

National Parks Act

a great deal toward our tourist trade in the province of Alberta.

I think this legislation goes much further than concerning itself with the basic facts of the national parks of Canada. It epitomizes the attitude of the government with regard to the whole aspect of responsibility. I spoke on the question of responsible government on a point of privilege this afternoon. I did not get far at that time, but I fully believe the dripping water will wear away the stone at some time. This is one more attempt wherein I take it upon myself, as other members have, to point out the callous attitude of the government in paying no attention to the citizens now living within the national parks.

The hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Thompson) quite logically and deliberately pointed out who those citizens are, why they are there and how they came to be there. He also pointed out that 94 per cent of the land of the national parks in Canada lay in western Canada. This is an interesting point if you couple it with the feeling of alienation that exists in western Canada because this government does not care about the citizens there.

Then you look at this piece of legislation and ask, "Are these people to have the right to administer their affairs in their towns; growing, prosperous towns until a few years ago when the 42-year lease concept was brought into being?" If you take that into consideration, this piece of legislation deliberately epitomizes the attitude of the government.

The right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) pointed out this afternoon that with the largest cabinet this country has ever had—with 30 ministers—not one minister is interested enough to come in, take part, observe, and interest himself in the plight of the citizens in our national parks. I see the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) in the House dutifully reading a labour contract, no doubt not concerning himself with this question although I know he is a man of generous heart. I wish he would attempt to interest himself in this matter, because he has gone down in history as quite a negotiator. Maybe he could negotiate this bill into oblivion. I know that the member for Rocky Mountain (Mr. Sulatycky) would agree.

Mr. Mackasey: I am a good defence man.

Mr. Horner: The minister suggests he is a good defence man. I can vouch for that. The people of Banff, Jasper and Waterton need a

[Mr. Horner.]

good defence man today. I urge him to take part. The hon. member for Rocky Mountain isn't a bad forward, either, and this is what he had to say about this legislation:

Its powers are too wide. The corporation would be in a position to compete with free enterprise in the national parks. Such competition should not be allowed when private enterprise is already in the field.

He went on to say:

I do not believe such a result will be achieved by this bill unless there are some very significant changes to it.

I agree with him 100 per cent, but I go further than he did and point out the callous attitude this government has had to the whole concept of responsible government. Is this bill spelling out to the people living in these parks that they will have some say in the development of the parks? No, Mr. Speaker, the bill does not say that at all. The bill says: We are going to set up a corporation.

● (9:20 p.m.)

If the government were operating with 10 or 15 ministers who were overburdened with work and wanted to get rid of some responsibility, maybe one could accept the idea that a Crown corporation would release them for other activities. But 30 ministers should be able to carry the load that 20 carried a couple of years ago.

What does a Crown corporation do? I was interested in the remarks of the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Skoberg) when he spoke against Crown corporations, although a few years ago the leader of his party was promoting Crown corporations in western Canada. A Crown corporation removes control one step further from the people. An elected representative has to batter down the doors of a Crown corporation in order to be heard, and that is sometimes difficult; the appropriate minister can say that decisions made by the corporation cannot be changed.

I maintain the concept and the basic principle of this legislation is wrong. What does it say? It says a Crown corporation is going to manage and maintain townsites in the national parks. The government are going to give it a few tidbits. Then it comes along and says that it is going to develop. What about the money that is already invested by private enterprise in the townsites and parks? What chance has it to compete with a new developer who is also going to manage and maintain the existing enterprises in the parks? The existing enterprise in that park is not going