



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

60/2

RESOURCES FOR TOMORROW

A Statement by Mr. Alvin Hamilton, Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, at the opening meeting of the Steering Committee for the National Conference on Conservation, on December 17, 1959.

May I first of all express a very warm welcome to the Ministers and officials who have come from all the provinces to this second meeting to consider plans and preparations for the National Conference on Conservation.

The first meeting, which was held just a little more than a year ago, decided that the conference that we have in contemplation should be limited to renewable resources - that is, the resources of soil, water, forests, wildlife, fish, and recreational facilities - all of these resources that are of great importance in the fabric of our national life. The Federal Government is, I can assure you, amply aware that the primary responsibility in many of these fields lies with the provinces - and that most of the resources to which I have referred, in so far as they are a matter of governmental property, are the property of the provinces. The Federal Government has not the least desire to extend its responsibilities or to interfere in any way with the jurisdiction that is properly that of the provinces. The Federal Government has, however, certain responsibilities of its own in these fields.

First, the Government of Canada has a direct interest in the whole nation's material welfare and well-being which results from the pace with which the ten provinces develop (or do not develop) their renewable natural resources. This is what is called the "national interest".

Secondly, the Government of Canada has the direct responsibility for the development of the resources of the Northern Territories which cover 40 per cent of Canada's land mass. In this role, my Government is the trustee of the provinces