

## TAXES, TARIFFS AND RESTRICTIONS

The following noteworthy statements were made during the course of the four-day Budget Debate.

### Fuel Oil Tax

MR. ANTHONY GREENWOOD (Lab., Rosendale): "To-day the tax is no less than 214 per cent which I believe to be at a wicked and punitive level. The untaxed cost of "Derv" (diesel oil) is 1s. 2d. a gallon. When tax is paid it is 3s. 8d. a gallon . . . The extra imposition upon our passenger transport is one of the considerations which is making for more wage demands; . . . the tax on fuel is also putting up the price of the goods that we produce and so adding an extra burden to our efforts to compete in export markets."—April 6.

### Purchase Tax and Exports

MRS. EIRENE WHITE (Lab., Flint, East): "The effect of Purchase Tax on the export of high quality goods has not been solved . . . We keep telling Lancashire and other textile areas that their one chance is not to compete with Japan with cheap stuff but to go in for the quality markets, and we find that when our manufacturers send their representatives to those markets, as a result of the incidence of the tax at home it is difficult for them to produce the range and variety demanded in the American market, for instance."—April 6.

MR. ANTHONY GREENWOOD (Lab., Rosendale): "I believe that this is a fraudulent tax which was put on during the war in circumstances very different from the circumstances of to-day. It was never intended to be a permanent tax. It is an inflationary tax because it puts up the cost of living. It makes the development of our export lines more difficult. And it means, because of the operation of the D scheme, that there is a lowering of the quality of many of the goods that we produce."—April 6.

### Interest on the National Debt

MR. WILLIAM KEENAN (Liverpool, Kirkdale): "The interest on the National Debt has climbed to over £600 million a year. That is more than we pay to the old-age pensioners on contributory and non-contributory pensions. That is something we shall have to look at one day. I am not suggesting that we should repudiate the National Debt . . . We have to pay interest on the Debt for services and wars that took place 100 and more years ago, yet we cannot adequately look after 4½ million of our old people who have served the nation in their younger days."—April 6.

### Government Expenditure must be Reduced

MR. GEOFFREY HIRST (Cons., Shipley): "I regard the rate of expenditure and the present increases as a national tragedy. We must do something about it. We must tackle it in various ways . . . a Minister of Cabinet rank must be charged with the job, with the assistance of a Cabinet committee, to go into this problem on a full-time basis, or we must have some form of independent committee to inquire into the administration of the various Departments."—April 7.

SIR ROLAND JENNINGS (Cons., Sheffield, Hallam): "We must have economies in Government . . . This constituent of mine plays a bassoon in an orchestra. He informs me that his instrument cost him under £20, yet children in secondary schools are being provided with bassoons and wind instruments costing £100 each."—April 6.

### The Chancellor's Share

MR. RALPH ASSHETON (Cons., Blackburn W.): "One quarter of the income of the average manual worker is to-day taken in direct or indirect taxation. From the more prosperous section of the community more than half is taken, and from the highest incomes more than 90 per cent . . . Two things are bound to happen. One is a depreciation of the currency and the other, as a consequence, is a rise in prices . . . Employers and wage-earners alike feel that further effort is not quite worth while, and certainly business and professional men become extravagant in incurring expenses. As a consequence of this, productivity is reduced and there is a steady decline in the value of savings, benefits and pensions . . ."—April 7.

MR. W. M. F. VANE (Cons., Westmorland): "Hon. gentlemen opposite . . . were not in fact creating an egalitarian society but merely a new one with class differences just as marked as those which they were trying to eliminate . . . It is commonly said that this country was, and still is to some extent, divided between rich and poor. It is now divided between private and official-and-business. The high rate of taxation that we have borne over the last few years has made perquisites of one sort and another far more valuable to a taxpayer at any high level than small additions in hard cash."—April 6.

### Restrictive Practices

MR. H. A. PRICE (Cons., Lewisham West): "In private life I am a paper merchant, and if I want to buy a certain kind of paper and go to any of ten or a dozen mills in this country they all quote me the same price, no matter how eager one or more of them may be to quote a lower price. Similarly, having bought the paper and ordered it to a customer, I have to put on a controlled margin of profit, the margin being 6½ per cent for lots of one ton. No matter how willing I may be to put only 5 per cent on, I dare not do so—I must put on 6½ per cent. If I should put on less and it became known, I should be in danger of being blacklisted, and all the mills concerned would be forbidden to supply me with that type of paper in future . . . It is ruling out competition and it is not my idea of private enterprise.

"I read in the press of a woman who was penalized by her union for making 93 cushions in a day instead of 40. For every example of which we learn, as a result of such a disclosure in the national press, there are thousands and possibly hundreds of thousands of similar examples of which we never learn because the work people dare not contravene these rules."—April 6.

### Old Age Pensioners

MR. GEORGE CHETWYND (Lab., Stockton-on-Tees): "The poor and the old—especially old age pensioners—spend a far bigger proportion of their income on food than do other sections of the community, and we know from all the surveys that many of them, after paying their necessary expenses have less than 2s. a day to spend on food."—April 6.

### "Lower your tariffs while we raise ours"

MR. CLEMENT DAVIES (Liberal, Montgomery): "The Chancellor is encouraging the President and the Government of the United States to remove restrictions. The right hon. gentleman says to them 'Pull down those barriers, and I hope you will succeed . . .' Having said all that, having declared that this was what he wanted and that this was the wise policy, what did he himself propose to do? Put an increased tax on chicory. Is that the message to the President of the United States? Does the Chancellor say, 'Well done, Mr. President; follow my precept but do not follow my example'?"—April 7.

### "Freer" trade would improve conditions

MR. JOHN RANKIN (Lab., Glasgow Tradestown): "If we can get a freer flow of trade then I am certain that we shall improve the economic condition not merely of this country but of the entire world and we shall make it easier for the Government to meet the legitimate demands of the old-age pensioners . . ."—April 6.

### Welfare and Warfare or Lower Taxation?

MR. CYRIL OSEORNE (Cons., Louth): "There is no escape from the fact if we are to maintain the Welfare State and bear a tremendous arms burden we have to pay very high taxation. We must give up one or the other, or both, if we are to reduce heavy taxation."—April 7.

### FORM OF BEQUEST

I bequeath, free of duty, to the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, Limited, the sum of £.....