

student in Alberta. I traveled extensively in the province and visited many schools. I taught and helped in the administration of their school system.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that it will take the province I represent in this House another quarter of a century to catch up with Alberta, in terms of our ability to spend money on education and bring our standard of education up to that of Alberta at the present time. This is basically because we do not have the revenue base, we do not have the dollars required to give our people the standard of education they deserve.

I could argue in terms of national unity. The fragmentation existing throughout the country could be attributed to differences in education standards as at present our educational system makes it practically impossible for us to exist as one nation. I am speaking of our being one nation in the sense of being a kind of geographic entity in which the people enjoy a common culture, common expectations, a common outlook and some mobility. In these days you cannot move your family from one province to another without suffering tremendous disadvantages and setbacks. These are the result of the different goals and over-all objectives of the different educational structures within the country.

We have ten totally independent educational structures with totally different objectives and goals. I am not talking so much about physical things such as classrooms, different though they may be, as about the parameters of our educational system. Today our people are tremendously mobile, much more so than when those who founded the constitution gave the provinces responsibility for education. In these days the members of one family within a span of 10 or 15 years might live in every one of our ten provinces. That necessitates some common ground in education. These are a few of the many arguments that one could bring forward. One could bring forward all kinds of statistical details.

The Government of Canada has always recognized, albeit surreptitiously and secretly, that it ought to be involved in the matter of education. Yet no government since confederation has had the guts to say officially that it should be involved in education. The government, today, is involved in education in many ways. It is involved in the education of Indians through the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Most of our manpower programs are educational programs, whether they are manpower training programs, on-the-job training programs or school upgrading programs under which people who have little or no scholastic foundation are upgraded in their education to standards at which they can be trained.

As well, there are vocational schools, technical schools, and so on all the way up to university. One could go down the line and see that although the government is behind these educational programs, it does not call what it is doing educational involvement. Under no circumstances does it say that these are matters of education. The latest program which comes to mind is that involving the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. A couple of years ago, when the government started talking about being involved in regional development, the provinces wanted it to become involved in education. What is the

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justification for the government's involvement in education?

Governments take an area where there is potential for industrial growth and say that in order for there to be industrial growth an infrastructure must be established. The new word "infrastructure" means water, sewers, roads, industrial parks and things of that nature. Then schools are thrown in as part of the infrastructure. It so happens that when special are designated across the country there is a chance that the provinces can negotiate with the federal government the establishment of schools referred to as DREE schools. I have been advised by officials in one province of Canada that because the provinces have no say over expenditures and no say over these DREE schools are to be built, they cost twice as much to build as they would cost the province.

These schools, by the way, are sometimes expensive and sophisticated structures. Second, they are built in areas where the federal government wants to build them, not in areas where the provinces might think them to be most necessary. Consequently, as I have been advised by people who have been close to this program, the system is not working out at all and there are major disadvantages in most cases to provincial governments involved. I am saying that it is time to cut out this nonsense. Let us get down to basic facts. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is one of the most regressive or reactionary men I have seen in this field.

An hon. Member: Are you serious?

Mr. Lundrigan: I am absolutely serious, and I can give the hon. member categorical evidence to support my view. I have talked with progressive educators across this country who have pushed for federal involvement in education. There were murmurs from the previous administration that there might be federal involvement in education. Then the Prime Minister came on the scene and I quickly discovered his attitude.

During the first few weeks when I was a member of this House I raised the question of federal involvement in the area of human resource development. I carefully used the phrase "human resource development". The Prime Minister was very quick to point out that this was a categorical and clearcut responsibility of the provinces. I have raised the question several times since then but he will not involve himself in debate. Apparently he assumes that everyone from Quebec would automatically start some kind of gang warfare if the federal government ever became involved in provincial education.

● (1610)

I am convinced that no official of the government of the province of Quebec would be unwilling to allow the federal government to participate in the field of education if it were a matter of trying to provide assistance to the provinces to help overcome the disparities in education across the country. I am sure every provincial educator would object to the federal government trying to direct education in Canada. You can hardly go beyond a teacher in expressing direction. Direction in education is what happens in a classroom. That is the only place it can be talked about meaningfully. If we try to centralize education, we