

CANADIAN SOCIETY AND INDUSTRY AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

New social security programs were just one area where Canadians' lives were changing in the years following the Depression and the Second World War. Many of the war industries and factories switched over from their wartime industries to producing consumer goods. There were lots of jobs, and Canadian incomes rose. The difficult years of the Depression and war were behind them and, as the average standard of living increased, Canadians once more felt prosperous and optimistic about their future.

THE BABY BOOM

Following the Second World War, the Canadian birth rate increased significantly. In 1940, 253 000 babies were born. After the war, the average birth rate increased to more than 400 000 babies per year. This **baby boom** lasted until 1966, when the number of births in Canada declined for the first time in decades. Although many factors contributed to the boom in births, a major reason was that many people had postponed having children during the Depression and then the Second World War. When the economy turned around and soldiers returned from the war, many people were ready to begin having families.

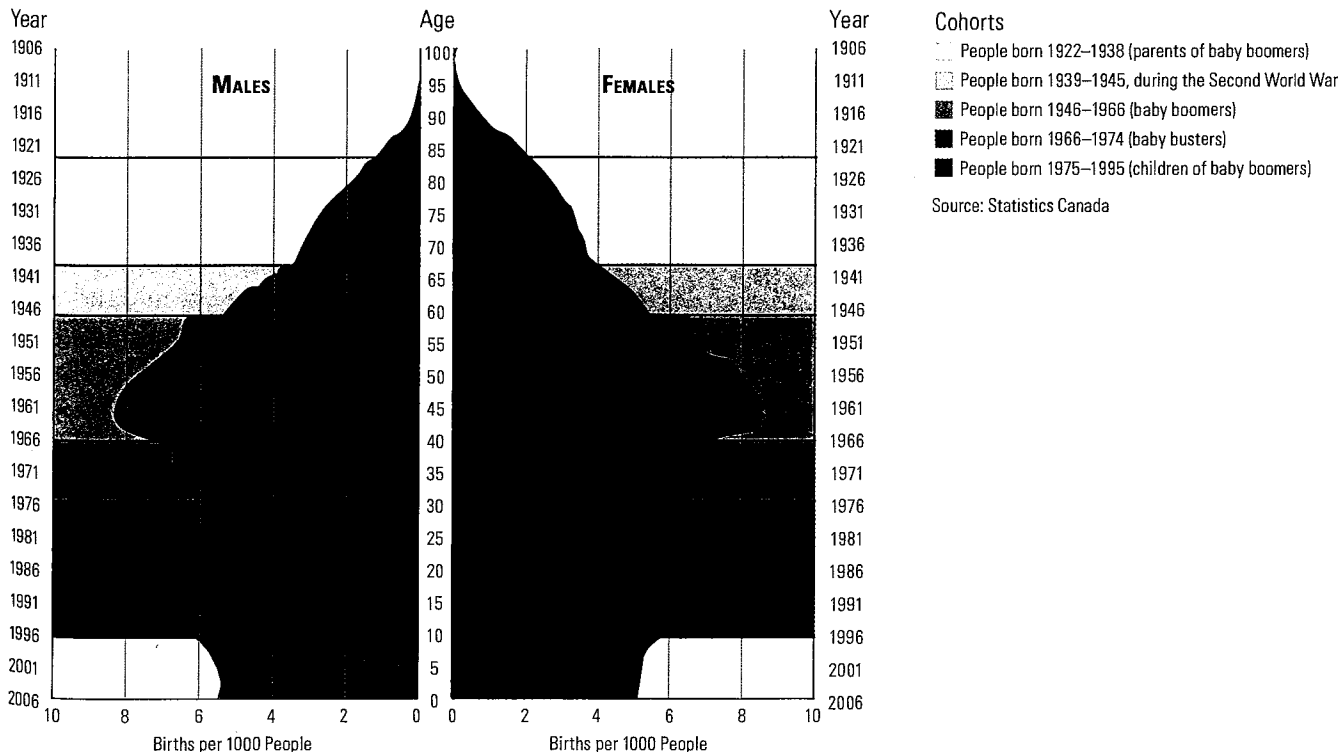
HS Read the Shaping Canada Today feature on this page. In what other ways do you think the baby boom may have been historically significant?

...SHAPING CANADA TODAY...

Baby boomers, who make up one-third of the Canadian population, have had a major impact on the Canadian economy and society. For example, the boom in young children from 1946 to 1966 required more facilities to accommodate them. Across the country, provinces and municipalities funded construction of schools, arenas, sports fields, and libraries. Today the baby boomers are beginning to retire. Some of the schools that were opened for them are now closing and retirement homes are being built.

