

*Interim Supply*

a school term exchange. There should also be provision for a number of students who could not properly make an exchange during a school year. In this category there would be students in their final year of secondary school, whose education should not be disturbed. If these students wanted to make an exchange they might find that the standards of education were so different in the province visited that they would not be able to pass the different examinations. There should also be a summer exchange for students who desire to make an exchange with students in areas not having a comparable curriculum.

There would be a third group of students who would not take the whole year. They would be those who wanted to exchange for cultural or language purposes and who could not properly fit into the language area and get any results from their schooling. These would be people who desired to exchange from one language area to another, to move into a home environment in the other language and acquire fluency in that second language. Such an exchange could work both ways. By that I mean it could be partly in the one province and partly in the other, for one month in the one province and one month in the other for each of the students.

Summer exchanges would be based on the same principles as the others, except that they would be of shorter duration and would not involve any educational problem of any kind. I know of several very successful experiments that have been made in this type of home to home exchange. I know that this summer a large number of students from the province of Ontario who live in English language communities moved into various French language communities in Quebec, stayed there for one or two weeks and returned home bringing their guests with them for a similar period. This experiment was entered upon with a great deal of hesitation by some of these children because they were not sure what they were going to get into. That is the reason why I suggested in my original plan that when there is an exchange there should be supervision by some sort of agency which would verify that the home is proper for the child to go into and, on the other hand, that the new parents are satisfied with the child who has been placed with them.

There is one difficulty that undoubtedly will come to mind and that is the question of religion. There are many situations where religion might cause difficulty, even though other exchange factors would be satisfactory.

[Mr. Aiken.]

The plan I envisage would include the question of religion as part of the application particulars, and if necessary the computers could match up the cards of the student and the parents. But in many cases there would be no problem and as I see it the sole requirement would be that the foster parents agree, as part of their general undertaking, to send the student to a church designated by the parents. There is no real problem but it is undoubtedly one matter that would cause some concern.

As to the time of commencement of this plan, I should like to set as a target date the school term of 1966-67, which is roughly two years away. I have had discussions with people who are interested and who have operated exchange programs and they feel that a two year period would be quite sufficient to enable them to be prepared to carry out this program. I am not putting forward this project as a pipe dream because I have discussed it with people who have been in the field, and it can be done and can make a very significant impact on Canada for the future. I would suggest that the summer exchanges start in 1967, and after 1966 and 1967 these exchanges would be on a continuing basis as students reach the grades designated.

There are about a million students in Canada's secondary schools and about 400,000 of these are in their third or subsequent years and would come under the plan I have mentioned. I have selected this age group because they are mature enough to travel but young enough to adapt to new surroundings. Allowances will have to be made for those who find some disturbance in curriculum, because they will have compensated for it in experience. Final year students who are preparing for university entrance should probably only participate in the summer exchange.

I have discussed this plan with a number of experts in the field. The technical difficulties can be ironed out. Computers can handle the matching of registration cards, provincial curricula can be equated, and the plan can work.

I can think of no better way to meet our obligation to the coming generation, to take a great step toward national understanding, to substitute personal experience and direct exposure for book learning, and to provide a living and meaningful centennial project. For the cost of one public building and one military aircraft, or for the amount the federal government spends in one day, this