

National Parks Act

On section 1—*Short title.*

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, for the record, will the minister make a statement as to the purposes of the bill?

Mr. MacKinnon: Hon. members will recall that in 1929 the natural resources of the province of Alberta were transferred by the government of Canada to that province, and as appears in section 16 of the Alberta natural resources transfer agreement it was intended that that portion of Banff national park necessary for the proper development of the Spray lakes storage and power development project would be excluded from Banff national park. This is made clear by the debates in the house on the second reading of the bill approving the said agreement. Pursuant to the said agreement 630 square miles were excluded from the park in 1930.

The government of Alberta has now arrived at an agreement with the Calgary Power Company for a licence to develop the said project. It is proposed to dam the Spray river twenty-three miles above its mouth, and from the north end of the reservoir so created to divert the stored water through a system of canals, pipe lines and power houses down Goat creek valley and out through the pass opposite Canmore to the Bow river. The project will add 90,000 horsepower to the 110,000 horsepower now developed in the Bow river and its tributaries.

Strong representations have been made to me by the premier of Alberta as a result of which I am satisfied that the area excluded from Banff national park in 1930 is insufficient for the proper development of the project, and that it is necessary in the public interest that the further area of 21.2 square miles proposed to be withdrawn from Banff national park by section 2 of the present bill be excluded from the park in order that the proposed project may proceed. The said further area is all on the edge of Banff national park, and contains no features making essential its retention for park use. The natural flow into the Spray river from the watersheds emptying into it below the site of the proposed dam is usually adequate for scenic purposes.

In order to ensure an adequate flow of water for scenic and fire-fighting purposes, I have required the government of Alberta to enter into an agreement with me by exchange of letters between myself and the Hon. David A. Ure, the minister in charge of water resources and irrigation for the province. By this exchange of letters the province has agreed that it will not reduce, and that it will not permit any licensee from it, by works outside the boundaries of Banff national park, to reduce the flow of water in the Spray river

at its junction with the Bow river in the said park to an amount less than 200 cubic feet per second during the months of June, July and August in each year hereafter; that it and any licensee from it will during the month of September in each year hereafter supply such amount of water as may reasonably be required by Banff Springs hotel for essential sewage and water supply, and that it and any licensee from it will provide additional water for fire fighting within the said park as required at the rate of 100 cubic feet per second. I consider that these provisions amply safeguard the scenic beauties of that portion of the Spray valley lying within Banff national park.

In order to protect fishing in the Spray river, the proposed licensee from the province of Alberta has agreed to provide 20,000 acre feet of storage more than was originally contemplated and to release the additional water into the Spray river below the dam at the rate of 100 cubic feet per second as and when required for the maintenance of a flow in the river sufficient to protect the fish therein.

Section 3 of the bill withdraws from Elk island national park, in the province of Alberta, a narrow strip of land on the north side of Alberta provincial highway No. 16 with a total area of 20.6 acres. The withdrawal of this area has been requested by the government of Alberta in order that the highway may be widened. I am satisfied that the withdrawal of this small area will in no way affect the park, and that such withdrawal is in the public interest.

Section 4 of the bill changes the name of New Brunswick national park. The new name, Fundy national park, has been suggested by the Hon. J. B. McNair, K.C., LL.D., premier of New Brunswick, and was selected as a result of an essay competition conducted throughout the New Brunswick schools.

Section agreed to.

Sections 2 and 3 agreed to.

On section 4—*Heading repealed.*

Mr. Brooks: I wish to ask the minister a question with reference to section 4. I notice that the name is being changed from New Brunswick national park. Is that because another national park is to be established in the province of New Brunswick and they do not wish to have confusion of names? Is this park to be called Fundy owing to the fact that possibly another park will be established in that province along the Saint John river? I may say that the site which was first selected for the national park was up the Saint John river, and it was the one which was most highly recommended. It occurred