

is concerned. I think it is time we faced facts as Canadians, as provincial governments and as a federal government. It is time we tossed out the old shibboleths which have hobbled Canadian education for 99 years. Perhaps up until now we could afford it; but today we have a different society, a different economy, and a different nation in a different world. Education itself is different, it is in ferment.

In today's Canada we cannot afford to have education walled up, no matter how good each provincial system may be. Let us knock down the bureaucratic walls which plague Canadian education today. We hear talk of jealousy of sovereignty. Are those authorities which are jealous of their sovereignty also jealous of poverty, ignorance, and lack of opportunity for full participation by every citizen in educational progress. I suggest there may be jealousy among governments in the field of education, but I suggest also that these governments ask their people about education.

I believe that the people of Canada are not interested in arguments about sovereignty; they are interested in obtaining the fullest possible opportunity for every Canadian to develop his talent to the fullest. If we fail to develop national goals in education, if we fail to make significant progress toward those goals, the result will be to the detriment of Canada as a nation. What has been good enough for Canada in the past 99 years is not good enough today. Balkanized education will not serve Canada's needs in its second century.

I appeal, Mr. Speaker, for a new awareness of the need for a national focus on education, respecting provincial jurisdiction and earning provincial co-operation in meeting the challenge. I favour a federal initiative in the establishment of an office of education and I join the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond in respectfully taking issue with the view expressed by the Prime Minister, that no initiative should be taken without the agreement of the provinces. I favour a federal initiative in the establishment of such an office.

I hope that the provinces will co-operate in a spirit of mutual good will and mutual interest, and make the fullest and most productive use of such an office for the benefit of their citizens, and in the national interest; but I urge the establishment of such an office even if such co-operation and such interest is not forthcoming, for the purpose of more effectively carrying out the established func-

Proposed Federal Office of Education
tions and responsibilities of the Government of Canada to the people of Canada in the field of education.

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I will take only a few minutes because I know quite a number of hon. members are most interested in this particular subject. I will try to say what I wish to say in a very few minutes.

I think the need for the establishment of an office such as is proposed is so obvious that we should hardly need to be debating it. I would go further and say that the re-organization of the government which the Prime Minister proposed very recently very easily could have included, in a branch of the manpower department, an office to co-ordinate these efforts.

I support absolutely the motion in its general intent. The federal government has engaged in an encroachment in the field of education in three main areas, the first of which is in the vocational schools program, which was not really an encroachment because it did not make any effort to teach, but rather to provide financial assistance. There was a large amount of federal money spent. Second, the university grants to the provinces have been increased from time to time and now are expected to be \$5.00 per capita. This is a very large and substantial federal expenditure. The third is research, which reaches across the whole field of education. We are involved in education, particularly in these three very important fields.

I do not believe there has been any question of the constitutional grounds about these three fields. In two other fields a reasonable case can be made for federal involvement in education, and that is post-secondary education at the university and vocational levels—and also in the matter of standardization of grading in elementary and secondary schools in Canada. I think this is very badly needed.

• (5:40 p.m.)

Last year I proposed a confederation student exchange for the centennial year which had as its objective the exchange of students between different parts of Canada for a full term of study, particularly students taking education at the secondary level. The centennial commission has never fully adopted this idea, although it has received general interest and support by various people and organizations as well as the government. As a result, the student exchange program was stepped