

are supplemented by a major north-south line on the West Coast and by a number of independent regional railways. Together, the railways are the only carriers that can transport large volumes of freight at low cost, in all weathers, across the length and breadth of the country.

In their heyday, trains were the most popular mode of passenger travel. They lost this favoured position after the Second World War but, under a new rail policy announced in 1976, attempts are being made to attract a large part of the market for interurban passenger travel back to the railways. To this end, steps are being taken to make the trains more attractive, more comfortable, more efficient and more economical to operate.

Roads

Far and away the most popular and widely-used form of transportation is the automobile. This way of getting about began to make real inroads into the popularity of the railways after the Second World War. In 1945, there were 1,161,337 automobiles, including taxis, registered in Canada; by 1973, there were 7,866,084. During the same period, the number of commercial vehicles, including buses and trucks, rose from 321,550 to 2,004,536.

Motor-vehicles of all sorts account for most urban transportation, both passenger and freight. They also play a major role in inter-city transportation. To accommodate this vast number of road-using vehicles, and to ensure that transportation is available in all parts of the country, many roads are needed. Canada has well over a million miles of paved highways and nearly three million miles of secondary roads. In 1975, the provinces and the relevant federal departments spent a total of nearly \$1.5 billion on highway construction and nearly \$5 million on maintenance.

Aviation

Early in this century, man started taking to the air. The first heavier-than-air flight in Canada took place on February 23, 1909, when J. A. D. McCurdy flew the famous *Silver Dart* for half a mile from the ice of Baddeck Bay, Nova Scotia.

Numerous Canadians were trained in aviation during the First World War. After the war, many ex-airmen bought war-surplus aircraft and started careers in civilian flying. By 1925, the aeroplane

⁴See Reference Paper No. 111 — *Canadian National Railways*. (January 1977)