

National Parks Act

measure. But, Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary system is founded on the concept of adversaries, on the concept of a government proposing and an opposition opposing in a meaningful, relevant way. When the official opposition is derelict in its duty, lowers its criticisms to obscure irrelevancies and fails utterly in its function, someone has to take up the slack.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Oh boy!

Mr. Mahoney: I admit that it is sometimes difficult to find legitimate fault with the legislation presented in this House by the government, but we on this side occasionally are able to do so. It is a sorry thing for the parliamentary system in Canada that the official opposition is not. Spokesmen for the official opposition, starting with their shadow minister, the hon. member for Oxford and working on down through a succession of lesser luminaries have succeeded with suspiciously monotonous regularity to miss the main point of the bill. They see its main purpose as this—and I shall quote the hon. member for Oxford as recorded at page 3225 of *Hansard*:

In a nutshell, it sets up a corporation to carry out the administration and to make policy for the national parks.

It does no such thing.

Mr. Yewchuk: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you would see to it that a man with a shovel comes into this chamber when this speech is over.

Mr. Mahoney: I trust the comments of the hon. member will be up to the standard of his interjection. The hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams), whose achievements on behalf of the residents of Banff National Park are reported to be legion, added a new dimension to the debate when he noted that the hon. member for Rocky Mountain (Mr. Sulatycky)—as recorded at page 3429 of *Hansard*—had been elected with 30 per cent of the vote. That observation was neither accurate nor, so far as I can see, relevant. But when the hon. member takes the opportunity to check the records, as he invited us to do, he might then wish to talk with some of his colleagues. I would suggest he start with the hon. members for Edmonton Centre (Mr. Paproski), Dauphin (Mr. Ritchie), Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) and Charlevoix (Mr. Asselin), to ascertain whether they would

agree that such an observation is relevant for any purpose in this House.

The hon. member for Calgary North also chose to miss the main point of the bill. At page 3427 of *Hansard* he said:

In brief, this bill would set up a Crown corporation to control and govern the national parks of Canada and would take them away from ministerial responsibility.

It does no such thing. It was the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) who introduced into the debate the old adage, "Don't confuse me with facts: my mind is already made up." Regrettably, his colleagues epitomize that attitude. The hon. member for Churchill (Mr. Simpson) perpetuated the error at page 3458 of *Hansard* when he said:

I say at the outset that I take strong exception to the government's plan to set up a Crown corporation to administer our national parks.

It does no such thing. What the bill proposes is that the corporation administer property in the parks and administer in particular leasehold real estate. This, in itself, may very well be sufficient ground for some pretty solid criticism or it may be a good idea. The committee will examine that. Let us at least stick to the facts. The bill does no such thing as the hon. members for Oxford, Calgary North and Churchill say it does. They say the purpose is to avoid accountability by the government. In asserting this allegation they choose to ignore the effect of clause 18. It is too bad the Broadcasting Act does not contain a provision such as clause 18 of this bill. Since the hon. member for Oxford does not appear to know what clause 18 says, and since he will have difficulty finding any patronage in it, I shall read it to him:

18 (1) The Corporation shall comply with any direction from time to time given to it in writing by the Governor in Council or the Minister respecting the carrying out of its objects or the exercise of its powers.

(2) The Treasury Board may from time to time for any year establish the percentage of the gross revenues of the Corporation for that year that may be expended by the Corporation in that year for administration purposes.

It is difficult to see, with the power given by clause 18, how the Governor in Council or the minister could avoid accountability. They are to be given a power and they will be accountable not only for its use but for failure to use it. The hon. member for Edmonton West left me as confused as his colleagues. In one breath he calls the proposed corporation a stooge and in yet another refers to its tremendous powers. Is it the action of a responsible opposition to misrepresent the main