

Supply—Northern Affairs

We in Canada can offer winter as well as summer activities. We have plenty of snow in winter for skiing and the air is invigorating. For the sportsman Canada offers unlimited opportunities for fishing and hunting in the spring, summer and fall when Canadians as well as tourists can take advantage of the thousands of lakes and the rich wooded areas which are found in almost every province. We have all kinds of summer and winter resorts. We have some of the best hotels in the world. In our big cities we have facilities for large conventions. The Queen Elizabeth hotel just completed in Montreal can accommodate small and big conventions as well. We can offer one of the best transportation systems in the world, either by train, plane, car or boat. All that we have to offer we have to promote. The Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources has done a good job in the past, but more should be done. Our national parks which are a big attraction to the tourists should be multiplied and beautified. We should find more picnic grounds alongside our highways, we should find better accommodations for tourists.

According to the annual report of the Canadian travel bureau, which was established in 1934 and which is responsible for the promotion of travel to and within Canada and for the general welfare of Canada's tourist industry, that agency has a staff of 85 to 90 in Ottawa to do the job of promoting Canada. According to the same report there are also offices of the bureau in New York and Chicago with small information staffs, as well as a travel representative at the Canadian consulate general in Los Angeles. At page 1951, of the annual report of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources for the fiscal year 1956-57 we find the following statement:

In 1956, the bureau achieved a new all-time record for inquiries handled during a single year. A total of 538,063 inquiries were received 480,882 by its Ottawa office, 55,181 by the New York office, and 22,000 by the Chicago office. An advertising program at a cost of \$974,607 was conducted in 50 magazines and 59 newspapers in the United States. Combined circulation of the magazines used totalled 71,909,759.

As far as I am aware the Canadian government travel bureau is doing a good job considering the small amount of money they are given for doing so.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, the tourist industry brings over \$350 million to Canada every year. That amount exceeds the sum spent by any department of the federal government save the Department of Health and Welfare, the Department of Finance and the Department of National

Defence. It is one of our largest industries and we should do the utmost not only to maintain but increase it. Any amount of money spent on it is a sound investment. The government should give consideration to expanding our Canadian government travel bureau and should do even more than is presently being done to multiply and beautify our national parks.

I also wish to suggest that a department of tourist travel and information should be created by the government, under whose jurisdiction would fall the national parks, the Canadian government travel bureau, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the national film board and any other bodies related to the tourist industry and information in Canada and abroad. I submit that every possible consideration should be given to the suggestion I just made. Its purpose is not necessarily to find an opening for the many candidates there are for government posts, even if it would help the Prime Minister satisfy at least one of the many ambitious supporters of his party in the house.

The sole purpose of the formation of this new department would be to help promote by all means the tourist industry in Canada. It would also put under the authority of the same minister the bodies and corporations which have to work closely together in order to achieve good results, namely national parks, the government travel bureau, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the national film board. If each and every one of those bodies have done a great job so far, they can do better still if they are working under the jurisdiction of the same minister. I hope the government will take this suggestion under serious consideration.

In closing, I should like to ask the minister if he can tell the committee whether the government has any program or plans for the development of the tourist industry in Canada?

Mr. White: Mr. Chairman, I want to take about five minutes of the time of the committee to say a word or two about western Ontario and the development there, past, present and future. I wish to bring to the attention of the minister the site that was first mentioned and developed by the late John R. MacNicol, a former member of this house. That area was situated in Kent county adjacent to the river Thames on No. 2 highway. This was the site of an Indian village which was destroyed by invading Americans many years ago. The site was lost for many years. Through the efforts of John R. MacNicol and many of the local residents the area has been developed, a small park was provided there and any time that I ever