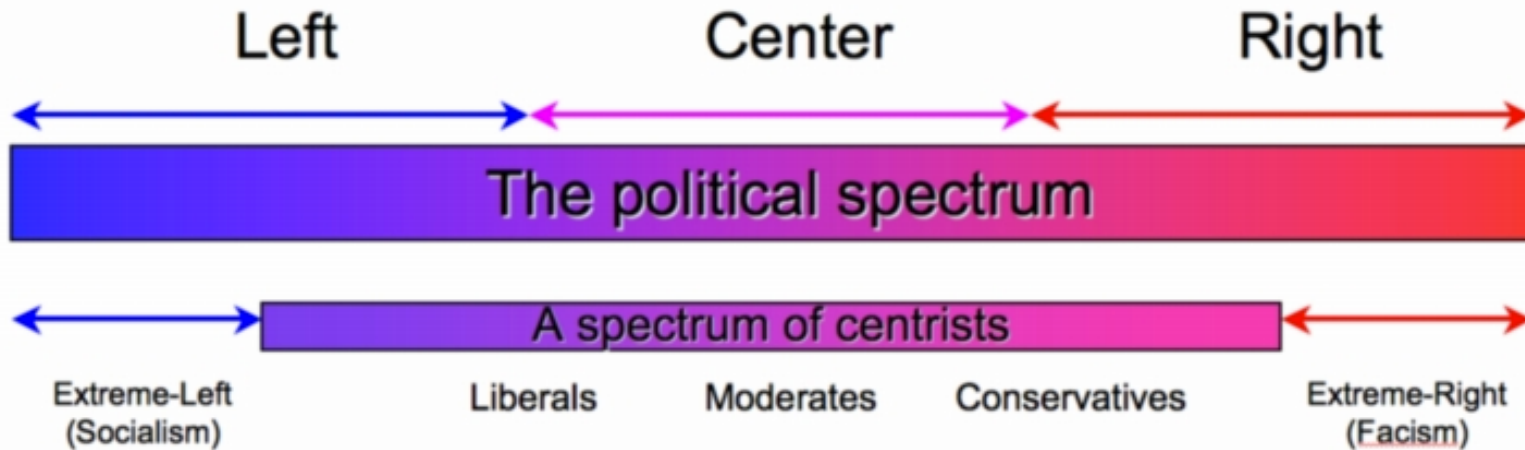


Politics and Government in Canada

Socials 11 Exam Review

The Political Spectrum



Left and Right

- The terms “Left” and “Right” come from the French Revolution. In the legislative assembly, the people who opposed the monarchy sat on the left, where the people who wanted to preserve the monarchy sat on the right.
- “Left-wing” usually supports social change towards a more egalitarian society.
- “Right-wing” is usually more about maintaining the status quo.

LEFT-WING	RIGHT-WING
--More egalitarian --More government intervention --More public resources	--Each person takes care of themselves --Less government intervention --More private resources

On the left

- Communism—Common ownership of the means of production and abolishment of social classes. Money does not exist. Everyone has what they need, regardless of the work they do. “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.” IN THEORY: The power is in the hands of the people.
- Socialism—Like communism, workers control means of production. But everything is not communally shared. (There are many varieties of socialism)
- Liberals (not the “Liberal Party”)—Again, takes many forms. But generally: The government should intervene in society to promote greater equality. Ex: progressive taxation, public health care

On the right

- Conservatism: Usually more about maintaining “status quo.” (Ex: Gay marriage in the US). Usually less emphasis on collective responsibility and egalitarianism, and greater privatization of resources.
- Fascism: Opposite of communism on the spectrum because instead of power belonging to the people, it belongs entirely to the government. The government, led by a strong leader, has total control over people’s lives. (Although in reality both systems have strong government control.)

And some other terms...

- Democracy: A government in which people decide how their country should be run (usually through elections).
 - Direct democracy: people decide on laws themselves (ex: through referendums)
 - Indirect democracy: people choose representatives (through elections) to make laws for them.
- Totalitarianism: The government decides how the country should be run, and people do not have a choice.

Major Parties in Canada

Name	Founded	Ideology	Leader	MPs
Conservative Party of Canada <i>Parti conservateur du Canada</i>	2003	Conservatism, Economic liberalism	Stephen Harper	163
New Democratic Party <i>Nouveau Parti démocratique</i>	1961	Social democracy	Thomas Mulcair	95
Liberal Party of Canada <i>Parti libéral du Canada</i>	1867	Liberalism, Progressivism	Justin Trudeau	35
Bloc Québécois	1991	Quebec sovereignty, Separatism, Social democracy	Mario Beaulieu	2
Green Party of Canada <i>Parti vert du Canada</i>	1983	Green politics	Elizabeth May	2
Forces et Démocratie	2014	Social democracy, Quebec nationalism, Regionalism	Jean-François Fortin	2

Left to Right

New Democratic Party: The furthest left party in power. Socialist roots.

