

Trivia

Government in Canada a costly proposition

Q. How much does it cost to run Canada's parliamentary institutions?

A. In the current fiscal year the cost of operating Canada's Parliament and 12 legislatures was \$585 million up 7.6 per cent from \$540 million last year, according to a recent issue of Canadian Legislatures, a book written by business consultant Robert Fleming.

Not surprisingly, the highest cost is connected to the House of Commons, which in 1991-92 operated on a legislative budget of \$229,350,000. During the same period, the Senate cost \$43,489,300 to run. The costs for each include a variety of expenditures, including pensions, office expenses and salaries. When broken down, it means every person in Canada paid \$8.49 to run Parliament and \$1.61 to run the Senate in 1991-92.

In 1991/92 it cost each of Ontario's 9.8 million residents \$13.12 to run the Ontario legislature and another \$10.10 to run

Parliament and the Senate for a total of \$23.22.

Fleming's book points out that the per person cost of administering similar government institutions in the US is far lower. For example, the average cost of running a state assembly is about \$6.02 per person, less than half the cost of operating the Ontario legislature but close to the cost in Alberta where every resident paid \$7.76.

Q. What can you tell me about the origin of Canadian whisky?

A. The first Canadian whiskies were made in the 1700s by newly-arrived settlers from the British Isles and Loyalists from the south, according to information provided by the Liquor Control Board of Ontario. Many turned to farming for their livelihood and grew corn and rye. In the fall, with the harvest gathered, they erected stills and turned excess grain into whisky, as solace for

the long winter ahead and as an item to trade.

As settlements grew, millers and merchants drew on their entrepreneurial spirit to build distilleries beside their mills and began producing larger quantities of whisky. By the 1860s, William Gooderham and James Worts had established distilleries in Toronto as had Henry Corby in Belleville

and Hiram Walker across the river from Detroit, near what is now Windsor. The Waterloo Distillery, eventual keystone of the Seagram's empire was also set up.

In 1874, Canadian whisky was officially recognized as distinct from its southern competitors, although it's hard to pinpoint why, until Hiram Walker developed a new blend of rye whisky and neu-

tral spirits much lighter and cleaner than American straight rye, with a full flavor. He sold it in labelled bottles rather than anonymous kegs and named it Canadian Club. Canadian Club was a big hit in Europe and the US and other distilleries soon adopted Walker's ideas developing their own distinctly Canadian brands.

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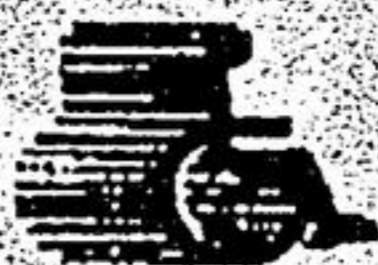
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