

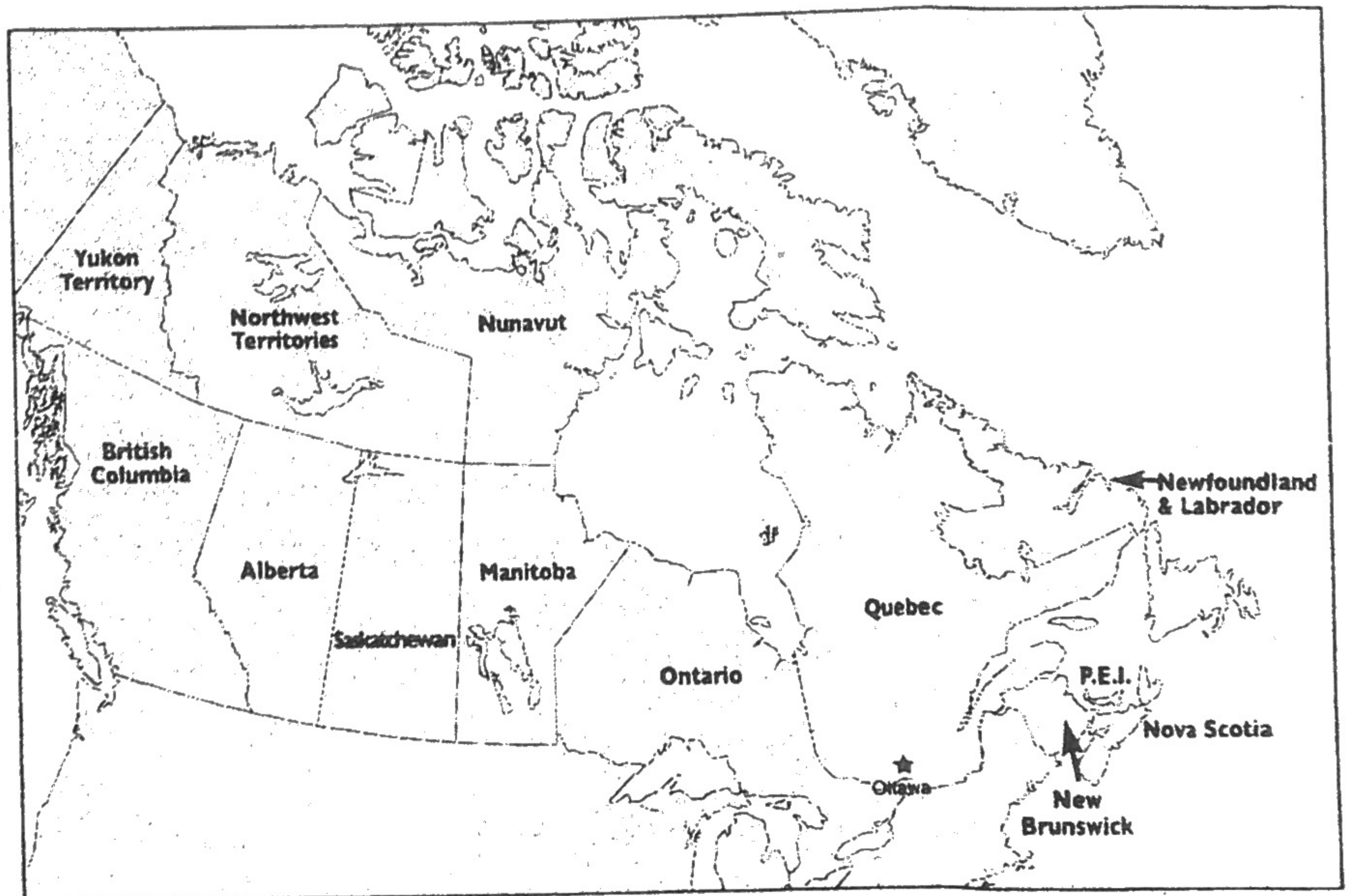
Chapter 10

SS6CG3 The student will explain the structure of the national government of Canada.

a. Describe the structure of the Canadian government as a constitutional monarchy, a parliamentary democracy, and a federation, distinguishing the role of the citizen in terms of voting and personal freedoms.

