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QUEBEC - INDUSTRIAL NERVE-CENTRE

A report issued by Mr. J. Paul Beaulieu, Minister of Trade and Commerce, points out that the Province of Quebec is moving forward with giant strides. Its contribution to the Canadian economy is growing constantly and each year its portion of the national product becomes larger. Within the past fifteen years there has been an accelerated industrial surge which has extended to the four corners of the Province. A great many regions which, only a few years ago, were a wilderness are now alive with industrial activity. An enormous amount of capital investment in the form of new town-sites, new roads, new railway lines, new harbours, and new enterprises has resulted in making Quebec one of the richest of the Canadian provinces.

From the point of view of the value of industrial and manufacturing production, Quebec is in an enviable position compared to her sister provinces and other countries of the world. The Province supplies more than half of the Canadian output of newsprint; a quarter of the world's production of aluminum is turned out in Quebec plants; it accounts for 30 per cent of the Canadian production of chemicals and allied products; 60 per cent of the free world's output of asbestos comes from its mines; the huge oil refineries of Montreal East constitute the largest concentric group of the kind in the whole country.

The production of hydraulic power per head is greater in Quebec than anywhere else in the

world. Within the next ten years Quebec will lead all North America as a producer of iron ore. Its rich reserves in copper and nickel ore are the largest in the world in proportion to the size of the area they cover. The ilmenite deposits near Lake Allard, on the North Shore of the St. Lawrence, are the richest known.

In the years from 1949 to 1955, Quebec increased its net value of production by 63.4 per cent, while the increase in the country as a whole amounted to only 58.1 per cent. In the field of developed natural wealth, particularly with regard to mines, forests and hydro-electric power, Quebec leads the rest of Canada by the very extent of its available resources.

The abundance of Quebec's resources would be of little use without a large and dynamic demand to sustain their development. Apart from the numerous outlets its strategic geographic position provides, the constant rise of individual income and of wages, as well as the healthy growth of its population are prime factors in the increasing size of its market.

In June 1957, the Province of Quebec had a population of 4,771,500, that is, an increase of 17.6 per cent compared to the 1951 population which was 4,055,681. Between 1941 and 1951 the population had increased by 21.7 per cent having risen from 3,331,882 to 4,055,681. The actual increase in number during the past six years has been 715,819, a figure only