

have to accommodate the immense quantities of crude and processed minerals transported each year across the country *en route* to shipping ports.

The geological regions of Canada

Canada has five main geological regions: the Canadian Shield, the Interior Plains, the Cordilleran Region, the Appalachian Region and the Innuitian Region.

The Canadian Shield, the country's main physiographic feature, consists of an enormous expanse of rock over three billion years old rising above ground level in some places and in others covered with bush and bog. It includes almost half the country's surface, occupies most of eastern and north-central Canada and forms a broad band around Hudson Bay. The Shield is also one of the world's mining regions and one of the most mineral-rich areas in Canada, containing mainly nickel, copper, gold, silver, cobalt, zinc, iron and uranium.

The Interior Plains region is a vast flat land extending west from the edge of the Canadian Shield to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. It is the centre of considerable agricultural activity as well as mining. The Plains Region is Canada's primary producer of fossil fuels, but non-metals such as potash, gypsum and salt are also extracted.

The hilly Appalachian Region, located southeast of the Canadian Shield, encompasses the Atlantic provinces and part of southeastern Quebec. It contains copper, zinc and lead mines and large deposits of coal. The world's largest asbestos mines are found in the Quebec sector of the region.

The Cordilleran Region, part of the Pacific belt, is characterized by the spectacular mountain chains of the West. It covers British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. Mining activity is intense in this region. Copper, lead, zinc, asbestos, iron ore, molybdenum and tungsten are produced.

The Innuitian Region, named after the Inuit word for "man", comprises the northern islands of the Canadian Arctic. Recent exploration activities in this inhospitable area have indicated extensive oil and natural gas deposits and large deposits of zinc and lead. In 1982, 160 000 tonnes of lead-zinc concentrates were shipped from the Polaris mine. Interest in mineral exploration in this part of the country is on the increase.