

of every State, territory, and possession of the United States as well as the District of Columbia.

It is a recognized fact that travel stands third in this country as an industry. One needs only to look at the tremendous increase in pleasure visitor and convention traffic in the Washington area.

Prior to World War II, visitors here numbered between 1 and 2 million per year. In 1950, tourists and convention delegates numbered about 3,300,000. In 1960, this figure increased to 7 $\frac{1}{3}$ million. In the last several years, we have had the large total of over 9.5 million pleasure and convention visitors.

Undoubtedly, this will increase to 15 and even 20 million within a relatively short time. These will be purely tourists and convention delegates. The pure business visitors, of course, increase these figures by additional millions.

This is more than purely commercial business. The opportunity presented by this city—to teach all our visitors the true fundamentals of democracy as exemplified by the shrines, memorials, and by the day-by-day democratic processes—is one we should not let pass.

Most often the visitor to Washington does not have more than a few days to spend here, particularly for sightseeing. Many of them go away without having had the chance to get the most meaningful results from their visit.

Only through a National Visitors Center equipped with literature of all types—with motion pictures and slides describing the major highlights of this area and of the entire country—with well-informed guides to properly orientate the inquisitive visitor—with panoramic visuals leading the visitor to his principal interests—with intelligently presented information to the hundreds of thousands of students—with dramatic displays and information to the ever-increasing number of visitors from overseas—only with this kind of service can the visitor be properly rewarded.

We assume from the language and the tenor of H.R. 12603 that the need for and the desirability of a visitor information center has already been established in Congress.

As this committee well knows, desirable locations for a visitor center in Washington are fast disappearing. H.R. 12603 grasps an existing structure which could be relocated over the vast railroad tract area adjacent to Union Station. A new station could be built which would be much more efficient and more adaptable to current and projected railroad passenger needs.

This would then release the present Union Station structure for such alterations as would be required to provide the vitally necessary Visitor Center.

In view of the fact that there are few desirable locations left for the Center, Union Station seems to offer the best site, assuming, of course, that the parking facilities and the access roadways suggested by Mr. Gray's bill are an integral part of the entire project.

Traffic in Washington, as in all major cities, is a real problem. Traffic patterns around the Union Station area should and must be thoroughly thought out and solutions reached by the best traffic experts available, not only for the present but for the long-term use of the proposed visitor facility.