

*National Education Standards*

inces for educational purposes. We are very involved in student loans, in vocational training, in the program of training and retraining through the Department of Manpower and Immigration. These programs make it clear that the federal government is involved in an indirect way in education, and for this reason I have no hesitation in moving this motion which simply calls for a conference to be convened to inspire co-ordination and co-operation among the provinces.

In this motion, I ask the government of Canada to convene a conference, in view of its involvement in education, because of the inequalities that exist in the educational systems of the different provinces, in equalities that existed last year and continue to exist this year.

True, representatives of provincial governments meet at times to consider certain problems which come up in the field of education.

But I am not satisfied and that is why I would like the point on which I want to insist to be brought to the attention of provincial ministers of education in order to satisfy young people who travel across Canada.

Last year, I quoted figures, and I do not want to recall them. But I said that more than 100,000 young people who moved many times from one province to another are facing different education systems, which is no doubt likely to delay their progress.

It is therefore important to know that over 100,000 young people go from one province to the other every year.

[English]

I stressed the point previously that Canadians are very mobile, and last year I produced statistics to prove it. I emphasized the point that yearly over 50,000 families move from one place to the next, and on the average there are two children to a family. Young families are moving and jobs do not last long. I suspect that this year more families will be moving to try to find employment. The government wants youth to move, since it is subsidizing their travels this summer. Young people want to go to study in various provinces. So, there is cause for concern about this particular problem.

As I said, my remarks today are simply a rebuttal of the arguments put forward last year because I did not have a chance at that time to answer the comments made during the time allotted to private members hour. The hon. member for London West (Mr. Buchanan) made the following remarks, as recorded at page 4245 of *Hansard* for March 2, 1970:

In conclusion, I should like to suggest that this motion has the effect of making more rigid and stratifying our structure, when really the solution and outcome should be more freedom at the individual and municipal level, giving the teacher more power to develop and design programs which fit in with these students who move from province to province.

Some valid arguments have been put forward, and I respect them, but my argument in presenting this motion is that I certainly do not want to limit the freedom of our youth. I respect the right of the individual to develop. I do not want to limit the initiative of the individual provinces, school boards and teachers. I just hope that the

[Mr. Comeau.]

programs which are developed by the individual teachers, school boards and provinces will be recognized by other provinces. This is all I am asking.

The hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) spoke somewhat along the same line, pointing out that there are many arguments nowadays in favour of individual rights and freedoms, and that these would be limited if we had uniform standards of education. Mr. Speaker, I am not calling for uniform standards of education. I am simply asking that what an individual province does in the field of education will be recognized by the other provinces, so that our young people will not lose credits when they move from one province to another.

The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair) and the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. Francis) agreed with me that this is a very essential matter. I would point out that many of their constituents are people who moved from other areas of the country, and who have been faced with this problem.

The hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Lundrigan) pointed out that there are ten different approaches to curriculum questions. Mr. Speaker, I want the classroom curriculum to be geared to the individual considering his unique environment, his unique hereditary background. I do not want to stifle the individual. I do not want uniform courses to be offered across the country, but I do want the various curricula to be recognized across the country. I want the credits earned by young individuals to be recognized by each province. I do not want children to suffer the loss of a year of schooling because individual provinces may be proud of their systems and have a superiority complex.

I have only a few minutes left, Mr. Speaker, but I want to point out that since March 2, 1970, when we debated this matter I have received many letters from mothers and fathers whose children lost school years because their credits were not recognized in other areas of the country. They were the children of people in the Armed Forces, or of public servants who had been transferred from their home provinces. I have also read letters to the editor in various newspapers supporting my stand that an effort be made to recognize the credits given by the different provinces.

Recently, I wrote to each provincial minister of education asking for their co-operation in this regard, and for their comments on the matter. I have received a couple of replies, one in particular from the Manitoba Minister of Education, but I am afraid I will have to send him another letter because I do not think he really understood what I was seeking. In his reply he said:

We have generally tended to consider that a little more uniformity in school programs would be helpful but the trend in Canadian schools and the pressure from both teachers and community, and nowadays from students in the high schools, is in the opposite direction.

I recognize that. I do not want to stifle the individual. I simply ask that what the individual does in one province be recognized in another province. I do not want one history course for the whole of Canada. I do not want a conference to discuss one geography or one mathematics