

CA1
EA9
S62
1988
ENG
DOCS

GENERAL

ELECTIONS

REFERENCE SERIES NO. 62



Canada

GENERAL ELECTIONS

REFERENCE SERIES NO. 62

43-279-317

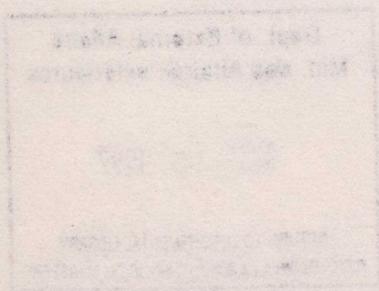
Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures

MAY 15 1997

RETURN TO DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY
RETOURNER A LA BIBLIOTHÈQUE DU MINISTÈRE

Produced by
External Communications Division
Department of External Affairs
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K1A 0G2

Revised August 1988



This pamphlet may be freely reproduced either as a whole or in part. Please note its date. Pamphlets in this series may be obtained from all Canadian embassies, high commissions and consular offices abroad. Requests for copies of *Reference Papers* by residents of countries where there are no Canadian representatives should be sent to the above address.



Canadians choose their federal governments through general elections for the House of Commons, the principal law-making body in the country.

The Canadian Constitution requires the election of a new House of Commons at least once every five years. This is called a federal general election to distinguish it from the many other elections held in Canada.

At the next federal general election, 295 legislators, representing the same number of electoral districts, or constituencies, will be chosen to sit in the House of Commons. They are called Members of Parliament or M.Ps. The leader of the party with the most seats becomes prime minister and forms a government, which thereafter remains answerable to the House for its policies and actions.

Canada uses a simple plurality system to elect its legislators. This is sometimes called the 'first-past-the-post' system. It means that the candidate who obtains the greatest number of votes in the constituency is elected to represent it in the House of Commons.

Under Canadian law, representation in the House of Commons must be reviewed at ten-year intervals, after each decennial census. The review normally results in the redrawing of a number of electoral boundaries. This work is carried out by electoral boundaries commissions appointed in each of the ten provinces and in the Northwest Territories.

The voting population of electoral districts varies from one to another but averages some 60 000.

The prime minister chooses 30 or more individuals from his party to serve with him as ministers in the Cabinet. Though one or two may be members of the non-elective Upper House, the Senate, all are usually members of the House of Commons or are elected to that House after their appointment.

The Cabinet, consisting of the prime minister and the other ministers, discharges the executive functions of government. Individual members administer different government departments such as finance, agriculture, external affairs and justice. In addition, there are sometimes one or more Cabinet members known as ministers without portfolio, who are not in charge of departments but who may be assigned by the prime minister to carry out specific executive functions within departments.

Collectively, the Cabinet provides leadership and initiative in the determination of national policy and the appointment of other chief officers of state, including lieutenant-governors of the provinces, judges and ambassadors. The Cabinet is at all times responsible to the House of Commons.

A federal general election is only one of many opportunities for Canadian citizens to make known their wishes respecting the management of public affairs. Each of the ten provinces and two territories in the Canadian federation has its own elected legislature and each has its own system of local government under which elected councils direct the affairs of cities, towns, villages, rural municipalities and school districts.

The federal Parliament, however, is the only body that makes laws for and speaks for Canada as a whole. Headed by the Queen, represented in Canada by her viceroy the governor general, it consists of the appointed Senate and the House of Commons, members of which are elected by universal suffrage.

The Queen's powers, exercised through the governor general, are used only on the advice of the Cabinet, in respect to executive decisions, and of the two Houses of Parliament, in respect to legislation. The powers of the Cabinet, too, are often exercised through the governor general, by orders-in-council that she must sign.

The Senate's powers are limited in two fundamental respects. It may not initiate financial legislation. This means that it has little more than a negative say on the taxes to be levied on Canadians and the use to which public funds may be put. Furthermore, unlike the House of Commons, it has no control over the executive. It cannot unseat a government.

Senators are appointed by the governor general on the advice of the prime minister. There are 104 members of the Senate.

