

BUREAU OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

RESEARCH PAPERS

Series A. No. 7

December 1, 1966

Changes in the Geographical Distribution of the Jewish Population
of Metropolitan Montreal in the Decennial Periods from 1901 to 1961
& the Estimated Possible Changes during the Period from 1961 to 1971

A Preliminary Study

by

Louis Rosenberg
Research Director
Canadian Jewish Congress

971j
C
Ser. A
no. 7

BUREAU OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH • CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

493 SHERBROOKE ST. W. • MONTREAL • CANADA

Changes in the Geographical Distribution of the Jewish Population of Metropolitan Montreal in the Decennial Periods from 1901 to 1961 and the Estimated Possible Changes during the Period from 1961 to 1971.

A Preliminary Study

by

Louis Rosenberg

Research Director, Canadian Jewish Congress

The Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal has increased from 28,895 in 1911 to 102,726 in 1961. The percentage of Jews among the total population of Metropolitan Montreal has decreased from 6.2 in 1921 to 5.7 in 1951, and has decreased still further to 4.9 percent in 1961. The numerical increase of the Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal during the decade from 1951 to 1961 however was 21,895, an increase higher than in any previous decennial period since 1901-1911.

In all years from 1901 to 1961 Jews have formed the third largest ethnic group in Montreal, exceeded only by the population of French and Anglo-Celtic origin, but during the decade from 1951 to 1961 the population of Italian origin in Metropolitan Montreal has more than tripled in size, and numbered 101,466 in 1961, approximating closely the number of Jewish residents in that year. Because of the higher natural increase rate among the population of Italian origin, and the much larger number of Italian immigrants who have settled in Montreal during the decade from 1961 to 1971, there can be little doubt that the population of Italian origin will exceed in number the Jewish population of Montreal in 1971.

A great change has taken place in the geographic distribution of the Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal since 1946. In 1901 more than half of the total Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal lived in the area south of Pine Avenue and east of Park Avenue. By 1911 the majority of the Jewish population had moved northward into the area north of Pine Avenue and east of Park Avenue, and by 1921 the percentage of Montreal's total Jewish population living within that area had increased to more than 86 percent. It was in that area that the new buildings of the Mortimer Davis Y.M.H.A., the Talmud Torah, the Jewish People's School, Jewish Public Library, Peretz School, Jewish Old Folks' Home and Neighbourhood House were built in the 1930's and early 1940's. In 1941 the majority of Montreal's Jewish population, exceeding 60 percent, still lived in that area. Although an increasing number of Jews had moved westward into Outremont during the period from 1921 to 1941 and Outremont's Jewish population in 1941 had increased to 10,338, only four of the forty synagogues in Metropolitan Montreal in 1941 were situated in the new area of Jewish settlement, and of these four, two were in Westmount, one was in Notre Dame de Grace, and one in Outremont.

By 1951 the number of Jewish residents in every one of the wards in the old area of Jewish settlement east of Hutchison Street had decreased substantially, while the number and percentage of Jewish residents in the Snowdon area, Notre Dame de Grace areas had greatly increased, and some Jews had moved into the residential suburbs of St. Laurent, Mount Royal, Hampstead and Cote St. Luc.

Prior to 1961 there were only two municipal wards in Montreal in which Jews formed a little more than a majority of the total population for a brief period in 1931 and these were Laurier and St. Louis Wards in the old area of Jewish settlement. In 1941 and 1951 there was no ward in the City of Montreal, nor in any of its suburbs in which Jews formed the majority of the population.

1951 was the first year in which Montreal was divided for census purposes into census tracts, areas smaller than municipal wards; and in that year there were nine census tracts in which Jews formed a majority of the population, and of these six were still in the old area of Jewish settlement in St. Louis, St. Michel and Laurier wards, two were in Outremont, and one was in the newer residential area in the western portion of the City of Montreal known as Snowdon, which was part of the newly formed Mount Royal Ward.

