

Education

conclusion I would ask the minister to indicate, at this stage of the debate, the decision of the government with respect to this resolution. We have heard what other people have to say. I know that with his great kindness and courtesy the minister will say he would have loved to make a speech but there were so many others who wanted to speak and whom he wanted to hear. I quite appreciate that, but I believe the minister should amplify what he said during the last session or so. I have not my *Hansard* here, so I am not sure of his exact words, but he will recall them at once. If I may paraphrase what I remember him saying when a similar resolution was before the house, I think the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin) indicated that one reason the government did not want to make any move at that time was because there was another dominion-provincial conference coming up.

I do not know what this government would do without a dominion-provincial conference somewhere in the offing. It seems to me that is a very convenient umbrella to get under once in a while.

I only suggest this to the minister: Before this debate ends he should indicate to the Commons what the government's policy is with respect to federal aid to education as laid down in this resolution. We shall be awaiting his very expanded remarks with more than usual interest.

Mr. David A. Croll (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I first want to declare my prejudice in the same way as the member for Peel (Mr. Graydon) declared his. I, too, married a schoolteacher, and I found when I graduated from law that we could not live on her salary. I had to go to work. That may not be the sole reason why I welcome this resolution, but it does give us an opportunity to think about this problem and keep it before the public and before the government. I believe it is an extremely important problem. I realize that at this session we have some very heavy expenditures, particularly in connection with our preparedness program. Nevertheless, I believe I can recommend to my electors further expenditures for education. I think education pays dividends by way of the good citizenship which comes from it in a manner that no other expenditure does.

I want to make clear one more thing that the member for Peel as well as others touched upon. I join with them wholeheartedly in agreeing that provincial rights must be preserved. Anything we do in the way of assistance to education must in no way invade provincial rights. The matter of education belongs entirely to the provinces. The federal

[Mr. Graydon.]

government has no legitimate interest in provincial schools as such. Its interest is, and should, be in the children of Canada in all schools throughout the country. But I believe the federal authority ought to take an active rather than a passive interest.

The resolution before us speaks of equalizing educational opportunity. The problem, as has already been stated by members in this house, arises because our country's wealth is unequally distributed. But we must not lose sight of the fact that education is no less a concern of the poorer provinces. Inequality of educational opportunity is the result of economic inequality and not inequality of will. In my opinion federal aid to education will make it possible to raise the salaries of some of the teachers who have been notoriously underpaid for a great length of time. I have always felt that the community should look to the teacher, and the teacher should be proud of her profession. Salary increases have been neglected for a long time. On the last occasion when this subject was before us, some of the figures that were given in this house as payment to teachers for years of service were almost scandalous.

Recently in my own city of Toronto the board of education decided to increase teachers' salaries. There was a great hullabaloo about the possible increase in taxes. Of course, taxes will increase. But I think it is well for the citizens to know that money spent in that fashion is not only wisely spent but prudently spent. I noticed a Canadian Press dispatch which appeared in the *Toronto Star* of January 24. It was a dispatch from Vancouver, and reads as follows:

At the university of British Columbia, some lecturers get less than the janitor who sweeps out the classrooms, assistant professors less than plumbers, and full professors with a string of degrees little more than bricklayers.

One lecturer with a B.A. and M.A. drew a salary cheque last month for \$190 less deductions. At the same time, in a waterfront office, a husky stevedore pocketed a month's earnings of \$290.

The dominion government has had a wealth of experience in joining with the provinces in educational training, particularly vocational training. I have not heard of any friction between the two governments. The problem that seems to be uppermost in the minds of the members is, where do we get the funds? The government has been spending a considerable amount of money in educating veterans. Members have commended the government for it. We have all agreed that was money well spent, but it is now coming to an end. Some of these funds might well be diverted into this channel. It is for education. I believe the figures indicate