

Wheeler. There is the Carlton trail-marker and the Almighty Voice, a plaque in honour of this historical person.

There is the Duck Lake battlefield, the treaty No. 6 marker, the Fort Carlton marker, the Rosenorth Church marker, the Gerhard Ens-Seager Wheeler marker, the Nisbet provincial forest reserve, the prehistoric archaeology and the complex. This is an interesting part of Canada. There are the unmarked fur trade posts, the Almighty Voice grave, and the St. Laurent shrine, which is located near Duck Lake, the Qu'Appelle Long Lake and Saskatchewan railway line now operated by the CNR, and Seager Wheeler's Maple Grove farm. It is an incredible list of historic sites, monuments and institutions. There is the Rosthern experimental station and, finally, numerous historic buildings throughout the proposed complex.

I have touched in a brief form on some of the important historical and other places in my constituency. As the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle) indicated, there were few, if any, national historic sites in his constituency and in northern British Columbia, but you can see that in my constituency alone we have a number of national historic sites. Hence the great interest I and the people in my area have in this bill.

Again I ask the parliamentary secretary to take back to the minister, to the department and to the National Historic Sites Board the expression of my constituents' concern that this area will be given the initiative and development that it deserves so richly. I hope the parliamentary secretary will in fact initiate an inquiry through his minister to his colleagues in the cabinet who have responsibilities for other departments which might affect the development of this complex so that we can proceed with the development of this historic complex of which we in Canada can be proud and which we could leave to our children and those who follow us a feeling that we have preserved a very important piece of Canadian history.

I want to thank hon. members for bearing with me and listening to the comments which I have made today with respect to what I consider to be a most important area in my constituency. I hope the parliamentary secretary will be able to encourage that initiative which we would like to see taken in this area.

Mr. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few brief comments with regard to Bill C-13 which the House is debating today. I think it would be appropriate for me to say at the outset that it would have been difficult for me to have been in the House in the course of the last several minutes and to listen to my colleagues from various parts of the country speak without being struck by the pride which they have in the areas which they represent and without developing an increased awareness of the tremendous contributions which have been made to Canadian history by people from all parts of Canada.

I think that if there is one important core to the debate today, it is that we as Canadians have a tremendous history which we often overlook. Often our children in school find that the Canadian history, because it is not marked by bloodshed

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and by successive wars, is dull compared with the history of other countries. But I think that if we read our history and develop an increased awareness of our roots and of our origins, we cannot help but have a great deal of pride in our past and in our heritage. If we are to do a proper job in the future of safeguarding our heritage and moving society in a direction desirable to all Canadians we must develop an awareness of where we came from. This is why the work which is done by the federal government in terms of preserving and restoring national historic sites is a very vital function of the national government.

● (1640)

I want to say at the outset that I support the very simple principle behind Bill C-13, which is simply to increase the number of members of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board from the current 15 members to 17 in order to allow representatives from the Northwest Territories and from the Yukon Territory. It would be difficult for any hon. member of this House to be opposed to that principle because it is important that we have representation from all parts of the country.

In addition, as my hon. colleagues have said before, it is probably worth-while to deal briefly with the question of the way in which the government is functioning at the present time when it comes to the recognition and preservation of national historical sites, because this country is rich in historic sites: it is rich in history, and it is important that we do whatever we can to ensure that our children have the heritage, which has been passed on to us, maintained for them.

When we travel abroad or to other countries, we cannot help but be struck by the awareness people have of their own history, the pride they have in events which have taken place in their countries and their knowledge of the historic sites in their countries. A good deal of the credit for that must go to the respective national governments which have taken action to ensure that national historic sites are not lost, that they are properly publicized and that they are maintained for generations to come. Anyone who travels through the United States, for example, cannot help but be struck by the tremendous number of historic sites which have been recognized by the national government and by the individual states. I think it would be worth-while for us to follow the example of other countries and to give increased emphasis to the preservation of our national heritage.

I was first elected in 1972, and it is very difficult for me not to be overcome at times by a sense of humility when I study the history of my constituency and consider some of the great Canadians who have represented my area in the federal parliament. Since we are talking about historic sites, I think it would be worth-while for me to mention some of these people briefly. It was a tremendous responsibility for me to succeed Mr. Marvin Howe in 1972. He was a very distinguished member of this House. Mr. Howe followed in the tradition of a number of other distinguished Canadians who have left their mark on our national heritage. I would like to mention just a few of them.