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HOUSE on the HILL

By GEORGE HAMBLETON

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Government by the People

Elections are in the news these days. The United States election last year had Canadians feeling almost as tense and partisan as their neighbours to the south. Interest in the British general election, the results of which will be known soon after this is published, has been worldwide. The United Nations stand by the principle of free elections for the peoples of Europe as soon as possible. And, of course, Canadians themselves have just seen two elections in quick succession.

Popular interest throughout has been widespread; campaigning bitter and fierce. The results may leave us complacent, confident, disappointed, apprehensive or reassured. But, however we may feel, our responsibilities as electors continue—and that goes for supporters of losing candidates, too. We can acquit ourselves properly as electors only if we know something about the machinery of government.

This article tells how parliament began, how it developed and how it works today. Discussing it now should throw light on what may otherwise seem like strange events when our new Parliament assembles on August 23rd.



Canadian Affairs will be published slightly more often in future. At least one issue every two weeks is planned instead of the two a month formerly published. Note that no regular issues were published for the dates May 15, June 15 and July 1.

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House on the Hill

By GEORGE HAMBLETON



"In His Majesty's name the Honourable the Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General thanks His Loyal Subjects, accepts their benevolence, and assents to this Bill."

It is Prorogation Day on Parliament Hill. After months, it may be, of talk and discussion, members of the Senate and members of the House of Commons are preparing to leave Ottawa, rejoicing in the relief from committees and resolutions and questions on the Orders of the Day and all the rest of the strange mumbo-jumbo (or so it seems to the puzzled on-looker) with which our national legislature conducts its business.

And now it is the last act of session. Members gather in the Chamber of the Upper House as, in the stilted phrase I have quoted, the Clerk of the Senate "by command of the Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General" expresses royal assent to the Appropriation Bill. This will

provide funds for the twelve months to make the wheels of war go round. And with an appropriate Speech from the Throne, the Deputy Governor General rings down the curtain.

Now, let us for a few moments get behind those stilted phrases and see if we cannot form some plain and simple idea—how our laws are made. But first let us turn back a little and look into the beginning of parliamentary things. For, to understand the Parliament of today, we must go back to the Parliament of the day before yesterday.

The Canadian Parliament did not spring overnight from the creation of the Dominion. It is rooted in tradition. And, if we turn back, we shall perhaps better understand the why and wherefore and not be quite so inclined to look upon the official reports of Parliament as but chronicles of wasted time.

Early Struggles

For the beginning of our parliamentary things, we must turn to the early parliaments of England, their struggles with the Crown, their fights for free speech and for all those other "privileges and immunities" which the Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons still formally claims from the King's representative at the opening of each new Parliament at Ottawa.

First Mention of Parliament

It was not till the reign of Edward the First that the word Parliament (from the French "parler"—to speak—hence a talking shop) was first used in an English statute in description of the Great Council. Odd, too, that the statute should bear a title which has become so familiar to us in recent years—the Statute of Westminster. The same title but only a very distant cousin of the Statute of Westminster, passed in 1931, which lays down among other things that no law of the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall extend to any Dominion except at the request and with the consent of that Dominion. This other Statute of Westminster, passed away back in 1275, is famous because for the first time



in English legislation it refers to a "parlement".

Those early parliaments were very different from the parliaments of today. When they came to have a House of Commons, the Commons were representative only of a limited class. Six centuries of evolution and struggle had to pass before parliamentary democracy as we know it today came into play.

We think much today of the honour of being elected to Parliament. No honour is more eagerly sought. None is more keenly contested. Huge sums are spent in seeking the return of members to Parliament. Party organizations accumulate campaign funds so large as to create demands, from time to time, that such funds should be investigated and political parties be required to make their source public.

But it was not always so. When

modest traders were first chosen by English towns as their representatives in Parliament, many did not even take the trouble to go. The journey was irksome; the cost of travel high. Frugal constituents (who likewise did not appreciate the honour) grudgingly allowed them two shillings a day for expenses. But even this meagre stimulus proved inadequate.

Held the Purse Strings

Yet, despite difficulties and setbacks, the early Parliaments of England soon discovered their power. Kings had to have money to wage wars and they had to go to Parliament to get it. And the Parliaments made their grants of money conditional on the redress of grievances.

When, in 1621, James the First of England commanded the Commons to abstain from discussion they bluntly told the King in a resolution that "the liberties, franchises, privileges and jurisdictions of Parliament are the an-

cient and undoubted birthright of the subjects of England . . . and the making of laws and redress of grievances, which daily happen within this realm, are proper subjects and matter of Council and debate in Parliament." Angri-ly, the King sent for the Journals of the House and with his own hand tore out the offending page which recorded the resolution.

