

5.—Duration and Sessions of Parliaments, 1936-53

NOTE.—Similar information for the 1st to the 12th Parliaments, covering the period from Confederation to 1917 is given in the 1940 Year Book, p. 46, and that for the 13th to 17th Parliaments in the 1945 edition, p. 53.

Order of Parliament	Session	Date of Opening	Date of Prorogation	Days of Session	Sitting Days of House of Commons	Date of Election, Writs Returnable, Dissolution, and Length of Parliament ^{1,2}
18th Parliament.	1st	Feb. 6, 1936	June 23, 1936	139	91	} Oct. 14, 1935 ³ Nov. 9, 1935 ⁴ Jan. 25, 1940 ⁵ 4 y., 2 m., 16 d.
	2nd	Jan. 14, 1937	Apr. 10, 1937	87	62	
	3rd	Jan. 27, 1938	July 1, 1938	156	102	
	4th	Jan. 12, 1939	June 3, 1939	143	103	
	5th	Sept. 7, 1939	Sept. 13, 1939	7	6	
	6th	Jan. 25, 1940	Jan. 25, 1940	1	1	
19th Parliament.	1st	May 16, 1940	Nov. 5, 1940	174	61	} Mar. 26, 1940 ⁵ Apr. 17, 1940 ⁵ Apr. 16, 1945 ⁵ 5 y.
	2nd	Nov. 7, 1940	Jan. 21, 1942	441	105	
	3rd	Jan. 22, 1942	Jan. 27, 1943	371	124	
	4th	Jan. 28, 1943	Jan. 26, 1944	364	120	
	5th	Jan. 27, 1944	Jan. 31, 1945	371	136	
	6th	Mar. 19, 1945	Apr. 16, 1945	29	19	
20th Parliament.	1st	Sept. 6, 1945	Dec. 18, 1945	104	76	} June 11, 1945 ³ Aug. 9, 1945 ⁴ Apr. 30, 1949 ⁵ 3 y., 8 m., 22 d.
	2nd	Mar. 14, 1946	Aug. 31, 1946	171	118	
	3rd	Jan. 30, 1947	July 17, 1947	169	115	
	4th	Dec. 5, 1947	June 30, 1948	209	110	
	5th	Jan. 26, 1949	Apr. 30, 1949	95	59	
21st Parliament.	1st	Sept. 15, 1949	Dec. 10, 1949	87	64	} June 27, 1949 ³ Aug. 25, 1949 ⁴ June 13, 1953 ⁵ 3 y., 9 m., 20 d.
	2nd	Feb. 16, 1950	June 30, 1950	135	90	
	3rd	Aug. 29, 1950	Jan. 29, 1951	154	17	
	4th	Jan. 30, 1951	Oct. 9, 1951	253	105	
	5th	Oct. 9, 1951	Dec. 29, 1951	82	56	
	6th	Feb. 28, 1952	Nov. 20, 1952	267	87	
	7th	Nov. 20, 1952	May 15, 1953	176	108	
22nd Parliament.	1st	Nov. 12, 1953	} Aug. 10, 1953 ³ Oct. 8, 1953 ⁴

¹ The ordinary legal limit of duration for each Parliament is five years. ² Duration of Parliament in years, months and days. The life of a Parliament is counted from the date of return of election writs to the date of dissolution, both days inclusive (B.N.A. Act, Sect. 50). ³ Date of general election. ⁴ Writs returnable. ⁵ Dissolution of Parliament. ⁶ During the war years Parliament was kept in almost continuous session. When prorogation took place it was followed immediately by a new session. During long adjournments provision was made whereby the Speaker could reconvene Parliament before the date previously set for reassembly.

Subsection 2.—The Legislature

The federal legislative authority is vested in the Parliament of Canada, consisting of the Queen, an Upper House styled the Senate, and the House of Commons. Bills may originate in either the Senate or the House subject to the provisions of Sect. 53 of the British North America Act, 1867, which provides that Bills for the appropriation of any part of the public revenue or the imposition of any tax or impost shall originate in the House of Commons. Bills must pass both Houses and receive Royal Assent before becoming law. In practice, most Public Bills originate in the House of Commons, although there has been a marked increase recently in the introduction of Public Bills in the Senate. Private Bills usually originate in the Senate. (See pp. 1255-1258 for current legislation.)

Under Sect. 91 of the British North America Acts, 1867-1952, the legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada extends to the following matters: the amendment of the Constitution of Canada subject to certain exceptions; the public debt and property; the regulation of trade and commerce; unemployment insurance; the raising of money by any mode or system of taxation; the borrowing of money on the public credit; postal service; the Census and statistics; militia, military and