

Supply—Resources and Development

Mr. Johnston: Then I can take it if the province allows certain haulage on its provincial highways the same traffic will be allowed through the national parks. Is that right?

Mr. Winters: That is the general policy being considered for the trans-Canada highway through national parks.

Mr. Johnston: Will that be the policy of the federal government?

Mr. Winters: That is the policy of the federal government.

Mr. Johnston: Of course the minister is aware of the fact that the federal government does not now permit the haulage of freight through national parks. I do not know whether it is because they are trying to bolster the inefficiently run C.N.R. railway which goes in the hole every year, but certainly we should not allow them to say that the roads are not to be constructed in such a way as to carry freight over them.

Mr. Mutch: A fine example of irresponsibility.

Mr. Fulton: I am not quite clear as to the implication of what the minister said. When the highway is completed it will pass through Banff and Yoho national parks. Will through trucking be permitted? Will trucks be permitted to enter from the west, pass through the parks and leave at the east exit, and vice versa, without off-loading onto another vehicle in transit?

Mr. Winters: Yes; that will be the arrangement.

Mr. Green: Under the statute the trans-Canada highway need not be completed for several years.

Mr. Winters: Seven years.

Mr. Green: Is it the intention that this road may be used by trucks this year, or will the new policy be held in abeyance until the whole trans-Canada highway has been completed in British Columbia?

Mr. Winters: I am not familiar enough with the type of road existing through the parks at the present moment to be able to say. That will depend on the engineering standard of the road, but I can say that when the highway is completed and we are satisfied the standard is satisfactory to carry the traffic, which is what we are aiming at, we will allow the through transport of commercial vehicles.

Mr. Green: Is the road being completed this year in the national parks, or when is that work to be done?

Mr. Winters: We have the same restriction imposed upon us, that there will be a period of seven years in which we can complete the road.

Mr. Johnston: I feel quite certain from what the minister has said that he hopes—and I use that word advisedly—that when the road is constructed freight hauled by motor transport will be allowed to enter one gate of the national park and pass right through to the gate on the other side. I hope that policy has the approval of the Minister of Transport. If it has not, the condition will be the same as it is now. Motor transports carrying freight may enter the east gate of Banff national park and proceed as far as Banff but they cannot go on through. You cannot haul a load of freight by motor transport right through the park. That is a ruling made by the board of transport commissioners under the Department of Transport. The minister may be quite sincere—and I am sure he is—when he says that he desires freight to go right through the parks from Alberta to British Columbia.

An hon. Member: He said it would.

Mr. Johnston: He said it would, and I am quite convinced that the minister is of that view. What I want to know, however, is whether that policy has the approval of the Department of Transport.

Mr. Winters: The restriction my hon. friend refers to is a park regulation.

Mr. Johnston: No. You must understand that park transportation is controlled by the Department of Transport. It is the Department of Transport that lays down the ruling.

Mr. Winters: I am told by the officials that there is no restriction imposed by the board of transport commissioners. The restriction is one laid down by the parks branch.

Mr. Johnston: For what reason?

Mr. Winters: It was a matter of regulating traffic on the road.

Mr. Johnston: Was it because the road was not in sufficiently good condition to carry freight, because they did not want the freight to be taken away from the railways, or because they did not want to frighten the wild animals?

Mr. Winters: It was a matter of the adequacy of the highway.

Mr. Johnston: I should like to pursue that one step further. I am glad that the minister has stated that the reason such traffic was not permitted was that the highway was not able