Canada's Provinces – British Columbia

BRITISH COLUMBIA is the third of Canada's provinces in population and in total area. At the time of the 1911 census, there were 1,146,279 people living in the province. Its total area of 566,295 square miles is exceeded only by Ontario's and Quebec's. If land alone is measured, British Columbia is bigger than Ontario, covering 239,379 square miles against 288,141.

Vancouver, the metropolis of British Columbia, is Canada's third city and the nation's second busiest seaport.

In production, only the provinces rank third, the value of its output being 9 per cent of that of the whole country. Manufacturing is the main industry of British Columbia, accounting for 45 per cent of total output. In order of their importance these industries are sawmills, pulp and paper, fish processing, smelters and smelters and fertilizers. Building accounts for 22 per cent of output, with forestry in third place (33 per cent) and mining yielding 9 per cent.

Not value of the province's production is more than $11 billion a year.

British Columbia has a well-diversified economy, though agriculture accounts for only a little more than 3 per cent of its wealth. The great harbour of Vancouver gives easy access, twelve months in the year, to the markets for the products of the province and it also exports many millions of tons of ore, from the province. More than 12 million tons of commodities are handled every year over the Vancouver waterfront.

The Parliament of Canada

Canada is a Federation of ten provinces and two territories, and its form of government is that of Parliamentary or Limited Monarchy.

There are eleven Parliaments in the nation, each sovereign within its own jurisdiction. All powers which are not specifically assigned to provincial governments by the constitution belong to and are exercised by the Government of Canada.

Canada's laws are made by the Parliament of the nation. Provincial laws are made by provincial Parliaments.

The Parliament of Canada is the Queen, the Senate and the House of Commons. Her Majesty's powers are exercised in Canada by the Governor General.

When legislation has been approved by majority vote in the Commons and the Senate and assented to in the Queen's name, it becomes law and every Canadian is bound to obey it.

Laws passed by Parliament are administered by a group of Ministers, known as the Cabinet. All the executive Acts of the Cabinet must be approved by the Governor General in the Queen's name.

Disputes about the meaning or application of the laws are judged by the Courts of Justice.

The Senate of Canada has 102 members.

Senators are appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. They hold office for life.

The House of Commons has 265 members.

Members of the House of Commons are elected by the people for five years, unless the House is dissolved sooner.

Money Bills

Bills for appropriating any part of the public revenue, or for levying any tax or impost, must originate in the House of Commons.

It is not lawful, however, for the Commons to adopt or pass any vote, resolution, address or bill for the appropriation of any revenue, or of tax or impost to any purpose, that has not first been recommended to the House by a Message of the Governor General.

This means, in practice, that the Commons enjoy the power of limiting the Government's spending, but cannot force expenditure which the Cabinet considers unwise or unwise. Money bills are read three times in both the House and the Senate.

Parliament at Work

When the affairs of a government department are under discussion in the Commons, the responsible Minister must be there to answer questions, or he must be represented by his Parliamentary Assistant or one of the other Ministers.

When an enactment is proposed to Parliament, it must be printed and circulated to the Members. It is explained briefly and voted on. Then it is discussed in detail and voted on for a second time. Finally, a third vote is taken. Then it goes to the Senate where again it must be given a triple vote. If there is disagreement between the two Houses, the dispute must be settled before a bill is laid before the Governor General for the Royal Assent which makes it the law of the land.

Every House of Parliament has a chairman who is called the Speaker. He does not join in debates. It is his task to see that Members keep to the subject which is being discussed and treat each other courteously.

This is done so that Canada's laws may not be enacted in haste or passion, but only after the most reasonable and useful discussion possible by the representatives of the people.

Federal Powers

The Government of Canada, which is also known as the Federal, National or Central Government, holds full and exclusive authority and responsibility in:

- National Defence
- Currency and Coinage
- Banking
- Naturalization and Aliens
- Criminal Law
- Post Service
- Trade and Commerce
- Navigation and Shipping

In case of disagreements between governments in the matter of jurisdiction, the final arbiter is the Supreme Court of Canada.

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