

Disability Benefit.

(c) That disability benefits be made available for persons who cannot qualify for invalidity, sickness or sustenance benefit or State superannuation, but who are otherwise physically or mentally disabled from earning a livelihood.

Sustenance Benefits.

(d) That sustenance benefits be paid to persons who are capable of, and available for, work, but for whom work cannot be found; that the rates of benefit be 20s. plus, if married, 15s. for wife with 5s. for each dependent child, in lieu of the present rate of 4s.

Widowed Mothers' Benefits.

(e) That a social-security benefit be paid to widowed mothers at the rate of 25s. per week and 10s. per week for each dependent child; the benefit to continue until the child reaches the age of sixteen years (instead of fifteen years as at present), and, in special circumstances, until the age of eighteen years, so long as the child is still at school; this to replace the existing widow's pension of 20s. per week. Wives of inmates of mental hospitals to qualify as at present, and deserted wives with dependent children.

Widows' Benefits.

(f) That widows' benefits be payable—

- (i) At any age to a widow who has previously drawn a widowed mother's benefit and whose youngest child has reached the age at which the benefit ceased;
- (ii) To a widow who has not previously drawn a widowed mother's benefit—
 - (a) If she was widowed before age fifty and has been married for not less than fifteen years, the benefit to be payable from age fifty;
 - (b) If she has been widowed after age fifty and has been married for not less than five years the benefit to be payable from the date of commencement of widowhood.

Orphans' Benefits.

(g) That orphans' benefits be payable to relatives or guardians who have been approved as foster-parents at the rate of 15s. per week in respect of orphans under the age of sixteen years.

Family Allowance.

(h) That the family allowance be paid at the rate of 4s. per week in respect of the third and subsequent children; the maximum allowable income to be £5 per week, plus the allowance (instead of the present provision of £4 per week plus the allowance); the allowance to continue to be payable in respect of eligible children until they reach the age of sixteen years.

Miner's Phthisis.

(i) That superannuation at the rate of 30s. per week be paid to miners suffering from Miner's phthisis, with a supplementary benefit of 10s. for the wife and 10s. for each dependent child up to age sixteen; to supersede the present miner's pension of 25s. per week.

War Veterans and War Pensions.

(j) That war veterans' allowances be paid at the rate of 25s. per week for the veteran, plus 15s. per week for his dependent wife and 5s. per week for each dependent child up to the age of sixteen years, the maximum pension to be increased from £2 15s. to £3 10s. per week.

State Superannuation.

(k) That State superannuation be payable at the rate of 30s. per week on the attainment of the age of sixty years, with the qualifications set out in the present legislation; the superannuation benefit not to be reduced so long as the income of the superannuitant, if a single person, or the joint income of a married couple (in addition to superannuation) does not exceed £1 per week; this will supersede the existing old-age pension of 22s. 6d. per week.

SOCIAL - SECURITY BENEFITS.

62. At an early stage in its sittings the Committee heard evidence from the Commissioner of Pensions, who gave a general survey of the existing pension legislation. From this and from our knowledge of the trend in respect of social legislation it is beyond dispute that the citizens of this country have a fixed determination to provide so far as is reasonably possible for those who are unable to support themselves by reason of age, sickness, status, or other disability. Not only is this found to be a fact, but it is also clear that from time to time as the community has found itself able to meet the cost, the pensions provided for those who have been unfortunate have been steadily increased in order to make them as nearly sufficient as possible for the normal needs of the beneficiaries. It is quite clear to the Committee that public opinion in the Dominion requires that the normal Christian attitude of life of helping those in need, whatever the cause of their need, should be carried on into the community life, enabling the joint resources of the people to be applied for assisting in banishing distress and want.

63. While the suffering resulting from a great deal of human misfortunes is beyond real assistance the greater portion of the distress is entirely preventable by means readily within the power of the