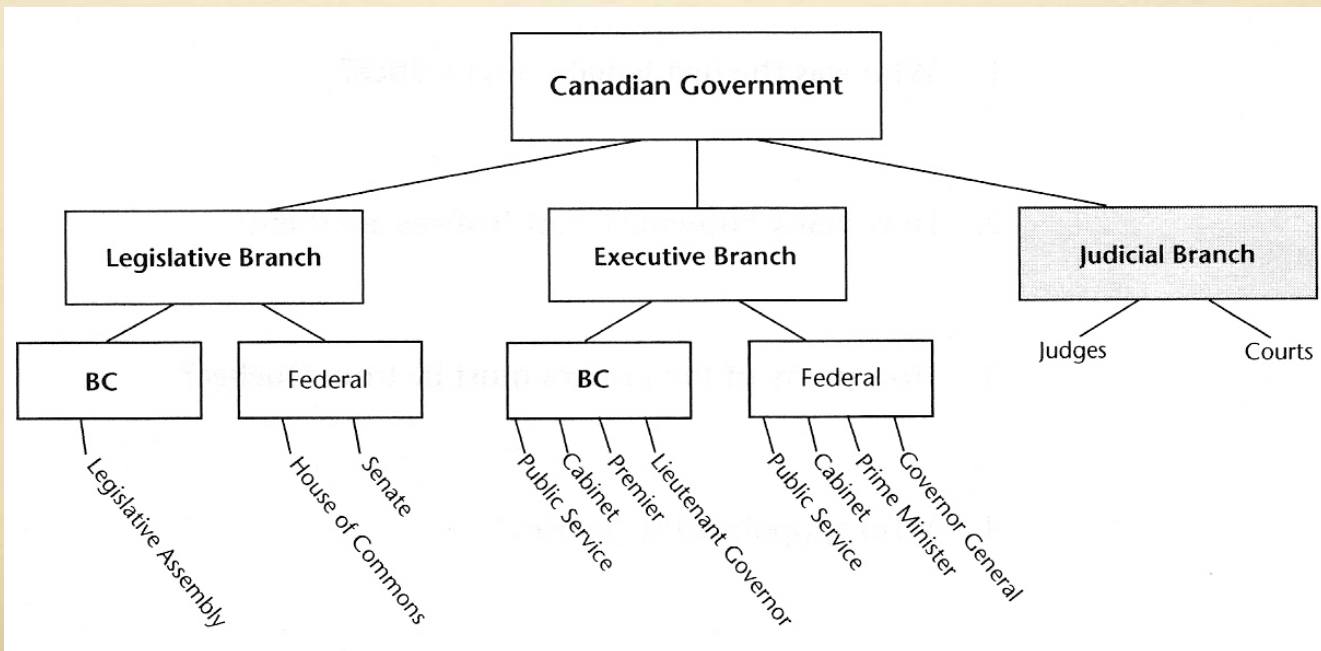


# Powers of Government

- Executive power is the power to make decisions and administer them (through the civil service)
- Legislative power is the power to make laws
- Judicial power is the power to interpret and administer the law