Unorthodox Tactics

Charles the First sought to prevent the Commons from drawing up a protest by commanding the Speaker to adjourn. Two members of the House prevented the adjournment by forcibly holding the Speaker in the Chair. Doors were locked. The Commons passed their resolution.

Charles the First himself went to the House to arrest five members whom he accused of treason. "Treason" said the King, "has no privilege." He was met by dead silence. Charles turned to the Speaker, demanding who the



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five members were. The Speaker fell on his knees. "I have neither eyes to see nor ears to hear save as the House commands", he replied.

Charles looked carefully over the ranks of members.

"I see," he said bitterly, "the birds have flown."

They had. They had flown to the City of London where writs for their arrest were disregarded.

The Civil War. The Commonwealth. The Restoration. Charles the Second. James the Second. William and Mary. Then the Bill of Rights of 1689, which, in formal statute, among other things emphatically lays down that the "freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in Parliament are not to be impeached in any court or place out of Parliament."

Freedom of Speech Established

Thus, bit by bit, the Parliament at Westminster established for itself freedom of speech. Gradually, it became the taxing power. Gradually, it became the supreme legislative authority of the nation. For, although royal assent is still needed before a Bill can become an Act, it is nevertheless Parliament that makes the law.

And (as the Canadian Parliament inherited the rights and privileges of the British Parliament) we find that the Parliament

at Ottawa today has three main functions:

1. To control the manner in which taxes are to be levied and public moneys spent.

2. To consider legislation and to pass laws.

3. To provide a forum where public grievances may be discussed and remedies found; to check any tendencies to autocracy and to maintain government by the people.

The Cabinet

At the heart of our constitutional system is the Cabinet. The Cabinet is the central executive of government. It takes the initiative in deciding national policy; it controls the great federal departments; it supervises national finances; it arranges most of the business in the House of Commons. The Cabinet is the directing authority. But the Cabinet is itself responsible to Parliament. Without a friendly majority in Parliament, it can neither get money voted nor laws passed. The Prime Minister is the leader of the party or coalition commanding a majority in the House of Commons.

Privy Council

In selecting the Cabinet, which he heads, the Prime Minister

makes it representative, as far as possible, of every province. In reality, the Cabinet is a committee of the Privy Council. All members of the Cabinet, before they are sworn in to their departments, if they have not done so already, must first take the oath as members of the Privy Council. But the Privy Council, although described in the B.N.A. Act, as a council "to advise in the Government of Canada", itself never meets. It consists of all who now hold or who in the past have been members of the Cabinet, plus a few others called to the Privy Council in recognition of services rendered.

Constitutional practice requires that members of the Cabinet have a seat in Parliament although temporarily a member of the Privy Council may hold a Cabinet portfolio without being a member of Parliament.

"Confidence" of the House

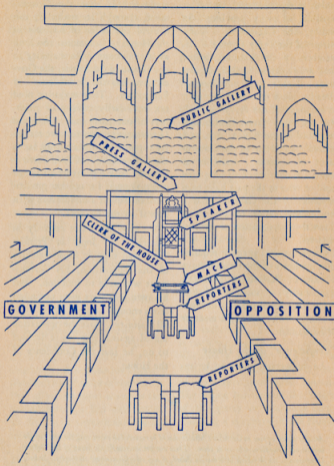
An important point to be re-

membered is that the Government, through its majority, can control the order of business in the House of Commons. So long as it can command a majority in the House of Commons, the Government has the "confidence" of Parliament. That majority need not necessarily consist of members of one party only. Once the Government ceases to have majority support, in other words, lacks the "confidence" of Parliament—its only course is either to resign and make way for another government or request a dissolution with appeal to the electors.

We saw the latter recently in Ontario. So long as Premier Drew had support from members of the Opposition, his Government was able to function. But his own followers were not numerous enough to give him an overall majority. Once the opposition united against him, as it decided to do, he lost the Confidence of the House.



Articles which appear in Canadian Affairs should be regarded as expressing the views of the individual Canadians who write them. These are not necessarily the views of the Defence Departments, the Wartime Information Board, or any other Government Authority. Indeed, occasions will arise when in order to complete the picture of some aspect of wartime life an issue will present opposing views of different authors on one subject.



HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA

Constitution of Parliament



We must remember that Parliament does not consist of the House of Commons alone. Our system of parliamentary government consists of three elements. Each plays its part. The assent of all three is essential before any Bill can become law. These three elements are:

1. The King (represented by the Governor General or his Deputy).
2. The Senate.
3. The House of Commons.

The Governor General

The Governor General is appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister of Canada as the King's representative in Canada, usually for a term of five years with a salary of ten thousand pounds sterling per year, paid by Canada.