Figure 11-25 Population Pyramid, Canada, 2006

This graph shows the cohorts—the various age groups—of the Canadian population in 2006. Considering the trend shown in this graph, describe what Canada's population pyramid might look like in twenty years. How will this demographic trend affect Canada's social programs and economy?



URBAN LIFE

Following the Second World War, the process of urbanization increased rapidly due to several factors:

- New agricultural technologies reduced the number of people who were needed to work on farms. More people headed to the cities to look for jobs in businesses, factories, government departments, and stores.
- Labour unions had negotiated higher wages and improved working conditions in factories, so these types of jobs became more desirable. Most were in cities.
- Canada's official push to attract farming immigrants was over. Many new immigrants stayed in the cities, taking jobs in factories and construction businesses.

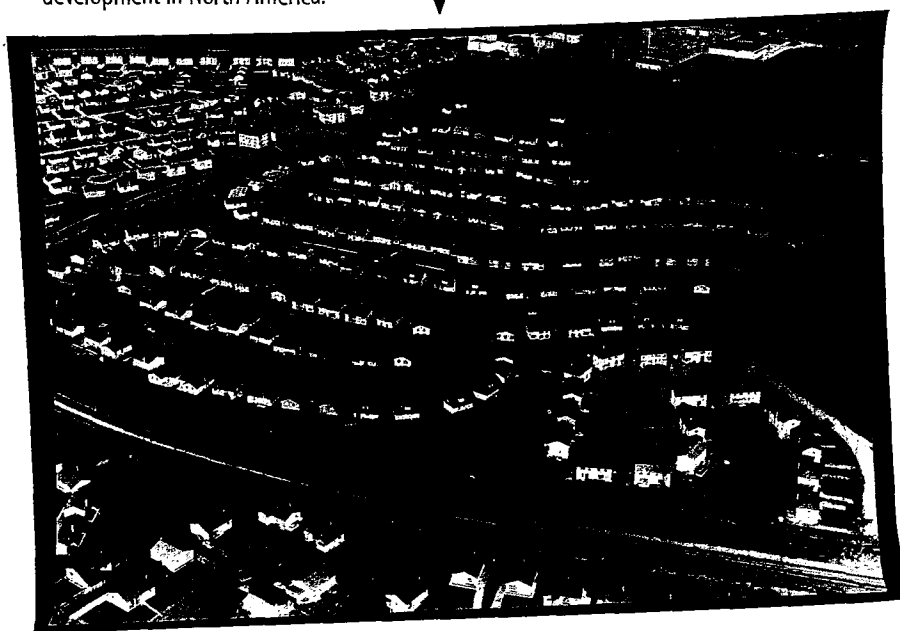
Not only did more people move to cities in the post-war years, but how they lived in cities also changed.

IMMIGRATION AND DIVERSITY

Cities became more culturally diverse, mainly due to changing immigration patterns. Canada had restricted immigration during the Second World War. With the economic boom after the war, industries needed workers, so Canada began accepting immigrants again. Immigrants still came from the northern European countries Canada had always preferred. However, now large numbers of immigrants also came from southern Europe—especially Italy. In the 1960s, Canada's immigration policies changed to become less discriminatory, and more immigrants were accepted from non-European countries. In 1971, for the first time in Canada's history, most immigrants coming to Canada had a non-European ancestry. This pattern has continued unchanged to the present day.

G&C Although Canada's approach to immigration changed in this period, in what ways was it the same as it had been throughout Canada's history?

Figure 11-26 This aerial photograph shows a section of Don Mills, a suburb of Toronto, which was developed in 1955. The photograph shows the curved roads, cul-de-sacs, and large front and back yards that are still characteristic of suburb development in North America.



RISE OF THE SUBURB

As employment and incomes grew, city dwellers expected a higher standard of living than they had had growing up. People wanted single-family houses that had front- and backyards, electricity, plumbing, and central heating. These families were willing and able to pay more taxes for libraries, schools, arenas, and community centres. A boom in housing construction created many new suburbs around the older urban centres. Better wages made suburb life more affordable for more families than ever before.

RURAL LIFE

City life was changing, but so was rural life, especially due to changing technology, such as the availability of electrical power.

