

Supply—Northern Affairs

year they cut poles to rebuild the stockade. They want to restore the buildings and establish a museum on the spot. Through their organized efforts they wish to preserve this historic gateway to Edmonton.

I might add, Mr. Chairman, that in 1936 the historic sites and monuments board looked into the matter of Fort Ellice but no action was taken. In September, 1960 the board's fur trade committee examined Fort Ellice together with other western fur trading sites, and placed it ninth in the order of importance. I should like to draw to the attention of the minister the opinion of my constituents and of the Canadian people to the effect that anything worth preserving is of sufficient importance that it cannot be graded up or down. It is either worth preserving or it is not. True, no battles were fought, no blood was shed at this particular fort, but a battle was fought against the elements, against nature; a battle was fought to blaze trails for the fur traders; a battle was fought to blaze trails for the settlers who subsequently came to this area.

Now the area is a thriving farming community. The local people for miles around can take pride in this old site. They are prepared to do as much as possible on their own. The people of this area feel sure, Mr. Chairman, that this department, under the able leadership of a man who knows this area and knows this constituency, will give assistance. We still have photographs and plans of the old fort. The people want to restore it so that future generations will know this is the spot to which the first white man came and laid claim to the western prairies. I hope the minister will take note of this particular site. My people are very much concerned about it. As a matter of fact, so far as historical sites are concerned this is the only request I have to make.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I should like to direct a question, through you, to the minister concerning the highway through Riding Mountain national park. I do not know whether this subject should be dealt with under this item or under item 285.

Mr. Dinsdale: Either one.

Mr. Mandziuk: Then I shall deal with it under item 285.

Mr. McCleave: I have a few brief remarks with regard to what I described the other day as the shining jewel in the historical part of the empire of the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources. This concerns the Halifax citadel, easily the most popular historical site in Canada, at least from the standpoint of visitors.

I have two problems in relation thereto. First, there is some complaint that the noon gun now being fired from citadel hill, a gun which has been fired for well over a century, is now housed in a building which one editorial writer at least likens to an old barn. It is to be hoped that before the tourist season is upon us some steps can be taken to bring the gun out into the open. I can assure the minister that the men who handle this weapon in Halifax are quite accustomed to the elements and will not mind the two or three days of the year when some fog or rain may be about.

The other problem, sir, is that the gun being fired now is a rather modern weapon. There are in that area, I am told, several 24-pounders which were used back in 1812. It might be a fitting historical note if one of these old pieces were to be found and placed in operation. I commend both these problems to, I am sure, the sympathetic consideration of the minister.

Mr. Smith (Calgary South): I should like to say a word or two to the minister about national parks policy. If it should be in any way construed that in so doing I am saying something unkind to him, I hope that, he will understand I am suggesting that it is time to take a new look at our general policy for parks. I would like to make it clear that in no way should it be inferred that I am criticizing the officials who have the responsibility of administering the National Parks Act, who for the most part, as I am sure all hon. members agree, are a dedicated group of civil servants. They have a very difficult time in carrying out the administration of an act which I suggest in its concept is somewhat impractical and to some degree outdated.

I rise on this occasion because I do not think there is a greater number of individual problems brought to my attention, not just by the people within my own constituency but from many areas, than those which relate to the difficulties in respect of national parks and their administration. I want to say to the minister that I think we all appreciate the fact that he, perhaps more than any of the gentlemen who have held this office save his immediate predecessor, has shown a great deal of interest in improving the situation. It is because of this that I am taking advantage of this time to make suggestions to him.

May I first of all read very briefly the first principle of the National Parks Act, which states that the parks are hereby dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment, subject to the provisions of this act and the regulations; and such