

The Government also built the Whitehorse-Mayo road, 247 miles long, connecting at Whitehorse the Keno Hill mining region with the Alaska Highway, which serves as a most valuable artery through the southern portion of the Yukon. The cost of the Whitehorse-Mayo road including ferries was \$4,450,000. Considerable assistance has been given to the construction of local mining and other roads in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. Other governmental contributions to transportation include the construction of airports, docks, and similar facilities.

While I am on the subject of measures taken to assist industry in overcoming the physical difficulties of developing the north, I might mention that the Government has constructed two power plants to assist in mineral development, one on the Snare River to supply the Yellowknife area and the other on the Mayo River to supply the Keno Hill area. The rates charged for power from each of these plants are calculated to amortize the cost of the plant over twenty-years, but the mining industry benefits by a rate of interest lower than what would otherwise have to be paid or by being relieved of having to provide the capital itself. The Government has also helped in the construction of community facilities such as water and sewer systems, schools and hospitals. Such facilities are important in encouraging people, particularly married men, to live in these areas, and I would like to emphasize at this point that, in spite of the remoteness and the rigors of the climate, a comfortable and sociable community life is possible in most settlements in the north.

So far I have discussed what might be called the discouraging side of the physical attributes of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. These aspects are by no means negligible, but they are dwarfed in economic importance by the dominating geographical feature of the Canadian north, which is its geological structure. The eastern and central portions of the mainland area of the Northwest Territories, and much of Baffin Island, are covered by the ancient rock of the Precambrian Shield. The Mackenzie Basin is an extension of the Central Plains. The western boundary of the Northwest Territories and almost all of the Yukon Territory lie across the Cordilleras and their flanks. Since the Precambrian Shield and the Cordilleras are the two great metal-bearing regions of the North American continent, and since the Central Plains are the great oil-bearing region, it stands to reason that the Northwest Territories and the Yukon are potentially one of the great rich mineral areas of the world. While their remoteness, and to some extent the rigorous nature of the climate and the toughness of the terrain, have up to the present deferred the development of these riches, there is little doubt in my mind that in the space of a few decades a very substantial proportion of Canada's mineral wealth will come from these areas.

Current mining production in the Northwest Territories covers gold at Yellowknife and its vicinity and uranium at Great Bear Lake. Gold production in the Northwest Territories started in 1938; in 1939 it amounted to \$1,800,000 and by 1952 had risen to \$8,400,000. Figures for uranium are not available. Petroleum is produced at Norman Wells, but only in sufficient quantity for markets in the Mackenzie District.