

The total number of all types of libraries reporting increased from 1,374 in 1953 to 1,560 in 1956, with corresponding increases in bookstock and circulation. The number of full-time employees increased 70 per cent from 2,193 in 1953 to 3,743 in 1956, including an increase of 13 per cent from 1,151 to 1,222 in professional staff.

CHILDREN'S READING

The trend in children's reading, as reflected in a comparison of public library activity for the years 1937, 1947 and 1956, is toward a growing interest in reading in the age group 5-14 years of age. While this group was slightly smaller in 1947 than in 1937, borrowers, volumes and circulation increased. The large increase in this population group from 1947 to 1956 (49 per cent) has been paralleled by an almost equally large increase in circulation although the supply of books did not keep pace.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN URBAN CENTRES

Public libraries in larger centres served 42 per cent of the Canadian population in 1956 through 102 library systems. Average per capita expenditures, including funds from all sources, fell far short of the Canadian Library Association's recommended minimum of \$2.00 per capita. The circulation of books in boys' and girls' departments indicated a healthy interest in reading on the part of an important section of the population, despite TV and other diversions.

REGIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Regional libraries began in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia in 1931 with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation. By 1956 regional libraries served more than ten times the population served in 1937 and more than six times that served in 1947.

This type of library organization had been established in seven provinces by 1956, and two more, New Brunswick and Manitoba, were organizing regional libraries which were to commence operations in 1957 and 1958, respectively.

FAO DIRECTOR VISITS CANADA

Mr. B.R. Sen, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, spent last week in Canada. During his stay he

met Prime Minister Diefenbaker and senior Government officials, received an honorary degree from St. Francis Xavier University, and was honored by the Agricultural Institute of Canada.

FAO was founded at a 1945 Quebec City conference, and Canadians were active in steering it through its organization stages. Thirty-four countries signed the constitution at the outset and there are now 74 member countries.

Aim of FAO is to raise the living standards of the world by having countries work together in a self-help cooperative.

VISITING QUEBEC CITY

Seven warships from four countries will visit Quebec City between June 26 and July 5 to take part in the city's 350th anniversary celebrations.

First to arrive, on June 26, will be four destroyer escorts of the Royal Canadian Navy -- HMC Ships St. Laurent, Ottawa, Saguenay and Assiniboine -- and the 10,000-ton British cruiser, HMS Birmingham.

They will be followed, on June 27, by the 31,000-ton United States aircraft carrier, USS Leyte, and, at the end of the week, by the French destroyer Du Chayla.

The four RCN ships comprise the Third Canadian Escort Squadron. Built specifically for anti-submarine warfare, they are among the most advanced warships of their type in the world.

DUTY IN LEBANON

A number of Canadian Army officers have been assigned to duty in Lebanon as members of the United Nations Observer Group in Lebanon.

The officers will be seconded to the Department of External Affairs while employed in the Middle East.

NORAD PACT APPROVED

The Canada-United States Air Defence Agreement was approved in the House of Commons on June 19. The agreement sets out the principles governing operation of the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD).