

*National Parks Act*

Alberta is greater by far than the total area of all remaining national parks in Canada with the exception of Wood Buffalo National Park which, by itself, is more than double the combined areas of Banff, Jasper and Waterton National Parks.

We are told in Alberta that we should be thankful we live next to the national parks, but we must not use them as recreational areas; oh, no. "Let the peasants be content with being next to the castle of the lord." That seems to be the attitude of some people who advocate the severely restricted use of the parks. In this day and age there is a requirement for the adequate development of those parks but that, as I have said before, does not mean that I support or in any way advocate making Banff or Jasper into so-called Coney Islands—not at all.

The parks contain enormous areas and, as a matter of fact, most of the people who advocate the total conservation of the parks have never been to them and do not even know the wilderness areas of those parks. Nevertheless, there are areas in which there must be development such as the townsites. People were living in the national parks long before any of the officials came there to work for the responsible department. Now, we are getting, step by step, bureaucratic action which is designed to cut back the rights of these people, rights that were obtained by agreement with the Government of Canada. There was a bona fide agreement on the part of both sides, Mr. Speaker. But now, because there are people in government who feel that other philosophies ought to prevail, the rights of these individuals are to be brusquely set aside.

It may be said that there was a change of policy with regard to leases back in 1960. Perhaps I ought to say that this was a bureaucratically inspired move. But further I want to say this: although from 1960 onward it was indicated clearly, as it was, that future leases and new leases would be entered into on certain conditions, that is no ground whatsoever for asserting and using improper pressures, and there are all sorts of examples of improper pressures being used upon holders of other types of leases, to make those persons surrender their rights under their original leases in order to obtain permits or renewals.

● (4:10 p.m.)

I have had all sorts of people write to me. Holders of commercial leases or owners of

[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

motels who wished to make improvements—yes, to make improvements—have written to me. They have told me these improvements were needed to meet the demands of increased traffic, to upgrade facilities as requested by the park authorities. But in order to do this a permit was required, because one almost requires a permit to go to the bathroom in the park; that is how closely monitored are the lives of the residents of Banff and Jasper. In order to bring about these improvements a development permit is required. And a development permit is not issued, under the new terms, unless there is a surrender of the original lease. In other words, an economic blackjack has been used on some of the leaseholders in the parks. That is reprehensible. Those people had an interest in businesses which they had been conducting for years. The park authorities had an interest in seeing that they should continue. And we, as citizens, had an interest in seeing that the parks lived up to their reputations.

The other day a resident of Jasper said there was not one park official who was aware of the conditions under which residents lived in those parks. This man was not there to make a living out of a commercial enterprise. He was there for a different, though essential purpose. He said none of those park officials had been obliged to spend a summer there and answer the door two or three times every night to people asking whether accommodation was available, or whether they could park trailers and cars in the yard. These are the conditions under which residents of the parks live.

In Jasper they have a very small, ancient hospital. A multi-million dollar ski development has taken place at *Marmot Basin* and is to be enlarged. The Yellowhead Highway is going through. But do you think any encouragement is given to the sisters who operate this hospital? Are they encouraged to upgrade it? A new hospital is required. Pilate-like, the park authorities stand aside and say this is the responsibility of the Province of Alberta. But when it comes to other things, the Province of Alberta has no authority within the townsite of Jasper. They cannot erect a senior citizen's home because there is no local authority. In fact, I suppose one could not build a hospital, now, because there is no local authority. We are dealing, here, with people. No man in Ottawa is able to wipe out or blot out or put aside any resident of the park or of the park townsite. Yet, in effect, these citizens find themselves under a sort of