

*Federal-Provincial Arrangements Act*

militates greatly against the entrance of foreign students. In provinces which are under great financial strain, the entrance of a foreign student to a university in the province probably represents an unwelcome financial charge and burden regardless of the contribution foreign students can make to the university life of Canada and through that university life to the whole of the community.

Another matter which greatly concerns the university community is the fact that all the financial assistance from public sources is funnelled to them through one channel. The evidence given by university representatives who appeared before the committee was to the effect that more than 80 per cent of the costs of operation of universities are now paid by the government and in all cases this money now reaches the universities through the provincial governments.

I believe the universities have good reason to be fearful of the erosion of their independence by reason of the tremendous concentration of fiscal power in the hands of the provincial governments. This would seem to be another good reason to look for alternative ways to provide fiscal assistance at the federal level for post-secondary education.

It is clear that there is no cow more sacred in our political history and in our constitution than that of education which, because of the inept wording of section 93 of the BNA Act, is presumed always and eternally to be a provincial responsibility. On the face of things it is impossible to believe that university education, the comprehension of knowledge at a high level and over a great scale, can in any sense be just a provincial responsibility. The mere fact that the universities have to find a location or physical site in various parts of the country is an accident which cannot be avoided and is not one which should be used to impose burdens upon university students no matter from what part of Canada they come.

I have contended vigorously for many years that the federal government should have an active role to play in university education. I am distressed to see that the report filed today by the constitution committee does not accord the federal government the hope of achieving a role of that kind, and retreats again into the ancient formula which assigns university education to the provinces just as if it were elementary school education in the year 1867.

We are fortunate that the arrangements being proposed here are of an interim nature. Obviously, we look to a better permanent arrangement for the future. I share entirely the apprehension of the hon. member for Fundy-Royal that we may try to avoid the basic responsibility of parliament to university education merely by the assigning of tax points or tax room to the provinces. We must do more than that if we are to achieve the full potential of university education in this country for the benefit of all our citizens and for the benefit of the nation.

The question of the future financing of university education in Canada is, I believe, too important to be left to private discussions between ministers of the federal government and the provincial governments. I hope very serious consideration will be given to the submission made by the Association of Universities and Colleges to the federal government and to the council of ministers,

[Mr. Blair.]

federal and provincial, which I understand was prepared and filed in the autumn of 1971. Among other things, this submission, as reported at page 244 of the March 14 report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs, recommends that there be a separate, countrywide study of the subject of financing higher education in Canada. It recommends that the terms of reference for such a study should include the following areas of concern:

1. the role and responsibilities of universities in the contemporary Canadian society;
2. the distribution of the financial costs and responsibilities as between governments and students and between federal and provincial governments, and the financial devices by which the desired distribution could be effected;
3. regional disparities in educational opportunities and appropriate devices for eliminating them;
4. universal accessibility and student support;
5. role of the federal authority in support of research, student mobility, graduate study, and foreign students;
6. ways of achieving provincial, regional and national co-ordination of activities, ways of achieving economies in university operations and ways of preventing unnecessary proliferation.

Mr. Speaker, through you I should like to thank the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) for moving the amendment which has provided an opportunity for this important discussion. As I said at the beginning, his amendment regrettably bears little relevance to the matters I have discussed and the matters raised by the hon. member for Fundy-Royal, but I say in all seriousness to this House that one of the most important items we must decide in the future is a better and revised way of financing university education in Canada.

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## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

### SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald)—Agriculture—Potatoes—Response to representations for action to relieve depressed market—Possible diversion to stock feed; the hon. member for Fraser Valley West (Mr. Rose)—Canadian Broadcasting Corporation—Dispute with NABET—Request that CBC engage in meaningful negotiations; the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Beau-doin)—Criminal Code—Abolition of capital punishment—review by parliament during present session.

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely, notices of motions, private bills and public bills.

**Mr. Stanley Haidasz (Parkdale):** Mr. Speaker, I understand there have been discussions among the parties on both sides of the House and there has been agreement to ask for unanimous consent to call the report stage and third reading of Bill C-164. I would therefore ask the unanimous consent of the House to proceed.