

Developments in Higher Education in Canada Since 1945*

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Canadian higher education since 1945 has been the subject of increasing government involvement in the establishment, progress and governance of Canadian universities. This period has witnessed unprecedented growth in facilities, enrollments and programs, and "Americanization" as described by Robin Mathews and James Steele in their *Struggle for Canadian Universities: A Dossier*, has occurred. As of 1970 there were over 300,000 students and 20,000 faculty in 66 universities.

The Massey Commission Report (1951) stated that the universities were centers of education, patrons of culture, and servants of "the national cause in so many ways that theirs must be regarded as the finest of contributions to national strength and unity". The commission recommended increased Federal Government support for the universities and urged that a Canada Council for the Arts, Letters, Humanities and Social Sciences be established. Ottawa implemented this suggestion in 1957; the subsequent influence on higher education and culture generally has been salutary. Meanwhile, government has contributed to other related research agencies in the sciences, medicine, and defence. Many new universities have been established since 1945, and provinces have assumed responsibility for universities previously under church control. After 1959 provinces gained control of federal funds allocated to higher education; this has led to increased regionalism and provincialism, a fact made more apparent by the racial division of French and English in Canada.

Recently, governments have acquired a vested interest in higher education in Canada. Like Pepys, Canadian academics have experienced "the unhappiness of having our matters examined by people that know them not". As J. A. Corry of Queen's University has written in his book, *Farewell the Ivory Tower*, Canadian higher education has become a public utility subject to governmental regulation. It is to be hoped that in an era of alleged economies, Canadian higher education will not be cheapened, and that young Canadians will be given the opportunity of the best higher education that the nation and provinces can afford. It will be no less important that Canadian institutions of higher learning contribute to the quality of Canadian life in cultural and

scientific fields, and that they maintain their beneficial connections with the Commonwealth and the United States.

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