So far no Governor General has been a Canadian. He summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament. He gives Royal assent to Bills. But cannot, without precipitating a constitutional crisis, refuse assent to Bills. He acts on

the advice of the Canadian Government which is responsible to the Canadian Parliament. The Canadian Parliament in turn, is responsible to the Canadian people. This is the essence of our democracy.

Cannot Attend Debates

Oddly enough, the Governor General, as the King's representative, is the only man in Canada who cannot attend a sitting of the House of Commons. For him to do so, would be a breach of parliamentary privilege which dates back to those days of conflict between Parliament and the Crown in England when the Commons sought to keep their proceedings a secret from the King.

There was one Governor General, Lord Dufferin, who tried to attend sittings of the Dominion House of Commons. His idea was to have some little cage or cubbyhole from which he could hear without being seen. "You have

promised to arrange some little closet in the House of Commons whence I could hear what was going on", he wrote in half-complaint to Sir John A. MacDonald.

The wary Sir John scented danger.

"Fletcher (the Governor General's secretary) spoke to me about the cage in the House of Commons about the time your note arrived", Sir John A. replied. "I doubt the prudence of your being known to be present at any time of the exciting debates we may expect at the beginning of the session . . . The burthen of their (the Opposition's) speeches will be that the Crown cannot know and ought not to know what passes in the House of Commons; that such knowledge is a breach of their privileges. Now, if this is said in the presence of the representative of the Crown—actually at the moment taking cognizance of the proceedings—the temptation to allude to such presence as a continuation of the debate will be irresistible . . . I do not suppose the Opposition leaders would use any unsavoury phrases but there are several truculent blackguards in the House—annexationists and the like—who would like nothing better than a chance of snubbing

the sovereign . . . I would advise you to forego the advantage which the hearing of debates would certainly be to you."

The Senate

The Senate or Upper House of the Dominion Parliament differs from the House of Commons in both constitution and rules. Members of the Senate are appointed for life by the Government in power. Members of the House of Commons are elected directly by the people. The House of Commons is constituted on the principle of representation according to population; the Senate according to territorial divisions. The present Senate consists of 96 members, with 24 representing each of the four territorial divisions: the Western provinces, Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes.

Qualifications

A Senator must be a British subject, must be at least thirty years of age, must be possessed of real property free of all incumbrances to the value of \$4,000 and must be a resident of the province for which he is appointed.

A Senator's place becomes vacant: (1) if for two consecutive sessions he fails to attend; (2) if he becomes a citizen or subject of a foreign power; (3) if he becomes

Civvy Street NEWS

No. 11

July 14, 1945

VOCATIONAL TRAINING SEEN AS PERMANENT PEACE-TIME NEED

IT is clear from the post-war training program announced by the Labour Department that the well-known emphasis on training and courses for any given task in the Services will be carried over in the reconstruction period and thereafter. The need to improve Canada's vocational training facilities on a permanent basis has been recognized, as the result of a survey on post-war employment problems.

Here is a résumé of what has already been done and of what is planned:

1. Special Dominion-Provincial agreements are in force, covering rehabilitation training of members of the armed forces.
2. The Dominion and the Provinces are co-operating on an apprenticeship plan, already in effect.
3. The expanded training facilities Canada will need will be provided through the Provinces. This will result in more training in industry and in a longer list of courses. An Order-in-Council provides that the Federal Government may enter into agreements with the Provinces under which

up to two million dollars a year may be provided to each province towards providing vocational training at secondary and high school levels. Each province may also get up to ten million dollars during the next three years to pay for new training facilities.

Training may be in schools or training centres, or directly in industry, and will be given for those occupations offering the best chance of a steady job. Although training is not confined to veterans, they will have priorities on available facilities in the event of a shortage.

A Royal Commission on Veterans Qualifications is now sitting and will visit all provincial capitals to confer with the governments. One recommendation already made, to ensure that veterans receive proper credit for trade training while in uniform is:

That veterans should have documents indicating educational and occupational standing in the Service, courses taken and time spent in the trade or other work concerned, and rank, appointment and/or trade group held.



Replying to your Inquiry...

FRUIT FARMING IN SOUTHERN B.C.

Could you please tell me how I go about applying for a tract of land in the region of New Westminster, B.C. suitable for fruit growing and mixed farming, under the V.L.A.? I definitely want to settle in southern B.C., have nearly 4 years' overseas service, and have lived on a farm most of my life.

—Col., 1st CAN ARMY OVERSEAS.

