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RAPID POPULATION GROWTH

Striking changes in the population of Canada as revealed by the 1956 census, taken for the first time at the end of a five-year period instead of the usual ten-year interval, are discussed in the August issue of the Bank of Nova Scotia's "Monthly Review".

The "Review" points out that in the five years from 1951 to 1956 the population grew by almost 15 per cent, or 2.8 per cent per annum. This is an even faster rate of growth than in the earlier postwar period when it was over 2 per cent per annum. In the process the population has become more "urban"; two-thirds of it is now so classified against 63 per cent in 1951; and the number living on farms has shown a further sharp decline. Among the provinces, British Columbia and Alberta have continued to show the most rapid growth. But the rate of growth in Ontario, which has had much the largest absolute increase, has not been far behind and the rate in Newfoundland, the newest province, has speeded up markedly as a result of a very high birth rate and a quite spectacular decline in the death rate. Largely because of the sustained high birth rate right across the country (and to some extent also because of immigration), the aging of the population has proceeded no further; in fact the Canadian population has actually become a little "younger". At the 1951 census the under 15's made up 30% per cent of the population and the over 60's 11% per cent, while at the 1956 census the under 15's made up 32% per

cent and the over 60's 11 per cent. The contrast is even more marked with 1941, when the under 15's comprised less than 28 per cent

BABIES AND IMMIGRANTS

From 1951 to 1956 there was a rise of 2,000,000 in the Canadian population, bringing the total to over 16 million. In absolute numbers this is more than the increase in any previous ten-year period except 1941-51 (when the population grew by some 2½ million, including the 345,000 brought in by the accession of Newfoundland in 1949). And the rate of growth was faster than that for any other intercensal period since the first one in the century. Canada's population has, in fact, been showing one of the fastest rates of growth in the world, its 15 per cent increase in these five years being the same as that in Mexico and comparing with 16 per cent in Venezuela, 12 per cent in Brazil, Australia and New Zealand, 10 per cent in Argentina, and 9 per cent in the United States.

In the prosperous conditions associated with the rapid rate of economic expansion, gains from both natural increase (the excess of births over deaths) and net migration (the difference between immigration and emigration) were remarkably high. As in other periods of Canadian population history, natural increase provided much the greater part of the total; but the share contributed by net migration - not far short of 30 per cent - was larger than

(Over)

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