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The 18th Decennial Census of the United States revealed a total of 179 million persons in the 50 States and the District of Columbia on April 1, 1960. This preliminary figure represents an increase of 27.7 million over the count of 151.3 on April 1, 1950. Numerically, this is the largest increase ever reported in the United States. This increase ever reported in the United States. This increase of more than 27 million exceeds the total population of the United States at any census prior to that of 1860. The relative increase of 18 percent between 1950 and 1960 exceeds the increase in all of the decades since 1910 but is less than the relative increase in any decade before 1910. It is substantially less than the decade increase of more than 30 percent shown in all periods before 1860.

The 1960 preliminary figure of 179 million is based on field counts of the population, and includes in addition an estimated 1.1 million persons who were enumerated by various special procedures. The subsequent discussions of changes in the internal distribution are based on the field count figure (177, 874, 042). It is unlikely that the inclusion of these additional groups will alter any of the conclusions drawn in this discussion.

The increase in population between 1950 and 1960 represents an increase through immigration of nearly 3 million, and a natural increase of approximately 25 million--the difference between about 41 million births and 16 million deaths. Although tabulations of the characteristics of the population have not yet been made, it seems probable they will show that our population has grown older -- and younger. The size of the group entering the 65 and over age group during this decade is considerably larger than the corresponding groups for previous decades. The continued decline in mortality also contributes to the increase in the upper end of the age distribution. At the same time, the unrelenting fertility of the 50's has served to produce a population under 10 years of record size. Thus, it is expected that both the group 65 and over and those under 10 will show more rapid increase than the population as a whole. On the other hand, a less rapid increase--or even a decline--is to be expected in the age group 20 to 34 as a reflection of the relatively small number of births in the period 1925 to 1940.

Within the country the rates of most rapid increase tended to be concentrated in the Southwest. Thus, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana all had rates of increase in excess of 20 percent. Florida, with a 76 percent increase, however, outdistanced California with a 47 percent increase. There were also rates of increase in excess of 20 percent in Michigan and Ohio, and in Delaware and the States which might be described as suburban to either Washington or New York City--Maryland, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The 2 new States--Alaska and Hawaii--showed substantial rates of increase. In all, there were 17 States with rates of increase of 20 percent or more.

In terms of absolute amount of increase however, the roster of States was somewhat different. The 17 States that ranked highest in absolute increase, to be sure, included--California, Connecticut, Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Texas, New Jersey, Maryland, Louisiana, and Arizona, in which the rate of increase was high, but the highest ranking States also included large States such as New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Indiana, North Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin, in which the rate of increase was somewhat lower. In absolute increase, for example, New York State, with an increase of 1.8 million, was outranked only by California and Florida. Taken together, the 17 States with the highest ranking absolute increases accounted for more than 80 percent of the total increase during the decade. The shifting pattern of growth among the States was not sufficiently great to change the ranking by population of the larger States. Thus, the 9 highest ranking States in 1960--New York, California, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, Texas, Michigan, New Jersey, and Massachusetts, were also highest ranking in the same order in 1950. Florida however jumped from the 20th State in order of size in 1950 to the 10th State in order of size in 1960, and there were some additional minor changes in ranking among other States.

There were 3 States--Mississippi, Arkansas, and West Virginia--that lost population during the decade. Two of these States--Arkansas and Mississippi--also lost population during the 1940-1950 decade. West Virginia, on the other hand, showed a slight increase between 1940 and 1950. The District of Columbia also lost population during the 1950-1960 decade, but in this context it is more meaningful to consider the District as a city rather than a State.

Just as the population growth in the decade 1950-1960 was concentrated in certain specific parts of the country, it was also concentrated in certain types of areas. More than 80 percent of the 26.5 million increase between 1950 and 1960 occurred in standard metropolitan statistical areas; that is, in cities of 50,000 or more and the suburban areas surrounding them. This concentration of population increase in metropolitan areas was simply a continuation of the pattern observed in the decade 1940-1950 when nearly 80 percent of the increase occurred in the same type of areas.