- Maintenance and expansion of human rights and civil rights
- Expanding public health care
- Raising the minimum wage
- Reducing poverty
- Improving environmental protection through government regulations
- Increasing corporate taxes for big businesses and lowering taxes for small businesses
- Abolishing the unelected Senate of Canada and ensuring more proportional representation
- A foreign policy that emphasizes diplomacy, peacekeeping and humanitarian aid instead of offensive military action

Liberal Party



- More of a centrist party
- Supports balanced budget and spending restraint in government
- Increasing energy production in Canada
- Support for businesses (big and small)
- Support for public welfare programs (but not as much as NDP)

Conservative Party



- The most “right-wing” of the major parties in Canada
- Focus on jobs and wealth—support for big businesses
- Concept that support for business will end up helping everyone (a rising tide lifts all boats)

Green Party

- Doesn't really fit on the political spectrum.
- They are left on some issues and right on others.
- Core values: ecological wisdom, social justice, grassroots democracy and non-violence
- Some examples:
 - a national childcare plan (left or right?)
 - Subsidies for environmentally friendly technology (left /right?)
 - Scaling back military spending (left or right?)
 - Maintain a competitive corporate tax rate (left or right?)
 - Reduced payroll and income taxes (left or right?)

Bloc Quebecois and Forces et Democratie

- Quebecois parties focused on Quebec nationalism
- Work to protect Quebec's interests in the federal government

There are others

- There are all sorts of others
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhinoceros>

Conservative	Stephen Harper
<u>New Democratic</u>	Jack Layton
Liberal New Democratic Party	Michael Ignatieff
Bloc Québécois	Gilles Duceppe
Green	Elizabeth May
Independent and no affiliation	
Christian Heritage	James Hnatiuk
Marxist–Leninist	Anna Di Carlo
Libertarian	Dennis Young
Progressive Canadian	Sinclair Stevens
Rhinoceros ²	François Gourd
Pirate	Mikkel Paulson
Communist	Miguel Figueroa
Canadian Action	Christopher Porter
Marijuana	Blair Longley
Animal Alliance	Liz White
Western Block	Doug Christie
United	Brian Jedan
First Peoples National	Will Morin

Canadian Elections

When:

- 3rd Monday of October in 4th year after previous election
- Unless the PM asks the Governor General to call one earlier

Who:

- Canada is divided into ridings/constituencies that each elect one Member of Parliament (MP) to sit in the House of Commons
- The MP who gets the most votes in their riding (but not necessarily the majority—over 50%-of the votes) is the winner
- The Prime Minister is the leader of the party with the most MPs
- Candidates are those running for office (usually with a political party but could be independent)

Provincial Elections

- Pretty similar to federal elections but with changes to specific laws about how often elections are held and how campaigns can be run. Usually elections are every 4 years.
- Like federal level, Premier is the leader of the party with the most MLAs (Member of Legislative Assembly)
- Nunavut and NWT have a different model (Consensus Model) where they don't use political parties. MLAs are elected as independents and then they form a common political agenda together.

How Elections Work

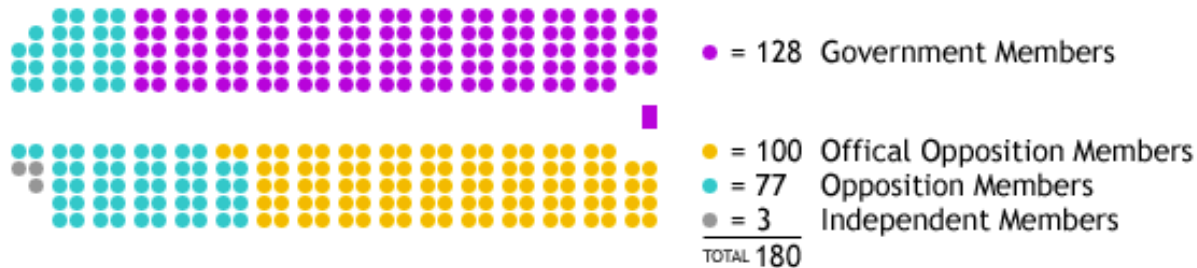
- Canada Elections Act lays out rules for elections
- There are rules about when you can start campaigning and how much money you can spend on certain things during campaigns, who you can receive money from and how much.
- Why do you think these rules exist?

Majority/Minority Government

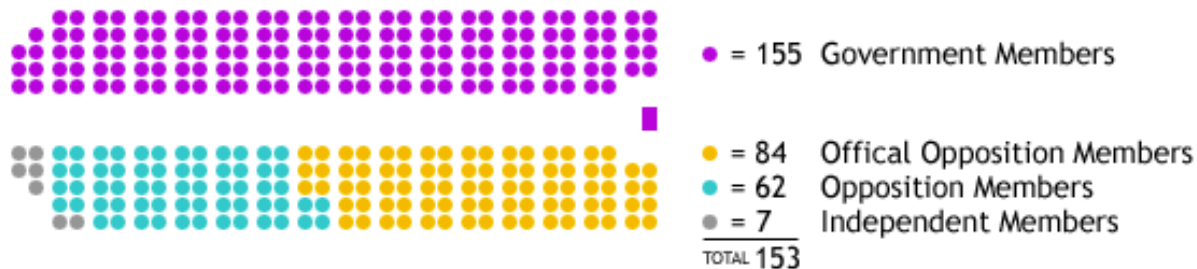
- The party with the most seats in the House Of Commons forms the government
- If the party in power holds at least half the seats it's called a "Majority Government"
- If they hold less than half, it's a "Minority Government"
- What do you think are the benefits and challenges of each?
- Sometimes a Minority government might form a "Coalition government" in which different parties work together. But since 1867 no peacetime coalition governments and only one wartime coalition (1917-21) have existed.

Majority/Minority Government

Minority Government



Majority Government



- The PM and party in power run the government as long as they have the “confidence” of the majority of MPs
- When the majority of MPs vote against a major issues such as the budget, this is called a “vote of non-confidence”
- When this happens the part in power usually calls an election
- The “opposition” party is the party that holds the second most seats and opposes the party in power.