

Structure of the Provincial Government

The Legislative Branch:

The provincial government provides services and makes decisions to meet provincial needs. The provincial government meets in Alberta's capital city, Edmonton. This special building is called the Legislature. The Legislature has 83 seats. People who sit in these seats have been chosen during an election and are called members of the legislative assembly or MLAs. Every MLA represents a part of the province called a constituency or riding. Each constituency has a population of 3000 to 30 000 voters. Most MLAs belong to a political party.



ALBERTA LEGISLATURE



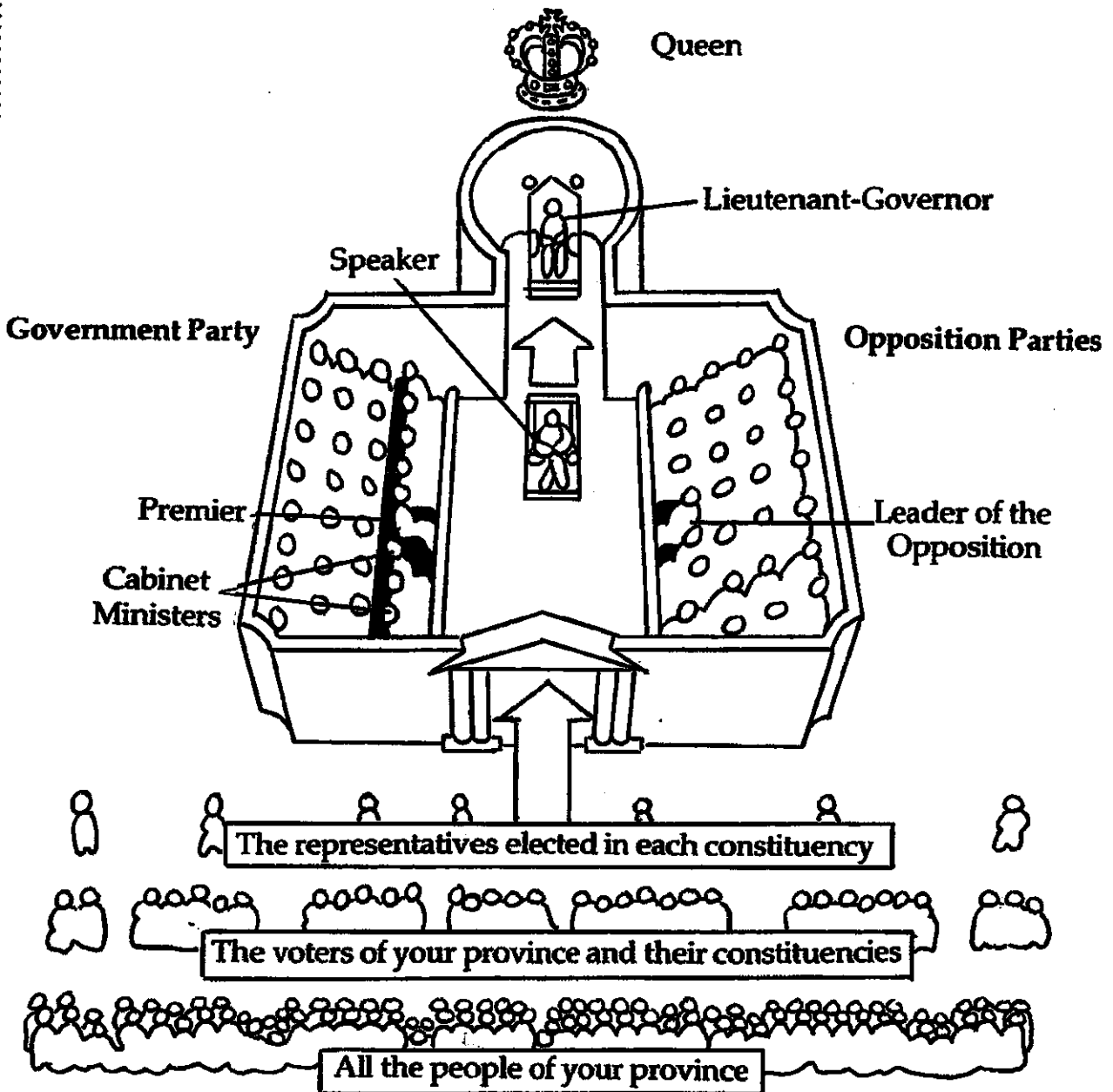
In Alberta the political parties are Progressive Conservative, Liberal, New Democratic, and the Alberta Alliance. A political party is a group of people who have similar ideas about how the province should be governed. Each party has a leader. The leader of the party with the most votes becomes the Premier of Alberta. The Premier chooses 15 to 25 people to become Cabinet Ministers. Cabinet Ministers are responsible to oversee a variety of government departments. The leader of the party that has the second highest number of votes becomes the leader of the opposition.

