

of the *Labour Review*, where the Canadian Federation of Labour has this to say:

Nobody has yet objected out loud to the payment of cash allowances to the members of the armed forces for the support of their children. That fact is worth nothing now that many persons are inveighing earnestly against Mr. Mackenzie King's proposal to continue the allowances when the troops return to civil life and to extend them to all Canadian families.

Millions of men now wearing the uniforms of many countries rely upon the state to provide for their children's upkeep. When the war ends, a large proportion of them will continue to enjoy the same provision. In quite a few countries, children's allowances were paid before the war. After the war, still more countries will have them. Canada has to decide whether or not to keep abreast of Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand in social progress and population policy.

In so far as social legislation is concerned, Canada is not only keeping abreast of some countries; she is well ahead of a great many with the introduction of this piece of social legislation. The article goes on to refer to the objection by some churches, and states:

The objection of some religious sectarians answers itself. If they took as much interest in the size of the population as they do in its habits they would not need to fear the spread of any church. Their sensible course would be, instead of opposing children's allowances, to urge the members of their communions to let marriage bear fruit and enlarge the congregation.

I say that the churches should take note of that, but so far they have not raised their voices. To my mind it is time they raised their voices about this very thing.

There is one warning I should like to give to those who will be responsible for the administration of this legislation. An effort should be made to see to it that the money paid out goes entirely for the benefit of the children. To-day the members of the special committee inquiring into the problems affecting the dominion government and the city of Ottawa were taken on a tour through the city. One man in the party who knew the different districts pointed out certain houses where the children were not attending school for one reason or another. The thought came to me that when this measure is in effect those children and any others should be made to go to school or the money should be kept back from the parents, and not paid until they do.

I have another suggestion to make. There may be a few fathers who will take advantage of the legislation and, so to speak, become vagrants, and who will not be inclined to work. If that is the case, steps should be taken by the municipalities to institute pro-

[Mr. Reid.]

ceedings against such parents who are ready to lie back and not earn money other than that provided by the state for the upkeep of their children. When in the past it was left to the woman of the family to lay a charge against the husband, in many cases the home was broken up. Some other authority should lay these charges. It should be made known to these men that if they are not ready to carry out their responsibilities, a charge will be laid by the municipalities, and they will be made to contribute to the upkeep of their families rather than simply lie back and allow the state to send a cheque along each month, which cheque is intended entirely for the children.

I think this is about all I have to say at this moment. But I do want to say that it is a proud moment in my life that I am a member of this House of Commons at a time when this measure is being placed on the statute books. I come from a humble home, and I realize, perhaps better than some of those who are opposing this bill, just what it means. Those of us who come from fairly large families know that quite often the children who come first are not as well provided for as those who come later on. The children who come first quite often have to go out to work quite early and contribute toward the support of the other members of the family. The children who come later on receive the benefit of this help, and likewise the parents themselves may be in better circumstances as the children grow older.

Coming from a humble family, I know what this would have meant to our family had we had it. I realize what it will mean to hundreds of families throughout the length and breadth of this country. I ask those who are opposing it to take stock of why they are opposing it. If they oppose it simply from a political point of view they should be ashamed. This is the finest piece of legislation this House of Commons has brought down and I am proud that I am a member of the Liberal party. While in the past few years the Conservative party and the Liberal party have got to the point where it has been at times difficult to distinguish between them, especially since tariffs have been done away with, this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, makes us truly Liberals, and I am giving it my unqualified support.

On motion of Mr. Fraser (Peterborough West) the debate was adjourned.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie King the house adjourned at 10.55 p.m.