In order to take up farming under the V.L.A. in the New Westminster region you will have to see the Regional Officer of the Veterans' Land Act in that area (Mr. T. Godfrey, Westminster Trust Bldg., 713 Columbia St., New Westminster). It would be as well first to talk over your plans with the Personnel Counsellor when you have an interview with him before being discharged. He will be able to tell you whether you are considered to have the required qualifications. If you were a farmer before coming into the Service, there is no reason why you should have any difficulty. You may be interested in knowing that the Custodian of Alien Property is holding the farms previously owned by Japanese in B.C. for purchase by returned men. Some of these are in the Fraser Valley, close to New Westminster. You can keep this in mind when talking to the Veterans' Land Act people.

BENEFITS TO U.S. CITIZENS IN CANADIAN FORCES

I have read several of your articles on Rehabilitation for Servicemen, but none of them cover my problem or possibly those of other U.S. citizens serving with Canadian Forces. I wish to attend the agriculture department at the University of Wisconsin and work for my B.A. degree. This will take four years. I am married, have one child and have served four years in the army. What rehabilitation benefits can I receive from the Canadian Government?

—SGT, 16 A/A ONS ROOM, RCA OVERSEAS.

Here are the benefits which you receive from the Rehabilitation plan:

1. Rehabilitation Grant of 30 days' pay and allowances.
2. Clothing Grant of \$100.00.
3. War Service Gratuity of \$7.50 for every 30 days in the Western Hemisphere and \$15.00 for every 30 days overseas, plus seven days' pay and allowances for every six months overseas.

As far as an Educational Grant is concerned: you can get this for attendance at a Canadian university, but not in the United States unless you had already started a course there which was interrupted by your enlistment in the Canadian forces. In either case, being married with one child, you would get \$92.00 per month as well as your fees at the University. Since regulations are changed from time to time to cover particular difficulties which arise, you would do well to consult the Personnel Counsellor as well as the Veterans Affairs officer. They will be able to tell you the latest regulations which apply to Americans serving with the Canadian Army.

KNOW YOUR REHAB RIGHTS:

FREE MEDICAL TREATMENT • CLOTHING ALLOWANCES • REHABILITATION GRANT • REINSTATEMENT IN JUNE
RE-ESTABLISHMENT CREDIT • A HOME OUTSIDE TOWN • FARMING OPPORTUNITIES • VOCATIONAL TRAINING
UNIVERSITY TRAINING • MAINTENANCE GRANTS

How do they work? How do they affect YOUR future? They are all part of Canada's Rehabilitation Program, designed to help you on the road ahead. Keep informed. Send in your questions to Editor, Civvy Street News, Wartime Information Board, Ottawa.

Extra copies of Civvy Street News are available on request.
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VETERAN WANTS TO BE VETERINARY

Could you give me any information regarding the qualifications required prior to taking a course as a veterinary? I have spent five years in the Canadian Army. Would that be of any benefit to me in regard to a course at the end of the war, as I have heard it said that every year spent in the service would entitle a person to a year's university training.

—DVR, RCASC OVERSEAS.

If you are qualified, you are entitled to enter a Canadian college or university to take a veterinary's course within 15 months of your time of discharge. You would be entitled to attend university and receive benefits for each month of paid service in the Army. These veterinary courses will be given by several different colleges—for example, by the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph. You would have to decide when you get back which college you want to go to and find out whether you have the necessary entrance qualifications (at least, junior matriculation).

RE-ESTABLISHMENT CREDIT TO PAY OFF MORTGAGE

Being a married man and having had to live in apartments most of my life, my wife and I decided to purchase our own home, which cost \$5,700. We saved up enough for the down payment which was \$1,200, the balance to be paid in monthly instalments of \$40.00 for 6 years until the second mortgage is paid up, then the payments will be reduced to \$30.00 a month. The question is—on discharge, can I use my Re-establishment Credit, which is \$850.00, to help clear off the second mortgage?

—CSM, OTG, BROCKVILLE, ONTARIO.

We can think of no reason why you shouldn't use your Re-establishment Credit to pay off this second mortgage.

APPLICATIONS FOR JOBS WITH CBC

In a January 1945 copy of Civvy Street News I noted an article concerning opportunities available in Civil Service Posts to returning vets.

I understand the CBC is a Civil Service outfit and in order to be employed there a Civil Service examination must be passed. Is this examination like the one used for examining radium applicants for their 2nd Class Commercial License? I am capable of being examined for 2nd Class Commercial License, and will be seeking employment in the CBC after my discharge. I have had experience in announcing.

—RADIO ARTIST J.C., RCNVR.

