

National Parks Act

that in 1963 the principle of perpetuity was cancelled by the then Liberal government, and that this was the point at which the controversy began. I think it would be helpful to have this suggestion clarified if that has not already been done by the Orders in Council because the hon. member for Brandon-Souris in the remarks I have quoted, made the very direct allegation that it was a Liberal government which in 1963 cancelled the perpetual leases. I wish now to read from the evidence given before the Standing Committee on Northern Affairs and National Resources on March 14, 1967 as recorded at page 1036 of the Minutes of Proceedings and evidence of that committee. At that time the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, who is now the Minister of Public Works, gave evidence before the committee. This evidence was not contradicted and never has been contradicted. I should like to read this paragraph:

● (5:10 p.m.)

The previous Ministry in 1958 decided that these so-called perpetual leases could not be reconciled with the public interest for a variety of reasons which I will not go into now, and since 1958 no new lease or renewal has been made with the so-called perpetual renewal clause. From 1958 until I assumed this portfolio, 252 so-called perpetual leases had already been recovered; that is exchanged for a lease with a fixed term and no perpetual renewal feature.

There was some discussion during the debate by the hon. member for Brandon-Souris and the hon. member for Rocky Mountain (Mr. Sulatycky) about the particular nature of the 252 leases. I thought it would be helpful to hon. members to have this information on the record at this time.

Then, as reported at page 3448 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Brandon-Souris talked about substantial increases in rents in national parks. I do not know how relevant it was to the debate, but in any event we wandered a bit. He referred to increases of 4000 per cent in some leases. The fact is that on commercial property—and I want to make a distinction between commercial and residential properties—there have in fact been very significant increases since the new rental policy was commenced. I should like to give two examples as an indication of what is happening. I think these examples will probably indicate to hon. members that the rental policy did in fact require some review and revision.

The first example is that of a service station in the Banff National Park. It is in the townsite and covers three lots. Recently it was valued by a competent professional land valuator at \$46,200. That is the market value. Prior to the rental review the lessee of that property had been paying \$50.40 a year for a property with a market value of \$46,200. The rental has been increased to \$2,072. The second example is that of a motel in the Banff townsite covering four lots. Recently it was valued by a professional, competent valuator at \$90,000. Prior to the rental review the lessee of that property had been paying \$80 a year in rent for a property valued at \$90,000. The rental was increased to \$5,400 a year. This would seem to be pretty cogent evidence that, first, a rental review was necessary and, second, that the sort of review that has been carried out under this minister and his immediate predecessor has been fair and reasonable.

The hon. members for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin), Joliette (Mr. La Salle) and Trois Rivières (Mr. Mongrain) dealt with the matter of national parks in the province of Quebec. I wish to mention in this context, as the minister has mentioned, that negotiations are now under way with the Quebec government, and indeed are proceeding well, with regard to the establishment of a new national park in the Gaspé and a new national park in the Mauricie area. These negotiations are continuing. Under the leadership of our minister there is no reason to believe they will not be successful. I want to give this assurance to the hon. members from Quebec who had a concern about this.

The hon. member for Malpeque (Mr. MacLean) and the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) made representations and expressed concern about a second national park in Prince Edward Island. Negotiations indeed are under way in this regard. Next week I will be representing my minister in Charlottetown in further discussions in respect of the establishment of a second national park in that province.

The hon. member for Rocky Mountain dealt very effectively, as did the hon. member for Calgary South (Mr. Mahoney), with the question of some greater degree of autonomy in the townsites in the national parks. Other members mentioned this. It seems to me this has been a very important aspect of the debate. Attention has been drawn to the concern of the residents of those townsites by the