In addition, in 1951 there were six mixed census tracts in which Jews formed the largest ethnic group, although not the majority. Of these three were in St. Michel Ward in the old area of Jewish settlement, two were in the new Snowdon residential area, and one in Outremont.

By 1961 the trend of the Jewish population to migrate to newly developed residential areas on the outskirts of the city of Montreal, and to newly built suburbs adjoining Montreal increased and became still more evident. When the 1961 census was taken, the Jewish population in the new suburb of Cote St. Luc, which had only 34 Jews in 1951, had increased to 8,307, and the Jewish population in the new suburb of St. Laurent, which had only 102 Jewish residents in 1951 had increased to 7,696; while the Jewish population of the Town of Mount Royal had increased from 298 in 1951 to 2,617, and the Jewish population of Hampstead had increased from 538 in 1951 to 1,560 in 1961. The suburb of Chomedey on Ile Jesus across the Back River, which had only 16 Jewish residents in 1951 had a Jewish population of 3,493 in 1961.

The number and location of the census tracts in which the Jewish population formed the majority or the largest group had also changed during the decade from 1951 to 1961. In 1961 there were seven census tracts in which Jews formed the majority; of which five were in the City of Montreal, all of them in the new residential area of Mount Royal Ward, and one in each of the suburbs of Cote St. Luc and St. Laurent. In addition there were eleven mixed census tracts in which Jews formed the largest ethnic group, although not the majority. Of these one was in the Town of Mount Royal, two were in Outremont, and of the eight census tracts in Montreal, six were in the new western residential areas of Mount Royal Ward, in the Snowdon and Cote des Neiges districts (See Table 3).

On the other hand, while the percentage of Metropolitan Montreal's Jewish population resident in Outremont and the old area of Jewish settlement in Montreal, which was as high as 87.4 percent in 1921, decreased from 78.5 percent in 1941 to 43.1 percent in 1951 and decreased still further to 20.8 percent in 1961, the percentage of Metropolitan Montreal's total Jewish population resident in the new western residential area of Montreal and its north-western suburbs has increased from 15.0 percent in 1941 to 40.2 percent in 1951; and in 1961 the percentage increased still further to 74.7 percent, forming a majority of the entire Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal.

There can be no doubt that the percentage of Metropolitan Montreal's Jewish population living in the area west of Outremont and extending westerly into Cote St. Luc and Montreal West, and northerly from Outremont and Chomedey will continue to increase still further, although at a slower pace than during the past decade.

In previous decades the Jewish residents formerly living in the old area of Jewish settlement, as they moved westward into the new residential areas in the western portion of Metropolitan Montreal, were replaced by more recently arrived Jewish immigrants. This is no longer the case. The number of Jewish immigrants admitted to Canada each year since 1961 has decreased from the peak which occurred during the period from 1946 to 1957, and now averages approximately 2,000, of which a little more than half make their home in Montreal. Moreover, the new Jewish immigrants who do arrive do not normally settle in the old area of Jewish settlement as they did in previous years, but settle in the Snowdon area.

The homes vacated by Jews formerly living in the old area of Jewish settlement are now occupied by immigrants of Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Polish and other ethnic origins; and the Jewish population living in the old area of Jewish settlement will continue to decrease at a still more rapid pace, particularly since practically all Jewish institutions such as the Jewish schools, synagogues, library, Neighbourhood House, Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, Y.M.H.A., Jewish Home for the Aged have already moved out of this area to the newer Jewish residential areas.

In some of the wards in the old area of Jewish settlement of Montreal, the Jewish population has decreased as much as 80 percent, and in Outremont the decrease during the decade from 1951 to 1961 was 22.2 percent. The only wards in the old area of Jewish settlement in which there was an increase in the Jewish population were St. Michel Ward, north of Fairmount Street, and in the Park Extension district of St. Jean Ward. The decrease in the total Jewish population in the old area of Jewish settlement in Montreal was 38.8 percent, a decrease greater than has ever occurred before in Montreal (See Table 1).

