

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*EDUCATION—FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR  
FRONTIER COLLEGE

**Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, on May 4 my colleague, the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent), and I directed questions to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen) with respect to a request made to the minister by Frontier College for a one-shot grant of \$50,000 this year to help that organization overcome its financial difficulties and continue the work it has been doing so effectively for so many years. I rise today because on May 4 the minister promised to look at the matter again but made no commitment to change his decision to grant only \$10,000. I have received information since I asked the question that as a result of their difficulties Frontier College are cutting back their work in the coming year by 20 per cent.

We should bear in mind that Canada has one of the worst records of any of the modern industrial countries with regard to education. Of Canada's adult population, 43 per cent have not completed their elementary education. One of the few organizations working hard in this field is Frontier College. In recent years we have been doing a good deal more than in the past in the field of adult training. This began under the former Conservative government with the program of technical vocational training grants for the building of schools and is continuing with the manpower training program which was begun by this government in 1966. Substantial amounts of money are being spent. This is not the time to discuss whether these programs are as effective as they could be. They are very expensive.

Frontier College, unlike the federal and provincial programs, works with volunteers. It has not had the difficulties that some volunteer organizations have had. On a budget of \$120,000 a year they have been able to place over 100 field workers in outlying parts of Canada. What do these people do? They have established what they call a labourer-teacher program. Since the early days of the college they have sent out volunteers to remote locations, work camps and factories. These men have full-time jobs as well. After hours they conduct informal seminars in basic English or French, mathematics and other subjects required for a basic education. They teach any subject in which there is interest. Where the motivation is limited or lacking, the volunteers do all they can to encourage those on the job to want an educational upgrading.

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

In the past few years they have developed a second type of program. Its aim is to promote adult education in a community setting. The field workers continue to offer special daytime and evening classes as part of this program. In addition, they become acquainted with the ongoing needs and aspirations of the community at large, encouraging reinforcement of positive values already existing in the community. They support greater participation by residents in local affairs. Anyone in the field of education, provincial or federal, can attest to the work done by Frontier College in the far-flung areas of Canada. As I already indicated, they operate on a very small budget. What they are asking is very simple. They are not asking for more contracts; they are getting these through the department and from some of the provincial governments. But they are experiencing a real financial crisis. Unless they get a grant in the neighbourhood of \$50,000 they will be forced to curtail their work by 20 per cent this year and probably more next year.

• (10:10 p.m.)

I appeal to the minister and to the department to give serious consideration to this question. If they do so, I am satisfied they will agree to making available what is, to the federal government, a very small amount of money yet one which could mean the salvation of Frontier College.

**Hon. Eric W. Kierans (Postmaster General and Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen), I wish to say I agree with the hon. member as to the value of the work done. Frontier College does excellent work in educating people in outlying areas. For this reason the Department of Manpower and Immigration will make a grant of \$5,000 available to the college for the fiscal year 1970-71. This matches a grant of \$5,000 by the federal Department of Labour and brings the total federal grants to \$10,000. Beginning in 1971-72 Manpower and Immigration will assume sole responsibility for the grant to Frontier College.

Unfortunately, the government could not meet the request by Frontier College for a grant of \$50,000 in 1970-71. However, Manpower officials are exploring with provincial and territorial authorities the possibility of purchasing training services from Frontier College in outlying areas. As hon. members may know, the enabling legislation for the Canada manpower training scheme requires