

Education

member for Saskatoon (Mr. Knight). That resolution is in these words:

That, in the opinion of this house, the government should take into consideration means of expanding and equalizing educational opportunity across Canada, by the granting of financial assistance to the various provinces for that purpose.

I think we all realize that at this time the government is already doing a great deal toward expanding educational opportunities. I note that within the past ten years two departments of government alone have spent about a quarter of a billion dollars in support of vocational education at the secondary school level, and about \$160 million for the training and educating of veterans. Many departments of government are concerned with and contributing to educational expansion and opportunity in Canada.

This resolution however does not pertain particularly to any specialized form of education. In the past the policy of the government has been to grant sums of money earmarked for special educational purposes. What those of us who support the resolution are asking is that the federal government should undertake to contribute to elementary, secondary and university education—to general education, rather than to special forms of education.

There are many reasons why the government should contribute to the expansion and equalization of educational opportunity. The history of education in practically every country of the world has followed much the same pattern. In pioneer days in every country the parents of children were required to provide education for their children and to pay for that education. As communities became organized, the smaller communities and municipalities proceeded to undertake, first, part of the cost of that education and, later on, to bear most of that cost. The next step was the contributions made by provincial and state governments to the municipalities in support of education.

We in Canada have followed the usual pattern up to that point; but we are one of the few, if any, countries in the world today where the federal or national government does not contribute to the general educational program of the country. We are the only part of the commonwealth, the only country of which I am aware, with a federal and provincial or state governments, where the central or national government has not undertaken definitely to contribute to the general elementary, secondary and university education.

I shall give four reasons—and while I believe they have been given in the house before, they will stand repeating. The first is that education today is a "must" for every

boy and girl. It is universally recognized that educated youth can make better citizens than do the uneducated. We found out during the last war that we had to send thousands of those who had enlisted back to school to learn to read, to write, to learn to do arithmetic, and to learn geography and history. Many thousands of others had to take specialized training in school for the army, the navy and the air force.

Necessary as education was for war, it is infinitely more essential in the day to day life of civilians throughout the world as it exists at the present time. It is vitally important to Canada as a nation that our youth receive every educational advantage we can give them. Regardless of the British North America Act, regardless of any difference of opinion that may exist between federal and provincial governments, education has become the nation's business, whether or not the nation undertakes to pay her share of the costs.

In the second place we educate Canadian boys and girls to become citizens of Canada. I doubt if there is any phase of national life today that contributes more to parochialism and provincialism than does our educational system. We should try to remember that we are not educating boys and girls to be citizens of the province of Ontario, or the province of Quebec, or of any other province. We should try to remember that those boys and girls become Canadian citizens. At least one out of every three moves out of the province in which he or she was educated, to live in another province.

So that the educational attainments of any boy or girl in any province become a matter of importance to every other province in the dominion. To overcome our provincialism we should seek to give our youth education that will enable them to become Canadians. Canada as a nation, and the federal government as the government representing the nation as a whole, and the government collecting the taxes from the nation at large, should, in our opinion, bear its share of the national educational cost.

In the third place, because every young Canadian boy or girl is a Canadian he is entitled to equal educational opportunity, so far as physically possible, with every other Canadian. There are factors which determine and will continue to determine the degree of education which a youth will attain. In many instances that degree of education is determined by his ability and his willingness to avail himself of the opportunities offered. In this country financial reasons should