

Education

which have contributed materially not only to the production of wealth in this country but to political leadership and every field of national enterprise. I am thinking, for instance, Mr. Speaker, of the fact that this one little college with which I have been particularly associated has contributed at least one predecessor to the distinguished office which you now hold; has contributed three ministers of finance to this nation, two or three ministers of national defence as well as several other cabinet ministers and numerous provincial premiers. These contributions have been made in the past.

Today these colleges, sir, are facing a problem which is almost insurmountable. Not receiving government grants, they are dependent upon the income from endowment and gifts. They now face a situation where, owing to the incidence of taxation and succession duties, the endowments are at least not being increased and in many cases are depleted. Because of interest rates, the return on the endowments is gradually diminishing each year while costs are increasing. The net result is that students have been called upon to carry a greater share of the cost of these institutions until tuition fees today are as high as the traffic will bear. I believe that any further increases in fees will result in a diminishing student body. Yet the contribution, as I say, that has been made by those universities in the past, not so much because of the tremendous equipment which they have, but because of the quality of the professors, the character and leadership given to the student body by the teaching profession, has been a real contribution. Who has contributed more to the development of this nation than the teaching profession generally? I believe if anyone had to select a group from that profession, he would select that group of professors associated with the smaller universities. Many of them have had opportunities to go to the larger centres, but because they felt they were doing their duty and had a task to perform, they have remained in the smaller field and have contributed to the leadership these smaller institutions have given.

I suggest that something must be done about this problem. I do not care how it may come, but I am thinking of one particular solution which was recently adopted by this government. It has been said that 130,000 or 140,000 veterans received assistance from the government and went to college, some of them advanced in years. Some of them were not very good students before, but in practically every case these young men and women graduated from the university with distinction. The contribution which they will make

[Mr. Nowlan.]

to our life in the future will return many times over the cost to the treasury of that educational scheme. I suggest to you, sir, that at least a partial solution to this problem could lie in the field of national scholarships, not only for research. I realize that under the national foundation for research scholarships are given today in specialized fields and for graduate studies, but I am thinking of the field of undergraduates. Many young men and women who should go to college, who possess natural qualities that could be developed by the university, and who could make a tremendous return to our national development will be prohibited from attending university because of the cost of a college education. I am suggesting, sir, that we institute in this country a system of national scholarships which will be for the students in the provinces attending recognized degree-conferring universities, whether graduate or undergraduate. No greater return could be made to our national development.

I realize that there are stresses and strains through which we are passing. I know that the argument urged will be that we are bearing the cost of a national war, or what may be a war, and that the treasury is carrying a terrific load. We all realize that situation. But, Mr. Speaker, it will serve this country but little if, through great expenditures, we succeed in coming through the national crisis through which we are now passing and yet face a period thereafter when we suffer from a dearth of leadership, something that we need so badly. In this country that is expanding so tremendously and which has such great possibilities we need the leadership which can come from those young men and young women who are awaiting assistance and who must receive it. I suggest to the government that this is a field that should be investigated and that it is one in which definite action must be taken. Whatever approach may be made, I say without fear of successful contradiction that no expenditures which will be made by the dominion government in any particular field can give a greater return for the future than those suggested by myself and by others who have spoken on this resolution this afternoon.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. J. W. Noseworthy (York South): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the resolution standing on the order paper in the name of the hon.