

of the Commonwealth. In the case of countries such as Canada, which retain the position of the Sovereign as Head of State, the principle is firmly established that Her Majesty and the Governor General exercise royal powers on the advice of the Prime Minister (acting as the spokesman of the national government).

The duties of the Governor General are both constitutional and ceremonial. His office is an integral part of Parliament, which is composed of three elements; the Crown, the Senate and the House of Commons. He convokes, prorogues and dissolves Parliament, and members of the Privy Council, including Cabinet Ministers, are sworn in before him or his deputy.

The Governor General must also give his assent on the Queen's behalf to all bills passed by Parliament so that they may become acts of Parliament; otherwise they do not have the force of law. He also signs orders-in-council, commissions and many other state documents.

One of the most important responsibilities of the Governor General is to ensure that the country always has a Prime Minister. If this office becomes vacant because of death, resignation or defeat in the House of Commons, or deadlock following a general election, it is the Governor General's duty to see that the post is filled immediately.

The Governor General is the nation's host to visiting members of the royal family, heads of state and other distinguished visitors and extends hospitality in many forms to great numbers of Canadian citizens. He also receives the letters of credence of heads of mission of non-Commonwealth countries appointed to Canada, and holds investitures.

Travel is an important part of the work of the Governor General. In this way, he gets to know the country and its problems and establishes a close link with the people he serves. The Governor General lends his patronage and support to many organizations such as the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance, the Royal Canadian Legion and the Victorian Order of Nurses, and, through his interest, is able to do much to help their work. His speeches on national and civic occasions and to groups of all kinds encourage and stimulate thought on many important subjects such as the arts, charity, education and sports.

The Crown in Canada has a profound influence on the character of the nation. Canada and the Commonwealth nations of the Caribbean are the only countries in the Americas that have a monarchical form of government. It is the Governor General's task to preserve and enhance the prestige of the Crown and to strengthen the ties between it and the people of Canada.