

*Proposed Federal Office of Education*

schools of the federal government, consulting with the provinces and the universities concerning university and technical and vocational grants, I suggest that a federal office of education could serve as a clearing house of educational research in literature throughout Canada.

In the provinces in Canada co-ordination in educational research is going on, and new curricula as well as new teaching methods are being developed. However, there ought to be a clearing house where all these things can be brought together.

I should like to say a word about research. I have already said that in Canada some educational research is being carried on, although not nearly enough. We are behind many other countries in this respect. There was an organization in this country a few years ago known as the Canadian Council for Research in Education. This body was supported by several national organizations, including the Canadian Association of Professors of Education, the Canadian Association of School Superintendents and Inspectors, the Association Canadienne des Educateurs de Langue Française, the Canadian Education Association, the Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation, and, as it was then called, the National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges.

In a brochure recently published by the associations I have mentioned, it was pointed out just how far behind other countries Canada is with respect to educational research. May I quote briefly from the brochure:

But there is a growing concern in the educational world about the effectiveness and efficiency of our educational programs. One source of this concern is the increasing cost of education. Rising cost brings with it the inevitable question as to whether the two billion dollars Canadians are now spending on education are being put to the best possible use.

● (5:10 p.m.)

However, a much more basic cause of our concern with efficiency is that we recognize that man's knowledge is accumulating at an accelerating pace. Thus the child of each succeeding generation must learn more and more rapidly, or he will become increasingly less capable of utilizing this accumulated knowledge. This acceleration in the child's learning will require a continuing improvement in the effectiveness of our school programs.

Speaking at a conference of the Canadian College of Teachers at Lac Beauport, Quebec, two years ago, Dr. Robinson of the Canadian

[Mr. Prittie.]

Council for Research and Education expressed this opinion—and I am reading from a report by the Canadian Press:

Many of the differences in education from province to province were not based on different philosophies, but simply on different rates of slowness in copying United States methods, he said.

He quoted mathematics as a subject in which Canadian education is five years behind the U.S.

We must, of course, profit where we can from American research,

But if Canada is to pretend to have an educational system with unique goals—as we surely do—it must follow that we develop an independent research program.

Otherwise, Canada confesses to being the intellectual beggar among the educationally advanced countries of the world.

I think there is ample evidence that educational research in Canada is behind that of the United States, and that we should be doing more than we are doing now in this field. The Canadian Council for Research in Education is, I am sure, performing a useful function. It is supported by the organizations which I mentioned a few minutes ago. I would suggest, however, that these are organizations with only limited funds at their disposal and that it would be fitting if an agency could be set up by the federal government which would recognize the importance of research in education, just as we recognize the importance of scientific research by the National Research Council.

I believe the federal government should recognize this and provide the financial support necessary to carry on the type of research into education which is really necessary in this country. I suggested earlier that there are educational activities in the educational field which are quite appropriate for the federal government. I suggested that a federal office of education should be established to handle those functions which pertain to the national defence schools, Indian schools, the granting of moneys for technical education, and so on. I am also suggesting that we should go further and set up an office for educational research. Whether the provinces wish to co-operate or not is, of course, up to them. It seems to me that education throughout Canada would profit from research into curricula, teaching methods and the psychology of learning. This information could be brought into one clearing house and then be made available to the whole country.

I realize that some agencies are trying to do this at the present time—the Council for Research in Education, the Canadian Teachers Association and, perhaps, the