

communities, areas, structures, sites and objects significant to architectural, cultural, social, economic, political and military history and which contribute to the quality and meaning of American life.

In pursuit of this objective, the committee, which includes representatives of all levels of Government and the agencies involved, has studied problems and programs related to historic preservation in the United States and in Europe. At the request of the committee, a number of Federal agencies and the National Trust for Historic Preservation have supplied studies, reports, documents, and comments on numerous historic preservation activities and accomplishments. The committee has examined contemporary European practices in historic preservation, restoration, and reconstruction. It has obtained from authoritative sources in England, France, Holland, Germany, Scandinavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Italy legal and administrative information which could be used to evaluate European experience in relation to American needs and proposals for improving and developing historic preservation programs in the United States.

It is clear to the committee that our own needs and the evidence of experience in Europe, where historic preservation is a major responsibility of government, suggest an expansion and development of our own programs, placing greater emphasis on Government support of private efforts in historic preservation.

The committee has been aided in its work by consultants and by the contributors whose work appears in the various chapters and photographic sections of "With Heritage So Rich."

The committee is indebted to many public officials and private citizens, in the United States and Europe, who have provided information and ideas for this study. We hope this material and our findings and recommendations will assist the growing interest in and concern with historic preservation throughout the United States.

One of the exciting conditions which has encouraged the committee to make its recommendations is the attitude of public officials and private individuals toward historic preservation. What has been a ground swell is becoming a great wave of interest and support.

This growing interest is part of an evolutionary process which began a century or more ago with the first movements to preserve important historic sites and structures. The historical material provided this committee, shows that this process has involved many dedicated public servants, private individuals and groups, scholars and experts.

In accordance with this increasing desire to make historic preservation a living part of our community life and development, the committee recommends certain new programs described in this report. Along with enlargement and enhancement of existing programs, they will broaden and deepen the scope of national historic preservation activity.

Findings

If it can be said that there is a new awakening of interest in the preservation of our cultural and architectural heritage, it must be added that never was the need for it greater.

Since World War II a great wave of urbanization has been sweeping across the Nation. And such is the rate of growth that in the next 40 years the United States will have to build more homes, more schools, more stores, more factories, more public facilities of all kinds than in the entire previous history of the country.

Out of the turbulence of building, tearing down, and rebuilding the face of America, more and more Americans have come to realize that as the future replaces the past, it destroys much of the physical evidence of the past.

The current pace of preservation effort is not enough. It is as though the preservation movement were trying to travel up a down escalator. The time has come for bold, new measures and a national plan of action to insure that we, our children, and future generations may have a genuine opportunity to appreciate and to enjoy our rich heritage.

The United States, with a short history and an emphasis on its economic growth, has left historic preservation primarily to private interests and efforts. In the older, history-conscious countries of Europe, preservation leadership has been provided primarily by government.

One of the acute shortages in the field of historic preservation is that of specially trained architects and other technicians and trained preservationists. These