

*Family Allowances*

was on, be it this year or next, cheques were going into the homes of this country out of the public treasury in payment of family allowances. I think I know what would be said in this house in regard to anything of the kind, and rightly said. I was determined that no stigma of that sort should attach to a great social measure of this kind intended for the continuing well-being of the children of Canada.

What I wish to refer to more particularly, and it is the last subject on which I shall touch, is the justice of this measure. I know that there are people of all classes throughout this country who are much concerned about the significance of this measure, as to what will follow from it, and as to what it may involve by the way of change of many practices and usages to which we have grown accustomed.

I want to speak of the justice of this measure as between man and man in the matter of their possessions, as between those that have and those that have not. Some there are who say that this measure is unjust in that it takes away from him that hath and gives to him that hath not. It all depends on how wealth is created and how it comes to be possessed. I want to make clear the justice of the measure in relation to a more equitable distribution of the wealth of this country. I want to say a word, also, as to the justice of the measure as between parents in this country, as between those who have great responsibilities in the bringing up of families and other members of our society who have not the same obligation.

I want also to say a word as to the justice of the measure in relation to the children of this country, a limited number of whom have the best of opportunities in facing the battle of life, but multitudes of whom have little or no opportunity at all.

I wish to say a few words as to the justice of the measure from the point of view of Canada itself, the preservation of our nation and all that that will mean in the years to come.

First as to the justice of the measure as between man and man. Here may I take occasion to say that this measure grows out of a sincere desire on the part of the administration to meet a new condition of things with which we shall be faced when the war is over. During the last war we heard time and time again: When the war is over we shall have a new social order, things are going to be very much better for all classes of people in this country. We know that anything but that was the case. The years have gone by, we are now going through another war, and the same pro-

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

fessions once more are being made. But this time, so far as this administration has power to have it so, we intend to see if we possibly can that the new order expresses a new social concept altogether of industry as being in the nature of social service and the obligations and rewards that grow out of that conception. It is of that concept that I wish to say a word in conclusion this afternoon.

I tried, in the period of the last war, not knowing whether or not I should be in parliament again, to give to my country what I could, as the results of careful research, of the principles on which I believed reconstruction should be attempted after the war. The measure I am advocating to-day is along the lines of the principles that I laid down at that time. But conditions which no man could control and no group of men could control have made it impossible for many of the required measures to be carried out since that time which, when the war was on, people were most anxious to have carried out. But we owe an obligation to our country to-day, and we owe it to the world to-day to see if, in some way, we cannot make a contribution that will prevent a recurrence of situations such as since 1914-18 have brought about another war.

May I by way of prefacing what I have to say read a paragraph from an address I made in Toronto before the Empire club at the King Edward hotel on March 13, 1919? At that time I was seeking to point out the necessity of a new conception of industry, the necessity of being in earnest in the matter of establishing a new world order, of finding the means whereby that new order could be secured. I repeat, as more applicable than ever to the world to-day what I said in the years immediately following the end of the last war:

Especially in industrial relations have we accepted with complacence an order of things to which we have grown accustomed. The shock of war, stirring the world's soul to its very depths, has brought before our eyes the shattered image of an industrial civilization which is full of injustice. It has left us to decide whether the new order shall be little more than a return to the old, with all its worship of material wealth and material power, and its relative indifference to human worth and human well-being; or whether it will be an order worthy of the sacrifices of the heroic dead, and the services of those who, on land and sea and in the air have endured all manner of hardship and peril to preserve the liberties and freedom that we still enjoy.

Let us be assured of this: the unrest in the world of industry to-day is no ephemeral and transitory affair; no mere aftermath of the hideous convulsion which has shaken existing society to its very foundations. It is the voice of a grief-stricken humanity crying for justice in the relations of industry.