The CBC do not require applicants to pass Civil Service examinations. They interview each applicant personally and if they give any examination at all, it will be an oral one. We suggest you get in touch with Col. R. P. Landry, Director of Personnel and Administrative Service, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Ottawa, if you wish further detailed information.

REHAB ROUNDUP

Civilian 'brasshats' are among the unfamiliar types to be found in the day coaches of long-distance Canadian trains these days. Top priority on passenger equipment goes to service personnel returning from overseas. As a result, regular passenger trains have been almost stripped of sleeping cars, diners and tourist cars to provide the needed accommodation. It's going to get worse for the civilians, but they are willingly co-operating, according to the railroads.

Four soil survey parties have been sent into B.C. to examine and map soil areas—near Prince George; in the Vanderhoof-Fort Fraser area; in the Lakes district west of Fort Fraser; and in a section of the Cariboo. The idea is to furnish detailed information to the government for the use of returned men who wish to settle on the land.

To bridge the gap between military and civilian life, the Canadian Women's Army Corps has established in Toronto the Dominion's first Rehabilitation Wing for servicewomen. This is the first step in a program to help re-orient CWAC personnel to civilian life. Military routine is reduced to a minimum and personal planning for the future is encouraged through discussions, lectures and interviews.

Calgary veterans are getting city land for post-war homes, Mayor Andrew Davidson has announced. One hundred and forty-four of the city's veterans intending to start market gardens and raise chickens are each going to get an acre of land in the city itself. The City has extended the provisions of the Veterans' Land Act to cover urban property and has donated the necessary land.

Calling all doctors! Be on the lookout for a handbook called "Facts about your

Medical Career on Demobilization". This gives an authoritative answer to every question likely to occur to the medical officer returning to civilian life. It outlines a professional rehabilitation scheme for Canadian doctors in the armed forces which is, according to the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs, "second to none in the world".

Applications are invited at once, by airmail or cable, for ten graduate fellowships of the value of \$900 being offered by the Department of Physics of the University of Toronto. Fellowships are for one year, but are renewable if progress is satisfactory. No deadline for application has been set. Applicants must be war veterans and graduates of any Canadian university in mathematics, physics, engineering physics or electrical engineering.

Ontario will have a provincial Department of Veterans Affairs, to be established after the Dominion-Provincial Conference scheduled for August 6th. The results of the conference will determine what form the new department will take.

Certain key workers at present in the services may be released ahead of their normal priority if their services are considered essential in industry or for important reconstruction projects. Applications for release will come before an Industrial Selection and Release Board made up of representatives from the Defence Departments and the Departments of Labour, Munitions and Supply and Reconstruction. The application must come from an employer, not from service personnel themselves; but if the release is okayed by the Board it will be subject to the personal concurrence of the service man or woman concerned.

a bankrupt or a defaulter; (4) if he ceases to be qualified in respect of property; (5) if he is attainted of treason or convicted of felony or of any infamous crime.

Can Delay and Reject Bills

Rules and orders of the Canadian Senate are modelled largely on those of the House of Lords. But there is a significant difference in their authority. Despite its pageantry, its dukes, earls, marquises, and barons, the House of Lords has less legislative authority than the Senate. The House of Lords can delay Bills from the British House of Commons. But it cannot finally reject Bills. The Senate can both delay and reject.

Over money Bills (that is, Bills to impose taxes or to spend public funds) the House of Lords has still less authority. A money Bill sent from the British House of Commons to the House of Lords becomes law in thirty days on receiving royal assent whether the House of Lords passes it or not. The Senate can reject money Bills. By a report adopted May 22, 1918, the Senate also claimed that it had the power to amend money Bills. This right is challenged by the House of Commons.

Now the Senate's power of rejection might become supremely important in the event of a Gov-

ernment which has had a long period of power being defeated at the polls. For, in that event, the new Government, while it would have a majority in the House of Commons, might have to face a majority of opposition members in the Senate.

Sober Second Thought

Removed from the livelier arena of the Commons, Senators tend to hold less partisan views. Sir John A. Macdonald once called the Senate the "sober second thought in legislation." Last year, a Government Bill affecting the right of Canadian Japanese to vote in provinces other than British Columbia was before the Senate. It had gone through the House of Commons hurriedly. Examination of the Bill in the Senate showed that its provisions were much more sweeping than had been intended. The Senate amended the Bill, deleting ob-



jectionable features. That was a "sober second thought".

