

results of a census conducted in June of last year. While marriage is on the increase, the divorce rate has declined slightly. There has also been a 38% jump in common-law marriages since 1981, and now one in twelve Canadian couples is living in a common-law relationship.

Although Canada's population, which now stands at 25.3 million, continues to grow, this is largely attributable to Canada's post-war baby boom and medical advances. The average annual growth rate, however, has declined to 0.84%, which is still higher than that of all other industrial countries with the exception of Australia.

Canadians are also living longer, with the result that, today, the country has more than one million people aged 75 and over — double the 1961 figure. Also, more than half the population is now aged over 30 for the first time in Canada's history.

One particularly interesting trend is that the longevity gap between sexes seems to be shrinking. In 1981, the average Canadian woman could expect to live eight years longer than her male counterpart. Now the gap is only seven years. Statistics Canada's chief statistician, Ivan Fellegi, suggests that this could be a reflection of the changing lifestyles of women who are participating in the labour force in increasing numbers.

A reduction has also been noted in the nation's infant mortality rate, which among the Western democracies is bettered only by Sweden's. But there are now more families without children — 30% of the total number. And 13% of all families have just one parent.

English speakers now account for 68% of the population, while French is the mother tongue of just under 25% of all Canadians.

Science and Technology

Alberta scientists make breakthrough in enzyme research

One problem encountered in medicine is the enzymes which cause germs to resist antibiotics such as penicillin. Now, two

scientists in Alberta have made a discovery that will enable compounds to be found, which will neutralise the enzymes' effect.

Dr Osnat Herzberg and Dr John Moulton have worked out the atomic structure of the antibiotic-resisting enzymes. They obtained a three-dimensional picture of one of three classes of the enzyme known as Beta-lactamase or penicillinase, which revealed the part of the enzyme that enables it to bind with, and destroy, penicillin molecules.

This discovery will help scientists to design compounds that will inhibit the enzymes' action. Alternatively, they could design new antibiotics that the enzymes do not recognise.

Until now, drug companies have resorted to trial and error in their efforts to counteract this class of enzyme. Now thanks to the efforts of Herzberg and Moulton, the stage seems set for the early development of a compound that will overcome resistance to antibiotics.

Education

Canadian studies project produces geography packs for UK students

Land use in Ontario features in a set of three teaching packs produced by the College of St Mark and St John in Plymouth. The packs are designed for 'A' Level and first-year degree courses in geography.

The packs form part of the College's Canadian Studies Geography project, and have been compiled by Dr Roland Allison, an acknowledged expert on Canada, with assistance from other members of the Centre for North American Studies at the College. They provide a comprehensive case study of land use in southern Ontario with extensive data in the form of maps, diagrams and statistics.

The first pack deals with agricultural land use and farming systems, while the second examines the impact of urban influences on changing rural land-use patterns in the area. The most recently published pack is entitled Urban Land-Use and

Planning in Metropolitan Toronto.

The packs have been welcomed by Canada specialists, as well as by those who are particularly concerned with the study of land use. As the material focusses on a single part of Canada, the interplay of influences can be more easily detected.

The packs cost £3 each, and more information on them can be obtained from Michael Bradshaw, Centre for North American Studies, College of St Mark and St John, Derriford Road, Plymouth PL5 8BH.

Sport

\$100 gold coin will commemorate Calgary winter Olympics

The climax of the Royal Canadian Mint's special issues to mark the staging of the 1988 Winter Olympics in Canada is to be a \$100 gold coin. It depicts a hand carrying the Olympic torch with a stylised flame forming an image of Canada's Rocky Mountains.

The coin follows on from a ten-coin sterling silver Olympic commemorative series, which was launched in 1985. Part of the revenue from the sales of all the coins will go to support the Olympics and amateur athletes through royalties.

The coin's designer is Friedrich Peter who has won many awards for coin design. The second silver coin of the series depicting a speed skater is also his work, and his submission to the Games Organising Committee has been selected as the design for the gold, silver and bronze medals that will be presented to the winning athletes.



shown larger than actual size

People

New business development director arrives at Ontario House

The Government of Ontario has recently appointed John B. Blanchard as its Business Development Director in London. He takes over from Brian Donoghue who has moved to Atlanta.

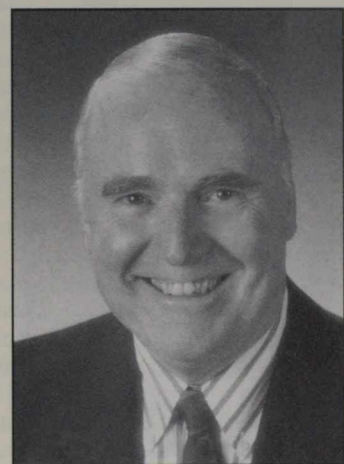


Photo: Sidney Harris

A certified management accountant, Mr Blanchard is well versed in business development matters; he held senior positions in private manufacturing industry before joining the Toronto Area Industrial Development Board in 1960.

In 1979, he joined the industrial development branch of Ontario's Ministry of Industry and Trade, later becoming Director of the Ministry's Domestic Offices Section, which promotes manufacturing and industrial development throughout the province.

In London he will have responsibility for all aspects of business and trade development, not only in Great Britain, but in Ireland and Scandinavia as well.