The House of Commons derives its power from the fact that the prime minister and most members of the Cabinet also belong to the House and are responsible to it. They are called upon to explain their conduct and policies daily while the House is in session, especially during the question period. Their positions depend on the confidence of the House. If the House votes lack of confidence in them, they must resign or bring on an immediate election. Through the latter device they can appeal the verdict of the House to the voters at large. For example, this happened in December 1979, when the government was defeated in the House of Commons and then obtained from the governor general a dissolution of Parliament so that a new federal general election could take place February 18, 1980.

If five years pass without an election, Parliament is dissolved through the expiry of its mandate, and an election automatically becomes necessary. More often, before the end of this term, the prime minister fixes an election date. An election takes place usually four years or so after the previous one. In a minority-government situation, however (where no party has an absolute majority in the House of Commons), the vote is likely to come sooner, since the government is more vulnerable.

Since 1982, the period for a federal election campaign has been reduced from approximately 60 to a fixed minimum of 50 days.

Election arrangements

The dissolution of Parliament sets the complicated election machinery in motion. Essentially, it consists of an office, called Elections Canada, headed by the chief electoral officer in Ottawa, and a returning officer for each constituency. The returning officer is responsible for the conduct of the election in his or her constituency and for setting up polling division boundaries between elections.

As insurance against being caught unprepared, the chief electoral officer starts to get ready for a new election as soon as the last one is over. A general election requires the production of several hundred tonnes of paper material, such as ballot paper, manuals of instruction and forms of many kinds.

Sufficient quantities of these materials are shipped to the returning offices, some before and some after the calling of the election. Returning officers then complete plans for taking the votes in their areas, arrange for the rental of polling stations, assign enumerators to compile lists of eligible voters, and appoint deputy returning officers. In urban areas, the voters' lists are no longer posted in public places as a result of public outcry at the invasion of privacy it created in the past. Instead, each elector on the list prepared by the enumerators is sent a notice of enumeration card informing him or her that their name is on the voters' list and when and where they may vote. Following the enumeration of electors is a period of revision of the lists during which changes and additions can be made.

The independence of the chief electoral officer is assured by the fact that he is appointed by resolution of the House of Commons and not by the Cabinet, as are most public servants of similar rank. His salary is set by law and not by order-in-council. Finally, he is responsible to the Commons, and not to the government, and can be removed only for cause (not fulfilling his duties) by the governor general on address of the Senate and the House of Commons.

The voters

Every Canadian citizen 18 years of age or over and resident in Canada has the right to vote.

6

Persons born in Canada or born in a foreign land of Canadian parents are automatically Canadian citizens. Persons born in a foreign country may acquire Canadian citizenship after living three years in Canada.

Among those deprived of their franchise — but only so long as the cause of the deprivation lasts — are prisoners in penal institutions and persons restrained in their liberty of movement or deprived of the management of their property by reason of mental disease. Certain classes of person are deprived of their vote because of their official functions: the chief electoral officer and his assistant, federally-appointed judges (except for citizenship judges), and returning officers. The last-mentioned must cast the tie-breaking ballot if two candidates for election receive the same number of votes. Finally, any person found guilty of electoral fraud may lose the franchise for a specified period.

Voters who for any reason feel they cannot get to the polls on election day — for example, because they plan to take a trip or attend a wedding — can vote in advance polls held on the ninth, seventh and sixth days before polling day. Those who are unable to cast their vote at an advance poll or on election day may do so in the office of the returning officer from the twenty-first day before polling day, excepting Sundays, advance polling days and the last Saturday before polling day (making 18 days total).

Fishermen, mariners, prospectors, physically-incapacitated persons, members of air crews, forestry crews, topographical survey crews, or trappers and students away from home have, under certain conditions, the right to vote by proxy.

Canadian public servants posted abroad, such as the staffs of embassies, and their dependants posted abroad, vote before election day. The total in the thirty-fourth election is expected to be about 2 000.

In the same category for voting purposes are all 85 000 members of the regular armed forces in Canada and abroad plus their dependants posted abroad.

