

Supply—Northern Affairs

like to have his opinion as to whether those buildings are the right type to be built at the top of a mountain, in a park.

In view of the unique nature and the elevation of this park, as well as its beauty, I suggest more money should be spent in its development. I happen to know that people from the United States and from the old country visit it whenever they come to British Columbia, and that they are keenly interested in it. I do suggest that more money should be spent in the development of the Revelstoke park.

I do not know what the government's policy is and whether it would spend more money on the park if the Canadian Pacific railway were to build a hotel at the top of the mountain. However I have noticed that advertising by the travel bureau is coincidental with the information sent out by the two railway companies. I would urge again that the minister look into the possibility of spending more money on the development of this park.

Mr. Dufresne: A short time ago we heard reference to one hundred and fifty horses living in an area of eighteen square miles. Well, if hon. members do not like the sound of that, I would point out to them that we have labouring people in my home city, families of eight or ten, living in three-roomed apartments. Do you not think, Mr. Chairman, that it would be reasonable to keep these horses in an area of possibly a couple of square miles, instead of eighteen square miles, and thus permit the people of Canada to have access to this park?

Mr. Harkness: I should like to make a plea to the minister, one which the late Mr. Adamson and I have been making to successive ministers who have been in charge of the national parks over the last nine years. It is a matter concerning which, unfortunately, very little has been done. I refer to the improvement of skiing facilities in the western Rockies, particularly in the area leading out from Banff and Lake Louise, and crossing the Alberta-British Columbia border. We have in that area, and perhaps to a somewhat lesser extent in the Jasper area, the finest skiing to be found anywhere in the world. Unfortunately it is not used to any great extent because the number who visit there from eastern Canada, as well as from the United States and other countries, is relatively small. The number is nothing like as great as the number who go to much less desirable skiing areas in the United States and, of course, there is no relationship whatever to the great numbers who visit Switzerland, the Austrian Alps, and places of that kind.

[Mr. Herridge.]

We do not expect numbers as great as those who visit the European skiing resorts because we realize that there are not such great numbers of skiers on this continent. I am convinced however that the number of tourists and, of course, the revenue to the country and to the parks in particular, could be greatly increased by the improvement of skiing facilities. Those now available are limited and relatively expensive. For a number of years the late member and I advocated that the department should do a great deal more work by way of clearing ski trails so that people could go on ski trips to the mountains. It might make some effort to provide huts, such as are found in large numbers in the European skiing areas. These huts could be built at a relatively small cost and could be used by those skiers for overnight shelter, and things of that sort. The same trails, of course, could be used in the summertime by hikers. That is one thing which would not cost a great deal of money and it would greatly add to the number of people who could make use of skiing facilities in our Rockies during the winter months.

Another matter is the provision of a somewhat larger and better airstrip than exists at Banff at the present time so that the people can come in by air. To some extent that has had an effect on the number of people who go there to ski. In view of the present transportation methods and so on, one of the facilities that could be improved is the airstrip at Banff, which is quite small and undeveloped. Perhaps an expenditure of a considerable sum of money is not justified on that airstrip, but a certain amount of expenditure in order to increase its size is justified.

I wish the minister would go very closely into the question of the improvement that could be made as far as skiing facilities are concerned. I am absolutely certain an improvement in those facilities will pay big dividends, not only as far as this particular park is concerned, but as far as the entire tourist industry into Canada is concerned. If he will consult with the director of the Canadian travel bureau—I believe that comes under his department—he will agree fully with that view that that is one way in which we can materially increase the number of tourists, and therefore the number of tourist dollars we see in this country.

In addition to these general remarks, I may say that the youth hostels have increased quite considerably in the national parks out there, the Banff and Jasper national parks. I do not know about the British Columbia parks, but I think there has been some development of youth hostels in them also.