

Canada Student Loans Act

prevented from attending university through lack of funds, I think means can be found for them to do so. I will admit that everybody going to university would like to have more money to spend. Even the young fellow whose father is well endowed with worldly goods and gives him an allowance of say \$50 a week spending money would like more money to spend. There is hardly one who could not find grounds for saying, "\$75 is what I need". We are all human, and even our high school children who get \$3 will say, "Well, can't you make it \$5?" I am amused to hear this talk of \$3 and \$5 a week; it used to be something to get 25 cents a week when you went to high school.

There is in my opinion the necessity of a reorientation of our thinking with regard to providing financial assistance for attendance at university. As I have indicated in previous debates, I think we are putting the cart before the horse in this particular program and any program of free scholarships. Let us first build the universities, give them the money for libraries, laboratories and teachers, and then we will consider assisting students to further their education. Do not cram them into universities like meat into a sausage machine. What do you get out in the end? You get a lot of people who have been forcibly cut back and all too often you have too many products of the same identity and the same little sausage intellectually. In my opinion this is not the answer. A person who has a genuine desire to attend university will find the money that is necessary.

There is another point, Mr. Speaker, with which I wish to deal. It may have been referred to by the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra (Mr. Deachman) but has not been dealt with at any great length. I refer to the question of whether the provincial governments, which control a large number of universities in Canada, are actually in a way turning aside the funds provided by the federal government for education and using them for other purposes. It is simple, when generous loans are furnished to students so they may attend university and there is a certain certificate of eligibility, merely to let the fees rise and let the students absorb a higher proportion of the cost of operating the university rather than the provincial government maintaining or increasing its relative contribution to the university. That is one way in which a provincial administration can turn aside, shall we say, moneys provided by

[Mr. Lambert.]

the federal government and use them for non-educational purposes.

If a study were carried out in this field I do not know what the result would be. We know that fees are increasing. I am wondering whether the minister in his agreements with the provinces has made any provision for an escalation in the amounts required under the loan plan to compensate for an increase in fees. I think that in order to protect students both from the universities and the provincial governments there must be a ceiling imposed on fees, if there is one on the money that is available by way of loan, during the term of these agreements.

The minister has spoken of excellent co-operation or co-ordination between the provincial governments and the federal government. I wonder whether there has been any discussion in this respect. Otherwise the whole thing could be made complete nonsense by allowing fees to mount up without limit and at the same time limiting the amount of the loan available to a student. Remember, these are loans. We know what it is going to be like to repay these loans. There have been many instances of difficulties such as have been experienced with regard to those university graduates who have gone off on programs like CUSO. We will see how many difficulties will arise when The Company of Young Canadians is operating. We will see how many students who have taken loans under this program will be able to meet their obligations if they become members of The Company of Young Canadians. I think we will see a very interesting reaction in this respect.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, in recapitulation the questions I would ask are: What arrangements are there, either between the provinces and the federal government or between the provinces themselves, to sort of keep the lid on fees if they can? Second, is greater emphasis being placed upon capital funds being available for buildings, laboratories, libraries, teachers and, finally, for the students themselves, because in my opinion that is where the priority in respect of university education exists. It does not exist in cramming into our present universities thousands upon thousands of young people who will be artificially cut back at the end of their first or second year because they cannot continue at university due to a lack of space and teaching facilities.