

(Laos) will make periodic trips to inspect the field work being done in Cambodia and Vietnam by sub-contractors.

The survey parties will do the greater part of their work along the banks of the Mekong River. Only in Thailand and on some of the major tributaries will they be working more than 10 kilometres from the edge of the river itself. About five Canadians will be based at headquarters in Vientiane, Laos. Another 14 Canadians will be heading the seven field-survey parties working independently in the field, and will report directly to Vientiane. Two of the field-survey parties will run horizontal control surveys along the river, while the other five establish elevations along the river and within a narrow band along both shores.

The river itself is to be the main line of transportation for the field-survey groups. Each survey party has been provided with several fifteen-foot aluminum boats, while locally-acquired river craft will be used to move the camps downstream. Where roads or trails are passable, "Landrover" pickups and a "Landrover" stationwagon will also be used. A "Beaver" amphibian aircraft based at Vientiane will service all seven working groups in the field, moving supplies, delivering and picking up mail, and shifting personnel. A base radio at headquarters will link all the field groups with Vientiane, allowing a daily work-schedule to be co-ordinated with central planning.

An advance party of aerial surveyors has also moved into the area to begin the photographic survey. A Canadian DC-3 aircraft, manned by a Canadian crew and six Canadian technicians and equipped with high-level photographic devices, has arrived in Laos. By the time the two-year aerial survey has been completed, about 10,000 square miles of terrain along the Mekong and its tributaries will have been photographed at altitudes of 5,000 to 25,000 feet. The DC-3 is also equipped with a radar device for profile-recording, i.e., for noting changes in the terrain as the flight proceeds. This will be particularly valuable during the air survey of the Mekong tributaries, including the Upper Nam Chee in Thailand, the Nam Ngun in Laos, the Battambang in Cambodia and the Upper Se San in Vietnam. Between May 1960 and December 1961, topographic and engineering maps covering the 1600-mile stretch of river will be produced in the laboratories of the participating Canadian survey companies. Detailed maps at engineering scales will be made covering selected potential dam-sites.

This is not the first time Canada has carried out an aerial survey under the Colombo Plan. The aerial surveys of resources undertaken for India, Pakistan, Malaya and Ceylon were earlier demonstrations that this specialized Canadian skill could be put to good use for the economic development of South and South-east Asia.