INCREASED BASIC RATES OF BENEFIT

The maximum rate of universal superannuation and the basic rate of age, widows', invalids', and miners' benefits was increased from £104 to £117 a year. The rate of invalids' benefit for an unmarried person under twenty years of age, and the rate of benefit paid to the widow of a miner who died while in receipt of a miner's benefit, was increased from £78 to £91 a year. The basic rate of unemployment and sickness benefits was increased from 40s. to 45s. a week, and the rate for an unmarried person under twenty years of age was increased from 20s. to 25s. a week.

The rate of orphan's benefit was increased from £40 19s. to £52 a year.

EXTENSION OF WIDOW'S BENEFITS

Previously a widow's benefit was paid to the wife of a man either subject to a reception order or detained in an institution as a voluntary boarder under Part V of the Mental Defectives Act, 1911. From 1st October, 1947, provision was made to pay a widow's benefit to the wife of a man subject to a reception order, or detained in an institution under the above Act whether as a voluntary boarder or otherwise.

FAMILY BENEFITS

Provision was made to pay family benefit from 1st April, 1946, in respect of a child, or children of a member of any of His Majesty's Naval, Military, or Air Forces. Previously family benefit was not paid to any child in respect of whom an allowance was paid by the Armed Forces.

RENEWAL OF BENEFITS

The Social Security Amendment Act, 1947, provided that payment of superannuation, family, and miners' benefits should be continued for such period as the Commission might determine, and that the Commission might from time to time renew such benefits for any further period. This amendment gives the Commission power to continue the above benefits without review for a period longer than the twelve months to which it was previously restricted.

All other benefits which are subject to a means test may not be granted or renewed for a period exceeding twelve months without further investigation as to change in circumstances.

RESIDENCE

Provision was made for any person absent from New Zealand on Government business and liable for payment of social security charge to be regarded as resident in New Zealand for the purposes of Part II of the Social Security Act. This also applies to the wife and children of such a person.

QUARTERLY BENEFITS

SUPERANNUATION BENEFITS

Superannuation benefits, payable at the age of sixty-five years, came into operation from 1st April, 1940, at the rate of £10 a year. This rate is increased by £2 10s. each year and will reach the maximum of £117 a year in 1983. For the year ended 31st March, 1948, the rate was £27 10s., a year, and the sum of £1,593,757 was paid out during the year, an increase of £244,068 over the figure for the previous year. There were 61,612 benefits in force at the 31st March, 1948, an increase of 3,620 over the number for the previous year.