

the expansion of Canadian exports by providing insurance against risks of non-payment faced by exporters selling abroad on commercial credit terms. Since 1960, the Corporation has administered the Government's long-term export-financing programme under which direct financing is provided for export sales of capital goods and services when commercial credit is not available.

Since it began operations in 1945, the ECIC has insured export sales totalling \$2,687 million, including \$969 million for the account of the Government, and has signed loan agreements totalling \$408 million for 51 capital projects in 19 countries.

## POPULATION ESTIMATES

The population of Canada at April 1 was estimated at 21,007,000 an increase of almost one million since the census of June 1, 1966 and of 307,000 (or 1.5 per cent) since April 1968 compared to the increase of 366,000 (1.8 per cent) between April 1, 1967 and April 1, 1968. The smaller increase in the last 12 months is owing mainly to decreased immigration, though fewer births, and a rise in the number of deaths and emigrants have also contributed.

During the 12 months since April 1 last year, Ontario showed the largest gain, 142,000 or 2.0 per cent; British Columbia gained 54,000 or 2.7 per cent; Quebec, 53,000 or 0.9 per cent; and Alberta, 34,000 or 2.2 per cent. Smaller gains were recorded in Newfoundland, 8,000 or 1.6 per cent; Manitoba, 8,000 or 0.8 per cent, Nova Scotia, 4,000 or 0.5 per cent; New Brunswick, 2,000 or 0.3 per cent and Saskatchewan, 1,000 or 0.1 per cent.

The final census count of June 1, 1966 was the starting-point of these estimates. To these provincial counts were added births and immigration by quarterly period, while deaths and emigration were subtracted and the interprovincial movement of population was calculated from data on movements of families in receipt of family allowances.

## DEFENCE RESEARCH GRANTS

Some \$3 million in grants has been awarded this year to 40 Canadian universities by the Defence Research Board for fundamental research studies related to defence problems. The recipients, staff members of Canadian universities, carry out basic research and are expected to publish those results of their investigations which are not classified as secret.

Other objects of the programme are to develop and support an interest in defence science within Canada's scientific community, and indirectly, to assist in staffing the Board's seven research establishments with promising young scientists.

The grants may be used to pay research assistants, who are usually graduate students, and technical personnel; to purchase equipment and expendable materials and supplies; to finance travel required by the research programme of the individuals concerned; and to cover the costs of publishing the research findings in the scientific literature.

Support from DRB covers a substantially broad range of scientific disciplines. Included in the basic research are activities associated with medical, behavioural, and social sciences, chemistry materials, engineering, power sources, the atmospheric and earth sciences, oceanography, communications and information processing, physics, applied mathematics and computer science.

## FOREST FIRES IN APRIL

There were 322 forest fires throughout Canada during April, which damaged some 2,000 acres of woodlands, according to estimates of the Forestry Branch of the Department of Fisheries and Forestry.

By comparison, in April 1968 there were 765 fires, causing damage to 53,000 acres of forest.

Over the previous decade there was an average of 530 fires during the month of April with forest damage averaging 19,000 acres.