

*Historic Sites and Monuments***HISTORIC SITES AND MONUMENTS**

SUGGESTED ACQUISITION OF RESIDENCE OF SIR
JOHN A. MACDONALD AT KINGSTON

Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Prince Edward-Lennox) moved:

That, in the opinion of this house, the government should consider the advisability of acquiring the title to the historic residence of this nation's first prime minister, the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald, the same being the property known as 35 Centre street, in the city of Kingston, Ontario.

[Translation]

Mr. Gregoire: Mr. Speaker, according to the order paper, shall we study the public bills or the notices of motions? Looking at the order paper for Wednesday, March 18, I see this: from five to six o'clock p.m., private members' business: first, notices of motions and then public bills.

[Text]

Mr. Speaker: This is what I have called, and we are taking No. 4, standing in the name of the hon. member for Prince Edward-Lennox (Mr. Alkenbrack). If the hon. member will refer to the order paper, I think he will see that this is correct.

Mr. Benson: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, in connection with the motion before the house. In doing so I would first of all say that I personally agree wholeheartedly with the motion before the house; and the government agrees with it, as is exemplified by the rapid action of the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) in this regard when this particular residence came up for purchase.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. What is your point of order?

Mr. Benson: My point of order—and I must explain the action taken by the government in order to raise my point of order—is that the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) announced on December 23 that this particular residence would be purchased. At that time I had met with both with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (Mr. Laing), and by action of the treasury board on January 16, 1964, reference No. 6619768, it was agreed to purchase this particular residence. Therefore, the intent of this particular motion has already been carried out. I maintain that it is a dangerous precedent—

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but it seems to me that the reasoning he is following and the words he is uttering could easily be made during the debate itself which is about to take place. I do not see a point of order at this moment.

[Mr. Speaker.]

Mr. Herridge: Sheer propaganda.

Mr. Benson: If I might succinctly state my point of order, we are using the time of the house to discuss a motion which asks the government to do something which it has already done. If we carry this to its ridiculous conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we could put motions on the order paper asking that the government enter world war II, and then debate in this house recommendations that the government do things which have already been done.

Mr. Speaker: I understand that the hon. member for Kingston is saying that the government has acted in this matter and has purchased the house, but so far as the other hon. members in the house are concerned, there is no definite proof of this except the statement of the hon. member.

Mr. Benson: But I did quote the treasury board reference, and the date the purchase was approved by treasury board.

Mr. Speaker: Then in the circumstances I should like to ask for the views of the hon. member on this matter.

Mr. Alkenbrack: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your attention in this matter. I was going to, and I will, commend the government and the hon. member for Kingston (Mr. Benson) on their assiduous attention to this resolution. I want to commend the government on their action and on their discernment in the purchase of this property, the matter having been mentioned to them by my leader. I submit that we are not wasting the time of the house. A considerable amount of time has been wasted this afternoon, but I think it is now time that we took a little interval to discuss what has been accomplished in the past by the great leaders which this country has produced.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry I must interrupt the hon. member, but I understand he is speaking to the resolution, not the point of order. Does the hon. member wish to say anything on the point of order under discussion?

Mr. Alkenbrack: No, Your Honour, I have nothing to say on the point of order, but I do have more to say on the resolution.

Mr. Lambert: Mr. Speaker, may I say a few words on the point of order. Whatever knowledge the government may have in this regard, and despite the hon. member for Kingston having disclosed that there is a treasury board minute authorizing the acquisition of the title to this house, no disclosure has been made as to why the house is being bought which would be at all in conformity