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## CENTENNIAL TOURIST BOOM

Trade Minister Robert Winters called recently for a major reassessment of Canada's tourist industry following the most successful year in its history. "This has been the best of all years for tourism in Canada," he declared.

Mr. Winters told the twenty-second Federal-Provincial Conference that an unprecedented \$1.25 billion - half as much again as in 1966 - would have been spent in Canada by the end of 1967 by foreign visitors, and as much as \$3 billion or more by Canadians travelling in Canada.

"Few Canadians recognize the vital importance of tourism to Canadian prosperity," Mr. Winters said. "Our multi-billion dollar tourist industry provides tens of thousands of jobs for Canadians. It makes possible thousands of small family businesses which play such an important role in our economy, as well as hundreds of giant travel and accommodation enterprises. It provides a huge market for Canadian goods of all sorts - from souvenirs to ski-lodges. It stimulates every sector of our economy. It ranks with the automotive industry as Canada's biggest earner of essential foreign exchange. And, intangibly, it contributes to our pride in being Canadian and to the prestige of Canada in the eyes of the rest of the world," Mr. Winters said.

### CHARTING THE FUTURE

Canadians should, he said, immediately take stock of their travel industry to determine its present capacity and chart its future. To move forward in this sphere, it was necessary to know more about the industry's markets, more about Canada's competitors, more about travel trends in the world, more about the Canadian "travel plant" and more about the nation's travel promotion.

This would require intensive research and co-ordination, Mr. Winters said. The Canadian Government Travel Bureau, other federal departments, provincial governments and industry were co-operating in this task, he added. "The studies of the whole industry, its 'plant' and promotion, have been particularly intensive in the Atlantic Provinces," Mr. Winters said.

The Travel Research Planning Committee of the Federal-Provincial Conference has given priority to a Domestic Travel Survey building upon preliminary studies of the federal Travel Bureau and, in the Department of Trade and Commerce, a new Office of Tourism has been established comprising the federal Travel Bureau and a brand-new Travel Industry Branch.

This, Mr. Winters stated, was in recognition of the vitally important contribution of the tourist industry to the Canadian economy and its balance of international payments. Instead of last year's \$60-million deficit on travel account, a surplus of \$350 million to \$400 million was expected this year, he added.

### ROLE OF EXPO

"Active tourist promotion programmes combined with the calendar of centennial events, and, of course, Expo 67, have all helped to produce this tremendous upsurge," Mr. Winters said.... "Expo alone appears to have accounted for roughly half the total improvement in our tourism accounts.... Preliminary estimates indicate that Expo has generated close to a \$200-million improvement in our balance of payments - another impressive plus on the balance sheet of Expo achievements...."