

### Section 3.—The Indians and Eskimos of Canada

**The Indians.**\*—There are more than 170,000 native Indians in Canada today and it is noteworthy that their rate of increase is higher than that of any other segment of the population. They live on more than 2,200 tracts of land which have been reserved for their use and benefit. These reserves are located in every province with the exception of Newfoundland where the provincial government has a responsibility for Indians on the Island and on the Coast of Labrador. Elsewhere in Canada, the Indian Affairs Branch of the Federal Department of Citizenship and Immigration is responsible for the administration of the Indian Act and matters affecting the welfare of Indians.

#### 24.—Indian Land in Reserves and Number of Bands, by Province, Year Ended Mar. 31, 1958

Province or Territory	Reserves		Bands	Province or Territory	Reserves		Bands
	No.	Area			No.	Area	
		acres	No.			acres	No.
Prince Edward Island.....	4	2,741	1	Alberta.....	90	1,537,217	41
Nova Scotia.....	40	19,492	6	British Columbia.....	1,627	820,397	209
New Brunswick.....	23	37,597	15	Northwest Territories...	10	1,924	15
Quebec.....	23	178,566	42	Yukon Territory.....	15	3,535	15
Ontario.....	164	1,559,184	111				
Manitoba.....	107	524,490	51	<b>Canada.....</b>	<b>2,223</b>	<b>5,890,938</b>	<b>572</b>
Saskatchewan.....	120	1,205,795	66				

*Administration.*—The primary function of the Indian Affairs Branch, under the Indian Act, is to administer the affairs of Canadian Indians in a manner that will enable them to become increasingly self-supporting and independent members of the community. Among the important matters that come within the purview of Canadian Indian administration are: the management of Indian reserves and surrendered lands; tribal or band funds; education; welfare projects; relief; family allowances; rehabilitation of Indian veterans on reserves; descent of property; Indian treaty obligations; and enfranchisement of Indians.

The present Indian Act, proclaimed Sept. 4, 1951, was drawn up after a lengthy inquiry of a Special Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons, and after taking into account the views of the Indians themselves expressed at a conference held for that purpose. The overriding consideration that shaped the present Act was the desire to promote the integration of Indians into the general social and economic life of the country.

As a means of achieving this, the Act makes provision for the election of Band councils whose authority extends over a number of areas of immediate concern to Indians resident on the reserve, including such matters as health, regulation of traffic, control of livestock, and management of fish, game and fur. Bands that have achieved an advanced stage of development may enact by-laws having to do with the raising, appropriation and expenditure of money. While most Band councils are elected for a two-year term as provided in the Indian Act, some continue to adhere to appointment by tribal custom. All Bands, however, are given the opportunity to decide which system they will follow.

The Indian Affairs Branch takes a census of the Indian population under its jurisdiction at five-year intervals. The figures for the 1954 Census are given in Tables 25 and 26.

\* Prepared in the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa.