

The remainder occupy Alert, 900 miles north of the Arctic circle.

Air Transport Command runs scheduled flights into Alert weekly and into Inuvik every two weeks. Bulk supplies are airlifted to Alert during the year in three concentrated efforts of about 50 flights each. ATC records an additional 176 special flights in the past year to Whitehorse, Yellowknife or points north of the 60th Parallel.

Last year saw no major military exercises north of 60, but this year there have been three—"airlanded" operations at Watson Lake and Inuvik, involving about 800 members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment, in March and October, plus a smaller exercise at Mount Worthington, Yukon, in June.

Next year's schedule will be heavier still, including a projected series of small monthly exercises for all-season training.

Sovereignty flights 1,000 feet over the Arctic ice and snow follow various routes across the Arctic islands and the barrens, from Thule in Greenland to Yellowknife. The big *Argus* patrol aircraft flew 39 scheduled surveillance missions this year, 421 lonely hours, and almost as many again chasing down reported sightings.

ARCTIC MILITIA

Some of these reports have sifted back from the 1,683-man unpaid force of Eskimos and Indians known as the Canadian Rangers. These northern militiamen, who are issued with a .303 rifle and 100 rounds of ammunition annually, gather information or serve as guides in the areas they know best. There are two outposts in Labrador, and four in

Baffin Island, as well as sub-stations at Frobisher Bay, Destruction Bay, Alexis Creek, Sugluk, Rupert House, Pond Inlet and Port Radium.

Two *Tracker* aircraft and crews flew ice reconnaissance from Cape Dyer, Resolute Bay and Inuvik from September 1 to 19 during the *Manhattan* project. Two Canadian naval officers aboard the coast guard vessel *John A. Macdonald* escorted the American tanker through the Arctic to Point Barrow, Alaska, and back.

Communications research, mapping and engineering projects also take servicemen into the North. Military surveyors and aerial photographers have mapped the entire Western Arctic. The Mapping and Charting Establishment in Ottawa still carries out small projects; one is planned for the Cambridge Bay area in 1970 and another for the region between Coppermine and the Melville Coast in 1971.

SEPTEMBER FOREST FIRES

During September there were 515 forest fires throughout Canada, which damaged some 15,000 acres of woodland, according to estimates released recently by the Canadian Forestry Service.

In September 1968 there were 449 fires, which damaged 70,000 acres.

During the current forest-fire season, to the end of September, there have been an estimated 6,335 fires, damaging 1,643,000 acres of forest. By comparison, in the period April 1 to September 30, 1968, there were 6,658 fires, which damaged 2,111,000 acres.