

## *Silver*

In view of its qualities and its relative scarcity, silver is classified as a precious metal with gold and platinum. Owing to its superiority as a conductor of electricity, more than 25 per cent of all industrial silver is used for the production of electronic and electric equipment, and in the manufacturing of highly developed equipment such as satellites, space craft and guidance systems. However, the largest quantity of silver — nearly 40 per cent of total industrial production — is consumed by the photography industry. Numismatic and commemorative pieces are the only coins in which silver is used today.

With an average annual production of some 1 200 tonnes, Canada is the world's third producer of silver. The main regions in which it is mined are Ontario, the Yukon, British Columbia and New Brunswick.

The principal sources of silver in Canada are the base-metal ores, mainly those containing copper, lead and zinc, either in the secondary or complementary form. Consequently, only a small proportion comes from silver-cobalt ores and lode and placer gold ores.

The United States is by far the largest importer of Canadian silver, absorbing 73 per cent of total exports, while the remainder is shipped to Japan, Belgium and Luxembourg.

In the short and medium term, Canadian production of silver should remain near the current level. It is not believed that the new electronic technology being used in photography will reduce the quantity of silver used in this field.

## *Zinc*

Zinc, one of the most useful metals in modern society, is used mainly for plating iron and steel to increase their resistance to rust and corrosion by a process called galvanization. Galvanized products are used extensively in the building and automobile industries. Another important use of zinc is in the production of a wide range of products molded under pressure. Finally, zinc is used in the manufacture of brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, which has good physical and electrical properties and which conducts heat and resists corrosion.

Some 25 per cent of all zinc used in the Western world is produced by about 30 Canadian mining operations. Their output of more than a million tonnes of zinc a year, makes Canada the world leader in this metal.

In the ground, zinc is usually mixed with copper or lead or with both. The ore is then separated in different metallic concentrations by the flotation method. Canadian zinc concentrates have a metal content of 48