

Family Allowances

they might come; that is the way to bring happiness and prosperity to the province of Quebec and to Canada.

Of course, on the eve of elections and for campaign purposes only, our leaders changed their minds and at long last decided to give in to the pressing appeal of those who tirelessly urged that the Canadian family be encouraged and treated fairly.

Indeed, we rejoice in the fact that the government has deemed fit to recognize the principle of helping the family, but we cannot help noticing that the proposal fails in two most important respects. [In the first place, it disregards the autonomy of the provinces; in this field, however, their rights cannot be ignored. As far as the province of Quebec is concerned, it has always claimed them. For that reason, each particular province should be entrusted with the administration of the act.]

The proposal provides, moreover, that the allowances be paid on a "decreasing" scale from the fifth child on. This is a most unjust procedure. No other country has put into effect a similar method. Some have chosen a uniform rate, others have preferred an "increasing" scale. If the government really wants to help large families, it should put the latter into effect. French-Canadian families will be particularly hard hit by this "decreasing" rate and if approved, it would cause unforgivable injustice. I hope the government will reconsider the matter and remedy that injustice by adopting the progressive rather than the decreasing rate provided for in the bill now before us.

The true originator of family allowances in Canada was the great patriot Honoré Mercier, former prime minister of the province of Quebec. He was the first to take a sympathetic stand toward large families in the province of which he was unquestionably the greatest prime minister. He granted to families of twelve or more children a certain acreage of land. He was an ardent believer in the "revenge of the cradle". Consequently, his memory is ever cherished by the people of the province of Quebec whose motto will always be "I remember".

I listened the other day to the speeches of some members who are horrified by the fact that the government have decided to spend \$200,000,000 in order to help large families. Yet, those members are the same ones who had no hesitation in voting \$2,800,000,000 as a tribute to England. They are the ones who demand total war, who do not hesitate to state that Canada should fight to the last man and spend its last penny in this war. But when it comes to protecting this country's most valuable asset, the large families, they are horrified and condemn the government.

[Mr. d'Anjou.]

As far as I am concerned, I join those who have congratulated the government on having at last brought down this measure of family allowances. It is a step in the right direction.

The hon. member for Parkdale (Mr. Bruce) said last night, as reported on page 5365 of *Hansard*:

Is it not amusing to observe a Liberal government, which laughed at Aberhart's \$25 a month to all families, suddenly bringing down a baby bonus proposition which will cost the country \$200 million or more? This bonus will be given to children up to fifteen years of age, whereas even in Russia it is proposed to bonus children only up to five years of age. It should be remembered that the government will get the money for their largesse out of the people by taxes. This means that everyone who pays taxes will have less money to educate and bring up his own family. I believe that it is a fact that sixty-three per cent of the families with ten or more children live in the province of Quebec. Contrast this with British Columbia where families are small and where forty per cent have no children living at home. When eight provinces realize that they are being taxed for the benefit of one province, will it not accentuate the disunity which has shaken Canada from coast to coast, because the government chose to listen to the powerful voice of this same province which refused to share equally with others in fighting the common enemy?

If there are people who can sow disunion in the country, they are like the hon. member for Parkdale, who forgets that recently a French Canadian, Major Triquet, won the Victoria Cross.

He also forgets the losses sustained in this war by the French Canadians. If he were to peruse the daily casualty lists, he would notice that the losses among the French Canadians have been especially heavy, in Sicily, in Normandy and elsewhere. He would see that the Royal 22nd has fought nobly and the Régiment de Québec has been practically annihilated. This same gentleman states in this house and before the whole country that the province of Quebec should not benefit from the family allowance proposed by the government, because the French Canadians of Quebec have not discharged their duty. As long as this country harbours such fanatics and imperialists, it will be very hard to attain Canadian unity.

I shall not labour this point any further, but I shall repeat that these very same gentlemen are the ones who do not hesitate to claim that the tribute we pay to England is not large enough; who maintain that we are not sending enough men to the slaughter in foreign lands; who, to-day, oppose a vote of \$200,000,000 to safeguard the most precious asset of our country. Family allowances will be a great encouragement to large families and, after the war, we should be in a position to do without immigrants. It is better to take