

would tell us something about your experience in this field?

CLAXTON: Well, Mr. Fisher, I would like to repeat what I said earlier that we regard social security merely as a means of putting people on a more equal footing and not of supplanting that freedom of enterprise which is necessary in order to take advantage of our opportunities. In Canada we have three types of social security in the federal field. The first is the Unemployment Insurance Act, passed in 1940. That was the first piece of social legislation administered by the Dominion Government. It has two parts: unemployment insurance and a nation-wide employment service administered by a three-man commission.

FISHER: Now do the provisions apply to all Canadians?

CLAXTON: Yes, unless their employment is specifically excepted or their pay exceeds certain specified amounts.

FISHER: I take it that both employers and employees contribute?

CLAXTON: Yes. And their contributions are approximately equal.

FISHER: Does the government make any contribution?

CLAXTON: Yes. It contributes one-fifth of the amount contributed by employers and employees and it also pays the expenses of administration. The benefit is payable as a right to any insured person who fulfils the prescribed conditions. And there is no upper age limit. Our second type of social security is designed to better the lot of Canada's future citizens. We are extremely conscious in Canada of the fact that our children are our greatest national asset. Consequently, in order to give them the chance to take advantage of their opportunities, we make monthly payments, normally to the mother. The payments are made in varying amounts, depending on the age of the child and the number of the children in the family. They average about \$15 per family per month. These payments amount to about \$260,000,000 a year. I might add that these payments will maintain basic purchasing power in the event of a depression.

FISHER: Have you had this system of family allowances in effect long enough to determine its value, Mr. Claxton?

CLAXTON: Mr. Fisher, the plan went into operation in July 1945, and already reports show that diet has improved. That there is more adequate clothing and a greater use of medical, dental, and optical services. And in addition, there has been a widening of recreational outlets.

ST. LAURENT: Is it not also true that school attendance has increased?

CLAXTON: Yes, I am glad that you mentioned that. And it would seem from these early reports, Mr. Fisher, that Canada has invested wisely in her future.

FISHER: What's your third security?

CLAXTON: Old age pensions and pensions for the blind. We share the responsibility for this with the provincial governments.

FISHER: Well, I see that we have time for my last question. I mentioned it at the beginning, Mr. St. Laurent, and I've been saving it until now. Just a month ago Senator Austin, our delegate to the United Nations, came on this program and discussed the past session of the General Assembly. I'd like to ask you to what extent you think it succeeded?