The Commons

The House of Commons is directly elected by the people for five years, unless dissolved sooner by the Governor General, acting on the advice of the Government. It consists of 245 members whose seats are distributed among the provinces as follows:

P.E.I.....	4
Nova Scotia.....	12
New Brunswick.....	10
Quebec.....	65
Ontario.....	82
Manitoba.....	17
Saskatchewan.....	21
Alberta.....	17
B.C.....	16
Yukon.....	1
TOTAL.....	245

Members of the Commons, unlike members of the Senate, require no property qualification but they must be of the age of 21 and British subjects. They are elected by constituencies and voting is by secret ballot. In theory, each member represents the majority opinion of his constituency. In the old days of the two-party system, the winning candidate did represent the majority of the votes cast. But, with the growth of new parties and groups, it is

now possible for a member to be elected on a minority vote.

Take three rival candidates "A", "B" and "C" in the same constituency. In the election, votes cast total 16,000—of which "A" gets 7,000, "B" gets 6,000 and "C" gets 3,000. Under our present system "A" is declared elected because he gets more votes than either of the other two. But he gets less than one-half (8,000) of the total votes cast. He is therefore elected on a minority of the votes cast.

Other Voting Systems

For some time past, various political associations have urged changes in our system of voting. Some claim that the elector, instead of voting for one candidate only in a three-cornered fight, should be entitled to indicate his order of preference for the other candidates. Under the preference system, if no candidate gets more than half the votes cast, the candidate at the bottom is eliminated. Votes cast for him are examined again. Preferences indicated for the other candidates on his ballots are allotted until one of the two gets a majority of the votes cast. But it would still be possible for a political group to secure a heavy popular vote without electing any members.

Parliament at Work



We began this article with a short description of what happens when the curtain rings down at the end of session. Let us now raise the curtain on the beginning, imagining ourselves among the favoured few who have seats in the public galleries for the opening of the new Parliament.

Opening Ceremony

It is three o'clock in the afternoon. The Commons are seated in their Chamber. Many of them are new to Parliament and are, you may be sure, not a little bewildered. The Clerk and Clerk Assistant are seated at the large table in the centre of the Chamber. Three knocks are heard on the closed doors. It is the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod who, with three courtly bows, informs assembled members that the immediate attendance of "this honourable House" is desired in the Chamber of the Senate. With three more bows, Black Rod retires.

Led by the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition, members of the House now proceed to the bar of the Senate. There, in words which sound like a lecture to little boys caught playing truant, the Speaker of the Senate blandly informs members of the Commons that "His Excellency does not see fit to declare the cause of the summoning of the present Parliament until the Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen by law."

Despite those victories at the polls which seemed so world-shaking a few weeks before, members of the Commons must troop back to their own Chamber to elect a Speaker.

Election of Speaker

The Clerk of the House now presides. A member rises—generally the leader of the Government—to propose a new Speaker. The Clerk of the House stands up,

points to the member, but himself says nothing. He points then to the seconder. If the motion for a new Speaker is carried, the Clerk declares it adopted. The proposer and seconder then accompany the new Speaker from his seat to the Chair where, standing on the upper step, he will return thanks. If there is opposition, or another member is proposed as Speaker, the Clerk will continue to point to each member in turn.

Not till then can they return to the Senate—usually on the day following—for the formal opening of Parliament by the Governor General.

As his first act, the new Speaker, standing at the head of members of the Commons gathered at the bar of the Senate, makes formal claim, on behalf of the Commons, to all their "undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates." All of this, the Governor General graciously grants.

Speech from the Throne

His Excellency now reads the Speech from the Throne. Mark it well. In the old days, it was the "deep speech" of early English kings, the "colloquium" of the Normans with wise men in council assembled.

Today, it is the King's Speech in name only. The King's representative reads it but it was prepared in the deep secrecy of the Cabinet Council and represents the Government's legislative program for the session.



The Commons return to their Chamber to consider it. But note well. Before the Speech from the Throne is considered at all, the Prime Minister will rise to move first reading of a Bill. Only a pro forma Bill respecting the oaths of office. The more disrespectful of observers say it is only a blank piece of paper. But it has a history. Technically, the Speech from the Throne is business from the Crown. And by giving first reading to a pro forma Bill, the House asserts its right to transact business of its own before it transacts business from the Crown.

First Debate of Session

Routine business follows. Then

Government supporters move and second the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. It is the first full dress debate of the session, with speeches limited to forty minutes each. From side to side of the House the debate wanders on, each party having its list of speakers' names arranged in advance through the party whips. Or perhaps an Opposition amendment, with sub-amendment, may lend snap and flurry. If so, try to be there when the last speaker sits down and the division bells ring. Then you will see the House divide first on the sub-amendment, then on the amendment and finally on the main motion.

The House will no doubt be crowded, for the new Government will want to run up a good majority on its first division. Adoption of the Opposition amendment, with consequent defeat of the main motion, would spell defeat of the Government in power.