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In terms of growth rates, there was again a similarity. Between 1950 and 1960 the population of standard metropolitan statistical areas increased by about 25 percent and between 1940 and 1950, about 22 percent. The percentage increase for the remainder of the country outside metropolitan areas was 8 percent for the decade 1950-1960; it was 6 percent for the decade 1940-1950. The difference in these levels of increase reflect the difference in the percentage gains in the country as a whole--18 percent between 1950 and 1960, and 14.5 percent between 1940 and 1950.

Within metropolitan areas, however, there were appreciable differences. In the decade 1950-1960, the population of central cities increased by only 8 percent, whereas in the previous decade the corresponding increase was nearly 14 percent. In the suburban ring, however, the 1950-1960 increase was nearly 50 percent as compared with 35 percent in the preceding decade. Considered as a proportion of the countrywide increase, the suburban ring accounted for about two-thirds of the total 1950-1960 increase, but slightly less than one-half of the 1940-1950 increase.

The metropolitan-nonmetropolitan pattern of increase varied considerably among the various regions. The population in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas of the Northeast increased at about the same rate (12 and 13.3 respectively), central cities decreased by about 4 percent, and the suburban ring increased by slightly more than one-third. In the North Central States, the rate of increase in metropolitan areas was about 4 times that of the nonmetropolitan areas (23 vs. 6 percent), central cities showed a modest increase of about 3 percent, and the suburban ring increased by something more than one-half.

In the South, the population of standard metropolitan statistical areas increased at a rate 8 times greater than the population living outside such areas (33 vs. 4 percent), that of central cities increased by nearly one quarter, and that of the suburban ring by about one-half. In the West, the population of metropolitan areas increased at more than twice the rate of the population of nonmetropolitan areas (46 vs. 21 percent). The rate of increase for central cities was about 28 percent and the ring about 65 percent.

These findings suggest a sort of evolutionary hypothesis with respect to the pattern of population growth in this country. In the mature Northeast, central cities have achieved a high density, are generally speaking unable to extend their limits, and thus tend to lose population, and the exchange of population between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas has reached a state of dynamic equilibrium. In the North Central Region, the decline in the population of central cities is foreshadowed by the low rate of increase, but there is still evidence of the movement of population from nonmetropolitan areas to metropolitan areas, the net gain appearing in the ring. In the South, there is the same net movement into metropolitan areas, but this net increase appears to be more evenly distributed between central city and ring--evidently the limits of central cities were less rigidly fixed or initially the incorporated area of central cities was relatively large in relation to population.

The West is unique in having an overall rate of increase more than twice as great as that of any other region. Like the North Central Region and the South, but to a lesser degree, there is evidence of movement from nonmetropolitan to metropolitan areas. The growth rate of the ring is somewhat greater in relation to the growth rate of central cities than in the South, but less than that in the North Central Region.

The results of the 1960 Census which have attracted the most attention, not all of it favorable, have been the losses of population in a considerable number of our large cities. Of the 225 central cities of standard metropolitan statistical areas, 72 lost population between 1950 and 1960. Of the 5 cities of a million or more--New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Detroit-only one, Los Angeles, showed a gain; the others had appreciable losses.

In one sense, the alarm and dismay with which the losses have been viewed is not justified. To be sure, New York City had about a 3-percent decline in population, but the New York Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area increased by about 10 percent. The corresponding figures for Chicago were -3 percent and 19 percent, respectively; for Philadelphia, -5 percent and 17 percent; and for Detroit, -10 percent and 25 percent. In short, although the legally defined cities declined in population, the complete areas increased in population.

Thus, if we consider the natural concentration of population independent of artificial and arbitrary boundaries, then these concentrations have grown. It is clear that an urban aggregate which is growing, grows more rapidly at its periphery than in its central parts, and as it spreads outward it sconer or later overflows arbitrary boundaries from the past. At the same time, the growth of the total area increases the need for nonresidential use of land in the center of the city to accommodate increased business activity, increased traffic, and the like. Thus, if city limits are fixed, there comes a time when a decline in the population of the central city may be taken as evidence of the economic well being of the whole area.

