



## REFERENCE PAPERS

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### THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN CANADA

(A lecture in the series "Natural Resources in World Affairs" delivered by Dr. H.L. Keenleyside, Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, on July 27, 1949).

The general subject of this series of lectures is "American-Canadian Relations", but I understand that my contribution falls also within the scope of the University Series entitled "Natural Resources in World Affairs", and that during the present week you are directing particular attention to government policy with respect to natural resources.

In preparing what I now propose to place before you I have tried to keep these varied interests in mind. Thus in describing "The Development of Natural Resources in Canada" I shall place particular emphasis on those governmental activities and decisions that have influenced that development. And while I shall not make any extended comparisons between our policies and yours, I hope that a description of what we have done, of why we have done it, of the difficulties that we have met, and of the mistakes that we have made, may be of interest to you and may perhaps stimulate your thinking about similar problems in your great and democratic country.

The economic strength of a nation is measured by the extent of its natural resources combined with the ability of its people to put them to wise and efficient use. Judged on a per capita basis the known resources of Canada far exceed those of any other country. Given wise and imaginative domestic policies and an international framework of peace and free exchange, Canada should be the most prosperous of nations.

The roll of Canadian resources makes impressive reading. In the range of metals we stand first among the nations in the production of nickel, asbestos, and the platinum group; second in gold, zinc, aluminum, and uranium; third in copper, silver, and magnesium. Within the last two years we have proven oil and gas resources that will soon make Canada an exporter of these commodities instead of having to rely on imports for 90 percent of our consumption. During the same period, as a result of the admission of Newfoundland and the confirmation of enormous resources in the Labrador-Quebec border, we will shortly be a major source of iron. About one-quarter of Canada is under forest cover and of this about one-third is available for exploitation. The annual value of our forest products is already running at about one and one-quarter million dollars. Water for power and irrigation is readily available in most of our regional areas. Almost one-third of our power needs are now supplied by hydro installations. In arable land Canada can supply any needs that are likely to arise for generations in time and many millions of population increase. In fisheries and wildlife our position is high in the rank of the nations.

In view of these facts it is of interest to consider some of the special considerations that have influenced and still affect the development of Canadian resources. Outstanding among these are the division of responsibilities imposed by our federal constitution, and the constantly fluctuating