
Tourism trends encouraging

A report by Statistics Canada on travel to and from Canada for the first nine months of 1978, as well as estimates on the travel balance of payments, indicate that trends are encouraging. The number of visits from overseas is increasing. The decline in United States visitors to Canada — very apparent in the past three or four years — appears to be levelling off; travel by Canadians to the U.S. declined in 1978 compared to figures of the previous year.

The foregoing information was reported at a conference on tourism recently, attended by Industry, Trade and Commerce Minister Jack Horner and the provincial and territorial ministers of tourism. The conference discussed the current state of Canada's tourism industry and ways to enhance its growth and competitiveness. Reports tabled included those of the Canadian Travel Film Committee, Tourism Research Planning Committee, the National Advisory Committee on Manpower, Education and Training in the Accommodation, Food and Beverage Services sector and one on the system of travel information.

Travel by Canadians abroad, while still increasing in 1978, compared to that in a similar period in 1977, appears, however, to be lessening, the conference was told. Also, the tourism balance-of-payments deficit for 1978 was forecast to be approximately the same as or only slightly higher than it was in the previous year.

Resolutions

The conference also discussed seven resolutions forwarded to the Conference of First Ministers:

- (1) that the 12 percent federal tax be eliminated by the Government of Canada on all government and industry printed tourism literature which promotes or stimulates travel into or within Canada, but that the Government retain such tax on all materials promoting tourism travel from Canada to points outside the nation;
- (2) that an investigation be made of alternative means to provide for effective distribution of travel promotional literature. Ministers favoured the establishment of a low uniform postal rate for mailing publications supportive of travel both to and within Canada;
- (3) that regional information systems be established whose primary users would

be, first, the consumer and, second, the trade in both Canadian and American markets;

(4) that existing Canadian Government Office of Tourism services and programs be immediately decentralized to regional offices to allow greater autonomy and flexibility of marketing and industry development programs;

(5) that there be agreement on the need for the elaboration and maintenance of a national tourism plan; the definition of the respective roles in tourism of governments at all levels in Canada; mechanisms for continuing consultation and co-ordination amongst governments and industry; the establishment of a firm base for the tourism industry;

(6) that further deregulation of air travel to and within Canada was desirable;

(7) that the Government reconsider its curtailments of Parks Canada budgets which threatened early closure annually of historic Fort Louisbourg and other parks programs.

Winter festivals in Manitoba

Trapper experts are being summoned to The Pas, Manitoba, February 14 to 19, to match their skills at snowshoeing, muskrat skinning, setting traps and racing dog teams in the World Championship Dog Derby during the annual Trappers' Festival.

The 240-km (150-mile) race, worth \$2,000 to the winner, first tested the skill and stamina of dogs and men in 1916.

Just prior to the festival, the Manitoba 800 Snowmobile Race from Winnipeg will be held on February 10. Citizens of The Pas prepare for the five-day festival by donning beads and buckskin, participating in moccasin dances, and hunting the mythical "ice worm".

After the trappers' events, seven dinners will take place, as will continuous entertainment, five beer fests, pancake breakfasts, and a banquet.

For the less rugged, other events include "squaw" wrestling, goose calling, beard growing, ice sculpting, fiddling, and jigging.

Also on the program will be the crowning of Miss Fur Queen of the North, and a stage show.

Another celebration, the annual Festival du Voyageur, takes place in St. Boniface, starting with the Grand Governor's Ball February 11, when awards will be

given for the best period costumes. The festival runs until February 18.

Snowshoe races on the Red and Seine Rivers will be held, and in the Canadian National Dog Sled Classic some 20 teams will compete for a total purse of \$2,000.

Other competitors are free to enter the 15-km (10-mile) Marathon Foot Race.

Several "trading posts" will offer pea soup, *tourtière*, and other French-Canadian dishes, to the accompaniment of the fiddle.

Teaching agreements negotiated

Secretary of State John Roberts recently released a discussion paper for Cabinet on the negotiation of new federal-provincial agreements for the teaching of Canada's two official languages. Under the current five-year agreement, which expires March 31, the Federal Government has provided some \$800 million to the provinces to support English schooling in Quebec, French schooling outside Quebec, and the teaching of English and French as second languages.

The minister, in negotiating new agreements with the provinces, will consider whether it is appropriate and effective for the Federal Government to make unconditional contributions to the provinces in accordance with formulas devised in 1970 to meet the objectives of the program.

Good year for fishermen

Fisheries Minister Roméo LeBlanc has released fisheries catch and landed value statistics for the first nine months of 1978 which, compared with those of the same period last year, indicate an excellent year for Canadian fishermen. Sea fish catch until the end of September for both coasts totalled 895,647 metric tons valued at \$448,943,000.

On the Atlantic Coast the total fish catch of 744,545 metric tons for the first nine months of 1978 is up 21 per cent over the figure for the same period in 1977, and the landed value (\$263,417,000) is up 49 per cent. Figures for the Pacific Coast (151,102 metric tons) indicate a decline of 7 per cent from landings in 1977, mainly because of the lower abundance of shrimp and herring, but reflect an increased value of 44 per cent (\$185,526,000).