

milk marketing facilities, improvement to tourist resorts, and assistance to industry by procurement of critical materials like jute sacks. Whilst minor increases under most headings are anticipated all estimates have been carefully reviewed and non-essentials eliminated.

In total, the expenditure shown in detail in the Main Estimates is £105,516,000, but special provision must be made to cover the situation resulting from the recent Court of Arbitration ruling on wage increases. Such items as additional hospital subsidies and war pensions must be provided for, also increased wages and cost of stores and equipment to be paid for by the Government Services as a whole for the rest of the financial year. These items will absorb £2,350,000, and £994,000 has been allowed for the normal supplementary expenditure which has to be provided to meet those costs which cannot be foreseen when the Main Estimates are being compiled.

The increased cost of benefits out of the Social Security Fund following the rise in wages recently announced will be met in part from increased revenue from the Social Security charge and the balance has been allowed for in the transfer of £16,000,000 from the Consolidated Fund as set out in the Main Estimates.

Stabilization

As recently indicated, some of the stabilization subsidies paid to hold down the prices of certain commodities included in the wartime prices index are to be reduced or withdrawn. The time of withdrawal will vary for different products, having regard to seasonal factors, rationing periods, and when the necessary administrative arrangements can be made for review of prices. In the meantime, subsidies will continue on the present basis and any alteration in prices will be subject to the issue of the necessary orders by the Price Tribunal.

Even though the cost of subsidies this year for bread, butter, and milk will amount to about £3,600,000, the Government have decided to continue holding the prices of these commodities at the present levels. The existing subsidy on eggs will be continued. On the other hand, subsidies on fresh fruits, meat and bacon, oatmeal, sugar, and imported raw leaf tobacco will be discontinued.

The price of tea in overseas markets has risen substantially during recent months. In part at least the higher cost is likely to continue, as it arises from higher wages paid to employees in the tea