

*Family Allowances*

leader adopted a socialistic programme. It was copied very largely from the best of many countries. It was patterned according to a recognition of what Canada could afford to pay for, adapted to our local circumstances, and that should be the test of any social system, for the state has no money to provide for all this work except what comes from the taxpayer. I stated in 1927 and 1928 that the only authority in the British North America Act under which the federal government could provide social services was contained in the words "public debt and property." In the result, in 1935 our government was beaten at the polls, and a new government came in. I remember the blazing billboards all over Canada in 1935, with the colours of the magnificent racing stable at Hamilton—gold and black—and the words "End unemployment; vote Liberal." Was unemployment ended? No; but the people voted Liberal; there is no doubt about that. Along came a continuance of the depression and the dole system. I remember that, sitting across the floor on the front government benches was the late Minister of Labour, the Hon. Norman Rogers, who made the statement to me that what I had said about a billion dollars being spent by federal, provincial and municipal authorities on the dole was correct. And what did they get out of it? Nothing.

I remember when alone in this house, seeing two hundred thousand of our youth coming every year, from 1935 to 1937, out of high school, I advocated an apprenticeship system and an advanced social and security policy for the young people of our country. For this proposal I got no support in this house, I am sorry to say, from my hon. friends to the left. It is true that there were hardly any of them in the house at that time, about the only one being the late Mr. Woodsworth. I wanted to see established an apprenticeship system by which these young people would sign up as apprentices for from three to five years and learn one of fifteen trades, and get military and physical clothing, lodging, a per diem allowance and deferred pay. I suggested that this system should extend from three to five years and include military drill and some knowledge of civil aviation, then in its infancy. With such a system we would have produced in three to five years journeymen fit for some twenty to twenty-five skilled callings, comprising the bigger industries of this country, and when the war broke out we would have had 25,000 skilled pilots and air mechanics. But all we got was the dole, and the dole was a complete failure; to a large extent the money was wasted.

[Mr. Church.]

Then came 1935, with the reference of legislation to the privy council. In 1937 I again put forward the apprenticeship proposals for ending unemployment and abolishing the dole. The government of the day appointed the Rowell commission, largely as a consequence of a debate on a motion for parliamentary, constitutional, cabinet and law reform. The late Chief Justice Rowell, who had taken a great interest in the work, headed the commission, and a report was made, but they found out very little except what was known before, namely that under "public debt and property" we could make grants for various social purposes. While I am not speaking for others who live in Ontario, I would state my opinion that the final report of the Sirois commission was unjust and unfair to Ontario, the main tax-paying province of this country. The effect of its recommendations would be to make that province a milch cow for the whole of confederation. However, I do not wish to urge that argument; I never did and I never will, because I believe in the pact of confederation and in the spirit of the old Cornish battle cry, "Each for all and all for each." What is for the benefit of one province should be for the benefit of all the provinces. But from the point of view of social services and the reforms proposed, education and so on, it seems to me that report was unfair to a province like Ontario.

Coming now to the question which has been raised by this bill, No. 161, introduced as a government measure by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), who has followed this sort of work for many years past, I think he should be well acquainted with the glorious record in the social services of the city from which I come because he and his family have had an intimate connection with that city. It has led in social reforms and services of one kind and another. It is one of the finest cities on the continent and has done a great deal in public health to spread social reform benefits to all classes. Some people seem to think that by means of these family allowances and social security generally we are going to abolish poverty. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we have always had the poor with us and we shall always have them. Neither planning nor victory, nor social reforms, as President Roosevelt has said, will ever bring about the millennium. All the parties in this house seem to have been competing in a race to see which of them could do the most along these leftist lines and which will first reach the sepulchre of social security.

I submit that if this bill had been referred to a select committee of the house we would