

*National Parks Act*

put forward their complaints in this House in the form of a question, either orally or on the Order Paper, or raise the matter in debate. Then we are told by the minister responsible that he cannot interfere with the administration of the CBC since politics must be divorced from the administration of the CBC as a Crown corporation.

Consequently, we decide to write to the president of the CBC or to some other senior official in that organization. I have many letters in my files to verify the fact that they invariably write back saying they are sorry but they do not determine the over-all policy of the CBC; that the Parliament of Canada is responsible for this. So you are caught betwixt and between. The Crown corporation will probably act as it sees fit, anyway. This is the sort of danger we face in establishing a Crown corporation to administer leaseholds and, indirectly, the rights of those Canadians who live in our parks and service the facilities therein.

It is not difficult to ensure that our national parks are preserved so they fulfil their intended purpose. The parks should be preserved not only for their natural beauty but in the interests of promoting those sports and recreational activities that admirably complement their terrain. I refer particularly to winter sports. However, as I say, these recreational facilities in our parks can be so constructed that they in no way interfere with the beauty of the park and its enjoyment by the Canadian people. There are some wilderness areas in our parks that should be classified as such. The hon. member for Northwest Territories illustrated this point when he referred to the Wood Buffalo Park in northern Alberta.

• (8:50 p.m.)

There is no real reason why that park should be categorized in the same way as Banff and Jasper National Parks. It is strictly a wilderness area which provides a haven for the buffalo herds. I believe these should be preserved. However, at no time will the Wood Buffalo National Park be used in such a way that it compares with Banff or Jasper National Parks. Should the fact that there are important mineral deposits within that area mean that they should never be developed? Certain wilderness and other areas which may exist in major parks like Waterton, Banff or Jasper should be delineated as such, but at the same time we should allow the controlled development of the resources

which may be in the area. This is particularly true in respect of Wood Buffalo Park. The hon. member spoke about negotiations between the government of Alberta and the federal government. These negotiations have been going on for many years. How will the negotiations be improved by signing the administration of the park over to a Crown corporation?

Then there are the townsite areas. In my opinion there is no reason why the areas included in these townsites should not be administered in an altogether different manner from the wilderness or recreational areas of our parks. It would seem to me that the passage of legislation such as this to set up a Crown corporation would even further confuse the picture and deny the right of self-government and citizenship to the people who happen to live in the parks. The rights of Canadians must not be violated. It is the responsibility of Parliament to protect these rights. Whenever people live in the parks we have a responsibility to ensure that their rights are protected, as we do for those who live elsewhere.

The people living in these parks are not exploiters; they are not people who have taken unfair advantage of their place of residence within a park. Some people may have abused the privilege but I ask, where are these culprits? There are very few people in the parks who do not carry out their responsibilities in a loyal and satisfactory way; therefore, consideration must be given to them. We are talking about individuals and communities of people.

It might be interesting to look briefly at the people who are living in these parks at the present time. In 1969 in Jasper—I am speaking now of the townsite and the people living there—30.2 per cent gained their livelihood from railroad employment. Several major transportation lines, either highway or railway, pass through this national park. It is logical to expect there must be people to service these facilities within the parks. Because Jasper is a railroad divisional centre and a large proportion of people work for the railway, are the people there to be denied their right of citizenship? Of the people living in Jasper 17.4 per cent are tradesmen—tradesmen are necessary so far as the building and maintenance of facilities are concerned—and 15.4 per cent of the people are governmental employees. These are for the most part people who are employed by the parks administration.

[Mr. Thompson.]