

National Parks Act

thus stimulating the interest of youngsters in our wildlife.

• (3:50 p.m.)

The administrators of our national parks spend vast sums of money to publicize the Canadian wildlife, while our zoos have to start with makeshift means. In fact, there were individuals in Granby who invested \$50,000, more than fifteen years ago, with no hope of any reimbursement, and who gave of their time and their efforts to make of the Granby Zoo the finest in the province of Quebec.

A former mayor, Mr. Pierre-Horace Boivin, for instance, bought beavers to distribute them across the world in exchange for parrots which, in turn, he exchanged for wild beasts. At first, he also paid for their transportation out of his own money. Others have done the same, so that we now have in Granby something equal to if not better than a national park.

The National Parks Act should, I believe, be more generous towards zoos like ours, which are a tourist attraction for the whole province and for the rest of Canada. Today they enable our young people to come in thousands each year to learn about our wildlife, which is one of our national resources. In view of what the Granby zoo has done for the Canadian people, we have to admit that its directors are entitled to more than mere thanks. The federal government should give more assistance not only to the Granby zoo but also to other zoos in Canada, whose directors have to travel throughout the world to stock their establishment and thus promote the tourist industry.

We are proud of the Granby zoo and hon. members have had the opportunity in the past to hear us talk about it.

The Granby Zoo made a net profit of \$309,000 in 1968 and attracted several million tourists.

Mr. Speaker, I believe national parks could serve such a purpose. That is why I wanted to make these few comments because so far we have had no help either from the Quebec government or from the federal government in promoting our zoo, to assist in the capture of wild animals and in their reproduction. We have had to pay everything, at the cost of sacrifices. All this cost us a great deal of money, and yet Canada benefits by the zoo, as well as the province of Quebec.

I hope the minister responsible for national parks will consider this problem and, perhaps,

[Mr. Rondeau.]

provide some assistance to the Granby Zoo and others who might be facing similar difficulties.

As far as wild animals are concerned, we have to rely on American zoos or on African charitable organizations or others, even if we must wait a long time for help, so that the Canadian people can be proud of showing to their descendants the marvels of wildlife, which contribute to the enrichment for everyone.

[English]

Mr. Steven Otto (York East): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to just about all the speeches by opposition members on this bill. Having heard the speeches, one would think this bill would institute the worst form of tyranny in the world on the people who live in these parks. One would imagine that the government intends to abandon the right of all the people who live in these areas, especially in the towns of Banff and Jasper, to a corporation which will grind them under its heels. I cannot imagine any government in Canada or any person in Canada allowing this. For the life of me, I certainly cannot connect this idea to the bill. Over the period of the seven and a half years I have been here—and I daresay over the period of almost 50 or 100 years that other members have been here—we have heard time and time again in connection with parks and government-owned land that someone had an advantage because of political patronage, that someone had not properly assessed the property and, as we heard this afternoon, that the administrator had not relayed the correct information to the government.

Indeed, the time has come now when we should have some sort of rational system of administering leases in respect of these lands and the land itself. What better way could there be than by having a Crown corporation, of which we have many examples, functioning with the ability and right to hire qualified people, to give advice and conduct the operation? Then, no one could possibly complain of any political patronage or of anything underhanded being done. I might give the example of the Toronto Harbour Commission. I have had some dealings with this commission. It administers valuable harbour lands. It is well known in Toronto that the Harbour Commission is one of the toughest boards to deal with that one could find. It is competitive. No one has ever accused it of political shenanigans or patronage over a number of years. It is