

The CHAIRMAN: I have another question which I would like to ask Mr. Gibson, but first, are there other members of the committee who would like to ask him about the parks? I would like him to say something briefly about traffic over the Alaska Highway, and to tell us something about what is being done in the way of providing tourist accommodation along the way. If there are no further questions on the parks, will you tell us about the Alaska Highway?

Mr. GIBSON: I believe that each member of the committee, Mr. Chairman, has been furnished with a copy of our circular which we distributed to those who asked for information about the Alaska Highway. We have tried to answer most of the questions asked. The amount of accommodation available along the highway is given on page 8 of the literature. We have had to warn everyone that ordinary tourist travel on the Alaska Highway cannot be permitted this year because there is not sufficient accommodation to look after the people who want to travel it. There is a surprisingly large amount of travel right through to Alaska, particularly by service personnel who have become a bit unsettled in their present surroundings and think that perhaps the land of opportunity lies further north, and they have decided to go to Alaska. As long as these people have a vehicle that is roadworthy and are supplied with sufficient funds and anything else they need to see them through to the end of their journey, the permit is issued by an officer of the police at Edmonton who handles these matters.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the condition of the road?

Mr. GIBSON: The road needs a lot of gravel in many places; and, as you know, during the wintertime the snow is shoved off into the ditches, and in the spring there is quite a drainage problem; they have to attend to that and to the spring freshet, which means all the bridges have to be checked. The army is in charge of maintenance operations on this road, and it is quite an expensive undertaking.

The CHAIRMAN: Do many people apply to travel over the road that are not given permits?

Mr. GIBSON: At the beginning there were quite a number. Here again we had the co-operation of the press. We sent out our circular and the press commented favourably upon it, and said that it was reasonable that we should warn people not to attempt this trip until there was more accommodation along the way. I think that has had more to do with the falling off of the number of requests from people who were going up there purely for a trip more than anything else. Also, people have written to those whose names appear on our circular, and they in turn have written back telling of the difficulties that must be met. As you know, it is quite a problem even to get to the Alaska Highway from Edmonton.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no other questions, gentlemen, we will call on Mr. Dolan. Thank you, Mr. Gibson.

Mr. Dolan is Chief of the Canadian Travel Bureau, of the Department of Trade and Commerce.

Mr. Dolan, the committee would like you to review the tourist traffic and development of last year; tell us something about your plan of expenditure for this year and what you anticipate.

Hon. Mr. ROBINSON: The committee is interested, I think, in hearing Mr. Dolan on the question of the Dominion-Provincial Conference held last fall.

Mr. D. LEO DOLAN: Mr. Chairman, and honourable senators, last year after I had been before your committee, the suggestion had been made that we needed closer co-operation between the provinces and the federal tourist organization. That suggestion was put into practice, and in October last year we had the first