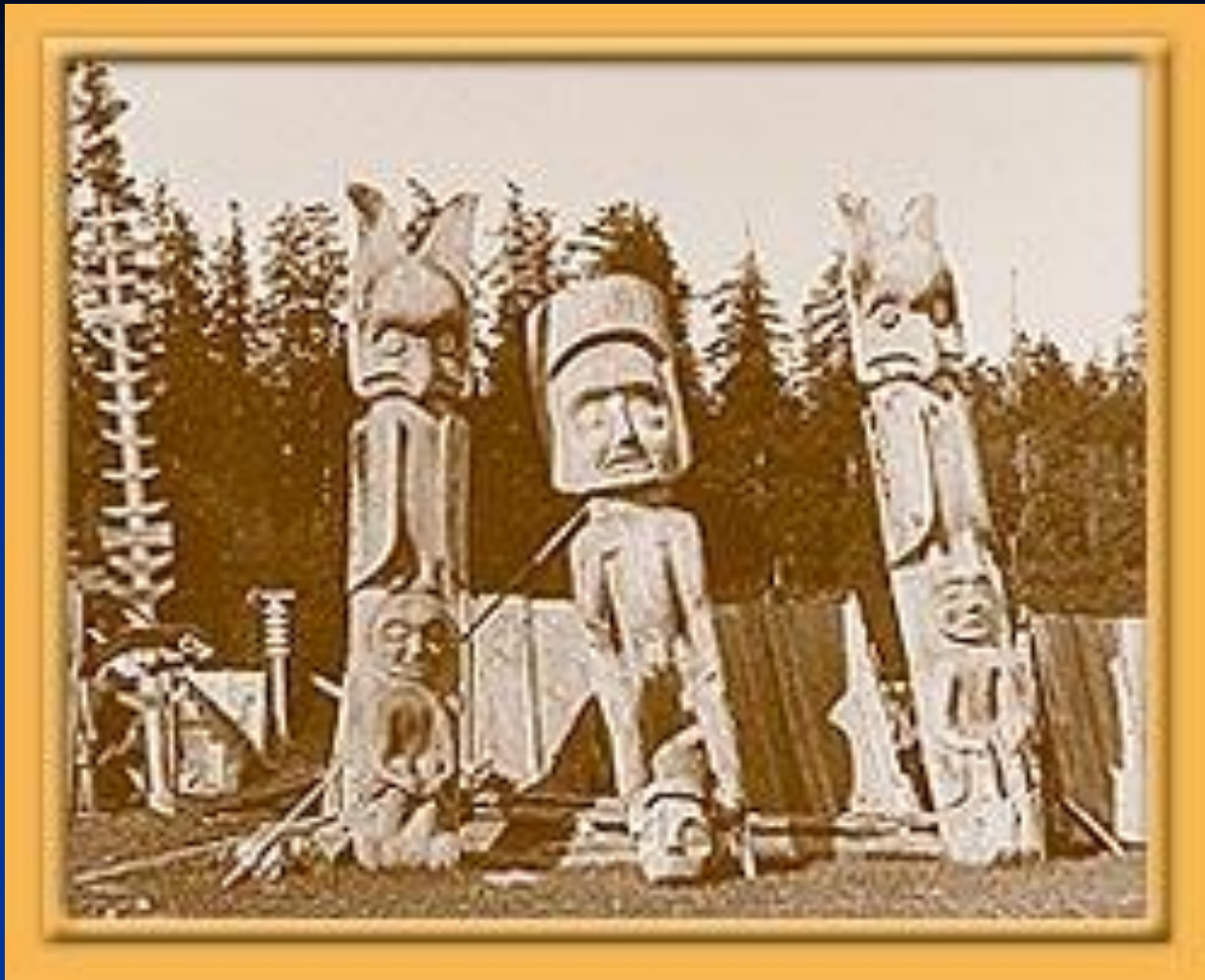
- Canada's federal system of government divided the power to make laws and the responsibility to provide government services between two levels of government: the federal, government based in Ottawa and the provincial governments. A third level--municipal government--developed later to look after local concerns. This system was formed to recognize the need for all Canadians to work together and for each province to maintain local autonomy.





