

Historic Sites and Monuments

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Alkenbrack: I wish to thank hon. members for their kind consideration. To continue the quotation, Macdonald said:

I believe that if one thing more than another has raised British America, or the Province of Canada, its chief component part, in the estimation of the people and government of England, it is that by this scheme there was offered to the Mother Country a means by which these colonies should cease to be a source of embarrassment, and become, in fact, a source of strength.

That illustrates the foresight that he and his colleagues had, looking forward to the day when this great conglomeration of states and provinces would become a source of strength to the motherland. What an under-estimation that was, after almost a century in which Canada has played her noble part, and now one nation free and independent from sea to sea.

As I have said, Mr. Speaker, Macdonald had help. He had a great colleague and great political ally in Sir Georges Etienne Cartier, the leader of the Conservative party in the province of Quebec. In order to keep properly on this theme I cite the great Gallic attitude toward confederation at that time, as portrayed by Sir Georges Etienne Cartier.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, allow me to quote the words spoken by Macdonald's political partner, Georges-Etienne Cartier, in 1865, as reported in the third edition "*L'Histoire du Canada par les Textes*":

Therefore, the confederation of all British provinces must take place, otherwise we shall join the American confederation.

As the audience showed its disagreement to such a consequence, he further stated:

I knew you would react like this, and I am pleased with your protests. I know that all those present wish to complete this great national task which will unite together all the main interests of the colonies and make of us all a real nation.

I am not claiming that this nation will be separate from the mother country. But when I talk about creating a confederation, I mean that the powers given to the various provinces by the imperial government will be combined and entrusted to a single general government. And, if that happens, I will feel that I contributed to a wonderful achievement—

[Text]

I now wish to make a comment regarding another matter but which concerns the preservation of our national historic sites. I quote from the *Toronto Star*, that great Toronto organ, a free newspaper, thanks to Macdonald and our forefathers, which at the end of a rather long editorial which I am sure all hon. members received, said, "A nation which forgets its past is likely to have a short future." I am sure all hon. members agree

[The Acting Speaker.]

with that truth, and that Canada as one nation will never forget her past as she guards her future nationhood.

In conclusion I wish to thank all hon. members for the support which they have given to this motion, and I again wish to commend all those who were connected with it and with the project of preserving the residence of our first prime minister, namely "Bellevue" in the city of Kingston.

Mr. E. J. Benson (Kingston): Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak only briefly concerning this particular motion. As I mentioned when I raised a point of order at the opening of this debate, the government—and also speaking for myself personally—certainly are in favour of the resolution as put forward. As a matter of fact the government was so in favour of it that it had carried out the intent of the motion, and not only considered but decided upon the acquisition of this particular property before the motion was put on the order paper.

I should like to congratulate the hon. member for Prince Edward-Lennox (Mr. Alkenbrack) on his remarks with respect to Sir John A. Macdonald, and I should like to join with him in his eulogy of this great Canadian. I am proud to represent in the House of Commons the riding which was formerly represented by Sir John A. Macdonald. I think Sir John A. Macdonald was certainly one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of the architects of confederation—one of the men who brought this nation together and created the relationship between the French and the English in this country, which made the creation of Canada possible.

I believe that we in Canada do not honour our great Canadians enough. Certainly, I was proud and happy that the government should have made the decision to purchase "Bellevue" house at 35 Centre street in Kingston. This house, built between 1841 and 1843 when Kingston was the legislative capital of the united Canadas, is one of the earliest known examples of the Italian villa style of architecture in Canada. It is located in an attractive residential area of Kingston, among several other homes and estates built during the construction boom that followed the selection of Kingston as the new capital. John A. Macdonald, who was then a member of parliament, moved into "Bellevue" with his wife, infant son and servants in August, 1848. He rented the house from the owner Charles Hale, until late 1849 or early 1850. Although the house was both large and expensive, he chose it in the hope that the semi-rural setting would benefit his ailing