

*Education*

resolution. There are, however, certain principles that, it seems to me, are well established and that must be brought to bear on the present resolution regardless of whether we have or have not the assistance of the report of the Massey commission.

On each occasion on which I have had the opportunity of speaking on this subject, I have begun with a firm assertion of the view, to which I cling tenaciously, that there must be no trespassing upon the rights of the provinces, under the constitution, in the matter of the content and the system of education. Section 93 of the British North America Act is one of the most important of the fundamental provisions of our constitution. It reads as follows:

In and for each province the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education.

Then follow certain reservations which are not directly relevant to the matter now before us.

I do not believe that anyone in this house, regardless of how enthusiastic may be his support for federal assistance, has any thought of trespassing upon the exclusive jurisdiction of the provincial legislatures in the matter of education. For my part I give the most unhesitating and wholehearted support to the principle, the spirit and the letter of section 93 of the British North America Act. I can do that without withdrawing in the slightest the support I give to the resolution now before the house. It is possible to give strong support to the present resolution without in the slightest withdrawing one's attachment to the spirit and the letter of section 93 of the British North America Act.

What this resolution proposes is that federal financial assistance should be extended to the provinces for the purpose of "expanding and equalizing educational opportunity across Canada." Inherent in one's approach to this resolution is necessarily one's belief in the value of education and one's faith in those who are charged in the various provinces with the education of our young. Education has played a leading role in the shaping of the history of our country, in the shaping of our young people to assume in due time their responsibilities as citizens and as leaders in the various walks of Canadian life.

In the second place, inherent in one's approach to the resolution is one's conviction that today, by reason of the fact that the provinces and municipalities are lacking in adequate revenue for the purpose, there is a necessity for finding additional sources of revenue out of which the increasing costs of education may be met.

[Mr. Fleming.]

Educational costs in this country have risen very rapidly in recent years. I am sure I need not weary the house with a recital of statistics to prove that. One has only to glance at figures showing educational costs in the various provinces to realize that these costs have been mounting by leaps and bounds. Of course, the youthful population of the country has been increasing; there are more people to educate. But, sir, the cost of providing educational institutions has been rising rapidly. We are recognizing the need for providing better equipment in the schools. Great advances have been made in educational methods, and in most cases they have brought with them the need for providing new and improved equipment and facilities. Then, sir, quite properly in this country—and it is one of the features of the attitude of young Canadians upon which we ought to commend them and congratulate ourselves—they are appreciating to an ever-increasing degree the value of education in their own lives. More and more young people are seeking for themselves the benefits of higher education. More and more parents are dedicating the best efforts of their lives to seeing that, so far as their means and efforts will permit, their children will have better educational opportunity than they had. I am sure all of us know many people who are making sacrifices for their children to see that the dream of higher education for those children may be fully realized.

All of us would like to see greater equality of opportunity in life. A good deal of lip service is given to the principle of equalizing opportunity among the young people of our country, regardless of the means of their parents, regardless of the part of the country in which they may reside. There is one way in which it is possible to bring that principle out of the realm of hope and bring it right down to earth, so that it may have practical application, and that is by seeking in a practical way to equalize educational opportunities for the young people of this country.

While it will take dominion and provincial co-operation, if there is a will we can do much, through the avenues of education, to provide greater opportunity for our young people than has existed hitherto. In the different areas of this country the difficulties of trying to meet 1951 needs with the methods and principles of revenue-raising laid down in 1867 in the British North America Act have resulted in a disparity of opportunity in the different parts of the country. What I have said about the desirability of equalizing educational opportunity, regardless of the