

Mr. LaCROIX: Without any control?

Mr. ZAPLITNY: I think I have made it clear.

The other objection which may be raised, and it is one of the stock objections, is the matter of cost. There are those who will throw up their hands in despair and say that this will cost too much. I do not deny that it will cost money, and a great deal of money because if we are to obtain quality we must pay the price. But let me assure the house that if we want to make the safest possible investment in the future of this country there is no safer or more gilt-edged security than the education of the growing children of Canada. It is impossible for us to overspend in this respect. What I have said earlier in my address should, I think, bear out the fact that for every dollar spent in this way we shall get hundreds, perhaps thousands, of dollars of value in the future. I ask hon. members to use their imaginations to the extent of realizing that we are now standing on the threshold of a great opportunity. We have discovered through our scientific efforts the sources of power of which we never dreamed before. All we need to do now is to control those powers and direct them into the proper channels, and then we shall have in the future a veritable paradise in this country. I have no apologies to make and no hesitation in recommending to the government, with all the vehemence I can gather, the adoption of this resolution.

Mr. HANSELL: If I may ask the hon. member a question because I do not expect to participate in this debate, I fancy that what has bothered some hon. members, judging by the interruptions, is the same question that is bothering me. I agree that we should seek financial aid from the federal government, but can my hon. friend throw some light on this question? Can we expect the federal government to give financial aid to the provinces without the federal government expecting to have something to say as to how the money is to be used?

Mr. ZAPLITNY: It is quite possible that the federal government may make certain recommendations to the provinces as to the best possible way in which the money could be spent, but I would point out that it is not necessary for the federal government to go into the field in which the provinces are now operating. The federal government, without interfering with what the provinces are doing, could spend large sums of money for erecting buildings and in purchasing equipment and in paying for teacher training which the provinces are in need of to-day.

[Mr. Zaplitny.]

Mr. HANSELL: That is a good answer.

Mr. BONA ARSENAULT (Bonaventure): (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for Dauphin (Mr. Zaplitny) on his very able presentation of this resolution; however, the fact remains that were this motion to be adopted by the house, it would, in my estimation, constitute a serious threat to provincial autonomy, with regard to education. The resolution is worded as follows:

That, in the opinion of this house, the government should take into consideration ways and means of equalizing educational opportunity across this dominion and granting financial assistance to the various provinces for this purpose.

Such a resolution constitutes a threat to our provincial rights in matters pertaining to education. It does not say what sort of education it is intended to equalize across the Dominion. Does it refer to primary, secondary or postgraduate teaching? We do not know. But in its very vagueness, the resolution constitutes a threat, and it is up to the representatives from the Province of Quebec, from the French speaking settlements of Ontario, New Brunswick, the western provinces, and other parts of this country, to ward off this intrusion of the federal government in the field of education.

Section 93 of the British North America Act grants the provincial legislatures exclusive rights in matters of education and teaching, so that the hon. member for Dauphin has presented his resolution in defiance of our constitution, in defiance of the greatest chapters in the history of French Canada, of those heroic struggles which our compatriots have had to wage in Ontario, New Brunswick, western Canada and elsewhere, on matters with regard to which there can be no compromise.

Those who, in this period of unrest, take pleasure in gnawing at the confederation agreement of 1867, may as well know that the French-speaking members of this house are ready to take up the challenge.

We want none of this federal centralization in matters pertaining to education.

I would not be surprised that this apparently harmless motion would be but the beginning of a great manoeuvre launched by the partisans of centralization in Canada, to deprive us of our educational rights and aim a blow at provincial autonomy in that respect.

As lately as October last, at their annual convention, held in Quebec City, the Canadian Congress of Labour put forward the following proposal:

That a standard educational programme be drawn up by the federal government and implemented by the municipalities.