Included in the business on the first day of session are two Government motions which always pass without comment. One sets up a Committee of Ways and Means; the other a Committee of Supply. They are the two most important committees of the House. Yet, strictly speaking,

neither is a committee at all, just the House itself with a Chairman presiding instead of the Speaker. The mace is taken from the table and rules put in force which enable a member to speak more than once.

Important Committees

The Committee of Ways and Means considers what taxes you and I will have to pay; the Committee of Supply considers how the money is to be spent.

The costs of war, now about four billions a year, are covered by a special Bill known as the War Appropriation Bill. No measure is more keenly scrutinized than the War Appropriation Bill. Last year, the War Appropriation Bill was under consideration by the House of Commons for four months. It took 1833 pages of the printed House of Commons Hansard to report members' speeches although they resulted in not a single dollar being added or subtracted.

How a Bill is Passed

Let us follow the War Appropriation Bill in its course through Parliament. It is a financial measure — a money Bill — and therefore must be preceded by a resolution introduced by a member of the Government. In that

way, the Government has to assume responsibility for recommending the expenditure. The House considers the resolution. It then goes to Committee of the Whole which, like Committee of Supply, is simply the House itself sitting with a chairman and less rigid rules of procedure.

When Committee of the Whole has completed its consideration, it reports back to the House with the Speaker again in the Chair and the mace on the table. The House concurs in the resolution.

The Bill, like any other Bill, is introduced and receives first, second and third "readings". These are really not readings at all but stages in the progress of the Bill. After the third and final reading, it goes to the Senate where it

must pass three readings before receiving Royal Assent. Only then does it become law.

In recent years, there has been a tendency to make light of Parliament as nothing more than a talking-shop where members waste interminable time to air views of little consequence. There is some basis for the criticism. Debates would be better and livelier for being shortened. But while putting the damper on endless, futile repetitions, we must take care to see that no barrier is placed in the way of the private member who has a real public grievance to submit demanding remedy.

A strong and vigorous Parliament is essential to the successful working of our democracy.



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CANADIAN AFFAIRS is produced as ammunition for good fighters and good citizens. Both know why they are fighting and what they want from victory. These pamphlets are designed for discussion. If they are not being discussed, they are being misused. Reading them by yourself is all right; but nothing takes the place of chewing over facts and ideas in open discussion. See the discussion notes on page 18.

Some Parliamentary Terms Explained



Distribution of Seats: Seats in the House of Commons are redistributed after each decennial census. Quebec has a fixed number of 65 seats. The Quebec census total is divided by 65 which sets the representation quotient. This is then divided into the populations of the other provinces to determine the number of representatives in the House of Commons to which each province is entitled. Owing to war conditions the 1941 redistribution was postponed.

The Estimates: Statements in detail of proposed public expenditure in the ensuing fiscal year.

(War expenditures are provided for in a special Bill known as the War Appropriation Bill.)

Committee of the Whole: The House, as a whole, sitting in Committee. In Committee the Speaker leaves the Chair and is replaced by a Chairman sitting at the head of the clerk's table. The mace is removed. Rules of debate are relaxed.

Committee of Ways and Means: Taxation proposals in the budget are discussed by the House sitting as a whole in Committee of Ways and Means.

Committee of Supply: Estimates of expenditures are discussed by the House sitting as a whole in Committee of Supply.

Caucus: A private meeting of members of a political party who are members of Parliament, at which their actions in the House are agreed upon.

Party Whip: A party official appointed to ensure that all members of his party are on hand when an important division is taken in the House. Party whips also arrange speakers in formal debates.

Hansard: Printed shorthand report of debates.

B.N.A. Act: The British North America Act (B.N.A. Act), passed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom in 1867, lays down the written constitution of Canada. It can be amended only by the British Parliament at the request of the two Houses of the Canadian Parliament.

Statute of Westminster: An Act of the British Parliament passed in 1931. It lays down, among other things, that no law of the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall extend to any Dominion except at the request and with the consent of the Dominion. Popularly known as the legislative Magna Charta of the Dominions.

Parliamentary Privileges: Members of Parliament enjoy certain privileges and immunities. Chief are freedom of speech and freedom from arrest or molestation. The principle of freedom from arrest is based on the necessity of enabling members freely to attend Parliament. It is not claimable for any indictable offence and cannot be allowed to interfere with the administration of criminal justice.

Languages Spoken: Members of the Canadian Parliament may speak in either English or French. Official documents are printed in both languages.

Order Paper: Printed agenda of business for consideration.

Votes and Proceedings: Official record of proceedings and decisions.