The Canadian Government

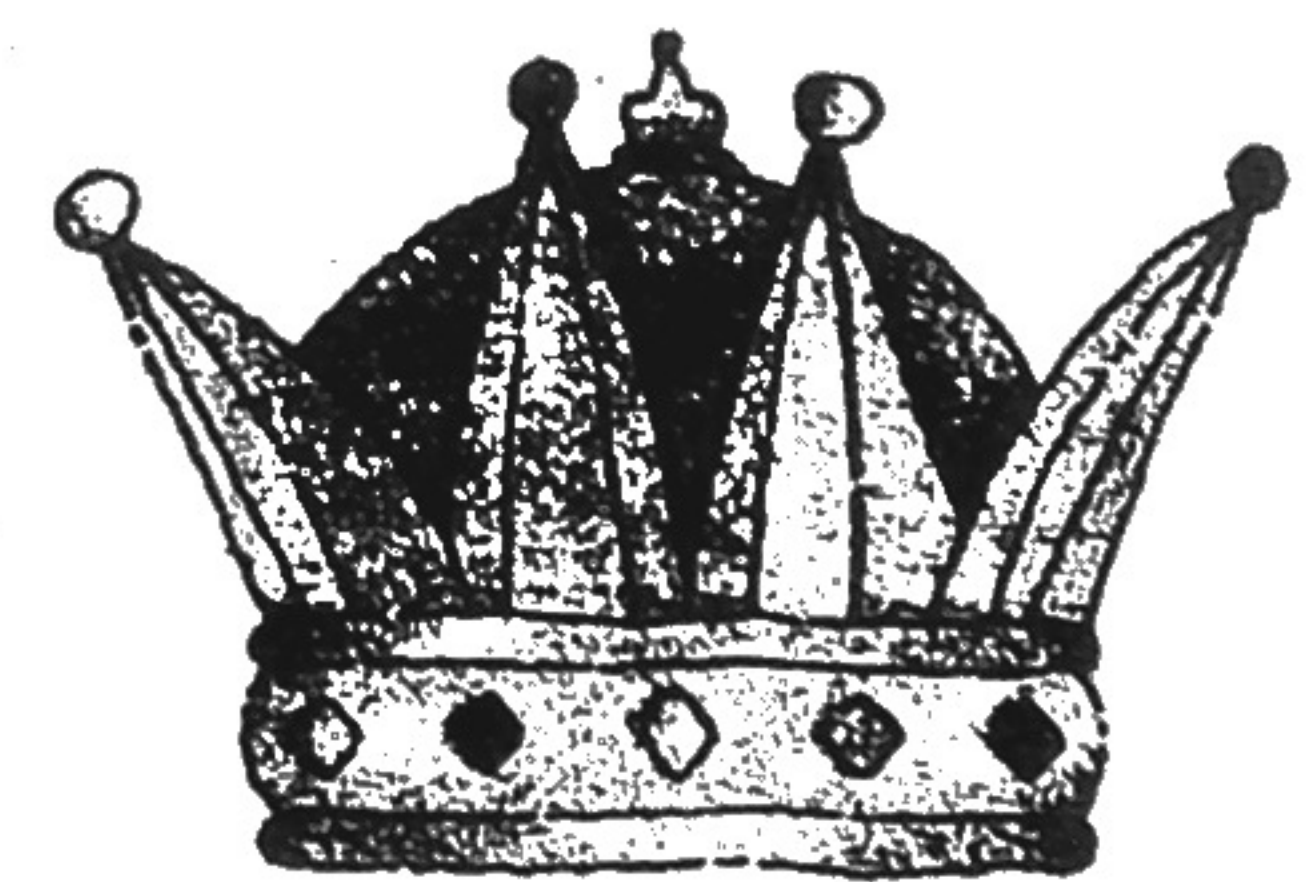
Canada was under the authority of the British constitution until establishing its own constitution in 1982. Canada still has ties to Great Britain, which can be seen in its form of government. Canada is a democracy like the United States, but its government has a different structure. Canada can first be described as a **constitutional monarchy**. This means that Canada has its own constitution but its head of state is the



monarch (king or queen) of Great Britain. The monarch selects a governor-general to represent him or her in Canada. The monarch and the governor-general are ceremonial positions with very little power.

Who is in Charge?

Canada is also a **parliamentary democracy**. The legislature, or Parliament, has three parts: the monarch, the Senate, and the House of Commons. Parliament makes the laws. The executive branch, which enforces the laws, includes the monarch (Queen of England today), the prime minister and the cabinet. The judicial branch interprets the laws.



Parliament controls the power. The majority party in Parliament forms a government headed by the prime minister they have chosen. The prime minister is the head of government, but he answers to the legislature. If the prime minister loses support of the majority in the legislature on an important vote, he and his cabinet members must resign, and elections are held immediately.