

**Letters Patent Constituting  
the Office of Governor  
General of Canada**

Effective October 1, 1947

**"GEORGE R."  
CANADA**

George the Sixth, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith.

**[SEAL]**

To All To Whom these Presents shall come,

**GREETING:**

Preamble. Recites Letters Patent of 23rd March, 1931 Whereas by certain Letters Patent under the Great Seal bearing date at Westminster the Twenty-third day of March, 1931, His late Majesty King George the Fifth did constitute, order, and declare that there should be a Governor General and Commander-in-Chief in and over Canada, and that the person filling the office of Governor General and Commander-in-Chief should be from time to time appointed by Commission under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet:

And whereas at St. James' on the Twenty-third day of March, 1931, His late Majesty King George the Fifth did cause certain Instructions under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet to be given to the Governor General and Commander-in-Chief:

Revokes Letters Patent of 23rd March, 1931, and Instructions And whereas it is Our Will and pleasure to revoke the Letters Patent and Instructions and to substitute other provisions in place thereof:

Now therefore We do by these presents revoke and determine the said Letters Patent, and everything therein contained, and all amendments thereto, and the said Instructions, but without prejudice to anything lawfully done thereunder:

And We do declare Our Will and pleasure as follows:

Office of Governor General and Commander-in-Chief Constituted **I.** We do hereby constitute, order, and declare that there shall be a Governor General and Commander-in-Chief in and over Canada, and appointments to the Office of Governor General and Commander-in-Chief in and over Canada shall be made by Commission under Our Great Seal of Canada.

His Powers and Authorities **II.** And We do hereby authorize and empower Our Governor General, with the advice of Our Privy Council for Canada or of any members thereof or individually, as the case requires, to exercise all powers and authorities lawfully belonging to Us in respect of Canada, and for greater certainty but not so as to restrict the generality of the foregoing to do and execute, in the manner aforesaid, all things that may belong to his office and to the trust We have reposed in him according to the several powers and authorities granted or appointed him by virtue of the British North America Acts, 1867 to 1946 and the powers and authorities hereinafter conferred in these Letters Patent and in such Commission as may be issued to him under Our Great Seal of Canada and under such laws as are or may hereinafter be in force in Canada. (1)

Great Seal**III.** And We do hereby authorize and empower Our Governor General to keep and use Our Great Seal of Canada for sealing all things whatsoever that may be passed under Our Great Seal of Canada.

Appointment of Judges, Justices, etc.**IV.** And We do further authorize and empower Our Governor General to constitute and appoint, in Our name and on Our behalf, all such Judges, Commissioners, Justices of the Peace, and other necessary Officers (including diplomatic and consular officers) and Ministers of Canada, as may be lawfully constituted or appointed by Us.

Suspension or Removal from Office**V.** And We do further authorize and empower Our Governor General, so far as We lawfully may, upon sufficient cause to him appearing, to remove from his office, or to suspend from the exercise of the same, any person exercising any office within Canada, under or by virtue of any Commission or Warrant granted, or which may be granted, by Us in Our name or under Our authority.

Summoning, Proroguing, or Dissolving the Parliament of Canada**VI.** And We do further authorize and empower Our Governor General to exercise all powers lawfully belonging to Us in respect of summoning, proroguing or dissolving the Parliament of Canada.

Power to Appoint Deputies**VII.** And Whereas by the British North America Acts, 1867 to 1946, it is amongst other things enacted that it shall be lawful for Us, if We think fit, to authorize Our Governor General to appoint any person or persons, jointly or severally, to be his Deputy or Deputies within any part or parts of Canada, and in that capacity to exercise, during the pleasure of Our Governor General, such of the powers, authorities, and functions of Our Governor General as he may deem it necessary or expedient to assign to such Deputy or Deputies, subject to any limitations or directions from time to time expressed or given by Us; Now We do hereby authorize and empower Our Governor General, subject to such limitations or directions, to appoint any person or persons, jointly or severally, to be his Deputy or Deputies within any part or parts of Canada, and in that capacity to exercise, during the pleasure of Our Governor General, such of the powers, authorities, and functions of Our Governor General as he may deem it necessary or expedient to assign to him or them: Provided always, that the appointment of such a Deputy or Deputies shall not affect the exercise of any such power, authority or function by Our Governor General. (1)

Succession**VIII.** And We do hereby declare Our pleasure to be that, in the event of the death, incapacity, removal, or absence of Our Governor General out of Canada, all and every the powers and authorities herein granted to him shall, until Our further pleasure is signified therein, be vested in Our Chief Justice for the time being of Canada, (hereinafter called Our Chief Justice) or, in the case of the death, incapacity, removal, or absence of Our Chief Justice, then in the Senior Judge for the time being of the Supreme Court of Canada, then residing in Canada and not being under incapacity; such Chief Justice or Senior Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, while the said powers and authorities are vested in him, to be known as Our Administrator.

Provided always, that the said Senior Judge shall act in the administration of the Government only if and when Our Chief Justice shall not be present within Canada and capable of administering the Government.

