Name: Date:

Bahamian Parliament Past & Present

Woodes Rogers, the first Royal Governor to The Bahamas established the first Parliament. The first session of Parliament was on 29th September, 1729. There were 24 members representing three islands: New Providence, Eleuthera and Harbour Island. John Colebrooke was the first Speaker of the House of Assembly. The speaker rules or maintains order in the House of Assembly. The purpose of parliament is to create laws to help run the country and maintain order. The way our country is run is set out in a special document called the **Constitution**. The Bahamas is a **Constitutional Democracy**. The King is our **Head of State** and he is represented by the **Governor- General**.

However, as an independent nation, The Bahamas makes its own laws which come into effect after it has been signed by the Governor-General.

There are two chambers Parliamen

I. ***The House of*** **Assembly**– consists of **Members of Parliament (MPs)** who are elected by the people. The number of MPs are determined by the number of constituencies. These include Cabinet Ministers who are selected by the Prime Minister to run the various ministries of the countries. They suggest laws and projects to make their ministries more effective.

II. ***Senate*** - consists of 16 senators who are appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister with some advice from the Leader of the Opposition. Together, these two chambers write, debate and pass laws so that the country can function well. The bill is introduced in and read in parliament first and sent to the Senate to be read and examined. This occurs three times to make sure that it is flawless. The bill is then sent to the governor general to be signed. Only then it becomes law. Laws are enforced by the police and law courts.

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Answer the following questions using the information above and research where necessary.

1. a. Who was the person who established the first parliament?

b. What was his position?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2. This first meeting took place on _____.

3. How many members made up this first assembly?

4. What 3 Bahamian islands did these parliamentarians come from?

5. Who was the first speaker of the House of Assembly?

b. Name the present speaker of the house of assembly.

6. Name the head of State of The Bahamas and the person who represents this person presently in our country.

7. Give 2 reasons why parliament is necessary in The Bahamas.

8. Complete the table.

	House of Assembly	**Senate**
Name of people in these chambers		
How to the get to work in these chambers?		
Number of people in these chambers.		
The jobs of people in these chambers.		

LIVEWORKSHEETS

9. Who is responsible for making the bills to become laws?

10. Name the group of people responsible for enforcing these laws.

LIVEWORKSHEETS