



CANADA

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## OIL AND GAS IN CANADA'S ARCTIC

Addressing the Joint Arctic Weather Stations Planning Conference in Ottawa on February 11, Mr. Alvin Hamilton, Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, said:

"...The important work being done by the Joint Arctic Weather Stations programme is well known not only in Canada and the United States but in many countries of the world. Although the programme has been in operation for only thirteen years, it has provided an excellent weather service and has yielded scientific information far beyond original expectation. In addition, it has provided another fine example of Canadian-United States co-operation at all staff-levels...."

"When the Joint Arctic Weather Station was established at Resolute Bay in 1947, there was little indication that it would become a centre for the exploration and development of the vast oil and gas deposits in the northern islands. Within the past year we have witnessed an unprecedented amount of interest and activity in the search for oil and gas not only in the Northwest Territories and Yukon but also, to an increasing extent, throughout the Queen Elizabeth Islands. It is particularly with reference to oil and gas exploration and its implications for all of us working in the North that I should like to confine my brief remarks today.

"To gauge the magnitude of this interest and activity we need only look at the record for last year. On the *mainland* forty companies

held over one hundred million acres under oil and gas exploration permits. In the exploration and development of this acreage nearly five hundred men were employed and a total of sixty fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters were used. Seven wells were drilled in the area stretching from the southern boundary of the territories to the Arctic Circle. At Chance No. 1 well on the Eagle Plains Reservation a showing of oil and gas has been made.

"In the *Arctic Islands* twenty-eight individuals and companies held priorities on over one hundred and thirty million acres. Combined with the acreage held on the mainland, the total is greater than the land area under oil and gas exploration in the provinces. It is of considerable significance to note that, in spite of the remoteness of the Queen Elizabeth Islands, there were ten aircraft and five exploration crews operating there at various times during the last year. You will be interested to learn that successive geological reports have indicated favourable locations for oil and gas deposits. You will also be interested to know that during 1960-61 we anticipate that over 20 oil and gas wells will be drilled in the North including at least one in the Arctic Islands.

"Last year, on the mainland and in the Arctic Islands, three times the amount of oil and gas exploration was carried out that had been carried out in any previous year. The general increase in exploration activities in