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SURVEY PROGRAMMES ANNOUNCED

Much has been done toward the topographical and geological mapping of the Northwest Territories, but because of its vast size, the inaccessibility of much of it, and the shortness of field seasons, a great deal remains to be done, Transport Minister George Hees said last week in a speech at Edmonton. Interest in the northland, mineralwise and otherwise, has been increasing, and the Government has been stepping up its mapping activities to meet the demand.

Mr. Hees said, in part:

"So great is the area to be mapped in Canada that the Geological Survey has had to turn to helicopter-supported parties to provide more rapid reconnaissance so as to be able to evaluate the possibilities of these great unmapped areas within the foreseeable future. By this method, 30 times greater coverage has been achieved during any one season.

"In three operations in the field season of 1952, 1954 and 1955, the Survey mapped a total of 185,000 square miles of the Precambrian in the mainland portion of the Territories on a scale of one inch to eight miles. Moreover, the experience gained in these operations has enabled the Survey to cut costs and to actually map large areas by helicopter at less cost than by conventional ground methods.

"Last year in Operation Mackenzie, the Survey mapped 100,000 square miles of the Upper Mackenzie River drainage basin, much

of which is being explored for oil and gas. The region is underlain by rocks similar to those in which producing wells have been found in Alberta and to the northwest at Norman Wells, and there is little doubt that this whole area contains a great reserve of oil to which Canada will turn in future years.

"This year the Survey will use helicopters to map the geology of the Wholdaia area in southeastern Mackenzie District, large sections of which are inaccessible to canoes. This year, too, it will also establish fuel caches for two ambitious projects it has scheduled for 1959, Operation Coppermine, and the aerial reconnaissance of Banks and Victoria Islands.

"In Operation Coppermine, the Geological Survey will map some 60,000 square miles of territory in northern Mackenzie District starting at the western boundary of the Shield and proceeding eastward towards Bathurst Inlet.

"In the Banks-Victoria Islands project, the Survey expects to explore the main stratigraphical and structural features of some 125,000 square miles of the Islands which are still unexplored geologically.

"Together, these projects are providing the data for an assessment of the mineral potential of the Canadian Northland. They are also providing a veritable storehouse of valuable information to which industry and those interested in resources development may turn in years to come.