

# **Post-Secondary Tuition Should be Eliminated in Canada**

The advance of human civilization has for centuries been closely related to the advance of education. By investing into the development of minds, societies across the globe and throughout history have risen and declined, often due to the specific set of social circumstances which were shaped by the particular set of ideas, themselves rooted in education. In the contemporary world, which is characterized by increased globalization and exchange of ideas, economic uncertainty, and unpredictable, shifting global power relations, the investment into education is crucial to the socio-economic success of all countries. When examining the case of Canada, it is without a doubt of utmost importance that its government and society as a whole orient their policies towards the goal of elevating the standards of education and the accessibility of it to the general populace. Canada is vast country, with rich deposits of non-renewable and renewable resources. Canada's greatest disadvantage however is found in its population scarcity, which ensures that the economic development and growth is greatly dependent on a smaller number of people than would be found in other countries of comparable size and economic potential. The free-market economic system, which is predominant in various forms across the world and certainly in the nations of the First-World, is founded upon economic competition for limited resources of the planet. In order for Canada to remain competitive and ensure future prosperity, stability, and safety of the country, it is crucial that government policies be oriented towards increasing the quality of education of the Canadians, as well as the accessibility to it.

Thus, it is evident that the best course of action is to eliminate post-secondary tuition completely, funding it entirely through government revenue.

Canada's competition include highly developed European countries, as well as emerging, newly industrialized nations, such as China, India, and Brazil. The aforementioned societies have high numbers of well-educated people, due to their generally higher populations, as well as a higher level of government investment into education; therefore, if Canada is to balance its territorial vastness and large economic potential with its scarcity of population with the goal of being more competitive than other developed nations, it must raise the standard of education higher than all of them.

According to the Central Intelligence Agency's World Factbook, Canada spends 4.90% of its annual GDP of \$1.414 trillion on education and is ranked 65<sup>th</sup> in the world in terms of education expenditure. (CIA World Factbook) Some of the countries which are found higher than Canada on this list include economically and socially stable European countries, such as the United Kingdom, France, Norway, Denmark, Austria, Slovenia, Belgium, Finland, Iceland, Hungary, Ukraine, Netherlands, Switzerland, and Poland. Further competition to Canada's economic success is found in developing countries, such as Cuba, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Israel, and Vietnam, whose shrewd ambition to raise the standard of life in their own countries has rendered their governments highly supportive of the policy of increased education expenditure. Canada finds itself in a potentially uncertain position in respect to its economic future. Countries with extremely large populations such as China will easily have a greater number of highly educated people than Canada due to the sheer reality of the disparity in population size, rendering them more competitive in the future. The aforementioned European countries have centuries-long traditions of the educational development and nurturing a highly

educated populace. In addition, the European nations too have the great advantage of bigger populations than Canada and thus greater human resources to utilize in the competition on the global market. Should the need for a much higher number of well-educated professionals in all fields not be addressed by the Canadian government, Canada will falter and rapidly fall behind its competition.

As greater social stabilization and economic harmonization occurs between European countries with the growth of the European Union, Canada will find itself facing competition from counterparts who have vastly greater populations and correspondingly greater number of educated professionals. Societies with more educated people are naturally more competitive, as those individuals must compete with each other for limited professional opportunities, thus forcing them to innovate, self-improve, be more productive, and of greater utility. This will in turn lead to greater innovation and elevated levels of entrepreneurship, all serving to foster economic advancement at the expense of societies which do not keep up.

Canada must respond to these growing challenges in the world marketplace by outperforming its competition in the development of educated and innovative minds. Canadian professionals must be more educated, innovative, efficient, resourceful, and industrious than their counterparts across the globe, in order to even out Canada's disadvantage of having a smaller population. As non-renewable resources get depleted, Canada will need to transition from an over-reliance on the export of natural resources towards relying on innovation, development of ideas, and entrepreneurship. In other words, Canadian society must develop individuals whose intellect, knowledge, and ideas are far superior to their competition across the globe. In order to render this possible, the Canadian government should eliminate post-secondary tuition, placing education at the forefront of Canada's economic future. The right to education

should not be based upon an individual's financial ability to afford it, but rather on their will and desire to learn, where grades would be used as the filter instead of financial ability.

Evidently, such a policy will lead to an increase in government expenditure, and possibly increase in debt. This in turn should be balanced out by a reduction in military spending, increase in taxes on large corporations, and reduction in taxes for smaller businesses. This will lead to a situation in which a greater number of highly developed minds are innovative, competitive, and able to put their ideas and industriousness to work, made all the more possible by access to small business opportunities. In effect, this policy will blend Thatcherist-style orientation towards increasing competition, efficiency, and small business opportunities with a traditional Marxist view that places education as an inherent human right, rendering it a powerful tool in the economic development and strengthening of a nation.(Darby and Lothian)Canada should aggressively seek to increase its human resource potential by investing heavily into young minds through the policy of free post-secondary tuition, as this will undoubtedly lay the foundations for an economically vibrant future of the country.

In order to maintain its economic prosperity and ensure that future generations of Canadians live in a country whose economy and standard of living is among the top in the world, the government of Canada should reform its financial budgets and expenditures, in order to make education equally available to all Canadians. By doing so, Canada will economically ensure its place under the sun, ensuring the country never declines, instead utilizing its greater potentials to its maximum.

### Works Cited

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