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

In the early 1920s, Ontario began building rural power lines. Efforts were slowed during the Depression and war, but by 1953, 85 percent of Ontario farms had electricity. Manitoba was the first western province to connect farms to power, starting in 1945. By 1955, most farms in Manitoba had electricity. In Alberta, farmers had to pay the full cost of power-line installation—an average of \$1100 per farm. Despite this cost, by the spring of 1953, about 20 000 Alberta farms had electric power. By 1956, the CCF fulfilled its election promise by electrifying 40 000 Saskatchewan farms (47 percent of the province's farms). By 1966, most rural areas in Saskatchewan had electricity. With electricity, conveniences such as vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, radios, and televisions became more common in rural areas.

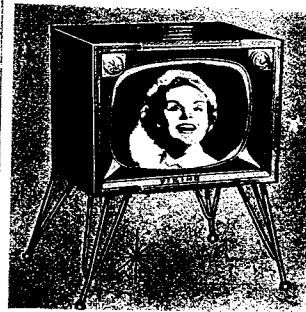
CHANGING PATTERNS OF AGRICULTURE

Increased mechanization on farms in the 1950s helped individual farmers increase the size of their farms. However, as the size of farms grew, the number of farmers decreased. Between 1940 and 1980, the number of western farms was cut in half and farm populations fell by more than a half. Government policies also changed agriculture. For example, during the Depression, layers of topsoil that had developed over thousands of years had been blown away. The government hoped to help farmers prevent this type of situation from happening again. In 1935, the federal government passed the *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act* and created the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA). The PFRA worked with farmers to develop soil and water conservation programs. In 1946, the PFRA began to focus on water conservation and helped to develop many large irrigation projects that helped farms across the prairies.

Although the *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act* helped many farming communities, not all benefited. For example, St. Madeleine, a community near the Manitoba/Saskatchewan border, had been settled by Métis families displaced from Red River after 1870. The farmland was poor, but St. Madeleine had a vibrant, close community. Between 1938 and 1941, under regulations set by the *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act*, community residents were forced off their farms, and their lands were used to create a community pasture for Euro-Canadian farmers. No compensation was given to St. Madeleine residents for the loss of their homes, farms, and church, because few had formal title to their land. Even if they had title, most, like other prairie farmers, had been unable to keep up with their tax payments during the Depression, and so the federal government could confiscate their land.

Figure 11-27 The first Canadian television station opened in Montréal in 1952. In 1958, coast-to-coast broadcasts began. Canadians everywhere wanted a television, but isolated rural Canadians especially welcomed television entertainment and information. In addition, televisions helped many rural people feel more connected to Canadians beyond their local community.

lasting enjoyment for the whole family!



21-INCH TABLE MODEL VIKING

A handsome Television Set bearing our VIKING label—your assurance of good quality—with full 21-inch aluminium picture tube. Sharp cascade tuning. Big 19-tube Teleonic chassis designed for maximum performance with a minimum of possible trouble spots. Sloping safety glass tilted to reduce annoying glare and help cut down reflections. It removes for quick cleaning. 6-inch speaker is mounted in top rear cabinet. Top front tuning for convenience—the controls are within easy stand-up reach. Attractive wrought iron effect metal stand. Set is finished in a choice of close-grained Walnut or selected Mahogany veneers. About 24 1/2 ins. wide, 19 ins. deep and 19 1/2 ins. high. For 60-cycle operation only. Please be sure to state your choice of Walnut or Mahogany finishes when ordering. 060-P-0124. Price, with stand, delivered..... 259.50



21-INCH CONSOLE TELEVISION SET

A distinctive Cascade Model VIKING Television Set combining all the advantages of the VIKING name! Control panel, with all adjustment knobs right at your finger tips. New 90-degree deflection aluminium picture tube brings high contrast between light and dark shades—improved clarity and brilliance. 22-tube Ultronic chassis. Standard coil cascade tuning brings in stations with bull's eye focus. Sloping, tinted safety glass reduces glare, cuts down reflections. Built-in speaker gives excellent reproduction. Built-in antenna with provision for outside connection. Cabinet finished in Walnut veneers, about 24 by 19 by 37 1/2 ins. high. For 60-cycle, 110-120-volt A.C. only. 060-P-0125. Price, delivered..... 319.00

TRANSPORTATION

Other changes affected how Canadians lived and worked. For example, mass-produced automobiles became more affordable, and travelling by automobile became the most common form of transportation. Between 1945 and 1955, Canadians bought 3.5 million cars. With so many more cars on the road, people wanted better roads. In 1949, the federal and provincial governments agreed to jointly fund construction of the Trans-Canada Highway. In 1970, the Trans-Canada Highway was officially completed. It extended 7821 kilometres across Canada—the longest national highway in the world.

