

*Historic Sites*

for the development of the area in terms of retaining the historic value in years to come. The report points out that one of the most striking features of the Saskatchewan rivers heritage complex is the very large inventory of important historic sites, locations and institutes.

Mr. Dyck points out that together with the area's interesting natural history and setting, to which I have referred, this area constitutes a heritage resource in the broadest sense of the term. The importance of this area included in the complex has certainly been appreciated by scholars, laymen and government departments for many years. Canadian historians recognize this area as the place where treaty No. 6, the most important treaty signed in Canada between the Indians and the Crown, was negotiated; where Louis Riel and the Métis people made their stand in 1885, where Seager Wheeler, the Canadian wheat king, achieved his triumphs in grain growing, and where many other important events and themes of Canadian history have unfolded.

This area attracts an amazing number of visitors from within and without Saskatchewan. During the past summer I travelled through my constituency in order to speak to the people. I had occasion to travel this historic area and trace out the course of General Middleton's march and engagement at Fish Creek. I saw the location of Batoche and some of the historic buildings and the museum in the area.

As has been pointed out by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton), we in Canada really do not do a very good job of taking pride in and maintaining the history of our country. I think this is a very important endeavour and should be very high on the priority list of any federal government interested in maintaining a sense of Canadian unity and federalism. More importantly at this time than at almost any other, we should be paying attention to those parts of our history with which we can feel a sense of reality and development. We look back to past events which were difficult at the time, such as an outbreak of fighting, but it tends to bind us together rather than tear us apart. For example, the Americans spend a lot of their time talking about and looking back at their civil war, but over the years the United States has become stronger and more unified. So while we may regard the northwest rebellion as an unfortunate part of our history, it was nevertheless a fact of life, one which we can now look back on as the basis for and beginning of the development of Canada as we know it today.

● (1620)

I have had the chance to go through this area and to travel somewhat more leisurely than is the case when the House is sitting, and I was amazed at the kind of development that has taken place and at the participation and pride of the local people of the area. But many things remain to be done. Access to these historic sites and the development of historic sites can be very greatly improved. If the minister and his parliamentary secretary have an opportunity to visit this particular area, they will see great scope for development. I think there is no question that there will be development; but the real question

at this time is how individual sites are to be developed, by whom and when?

It is incumbent on the government to examine this area very seriously with a view to making some decisions which will put into effect a co-ordinated plan to develop the area for generations to come. I, personally, have been involved in hosting representative groups from my constituency which came to Ottawa. I think in particular of a delegation from the Duck Lake and district board of trade which is interested in promoting a museum in the Duck Lake area. I arranged some meetings with various government departments to see whether any assistance might be available. I might say that I have had good co-operation from these government departments and the public servants in those departments. Quite frankly, I think development will require governmental initiative in the sense of cabinet initiative in order to put this project in its proper place.

The major decision to be faced by the senior government, which is the federal government, as well as provincial and local governments, is how they will expand from the foundation that has been laid down and which has proven successful in the past. The second matter to be decided is whether they will design and co-ordinate their future activities in the area in order to achieve the most suitable form of development, not only for individual sites and projects but for the complex as a whole.

The fact of the matter is that this is another of the situations that we in Canada face from time to time which involves not only one level of government but three, the federal government, the provincial government and the local or rural municipalities—the municipal governments in the towns and villages. These must be involved in the co-ordination that must take place if we are to assure the proper development of this area. I hope the minister and his parliamentary secretary will undertake to pay special attention to this and will give this development the initiative it so richly deserves.

I want to place before the parliamentary secretary one or two brief points. I am not going to take a lot of time, but it is important not only to my constituency and my province, but to Canada as a whole that these developments take place wherever possible. Quite frankly, I do not think a very substantial outlay of money is involved, and at a time of restraint I understand the restrictions placed on government spending. On the other hand, it seems to me that if the initiative on the part of the federal government is well warranted, attention must be paid to some of the points I want to make which have already been set forth by Mr. Dyck in his report.

There is considerable potential for further development of heritage resources and associated visitor services and facilities in the Saskatchewan rivers heritage complex. It has been pointed out that this is a unique area, for located within it are a number of heritage institutions, sites and resources. It is a part of Saskatchewan that we often forget, a part where the prairie wheatlands meet the tree line and rolling hills of northern Saskatchewan which eventually turns into the pre-Cambrian shield. It is a part of Saskatchewan which has