

covered such widely diversified problems as: registration affecting Indians, inter-provincial exchange of vital records, establishment of standards for delayed registration of birth, definition of vital statistics terms, standards of certification, divorce and adoption records, preliminary study of uniform provincial Marriage Acts—to name but a few.

At the Dominion-Provincial Vital Statistics Conference of 1944 the implications, for vital statistics, of impending social security legislation were studied. The immediate objective of this Conference was the formulation of an arrangement for a relatively speedy, accurate and efficient method of verification of the facts of birth of all children under the age of 16 in Canada. It was imperative that this procedure be accomplished: (a) within the provisions of the provincial vital statistics legislation; (b) without disrupting the normal operation of the Provincial Registration Offices, and (c) with the maximum of speed. This verification process was required in connection with the implementation, on July 1, 1945, of a national scheme of Family Allowances whereby the Federal Government was to pay a monthly allowance on behalf of each child.

The plan recommended by this Conference was approved by individual agreement between the Dominion and the Provinces and provided, among other terms:

- (a) that in lieu of transcript copies as heretofore, of all births, stillbirths, marriages and deaths, the Provincial Registration Offices would transmit, currently, to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, microfilms of the original registrations as well as microfilm copies of all births registered in the Provincial Registration Offices since Jan. 1, 1925;
- (b) for the processing, by the Bureau of Statistics, of Hollerith punch cards from these records and the preparation of indexes for governmental and other purposes approved by the provinces;
- (c) for the production as heretofore, of national tabulations on vital statistics for the use of the provinces and other agencies;
- (d) for the production of an index, showing the births of children in each province and each year of birth and covering all persons born in Canada since Jan. 1, 1925.

Although the National Index is now being used as a posting medium for Family Allowance purposes, its use may be extended to meet other needs, as they may arise, and as approved by the provinces on the recommendation of the Vital Statistics Council for Canada.

The agreement arising out of the Conference of 1944 went into effect on July 1, 1945.

The Order in Council ratifying this Dominion-Provincial Agreement also provided for the establishment of a Vital Statistics Council made up of one representative from each of the Provincial Registration Offices and the Federal administration responsible for registration in Yukon and the Northwest Territories, the Dominion Statistician, as Chairman, and the Directors of the Vital Statistics and Census Divisions of the Bureau of Statistics.

This Council is a representative national body whose primary functions are:

- (a) to discuss problems of registration procedure and legislation;
- (b) to determine and advise their respective governments of such changes in registration techniques as appear useful or necessary;
- (c) to improve, as one of its main objectives, the statistical quality of vital statistics tabulations, and
- (d) to make recommendations as to the future use of the National Index.

In short, the Council has become the clearing-house for problems of registration, vital statistics and the National Index, and has been the means of increasing and consolidating that close co-operation between the provincial and national offices