



REFERENCE PAPERS

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 9

EDUCATION IN CANADA

Canada has ten separate educational systems. Eight of the nine provinces have individual autonomous systems. Quebec in effect has two systems - one for the majority Roman Catholic and largely French-speaking population, and a second for the Protestant, largely English-speaking minority. Three other provinces - Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan - make provision for separate schools for Roman Catholic children at the primary level.

The Quebec French-language system is attended by about one-fourth of all Canadian children. Of the 23,660 teachers in Quebec Catholic public schools, over half - 12,110 - are members of religious orders, both men and women.

When Canada became a nation in 1867, a constitution was drawn up preserving control over education to the authority of the provinces. This is why each province has its own school system. The costs of provincial education, which runs from \$36.65 per child per year in Prince Edward Island, to \$99.20 in British Columbia, are met mainly by taxation on real estate.

School attendance is compulsory up to the age of 14 or 16, and enrolment is free in the public and separate schools. Only two or three per cent of Canadian children attend private schools.

Primary education lasts for seven or eight years. Then the child is ready for secondary education. Some have a choice of entering an academic school, a commercial school or a technical school where a boy may learn a trade or a girl, domestic science. From any of these the student may, four or five years later, proceed to a university, a normal school (where a certificate as a teacher is earned), or an agricultural or domestic science college. The majority of children go to work after leaving high school. Only three per cent graduate from Canada's 30 universities in normal times, although at present some 35,000 veterans are attending university under a rehabilitation scheme which grants them free tuition and a living allowance of \$60 a month while studying.

Over 2,000,000 Canadian children attend provincially-controlled schools. Approximately 125,000 attend private schools, of whom a fifth are in business colleges learning stenography and book-keeping.

Another 16,000 children are attending schools run by the federal government. These are the Indian children who live on Indian reservations all across Canada.

(H.M./8.1.47 n.p.)