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## Original Article

# To see ourselves: The rhetorical construction of an ideal citizenry in the perorations of twentieth-century budget speeches

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**Abstract** For classical writers the peroration represented a recapitulation of the arguments that had been deployed in a speech, but was also considered the part which sought to engage the emotions of the audience. In their use of pathos, perorations are therefore particularly revealing. This article considers how they have been used by Chancellors, who have employed the collective concepts of ‘country’, ‘nation’ and ‘people’ to rouse, exhort, persuade, console, applaud, and inspire their audiences through the rhetorical construction of an ideal British citizenry.

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## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The budget speech is, in essence, a linguistic and rhetorical exposition of the logic and rationale for the particular means and objectives underpinning the annual business of getting and spending. Along with the Queen’s Speech it is, with its own protocols and traditions, one of the monumental set pieces of the parliamentary year. And as one commentator has put it with respect to an analysis of Australian budget speeches: ‘rather than simply a vehicle for new announcements, the budget speech has a rhetorical function. It affords a significant opportunity for a government to argue for its economic policy [and] vision’ (Lukin, 2015, p. 1).

As Fairclough has stated ‘much of the action of government is language’ and budget speeches are certainly one of the most telling examples of this (Fairclough, 2000, p. 157). At one level they are, of course, a means of communicating with what have been termed particular ‘discourse communities’: for example, the



members of the House of Commons to whom they are most immediately addressed but also those beyond the Palace of Westminster – *ad urbe et orbe* – the City and the global financial community, which have their ‘own particular [discursive] genres, [their] own set of specialised terminology and vocabulary, and a high level of expertise in [their] particular area’ (Paltridge, 2006, p. 12). But, as a discursive and communicative exercise, these speeches are more than this. For when the Chancellor speaks, it is to communicate with a constituency that transcends these specialist and particular discourse communities, namely the British public;<sup>2</sup> recognising as Chancellors do that budget rhetoric and measures, both of a micro and a macro character, can have a significant impact on that constituency’s political perceptions and material interests and thence the outcome of General Elections.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of Fairclough’s three-dimensional framework for discourse analysis, which posits an analysis of texts, discourse practice (text production, distribution and consumption) and discursive events as instances of socio-cultural practice, we can see budget speeches, as both written and spoken texts, as having a distinctive forms of production, distribution and consumption and as a cathartic moment in a particular kind of socio-cultural theatre. As to text production this may originate in the bowels of the Treasury, but as a function of manifesto commitments balanced with existentially dictated financial and economic imperatives. Dissemination is essentially through the mass and financial media but is also mediated by subsequent political speeches both inside and outside the palace of Westminster. As to socio-cultural practice, the Budget has its own rituals from the waving of the red box on the steps of No. 11, to the protocols that dictate and choreograph its performance in the House of Commons.

However, as far as this study is concerned the focus will be limited to the first of these dimensions, namely the budget speech as spoken and written text and, specifically, its construction of an ideal citizenry in the particular circumstances of war, economic crisis and economic recovery. In this regard, the article considers the discursive/rhetorical manner in which this was done, the socio-political purposes which this imaginative act served and how these changed over the course of the twentieth century.

As critical discourse theorists remind us, language connects with, mediates, expresses and constitutes social relations of power and domination (Fairclough, 2000, pp. 158–159). Van Dijk, for example (2001, p. 357), mirroring the reflections of the rhetorical theorists of ancient history, has written of the power that derives from those who can convince their audience of the authoritative, trustworthy, or credible sources which underpin their discourse. And budget speeches in particular both demand and evidence this quality. While their messages are often simple, the language in which they are delivered can be arcane. And it is that inaccessibility, except to a financial elite, that often gives them their particular authority. However, if they are to resonate as authoritative, trustworthy and credible, they must also



engage with those who do not make up the financial cognoscenti. And here the peroration of the budget speech furnishes just such an opportunity; the language of the collective, however conceptualised, providing a potentially potent means of doing so.

