

Let me refer to a statement in respect of the Gros Morne national park made by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) at the joint signing of the agreement establishing this national park, dated August 13, 1973. That was just a few months ago. I quote from page 3 of that document:

Rights of inheritance are undisturbed. Residents who wish to relocate will have specially prepared options available.

Surely that is not compatible with the agreement negotiated by the province of Quebec for the 99-year lease. Somewhere along the line the federal authority has obviously decided that any agreement entered into by the province of Quebec in respect of a lease for 99 years is none of its business. I suggest that at some point in the future there will be difficulties as a result of this attitude. Let me repeat the very clear words of this statement:

Right of inheritance are undisturbed.

There is nothing like this in Nova Scotia; I suggest there is nothing remotely comparable in terms of national parks. There are three entirely different concepts involved. How can the people of Canada have confidence in the Government of Canada when it is not consistent in its decisions in respect of national parks? I am not denigrating for one moment the very sincere desire of the present minister to carry out his responsibilities in setting aside national lands for the future generations of Canada. I do not attack that concept.

What I am suggesting is that it is not fair and right for the Government of Canada to deal obliquely and vaguely with one province in relation to land for the purpose of developing national parks while at the same time not dealing with another province on the same basis. In the past it seems that one province has been dealt with ideally and equitably because of previous negotiation in respect of provincial rights, while another province is dealt with inequitably with little or no notice. This may be a very simple and minor point but it goes very much to the root of the unhappiness of concerned people in various provinces. People who pretend to lead Canadians must have respect for them, and where there is a demonstrated absence of respect there is a tangible concern on the part of the people involved. As a result, frustrations and indignations occur. People become angered by the actions of governments that have this lack of concern.

The proposed amendment to the act does nothing to change this situation but seems to perpetuate the direction in which this government is moving. This direction does not take into account the views of the people who are directly concerned with the development of national parks. I suggest this is bad government and the type of government that the people in this country have had for ten years too long. This is the type of government which does not foster good will among our residents. Whenever there is inequity on the part of the government, there is frustration on the part of the people. When there is inadequacy in terms of a national concept, there is frustration and distortion of meaningful national unity.

Without going into detail as to the background of our national parks policy, I should like to give an example of the direction in which this government is moving with particular reference to the development of national parks in Nova Scotia. I refer to a communiqué issued by the

National Parks Act

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development on August 25, 1972, in which it is stated:

Canada is to have a new national park in Nova Scotia according to an agreement signed today in Halifax by Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Benoit Comeau, Minister of Lands and Forests, province of Nova Scotia.

Prior to that date there was not one public meeting, not one public discussion, not one opportunity for anybody in that province to talk to this government about the establishment of this national park. I am referring to the fostering of distrust and the creation of anger in the minds of the people involved. This is something that should be brought to an end in this country, because it destroys confidence and leads to mistrust.

There are several ways we can approach this situation, but we do not approach it by threatening hundreds of people in a 125 square miles area without talking to them. We do not do this without holding public meetings. There have been two public meetings following this announcement, and during the second meeting the people appointed by the federal authority withdrew. That was over a year ago, and we have not heard one public word since about the government's intentions. Not one public meeting has been held or any contact made with the hundreds of people involved in Nova Scotia.

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In spite of the lowest form of political opportunism by both the federal and provincial authorities in respect of parks, there has been not one word spoken nor one public forum held, or one response. Not one letter even has been forthcoming from a member of parliament in response to a simple request for basic information in which questions are asked, such as is the project going ahead and what is the form of it to be? When we do things which would intimately affect the lives of people and families, why do we not go to them and speak to them? Why can we not find the time to do this? Why can we not listen to them when they try to explain to us that although what is being done seems to be good, possibly it may affect them? Why do we withdraw and act in secrecy? Why do we do these things? Why do we not have a national parks policy? Why does the government not speak to these people?

The government has a moral responsibility to place in front of these people a clear and definitive statement about the course of action the government intends to follow. This should be done in the form of a written parks policy. I have been looking for a parks policy in Canada for eight or nine years. I tell you that is eight or nine years too long. This is simply inadequate. This is not the way to embrace what essentially is a very good concept on the part of this institution. I refer to the desire to make additional land available. It is a good concept in principle and philosophy, but the act which supports it is lousy and stupid, and the people who continue to support it without amendment and without bringing it up to date are equally stupid because they do a disservice not only to the people they are attempting to serve but also to the institution which the people believe serves them. The fishermen in my community do not blame the Liberals for what has been done; they blame the federal authority.