

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.(Summarising the two reports on Family Allowances).  
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A scheme of children's allowances, or equivalent social services, should cover both children who visit schools or can attend at communal feeding centres and those who, for reasons of distance or in the interests of family life, should remain at home.

Children living in agricultural areas cannot be properly aided by cash allowances, nor is it possible to include every farm in communal feeding schemes. Food is, however, produced on the land, and the inhabitants of rural districts should be enabled to draw all the food they require from the soil or the livestock kept on the land.

Assistance in the form of communal feeding etc. and cash allowances should be made dependent on attendance at schools or other educational centres when these have been provided. Regular visits for examination at welfare or health centres and the compliance with such other rules and advice, as may be laid down by the health and housing services, should be a further condition.

In the circumstances it is suggested to combine relief services as outlined by Mrs. Stevens and a cash allowance on a percentage basis in the following manner:

(1) All children under 15 years should be entitled to registration with a welfare centre for the purpose of communal feeding, receipt of essential clothing, medical treatment if required etc. A service of this kind could be established gradually as personnel and equipment become available, starting with urban centres and wherever a co-operative effort is made in that direction.

(2) Alternatively, families should receive a cash allowance equal to 20% of the parents' aggregate income for each second and subsequent children, but not exceeding 9/- per child or 36/- for a family per week, less benefits drawn in kind or coupons. (In exceptional cases, as stated in the Beveridge report, the first child might be included). These allowances should be paid to the child's mother if she is in charge of the child, otherwise to the legal guardian. Such cash allowances should not be paid in food-producing areas (farm districts).

Benefits under (1) would gradually establish a reasonable minimum for the youth of the country although the parents' incomes might not yet be sufficient to secure a decent standard of living for the whole family. The grants under (2), on the other hand, would be an encouragement to keep families together at meal times etc. wherever the parents have reached tolerable conditions for themselves. The exclusion of the first child from, and the percentage basis for, cash benefits would automatically induce poor householders to prefer system (1), as few people would care to overstate their incomes while claiming aid or relief in other directions.

Except for meals taken at schools, it should be possible to combine the feeding of indigent adults at moderate prices with the feeding of children, especially in the case of mothers. It must be taken into account that any comprehensive system of health and feeding services will not only require a considerable amount of new construction, but also lead to an increase of traffic between homes and welfare centres. To reduce distances it is essential to have numerous small centres catering for all inhabitants of an area, instead of directing persons of different ages to meet at

larger centres and at greater distances from their homes.

It has been suggested that the expenditure on children eating at welfare centres could be kept considerably below the cost of equivalent food provided by individual families. This, undoubtedly, is correct in regard to scientific diets based on actual market conditions, particularly when the welfare centres are able to buy wholesale, cook large quantities of food, and so on. On the other hand, the welfare centres themselves must be provided and pay salaries to their staff, an expense which does not arise when housewives perform the same functions at home.

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