ton, who accepted a bribe of $7,500, was sentenced by federal court to a fine of $5,600 and five years' probation, but got his pension anyway.

Anderson wrote: "Incredibly, though Hamilton collects an annual pension of $18,771, he has yet to pay the $5,600 fine imposed on him by the court three years ago."

It is said that there are only two sure things in life—death and taxes. One more sure item might be added: the Brass will get their pensions come hell or high water.

Not so with civilians. In the first place only about one-quarter of all working people expect, hope for, or are ever promised any kind of pensions from their employers. They have to depend on whatever Social Security doles out to them—the minimum in 1979 was still only $122.00 a month.

In the second place, thousands who expect pensions never get them, or get only part of what they have been promised, because their employers can claim bankruptcy, or because pension funds are frequently dipped into for purposes of speculation or other uses. There are many cases on record where companies close down and move elsewhere just before a number of their employees reach retirement age.

When they reach 65, these cheated workers help swell the welfare load.

Who Gets the Real Handouts?

Let's take a look at some of the known recipients of the juiciest handouts the U.S. government can offer.

First, there's the matter of subsidies. If you have a corporation, and can spare enough money to keep a lobby in Washington full time, you can probably convince Congress that what you are selling is in the "national interest" and should be supported with a government grant, or subsidy.

A lot of corporations must have been working very hard at gaining that support from Congress because there are more than 170 subsidy programs now in existence.

They range from $38 million for ship construction, to $84 million for the sugar crop, to $267 million for airplane and airport construction.

In the 1930s, when the farmers were in real trouble, and when food prices were low (though millions of Americans couldn't buy much of the food anyway because the price of their labor was even lower), the government passed "crop limitation" laws. They paid farmers to plow under wheat to raise the price, and hog farmers got government money to slaughter little pigs and bury them to bring up the price of pork.

This idea was sold to the country as a means of saving the little farmers. It didn't work. The big farmers have gobbled them up.

There were 7 million farm families in the 1930s, now there are only 2.5 million. How many of those disinherited families have helped swell the welfare rolls?

Neither crop limitations nor crop subsidies (payments to compensate farmers when market prices are below the level that would allow them a handsome profit) have been worth a hill of beans to the small farmers. But they have been a source of pleasure and joy to the big farmers who squeezed out the little ones.

Only a few of the many getting handouts for crop limitation are well known, simply because they are prominent politicians whose adversaries are very interested in letting the public in on the facts.

Of the 12,309 lucky ones who collect $20,000 or more a year to keep food production down and food prices up, the name of Senator Eastland is one of the most familiar.

In 1971 he received $38,646 for not planting cotton,