These special votes usually take place throughout the second week before the election.



In general, anyone eligible to vote is eligible for nomination and election to the House of Commons. There are no property or educational qualifications.

Some exceptions to this rule are members of provincial legislatures, judges, persons convicted of corrupt electoral practices, public servants, except those having been granted leave of absence without pay to seek nomination under the Public Service Employment Act, and members of the regular armed forces. None of these may run for election to the House of Commons.

Most candidates are the official representatives of the various political parties, chosen at party-nominating meetings.

Nominations close 28 days before election day. A candidate need not reside in the constituency he or she is contesting. The nomination, however, must be endorsed by at least 25 electors in the constituency, and must identify the official agent and the auditor he or she is required to appoint. The candidate must put up a \$200 deposit which is returned if he or she wins the election or polls 15 per cent of the total valid votes cast. This is to discourage frivolous nominations.

Parties

Everyone is free to form a political party and to join or support any party he or she chooses, but only a federally-registered political party may enjoy election expenses privileges.

Two parties have hitherto shared the allegiance of most Canadian voters. They are the Progressive Conservatives, usually called simply the Conservatives, and the Liberals. Every Canadian government up to now has been formed by one or other of these parties or a merger of elements of both. Other parties have succeeded in winning provincial elections and have regularly elected members to the House of Commons. Two of the most prominent in this respect are the New Democratic and the Social Credit Parties.

At the last federal election in 1984, there were 11 registered political parties. One advantage of registration is that the name of the party is printed on the ballot paper used by electors together with the name of each candidate. A party must officially field candidates in at least 50 constituencies at an election for its registration to become effective.

The principal political parties function through voluntary associations with headquarters in the national capital but in more or less intimate association with organizations at the provincial and constituency levels.

The constituency association is responsible for selecting the candidate who will contest that seat in the election: (It also sends delegates to national conventions where the party leader is chosen and party policies formulated.)

As the time for an election approaches, party associations hold campaigns aimed at publicizing the party's policies and the personality of its leader. These campaigns reach their peak in the weeks immediately preceding an election, as the leaders move across the country addressing meetings and meeting individual voters.

Expenses

Canada is the size of a continent and spans six time zones. Many parts are sparsely populated, yet, as far as possible, every voter, no matter where he or she lives, must be given a chance to vote.

Elections Canada expects to spend \$112 million in public funds at the next election — on printing, salaries and fees for election officials, transportation, polling place rentals and other costs such as an information program aimed at the general public. Included in this amount are the expense reimbursements which some candidates and political parties may be entitled to receive.

The campaign expenses of candidates and political parties will exceed several million dollars. These funds come from private sources — the candidates themselves, friends and well-wishers and party supporters.

Individual candidates must keep detailed accounting records and, after the election, must declare their election expenses. They are required to appoint official agents to receive all contributions and make all disbursements on their behalf, and an auditor.

Under the Income Tax Act, persons or corporations who donate money to a registered political party during any given year, or to an official candidate during an election, are entitled to a partial reimbursement in the form of a tax-credit receipt. They may then deduct this directly from their income tax payable.

A disclosure requirement also exists, so that the returns submitted by registered political parties and official candidates must declare all contributions and identify all donors whose contribution exceeded \$100. This becomes public information.

Legislation approved by Parliament, which has been in force since August 1, 1974, has the effect of limiting campaign spending. At the same time, candidates who are elected or who obtain at least 15 per cent of the valid votes cast are entitled to a reimbursement of 50 per cent of their actual expenses from the public treasury and registered political parties are also entitled to a reimbursement of 22.5 per cent of their actual expenses.

Large expenditures are required to finance the national campaigns of the parties, but these, too, are limited in law. They cover such areas as advertising in newspapers and other publications, radio and television broadcasts, printing and distribution of literature, travel expenses of the leaders and party organizers, and rental of office space and meeting halls.

