REFERENCE PAPERS

No. 61
(Revised April 1965)

THE NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
OF CANADA

".... the function of any central organization must be
to stimulate and encourage this work in others, to fill the gaps,
to conduct generalized researches not apt to the functions of
narrower institutions, to create organizations and institutions
where these are lacking."

Viscount Hailsham, 1963

In Canada, a great deal of research is conducted by govern-
ment departments in such clearly defined areas as agriculture,
fisheries, mining and defence. Many of the remaining areas of
science and technology fall within the scope of the National
Research Council, particularly those that aid the secondary
industries.

When, in 1916, during the First World War, the Government
of Canada established the National Research Council, the purpose
was clear -- to strengthen science as an aid to industrial develop-
ment. From the beginning, the NRC has pursued this objective in
two ways: by encouraging and supporting basic science, mainly in
the universities, and, as conditions permitted, by strengthening
technology as an aid to secondary industries.

Responsibilities

The duties of the Council are outlined in the Research
Council Act. Broadly stated, the Council has charge of "all matters
affecting scientific and industrial research in Canada that may be
assigned to it by the Privy Council Committee on Scientific and
Industrial Research" (to which it reports).

The Act also designates a number of specific responsibilities:
for discovering processes and methods that may promote the expansion
of existing industries or the development of new ones; for maintaining
and improving primary standards for Canada and certifying scientific
and technical apparatus and instruments used in the government service