

The Address—Mr. Webster

must strive toward the time when all financial impediments to attendance at university are removed for Canadian youth.

An impressive number of organizations have urged a policy of greater participation by the federal government in supporting education as a national responsibility in this scientific age. I wish now to present some of their views on this vital subject. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce at its annual meeting in October, 1963 expressed the following view:

While recognizing that educational institutions and their administration in Canada are under the specific jurisdiction of the provincial and local authorities, it is nevertheless asserted that education is and ought to be of national concern and of direct interest to all Canadians. A competent and well balanced work force is essential to the healthy growth of our Canadian economy and the maintenance of our standard of living. If Canada is to compete successfully in the international, economic and political struggles of the future, a much greater percentage of its citizens must possess a higher degree of education or skill.

The Canadian home and school and parent-teachers federation declared in their brief to the Prime Minister and the cabinet in September, 1963:

We are convinced that education in Canada would be better served by the organization of an office to co-ordinate federal educational assistance of all kinds. We suggest the following functions could be performed by such an office:

(a) Establishment and maintenance of a liaison with other countries on matters relating to education and the right to speak for education in Canada;

(b) Supervision and co-ordination of federal activities in education;

(c) Action as a clearing house for educational information;

(d) Stimulation, support, and conduct of educational research.

The Canadian school trustees association in their brief to the royal commission on taxation in November, 1963 expressed the following view:

The association recommends that the federal government effectively assume the full cost of all vocational, technical and university education either through increased payments to provincial governments under existing schemes or through vacating certain areas of taxation in favour of the provinces. The association further recommends that the federal government devise some means whereby additional revenues may be channeled to the "have not" provinces in order that they may provide educational opportunities equal to those in other parts of Canada.

The Canadian teachers' federation, representing 135,000 teachers in 10 provinces, said in their brief to the Prime Minister and the cabinet in November, 1963:

This 1963 submission is directed by our sense of urgency which prompts us to seek a solution to this problem. Our national and international leaders have again and again testified to the strategic importance of education as a basic tool

in the economic and social development of all countries in the world, including our own.

To continue the quotation:

Canada has long since reached a state of national emergency in education. Educational costs are expected to double in the next decade. The Canadian government has tried to stimulate the economy of certain sections of our country through the use of grants and subsidies to specific industries. We believe that economic growth in relatively poor areas of our country could be more effectively stimulated by equalization grants or other fiscal arrangements aimed at upgrading the level of their education. Investment in human capital, designed to foster economic growth is perhaps the most promising strategy in any long range attempt to reduce our gross inequalities in education and in prosperity.

Canada is a confederation of 10 provinces but it is also a nation. Therefore, it is appropriate that in matters of broader scope we should act as Canadians and not only as citizens of any one province. Surely every Canadian boy and girl has a right to an equally high level of educational opportunity.

The Canadian universities foundation, representing all our institutions of higher learning, made two submissions to the government in 1963, one to the Prime Minister and cabinet in May 1963, and another to the Minister of Finance in December, 1963. The following quotations are from their briefs:

The Canadian universities foundation, as the executive agency of the National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges, is naturally alarmed by the fact that Canada's institutions of higher learning are steadily falling further behind in providing facilities for rapidly rising student enrolments and in satisfying the growing demand for professional and postgraduate education. The universities and colleges of Canada are facing a situation which calls for prompt action if their obligations to the nation are to be met.

We Canadians have been relatively slow to realize that the economic, social and cultural health of the country all depend on a high level of investment in education. We recognize the complexity of Canada's constitutional position in matters relating to education, even higher education. Nevertheless, we urge the government of Canada to deal directly with these expressed needs or to initiate action with the provinces so that, one way or another, arrangements may be made to meet them.

The Canadian council for research in education, in a brief presented to the government in November, 1963, made the following appeal:

The total cost of public education has now reached approximately \$2 billion per annum and is likely to double in the next 10 years. To ensure the most effective use of these huge sums, it is essential that every effort be made to improve and modernize educational procedures, as has been done in other fields of public endeavour, through a large scale program of experimentation and research in the basic processes of learning. The government of Canada by providing funds for long term research to be conducted by national organizations and educational institutions can make a stimulating and vital contribution to education at all levels and at the same time, to the total development of Canada.

[Mr. Webster.]