In 1961 the majority of the total Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal, approximately 94 percent, lived in the area extending from Park Avenue in the east to the western boundary of Cote St. Luc in the west and from Monkland Avenue in the south, northward to Chomedey.

The centre of this area lies approximately near the corner of Decarie Boulevard and Van Horne Avenue. In 1961 the Jewish population within this area was approximately 96,300, of which 49,900 lived in the area east of Decarie Boulevard and 46,400 lived in the area west of Decarie Boulevard. I would estimate that by 1971 a little more than half of the total Jewish population will be living west of Decarie Boulevard, and that the total Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal will be approximately 120,000. This estimate is based on the assumption that the annual number of Jewish immigrants who settled in Metropolitan Montreal from 1964 to 1966 was approximately the same as the average number who did so in the years from 1961 to 1964, and that the annual rate of natural increase, or excess of births over deaths from 1961 to 1966 was the same as reported in Montreal for 1961.

I estimate that the rate of increase of the Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal will slow down, and will be much less than the rate of increase which took place in the period from 1946 to 1961. That decrease in the rate of increase was the result of the massacre of the six million Jews during World War II in those countries in Eastern Europe which were the major source of Jewish immigration to Canada during previous years, and the decrease in the Jewish birth rate and increase in the Jewish death rate in Canada which has continued since 1951.

On the basis of the decrease of the Jewish population in the old area of Jewish settlement in Montreal and Outremont from 1951 to 1961 I would estimate that the Jewish population in that area will continue to decrease by 1971 by approximately 5,000, and that the Jewish population in the areas west of Outremont and north of Monkland Avenue and the northern boundary of Westmount will increase by approximately 13,000 to a total of 90,000, so that the Jewish population in the newer residential areas of Montreal and its suburbs west of Outremont will form approximately 75 percent of the total Jewish population of Metropolitan Montreal by 1971. The centre of the Jewish population is not likely to move more than two or three city blocks westward and northward from the present central point at the junction of Decarie Boulevard and Van Horne Avenue during the next ten or fifteen years.

May 5, 1966.

Table 1. Changes in the Geographical Distribution of the Jewish Population in the Older Area of Jewish Settlement of Metropolitan Montreal east of the Western Boundary of Outremont in the Decades from 1901 to 1961 inclusive

	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	Decrease 1951-61	Incr. 1951-61
<u>Outremont</u>	-	41	1,195	6,783	10,338	11,566	9,003	22.2%	-
<u>Montreal Wards</u>									
St. Michel Ward	-	-	-	9,871	12,749	2,444	3,744	-	53.1%
Laurier "	-	1,211	7,289	8,198	10,188	6,827	3,316	51.5	-
St. Jean "	-	1	330	415	327	2,732	3,137	-	14.8
St. Louis "	2,899	11,523	12,224	9,671	10,481	7,498	1,390	81.5	-
St. J. Baptiste Ward	1124	2,991	11,712	10,828	5,073	3,076	512	83.4	-
St. Lawrence "	2,131	7,733	5,342	1,360	1,127	681	228	67.3	-
St. Denis "	6	1,019	1,574	310	79	34	19	44.1	-
Total, old area of settlement	5,160	24,519	39,666	47,436	50,362	34,858	21,349	38.8	-
Total Jewish Population in Metro. Montreal	6,979	28,895	45,927	58,099	64,122	80,829	102,726		
Percentage of total Jewish Population	74.1	84.7	87.4	81.6	78.5	43.1	20.8		

Table 2. Changes in Geographical Distribution of the Jewish Population in the new Western Residential Area of Metropolitan Montreal, west of the Western Boundary of Outremont in the decades from 1901 to 1961