Partisan radio and television broadcasts as well as advertising in periodical publications are prohibited from midnight on the day of the issue of the writs to the twenty-ninth day before polling day, as well as on polling day and on the day immediately preceding polling day. Owing to time-zone differences, election results in eastern Canada are known before voting ends in the west. Federal law therefore prohibits the publication or broadcast in any area, before polls close in that area, of the result of voting in any electoral district in Canada. This is intended to prevent late-voting westerners from being influenced by results already made public in the east.

Compilation of results

As soon as the polls close, counting of ballots begins. The deputy returning officer and the poll clerk are responsible for counting the votes in each polling division. These counts are transmitted to the returning officer and are made public as they are completed. Within a few hours of the closing of the polls, the result in most constituencies is known. The national outcome of the election is usually known by midnight, eastern time. The official count is usually undertaken in each electoral district by the returning officer a few days after polling day.



If the party forming the government before the election wins a majority or has the largest number of seats in the new House of Commons, the members of the Cabinet must be sworn in again. Even when a general election returns the same party to power, the makeup of the Cabinet usually changes.

If another party wins a majority or has the largest number of seats in the new House of Commons, the prime minister, within a few weeks, submits his resignation and that of his Cabinet to the governor general with a recommendation that the leader of the winning party be called on to form a new government.

