

IRAN-CANADA VISA PACT

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Howard Green, has announced the conclusion of an agreement between Canada and Iran for the issuance of free multi-entry visas. The Ambassador of Iran, His Excellency Mahmoud Esfandiary, acted on behalf of his country and Mr. Green on behalf of Canada at a brief ceremony in the East Block, Ottawa, on March 10.

Under the agreement, Canadian and Iranian citizens seeking temporary entry to Iran to Canada respectively may be issued visas, free of charge, that will be valid for an unlimited number of entries within a 12-month period.

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ALBERTA TELEPHONE EXPANSION

A northward expansion programme by Alberta Government Telephones of the existing microwave network in the province will be undertaken this year. The \$5-million project will increase the facilities of the network to Grande Prairie and provide service to northern points at present lacking telephone communications.

The light-traffic route now in operation from Grande Prairie to Edmonton will be replaced by a heavy-route system. This provides an increase in voice channels from the present 120 maximum to a possible 600. The Alberta government telephone system will then link up with the network to Alaska. Canadian National Telegraphs will construct the portion of the system from Grande Prairie to the Alaska border. Sixty channels of the network have been leased to the United States Army as a part of the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at present being completed. In addition to increased facilities for voice transmission, the new system will provide for the possibility of television broadcasting to the Peace River area.

MACKENZIE NETWORK

Another major development included in the project is a medium-route microwave network following the Mackenzie Highway to the border of the Northwest Territories. Telephone service will be provided to Yellowknife and Fort Vermilion as well as points along the Highway. The present communication system is operated by the Canadian Army and is restricted to high frequency radio.

The expansion project will necessitate the replacement of eight towers with heavier towers between Edmonton and Grande Prairie. The southern end of the system will require the construction of two new towers in the areas of Milk River and McNabb, south of Lethbridge. The Alberta government telephone network will end at Coutts, where the American Telephone and Telegraph Corporation system commences.

NORTHERN EDUCATIONAL BUILDING

An estimated \$2,236,250 will be spent in 1961-62 to expand the physical "plant" for the educational system operated in the Arctic and Mackenzie Districts by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

Northern Affairs Minister Walter Dinsdale has announced that the construction is part of the continuing programme to extend education facilities to all residents of the North. Expenditures will provide for the construction or expansion of schools, hostels, residences for staff and other facilities and for the purchase of equipment required in their operation.

Of the estimated figure, some \$1,212,750 is for the Mackenzie District, while \$1,023,500 has been provided for the Arctic District, including schools for Eskimos in Northern Quebec.

HOSTEL PLAN

A feature of the programme in the Arctic is the establishment of family-type hostels in nine Arctic communities. These hostels are designed to provide accommodation for a local couple and for up to eight school children whose homes are too far away from the school for them to live there and attend classes every day.

In addition to the money allocated for the construction of buildings, \$241,630 has been allocated for the acquisition of equipment. This includes furniture and furnishings for staff houses, schoolrooms and hostels, tools and equipment for vocational training workshops, industrial arts and home making, equipment for playgrounds and gymnasias and scientific and special equipment for classrooms.

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FIRST TCA LOSS IN DECADE

For the first time in 10 years, Trans-Canada Air Lines has recorded a financial deficit, it is revealed in the Company's 1960 Annual Report, tabled recently in the House of Commons by Mr. Léon Balcer, Minister of Transport.

The Airline ended 1960 with a financial loss of \$2,607,350, owing principally to a reduction in average return per seat-mile flown and increased expenses, largely associated with the introduction of two new types of aircraft.

Revenue growth started slowly under competitive pressure, but accelerated in the latter half of the year under the stimulus of new equipment and lower Atlantic fares. Total revenues reached an all-time high of \$148,986,526.

TCA made more than three billion seat-miles available to the travelling public in 1960, an increase of 13 per cent over the previous year, while occupied-seat miles rose 12 per cent to a total of two billion. This resulted