

and government, primary producers and manufacturing and transportation industries keep in mind at all times the importance of our trade abroad. The development of the resources of our country, the opening-up of our North, the advancement of our standard of living - all of these are affected directly or indirectly by the trade we do abroad.

"Back of it all is the industry and character of our people. Canada is as much a land of promise as ever in its history. The future beckons to all men and women of faith and courage."

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ATOMIC ENERGY AGREEMENTS

Mr. Smith, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, announced in the House of Commons on February 2 that negotiations had been opened toward two additional atomic energy agreements.

The Minister said that these agreements are designed to provide for the development of co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and for commercial exchanges of nuclear energy, particularly uranium, of which Canada is a large producer. Canada has already concluded two such agreements, one with the Federal Republic of Germany and one with Switzerland.

Mr. Smith went on to say:

"Preliminary negotiations for a bilateral agreement between Canada and Japan to provide for co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy are now under way, and we expect that formal negotiations will be concluded in the spring of 1959.

"With respect to western Europe, the House will recall that a treaty establishing a European atomic energy community, EURATOM, became effective on January 1, 1958. The object of the community, of which Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands are members, is to contribute to the raising of the standard of living in member countries and the development of commercial exchanges with other countries by the creation of conditions necessary for the speedy establishment and growth of nuclear industries. The Canadian Government has approached the EURATOM commission with a view to the negotiation of an agreement for co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy to provide a framework for the development of such co-operation between Canada and EURATOM, and particularly for the organization of a joint programme of research and development on natural uranium/heavy water power reactors. The commission has welcomed this proposal and the negotiation of an agreement is expected to begin shortly. The natural uranium/heavy water reactor is, of course, the type on which Canadian research and development have been concentrated.

"We are engaged in discussions with a number of other governments, and we will continue our efforts to conclude new bilateral agreements in this field."

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VITAL STATISTICS

Record number of babies were born in Canada in 1958, according to estimates based on registrations in provincial vital statistics offices in the year and contained in the December issue of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics' monthly report "Vital Statistics". The report also contains a summary of principal statistics since the end of World War II. Marriage registrations were second only to 1946's peak total, while deaths were down slightly from 1957's record.

Births are estimated at a record 472,000 in 1958, slightly (0.6 per cent) above 1957's previous high of 469,100, dropping the birth rate per 1,000 population to 27.7 from 28.3 in the preceding year. After a series of progressively increasing birth rates since the end of World War II, the estimated 1958 rate dropped to the level of the rates in the early 1950's.

Marriages are estimated at 135,200 in 1958, up 1.5 per cent from the preceding year's total of 133,200, but down 1.6 per cent from 1946's all-time high of 137,400. The marriage rate per 1,000 population eased to 7.9 from 8.0 in the previous year, continuing the almost unbroken decline since the record high of 10.9 reached in 1946.

Deaths numbered an estimated 133,600, down 2.2 per cent from 1957's peak total of 136,600 but greater than in any other post-war year. After remaining stationary at 8.2 for the past four years, the national rate per 1,000 population is estimated to have dropped drastically to 7.8 -- the lowest in Canadian history -- representing a decrease of 15-20 per cent since the end of World War II.

Provincial registrars had processed the registrations of 473,854 births up to the end of December compared to 474,086 in 1957, 134,813 marriages versus 135,320, and 133,700 deaths against 137,230. December birth registrations numbered 35,787 compared to 34,521 in the like month of 1957, marriages 9,757 versus 8,971, and deaths 11,740 against 11,398.

Birth registrations in 1958 were greater than in 1957 in Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, virtually unchanged in Ontario, and smaller in the other provinces. Provincial totals were: Newfoundland, 14,573 (15,598 in 1957); Prince Edward Island, 2,558 (2,698); Nova Scotia, 18,839 (20,199); New Brunswick, 16,651 (17,733); Quebec, 144,459 (142,299); Ontario, 153,801 (153,773); Manitoba, 21,995 (22,665); Saskatchewan, 24,011 (23,937); Alberta, 37,207 (36,661); and British Columbia, 39,760 (38,523).