LIBRARY E A / BIBLIOTHÈQUE A E



3 5036 01074609 0

CA1 EA9 S62 1988 ENG DOCS
General elections Revised. --
43279317

INDEX OF ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

BRITISH COLUMBIA	ONTARIO	QUEBEC	
001 Burnaby—Kingsway	001 Algoma	001 Abitibi	070 Témiscamingue
002 Capilano—Howe Sound	002 Beaches—Woodbine	002 Ahuntsic	071 Terrebonne
003 Cariboo—Chicoutin	003 Brampton	003 Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies	072 Trois-Rivières
004 Comox—Alberni	004 Brampton—Malton	004 Argenteuil—Papineau	073 Vaudreuil
005 Delta	005 Brant	005 Beauce	074 Verchères
006 Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	006 Brockville—Greenwood	006 Beauharnois—Salaberry	075 Verdun—Saint-Paul
007 Fraser Valley East	007 Bruce—Grey	007 Bellechasse	
008 Fraser Valley West	008 Burlington	008 Berthier—Montcalm	
009 Kamloops	009 Cambridge	009 Biamville—Deux-Montagnes	
010 Kootenay East	010 Carleton—Gloucester	009 Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	NEW BRUNSWICK
011 Kootenay West—Revelstoke	011 Cochrane—Superior	011 Bourassa	001 Beauséjour
012 Mission—Coquitlam	012 Davenport	012 Brome—Missisquoi	002 Carleton—Charlotte
013 Nanaimo—Cowichan	013 Don Valley East	013 Chambly	003 Fredericton
014 New Westminster—Burnaby	014 Don Valley North	014 Champlain	004 Fundy—Royal
015 North Island—Powell River	015 Don Valley West	015 Chapleau	005 Gloucester
016 North Vancouver	016 Durham	016 Charlesbourg	006 Madawaska—Victoria
017 Okanagan Centre	017 Eglinton—Lawrence	017 Charlesvoix	007 Miramichi
018 Okanagan—Shuswap	018 Elgin	018 Châteauguay	008 Moncton
019 Okanagan—Simikameen—Merritt	019 Erie	019 Chicoutimi	009 Restigouche
020 Port Moody—Coquitlam	020 Essex—Kent	020 Drummond	010 Saint John
021 Prince George—Bulkley Valley	021 Essex—Windsor	021 Duvernay	
022 Prince George—Peace River	022 Etobicoke Centre	022 Frontenac	
023 Richmond	023 Etobicoke—Lakeshore	023 Gaspé	
024 Saanich—Gulf Islands	024 Etobicoke North	024 Hochelaga—Maisonneuve	NOVA SCOTIA
025 Skeena	025 Gengarry—Prescott—Russell	025 Hull—Aylmer	001 Annapolis Valley—Hants
026 Surrey North	026 Guelph—Wellington	026 Joliette	002 Cape Breton—East Richmond
027 Surrey—White Rock	027 Haldimand—Norfolk	027 Jonquière	003 Cape Breton Highlands—Canso
028 Vancouver Centre	028 Halton—Peel	028 Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	004 Cape Breton—The Sydneys
029 Vancouver East	029 Hamilton East	029 Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis	005 Central Nova
030 Vancouver Quadra	030 Hamilton Mountain	030 Lac-Saint-Jean	006 Cumberland—Colchester
031 Vancouver South	031 Hamilton—Wentworth	031 Langelier	007 Dartmouth
032 Victoria	032 Hamilton West	032 La Prairie	008 Halifax
	033 Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	033 LaSalle—Émard	009 Halifax West
	034 Huron—Bruce	034 Laurentides	010 South Shore
	035 Kenora—Rainy River	035 Laurier—Sainte-Marie	011 South West Nova
	036 Kent	036 Lével	
	037 Kingston and the Islands	037 Laval-des-Rapides	
	038 Kitchener	038 Lévis	
	039 Lambton—Middlesex	039 Longueuil	
	040 Lanark—Carleton	040 Lotbinière	PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
	041 Leeds—Grenville	041 Louis-Hébert	001 Cardigan
	042 Lincoln	042 Manicouagan	002 Egmont
	043 London East	043 Matapédia—Matane	003 Hillsborough
	044 London—Middlesex	044 Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead	004 Maispique
	045 London West	045 Mercier	
	046 Markham	046 Montmorency—Orléans	
	047 Mississauga East	047 Mount Royal	
	048 Mississauga South	048 Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	
	049 Mississauga West	049 Outremont	NEWFOUNDLAND
	050 Nepean	050 Papineau—Saint-Michel	001 Bonavista—Trinity—Conception
	051 Niagara Falls	051 Pierrefonds—Dollard	002 Burin—St. George's
	052 Nickel Belt	052 Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle	003 Gander—Grand Falls
	053 Nipissing	053 Portneuf	004 Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte
	054 Northumberland	054 Québec-Est	005 Labrador
	055 Oakville—Milton	055 Richelieu	006 St. John's East
	056 Ontario	056 Richmond—Wolfe	007 St. John's West
	057 Oshawa	057 Rimouski—Témiscouata	
	058 Ottawa Centre	058 Roberval	
	059 Ottawa South	059 Rosemont	
	060 Ottawa—Vanier	060 Saint-Denis	
	061 Ottawa West	061 Saint-Henri—Westmount	YUKON TERRITORY
	062 Oxford	062 Saint-Hubert	001 Yukon
	063 Parkdale—High Park	063 Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	
	064 Parry Sound—Muskoka	064 Saint-Jean	
	065 Perth—Wellington—Waterloo	065 Saint-Laurent	
	066 Peterborough	066 Saint-Léonard	NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
	067 Prince Edward—Hastings	067 Saint-Maurice	001 Nunatsiag
	068 Renfrew	068 Shaford	002 Western Arctic
	069 Rosedale	069 Sherbrooke	
	070 St. Catharines		
	071 St. Paul's		
	072 Sarnia—Lambton		
	073 Sault Ste. Marie		
	074 Scarborough—Agiacourt		
	075 Scarborough Centre		
	076 Scarborough East		
	077 Scarborough—Rouge River		
	078 Scarborough West		
	079 Simcoe Centre		
	080 Simcoe North		
	081 Stormont—Dundas		
	082 Sudbury		
	083 Thunder Bay—Atikokan		
	084 Thunder Bay—Nipigon		
	085 Timiskaming		
	086 Timmins—Chapleau		
	087 Trinity—Spadina		
	088 Victoria—Haliburton		
	089 Waterloo		
	090 Welland—St. Catharines—Thorold		
	091 Wellington—Grey—Dufferin—Simcoe		
	092 Wildcat		
	093 Windsor—Lake St. Clair		
	094 Windsor West		
	095 York Centre		
	096 York North		
	097 York—Simcoe		
	098 York South—Weston		
	099 York West		

CANADA

FEDERAL

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS — 1987

PURSUANT TO THE ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES
READJUSTMENT ACT
R.S.C. 1970, as amended.

