

AT YOUR SERVICE

Editor's Note:

This is the first in a series intended to call the attention of the travel industry to organizations and individuals in Washington, D. C., who are "At Your Service." Both governmental and nongovernmental sources of information will be dealt with. The United States Travel Division invites suggestions or material for this feature for use in future issues.

Holiday News Letter

When VJ-day arrived most prewar businesses had their reconversion plans well mapped out. In general they planned to resume where they left off, but now they would be facing a gigantic market which had been starved for 4 years. One of the chief exceptions to this general situation was the travel and recreation industry, which found itself confronting problems it had scarcely dreamed of before. Moreover many of these problems were so complex that it was difficult even to chart an approach to them. For example, who would be permitted to travel out of the country? What was the currency situation in occupied countries? What transportation would be available? How long would the armed services be kept intact and when would demobilization start? Were the domestic resorts and transportation industries capable of handling the wave of vacations demobilized servicemen would demand before going back to work? There were no ready answers to these questions.

Shortly after *Holiday* magazine was launched in 1946, the Curtis Publishing Co. began to issue from its Washington office (743 National Press Building, Washington 4, D. C.) the *Holiday News Letter*. This letter, a supplementary service furnished the trade at no cost, sought to provide individuals and organizations interested in the travel-vacation-recreation field with factual, up-to-the-minute news affecting those interests. It sought to tap the primary Government and trade sources of information and distribute it to the industry at large for its common good. This biweekly, which has been spot-checking travel news developments for more than 2 years, has grown spectacularly. There has been no promotion of the letter and all requests for the service have come in without solicitation.

Readers of the letter are located in every State in the Union, as well as in Alaska and several foreign countries. Among them are travel agents, state and city automobile clubs, advertising agencies, travel editors, chambers of

commerce officials and executives of national and State agencies, including conservation commissions, highway departments, development groups, and convention and tourist bureaus.

The letter is sent to them only after they have indicated by letter or otherwise that they would like to be placed on the mailing list.

Prepared by a staff in the company's Washington office, *Holiday News Letter* attempts to keep its reader informed of all government, congressional, foreign embassy, and similar developments pertaining to the travel industry. It is published every other Thursday.

By being edited in Washington, the letter is able to tap primary sources of vacation and travel news. Both the United States Travel Division and the travel section of the United States Department of Commerce are located here. So are the passport and visa divisions of the Department of State and the headquarters offices of most of the associations and groups allied with the particular field covered by the letter.

Close contact is maintained with these sources by the letter's staff, and constant watch is kept for news affecting either directly, or indirectly, vacationists, tourists, resort operators, carriers, manufacturers, and all other people connected with the travel and transportation business. Often the letter is able to predict and give warnings of forthcoming developments. This has been especially true when Congress was in session.

One year after the letter was started, the editors sought to determine its effectiveness through questionnaires. Readers were asked for their reactions and for suggestions for improvement. A large percentage of replies were received and nearly 80 percent considered the letter satisfactory as now published. Equally as great a majority urged that the subject matter include both domestic and foreign news and that it take in sources outside as well as inside Washington. It was most commonly praised for its brevity and clarity.