

## CLAIMS PACT WITH ROMANIA

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Mitchell Sharp, announced the signature in Ottawa on July 13 by Mr. Edgar J. Benson on behalf of Canada, of an agreement settling outstanding claims of Canadian citizens and the Canadian Government against Romania. The Romanian Minister of Finance, Mr. Florea Dumitrescu, signed the agreement on behalf of his Government. It will come into force on exchange of instruments of ratification in Bucharest, as soon as possible.

Following agreement with the Romanian Government in 1967, Canadian citizens were invited to submit such claims to the Department of External Affairs. Negotiations between officials of the two Governments began in Bucharest in May 1969 and subsequent rounds were held there and in Ottawa.

The claims covered by the agreement arose from postwar nationalization and similar measures of the Romanian Government, Romanian obligations under the Treaty of Peace of February 10, 1947 and Canadian-held bonds of the Romanian external public debt.

A claim under the agreement must have been owned continuously by a Canadian citizen from the time of loss until the date of the agreement. The pact provides for payment of the lump sum of \$1.4 million in quarterly instalments as a percentage of Romanian exports to Canada. In agreeing to these terms, the Canadian Government took into account the circumstances giving rise to the Canadian claims as well as other similar claims settlements.

The Foreign Claims Commission will be authorized to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Minister of Finance regarding the distribution of the nationalization portion of the proceeds of the settlement. Persons who have filed claims with the Government will be notified of the settlement.

## ALASKA HIGHWAY DISCUSSIONS

At the request of the United States Government, exploratory discussions were held in Ottawa last month on a proposal to pave the Canadian portion of the Alaska Highway.

The discussions are the outcome of the passage last December by the United States Congress of the Federal-Aid Highway Act, which authorized the President, through the Secretaries of State and Transportation, to open negotiations with Canada on the subject of paving and reconstructing the Alaska Highway and to report back to Congress by the end of this year.

## TRAFFIC SURVEY

One result of the recent discussions will be a survey by Canada during July and August of the origin and destination of traffic over the Highway during the height of the tourist season. It is expected that this

information will be of major importance when the government representatives of the two countries resume their discussions in September.

The group which met at the Department of Public Works headquarters was made up of Canadian officials representing the Yukon Territory and the Departments of Public Works, External Affairs, Transport and Indian Affairs and Northern Development, under Mr. G.B. Williams, acting Deputy Minister of Public Works, while the U.S. officials, headed by Mr. Ross W. Krauser, Director of Highway Operations, were from the Federal Highway Administration, Office of the Secretary of Transportation, and the U.S. Embassy.

The meeting heard a review of the present physical condition of the Highway and were introduced to the Canadian Government "in depth" studies already completed on the costs and benefits of Alaska Highway improvement.

Originally known as the "Alcan Highway", the Alaska Highway was built in 1942-43 as a military route. From its Canadian starting-point at Dawson Creek, British Columbia, to its terminus at Fairbanks, Alaska, it is 1,523 miles in length, of which 302 miles are in Alaska. Of the 1,221 miles in Canadian territory, fewer than 110 are paved, the remainder consisting of an all-weather gravel surface. Accommodation, food, fuel and repairs are available along the entire route.

The first 84 miles of the Highway, from Mile 0 at Dawson Creek, are paved and this stretch is maintained by the Province of British Columbia. The remainder of the Canadian portion of the Highway, which is maintained by the federal Department of Public Works, is paved through Fort Nelson and for 25 miles in the vicinity of Whitehorse, Yukon.

Canada spends some \$7 million a year on maintenance of the Alaska Highway and, in addition, has allocated some \$5 million for the replacement of bridges, a program which is continuing.

Included in the current discussions is the Haines Road, generally known as the "Haines Cut-off", which extends 159 miles from tidewater at Haines, Alaska, to Haines Junction at Mile 1,016 of the Alaska Highway, nearly 100 miles west of Whitehorse.

## SASKATCHEWAN AID TO REFUGEES

The Province of Saskatchewan has provided \$100,000 to the Canadian International Development Agency to supply food for the East Pakistani refugees in India. The funds will cover the purchase and shipment of about 650 metric tons of rapeseed that will be processed into oil in India. This is one of the high-priority items in the list of refugee needs provided by the World Food Program.

The food is expected to arrive in Calcutta in mid-August. On the strength of this action, the Government of India has promised to release immediately a similar quantity of rapeseed, drawn from its somewhat depleted buffer stocks.