

The doctrine of Cabinet responsibility is well established and the Cabinet resigns as a body if it is beaten on an important issue in the House. I shall not elaborate any further on our system of Cabinet government because as you all know, it is very similar to that of the United Kingdom with which you are familiar.

There is a parallel system in the provinces where the Lieutenant-Governor acts on the advice of his provincial ministers. The provincial cabinets, headed by a premier, perform much the same functions in their own field as the federal cabinet, and carry on as long as they have the support of the members of the provincial legislature.

Now for a word about our judicial system. Although legislative authority over the judicial system is divided between the federal government and the provinces, the system itself is closely integrated. The provincial legislatures are free to set up various courts and the federal government has set up the Exchequer Court of Canada to hear cases in which the Crown in the right of Canada is involved and the Supreme Court of Canada, which is now the final court of appeal in both civil and criminal cases throughout Canada.

The judges of the county and superior courts, as well as those of the Exchequer Court and Supreme Court of Canada, are all appointed and paid by the federal government. Judicial independence is safeguarded by the requirement that judges of the Supreme Court, the Exchequer Court and the Superior Courts of the provinces hold office during good behaviour and are only removable on an address of the Senate and House of Commons.

The Supreme Court of Canada is now the final court of appeal in both civil and criminal cases throughout Canada. The right of appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in criminal cases was abolished in 1933 and in civil matters in 1949.

One of the most important functions of the Supreme Court of Canada is, of course, the interpretation of the British North America Act and its amendments, and particularly of those sections of the Act which divide legislative power between the federal government and the provinces.

I have not said a word about Canada's status in international affairs, simply because I thought it was not necessary. It is, of course, obvious to anyone in a Commonwealth country that Canada as well as every other member of the Commonwealth is independent.

I have now told you something about our constitution and its development. All things considered, we think that we did a reasonably good job. But knowing the skill and enthusiasm of my Pakistan friends, I have no doubt that when you come to draft your own constitution, you will do much better.