

*National Parks Act*

all agree but I dare say that no Canadian will oppose the idea of developing our resources.

I would like to put forward a suggestion and ask the representatives of the federal government responsible for the setting up of the first federal park in Quebec to make some concessions while paying due respect to the wishes of the Quebec government, which they failed to do when the creation of the Forillon park was discussed.

The federal government, allegedly because it is the central government, would like the provinces always to bow down to its wishes. This is a bad attitude and Canadians are still suffering from it.

Last year, I put a question on the order paper. The answer which I received was obviously ridiculous. I asked: Can the minister tell us if discussions have been held between the federal government and the provincial government of Quebec, or if it is intended to hold any? In short, the question read as follows:

Does the government intend to establish other federal parks in the province of Quebec?

The answer was as follows, and I quote:  
No.

My first question was as follows:

Does the government intend to establish other federal parks in the province of Quebec a) if not, for what reason? b) if so, where?

Answer:

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):

1. a) The federal government would welcome—  
—it is again a good pious wish—

—any request from the province of Quebec for the establishment of other national parks in the province;

b) Any area in the province considered of national significance and worthy of preservation for future generations.

That is precisely the crux of the problem. It is obvious that the province of Quebec has vast territories that are worthy of being preserved and developed for future generations, which would represent untold wealth.

The federal government replies: we are waiting for a request from the provincial government. Whenever we ask the same question, to the Quebec government, we get this reply: We do not dare ask Ottawa for anything because they will answer no. If we make a request to Ottawa, they will say it has to be a national park and will refuse to respect provincial rights in this regard. And so there is no national park in Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw your attention to the other question, as I am sure you will be interested. I quote:

2. Since the adoption of the act respecting federal parks, how much money has been spent on federal parks and of that amount, how much has gone to the province of Quebec?

The answer was the following:

2. Since the establishment of the first national park (Banff) in 1885, \$355,289,424 was spent on national parks in Canada. (This comprises operation and maintenance, capital investments and money spent on trunk highways.) Since there were no national parks in Quebec, no money was spent in that province for national parks.

So that was the result. An amount of \$335,289,424 was spent in other provinces because the federal government thought it was worthwhile to develop those parks. Since the federal government is playing politics at the expense of the Quebecers and since the Quebec government does the same, the result is that there is no national park in Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, \$355 million were spent in other provinces and Quebec got nothing for the simple reason that both levels of government are taking pleasure in passing the buck and playing politics at the expense of Quebecers.

• (9:40 p.m.)

As there is a Liberal government in Ottawa and a Conservative one in Quebec, words give rise to conflicts. One day, the people in Gaspé are told that, thanks to the federal government, they will have a national park. The next day, the provincial minister states that the province cannot participate fully in the federal government's project because this section of the Constitution or that right are not respected or again because this or that wish of the province is not taken into account.

Then new discussions are begun, following which the ministers answer members' questions arrogantly, stating: We are now considering the possibility of creating a national park.

That is what led me to ask the third question, and I quote:

Is the government negotiating with the government of the province of Quebec with a view to establishing other federal parks in that province?

And what was the answer?

3. No.

That is where things stand as of now. Neither the federal government nor the provincial government are serious enough to take any steps likely to help the development of the tourist industry in Quebec.