

1898, a railway had been built over what even today would be considered almost impossible country from an engineering standpoint, a regular supply route established from railhead to Dawson City and a community was built which, at its height, contained 25,000 to 30,000 people.

Trade and the opportunity to profitably exploit natural resources were the two factors that led to the discovery and initial development of the North. Today, things have not changed a great deal. This statement might surprise you because facilities in the North have improved tremendously and social and living conditions are gradually being brought to a par with the average in the rest of Canada. In both the Yukon and Northwest Territories, a first-class school system is now in operation and a very large proportion of the school-age population now attend on a regular basis. Hospitals, air service, and an expanding network of roads in the western regions are all helping to bring the North more into the nation's economic and social structure.

The Federal Government invests relatively large sums annually, both in the development of orderly administration and government for the region and in the capital needed to provide the infrastructure that must be available if economic expansion is to follow. However, economic expansion today, as it was 70 years ago, is still dependent on the profitable exploitation of northern natural resources and this simple fact must guide those who are concerned with planning and investing for the future of the North.

Canada's economy is primarily resource oriented. Very often in our efforts to expand and encourage the establishment of new processing, manufacturing and secondary industries, we tend to forget the very foundation on which these must be based. In the North one cannot forget this because, by and large, all else is stripped away and the attention must be focused on the resource potential.

In referring to the North, I mean that area north of the 60th Parallel not included in any province but comprising the Yukon and Northwest Territories. There are, of course, many areas within the provinces that can be regarded as northern and where the situation is very similar to that of the territories.

#### DRAWBACKS WILL FADE

There are many things that, at the moment, the North does not have and these must be recognized, and at least accepted for the time being, if we are to make best use of available resources in accordance with the limitations imposed by our current state of technological advancement. In mentioning some of these disadvantages, however, I want to make it quite clear that they are disadvantages as seen from a moment in time. They might, therefore, be termed relative disadvantages because many will disappear, or at least be reduced in importance, as our technical capabilities continue to improve.

One of the most striking factors of our Northland is that it comprises in excess of 35 per cent of the total Canadian land-mass and yet its inhabitants number a small fraction of 1 per cent of the total Canadian population.

The hasty explanation for this is that the climate of the North is so unattractive as to deter people from settling there. While this is probably a factor, there are many spots on the Prairies, for example, that are just as cold during the winter as some north of the 60th Parallel. Although we, as Canadians, have accepted and successfully overcome many difficulties imposed by the tremendous size of our country, the problem is magnified many times in the North. Even to gain access to those areas holding resource promise needs careful planning and the utilization of all available methods of transportation. The explorer must face, perhaps, the rugged mountain country of the Yukon, the muskeg regions of the Mackenzie, the barren lands of the Eastern Arctic or the frozen desert of the Arctic islands, and each of these in its turn poses its own particular difficulty. The discovery of minerals or oil in each of these regions, however, demonstrates that access is not an insurmountable problem, but there is no doubt that it does add to the cost of exploratory operations.

#### POTENTIAL RESOURCES

...Until recent years the prime, and best-known, natural resource to come from Canada's North was gold. Not counting the rich finds of the late 1800s and the early 1900s, more than \$223-million worth of gold has been mined from the territories since 1932.

The Yukon is still relatively unprospected, but already enough is known to suggest that it may be the richest in minerals of the entire Cordilleran region, one of the two great metal-bearing regions of the North American continent. More than 25 minerals have been discovered in the Yukon, and of these, ten have been produced - gold, silver, lead, zinc, cadmium, copper, coal, tungsten, platinum and antimony.

As for the Northwest Territories' mineral potential, the eastern two-thirds of the mainland area, and many of the Arctic islands, are covered by the mineral rich Canadian Shield. The western part of the N.W.T. bordering the Yukon is the potentially mineral rich Cordilleran region. Between these two mineral areas lies the Mackenzie Valley, which is the extension of the Great Central Plains and is considered good gas and oil land.

Taking away the limelight from gold, and climbing at a fantastic rate, is the production of lead and zinc in the Northwest Territories. It accounts for most of Canada's mineral output at this time. The total value of minerals produced in the Northwest Territories during 1965 was \$75 million, a rise of \$61 million over the 1963 total of \$14 million. Lead and zinc from the N.W.T.'s Pine Point area accounts for most of the mineral production at present, amounting to \$52.5 million in 1965.

Reports of discoveries of high-grade lead-zinc ore on property adjoining the claims of Pine Point Mines Limited late in October 1965, initiated the largest staking rush in the history of Northern Canada. Whereas the number of claims recorded in the Pine Point area totalled 6,000 prior to October 1965, an additional 14,000 claims recorded in the three months following brought the total number of claims staked