Political rhetoric is also integral not just to the articulation but also the formation of ideology. As Finlayson has put it:

ideological thought and expression are never simply a ‘working out’ of a series of concepts or propositions but a dynamic interaction of predispositions with both opponents and events, mediated by political actors who must make choices about how to understand and persuasively present a case they must perform. The classical name for this activity is rhetoric (Finlayson, 2012, p. 758, my emphasis).

Budget speeches must therefore be seen in this light: not just as a means of transmitting a set of technical information about the nation’s finances but as a rhetorical construction of the world and the concepts in terms of which it wishes its audience to understand it. Therein lies their persuasive power, or lack of it.

As to the peroration of a speech, this has been variously defined. In neutral terms, it is simply the concluding part of an oration and, in classical rhetoric, it represented the last of the six traditional components in the speech’s *disposition*. Again, from the perspective of classical authors, the peroration had a number of purposes.<sup>4</sup> Primarily it represented a recapitulation of the arguments that had been deployed in the speech but was also deemed to be that part which aimed to engage with the emotions of the audience. So, for Cicero:

the entire speech should be concluded most often by amplifying our points, either by kindling the emotions of the jurors or by soothing them. Everything, both in the preceding sections of the speech and particularly in the last, should be aimed at stirring the jurors’ emotions as much as possible and in prompting them to think what is to our advantage (Cicero, 2001, p. 14).<sup>5</sup>

For Aristotle too, the *epilogos* had the purpose of ‘moving the hearer into emotional reaction... pity and indignation and anger and hatred and envy and emulation and strife’ and also casting those who might disagree in a negative light, while getting the listener to take a favourable view of the orator.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the Roman writer Quintilian stressed the importance of arousing the passions of the audience,<sup>7</sup> and again noted two components of the *peroratio*: the one involving a recapitulation of the heads of the speech the other directed to exciting the feelings of the listeners:<sup>8</sup> for ‘appeals to emotion are necessary if there are no other means for securing the victory of truth, justice and the public interest’ (Quintilian, 1921, Vol. 2, p. 387). Or, as a later eighteenth-century commentator exhorted: ‘let your perorations ... often be lively expostulations with the conscience of the hearer’ (Mather, 2015, p. 106).



In this context, if a speech is to be effective it must resonate with that audience's sensibilities and sense of themselves. Of course this wider audience may read the speech, or have it communicated to them in full or in part by the press or other media, but they are not present for the performance which the peroration represents. Nevertheless, if its impact on the immediate parliamentary audience is important, that on the wider one is politically critical, and therefore its capacity, as classical writers argued, to evoke an empathetic emotional response. And while there are different ways of doing so, this article focuses specifically on how this challenge was met by the rhetorical construction and representation of an ideal citizenry, a rhetorically fashioned mirror that showed its extra-parliamentary audience to itself in a manner that secured their support for, and practical delivery of, the measures being proposed. More specifically here the paper will examine how Chancellors, in their perorations, have delineated the virtues and qualities which an ideal citizenry should possess; how, in doing so, they have burnished its self-image, flattering not so much to deceive as to persuade; how they have constructed a moral identity for the nation and manufactured a corresponding notion of collective moral purpose and, critically, how they have imbricated this citizenry's moral qualities with the measures being proposed, thereby investing it with responsibility for their success. As we shall see, in the true spirit of perorations, this was an ideal that consistently sought to construct a self-image that allowed it to engender and exploit its audience's emotional reflexes, rhetorically sculpting and humouring its aspirations and inflating its self-regard and capacities. Standing Robert Burns on his head, the audience was encouraged to see themselves not as others saw them, but as they would most like to see themselves.<sup>9</sup>

As to the collective concepts which mediated the construction of this citizenry, the paper has focused primarily on the use of 'country', 'nation', 'people' and 'community'. Others have been touched upon, such as 'race,' but this was used only twice in these perorations. 'Land' and 'Shores', though superficially topographical references, were clearly used for their powerful 'collective' connotations and these have also been noted. However, they tend to be collocated with the chosen concepts and therefore are effectively considered alongside these. Finally, while recognising its inherent connotational ambiguities, the use of the first person plural in the rhetorical construction of an ideal citizenry has also been considered.

