

*Family Allowances Act*

families should rise to give his opinion on this matter. There will be no need for me to speak very long to assure my hon. colleagues that I am favourable to any measure calculated to improve the living conditions of our large families.

Having been a frequent visitor at the various welfare centres in my constituency, I believe I may say that I am aware of the situation in which the families of the constituency I have the honour to represent happen to find themselves at this time. Comparing it to that which I knew between 1930 and 1935, under a Conservative government, when I was a member of the municipal council of the city of Montreal as well as of the executive council, I believe I am in a position to say that there is absolutely no comparison between the two situations. What we saw at that time, in fact, was the worst possible plight in which a human being could find himself whereas nowadays we enjoy relative prosperity, a prosperity which is not entirely due to such and such a set of circumstances but which is the result of sound administration. This administration, mindful of its responsibilities, goes neither too rapidly nor too slowly in the preparation of its legislation where it is faced with the necessity of deciding how to meet any particular situation.

Before admitting that our hon. friends of the Social Credit party have the monopoly of compassion, pity and solicitude for the people—since that appears to be their idea—we must remember that even before the existence of that party in Canada, there were two great parties, two great parties which were diametrically opposed to each other on certain principles, particularly on social matters, when it came to being more liberal—that is generous—toward society. We then heard the Tories protest that it was bad policy to socialize the country, to which the Liberals replied that we had to allow for circumstances and progress in all directions.

The party to which we belong is not one which goes on harping upon the heroic deeds of the past. We must face the new situation brought about by changing times not only in our country but in the whole world, and rise to it. The Liberal party is the one which has managed to create and establish on a permanent basis the various social laws which make it possible for the people in general to hope for at least easier if not much happier days than those they have known, before the existence of these social measures.

Such was the situation as far as allowances are concerned in all fields of social security where the state is called upon to grant some measure of assistance. The government has provided for the new needs of the people as they occurred and has enacted adequate legislation to meet any situation.

Such a policy indicates that the government had at heart the welfare of those who asked not pity but help to go successfully through difficult times. On the other hand, we heard Conservative leaders say, especially when mention was made of family allowances, that they were more or less a bribe to get votes, more particularly in the province of Quebec. They accused the government of the day, in a sly way that I would have trouble to describe, of trying to buy the votes of the people of Quebec by giving them a measure of social security to alleviate their misery. Well, the government had understood the situation. It was not a matter of political expediency, but rather of sound comprehension and of wise administration. As long as the Liberal party will keep pace with times and conditions which bring about a change in the complexion of the various problems in this country, they may rely on the support not only of the member now addressing the house, but also of all the right-minded people in Canada.

This is the reason why we see, on the eve of an election—since there is to be one this year—our friends from the left, especially those from the Social Credit group, continuously getting up to suggest increases of all kind, which we also favour, because we have favoured them in the past and because we are as kindhearted as our Social Credit friends can be.

We would like, of course, to lighten the burden of the mothers in particular who look after most of these problems arising in the home. We, from the government side, are in favour of these things. But we can see how inconsistent our opponents are when, on the one hand, they are asking the government to reduce taxes, that is its own source of revenues, and, on the other hand, they are asking increase after increase on behalf of those whom we have been assisting long before being requested to do so by the hon. members from the Social Credit group.

Well, Mr. Speaker, though I am favourable to every possible increase, in every field of social welfare, as I have demonstrated by favouring an increase in the old age pensions, for example, in spite of what we have done in the past, as well as in supporting all those measures we have so far adopted, maybe the government should levy two distinct