

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

**Mr. Dinsdale:** The hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate is quite correct when he said that when I last reported on this matter I said I was seeking further information. I received a report from Cape Breton Highlands national park with respect to this matter and on the basis of that report I wrote to Mr. Boudreau, one of the municipal councillors at Cheticamp, Nova Scotia. Perhaps I can best answer the hon. member's question by quoting this letter. This is a letter dated April 21 and it reads as follows:

Further to my letter of March 16th on the matter of rotation of labour at Cape Breton Highlands national park, I wish to advise that I have received a report from my officers.

The report indicates that the established rotational system was followed, and as far as we can determine, every man hired was unemployed and in need of work. This practice is consistent with our policy, and appears to have been well accepted in the areas where it has been applied.

I checked back into the records and I find that this rotational system has been established for a number of years. There are on file letters which indicate it has the support of the local people and it seems to have worked out satisfactorily.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** The information was given to me and I do not vouch for it personally. I just put it to the minister that this particular rotation was carried on not on instruction of the park officials but on the instruction of a local political committee. I suppose the minister would say that would be quite impossible.

**Mr. Smith (Lincoln):** Mr. Chairman—

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Perhaps I could have an answer from the minister.

**Mr. Smith (Lincoln):**—I should have made my remarks sooner but, if I am in order, I should like to make some reference to Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Mississauga.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I wonder whether the hon. member for Lincoln would allow the minister to reply to my question so that the reply would appear in the record following the question?

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Looking back on the record of discussions on this matter I find that in *Hansard* for February 18, 1959, at page 1147, in reply to a question by the hon. member for Port Arthur, my predecessor had the following comments to make:

There has been no trouble in the great majority of the parks but there are certain parks a long way removed from the national employment offices and we do have a policy of employing men who live close to the parks. This applies particularly in the case of Terra Nova park in Newfoundland and the park in Cape Breton. In those districts we have asked people of varying qualifications, ministers of churches, parish priests and so on, to bring to our attention needy people in order

to put them to work. We have considered other things such as rotation to make the work go farther and so on. Generally speaking, there has been a pretty fair effort made to move in that direction.

I think they will even accept recommendations from members of parliament.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I should like to ask the minister this question. It is just a supplementary question which I think will take only a minute. I would ask the minister whether, in order to save me time and personal research, he could bring me up to date on the latest arrangement for patronage in Terra Nova national park.

Perhaps I ought, in fairness to the minister, draw his attention to the fact that one of the people who concerned himself most about this subject in the past has recently obtained a postal contract and with the purity policy of the minister's colleague, the Postmaster General, I would assume he would not accept any recommendations from him any longer.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Mr. Chairman, I am not as familiar as the hon. member with Terra Nova national park. As a matter of fact, if it were permissible I think I might ask him that question and he would be in a position to give me a more adequate reply.

Perhaps I could state the terms of preference in regard to hiring in our national parks. First of all, local residents; second, married men with dependents; and the veterans' preference is also taken into consideration.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** There is one other consideration in respect to the Terra Nova national park which I asked the minister's predecessor and his predecessor also, because I think the minister's portfolio is the only one that has changed hands twice since the present government was originally formed.

I refer to an assurance that was given at the time the park was established to give a preference in employment in the park—and that was to be an absolute, overriding preference and I am very familiar with this, as the minister rightly said, because I had a good deal to do with the negotiations for the establishment of the park—to those persons who prior to the establishment of the park had made their living by engaging in lumbering operations in the park or in working in saw mills which used the timber from the park.

The provincial government asked for this assurance because they felt they were more or less taking away the livelihood of these people in establishing the park. They wanted to be sure that no hardship was effected. The minister's predecessors have never hesitated to reiterate this undertaking and I think have done their best to carry it out. I make