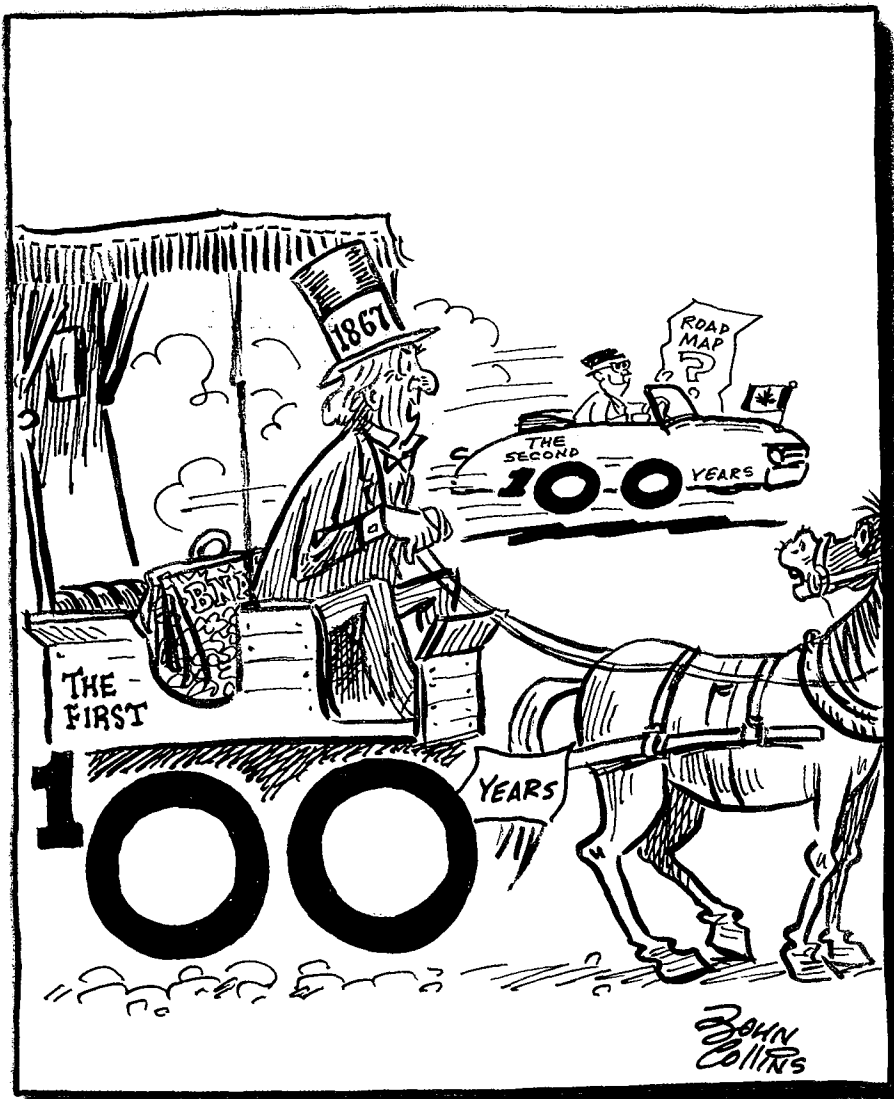
In rural areas, roads were extended and paved. Families with cars were capable of “running into town” for some of the necessities rather than having to rely only upon themselves and their neighbours. School buses brought more children of the same age together for education, bringing an end to the one-room schools that were once a feature of rural life.

Other transportation advances affected business and industry. For example, in 1954, the Canadian and American governments agreed to

jointly pay for the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway. This canal system enabled ships to move from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the western shores of Lake Superior—a distance of 3790 kilometres. The canals encouraged the development of many manufacturing and resource industries by helping businesses transport their products into and out of the interior of the North American continent.

CC How do the advances in transportation in Canada show change and continuity from earlier periods in Canadian history? What do the continuities tell you about Canada’s ongoing challenges as a country?

Figure 11-28 Editorial cartoonist John Collins published this cartoon in 1966. What was his main message? How did advances in transportation help him communicate his idea?



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE WEST

In the West, much of the economic prosperity that followed the Second World War came through the development of new resources. In particular, the 1947 discovery of significant quantities of oil in Leduc, Alberta, encouraged a thriving industry that has lasted to this day. Natural gas was later discovered in other areas of Alberta, as well as in Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Manitoba.

