

*Adjournment Debate*

Parks Canada, with benches for people to rest, with bridges over the stream, with paths for quiet walks so that all could enjoy nature, the birds, the 100 year-old trees and the animals, was destroyed, desecrated by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Roberts) in charge of national parks. The Minister allowed men with chainsaws to cut down the trees, bulldozers to tear up the paths so his friend, the Hon. Judd Buchanan, could build an apartment building on the site.

The Minister, knowing he had done wrong, steadfastly refused to investigate. When the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) was asked to freeze the project until a full inquiry was held, the Minister shook his head violently when the Deputy Prime Minister looked at him before answering the question in the House of Commons. He then meekly replied that he could see no reason to investigate. The head of any responsible Government would at least have looked into the matter before condoning it.

What were the Minister's excuses? First, he alleged he had telegrams from the Chamber of Commerce supporting his decision. In fact, he received one telegram over the name of the Banff-Lake Louise Chamber of Commerce which was sent by one or two men without the knowledge of the membership of the Chamber of Commerce, and one telegram, with the knowledge of the Chamber of Commerce, rescinding the first telegram. The Minister calls that support!

● (2220)

Second, the Minister alleged he had the support of the Banff Community Society when in fact that society on at least two occasions told the Minister it supported affordable housing, but asked that any decision to build in the park be held back until at least there was full public disclosure. The Minister conveniently forgot to mention that.

Third, the Minister misled the House by stating that the area had been zoned for multi purposes back in 1970 and that the people knew about it. The fact is it was so zoned and Parks Canada started the development of the park, but the Minister well knows that the people were not told in 1970 that a 76-unit apartment building was going to replace the park. It was only in late 1982 when a leak was published in *The Crag and Canyon* that the people found out about the under-the-table deal. Yes, it is true that near the end of 1981 it was discovered what was afoot, but the Deputy Minister in a letter stated emphatically that Parks Canada and Treasury Board had not approved the project. This again is a Government misleading the people.

Fourth, the Minister did not refer the case to Treasury Board, alleging that departmental officials did not consider it necessary. The people of Canada have been led to believe that Treasury Board decides whether a project should or should not be approved, which is a check on departmental expenditures. The Minister's action in this regard is hypocrisy of the worst kind.

Fifth, the Minister likewise deliberately avoided referring the matter to the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (FEARO). The Minister justifies his actions because affordable accommodation is needed in Banff. Everyone agrees that affordable accommodation is needed, but no one wants it in the only treed park in the townsite. No one wants it in the park. The Minister admitted in committee that he had no guarantees from the developers that the accommodation will be affordable. They said it will be as affordable as possible, but \$600 and \$800 per month is not affordable accommodation.

In summary, this matter was carried out without letting the people know what was going on. It was done under the table and a park was destroyed. It is a tragedy that will forever stand to the dishonour of a man who dares to continue to be the Minister of the Environment in charge of National Parks.

**Mr. Denis Ethier (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member well knows, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Roberts) has appeared in this House on numerous occasions to answer questions on the issue of the Banff land exchange. In addition, the Minister appeared before the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry on the afternoon of December 2 to respond to the Hon. Member's questions. On all occasions he provided forthright, complete answers to all questions directed to him. Yet the Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor) continues to repeat the same questions as though he had not heard the answers at all. If the Hon. Member were truly interested in finding out the true facts of this case, he would have listened to the answers which are already part of the public record. Despite having repeatedly received full and complete answers to the very questions he poses tonight, he continues with his repetition of worn out, unsubstantiated accusations.

I can see no useful purpose in repeating once again answers to questions the Hon. Member has asked. I would therefore refer him to the pages of *Hansard* and the minutes of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry meeting of December 2 where he will find all the answers to his questions.

[*Translation*]

And as always, the Hon. Member would seem to use his parliamentary privileges to lay false charges. If he has further questions to ask or if he has any valid allegation to make, the Minister will be pleased to reply and give him all the information he requests as the Minister has always done in the past. The Hon. Member, in my opinion does not want to understand and he goes on asking the same question. Considering that he has been given all those replies, I do not feel it necessary to carry on with this discussion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order, please. The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 o'clock.

At 10.25 p.m., the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.