

National Parks Act

Mr. Castleden: Is it not possible to interpret the act in any way so that students who want to continue with vocational training can receive these benefits? I understand there is no interpretation of the act at the present time which would permit any student to apply for vocational training of any kind.

Mr. Bennett: If the hon. member means vocational training at the secondary level the answer is no, but of course there are some technical institutes that require matriculation or high school graduation, and that type of vocational training is covered by the act.

Mr. Green: Can the parliamentary assistant give us an example of such an institution?

Mr. Bennett: In my own province I think the Ryerson Institute in Toronto is one. There must be others in other provinces.

Mr. Brooks: The technical institute in Halifax.

Section agreed to.

Section 2 agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

NATIONAL PARKS ACT**AMENDMENTS RESPECTING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PARKS**

Hon. Jean Lesage (Minister of Resources and Development) moved the second reading of Bill No. 28, to amend the National Parks Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, His Excellency the Governor General, having been made acquainted with the purport of this bill, has given consent, so far as Her Majesty's property rights are affected, that the house may do therein as they shall think fit.

I should like at this point, Mr. Speaker, to say a few words about the purpose of the bill. I am sure hon. members will agree that the amendments proposed are not extensive. They are, however, important, as they will assist in the orderly and efficient administration and development of our national parks.

We are all familiar with the manner in which the national parks of Canada were established and the legislative provisions which have been made in the past to assure that the parks would be preserved for all time as part of our Canadian heritage.

The National Parks Act was passed in 1930 and placed the national parks of Canada on a statutory basis for the first time. Since then, amendments have been passed at

various times to meet changing circumstances, to authorize extensions to the national parks system and to provide for better administration. The last amendment was passed in 1948. Since that time, it has become apparent that certain sections of the present act should be clarified and that certain changes should be made to permit the reasonable solution of problems which have arisen.

Perhaps the most important change proposed is that the governor in council be empowered to authorize the Minister of Resources and Development to enter into agreements with a province or any person for the development, operation and maintenance of public utility services in a national park, including telephone, electric power and natural gas for use only in the park. While in some cases it might be the most reasonable course for the department to undertake such a project, in other cases it might be found more efficient and economical for this type of service to be undertaken by private enterprise or by a provincial hydroelectric power commission. The proposed amendment would make such an arrangement possible.

A case in point has been the supply of power for Jasper national park. In 1948 the department entered into an agreement with the Northland Utilities Limited whereby the company would construct for the department a small hydroelectric power plant on the Astoria river. The funds were provided by the department, and the company has since operated the plant under lease. Power needs at Jasper have grown considerably and a larger plant is required. We believe the practical and efficient solution is to permit the company to purchase the existing plant, construct an addition and continue to operate the enlarged facilities. The company has indicated its willingness to participate in this arrangement.

A second important amendment would permit municipalities, water districts and other persons adjacent to a national park to obtain a supply of water from a park for domestic purposes. Many streams and rivers arise within the park boundaries and many persons outside the parks are dependent on these waters for their domestic supply. In the course of park operations and development it sometimes becomes necessary to pollute streams or otherwise interfere with the natural flow of water leading from the park. In these cases, persons living outside the park may suffer.

The amendment now before the house would permit these persons to obtain a supply of unpolluted water from within the