

Adjournment Debate

Immigration (Mr. Roberts). The issue is really employment for highly-qualified manpower.

I remind the Minister and his Parliamentary Secretary that everyone who pursues a higher education, such as the doctoral level and beyond, is really a small business. When we think of business and the expansion of business generally, we tend to think of the need to invest money into a facility—a building, a piece of equipment or something of the kind. Another place to put that money is into education. If we look at doctors and dentists who have put a lot of money into their personal education, we see that they are assisted by several others. They really constitute a small business. They need receptionists, dental technicians and other kinds of people. It is in that context that I become increasingly disturbed about the attitude of the present Government toward highly-qualified manpower.

• (1810)

Much against our objection, some two years ago this Government cut out part of the money which would normally have gone to the provinces for the post-secondary educational system. We sit here today in this House of Commons with certain knowledge that enrolment went up and that there is overcrowding. Many young people are being discouraged in terms of pursuing their personal education.

The specific issue I raised in Question Period the other day dealt with the fact that in Canadian society as a whole we are turning out three Ph.D. graduates for every university vacancy, three times as many Canadians as we need for the total system with that level of education, yet some 27 per cent of those jobs are going to foreign nationals.

It is worth while putting some statistics on the record that come under the Symons-Page report. In Britain, 92 per cent of the university faculty are British; in the United States 98 per cent are American; in France very close to 100 per cent of the faculty are French; in Sweden, 99 per cent of the faculty are Swedes. In this country it is very different.

Let us look at the senior levels of our academics in our institutions. The latest statistical basis gives an average from 1978 to 1981. It includes both English and French-speaking universities. The record is better in the French-speaking universities. Forty per cent of the full professors are not Canadian. At the associate professor level, it is 33 per cent and at the assistant professor level it is 30 per cent.

When we dig into those numbers and look at the kinds of careers and occupations that we really need to get the Canadian economy going, we find out some really strange things. In some very critical fields, between 1974 and 1981 the following has happened. The number of doctorates awarded to Canadians in agricultural and biological sciences fell from 202 to 163. That was a 20 per cent drop. In engineering and applied science the number of Canadians who received doctorates in 1974 was 229. In 1981 there were 118. In engineering and applied sciences, fields important to the future of this country, we had half as many people graduating with doctorates. In health science, there was a decrease from 138 in 1974 to 94 in

1981. In math and physical sciences, the number went down from 478 ten years ago to 232 three years ago. All those fields are vitally important to the economy of this country and the number of Canadians students going forward to the doctorate level is declining.

If we look at current enrolment in Canadian universities, we find that 55 per cent of the doctoral candidates in our engineering faculties are non-Canadian. Over half of the students pursuing doctoral work in those universities are non-Canadian students, 33 per cent in math and physical science and 25 per cent in agricultural and biological sciences. We have slid and somehow find ourselves in what I would think is already a crisis situation that needs correcting as quickly as possible through public policy. That correction can be led by a physical presence. It is not led when we start cutting funds to education.

I would ask the Parliamentary Secretary tonight in his expansion of the earlier answer given by the Minister if he can deal with the following three questions. What is being done to increase the level of Canadian enrolment in these areas vital to our future? What policies has the Government explored to encourage greater post-graduate studies by Canadian citizens? What studies have been undertaken on the long-term impact of these very disturbing trends? We need the federal Government to act and to support the idea that Canadians get themselves educated. The economy depends upon it. I am looking forward to the Parliamentary Secretary's reply to these questions.

• (1815)

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Guy Dubois (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to elaborate on the reply given on January 17, 1984, by the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) to the Member for Calgary-West (Mr. Hawkes). The four recommendations mentioned by the Hon. Member are among twelve submitted by Messrs. Symons and Page. The first recommendation for the establishment of a consultative committee on academic relations is a very valid one. The Committee would pave the way for regular consultation with bodies representative of the academic community. It could also be a way to encourage universities to work together to ensure compliance with the spirit and the letter of existing regulations. As for the recommendation that the committee or a part thereof would advise the Minister on appeals or complaints arising from certain cases, we feel that a Committee of senior officials of the Commission should not be called upon the judge cases in which the original decision was taken by the Commission itself.

Furthermore, any other aspect of the process, such as the suitability of candidates who feel they have not been properly evaluated, involves passing value judgments on the applicants. It is a policy of the Commission not to take part in assessments which are, in fact, an evaluation of academic merit and