

for their preservation but are also convinced that they represent an integral part of our cultural heritage and our identity.

**Mr. Ian Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Urban Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, in co-operation with the Department of State for Urban Affairs, the Department of Public Works has purchased the LaSalle Academy building for the price of \$1 million. When the building has been restored to its original 19th century state, it will house the Department of Urban Affairs. This acquisition comes under the government's policy on the restoration of buildings in the lower town and on the redevelopment of residential and commercial areas, which is an improvement on simply demolishing the old buildings.

[*English*]

The choice of the LaSalle Academy complex was a deliberate one. It is a unique urban opportunity for the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Basford) to symbolize in the national capital area one of the goals he holds for communities and neighbourhoods throughout Canada. Renovating a viable heritage property in Canada is a case of practising a policy we are preaching. It reflects our concern with the revitalization of older neighbourhoods and with business districts in the downtown cores of Canadian cities. It reflects our concern that the character of older communities be preserved when they are worth preserving, and it reflects our feeling that the recycling of older districts is as important as the creation of new communities and new housing developments.

#### *Adjournment Debate*

The proof of our concern lies not only in the choice of our future headquarters, however. It also lies in the Neighbourhood Improvement Program and other measures now under discussion by the House in Bill C-133. By preserving and renovating the LaSalle complex, which includes two other, more modern buildings, the ministry is demonstrating its belief that older buildings and neighbourhoods of historic significance need not be destroyed or preserved merely as museum pieces.

The purchase of the site is consistent, too, with plans for urban renewal in the Byward market-lower town area. Hon. members may recall the plans announced in the fall to sponsor the rehabilitation of a 50-acre area in lower town near the LaSalle site. This will involve the co-operation of all governments involved and participation from businessmen in the national capital area. Plans for renovating the LaSalle academy complex are now being completed by the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs and the Department of Public Works. The restoration of the buildings to a viable economic and social future will in turn stimulate the preservation and rebirth of the surrounding area. In this way, the ministry will have served as a catalyst to make the historic lower town area once again a focal point in Ottawa's business life and in the daily affairs of its residents.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member for Ottawa East that his remarks on the naming of the building will be brought to the attention of the minister tomorrow morning.

[*English*]

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.