

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1943

The Justness of Family Allowances

The Canadian government proposes to abolish the exemption per dependent child in the income tax, and to grant instead a comparable sum per child to all families irrespective of their income. The merits of this policy, and the validity or otherwise of the objection to it most frequently heard in Ontario, become clearer when three simple questions are asked and answered:

1. Who are more in need of assistance in bringing up their children—the people of low income or those of higher income?

Obviously the former.

2. Is it, then, fair or desirable that Canada should refuse assistance to the poor in bringing up their children when it has for years granted such assistance to the well-to-do?

The answer is "No."

Yet Canada, which has for years assisted the people with taxable incomes by allowing an income tax exemption per dependent child has, until now, given no assistance to low income families per dependent child.

3. Since this injustice can be remedied by family allowances, should Ontario object to these because there are more large families and more low-income families in Quebec than in this province?

Again the answer is "No."

Ontario ought not to deprive its own low-income families of allowances simply because such families are larger and proportionately more numerous in a sister province. If the principle is right—as in this case it is—the fact that the need for applying it is even greater in Québec than in Ontario is certainly no argument against its general application in all provinces.

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