



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 54/54

THE TREND IS TO THE NORTH

An address by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Mr. Jean Lesage, to the Canadian Club of Toronto, November 22, 1954.

One of the most pleasant parts of a Cabinet Minister's job is provided by the many and varied opportunities that he gets of meeting and addressing distinguished groups of Canadians. I am flattered by your invitation to this platform which is certainly one of the most renowned in Canada. I can assure you, Mr. President, that I am most grateful for, and honoured by, your invitation to be here today.

I know that many of my compatriots have spoken to you about the ethnic and cultural features of Canada and how, as Her Majesty the Queen Mother expressed it in Ottawa ten days ago, this country has achieved political unity through diversity. It seemed to me that it might be appropriate if I talked today about the development of our economic unity. The importance of directing our thoughts to this facet of the subject lies in the fact that our task is not yet completed. It is true that we and our ancestors have successfully transformed Canada from a collection of geographically isolated regions into a cohesive, strong and dynamic economic unit. Yet we must not forget that we have vast areas which are still virtually untouched. Our famous national motto, "A Mari Usque Ad Mare", and the aphorism carved above the doors of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, "The Wholesome Sea is at Her Gates, Her Gates Both East and West", are perhaps somewhat misleading. By concentrating our attention on only two of the oceans which wash our shores, the Atlantic and the Pacific, they cause us to forget our third maritime boundary, the Arctic Ocean.

It is only in recent years that Canadians have become actively conscious of the depth of Canada as well as of her breadth. Even so, it is still helpful to impress this fact more vividly on our minds by recalling certain geographical facts. The straight line distance across Canada from the east coast of Newfoundland to the west coast of Vancouver Island is about 3,500 miles. The distance from the American border to Edmonton, our most northerly large city is 300 miles. The distance from the American border to Coppermine, on Coronation Gulf, is about 1,300 miles, 1,000 miles north of Edmonton; but this northern settlement is still over 1,350 miles