

Mr. ZAPLITNY: I should like also to quote a resolution passed by the national convention of the Canadian Teachers' Federation in 1945. This is recent, and puts the organization clearly on the record. This is what they say:

Whereas important aspects of federal-provincial finance are to be decided at the present dominion-provincial conference; and

Whereas the matter of federal aid to education is considered to be one of the most important of these;

Be it resolved that we urge the federal and provincial representatives at this conference to see that the matter is included in their discussions with a view to implementing some such scheme in order to assure all Canadian children an adequate standard of education.

Surely this sets out their stand clearly and unequivocally; there can be no quibbling as to the position of this great body of teachers.

Where do the political organizations in this country stand? I am fortunate in having before me excerpts from statements made by the leaders of three of the parties, and by one of the ministers of the government. I shall begin by quoting the leader of my own group, in a statement he made in May, 1945. Here are his words:

Education is a matter of concern for Canada as a whole; not for a community or a province only. And next, and equally important, there is implied the recognition that the resources of the provincial governments are insufficient to undertake all the educational activities that modern requirements of peace and war demand.

That makes it clear where we in this group stand in the matter of federal financial aid to education. I now come to the then leader of the opposition, the hon. member for Peel (Mr. Graydon). Here are his words—and I wonder if he will recognize them to-day:

The ability to pay affects the whole problem of equal opportunity. The answer lies in federal aid for education.

I believe this sets out his attitude quite clearly. If it does not he will have an opportunity of setting the record straight.

Mr. GRAYDON: Is anybody arguing against that?

Mr. ZAPLITNY: Not at all. I am just leaving it open, in the case the hon. member wishes to say something.

Mr. GRAYDON: Perhaps the hon. member does not like me to think in that way; but I do.

Mr. ZAPLITNY: I now come to the leader of the Social Credit party, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Low). Here are his words.

Equality of educational opportunity is desirable and, therefore, substantial federal grants should be made to the provinces.

I think that is clear, and the hon. member nods his head in agreement.

I come now to the government side of the house, and quote these words from the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Claxton) who, I assume, speaks for the government in this respect:

But the constitution does not prevent the federal government from giving substantial assistance to education.

I hope the hon. member who interrupted me earlier will take that to heart, because those are the words of a minister in the government he supports. I believe these quotations place upon the record as fairly as it can be done the attitude taken by the various political parties in the house, taken, significantly enough, in May, 1945. It will be recalled that there was an election in June of that year. I have no reason to believe that any one of these gentlemen has taken a different position since then; therefore I have nothing but the highest confidence that, when the time comes, each of them will rise in support of this resolution.

In the time left at my disposal I should like to answer two possible objections to the proposal I made. One of those objections, which was implied in a question asked by an hon. member opposite, is that of provincial autonomy. I was asked whether I was aware that, according to the constitution, education is under the jurisdiction of the provinces. I answered that I was well aware of that, and may I point out that a careful reading of my resolution will show that I am not asking the federal government to take over the administration of education in this country. That is not suggested in the resolution, or in anything I have said to-day. What I am asking for, and what all the leaders of the various groups and one of the ministers of the government have agreed upon, is that the federal government should make substantial grants to the provinces to make it possible for the provinces to finance education properly. I hope that will clear up any misunderstanding which may exist in the minds of hon. members. This resolution does not suggest that the federal government should administer education.

Mr. LaCROIX: Is the hon. member adding the words, "Without any control from the federal government, so far as expenses are concerned?"

Mr. ZAPLITNY: Although I thought I had made myself clear, for the benefit of the hon. member may I repeat that I am not suggesting that the federal government take over the administration of education. My resolution calls for a substantial federal grant to the provinces, to be used as the provinces see fit.