It is appreciated that the collective concepts primarily examined – 'community', 'nation', 'country' and 'people' – each carry a distinctive historical and connotative baggage and resonance; each, therefore, has particular rhetorical possibilities that can be used to shape or construct the ideal. However, in terms of the construction of an ideal citizenry they were each unpacked in remarkably similar ways, with the rhetorical choreography most often taking the form of an attribution of laudatory behavioural characteristics, virtues or practical



competencies. Further, while note is taken of some of the changes in the frequency of perorational usage of these key concepts over the course of the century (see below Tables 1, 2), the size of the corpus does not allow any firm conclusions to be derived from this. Nevertheless the issue of frequency is discussed in the Conclusion and, in particular, in notes 34 and 36.

In terms of historical context, the paper focuses primarily on speeches in times of war, impending conflict and economic crisis. However, those delivered in the post-war period of increasing affluence have also been considered, as they reveal a different concept of the ideal citizenry, one that saw it as a fundamental driver of economic progress and prosperity, a concept not apparent earlier in the century. And with this went, as we shall see, a different and differently constructed set of virtues, attributes and capacities.

There remains then the issue of identifying what constitutes the peroration. In some of the later budget speeches this is ‘solved’ by the actual insertion of ‘Peroration’ or ‘Conclusion’ in the printed text. However, for most of the speeches this is not the case, and establishing the peroration’s onset becomes a matter of literary judgement, though one that can be informed both by the characteristics identified in classical literature and also by what applied linguists would term certain ‘discourse markers’. And, using these, the judgement is usually relatively easy to make, with a clear shift in discursive tone, tempo and rhetorical content signalling the finale.<sup>10</sup>

There is now, of course, a considerable literature on rhetoric and British politics, political theory, political psychology and ideology (see, e.g., Aletta, 2000; Fairclough, 2000; McLean, 2001; Finlayson and Martin, 2008; Atkins, 2011). And, more specifically and more recently, there have also been a number of studies of the

**Table 1:** Number of uses of collective concepts

	<i>Country</i>	<i>Nation</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>People</i>	<i>Community</i>
1900–09	12	2	0	6	3
1910–19	10	4	0	2	2
1920–29	7	4	3	3	1
1930–39	19	8	5	8	4
1940–49	5	3	2	13	3
Sub-total	53	21	10	32	13
1950–59	2	1	1	9	1
1960–69	4	1	2	6	1
1970–79	3	7	3	19	1
1980–89	2	3	0	2	0
1990–99	7	0	0	6	1
Sub-total	18	12	6	42	4
Total	71	33	16	74	17

**Table 2:** Frequency of use by the Chancellors of different political parties

	<i>Country</i>	<i>Nation</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>People</i>	<i>Community</i>
<b>Liberals</b>					
1906–14	13	4	0	3	1
Per words	175	570	–	760	2279
<b>Conservatives</b>					
1900–05	7	2	–	4	2
1925–29	4	1	3	2	1
1932–39	14	5	4	5	1
1952–63	2	1	1	4	2
1970–73	1	5	1	8	0
1979–96	7	3	0	6	1
Sub-total	35	17	9	29	7
Per words	326	690	1304	404	1677
<b>Labour</b>					
1930–31	5	3	1	3	3
1945–51	6	3	2	15	2
1965–70	2	1	2	10	0
1974–78	1	2	2	8	1
1997–1999	2	0	0	5	0
Sub-total	16	9	7	41	6
Per words	471	889	1143	191	1334

Liberals Corpus: 2279; Conservatives: 11, 738; Labour: 8002.

language of budget speeches (see Lukin, 2015; Thompson, 2015). But such literature is still relatively thin and it is to this that the article seeks to make a contribution.

