

Supply—Mr. Dinsdale

connection with national parks and also water resource policy in the nation. The minister is not a bureaucrat in so far as national resources are concerned; he is a politician. But he has demonstrated during his term of office that he has come under the influence of the bureaucrats who surround him in the cabinet. Otherwise he would not be constantly quarrelling with such democratic groups as the advisory councils for the Banff and Jasper national parks.

The minister and these advisory groups, which are duly elected bodies, have been in a state of armed truce ever since the hon. gentleman took over responsibility for national parks. I had many meetings with the advisory councils of both these parks when I was the minister responsible for parks, and I always found them to be a very strong-minded and forceful group, yet willing to listen to any reasonable explanations which might be put before them.

In dealing with the statement made by the minister last evening, he pointed out that the new leasing policy which is going to be put before this parliament in due course is quite a reasonable one and in line with the fundamental purposes of national parks. As a former minister I have no quarrel with that. It's not what you do, it's the way that you do it that counts most. I asked him last evening whether they were still carrying out the zoning policy which we enunciated in 1961 and he said yes.

If this is so, then there is no reason at all why the quarrel and the conflict between the minister and these advisory groups should exist; because the zoning policy approach was designed over a reasonable period of time to deal with the problems of preserving the wilderness area and conserving these museums of the flora and fauna of Canada for all future generations. The trouble is that if you attempt to unscramble the yolk too quickly you are bound to run into difficulty.

The point that the advisory council have constantly put forward is, in effect, that commitments previously made by the government of Canada are now being violated. The zoning policy was designed to raise over a reasonable period of time the standards of the townsites in these mountain and prairie national parks; to provide an area to meet the recreational needs of the Canadian public and also the growing tourist industry, referred to by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Winters) as of great economic significance to

Canada; and further, to prevent any additional encroachment on the wilderness areas of these important national parks.

The townsites were to be administered by a town manager rather than by a national parks superintendent. Two comprehensive studies on town planning have been placed before the government. These are the Oberlander reports in respect of Banff and Jasper. If they are carried out and implemented—and it is now some three years since they were brought down—there will be no need for all this bickering and backbiting which is now going on with reference to our national parks.

I should like to point out that the national parks of western Canada are quite different from those of eastern Canada. The national parks of eastern Canada never carried out a leasing policy owing to the fact that there were recreational areas available in abundance along the sea coast. But on the prairies and in the mountains in the early days, with a small population and a lack of alternative recreational areas, the government deliberately encouraged settlement of these parks and cannot repudiate overnight policies once established. I recommend to the minister that he follow the zoning plan that was very carefully laid out.

● (8:10 p.m.)

There is another matter that would help resolve this difficulty. The former Conservative administration had put before the provincial governments a comprehensive recreational park development program to take the pressure off these national parks. There has been no attempt to implement this program by the Liberal administration over the past three years. We also set up a federal-provincial ministers park conference to aid in the co-ordination of these policies. This is the way in which the problem will be dealt with, not by some out-of-the-blue bureaucratic dictat.

One word on water resources. The subject has been mentioned several times already in this parliament by the hon. member for Kootenay East—

Mr. Herridge: Kootenay West, please. Don't get me mixed up.

An hon. Member: Heaven forbid.

Mr. Dinsdale: By the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge), by the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) and by