

National Parks Act

administration, operation and maintenance and \$550,583 for construction and acquisition of equipment. In Waterton Lakes park there was spent \$187,857 for administration, operation and maintenance and \$327,258 for construction and acquisition of equipment.

Mr. Hansell: Would that construction include roads?

Mr. Lesage: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: If the minister speaks now he will close the debate.

Mr. Lesage: I just answered yes.

Mr. J. A. MacLean (Queens): Mr. Speaker, there are a few brief remarks I should like to make in connection with this bill, since one of the most popular national parks in the country lies entirely within my riding. I refer of course to the national park on Prince Edward Island. This park contains within its boundary a great length of excellent beach and very fine tourist accommodation, and also of course the area which is connected with the setting of the very popular and widely known series of books written by Lucy Maud Montgomery, and this factor alone brings a large number of tourists to visit our national park there from all over North America.

As far as the administration of the park is concerned, there are a few brief observations I should like to make and then I am through. The first is that although considerable progress has been made in the building of roads in this park, there is still progress to be made in that direction before the park can fulfil its function to best advantage.

In connection with accommodation, there are fine hotels in the area and also tourist cabins which are run by individuals, and built entirely out of their own capital, of course. These people have begun to fear—I do not know whether their fears are justified or not—that there may be considerable construction of tourist accommodation by the department in this park which will compete unfairly with private industry which caters to the tourist trade in the area. I hope their fears are completely unfounded. I would be glad if I had that assurance from the minister because I feel that the tourist accommodation now provided entirely by local people is provided from the investment of their own money. They have an interest in the best possible administration of the accommodation which is provided, and it is

only reasonable of course that this accommodation should come up to a very high standard so that as a result the tourist trade in that area will continue to grow.

I wish the new minister every success in his duties in connection with our park, and I hope at a very early date he will be able to come down personally and visit us, perhaps sometime during this summer.

Mr. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): I want to take this opportunity to raise three points that have to do with this bill and are of particular interest to our national park in Manitoba, namely the Riding Mountain national park. I could say all the fine things that the hon. member for Queens has said in reference to the national park on Prince Edward Island, but it is well known to all hon. members that the national park in Manitoba annually draws the second largest number of tourists of all national parks in Canada. That fact speaks for itself.

As I examine this bill, it seems to cover three matters that have been topics of discussion by all those who have a special interest in our Manitoba park. First of all, the terms of the bill would tend to suggest that there is a new policy relating to national parks to have them operated on an all-year-round basis. At the present time in Manitoba, partly arising from weather conditions, our park is a summer resort exclusively. During recent years the suggestion has been put forward that a park having the facilities of Riding Mountain park might very well serve as a winter resort as well as a summer resort. As I see the various terms of the bill indicating that provision is to be made for schools and hospitals, or at least the conditions are going to be set up making it possible to establish those services in the national park areas, it seems to me that this is a move in that direction. Perhaps later on in the discussion the minister might clarify that point so far as Riding Mountain national park is concerned, at least.

I would also point out that at Clear lake, which is the popular name of the park, it has been felt that there is need for a community hall of some type which would provide accommodation for large meetings. At the present time the only facilities available are to be found in the museum, a relatively small log cabin type building with quite a small auditorium. This matter might be taken into consideration by the minister. No doubt he will have an opportunity to visit the park in the near future to see the need for these improvements for himself.

It has been drawn to my attention that there is a special problem in our Manitoba