

British Columbia and the Pacific Rim

British Columbia is not simply California North.

Its largest city, Vancouver — the greatest ocean port in Canada — has points of resemblance to San Francisco, and the province as a whole has an abundance of beaches, harbour seals, large coastal trees, good Chinese restaurants, snow-capped mountains and lush vegetation.

But it has no Los Angeles and is unlikely to develop one. It has Victoria, which remains properly Victorian; rain forests on which three hundred inches of rain fall each year; coal mines and gold mines. It has the largest stand of timber in North America; an authentic nineteenth-century town (not restored, just unchanged) way off in the north surrounded by unsullied mountains; Barkerville, a gold rush boom town (which is restored); and the peaceful, sometimes snow-bound, ranches of Peace River.

It has the wild Fraser, 850 miles long, rushing down a trench of solid rock, and it has a growing abundance of salmon. It shares the most awe-

inspiring mountains north of the Andes with its neighbour Alberta.

It has few heavy industries though it has a singular and exportable pool of engineering and technical skills. The ports — Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster, Roberts Bank and Prince Rupert — are part of the great world that rims the Pacific; in one way or another British Columbia's 2,569,900 people are in touch with billions of people all over the world.

The province's essential characteristics, however, are particularly Canadian — it is a large, natural place (twice the size of California) which will still be mostly untenanted by man when we are gone. It has bustling cities in the south, but two-thirds of the province is covered by trees, which, with proper management, will provide an endless harvest of wood.

In this issue of CANADA TODAY/D'AUJOURD'HUI we look at the province, inside and out.

A Singular Decade

Between 1969 and 1979 British Columbia grew at an extraordinary clip.

The population went from 2,060,000 to 2,569,900 and personal incomes from \$6,645,000,000 to \$25,000,000,000.

Its total domestic product began at \$8,758,000,000 and ended at \$31,353,000,000, an advance greater than the growth of some industrialized nations.

Inflation peaked at 11.7 per cent in 1974 (slightly above the rate for Canada as a whole), then declined to 7.7 per cent in 1979 (substantially below).

The prosperity, not surprisingly, is based on investment. In 1969 capital and maintenance expenditures were \$2,789,900,000; in 1979 they were \$9,314,500,000.

Perhaps the most impressive advance has been in the activities of the British Columbia ports. Exports grew during the ten years from \$2,289,000,000 to \$12,722,200,000.



Vancouver (left and on the cover) is the largest port in tonnage on North America's Pacific Coast.