| Federal Powers | Provincial Powers | Municipal Powers |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Defence -Regulation of trade and commerce -Citizenship -Taxation -Currency and Coins -Native peoples and Native reserves -Postal Service -Patents and Copyright -Marriage and Divorce -Navigation and shipping -Fisheries -Criminal Law and federal penitentiaries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Education -Hospitals and charities -Licences (e.g., driving and fishing) -Private property and Civil Law -Direct taxation (e.g., income tax and sales tax) -Management of natural resources (e.g., forests and electrical energy) -Local public works (e.g. roads and canals) -Courts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Water and sewer service -Public transit -Fire and police protection and ambulance service -Licensing and inspection (e.g., houses) -Street lights, sidewalks, and local roads -Public health services -local roads -garbage collection -matters of purely local concern -by laws |

Quiz:



Which level of government has jurisdiction over Native affairs?



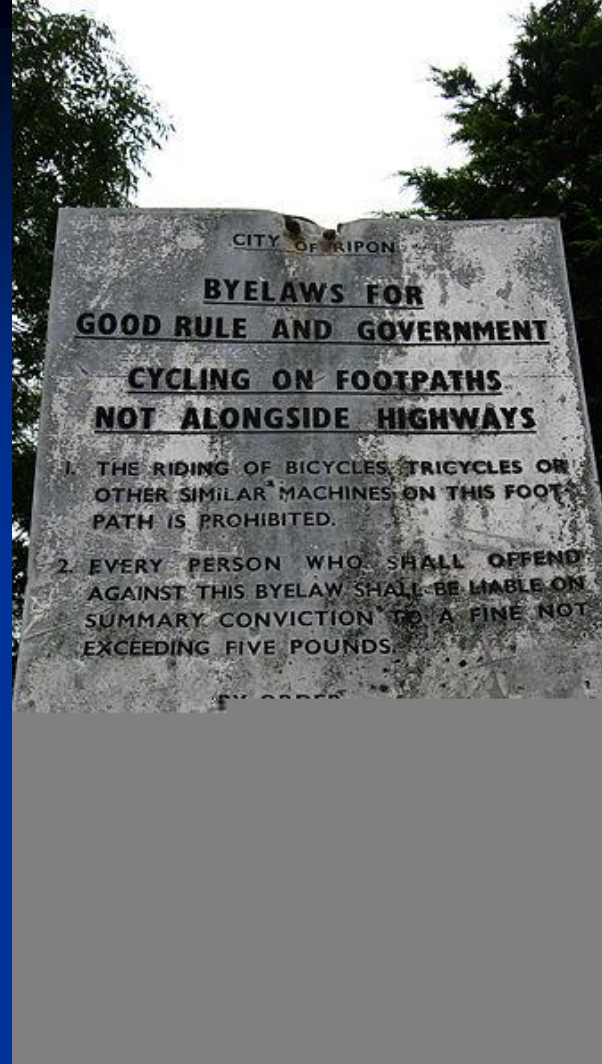
Which level of government has jurisdiction over currency?



Which level of government has over sewer and water services?



Which level of government has jurisdiction over education?



- Which level of government is responsible for by-laws? eg. parking, zoning, and retail business licensing

- Which level of government is responsible for hospital and health services?