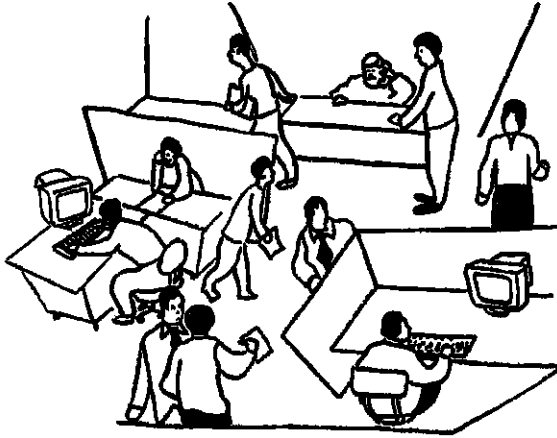
The legislative branch of the government are the policy makers. They usually meet twice a year for six to ten weeks. They can propose ideas for new laws and make decisions which help decide what civil servants will do. The legislative branch has the power to raise or lower taxes.



The Provincial Legislature

A Provincial Government (LEGISLATURE)



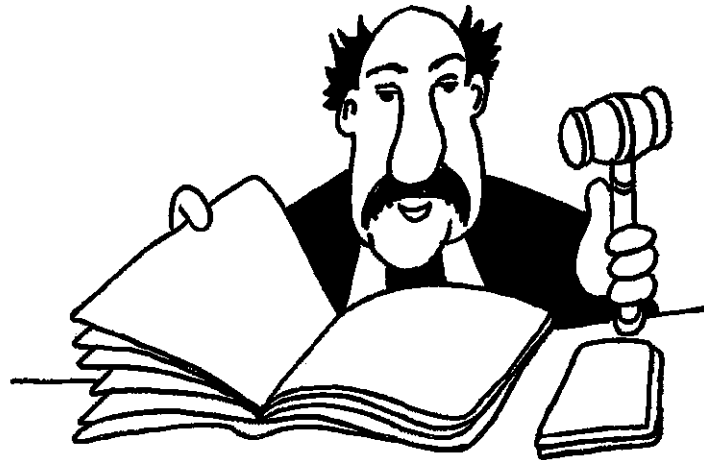


Executive Branch:

The executive branch of the government includes the civil servants. Civil servants are responsible for enacting policy or laws. The civil servant occupations are wide-ranging. Some civil servants are employed in accounting, auditing, secretarial and clerical activities while others are involved in maintenance of the provincial parks or on rat patrol on Alberta's borders. The executive branch has the power to collect the taxes.

Judicial Branch:

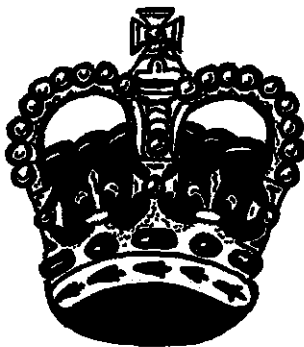
The judicial branch of the provincial government is responsible for enforcing the laws. These people have the power to punish citizens who do not pay taxes.



The Lieutenant Governor, as the symbolic provincial head of state, is the representative of the Monarch, Queen Elizabeth II and is appointed by the Governor General of Canada on the advice of the Prime Minister.

The Lieutenant Governor's responsibilities are to:

- Issue the Royal Proclamation which calls the Legislative Assembly into session
- Read the Speech from the Throne at the opening of each session of parliament
- Grant Royal Assent to bills which have passed third reading in the Assembly
- Approve cabinet orders
- Dissolve the Legislative Assembly when an election is called
- Ensure that the province always has a Premier who has the confidence of the majority of the elected Members of the Assembly.



ORGANIZATION OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

