

*Historic Sites and Monuments*

I have read a great deal in newspapers and magazines to the effect that this great prime minister Sir John A. Macdonald hated and despised this house in Kingston. He lived there for only seven months, called it a monstrosity and wanted to get out of it.

If all the newspaper reports and history are correct, and that is the true situation, on what basis does the government make a decision to buy this house, and not the one in the city of Ottawa where he lived for years? Is there some basis of priority? I do not know, and I think we should know. In no way do I wish to deprecate the idea of this government honouring Sir John A. Macdonald's memory and acquiring a residence which will be maintained over the years as a reminder of this man's great history, but I strongly believe that when decisions of this nature are made there should be some understanding as to the basis and the principle upon which they are made.

However, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude by just saying that as the decision has been made—and all honour to Kingston that it has been made—I sincerely hope that the proposal will be considered, and considered in the near future, of having the home of Sir John A. Macdonald in Ottawa maintained as an historic site and monument, as is today and has been for years the home of Mackenzie King. It is my understanding—only from reports—that the United Kingdom government would give very serious consideration to any request from the government of Canada with regard to the purchase of that home for this specific purpose. I hope this will be kept uppermost in mind by the government.

**Mr. John R. Matheson (Leeds):** Mr. Speaker, I am interested in this recommendation.

**Mr. Fisher:** Don't talk it out, killer.

**Mr. Matheson:** I have been interested in this Centre street property since being elected to this house in the middle of 1961. I have visited it several times and over two years ago discussed the possibility of the purchase of this property with Mr. Ian Imrie, one of our research experts in the historical section of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. I think we regret, as the hon. member just mentioned, that Sir John A. did in fact live at "Bellevue" for such a very short period of time. Perhaps one of the things—

**Mr. Winch:** He also lived in Victoria, on Vancouver island.

**Mr. Matheson:** Yes, and elsewhere in the Kingston area. One of the things to which we should give consideration in due time is Sir John A.'s grave, which is a rather shabby

[Mr. Winch.]

looking resting place for the first prime minister of this country. I know that one does not disturb graveyards—at least, one effects changes very cautiously—but I am sure the condition of this grave would bring pain to many members of parliament. I have been there at different times with my children and with visitors whom I have brought to the Cataract cemetery. I know hon. members would not be satisfied with the appearance of the final resting place of the first prime minister of Canada. One of the difficulties, of course, in doing a really good job on this Centre street residence is to adequately restore two residences, one in Ottawa and one in Kingston.

**Mr. Winch:** How about Victoria, where he was welcomed after Kingston kicked him out?

**Mr. Matheson:** It seems clear that to furnish the residences in Kingston and in Ottawa with authentic Macdonald furniture would be quite impossible. However, we have artisans who can very effectively copy the furniture of that period, and we have developed a good deal of experience in this sort of thing in Upper Canada Village on the Chrysler farm property. I have no doubt that when the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources have finished with this project, it will have been done creditably and well. The Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources might be interested in looking at an old stone law office of Sir John A., which I think could be acquired and perhaps should be acquired by the country. It is very much as it was, and is still there. This is a property with which Sir John A. was associated, not for a few months but for many years. I am sure there is wide support from all hon. members of this house for this motion, and it is not my purpose to detain the house any longer.

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten):** Is the house ready for the question?

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten):** Mr. Alkenbrack, seconded by—

**Mr. Benson:** The hon. member is not in the house.

**Mr. D. G. Hahn (Broadview):** Mr. Speaker, can we reasonably and legitimately pass a motion dealing with something that has already been done? The property is about to be acquired, plans are being laid to achieve the objectives of the motion and to restore the property to its condition at the time