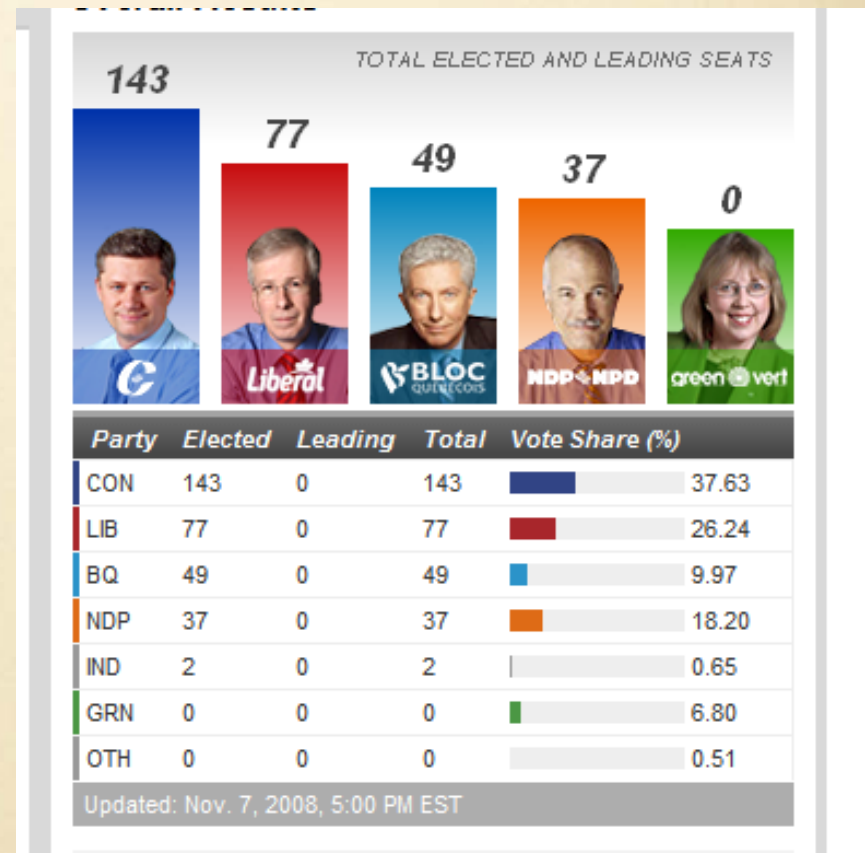


# Legislative Branch

- Composed of the Governor General, House of Commons, and Senate (parliament)
- Must meet at least once a year in what is called a session
- Passes new laws, amends or repeals others, debates issues
- Opposition parties can challenge government's action during question period

# Legislative Branch - House of Commons

- The only elected branch
- Elections must occur every 5 years unless PM calls an early election
- MPs represent ridings or constituencies



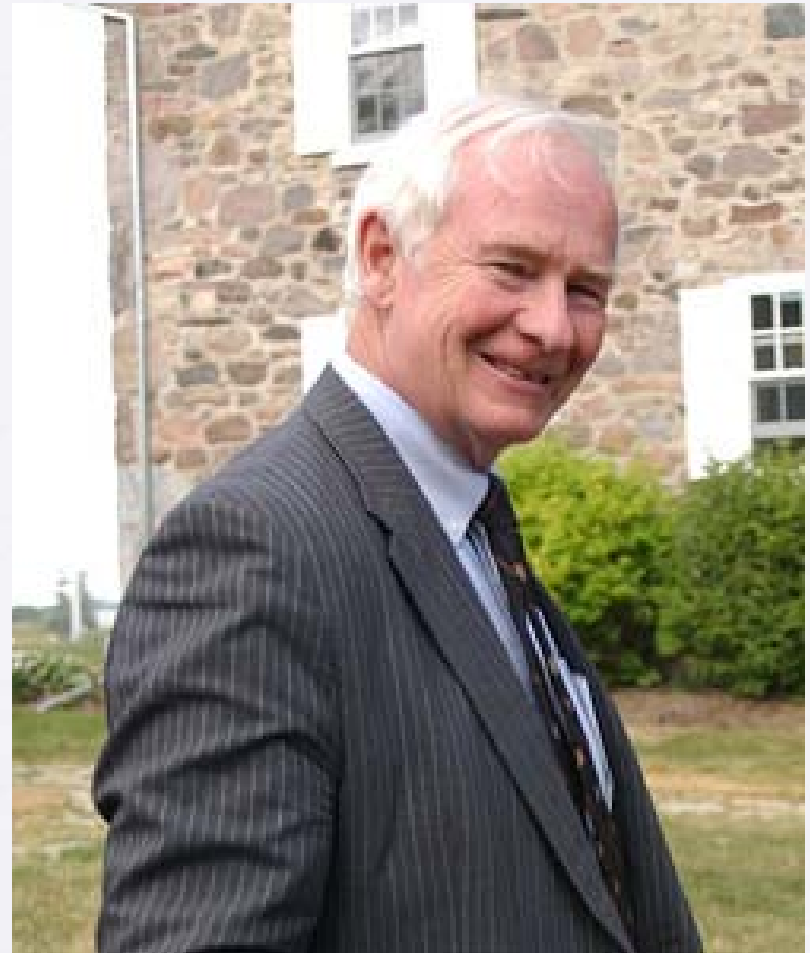
# Legislative Branch - Senate

- **Senators are appointed by GG on recommendation of PM**
- **Senators must be Canadian citizens, at least 30, living in the province represented and own at least \$4000 of property**
- **Senate's main role is to double-check legislation (sober second thought)**
- **Appointed on regional basis**

# Executive Branch -

## Governor General David Johnston

- Queen's representative in Canada
- gives final approval to a bill before it becomes law ("royal assent")
- performs ceremonial function
- adviser to government



# Executive Branch -

## Prime Minister Stephen Harper

- **Leader of party with most elected representatives is usually asked by the GG to be PM**
- **Responsibilities:**
  - **head of government**
  - **leader of nation**
  - **leader of national party**





# Executive Branch - The Cabinet

- Elected MPs from ruling party chosen by the PM
- Each is responsible for a government department/ministry (Defence, Finance, Foreign Affairs, etc.)
- They rely on each department's staff to help run it
- Meetings are in private for frank discussion but there is “cabinet solidarity” in parliament



# Judicial Branch

- Separate from Executive and Legislative
- Interprets and administers the law
  - Courts and judges, both provincial and federal
- Supreme Court of Canada
  - Highest court in Canada
  - Rules on constitutional issues and is the final court of appeal for selected criminal cases

