

care of our human resources in Canada than to spend fabulous sums to attract immigrants from overseas.

For my part, Mr. Speaker, I favour this measure and hope that the administration in power when the bill we are now considering has become the law of the land will administer it with justice and fairness to all.

Mr. THOMAS REID (New Westminster): I rise at this time to join with others in my support of the measure that has been introduced by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), namely, family allowances. In the few minutes at my disposal I wish to say that it seems strange to me that most of the opposition to this bill has emanated from those who, so far as I know, have never felt the hand of poverty. To me it is most remarkable that those whose lot in life lay along the easy path, shall I say, are the ones in this country who are now raising their voices loudly against this measure. I noticed also that in the address given by the leader of the Conservative party (Mr. Graydon) against the measure, although he claims to be a farmer, no mention was made by him of the fact that this measure would benefit one class above all others, namely, the farming class. The man who claims to be a farmer made speeches and diatribes against this measure but did not mention that it would benefit the very class to which he claims to belong.

Statements have been made by some that it would benefit certain provinces more than others. I took the time the other night to go into the child population of the various provinces. I obtained a statement from the bureau of statistics, a brief analysis of which is as follows: There are some 3,409,911 children in Canada between the ages of birth and sixteen.

Mr. WRIGHT: The census of 1941?

Mr. REID: Yes. They are spread out throughout Canada in this proportion. In Prince Edward Island the population is 30,484. The percentage of the children under sixteen to the total population within the province is roughly thirty-two per cent. In Nova Scotia the population is 577,962. The percentage of children under sixteen is thirty per cent. The population of New Brunswick is 457,401. The percentage of children under sixteen is thirty per cent. Quebec has a total child population under sixteen of 1,133,137; the percentage of the children in that province under sixteen is thirty-five per cent. Ontario has 988,933 children under sixteen. Their proportion works out to about twenty-eight per cent. Manitoba has 204,684 children. Their percentage is twenty-eight per cent. Saskatchewan has 286,821 children under sixteen. Their percentage is thirty-two per cent.

Alberta has 243,547 children under sixteen. Their percentage is thirty-one per cent. British Columbia, I am sorry to say, has the smallest percentage of children of all the nine provinces. That province has a total population of 817,861. The children under sixteen number 187,427, which works out to about twenty-three per cent of the population within the province.

Mr. HAZEN: Would you mind repeating the number of children in New Brunswick under sixteen?

Mr. REID: The population given to me is 457,401.

Mr. HAZEN: In other provinces you are giving the number of children.

Mr. REID: The children under sixteen total 155,319.

Mr. HAZEN: How many children in Nova Scotia?

Mr. REID: 179,559. It works out roughly to thirty per cent. These figures do not reveal a preponderance of children in the province of Quebec as compared with other provinces. In Quebec there is only a total of thirty-five per cent of the population under the age of sixteen years, whereas in New Brunswick there is thirty-four per cent, and in Prince Edward Island, thirty-two per cent. I think these figures are most interesting; at least they were to me.

The figure for British Columbia is only twenty-three per cent, but I noted that there is a greater percentage of older people in that province when compared with her population than in some of the others. As is well known, nearly all the provinces are represented in British Columbia by former residents. People in ill health or up in years are told to go there to enjoy the splendid climate we have, and usually they stay there to end their days at a time when the rearing of a family is not to be thought of.

It has been said also that some labour leaders have opposed this measure, and they have. Speaking to-night as a labour man, I want to say that I was astonished that any man who had fought his way up through the labour ranks would protest against a social measure of this kind. The contention that it would reduce wages is, to my mind, all wrong. Throughout the years when a man is applying for a position the employer does not consider whether he is married or not. He is employed for the work he is able to perform. When a man is hired because of ability, the employer generally does not look around to see whether a man is married or single when it comes to laying men off.

Not all labour has been against this measure, because I noticed an article in the last issue