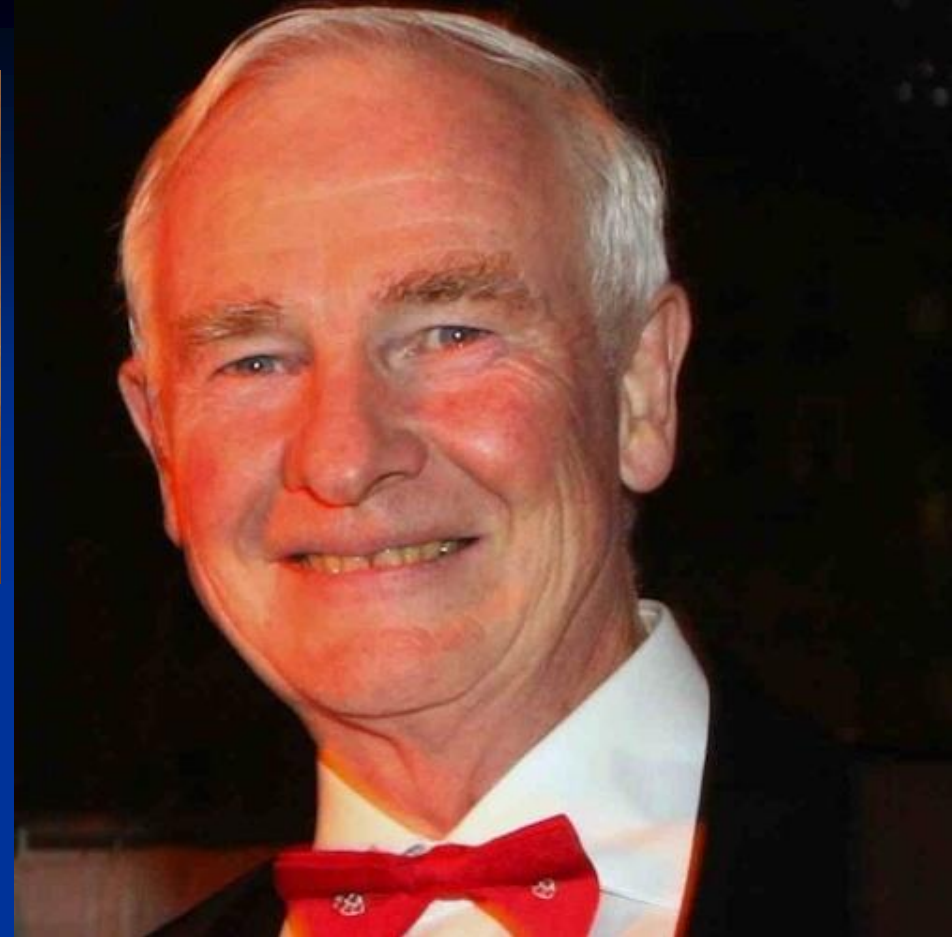
- Which level of government is responsible the postal service?



Head of State

- Canada is a constitutional monarchy as stated in the 1867 Constitution: "Executive government and authority of and over Canada is hereby declared to continue and be vested in the Queen."
- As head of state, the queen and her representative in Canada, the governor general, stand above political conflicts as neutral parties whose only interest is to ensure national unity, stability and all the interests of all Canadians.





Duties of the Governor General:

- "royal assent" to bills passed by the House of Commons and the Senate in order to establish them as laws.
- Speech from the Throne at the opening of a session of Parliament.
- swears-in of the prime minister, chief justice of the Supreme Court, and Cabinet ministers.
- Canada's Governor-General: David Johnston
- Rick Mercer's take on Constitutional Monarchy:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5GZIDnMzZQ>

The Role of the Prime Minister

- The PM appoints Cabinet ministers, Senators, the Governor General, Lieutenant Governors, Judges (including the chief justice of the Supreme court), and Senior Civil servants.
- The PM's own department is known as the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), which is made up of 60 to 75 intensely loyal employees who work to maintain the PM's popularity with the public, the media, Parliament, and the party as a whole.



The Role of the Prime Minister

- The PM leads the government party in the House of Commons and commands the support of a majority of the MPs, who must follow the prime minister's lead on government policy decisions. In addition, he or she appoints over 21000 government officials (patronage appointments which award important positions to loyal party members who will remain supportive).



The Cabinet: Managing the Nation's Affair



- The Cabinet is made up of senior members of the government party who have been chosen by the prime minister as advisers. Each Cabinet minister is given responsibility for portfolio, or a department of the federal government.
- Cabinet ministers are accountable to Parliament and to the people of Canada for all the activities of their departments

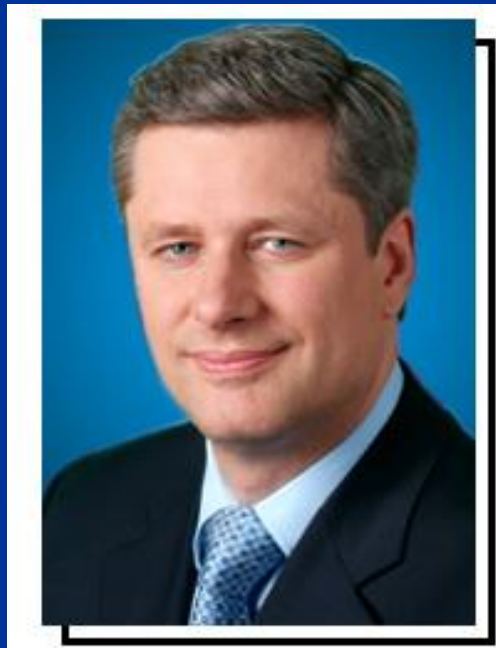
How are Cabinet Ministers Chosen?

