

The census, however, has a far wider application than the fixing of representation and federal subsidies. Periodically, all businesses take inventory of what is on their shelves and in their storerooms, estimate the value of their plants and take stock of their financial position. The government equivalent of this procedure is the taking of the census. The primary asset is the population itself, not merely the number of people but the various attributes that collectively make the Canadian people different from those of other countries. Data about sex, age, occupation, origin, language, years of schooling, etc., are facts in themselves of the greatest moment. They constitute the background against which almost all other facts must be projected if the latter are to have any real significance. The well-being of the state, physical, moral and economic, can be apprehended and interpreted only through the medium of population statistics.

In the allocation of grants by provincial authorities for educational, health and other purposes, population figures for rural and urban divisions are required. Occupational statistics are useful to provincial authorities in setting up public health services, arranging for provincial highway development, etc. In many other ways the provincial authorities place reliance on census figures just as the Federal Government does.

Thus, the census supplies basic information necessary to government in directing the affairs of the Canadian people. By means of the census, government at all levels -- federal, provincial and municipal -- is enabled to work more effectively and economically. Without the census, legislation would be passed and administration carried on in the dark. There would be no adequate means of knowing whether the country was on the road to success or disaster, or what constituted the norm or standard of its progress in almost any particular.

The census also has its uses for the business man. It supplies him with information on the size and potentialities of the home market. It helps him to decide on the advisability of expansion and in what areas expansion is justified. It helps him to determine quotas for his salesmen. It shows him where the occupational skills he needs are to be found. It supplies the investment broker, the banker and other financiers with a variety of information that they need for sound appraisal of business developments and projects and of investment conditions and opportunities.

Boards of trade, chambers of commerce and public utilities are enabled to advise and assist civic and municipal authorities in community planning, locating new schools, determining new bus-routes, erecting new electric and other facilities, etc. They are also better prepared to point out to manufacturers and retailers the advantages of obtaining factory sites and sales outlets in their particular localities by being able to quote a disinterested authority on the labour market and the strength of local purchasing power.

Advertisers and radio-broadcasting companies can more cogently present their case for patronage by prospective customers when they can produce figures on the population characteristics, such as language, origin and religion, of the areas in which they operate.

There is, as a matter of fact, scarcely a branch of business activity -- manufacturing, selling or financing -- that does not have specific uses for census figures. They are as important to business as they are to government.

Census figures are also useful to schools of social work, social agencies and societies interested in the improvement of social conditions generally. They learn which areas are less prosperous than others and where family-income ranges and other factors are such that there is likely to be a greater need of their services.