Order-in-Council: Executive order issued by the Governor-in-Council under powers conferred by some Act or Acts of Parliament. Example: The Order-in-Council of November 23, 1944, empowering the Minister of Defence to send drafted men overseas was passed under authority of the National Resources Mobilization Act of 1940.

Questions for Discussion

WHAT ARE POLITICS?

Once every five years (sometimes more often) Canadians are called upon to elect to Parliament someone who will be their ears, eyes, voice and conscience in the government of the country. Our rights and duties on election day are clear cut. What about the years between elections?

How do politics affect you in your daily life—as a serviceman?—as a citizen? What sources of information do you draw on to keep up-to-date on politics? Have you ever sat in the gallery at Ottawa? Do you belong to a political party? If so, what made you take this active part in politics? Do you personally know any politicians? Have you ever attended a party nomination meeting?

Who is your local member of Parliament? Have you ever met him—written

to him—attended a meeting where he has spoken? Do you know what position he takes on housing, exports, jobs, veterans and other questions of the day?

How many Cabinet positions can you name? Can you name any new Cabinet posts that have been created during the war? Why do you think these new Departments were set up? Can you name the Senators from your part of the country? Do you know of any new legislation passed by Parliament at the last session of the House? What effect is this likely to have in your daily life?

Public opinion is often said to have acted as a spur or as a curb on Parliament in considering new laws. In what ways does public opinion make itself felt? How do your feelings influence public opinion?

GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE

It is sometimes said that the more people there are who use their votes, the better our democracy will be. Is this true, do you think? In some countries voting is compulsory; in some others it is a privilege, belonging to the elite or paid for with money. In Canada, every citizen of twenty-one or over can vote—but not everyone does. In the recent general election, all servicemen and women had a vote—but less than half used it. What reasons can you give for this? Would you make voting compulsory? There is often talk that the voting age should be lowered to eighteen. What do you think of this suggestion?

The two party system was long the accepted form of democratic politics in Canada. One party was in power; the other formed a usually pretty strong op-

position. Of recent years many new parties have grown up. In the last session of Parliament no less than ten parties were represented in the House. How many parties running candidates in the recent general election can you name? How do you account for the growth of new parties? Have they had a good, or bad, effect, in your opinion, on the efficient workings of democratic government? Do they make the House of Commons more (or less) representative of the majority of citizens? What do you know of the number of parties in other countries?

Is our present voting system (each voter, a single vote, cast for a single candidate) thoroughly satisfactory? Can you think of any disadvantages? What other possible methods of voting are there?

Bring Your Files Up To Date

Back issues of Canadian Affairs are available in limited quantity. These are being offered to discussion group leaders, educational officers, personnel counsellors and others who find a complete file of Canadian Affairs useful in their work. Listed below are the titles from 1944 on. Write, specifying issues required, to Editor, Canadian Affairs, Wartime Information Board, Ottawa.

1944		1944	
Vol. 1, No. 1	War-Changed Canada.....Jan. 15	Vol. 1, No. 17	Canada and UNRRA.....Sept. 15
Vol. 1, No. 18	Wanted—Homes (Overseas).....Feb. 1	Vol. 2, No. 10	(Overseas).....Oct. 1
Vol. 1, No. 2	Future for Fighters.....Feb. 1	Vol. 1, No. 18	Will There Be Jobs?.....Oct. 1
Vol. 1, No. 19	The Excess We Pay (Overseas).....Feb. 1	Vol. 2, No. 11	(Overseas).....Oct. 15
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Vol. 1, No. 32	Our Latin-American Neighbours.....June 1	Vol. 2, No. 20	Where Does Labour Fit In?.....Feb. 1
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Vol. 2, No. 8	(Overseas).....Aug. 15	Vol. 2, No. 31	Business and Post-War Jobs.....June 1
Vol. 1, No. 38	Ontario.....Sept. 1	Vol. 2, No. 32	(Overseas).....June 1
Vol. 2, No. 9	(Overseas).....Sept. 1		

QUIZ

How much do you know about Parliament? Try these questions on your group. Numbers in brackets indicate the page on which answer is to be found.



1. How many members of the House of Commons are there? (12)
2. Does the total number of seats ever change? (17)
3. What do these terms mean: caucus, whip, Hansard? (17)
4. Our parliamentary system consists of three elements. What are they? (9)
5. Who appoints the Governor General? (9)
6. What is the Privy Council? Who are its members? (7)
7. Can the Senate reject a Bill passed by the House of Commons? Does it have more, or less, power in this respect than the House of Lords in England? (11)
8. Is it possible for a minority of electors in a constituency to elect a candidate to Parliament? (12)
9. How many languages may be officially spoken in Parliament? (10)
10. How many members of the Senate are there? Are they elected or appointed to office? (10)

