

*The Address—Mr. Webster*

Scotians who are settled in the prairie provinces or have jobs in British Columbia. Inequalities of education thus have a great effect on competitive adult life.

One central indication of the quality of an educational program is the amount of money spent yearly for each pupil. In 1961 the amounts spent in various provinces ranged from \$378 in Alberta and \$373 in British Columbia to \$141 in Newfoundland and \$162 in Prince Edward Island, with the average for the ten provinces being \$286. Thus in dollars one province spent almost three times as much per pupil as another.

Per pupil expenditure correlates highly with another factor, teacher qualifications. Few would deny that the teacher is the most important single influence during a child's formal education, yet the proportion of teachers with university degrees varies from 37.4 per cent in one province to only 7.7 per cent in another. Thus five times as many teachers in one province hold degrees as in another.

There are many other indicators of the uneven quality of educational programs across Canada. They include the variety of curricula, the adequacy of physical facilities, the extent of auxiliary courses such as classes for the gifted or handicapped, provision for transportation in larger school districts, and the text books necessary today for even a basic education. All these conditions vary widely, as thousands of Canadians who moved their children from one provincial system to another last year will testify.

The fathers of confederation could not possibly have foreseen the conditions that would arise in the succeeding 100 years. No one could have anticipated the enormous costs of modern welfare services or of public school systems or of institutions of higher learning. What made good sense financially in 1867 is absolute nonsense today. The fact that in 1867 education was made an entirely provincial responsibility should not now stand in the way of assistance from the government in Ottawa.

The principle of direct federal aid for education is really nothing new. The education of Indians and Eskimos and children of parents in the armed services overseas is a federal responsibility. Through the years substantial grants have been made available to the provinces for technical and agricultural education. More recently money has been advanced for vocational and industrial training. Following the war an immense D.V.A. program was financed by Ottawa. A per capita grant of \$2 has been paid to universities, as well as various aids to research and scholarship through Canada Council. The

Glassco commission refers to 20 different federal departments which provide some educational service.

Even acknowledging the good work of these many agencies, informed Canadians are more convinced that today there is greater need than ever before for federal participation in the broad field of education, either directly or indirectly through financial arrangements with the provinces. There is a growing awareness that the advanced technological development which sustains and causes our economy to expand is dependent upon a high level of training in our labour force. Whereas the industrial revolution was created largely through individual genius, today's scientific revolution depends not only on isolated genius but more importantly on the planned co-operative efforts of large numbers of highly trained personnel. As a consequence of this neglected relationship, education has come to be regarded as an investment on which the future productivity of the economy depends. In other words, education has been elevated to the level of an investment in human capital, rather than current consumption.

This is an entirely new concept. When the level of education in a country is high, then the level of per capita income is high as in Canada, the United States and western Europe. When the level is low, no matter how many resources a country possesses the level of income is low as in South American countries. No nation ever became an economic leader without a relatively high level of education; conversely, a high level of education is a stimulant to economic growth.

Canadians are coming to realize that our strength as a nation depends upon the job we do in providing education for our citizens to the limit of their abilities. Anything less will be to deny to our youth equality of opportunity to share in the task of developing to the full our greatest resource, the native intelligence of our population. It is now generally accepted that at least 30 per cent of our young people could benefit from higher education and could complete one kind of post-secondary training or another. Today we do not provide facilities for more than one quarter of these potential students.

The basic dilemma stands forth in bold relief. For the welfare of individual Canadians and for the future development of our economy it is hard to disagree with the proposition that every student, regardless of his financial resources and family background, should receive as much education as he wants and can absorb. If we are to achieve a truly democratic educational system in Canada we