Proviso. Administrator to Take Oaths of Office before Administering the Government Provided further that no such powers or authorities shall vest in such Chief Justice, or other judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, until he shall have taken the Oaths appointed to be taken by Our Governor General.

Provided further that whenever and so often as Our Governor General shall be temporarily absent from Canada, with Our permission, for a period not exceeding one month, then and in every such case Our Governor General may continue to exercise all and every the powers vested in him as fully as if he were residing within Canada, including the power to appoint a Deputy or Deputies as provided in the Seventh Clause of these Our Letters Patent.

Officers and Others to Obey and Assist the Governor General**IX.** And We do hereby require and command all Our Officers and Ministers, Civil and Military, and all the other inhabitants of Canada, to be obedient, aiding, and assisting unto Our Governor General, or, in the event of his death, incapacity, or absence, to such person as may, from time to time, under the provisions of these Our Letters Patent administer the Government of Canada.

Publication of Governor General's Commission**X.** And We hereby declare Our Pleasure to be that Our Governor General for the time being shall, with all due solemnity, cause Our Commission under Our Great Seal of Canada, appointing Our Governor General for the time being, to be read and published in the presence of Our Chief Justice, or other Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, and of members of Our Privy Council for Canada, and that Our Governor General shall take the Oath of Allegiance Oaths to be Taken by Governor General, etc.in the form following:-"I, ..... do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Sixth, His Heirs and successors, according to law. So Help me God"; and likewise he shall take the usual Oath for the due execution of the Office of Our Governor General and Commander-in-Chief in and over Canada, and for the due impartial administration of justice; which Oaths Our Chief Justice, or, in his absence, or in the event of his being otherwise incapacitated, any Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada shall, and he is hereby required to, tender and administer unto him.

Oaths to be Administered by the Governor General**XI.** And We do authorize and require Our Governor General from time to time, by himself or any other person to be authorized by him in that behalf, to administer to all and to every person or persons, as he shall think fit, who shall hold any office or place of trust or profit in Canada, that said Oath of Allegiance, together with such other Oath or Oaths as may be from time to time be prescribed by any Laws or Statutes in that behalf made and provided.

Grant of Pardons Remission of Fines. Regulations of Power of Pardon**XII.** And do further authorize and empower Our Governor General, as he shall see occasion, in Our name and on Our behalf, when any crime or offence against the laws of Canada has been committed for which the offender may be tried thereunder, to grant a pardon to any accomplice, in such crime or offence, who shall give such information as shall lead to the conviction of the principal offender, or of any one of such offenders if more than one; and further to grant to any offender convicted of any such crime or offence in any Court, or before any Judge, Justice, or Magistrate, administering the laws of Canada, a pardon, either free or subject to lawful conditions, or any respite of the execution of the sentence of any such offender, for such a period as to Our Governor General may seem fit, and to remit any fines, penalties, or forfeitures, which may become due and payable to Us. And We do hereby direct and enjoin that Our Governor General shall not pardon or relieve any such offender without first receiving in capital cases the advice of Our Privy Council for Canada and, in other cases, the advice of one, at least, of his Ministers.

Power In Issue Exequaturs**XIII.** And We do further authorize and empower Our Governor General to issue Exequaturs, in Our name and on Our behalf, to Consular Officers of foreign countries to whom Commissions of Appointment have been issued by the Heads of States of such countries.

Governor Generals Absence**XIV**. And whereas great prejudice may happen to Our service and to the security of Canada by the absence of Our Governor General, he shall not quit Canada without having first obtained leave from Us for so doing through the Prime Minister of Canada.

Power Reserved to His Majesty to Revoke, Alter or Amend the Present Letters Patent**XV**. And We do hereby reserve to Ourselves, Our heirs and successors, full power and authority from time to time to revoke, alter, or amend these Our Letters Patent as to Us or them shall seem fit.

Publication of Letters Patent**XVI**. And We do further direct and enjoin that these Our Letters Patent shall be read and proclaimed at such place or places within Canada as Our Governor General shall think fit.

Coming Into Effect of Letters Patent**XVII**. And We do further declare that these Our Letters Patent shall take effect on the first day of October, 1947.

In witness whereof We have caused these Our Letters to made Patent, and for the greater testimony and validity thereof, We have caused Our Great Seal of Canada to be affixed to these presents, which We have signed with Our Royal Hand.

Given the eighth day of September in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-Seven and in the Eleventh Year of Our Reign.

BY HIS MAJESTY'S COMMAND,  
W. L. MACKENZIE KING,  
Prime Minister of Canada

#### Endnotes

(1) The British North America Acts were renamed by the Constitution Act, 1982 to "Constitution Acts." Also, the British North America Act, 1943 and the British North America Act, 1946 were repealed.

Ref/source: Unpublished Sessional Papers, 4th session of the 20th Parliament, 5 December 1947 - 30 June 1948, No. 143, RG 14, D2, volume 528, Library and Archives Canada reel T-3537; Letters Patent constituting the office of Governor General of Canada (1947), Canada Gazette, Part I, Vol. 81, p. 3104; Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, Appendix II.

*Last HTML revision: 25 September, 1995.*

W.F.M.