

*National Parks Act*

of the government's unwillingness to listen to the concern expressed by people interested in the national parks, or even to the concern expressed by members of the Liberal Party from the province of Alberta, not to mention that expressed by opposition members, particularly those who have national parks in their constituencies or close to them. I am very pleased to see both the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) and the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) in their seats. A short time ago there was no minister in the House. The suggestion may be made that this was not so, but I am sure evidence can be produced to support the statement I am making.

The bill which we are considering proposes to set up a leaseholding corporation which will manage, maintain and develop the national parks of Canada. I would like to ask this question of the Parliamentary Secretary, who has dutifully remained in the House throughout the debate on the bill: How will the corporation get started on developing the national parks of Canada? How much money will Parliament grant, award or give it to get started? How much money will we have to appropriate for starting this corporation? Let me put it another way. Does it need any money at all?

We should be told these facts before we agree to the establishment of the corporation. We should be told how much money is involved. If no money is involved, we should be told whether the 42-year leases will return money so quickly that the corporation will be self-sustaining. This is the essential question we must consider in connection with the proliferation of Crown corporations such as we have seen in recent months.

Can we expect the Crown corporation to grow so quickly that immediately on its conception, immediately on its birth it can take hold and pay its own way; that it can manage, maintain and develop—I emphasize the word “develop”—the national parks of Canada? I am saying this with full recognition that the bill proposes the establishment of a number of new parks. Even before the bill was introduced we knew there would be new parks established, one in Quebec, possibly one in Newfoundland, and so on across the country. Certainly there should be one in Ontario, and more development of the ones presently in Alberta. Surely we should be told how the corporation is going to get off the ground. Is it going to get off the ground from the taxation on the 42-year leases, or

[Mr. Horner.]

from the appropriation of moneys by the government toward the development of these parks?

Does the government really believe—it has not indicated whether it does—that the national parks must be developed at an accelerated rate in order to keep pace with the tourist industry in this country? I say that with all the emphasis possible because, as I mentioned in an earlier speech in this House—and I am sure other hon. members have also mentioned it—the tourist industry in the province of Alberta is ranking the second or third industry in that province; it is a major industry. We cannot afford to neglect it. This fact is true of all of Canada.

• (9:50 p.m.)

As we see our balance of payments and our trade deficit, we realize the strength and value of the contribution of the tourist industry to the economy of Canada. We cannot lightly disregard the servicing industry required to support the tourist industry alone. It must be flexible and willing to move with every whim and wham of the tourist industry. Surely members of this House realize that a tourist is one who comes to our country from another, or comes to one part of Canada from another and says, “I am prepared to spend money to see this area but I want services”. He is prepared to spend money when he leaves home, and wants to enjoy the services and pleasures of this great country.

Can a Crown corporation, granted no appropriations from this government, be flexible enough to meet the wishes and demands of the tourist industry? I am doubtful if it can, Mr. Speaker. I see the Parliamentary Secretary nodding in agreement with my last statement, so he too is doubtful. Before this debate closes—I would like to think it will close tonight but if not, it will have to carry on tomorrow—I would like him to say that this Crown corporation will not be asked to start from nothing or from the taxation of the people now living in the parks; that it will be given the money to meet the demands of the tourist industry. Then we might better judge the intent and the willingness of the Crown corporation to manage, maintain and develop the national parks.

We have seen no evidence on the government side which would suggest that it is prepared to encourage the Crown corporation to properly manage and meet the demands of