

### *Established Programs Financing*

Knowing what has been happening and knowing how much the provincial governments have eroded the system, why did the federal Government not then immediately decide on the six and five and start working on a new funding formula with the provinces and the institutions? When it says that it is the fault of the provinces, most of us here wonder if it has been that concerned about the lack of accountability. If it has been that concerned about provinces not living up to a moral commitment, why did the federal Government a year ago not immediately set up a highly representative task force to look into the whole question of funding? Or why did it not simply bring together the provinces and representatives of the universities and colleges to start working on the subject? I simply cannot understand why it did not take action when it had time to do it and when it had seen what was happening in many of the provinces. The things that the provinces were doing were all the more reason for the federal Government to have acted.

One really begins to wonder whether the federal Government is really committed to the principle of accessibility. Accessibility means that any student who meets the qualifications established by a university or college can go to university or college. Perhaps he cannot always attend the exact institution which he would like to, and perhaps not always be in the exact program he would prefer, but nevertheless he can go. This principle has been pretty well adhered to by the institutions and most of the governments in this country. Two years ago the federal Government could not have made it clearer that that was the principle which it would like to see our higher educational systems rest upon. It is only if you have a principle like that that you can have a relatively fair system. The young people who did not get through high school, perhaps through no fault of their own, are still being kept out of the system. Young people who have been economically, socially and culturally disadvantaged and who, therefore, have not seen university or college as something within their ken, are still kept out of the system. It is not a perfect principle and cannot work perfectly. For those who are academically qualified at the end of high school it is a fair principle.

Look how it has been eroded. The University of British Columbia is going to be obliged to levy a 33 per cent increase in tuition fees this year. Simon Fraser is going to be obliged to levy a 25 per cent increase. Those kinds of tuition fee increases are going very seriously to erode the principle of accessibility. Requiring a student in British Columbia to borrow \$2,300 under Canada student loans before he is entitled to apply for a grant is eroding the principle of accessibility. Cutting off qualified students from entering colleges or university erodes the principle of accessibility. The very rich, the very diligent and those with a background which is very conducive culturally and socially will be the ones who will survive in our university and college system. That is the dimension of the crisis as far as the principle of accessibility is concerned.

Further than that, the institutions themselves are suffering. People forget that if we are going to keep first-class college and university institutions in this country, we have to have first-class libraries, laboratories, computing science faculties

and humanities departments. That is not what we are getting any more. Scientific equipment in the universities and colleges is out of date in many cases. These institutions have not got the money because of this great drain on their finances caused by the underfunding that has been going on. We look at the students and the institutions themselves because the two make up the total system. The institutions include the teaching faculty and the staffs.

I have already mentioned cutbacks in hiring teachers. About one out of ten qualified teachers with a Ph.D is hired. I fail to understand why this is joined by continual foreign hiring, but I will get into that on another occasion. These people with Ph.Ds and other qualifications are going to wither on the vine. In 10 years time when we find that we need highly qualified teachers we are not going to have them. We will not have provided the kind of research associates in our universities and colleges to enable these young people to at least keep up their research.

On Wednesday I asked the Secretary of State particularly about the underfunding of our universities and colleges and their requesting an emergency fund and so on. I reminded him about the principle of accessibility particularly which the Government said it adhered to. At page 721 of *Hansard* he said:

—it is our objective to ensure that the principle of accessibility will be maintained as much as possible.

It is like being a little bit pregnant. You either maintain the principle of accessibility or you do not. When you qualify it by saying you will maintain it as much as possible, you are really saying you will not maintain it. It is an absolute denial of what the Government committed itself to two years ago on the principle of accessibility. It may have been a slip. The Secretary of State may have suddenly believed that he could not say the Government would maintain the principle of accessibility because the Minister of Finance may go to him and say that it may not be maintained because the provinces will not be given enough money for the universities and colleges in order to maintain it. He may have also suddenly thought that he had better not cross the Minister of Finance, or even the Minister of State for Finance who may also be involved. For that reason perhaps the Secretary of State qualified his remarks by saying that the principle will be maintained as much as possible.

● (1440)

That is an absolute denial of what the Government committed itself to and what I believe most Members of the House would commit themselves to. I believe that we all want to see as high a participation rate of young people as possible. I believe we would like to see it higher than it is and I am amazed to see how low that level has become in my own province and in other parts of the country.

Where will we get the R and D of the future if we continue as we are with this continuous underfunding, higher tuition fees, restricted enrolments and inadequate student aid? There will be a small elite which will benefit from university and college education, particularly university education.