

legislation and it ought to be reviewed as to its real purposes.

Another concern about the national interest deals with the field of art. We note that if a piece of art reaches such prominence that it is deemed to be of national importance, it will then be retained and held within Canada. I think we must be cognizant of the fact that in many fields of art it is not only important to be recognized within one's own country, but often a part of achieving greatness is being recognized internationally, and obviously it would be difficult to be recognized internationally if the arts, artifacts and writings are deemed of such importance that they are held within this country. While I fully concur with the legislation, I think there should always be concern for those who espouse to greatness if recognition in the international forum will in some way limit them from achieving this.

Another concern that I have is the competition between the regions and the nation. I think it is important that we give all due emphasis to trying to perpetuate this legislation to the maximum degree possible—perhaps there could even be consideration at future dates in this respect—so that there will be the kind of promotion which will protect not just the national interest but will also assist regions and small communities to protect their cultural heritage, because surely it is the collection of all the communities of Canada which constitutes the major national issue and national importance.

I suggest that the minister has proposed two good amendments to the legislation. Both of them are important and I am pleased that they have been introduced. I think they have strengthened the legislation considerably and we appreciate that. There is the question of expropriation in the national interest. It is important to an artist to be recognized throughout the world. Therefore, I think it should be underlined in viewing this legislation that all due consideration ought to be given to any Canadian developing, in a cultural sense, artifacts, writings and paintings for us so that they also have an opportunity to seek international greatness and are not necessarily confined within the Canadian framework, because greatness cannot really be achieved if we hold everything in too tight a fist under the guise of nationalism.

Finally, I must say that I was extraordinarily pleased that the minister did not choose to exercise personal discretion as to the artists but has left that to the independent bodies which he has established within the limits of the legislation. I think it is important that we do not allow government bodies, and particularly ministers of the Crown, to get into the position of establishing for the Canadian people what is or what is not culture. I know there was some discussion in committee that perhaps the minister ought to have exercised more authority in protecting Canadian art.

While I know there are arguments which would certainly permit at least consideration and discussion of that point, I am pleased that in the final analysis the minister resisted because I think that in the long run, while we will lose in a few instances, we will at least avoid the danger, with very tight control, of anybody, for political reasons, being in a position to establish what our values are and what is good culture. I am pleased that it will, instead, be

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an independent body which will be discussing and determining what Canada's culture is, what our values are and what in the long run is of national interest.

I shall conclude at this point by saying that this is a piece of legislation to which we should find no difficulty in lending our support. I have outlined what I think are a few concerns. For emphasis, I would like to reiterate that I think everything possible ought to be done to make sure that we protect our culture, while at the same time doing as little as possible, as a government, to determine what culture is. While sometimes it may not be appreciated in its historical reference, I think it is always a part of the changing complexity of human beings, and it is simply the role of government to record and register, but not to determine, that which is good value or that which is bad value.

● (1440)

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to join my colleague, the hon. member for Battle River (Mr. Malone), who has spoken with great perception, brilliance and eloquence on a very important matter. I also congratulate the minister. I think it is the first time I have had an opportunity to address myself to an initiative of his, and I think this is a very worthy one.

This bill has been carefully examined in the committee and at the second reading stage. My colleague, the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert), who is a very perceptive man, found both a few hooks and a few harpoons in it and I think we will want to watch for these in the future. I know that the amendments have made improvements, as any good amendment should, and I predict that in the future there may be need for a little more redrafting of this bill because, as we all know, this is a forward step, one that was long delayed but should be all the more welcome.

I have long been pleading in the House for a little more attention to our cultural heritage. We have wasted so much and squandered so much, and on many occasions sold so much, that we should have retained and appreciated. I am never content that the residence of our first prime minister is in the possession of another government, or that the long-time residence of our great and first internationalist, Sir Robert Borden, has passed on into destruction. It should be the residence of either the Speaker of the House or the Leader of the Opposition. But that is all in the past, and now I hope that we have learned the lesson. We are at the stage in our development—and I note which bill is coming next—when we have ravaged our natural environment, so now we shudder at the prospects of what might happen unless we take environmental heed. So, also, in our historic and cultural environment we have been far too careless and heedless, and almost any country in the world could teach us lessons in archival and museum matters.

I think that in all of this debate perhaps too little attention has been given to the fact that this measure is a mere buttress to what has been going on in the private sector. I am very much heartened by the various heritage organizations which are functioning in provinces such as Prince Edward Island and on the dominion scene. The