## War

The 1900 budget peroration of Michael Hicks Beach<sup>11</sup> was a particularly splendid rallying cry in time of conflict; on this occasion, the Boer War, its tone, substance and understanding of past and present predicaments crafted to render palatable the fiscal hit necessary to pay for the hostilities. But more than that it constructed a citizenry that aligned itself with the necessary financial sacrifices. Here the specific rhetorical means, with a powerful emotive resonance, was to juxtapose these sacrifices with those being made by British troops. So:

*our* soldiers in the field, from whatever part of the Empire they have come, have shown that they are *equal to their forefathers*. *Our great colonies*, though perhaps at first sight not so directly interested in this war as ourselves, have *eagerly taxed themselves* in men and money for the cause of the Empire.



Success in the War was therefore linked to past glories and the present Empire, both the contribution that the latter had voluntarily made in terms of men and materials but also the consequences for Empire of its outcome. It was not just Britain but the British Empire that was engaged in the war; the cause for which sacrifices should be made was ‘the cause of the Empire’, ‘our’ Empire, ‘our great colonies’, not just that of the nation.

But it is the authority of the nation and the people which was subsequently invoked as a compelling argument in favour of the fiscal measures proposed. For while:

opinions on these subjects may differ... there is one thing on which *the great majority of this nation has made up its mind*, and that is that, at whatever cost, this war shall be prosecuted to a successful termination. To-day we ask you to provide means to fulfil *that mandate of the people*.

For ‘foreign nations are watching us, sometimes, I fear, with no friendly eye, to see whether years of comfort, of peace, of increasing wealth, have softened the fibre or diminished the courage and the tenacity of purpose of *our race*’ (Hansard, 1900, col. 78, my emphasis). For Hicks Beach, Britain must be a Sparta not an Athens, and ‘this nation’, ‘the people’, ‘our race’, through the mandate they had given and the qualities which thereby characterised them, had made clear their resolve to be just that and defend Britain’s pre-eminent global position. The rhetorical invocation of the people and the nation, their political and moral resolve, their appreciation of historical imperatives and their imperial responsibilities and the mandate they had given the government were therefore used to claim a prescriptive authority for what the Chancellor was seeking to deliver. It was they who, in the final analysis, willed the fiscal measures required for the successful prosecution of the war. The mandate for the sacrifices which the people must bear came from the people themselves, a citizenry that had not lost its ‘fibre’, its ‘courage’ and its ‘tenacity of purpose’.

And it was this moral capacity of ‘the people’ to make such sacrifices in time of war which was again invoked in 1915 when, for the Chancellor Reginald McKenna, ‘our greatest resource’ was ‘the continued *willingness of the whole people to pay their share*’ (Hansard, 1915, col. 363, my emphasis);<sup>12</sup> McKenna here linking the willingness to pay with the people’s sense of equity. And once more, in 1918, Bonar Law expressed himself ‘perfectly certain that *the country as a whole* will bear this heavy additional burden [proposed in the budget] in the same spirit in which they have submitted to *sacrifices far more heavy than anything measured by mere money value*’ (Hansard, 1918, col. 720, my emphasis).<sup>13</sup> The truly telling phrase, and that most likely to resonate with his parliamentary and extra-parliamentary audience, was of course the final one. Whatever pecuniary sacrifices had been undergone, whatever material deprivations had been necessitated, however austere the fiscal regime had been during the course of the Great





War, this weighed as nothing in the balance compared to the other and more telling sacrifices that that war had necessitated. A ‘country’ that had embraced such sacrifices, and shown the capacity to bear them, would not bridle at the fiscal measures which the war necessitated and the Chancellor was proposing.<sup>14</sup>

And similarly, during the course of the Second World War, it was comparable virtues of the citizenry that were invoked as both the progenitors and the guarantors of the abstinence which the war demanded. In this regard, John Simon, in 1940, as with Hicks Beach, directly linked the military struggle with what was necessary from the populace to pursue the conflict to a successful conclusion. So:

provided that the *zeal and persistence* of *our people* in supporting Government loans equals the *fortitude and resolution* of *our people* in paying Government taxes, we have nothing to fear; and *our financial front will hold as firmly as does every other front in the fight for victory and freedom* (Hansard, 1940, col. 88, my emphasis).<sup>15</sup>

Although fortunately, in 1940, the financial front held more firmly than that in France and Belgium. It is thus that the citizenry was presented to itself and the moral pressure of self-image applied. ‘Zeal and persistence’, ‘fortitude and resolution’: these were the qualities needed to bear the sacrifices required for victory on both the financial and military fronts.

