

divorce, been considered as having a domicile separate from that of her husband.

In every province except Quebec the civil law is based on the British common law. A married woman has full legal capacity to own, purchase and transfer her own property, to enter into contracts and to dispose of her possessions in a will, and she and her husband have equal rights and obligations with respect to the care and custody of their children.

In Quebec, where civil rights are governed by the province's Civil Code, the legal rights of a married woman were different from those of married women in other provinces. As a result of the Act Respecting the Legal Capacity of Married Women, passed in 1964, and the establishment of partnership of acquests under the Act Respecting Matrimonial Regimes, in force since 1970, married women in Quebec have acquired legal status similar to that of women in other parts of Canada.

#### *Politics*

Canadian women were first given the right to vote in 1916 in the provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan. This example was soon followed

in the other provinces, with the exception of Quebec, where women did not obtain the right to vote until 1940.

Women obtained the right to be appointed to the Senate following a decision by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England in 1929.

Canada now has 11 women in the 104-member Senate, 21 women members and six women ministers in provincial legislative assemblies, and 9 women members and 1 woman minister in the Federal Parliament.

#### *Women's organizations*

There are many women's organizations in Canada involved in public-service activities or activities of particular interest to women. In addition to these volunteer organizations, there are several created by the federal and provincial governments.

In 1954 the Federal Government set up the Women's Bureau, a division of the Department of Labour, and assigned it the tasks of studying the status of women in the Canadian labour force, preparing reports on this subject, making known the conditions encountered by working women, informing the public about legislation passed to combat discrimination against women, and promoting the acceptance of women in