<u>Montreal Wards</u>	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961
Mount Royal	-	-	-	321	3,610	20,681	37,961
Notre Dame de Grace	-	4	449	3,299	4,267	9,114	11,771
Ahuntsic	-	-	-	104	37	42	1,036
Cote St. Luc	-	-	10	-	13	34	8,307
St. Laurent	-	9	3	9	4	102	7,696
Chomedey	-	7	-	-	9	16	3,493
Town of Mt. Royal	-	-	1	4	12	298	2,617
Westmount	65	361	1,002	1,780	1,625	1,675	2,322
Hampstead	-	-	-	-	56	538	1,560
Total, new western area of settlement	65	401	1,465	5,516	9,633	32,500	76,763
Total Jewish population in Metro. Montreal	6,979	28,895	45,927	58,099	64,122	80,829	102,726
Percentage of total Jewish population	0.9	1.4	3.2	9.5	15.0	40.2	74.7

Table 3. Total Population & Jewish Population, & Percentage of Jews among the Total Population in 1961 in Specified Areas

<u>in Metropolitan Montreal</u>			
	Total		Percent
<u>West of Victoria Avenue</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Jews</u>	<u>Jews</u>
Cote St. Luc **	13,266	8,307	64.9%
Chomedey	30,445	3,493	12.7
Town of Mount Royal	21,182	2,617	12.4
Hampstead	4,557	1,560	34.2
Montreal West	6,446	585	9.1
St. Laurent	49,805	7,696	15.5
<u>Total, suburban area</u>	<u>125,701</u>	<u>24,258</u>	<u>19.3</u>
<u>Montreal City Census Tracts</u>			
C.T.89 Notre Dame de Grace	6,324	475	7.5
C.T.90 Notre Dame de Grace	8,952	2,673	29.9
C.T.91 Notre Dame de Grace	8,399	1,756	20.9
C.T.94 Notre Dame de Grace	5,638	1,134	20.1
C.T.95 Notre Dame de Grace	4,782	691	14.4
C.T.103 Snowdon	4,442	909	20.5
104 "	7,719	2,529	32.8
105** "	6,812	4,268	62.7
100 Notre Dame de Grace	4,869	401	8.2
102* Snowdon	3,215	984	30.6
110** "	8,324	5,552	66.6
111* "	2,487	776	31.2
<u>Total</u>	<u>197,664</u>	<u>46,406</u>	<u>23.3</u>
<u>East of Victoria Ave.</u>			
	Total		Percent
<u>East of Victoria Ave.</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Jews</u>	<u>Jews</u>
Outremont	30,753	9,003	29.3%
Westmount	25,012	2,332	9.3
Verdun	78,317	396	0.5
<u>Total, suburban area</u>	<u>134,082</u>	<u>11,731</u>	<u>8.7</u>
<u>Montreal City census tracts</u>			
C.T.106 Snowdon	6,046*	2,721	45.0
C.T.107 "	5,586*	2,703	48.0
C.T.108 "	4,952**	2,521	50.9
C.T.109 "	6,145**	3,078	50.1
C.T.101 "	8,890	2,389	26.9
C.T.113 Cote des Neiges	6,615*	2,403	36.3
C.T.114 "	6,851*	3,367	49.1
C.T.115 "	10,394**	6,297	60.6
C.T.116 "	3,073	544	17.7
C.T.118 "	8,908	611	6.9
C.T.123 St. Louis	4,025	827	20.5
C.T.124 "	6,538	1,281	19.6
C.T.125 St. Louis	2,218*	592	26.7
C.T.126 "	4,099	835	20.4
C.T.127 "	5,780	526	9.1
C.T.128 "	5,029*	1,829	36.3
C.T.129 "	5,094	1,336	26.4
C.T.130 "	4,620	499	10.8
C.T.208 Park Extension :	6,385	443	6.9
C.T.209 "	9,223	1,835	19.9
C.T.210 "	5,833	612	10.5
C.T.250 "	7,596	807	10.6
C.T.251 "	10,917	602	5.5
<u>Total</u>	<u>276,879</u>	<u>49,889</u>	<u>18.0</u>

**Jews form majority. *Jews form largest ethnic group, but do not form majority. Only census tracts with more than 100 resident Jewish families are listed above.