Again, in 1943, Kingsley Wood<sup>16</sup> linked the financial sacrifices of the ‘people’ and ‘the country’ to the successful pursuit of the armed struggle. His budget, he knew, represented:

a very great degree of *sacrifice by all members of the community*, but it is worth making, for it enables us to keep our financial and economic life in that sound and healthy condition which has already, as I believe, been such a *powerful aid to the war effort* and will help us so much after the war ... I do not doubt that they will be willingly accepted by *our people, who have played so great a part in the financial field*. They once again represent *our determination* to see that nothing *we* can do is left undone to achieve early victory and that *we go forward unceasingly and unflinchingly* until the issue is decided by the *triumph of the right and a free and decent world* is assured for all mankind (Hansard, 1943, col. 974, my emphasis).

The language is inclusive and the use of ‘community’ is particularly evocative here as is its link to the notion of fairness and equity in sacrifices associated with the idea of community membership. Further, the use of ‘our people’ and the first person plural are significant discursive markers that identified the citizenry with the government and what it was seeking to achieve. And so we have the construction of a citizenry ‘unflinchingly’ and ‘unceasingly’ pursuing a collective ‘war effort’ aimed at the ‘triumph of the right and a free and decent world’, while embracing the fairness of equitable sacrifices which it entailed. Once again there was also the



discursive linking of the Home Front with the war front, the ‘community’ and ‘people’ with the armed forces, while at the same time associating them with an ethical endeavour of global significance.

Chancellors of all parties similarly deployed such rhetorical devices to justify an increase in defence expenditure when conflict loomed, or seemed to loom, or was made to seem to loom, on the horizon. Thus, as rearmament gathered momentum prior to the Second World War, it was once again the language of collective restraint and sacrifice that informed the perorations of Chancellors. So we have Neville Chamberlain<sup>17</sup> asking for ‘new sacrifices’ from ‘the country’. That such exactions were necessary was a ‘bitter disappointment to me’, but:

*no man hesitates to set his fire-fighting appliances in readiness when already he can feel the heat of the flames on his face. Our safety is more to us than our comfort, and I think the country which has applauded and approved the precautions we are taking will not grudge us the means of bringing them about in the shortest space of time that we can compass (Hansard, 1936, col. 58, my emphasis).*

So, for Chamberlain, where security and comfort represented a zero-sum-game, there could be no doubt that the ‘country’ would have the moral resolve to prioritise the former over the latter, Sparta once again being preferred to Athens. Moreover, this invocation of the moral authority of ‘the country’ or ‘the nation’ again informed the argument that there must be a necessary link between what the people had demanded and what was required to meet those demands. And noteworthy here as well is the gendered nature of the citizenry’s construction.

In 1938 too, with John Simon now the Chancellor, the budget was designed firstly: ‘for the financing of our multifarious social services which spread so much benefit and help where it is needed; secondly, for the preservation of our financial strength which is *absolutely vital to our Defence* if trouble comes; and, thirdly, for *the protection of our native land*’. A spirit of national unity again being invoked in linking social service provision, financial strength and national defence – connecting the citizenry, the City and the armed forces.

Further, the increased expenditure on armaments and its fiscal consequences were associated with, and in some measure rationalised in terms of, a parallel policy of appeasement. So while it could be accepted that:

*the mere piling up of ever-greater armaments, by itself and in itself, is not a certain means of securing safety or ensuring peace ... this necessary outlay on rearmament is being accompanied by an active policy for promoting reconciliation and good will with other nations – a policy which is already beginning to show results. In pursuit of this double objective, the load which we have to bear will, assuredly, be carried with the dogged determination and dauntless courage of the British race (Hansard, 1938, col. 67, my emphasis).*



Pursuing peace must go in tandem with preparations for war, an ethically driven policy of promoting reconciliation and goodwill on the international front must be matched by a citizenry whose consistent virtues of ‘dauntless courage’ and ‘dogged determination’ would allow it to embrace the sacrifices necessary to prepare for possible conflict.

