

Supply—Northern Affairs

Can the minister tell us under what conditions those youth hostels are erected? What assistance is provided by the parks branch, if any, in addition of course to providing the site? How many of those are in existence at the present time?

Mr. Lesage: There are seven or eight of those hostels, and they are provided free of charge to the youth. We supply them with fuelwood, and all necessities of life, except food, of course, garbage facilities, public services.

Mr. Harkness: The service that is provided to the youth by the parks branch is the provision of a site to erect the building on and the provision of fuel. Apart from that no other assistance is given; is that correct?

Mr. Lesage: The buildings are the property of the government and the parks service has erected and maintained them, except for those at Eisenhower junction and Lake Louise.

Mr. Harkness: That is the point I am getting at. The parks branch actually erects and owns the buildings. In other words, all of the cost of the construction has been carried by the parks branch?

Mr. Lesage: Yes, with the exceptions mentioned.

Mr. Harkness: And the buildings are, you might say, operated merely by the youth hostel association?

Mr. Lesage: That is right.

Mr. Harkness: As I think I said before, the development of this youth hostel movement is an exceptionally good one. It has made the use of our national parks available to a large number of young people who otherwise could not go there because they could not afford the charges of the hotels and so on. I hope the erection of those hostels will be continued and expanded. It is one of the finest things that has been done in the national parks in the last two years, and I am extremely glad to see it.

The other matter which I mentioned was the provision of better skiing facilities. Perhaps it can be tied in with the erection of those youth hostels. Some of those youth hostel buildings could be used for skiing purposes in the wintertime. Can the minister comment on the general matter of improvement of skiing facilities which I spoke of a few minutes ago?

Mr. Lesage: I have not been there since the spring of 1946, but I expect to be there this summer and I intend to meet the people who operate under licence at Mount Norquay and to discuss with them facilities there and

any improvements that can be made to the present facilities. The hon. member can rest assured that I shall keep his representations in mind when I am there.

Mr. Harkness: I may point out that this business of discussing with the concessionaires of Mount Norquay what further improvements may be made does not even touch on the representations I was making, namely, the provision of ski trails through these mountains, thereby making much more territory available to skiing than exists at the present time. That is one of the difficulties of skiing out there. That is one of the reasons why fewer people go there than otherwise would. The number of places where you can actually go to ski and where there are facilities for people to get in out of the cold are extremely limited. You have only Norquay besides Banff, Sunshine and two or three other places. That is all we have. The very point I am making is that these ski trails and other things that could be used as youth hostels in the summertime are just straight shelters, cheaply constructed. Huts or lodges should be provided so that a much greater area could be opened up to skiers.

Mr. Brooks: Where are these seven or eight hostels located? At what parks in Canada do we have them? Are there any in eastern Canada?

Mr. Lesage: They are all in the mountain parks.

Mr. Brooks: Is it the intention to have any constructed in eastern Canada? We could do a bit of skiing down east, you know, as well as out west.

Mr. Lesage: I will consider it.

Mr. Montgomery: I have a question or two to ask the minister. This may not be the right place to ask it. If it is not, I would like him to tell me. I heard nothing about the revenue derived from these parks. Does the government get any revenue from these national parks? If so, where can we find it?

Mr. Lesage: At page 379 of the estimate book.

Mr. Johnston (Bow River): Before the item is carried I want to bring to the attention of the minister something that has bothered me for some little time in connection with the Banff national park. I refer to the buildings erected in the park area. This is in the town of Banff. I have had several instances of people writing to me in regard to the regulations concerning buildings. I have taken some of these cases up with the department and the officials, and they are working on them now trying to evolve some sort of a solution.