- They are selected from the pool of government MP's. The PM must ensure that:
- The most experienced MPs are included
- Each province is represented
- A linguistic balance is maintained—2/3's Anglophone, 1/3 francophone
- Women are included and, where possible, members of different cultural groups
- Ontario and Quebec are represented by 10 or 12 ministers.



The Three Branches of Our Federal Government

- **LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**- Has the power to make and amend laws (House of Commons, Senate)
- **EXECUTIVE BRANCH**- Has the power to administer and carry out laws (PM, Cabinet)
- **JUDICIAL BRANCH**- Has the power to decide who has broken the law and to set penalties (courts)



The Parliament



- Parliament is made up of the Crown, the Senate, and the House of Commons. The House of Commons (aka the Green Room- "a rectangular room divided by a central aisle") and the Senate make up the legislative branch.
- The main role of Parliament is to examine proposed laws called bills. In addition, it has the "power of the purse." The government party in the House sets the federal budget, outlining government spending and the collection of taxes.

How do MP's Vote?



- Each political party having elected representative holds private meetings called a **caucus**. Each party leader outlines the programs, policies and actions that the party is going to take.
- Heated arguments arise, but in the end tradition holds that all MPs are expected to vote in favour of the party's position in the House of Commons known as **cabinet solidarity**.

The Senate

- Also known as the **Upper House** of Parliament, the Senate is independent of the House of Commons. It appoints its own speaker and runs its own affairs.
- The governor general appoints senators on the recommendation of the PM.
- The Senate's main role is to provide a final check on the legislation passed in the House of Commons. It also introduces bills (proposed laws), debate them, pass them, and send them to the Commons, although this rarely happens.



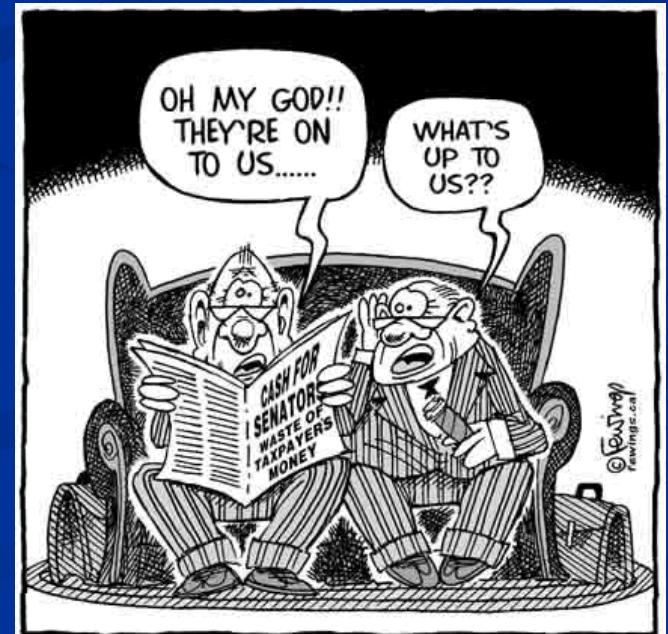
Photo: Library of Parliament / Paul Couvrette

Senator Larry Campbell



The Senate

- Seats are allotted in the basis of population, so the provinces with the greater populations get more senators.
- PMs often fill vacant seats in the Senate with supporters of their party, as a form of **patronage (reward)** for individual loyalty.
- This has led dispute over the qualifications of these individuals.
- In addition, some people claim that the Senate is not truly representative as only 20% of Senators are women, and almost all come from upper to middle levels of society. Also, some people feel that senators represent their party rather than their province or region.
- Senators can only serve up to the age 75



How a Bill Becomes Law



- In order for a bill to become law it must go through four main stages: First Reading, Second Reading, Committee Stage, and Third Reading
- It then goes to the Senate and follows a similar process.
- Finally it goes to the Governor General, who then signs the bill for Royal Assent.