

I hope the committee will study the New Zealand scheme. I am quite sure it would have no difficulty in obtaining the appearance before it of a man like the Hon. Walter Nash, who is now located at Washington and who, to a large extent, was responsible for the building of their social security system. I have no doubt that in studying social security conditions in other nations, the committee can find much first-class and first-hand evidence if it will, for example, consult officials of the international labour office in Montreal. I think some hon. members know that in the international labour office in that city there is one of the leading authorities on social security, a gentleman who was invited to go to England to appear before the Beveridge committee and who has been to South America to assist some of the countries there in devising social security systems in recent years.

Mr. MARTIN: Stein?

Mr. COLDWELL: Doctor Stein. What have they in the Dominion of New Zealand that we might study? Their plan is on a national scale, and all the residents of New Zealand, no matter what their station and condition in life, are included. The plan covers almost every kind of risk such as unemployment and complete care for all residents. They pay a sickness cash benefit if the breadwinner is sick. They pay workmen's compensation, and this compensation is unaffected by the sickness benefits. They pay permanent disability pensions, old age benefits and widows' and orphans' benefits. We sometimes misname our mothers' pension in this country by calling it a widow's pension. In some of our provinces, certainly in Saskatchewan, the mother receives a small pension as long as the children are under sixteen years of age. However, as soon as the children reach that age, the pension ceases and the mother is left without any pension whatsoever. New Zealand also pays child allowances and family allowances. In addition there are discretionary emergency benefits for exceptional cases of distress. Those are the main outlines.

They cover at least one of the four freedoms, the freedom from fear, fear of old age, fear of sickness, fear of disability and so on. The nutritional programme which they are trying to put into effect, and which we ought to study, will give a measure of freedom from want. There is no means test of the type we have. An aged couple can get their sixty shillings a week while owning their own home unencumbered by the caveat which is often placed against the little pieces of property in our country and which discourages the principle of thrift of which we hear a great deal.

[Mr. Coldwell.]

They may have £500, or \$2,500, in the bank without having their pension affected. In addition they may have an income of \$5 a week to enable them to get the small comforts that aged couples require in addition to the minimum provided.

I say to the government that the people of Canada will judge the sincerity of the government, will judge the sincerity of this parliament, not by the promises—as has been pointed out, the Liberal party made promises in 1919 and they remain unfulfilled in 1943—but by the performance. To-day in the midst of this war, it seems to me that we could not do better than to increase the benefits of those in this dominion who need the assistance of the state.

I urge the committee to get down to work and to place before this house at this session a scheme which will be a challenge to us to go forward and to remove the blots to which I have referred to-night. There are those who tell us that this is not the time to do these things. Many of the things I have mentioned as being in effect in the Dominion of New Zealand have been done since the war began. Benefits have been steadily increased and expanded since the beginning of the war, and who is there in this house or anywhere else who will say that the increase of those benefits has interfered in any way with the contribution of New Zealand toward the prosecution of this war. Indeed it is often said that considering its resources and man-power and everything else, New Zealand has probably made the greatest contribution of any one of the nations in the British commonwealth of nations outside of the British isles.

I happened to note a few days ago a letter which had been written by a man who was deservedly lauded this afternoon as a great leader, the President of the United States. Does he think it is too early to begin planning for post-war reconstruction? I have a letter which I clipped from the *New York Times* of February 20. This letter was addressed by Mr. Roosevelt to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and it reads in part:

I want to take this opportunity to commend the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* for its interest in publishing a series of articles which discuss the aims and objectives for which the United States and the united nations are fighting. There cannot be too much discussion of this kind, and there could not be a better time for it.

No better time for a discussion of the things for which we are fighting. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this nation are fighting this war expecting that out of it will come something better than what they have known in the past. The time to lay the foundations for that better deal is not after