

involves. There is also uncertainty as to how much is being done and should be done about it and whose responsibility it is in Canada. My purpose today is to attempt to suggest certain lines of approach which may help to dispel the uncertainty as to what our policies are or should be - and how they should be approached.

To begin with, confusion perhaps arises in part from the fact that the word "conservation" really does not fully express in every case the objectives we should strive for. The reason for this becomes clear when we classify natural resources by their two broad groupings, those which are renewable and those which are not. Applied to renewable resources such as land, forests and water, the term "conservation" appears to be not too inappropriate, for by definition "to conserve" means "to keep in safety or from harm, decay or loss" or alternatively "to preserve in its existing state from destruction or change." It is certainly our desire not to let the soil deteriorate and not to use up our forests or our water resources faster than they can be replenished. It is probably because we were first of all thinking of these resources that we adopted the word "conservation". The position is entirely different for the non-renewable resources of metals and other mineral wealth, for, of course, it is not our aim to "preserve in their existing state" our underground stores of oil and gas and the orebodies containing iron and copper, lead, zinc and uranium. Our purpose is to put them to their almost endless uses. Thus even though it has been conveniently recognized that conservation means "wise use", I think I might cause less confusion if I talk instead about "resource management".

It is our interest to see to it that our resources are managed in such a fashion that each of them produces the greatest possible benefit of which it is capable. In judging how we are to reach this goal we properly begin by recognizing that it is not alone our own welfare that needs to be considered but even more that of future generations. What we may call the "time factor" applies to the management of both renewable and non-renewable resources. Resources which are renewable when they are used wisely may be irreplaceable once they are destroyed. It can happen too that succeeding generations are needlessly deprived of non-renewable resources. Thus if an oil well is drawn on too rapidly some of its potential is lost, while if a mine is abandoned when the high-grade ore has been taken out it may be difficult or impossible to open it up again for the ore of lower grade. There is another way in which the management of non-renewable resources requires that the perspective we adopt should be a long one. It calls for an assessment of the relationship between the demand and supply of these resources not only in today's world but also in the world of the future. Even though there can be no final answer to the question which this consideration raises, it is still important that the optimum use of Canada's mineral wealth be viewed in that light.

Because there is general agreement that resource management is of great importance in Canada, the suggestion is frequently heard that there should be "a national resource policy".