

continued as chairman right up to the time of the centenary celebrations. I refer to Dr. Bruce Fergusson who is the archivist for the Province of Nova Scotia. Dr. Fergusson is typical of the men who serve voluntarily on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board. Twenty dollars a day scarcely pays a hotel bill nowadays, let alone the other expenses which are incurred by these gentlemen and ladies. We have had some distinguished ladies, too, including Dr. Hilda Neatby, who come to Ottawa to advise the government on the preservation of our monuments.

This increase really reflects the fact that we are living in an inflationary period. All Canadians are having difficulty keeping abreast of the greatest increase in the cost of living in Canadian history. While this is not a debate on fiscal, financial or economic policy, and while the minister did not say so in his remarks, the reason for this amendment placing remuneration in the hands of the Governor in Council, where the amount could be varied at will, is that the Governor in Council is himself having trouble keeping up with the rising cost of living in Canada. We object to this rapid increase in the cost of living but we would not want members of the board to be penalized because of the government's maladministration.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): In the way the pensioners are.

Mr. Dinsdale: Yes, in the way the pensioners are. That is the difficulty, here. If the principle applies in one area it should apply in all areas. The trouble is that the government is discriminating.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Hear, hear.

Mr. Dinsdale: I hope the minister is giving earnest consideration to a program which has long been contemplated in connection with the preservation and commemoration of our national historic sites and monuments, that is, the animating of our historic sites, particularly of our historic parks. This program has been under way for a number of years, but it has not been making much progress in recent years. I hope that when Louisburg is completed, or becomes operational—and I believe it is getting into the operational stage now—animation will be a fundamental part of the program.

Historic sites and monuments and historic parks have strong appeal to the tourists who are coming to Canada in increasing numbers.

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Historic Sites and Monuments Act

This means, of course, that the functions of the branch of government concerned here have an important commercial and economic value. In my opinion, the presentation of living history at precise periods in Canada's past has great educational value as has been demonstrated in some of the developments undertaken by the Province of Ontario, in particular at Fort Kingston, the Upper Canada village, and so forth.

This is the sort of thing the federal government should be encouraging right across Canada. I shall not take the time to mention areas which are ideally suited to animation but there are several in every province which deserve this kind of treatment. We have not had a chance to discuss this matter, and I am sorry that the minister did not take the opportunity to deal with it—

Mr. Speaker: Order. At this point I think I should say that if the minister had taken the opportunity to discuss the points which the hon. member is attempting to make now I would have been obliged to call him to order and remind him that this is a bill limited in scope and dealing with two matters only, one concerning the quorum and the other having to do with remuneration. I hope hon. members will seek to confine their remarks to the limited aspects of the bill now before the house.

Mr. Dinsdale: I was in the middle of a sentence when Your Honour rose. I was about to say I was sorry the minister had not broadened the scope of this bill, in which case we could have had a debate which was worthwhile. As it is, the whole machinery of parliament is being used to make these minor changes with no opportunity for the whole subject to be discussed. The labour of the house will bring forth nothing but a mouse, nothing of any real import.

Here too, was the golden opportunity to co-ordinate the functions of several branches of government so that we might have a more suitable program of historic sites and monuments commemoration. We have many government agencies working in this field. Some are doing a good job but would do a much better job if they worked under one minister or branch of government.

• (8:20 p.m.)

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to state that I feel the time is long overdue when the National Battlefields Commission should amalgamate its operations