

# BRITAIN'S SOCIAL SECURITY PLAN:

*BECAUSE Sir William Beveridge pays a special tribute, to New Zealand social services in his now famous Report, the BBC asked a New Zealander in London, Eric Haslam, a Rhodes Scholar from Auckland and a student of economics working in the city of London, to give, first, some general comments on the Beveridge plan, and then to make some comparisons with the New Zealand measures. Here, slightly condensed, are Mr. Haslam's comments.*

**T**HE Beveridge plan of course does not profess to tackle all social problems and solve all economic difficulties; it is one part only of an attack upon what Sir William calls the five giants—upon the physical want with which it is strictly concerned, upon disease which often causes that want, upon ignorance, upon the squalor which arises mainly through haphazard distribution of industry and population, and upon idleness which destroys wealth and corrupts men whether they are well fed or not.

## Government Not Yet Committed

The proposals are Sir William's responsibility, although they are based on the accumulated experience and advice of numerous departments of State, and have taken into account the evidence of more than a hundred interested organisations, some of which stand to be adversely affected by their recommendations. The Government is not yet committed in any way. Discussion is now opened, and will undoubtedly be vigorous.

The report shows that the social services of Britain bear favourable comparison as a whole with those in most countries. If the proposals are adopted, Britain will have a unified system covering unemployment, disability, retirement



**SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE**  
*He attacks five giants*

pensions, children's allowances, marriage and maternity and sickness benefits, and permanent grants. All citizens irrespective of means will be eligible for these benefits, which will be administered by a single authority, the Ministry of Social Security.

Other speakers have discussed the main proposals. I want to select some which may interest you in New Zealand more particularly. The plan aims at giving to all classes of people a minimum income to cover loss or interruption of earning power, say through unemployment, accident, or sickness. There are grants to meet part at least of these special costs, which may be very burdensome at such times as birth, marriage and death.

## Pensions By Stages

As happened in New Zealand, it is felt that the Budget in the near future could not allow the full pension rate to all who were likely to claim it. These funds can be built up by contributions, however, and the burden can then be borne, but whereas in New Zealand the full basic rate is not to be reached for 28 years, in Britain the proposal is to reach it in 20 years. Permanent pensions, that is those paid after a time in paid work, may be claimed by men any time after they reach 65, and by women after 60. And if they care to work beyond these ages and have nowhere else to go, the rate of pension will be suitably increased. As Britain's population is ageing, you can see that this is rather an important point.

Sir William hopes that universal children's allowances or endowments

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