

Orders and Minutes of Council ever on the increase. During the war years the number of these passed, including Treasury Board Minutes requiring approval of Council, was close to 15,000 a year. To cope with this volume all Orders and Minutes of a routine administrative nature were examined and cleared prior to a Council meeting by a special committee of Ministers called the Government Business Committee. After the War this practice was continued and extended with the establishment of a Special Committee of Council to dispose of formal business where policy had been settled. Matters calling for a policy decision are first referred to the Cabinet and, if approved, any necessary Order or Minute is disposed of, either at the time by the meeting resolving itself into the Committee of Council for that purpose or at a subsequent meeting of the Special Committee.

The introduction of a recorded Cabinet decision and its circulation for action tends to reduce the use of the formal Minute as it would have been considered necessary in the past to issue a Minute of Council for many of the decisions taken. However the enactment by Parliament in 1951 of the Financial Administration Act led to a substantial reduction in the routine functions of Council. Under this Act certain powers formerly exercised by the Governor in Council under the Civil Service Act, the Civil Service Superannuation Act, the Defence Services Pension Act and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act were delegated to the Treasury Board. In addition the Government Contracts Regulations of 1952 and the Regulations relating to the acquisition of lands by government departments, also made in that year, delegated to the Board and to the responsible Ministers the greater part of the powers of the Governor in Council relating to purchase, service and construction contracts, and the leasing and acquisition of lands for the Crown.

In keeping with the development of the work of Council as outlined above certain improvements have been made during the past ten years in bringing regulations, and orders of general effect to the notice of all concerned. Prior to World War II, Regulations and Statutory Orders were published in the *Canada Gazette* as they were made. During the war years all War Orders and Regulations were published separately and in more convenient form. At the end of the War it was felt that this practice should be continued for all Regulations and Statutory Orders and, in January 1947, Part II of the *Canada Gazette* made its first appearance. In 1950 the Regulations Act was passed providing for the continued publication of Part II and for the promulgation therein under the supervision of the Clerk of the Privy Council of all Statutory Orders and Regulations. To make these even more accessible a consolidation of Statutory Orders and Regulations was published in 1949. A second consolidation was scheduled in 1955.

The developments outlined above aimed at improving and expediting the work of the Central Executive and clarifying the position of the Cabinet can be seen to have followed a fairly logical pattern. Although decades may have elapsed criticisms have been answered and considered recommendations have finally been put into effect. The development owes much to earlier British experience and practice. What has resulted has a character essentially Canadian, reflecting the federal nature of the Dominion, the sectional representation of the Cabinet and the peculiar position and functions of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada which, that of the United Kingdom excepted, is the only one of its kind within the British Commonwealth.

### 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* Chap. XXIX for current legislation.)