

## THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

The three buildings on Ottawa's Parliament Hill comprise the federal legislative buildings and are known separately as the West Block, the Centre Block and the East Block. Standing on Wellington Street while facing the Centre Block, one finds the East Block on one's right hand.

Construction of the East Block began in 1861, making it the oldest building on Parliament Hill. Until the Second World War, it housed the Offices of the Governor General. At present, the building accommodates the Privy Council Offices and part of the Department of External Affairs.

The West Block, second oldest building on Parliament Hill, has recently been renovated. Its large conference rooms have frequently been the site of meetings of interest, and one of them will serve as the Press Room for the Royal Visit. Two recent conferences held in the West Block were the N.A.T.O. Spring Ministerial Meeting of May, 1963, and the Third Commonwealth Education Conference of August 1964. Normally, the West Block's chief function is to provide office space for Members of Parliament.

The Centre Block is not the building which the Fathers of Confederation knew, since the original structure was destroyed by fire in 1916. Only the Library of Parliament, located at the rear of the Centre Block, was saved from destruction. Construction of the present building was begun shortly after the 1916 fire, and was completed in 1921. The Peace Tower, which dominates the entrance, is 295 feet high. It contains the Memorial Chapel, dedicated to Canadians who fell in battle during the First World War, and the Carillon of Bells, installed in 1927.

The Centre Block contains the Senate Chamber, the House of Commons, and private offices for some Members of Parliament. It also houses the Speaker's Chamber, various committee rooms, the Parliamentary Press Gallery, and the Parliamentary Restaurant.

Perhaps the best known chambers in the Centre Block are those in which the Senate and the House of Commons