Between 1950 and 1960, the central cities which lost population were in the main mature cities, large cities, and cities which in 1950 had a high density. Generally speaking, they were located in the Northeast, although there were notable exceptions--Baltimore and Washington in the South and San Francisco in the West. The one characteristic which they had in common was a political and legal situation which made it nearly impossible to expand their boundaries.

The importance of annexation in determining whether or not a central city gained or lost population is demonstrated by the fact that the central cities of SMSA's in which there had been any annexation to central cities during the decade increased by ,19 percent, whereas in those areas in which there had been no annexations decreased by 4 percent. This classification, based on the sheer presence or absence of annexations, is relatively crude since it does not take into consideration the amount of territory and population annexed. Thus, in the Northeast, SMSA's with annexations showed a greater decline than those without annexations. In the San Francisco-Oakland SMSA there was a small annexation to Oakland which put the SMSA's in the "with annexation" column even though both cities are essentially hemmed in and lost population.

The effects of annexation are perhaps most clearly demonstrated in the case of those SMSA's which showed modest to sharp increases for the whole area, but losses in the suburban ring. Thus, for example, Evansville with only a gain of 3 percent for the whole area was able to produce a gain of about 9 percent in the central city and Tucson, Arizona, by a series of annexations during the decade, a gain of 360 percent in the central city; and a loss of 46 percent in the ring.

It is clear then that for a given rate of growth in the entire SMSA, the rate of growth of the central city will depend in large part on whether or not the municipal corporations are able to recapture the "flight to the suburbs" by annexation or on whether or not by "big thinking" at some earlier period they extended the city limits well beyond the area of heavy settlement. In this situation, the cities of the older and more settled parts of the country are at a disadvantage in that they are frequently ringed around by places incorporated in their own right, further expansion would involve annexations into adjoining counties, and generally speaking annexation is more difficult. In Ohio, for example, an annexation can be made only on the petition of the inhabitants of the area to be annexed, whereas in Texas a munic-ipality can annex adjoining unincorporated territory practically at will. Thus, in terms of sheer population growth, the losses experienced by many American cities in the decade 1950-1960 are illusory, but in terms of the problems of municipal administration they are, in many instances, very real.

Although the population growth during the past decade was highly concentrated in metropolitan areas, the population outside such areas increased by about 4.9 million, or 8 percent. This increase was by no means evenly distributed. For the country as a whole, counties that in 1950 contained urban population increased by 10 percent. On the other hand, those with no urban population in 1950 suffered a population loss of about 4 percent.

This same relationship was shown for the North Central States and the South, with appreciable gains occurring in the counties with urban population and losses occurring in counties that were entirely rural in 1950. In the Northeast and in the West, both groups of counties had increases, but the increases for the counties with urban population were greater.

Throughout the country, for counties with urban population in 1950, the percentage gain increased with size of county from counties of 10,000 to 20,000 to counties of 100,000 or more. For the class of counties containing urban population but with less than 10,000 inhabitants in 1950, the rate was higher than that of the class containing 10,000 to 20,000 inhabitants. The same pattern was observed in each of the regions except the West where there was a consistent pattern of increasing percentages from the smallest to the largest classes.

The heavy population losses were concentrated in the counties that were completely rural in 1950, primarily in those of less than 20,000. The very small number of larger rural counties showed an increase at the national level, but a somewhat erratic pattern of change among the regions.

In summary, the preliminary results of the 1960 Census showed a continuation of the concentration of population growth in metropolitan areas. They also indicate that outside metropolitan areas there has been a continuation of the relatively modest rate of growth characteristic of the decade 1940-1950 and the concentration of this growth in the larger counties. The most notable, but not unexpected, result of the 1960 Census is the decrease in the population of a considerable number of our larger cities. About one-third of all cities of 100,000 or more had decreases during the decade and of the 10 largest cities of 1950, 9 lost population.