

The CHAIRMAN: That is a point that may have significance for the committee.

Mr. FLEMING: May I come back to this matter of the taxes. Mr. Cleaver raised the point that the percentage had remained constant and that therefore it could not be a contributing factor to the rise. I suppose as long as your indirect taxes are on a percentage basis that where your cost of commodities which are subject to the tax is going up, your percentage while it remains constant is bound to take an increased amount over a time.

Mr. CLEAVER: These figures are on amounts, and I have reduced the amounts to percentages. In 1938 the amount collected for indirect taxes less subsidies was \$630,000,000. That is related to a total national revenue of \$5,141 million. Then when you move over to 1947 the amount collected for indirect taxes less subsidies was \$1,538 million but that figure is related to \$13,052 million. If you will percentage those you will find it is quite obvious indirect taxes could not be a contributing factor.

Mr. HARKNESS: I do not think it is obvious at all. I think we should get the figures and have a discussion on it afterwards.

Mr. CLEAVER: All right.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Marshall will supply those figures later.

Mr. MERRITT: If you do not percentage them it is obvious.

Mr. FLEMING: Perhaps we had better have this clear. The sales tax percentage remained constant in the period covered by the table on page 36, but you have some new indirect taxes at different periods there. I hope Mr. Marshall will cover that in his breakdown.

The WITNESS: As I say I may not be able to get as complete a breakdown as you would like but I will get all the information I can.

By Mr. Fleming:

Q. There were new excise taxes during the war. Are you in a position to give us a breakdown with respect to excise taxes for the last six weeks of 1947. Would those figures be available yet?—A. I am not sure. I will have to look into that.

Q. Are you able to break down your figures on cost in any shorter periods than the month?—A. Which costs?

Q. Any of your figures with respect to the cost of living?—A. Oh, no.

Q. You can only do it by the month?—A. There is one index in our wholesale price series where we have a weekly index number on very sensitive industrial commodities, but that is the only one we do on a weekly basis.

Q. Take the period covered by the last three or four months. I understand your figures are taken on the first day of the month in different areas?—A. That is for the cost of living.

Q. Yes, and you do not take any figures during the month. For instance, do I understand you would not have any figures relating to the cost of living as to essential commodities on the 17th of November and within one week or ten days following?—A. No, we would not have.

Q. You only have figures for the first of November and then for the first of December?—A. Yes.

Q. I see. Would you just enlarge on that subject, the method by which you go about ascertaining prices? How do you obtain your figures?—A. Well, we have 65,000, I think it is, price quotations. We send out questionnaires. I am talking about the cost of living now. We send out questionnaires to stores all over the country, independent stores, chain stores, department stores. In addition to that we have some price representatives in the field who go around checking up on these prices. They are received in the Bureau, of course, and then averages have to be made.