

is in the process now of negotiations and discussions with the Minister of the Environment of British Columbia.

● (1730)

I think the Hon. Member who moved the motion would be interested to know that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Crombie) recently visited the Queen Charlotte Islands and the native group in that area. That Minister made his views known to the Minister of the Environment. He is very supportive of the idea of protecting the area from undesirable development, yet he is looking at it as a possible area for tourism and a potential pilot project for allowing a native band to control or manage an area. I do not know if all those things can be accomplished, but I wanted to add the Minister's name to the list because he has made the effort to visit the Islands and discuss the problems with the native groups affected, and his comments have been related to the Minister of the Environment. That makes three Ministers of the Crown who have indicated their support for a reasonable resolution of this opportunity, which this is, on behalf of the Canadian environment and the Canadian people.

It might be helpful, Mr. Speaker, to explain how a national park might be developed. While we were in opposition, we indicated a very clear disposition to assist in the continued development of a national parks system in Canada. In the last month of the last Parliament we supported on very short notice an amendment to the National Parks Act which established a new national park in the Mingan Islands. At that time, the Hon. Member for Davenport was the Minister, although I think he was absent. In supporting that motion we indicated our support for expansion when possible of the national parks system. In addition to that, however, there is a process which needs to be understood. It is not a unilateral process. It must be undertaken in co-operation and in conjunction with the provinces, and this is precisely what has been undertaken with the province of British Columbia. If I may say so, Mr. Speaker, given the kind of relationship this Government has established with the provinces, we have an excellent opportunity of achieving the maximum degree of co-operation with the provinces as compared to other Governments in the recent past. If we continue that kind of constructive relationship, we can expect to get the most positive and favourable results.

Parks Canada has defined 48 natural areas across the country in conjunction with future park expansion. Each one has specific attributes. Included in this is South Moresby which has been clearly identified by Parks Canada, and this is part of the process which can ultimately add to the establishment of a national park there. For reasons the Hon. Member has already mentioned, this area is certainly unique in Canada and perhaps in the world. It has been called by many groups the second archipelago. I have not had the opportunity of personally visiting that particular piece of the Canadian landscape, but I have seen an excellent selection of well-documented presentation slides which exposed me to flora and fauna which I did not really know existed in Canada. So there is no question that we have a unique opportunity, but clearly we must follow a process in co-operation with the province and

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native groups as well as the long list of environmental groups concerned.

The Hon. Member indicated that the Parks Canada centennial could be recognized in this way. He will know that the first national park in Banff 100 years ago was created almost by accident, and I do not know that anyone really could have anticipated the extent to which we have developed a national parks system across this land. But with 31 national parks, as well as a number of areas under active consideration to become parks, I think it is a particularly appropriate time to recognize the contributions made over many years by many individuals, groups and Governments to the development on behalf of the Canadian public of a system of parks that we can all be proud of.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to go back a little to commitments and obligations and to the premise of this motion. I do not think the motion is completely redundant in that the Hon. Member is using this opportunity to bring forward his views and those of others, and I am happy to have had the opportunity to express mine. But the motion really lacks anything extraordinary over and above what the Minister of the Environment has already done, is continuing to do, and will hopefully be able to bring to a successful conclusion in the future. So the motion has really little place in the whole scene, if you will. It is in and of itself redundant. The thought is genuine, I am sure, and it is supported by the Government and is being acted on by the Government, which, again, is in contrast to the past.

Mr. Caccia: When will you announce the park?

Mr. Gurbin: The Hon. Member knows this is not a process which is put on an exact schedule or time-frame. He was the Minister of the Environment for a period of time. I cannot remember exactly how long his predecessor was there, but I believe it was several years. This process was not started yesterday and will not finish tomorrow. If we continue with the positive approach and constructive dialogue which the Minister is undertaking, I hope we will have a positive conclusion in which we can all take some satisfaction.

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on behalf of the NDP and on my own behalf because I visited this area a couple of times. I want to say to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Gurbin) that I am really disappointed in the attitude he took in his speech. I would ask him to reconsider.

As I understood his speech, he said he can support the motion. Those were his words. However, he thinks the motion is redundant and therefore the Government is not going to let it through today. That is what I understand from his speech. He feels that the process is going ahead and therefore we do not need the motion.