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## Government of the Province of British Columbia

### Investigation of Citizens' Research Institute Reviewed— System of Making Up Budget and Check on Expenditures in Line With Best Governmental Finance.

The Citizens' Research Institute of Canada has published a brochure on the Province of British Columbia and how it governs itself, which is indeed a valuable document and commentary on the Provincial Government's fiscal affairs, and is worthy of the earnest attention of all citizens, particularly those engaged in business. The report is issued under the direction of Dr. H. L. Brittain and Mr. J. E. Howes, Chief of Survey, who personally made the fiscal investigations last winter. The booklet is illustrated with a large number of charts and comparative statistics, which visualize the salient features of the report, making it easily understood by the casual reader.

On the general organization of the Government the report states: "The organization of the Province of British Columbia is similar in its main features to that of the other Provinces in Canada. The Legislative Assembly, which must meet at least once a year, consists of forty-seven members, elected by the people, with a maximum term of office of five years. The Executive Council is appointed from the party in power and has at its head a president, usually the Premier of the Province. This Council is limited by the "B. C. Constitution Act" to eleven members, of whom only eight receive salary as such. The members of the Council act as heads of the various departments of the Government and any member may act as head of more than one department.

The Comptroller-General, while working in conjunction with the Minister of Finance and the Finance Department, is a permanently appointed official responsible to the Legislative Assembly. It is desirable that this should be so, as it makes the holder of the office, to a great extent as is possible, independent of the heads of the various departments. This independence is necessary if the duties of such an office are to be carried out effectively. The advantages of the office of Comptroller-General over that of an Auditor, on account of the former's larger powers in connection with

the exercise of control over Provincial finances, must be patent to all. The effectiveness of the office is shown conclusively by the great advances which have been made since 1917 in the clearness and arrangement of the official estimates.

"The Civil Service Commissioner is also responsible to the Legislative Assembly. This position is an important one since it is only by the appointment of employees according to merit, with the proper grading and standardization of salaries, that conditions leading to satisfactory service can be obtained. One person with a comprehensive knowledge of the workings of every department, the number of employees with their positions, etc., should also be able, by assisting in a proper co-ordination of all branches, to eliminate any unnecessary duplication of duties.

"In working towards this end, a chart of the organization of each department would be of great assistance. We understand that the Civil Service Commissioner has this in mind, but owing to pressure of re-organization duties has been unable, as yet, to carry it out completely.

"We would also suggest that when all such organization charts are completed the head of each department be supplied with a chart of his department. This graphic aid would be of assistance to him in exercising departmental control and management.

"We understand that the Department of Education, with the Superintendent of Education as its executive head, is not represented directly in the Government by a Minister of

Education, but that the superintendent is responsible to the Council of Public Instruction, which consists of the members of the Executive Council.

"If the superintendent is granted large powers of initiative and, in the eyes of the public, is looked upon as the actual head of the department, while at the same time ministerial responsibility for the large expenditures of the department is fully maintained, the British Columbia method of organization is in many respects an ideal one.

"Another position in the Provincial Government which is an important one from the standpoint of economy in administration, is that of the Purchasing Agent. This

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