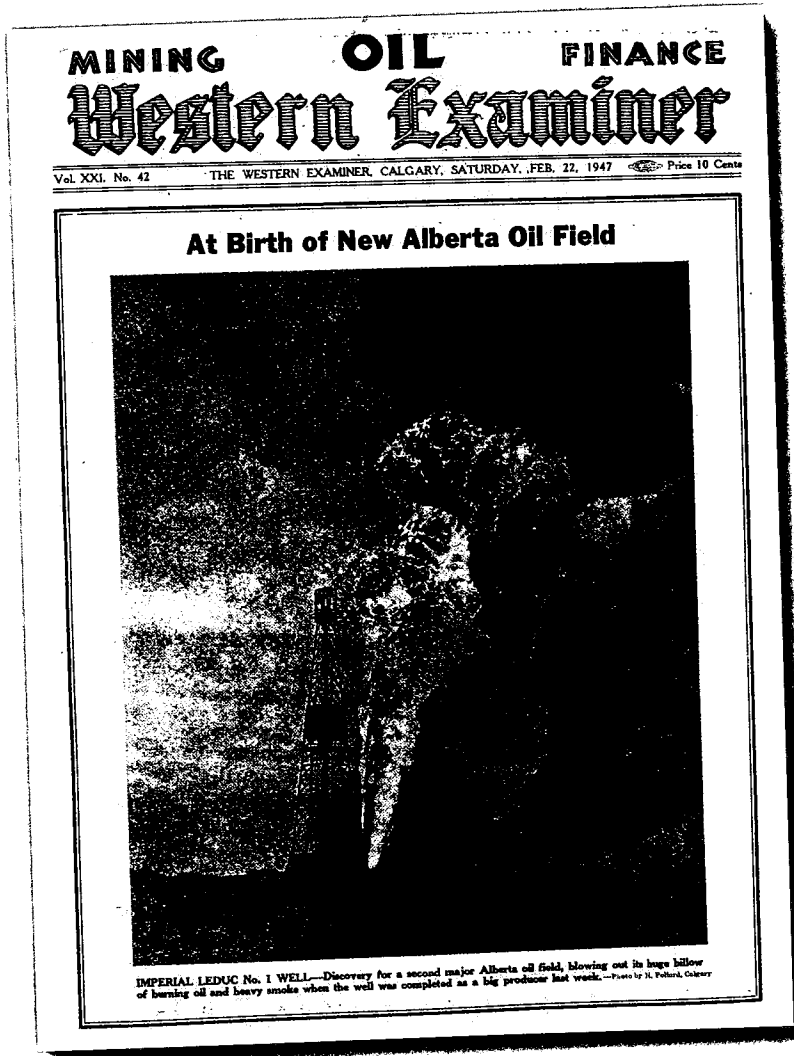
The discovery of oil and natural gas created many new jobs for Canadians as they built refineries to process the resources and pipelines to transport oil. Many people from other parts of Canada moved to the West. By 1981, over half of the prairie population lived in Alberta.

OTHER RESOURCES

The discovery of other resources also stimulated the Canadian economy. For example, in 1943, large quantities of potash were discovered in Saskatchewan. Used primarily for fertilizers, potash is still one of Saskatchewan's main exports. Other significant discoveries included uranium on the north shore of Lake Athabasca and nickel in northern Manitoba. Other parts of the country continued to develop the resources that were already part of their economies, such as logging in British Columbia and hydro-electricity in many regions.

Although the western Canadian economy diversified from its dependence on wheat exports, the economy remained dependent on the export of raw materials. This meant that if Canada's trading partners found a different source for the materials, the economy of the province producing those goods was dramatically affected. Many provincial economies, especially in the West, are therefore subject to "boom and bust" economic cycles.

Figure 11-29 Leduc No. 1 was a major crude oil discovery just outside Edmonton, Alberta. This discovery led to a post-war boom in petroleum exploration and development in western Canada.



RECALL... REFLECT... RESPOND

1. Create an organizer to summarize the major changes in Canada discussed on pages 335 to 339. For each area of change, note something about Canada that stayed the same. For example, you might note the development of Canada's oil and gas resources as an area of economic change, but also that exploiting **C&C**

Canada's natural resources has always been part of the country's history, beginning with fish and the fur trade.

2. How could each of the changes you identified be considered historically significant? **HS**