

A major obstacle to the provision of an efficient, low-cost transportation system for Canada is the country's enormous size — St. John's, Newfoundland, and Vancouver, British Columbia, are separated by more than 4,000 miles. But distance is not the only problem. Large parts of Labrador, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario consist of rocky, forested terrain. The great plains of the Prairie Provinces are cut off from the Pacific Coast by range after range of lofty mountains. In between, countless rivers and lakes, areas of exposed rock and marshes and vast expanses of tundra present a constant challenge to the builders of roads and railways. Mobility is greatly reduced in the Far North by the ever-present permafrost and sea-ice. Sizeable straits separate the island of Newfoundland, the province of Prince Edward Island and large parts of B.C. from the mainland.

No, it is not easy to move from one part of Canada to another, but, because the ability to do so is vital to the nation's very existence, all forms of transportation are called upon to serve the manifold needs of Canadians from coast to coast.

## **Marine transport**

Canada's earliest transportation routes were its waterways — called by the Indians "roads that walk". Long before the arrival of the first European explorers, the Indians had brought the birch-bark canoe to an advanced state of efficiency. The tribes of the Pacific Coast hollowed dug-outs of considerable size from the trunks of the huge cedars among which they dwelt. In the treeless North, the Inuit (Eskimos) made their seaworthy *kayaks* from skin-covered frames, thus devising a form of transportation still in use.

The early explorers, fur-traders and pioneers also followed the rivers and lakes, opening the country to trapping, trade and settlement. At first they used the Indian canoe for transport; in time they developed larger and larger boats, and even ships. Marine transport