

supreme sacrifice of those who fell overseas under the guns of the enemy for the triumph of freedom, justice and right. Then, and then only, shall we see the real sovereignty and the real valour of Canada. And we shall cherish but one ideal, the most noble and most worthy—*independence*. A shield of glory will assert the freedom, independence and sovereignty of our nation. Canada needs this freedom for the huge task of restoration which requires all its efforts. This sovereignty must emerge with complete clarity, distinction and brightness beneath a flag which will be a distinctive symbol of rallying around an essentially Canadian policy. It is in this broad, immense and enlightened horizon that I foresee and call for the freedom and independence of my country.

Mr. R. R. KNIGHT (Saskatoon City): Mr. Speaker, in looking about for a particular subject upon which I might speak in the budget debate, I came across a paragraph from something written by the pen of Ellen Wilkinson, minister of education in the British government. She says that her aim is to make the schools provided by the state so good and so varied that it will just seem an absurd thing not to send children to them. Then I received a letter from an address in Canada which reads:

I am the teacher of a rural school in a small fishing village. This school is built by the side of the public road, and as the land surrounding it is privately owned, the children have no playground. The desks on which the children must sit day after day are old, shabby and uncomfortable.

I could go on with that letter, but it ends with an appeal to the various citizens of this country to come to the rescue of the little children in that school district.

Mr. KNOWLES: Where was it from?

Mr. KNIGHT: Nova Scotia. Then I come to this sentence:

There is no point in education if it does not give youth a desire for a better life.

So I have my text. I have no apologies to make for speaking on education. I know this is a subject which is somewhat shunned in this house. We feel that it is so much and so particularly the prerogative of the provinces that we are almost afraid to introduce it here. I think that is a mistaken idea. Speaking on the subject of federal aid to education during the debate, I think last May, the hon. member for Dauphin (Mr. Zaplitny) made such a lucid and constructive exposition of the subject and covered the ground so thoroughly, that I was not much disappointed

when the procedure of the house precluded my taking part in the debate although I had intended to do so.

The fact that the dominion-provincial conference has failed, or, if that language is too pessimistic, the fact that it is in a state of suspended decision makes it even more imperative that the dominion government should come to the assistance of the provinces in this matter of education. May I assure my hon. friends, with whom this is a debatable point, that I am not suggesting that there should be any form of interference with provincial autonomy with respect to education but rather a standing by of the provinces on the part of the dominion with moral support which would lend weight to the importance of education as an essential part of the national life, and financial support which would ensure to the people of each and every province some equality in the matter of educational opportunities.

There are those who have said that the acceptance of federal grants would be a surrender of provincial freedom, but that is not necessarily so. The federal government is already in the field of education in the matter of grants in aid of technical education, without the loss, so far as I know, of the freedom of anyone. The acceptance of family allowances has enslaved no one. The provision of federal support for education could become an agency for the promotion of national unity. A new national interest in education could be an instrument for national unity, just as education in a broader sense could be used to promote mutual understanding among the people of the world and, with its ultimate aim of international peace, could shine into and dispel dark ignorance, the gloomy breeding ground of suspicion, of hate and of war.

One way in which the dominion government could aid education without objection from anyone would be to provide direct financial assistance to certain brilliant scholars unable to finance their own university courses, thus ensuring that Canada as a whole would have the benefit of their trained minds. Britain's labour government is giving the lead in that connection. Basil Dean in the *Ottawa Citizen* of May 20 says that scholarship winning students in Britain whose parents earn \$2,600 a year or less will get full maintenance grants, so that it will not cost the parents one cent for their children's university education. In future, no promising student in Britain will be deprived, by lack of means, of the opportunity for a full university course of study. This is a type of investment which we might well emulate.