

dissolves Parliament and reads the opening and closing speeches of each session, gives assent to all legislation and signs many other state documents, including orders-in-council (i.e. orders made by the Cabinet under law or the prerogative powers that have been transferred over the centuries from the monarch to his advisers), commissions, pardons, etc. Members of the Privy Council (i.e. those called to be Her Majesty's confidential advisers, the active group among whom consists of the prime minister and Cabinet) are sworn before him, and he accepts the letters of credence of ambassadors appointed to Canada and receives high commissioners of Commonwealth countries on their arrival in Canada, as well as other diplomats. He is Canada's most important official host, both in Ottawa and when travelling. He is the Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, and conducts investitures into that order, among others; and he is commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, and as such signs officers' commissions.

Ceremonial functions

These formal duties (and the list above is incomplete) are sometimes difficult to distinguish from the governor general's ceremonial functions. The investiture of a new member into the Order of Canada, for example, may take him

anywhere in the country, and the governor general's journey to the site will be a widely-publicized event. He is expected to travel in any case, to carry the image of the national government to every part of the country, to acquaint himself with Canada's widely-varied regions so that a national perspective on public issues is gained, and often to participate in activities connected with the various organizations the head of state is expected to approve or patronize.

As a head of state, the governor general represents the Crown in Canada. He may also, however, travel abroad as a representative of the Crown of Canada. During such absences, and often while the governor general is in Canada, his duties are performed by one of the deputies specified in the Letters Patent of 1947, a justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. The governor general himself, rarely attends in person to give royal assent to legislation.

Relation with prime minister

As a head of state aloof from politics, the governor general, like the monarch, is entitled to be kept fully informed on important governmental matters; he may (depending on the kind of personal relation he has with the prime minister) be consulted; and he has the right to caution his chief