

# Boom in Tourist Trade to Increase Golf, Experts Say

**P**ROSPECTS of expansion in country clubs far larger than is envisioned by most optimists in the golf field were presented in the address made by Don Thomas, pres., National Association of Travel Officials, at that organization's recent national convention in Chicago. Thomas, for years has been managing director of the All-Year Club of Southern California. In that capacity he made highly effective use of Southern California's golf facilities in attracting travel to that section.

Thomas quoted Dr. Gerald Wendt, science adviser of Time, Life and Fortune, as saying "whether we like it or not, we are going to have to get used to the greater leisure that will be made possible by the new science of atomic energy and electronics."

Expansion and revival of tourist business, he declared, is a quick means at the nation's disposal for stimulating employment during the postwar reconversion—and one requiring no U. S. government subsidy.

Thomas quoted an American Express estimate that as soon as transportation permits, the pent-up travel desire will burst forth in an approximate doubling of the five billion dollar prewar tourist business.

"Step up travel to ten billion dollars a year, as predicted, and the impact on jobs will be felt from border to border and ocean to ocean," Thomas declared. He said an economic survey indicates that a ten billion dollar tourist year will make jobs for 2,412,000.

"Where will these jobs come from? Most of them will be in transportation and in the trades and services, which are still capable of substantial expansion and which, in 1940, employed 51 per cent of all persons holding jobs in the United States."

Asserting that the travel business "is still the ugly duckling of our national planners," largely because the industry itself has failed to stress its own economic importance, Thomas likened the vacationer with his golf bags and fishing tackle to the belching factory smokestack as a symbol of national prosperity.

"Travel," he said, "is no longer a past-time for the rich. Money spent in tourist travel in 1939 represented seven percent of the national income—more than Americans spent for motor vehicles that year. It was twice our exports. Recreational travel equalled the combined output of

the meat-packing industry, petroleum refining, printing and publishing, and the products of our iron and steel furnaces."

The speaker likened recreational spending to "Vitamin B in the life stream of trade" because it distributes cash throughout the country and spreads buying power. He said:

"The tourist, the man with the golf bag, the fishing tackle, the riding boots, the man who leaves his job for two weeks to become a loafer, the man who stops being a producer to become a spender, to demand services he doesn't usually get at home, to buy things he usually doesn't buy or in the quantities that he buys them, the man who takes money made in Peoria to spend in Maine, Florida, Georgia, Michigan or New Mexico . . . is a highly essential and vital factor in the distribution of buying power."

"We have been bowing to smokestacks for so long in this country—and I don't mean to disparage industry—that we have failed to take notice of the fields in which most of our people are being employed," Thomas pointed out.

He quoted U. S. Census Bureau figures showing that from 1920 to 1940 agriculture dropped from 28 to 21 percent of our total of employed people and manufacturing dropped from 33 to 28 percent. Meantime, trades and services jumped from 39 to 51 percent. This trend, he said, will continue.

Trades and service industries benefit very heavily by tourist spending, and this offers an important source of postwar employment expansion, Thomas explained. In addition, he said, those employed in manufacturing have a vital stake in a revived travel industry.

Thomas chided his colleagues for a share of blame in "the failure of business and the public to comprehend the tremendous importance of travel to our national well-being."

"In the past," he explained, "we measured our results by the number of tourists who visited a given place, rode our trains, buses, steamships, and our airplanes, rather than by the number of jobs created by this travel. We counted the noses of our fares and our visitors and NOT the time-cards of our workers. We totaled tourist expenditures, but neglected to total the paychecks resulting from those expenditures."

"Tourist dollars are job-creating dollars. Let's get that fact over to the nation and to our communities."