

buy, sell, melt, assay and refine gold and precious metals; and to produce medals, plaques and other devices. The mint reports to Parliament through the minister of supply and services.

On December 16, 1971, a decision was made by the cabinet to locate a new plant for the production of coin for general circulation in Winnipeg. The plant was officially opened on April 30, 1976.

Chartered banks

21.1.4

Canada's commercial banking system consists of 11 private banks: Bank of Montreal, The Bank of Nova Scotia, The Toronto-Dominion Bank, Banque Nationale du Canada, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, The Royal Bank of Canada, The Mercantile Bank of Canada, Bank of British Columbia, Canadian Commercial & Industrial Bank, Northland Bank, and Continental Bank of Canada. At the end of December 1979, these banks operated 7,455 banking offices in Canada and 290 abroad. Canadian chartered banks accept various types of deposits from the public including accounts payable on demand, both chequing and non-chequing, notice deposits and fixed-term deposits. In

In 1920 there were 4,676 branches of chartered banks in Canada. The number gradually decreased during the 1930s and early 1940s to a low of 3,084 in 1943. By the end of 1979 the number had increased to 7,455.

addition to holding a portfolio of securities, they make loans under a wide variety of conditions for commercial, industrial, agricultural and consumer purposes. They also deal in foreign exchange, receive and pay out bank notes, provide safekeeping facilities and perform various other services. For the most part, these operations are carried out by the extensive network of bank branches. Head offices of the banks confine their activities largely to general administration and policy functions, the management of investment portfolios and related matters. A detailed account of the branch banking system in Canada is given in the *Canada Year Book 1967* pp 1126-1128.

All banks operating in Canada are chartered by Parliament under the terms of the Bank Act. The act regulates certain internal aspects of bank operations such as the auditing of accounts, the issuing of stock, the setting aside of reserves and similar matters. In addition, the Bank Act regulates their relationship with the public, the government and the Bank of Canada.

The Bank Act has been revised at approximately 10-year intervals; the most recent revision was enacted by Parliament early in 1967 and came into effect May 1 of that year. Because proposed revisions were still being discussed, legislation to extend the Bank Act to April 1, 1980 was passed in the House of Commons on March 22, 1979.

Chartered bank financial statistics for recent years are given in Tables 21.8 - 21.12; month-end data are available in the *Bank of Canada Review*.

History of chartered banks. Although there are fewer chartered banks now than at the beginning of the century, there has been a great increase in the number of branch banking offices. As a result of amalgamations, the number of banks declined from 34 in 1901 to 10 in 1931, and remained at that figure until the incorporation of The Mercantile Bank of Canada in 1953. In 1955 the Bank of Toronto and the Dominion Bank amalgamated as The Toronto-Dominion Bank. In 1956 Barclays Bank (Canada) amalgamated with the Imperial Bank of Canada; then in 1961 the amalgamation of the Canadian Bank of Commerce and the Imperial Bank of Canada as the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce reduced the number to eight, the other six being Bank of Montreal, The Bank of Nova Scotia, La Banque Provinciale du Canada, The Royal Bank of Canada, Banque Canadienne Nationale and The Mercantile Bank of Canada. The Bank of British Columbia was granted a charter by Parliament in December 1966 and commenced operations in July 1968. Unity Bank of Canada was granted a charter in November 1972 and commenced operations in 1973. Northland Bank received its charter in December 1975 and began operations in November 1976. The Canadian