

## POLITICAL SYSTEM OF CANADA

Canada is a self-governing federal state and a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The form of the government of Canada is a constitutional monarchy. It is ruled by a parliamentary system, but formally the head of the state is the King or Queen of the UK, and the appointed Governor-General is the monarch's representative, who is named by the Canadian Cabinet. However, the Governor-General performs only certain formal and symbolic tasks. And the leading figure in the political life of the country is the Prime Minister.

The Federal Parliament consists of the Senate and the House of Commons. The Senate numbers 104 members, Senators, who are not elected. They are appointed and have little power because they cannot write new laws. Senators can only approve or reject the laws passed by the House of Commons, excepting the laws that deal with taxes or expenses. Senators can serve until they retire at the age of 75.

The House of Commons has 295 members elected by universal suffrage for five years. The people of Canada elect members of the House of Commons. To vote in nation elections, a person must be at least 18 years old and a Canadian citizen.

The Cabinet is headed by the Prime Minister, usually the leader of the party which has the majority in the House of Commons. The ministers are members of the House of Commons, but the Prime Minister may name one minister from the Senate. The Prime Minister is responsible to the House of Commons.

Canada also has many courts. In the courts, judges deal with people accused of breaking the laws. The judges are appointed by the Prime Minister. They serve until they retire. As in the USA, people who are unhappy with a judge's decision can take their case to a higher court. The highest court in Canada is the Supreme Court. It decides the most important cases in the country.

So Canada has two branches of power in its political system: legislative branch and judicial branch.

In all the provinces there is a legislative assembly elected by the people for five years.

The seat of the Federal Parliament and government is Ottawa, the federal capital. The legislative assemblies and government of provinces have their seat in the provincial capitals.

In Canada there are five major parties: Conservative, Liberal, Unionist, New Democratic and Progressive Conservative. They differ only in foreign policy, their attitude to the USA, to the question of the French and English elements of the population and to provincial policies.

- a) Canada is a constitutional monarchy.
- b) It is ruled by the Queen of the UK.
- c) The leading figure in the political life of the country is the Governor-General.
- d) The Federal Parliament consists of the Senate and the House of Commons.
- e) Senators can write new laws.
- f) The people of Canada elect members of the House of Commons.
- g) The Prime Minister is responsible for the Senate.
- h) The judges are appointed by the Prime Minister.
- i) Canada has three branches of power in its political system.
- j) In all the provinces there is a legislative assembly elected by their people for five years.
- k) The seat of the Federal Parliament and government is Ottawa.
- l) In Canada there are three major parties.