

*Historic Sites and Monuments Act*

we have lost one of our historic buildings in York Township, Doane Hall. In the Town of Peterborough which is of some concern to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are in danger of losing another important historic building. I hope you and I will be able to combine forces and do something about that one. This is urgent. Cities are expanding. People are moving into the cities. Old buildings are often expensive to maintain and are falling into neglect. A great deal has already been lost. However, there is still much to preserve if we take action—and action does not consist of appointing one more person, no matter how able, to a board.

In Ottawa, which should be important to all of us, we have lost some fine buildings, the old Supreme Court building for one. Hon. members may have seen a television program last night on this subject. The Bytown Inn is in danger of being pulled down. No one can claim this is a building of national historic importance, but it is an attractive building and one which does add some character to this city—a building which represents the spirit of the past of this city. The owners are reluctant to see it torn down but there is little they can do to preserve it, because no kind of financial assistance for this purpose is available to them. In this city, Earncliffe, the home of Sir John A. Macdonald is the home of the British High Commissioner. Here is an historic building attached to Canada's first Prime Minister which should be supported, preserved and used by Canadians. One of the suggestions I would have for its use—and I am sure that the British would be prepared to let us have it—is as a home for the Speaker. Can the members of the house possibly imagine the citizens of the United States accepting a situation in which the British ambassador lived in Mount Vernon? Yet that is exactly the situation we are facing in this country. What kind of pride do we have in our national heritage when we are content to let plenipotentiaries of a foreign power live in the original home of Canada's first Prime Minister in Canada's capital? I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that that situation constitutes a disgrace.

● (5:50 p.m.)

Let us look at the old port area of Montreal. Why has the government done nothing to help preserve the buildings that are to be found there? Why is this left to the activities of private enterprise, sometimes beneficial, sometimes not?

[Mr. Roberts.]

In Niagara-on-the-Lake we have an area of immense historical interest as well as aesthetic and cultural interest. The National Historic Sites and Monuments Board has recently announced that it is going to help support the preservation of the Apothecaries Shop, but the whole area should be designated as one that deserves government assistance and help.

There are many other places of this kind in Canada. Close to here is Williamstown, Ontario, which is full of fine buildings. Down around Cardinal and Cobourg there are marvellous buildings which may not be of unique historical interest but are splendid examples of early 19th century architecture.

Faced with the opportunities of preservation, in 50 years in this country we have managed to do something to help preserve 30 historic buildings. For members who are interested, I would suggest that during the parliamentary recess they might take a trip down to Vermont and New Hampshire to see some of the things that can be done. I ask them to go and visit Woodstock, Vermont or Deerfield, Vermont, where with government help there has been the preservation of distinct, unique communities as a whole,—not isolated buildings, but communities that bring to the present a description, a concrete depiction of how people lived in an earlier time.

When we look at what other countries are doing in this regard, the efforts of Canada seem almost laughable. I have described in this house in the past some of the activities that the French government has pursued: the enormous facilities that are directed toward the preservation of old buildings and monuments, including churches; the giving of tax benefits to various categories of owners which enable them to preserve owner occupied buildings of architectural or aesthetic merit.

In Great Britain, the National Trust was established, I believe, back in the 19th century and arranges a program of tax benefits to such an extent that the National Trust is now the second largest land owner in the country. I realize some hon. members will say that in Europe there are things that are worth preserving, that in Europe there is a greater heritage. But let us look at what the United States is doing in this regard. The United States is usually presented to us as an example of individualism rampant, where the state does not involve itself overly much in the preservation of amenities of society. The United States is spending over \$10 million a year and has elaborated all sorts of programs of this sort, particularly urban renewal