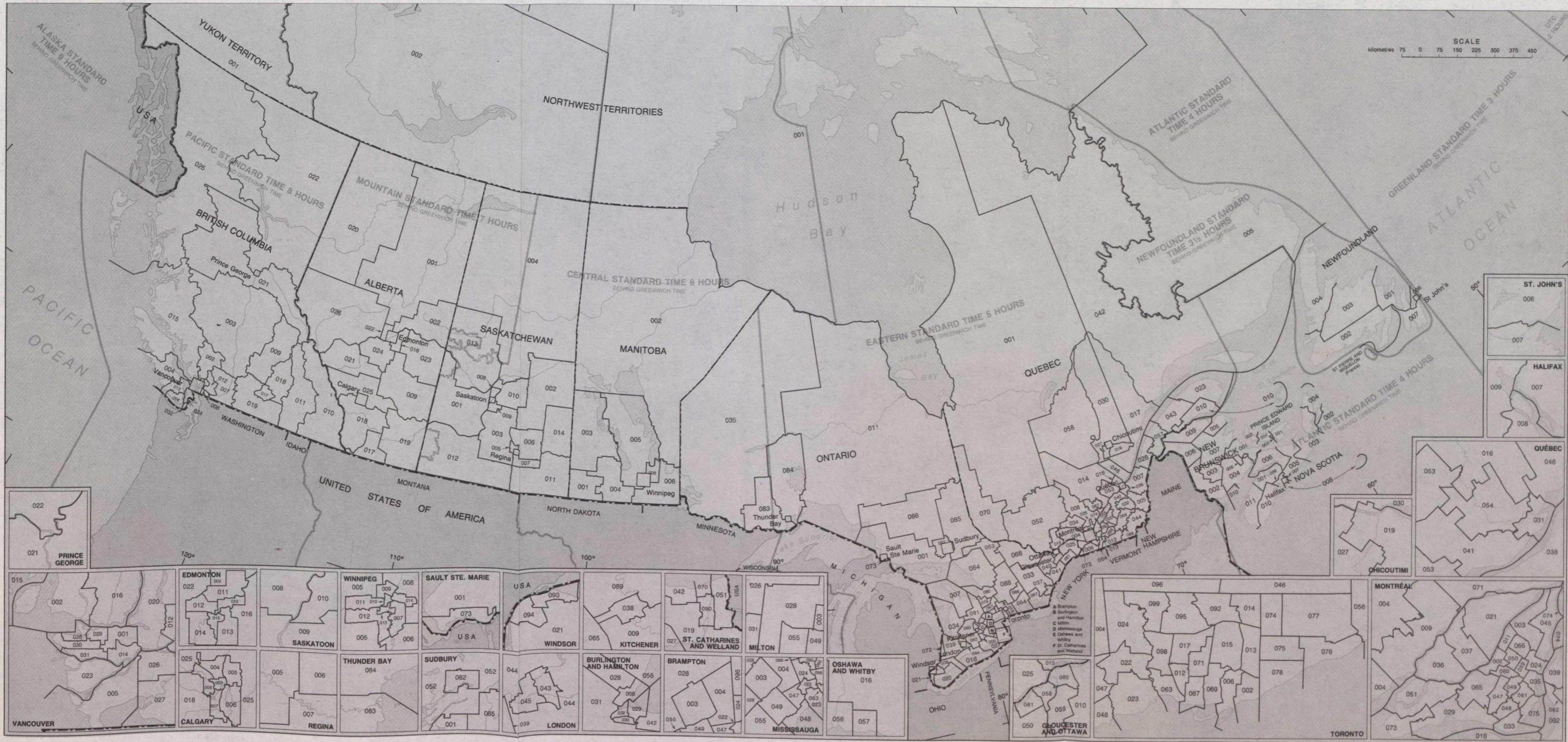
- REPRESENTATION ORDER 1987 -

- 1981 DECENNIAL CENSUS -

Electoral district boundary

Legislated Standard Time Zone boundary







External Affairs
Canada

Affaires extérieures
Canada