

that have been passed in both Houses of Parliament and which thereby become acts of Parliament with the force of law (unless Parliament prescribes specifically otherwise). Like the Queen, in virtually all cases constitutional convention binds him to carry out these duties in accordance with the advice of his responsible Ministers. Should he not wish to accept their advice, and should they maintain that advice, his only alternative is to replace the existing government with a new government. This alternative could be exercised only if, at the same time, the principle of responsible government could be upheld. This means that the Governor General's discretion in choosing another government is strictly limited to a situation in which a person other than the existing Prime Minister could command the confidence of the House of Commons.

**Canadian honours system.** An exclusively Canadian honours system was introduced in 1967 with the establishment of the Order of Canada. The honours system was enlarged in 1972 with the addition of the Order of Military Merit and three decorations to be awarded in recognition of acts of bravery. A complete description of these awards and a list of the recipients during 1974 are given in Appendix 4.

**The Privy Council.** The BNA Act of 1867 (Sect. 11) provides for "a council to aid and advise in the Government of Canada, to be styled the Queen's Privy Council for Canada...". The Council that in fact advises the Queen's representative, the Governor General, is the Committee of the Privy Council whose membership is identical to that of Cabinet.

Membership in the Privy Council is for life and includes Cabinet Ministers of the government of the day, former Cabinet Ministers, various members of the Royal Family, past and present Commonwealth Prime Ministers, Premiers of provinces, former Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons of Canada and a few distinguished civilians. It is a condition of office that all Ministers must first be sworn to the Privy Council. A member of the Privy Council of Canada is styled "Honourable" and may use the initials PC after his name. A member of the Privy Council of Britain is styled "Right Honourable". The Governor General, the Chief Justice of Canada and the Prime Minister of Canada automatically assume the title "Right Honourable" when they take office.

The Privy Council as a whole has met on only a few ceremonial occasions; its constitutional responsibilities to advise the Crown on matters respecting the Government of Canada are discharged exclusively by the Committee of the Privy Council, which is composed of the members of the Ministry of the day known informally as the Cabinet. The legal instruments through which executive authority is exercised are called Orders in Council. The procedure is for the Committee of the Privy Council to make a submission to the Governor General for his approval which he is obliged to give in almost all circumstances; with this approval, the submission becomes an Order in Council. Meetings of the Committee of the Privy Council or a sub-committee of this Committee are held without formal ceremony.

The office of the President of the Privy Council was formerly occupied, more often than not, by the Prime Minister but from time to time, especially in recent years, it has been occupied by another Minister. On July 5, 1968, the Prime Minister explained that the incumbent of the office of President of the Privy Council would also be the Government Leader in the House of Commons, with the broad responsibility of directing the business of the House, including such matters as supervision of the government's replies to questions in the House and of parliamentary returns in general, and also a special responsibility on behalf of the government of ensuring that Parliament, through its operations and organization of business, can effectively discharge its vital role in the Canadian political process under the increasing pressure of modern government.

The following, with the dates when they were sworn in, were members of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada as at December 31, 1974:

Hon. Thomas Alexander Crerar, October 12, 1917  
 Hon. William Earl Rowe, August 30, 1935  
 Hon. Joseph Thorarinn Thorson, June 11, 1941  
 Hon. Lionel Chevrier, April 18, 1945  
 Hon. Paul Joseph James Martin, April 18, 1945  
 Hon. Douglas Charles Abbott, April 18, 1945  
 Hon. Milton Fowler Gregg, September 2, 1947  
 Hon. Stuart Sinclair Garson, November 15, 1948  
 Hon. Hugues Lapointe, August 25, 1949

Hon. Gabriel-Édouard Rinfret, August 25, 1949  
 Hon. Walter Edward Harris, January 18, 1950  
 Hon. James Sinclair, October 15, 1952  
 Hon. William Ross Macdonald, May 12, 1953  
 Hon. John Whitney Pickersgill, June 12, 1953  
 Hon. Jean Lesage, September 17, 1953  
 Hon. George Carlyle Marler, July 1, 1954  
 Hon. Paul Theodore Hellyer, April 26, 1957  
 Rt. Hon. John George Diefenbaker, June 21, 1957