Yet it is interesting that Hugh Gaitskell,<sup>18</sup> in his 1951 budget, on the cusp of an age of affluence and the enticements it offered, painted a less sanguine portrait of the citizenry. The historical context was that of the Korean War – ‘a setting physically remote from *this Parliament of ours*, but spiritually ... very close’ – and a post-war Britain struggling to escape the travails of austerity. And in such a context:

the *popular urge* to relax, the pressure for higher and higher living standards, the absorption with domestic issues, are all powerful influences which *weaken the will* to re-arm. And *we* must face it; the very process of democratic government to some extent encourages all this – often, in the past, with fatal or near fatal results. It has happened many times in history that democracies have played, while dictatorships have prepared.

It was therefore ‘the government’s responsibility and our opportunity, *all of us*, to see that this does not happen again’ (Hansard, 1951, col. 867, my emphasis). So here we have juxtaposed an exhortation to virtue, a recognition of the siren call of consumerism and a preoccupation with self, the danger of the popular erosion or dissipation of those virtues required by a democratic citizenry for the survival of their *polis* and the evocation of a recent but also a longer past to highlight the consequences of such a sapping of the moral will. And interestingly it is the ‘government’s responsibility’, but only the citizenry’s ‘opportunity’, to prevent this erosion of a collective capacity to make sacrifices for the common good. And the ‘we’ is a reference to the Government not the citizenry and the political imperatives are ones that are therefore endogenous rather than exogenous to the political process.

Despite the years of post-war austerity which the people had already endured, and the consequent popular urge to succumb to the powerful appeal of consumerist indulgence, Gaitskell argued that the budget, and the government’s responsibilities, had to be seen in the geo-political context of a ‘clash and conflict between the two great forces in the world today – between Soviet imperialism on the one side and the Parliamentary democracies on the other. It is this clash and the particular episode in it – Korea – which has imposed upon us here in Britain the need to turn our industries to defence and to call up our young men from their jobs and their homes’ (Ibid.). This was a clash which dictated that, *pace* the urge and inclinations of the citizenry, despite the obvious electoral advantages of accommodating a latent consumerism, the government should assume responsibility for a fiscal



policy that prioritised national and international security over even laudable social expenditure.

So here we have a warning to, not an ideal representation of, the citizenry; a perorational caution, not an invocation of the citizenry's prescriptive authority nor a celebration of its virtues. And, as it transpired, such a concern with a citizenry antipathetic to continued austerity was to be borne out by the result of the 1951 General Election.

## Crisis

With economic crises we find again the capacity for abstinence and sacrifice, and their associated moral qualities used to construct an ideal citizenry. And here, by way of illustration, we have the most rhetorically overblown peroration to be found in twentieth-century budget speeches. The context was that of global economic depression and mass unemployment and the budget the second of 1931,<sup>19</sup> one which split the second minority Labour Government by seeking a significant reduction in public expenditure in the light of the nation's rapidly deteriorating financial position. The unfortunate Chancellor was Philip Snowden: his aim, to persuade his Party and the country that the implementation of the May Committee Report, 1931, recommending economies of c. £120 m (£66 m of which was to come from a reduction in unemployment benefits) was in the national economic interest:

I have finished what I described as my very unpleasant task. These proposals are admittedly drastic and disagreeable. They are justified only by the regrettable necessity *urged upon us by the present financial position of the nation*, but I have received during the last few weeks *the most amazing evidence of the willingness of the nation, men and women of all classes, to make their contribution to this effort ...* Old age pensioners ... have returned their pension books... War pensioners have offered to forgo their pensions for the year... Children, even, have sent from their savings-boxes shillings and half-crowns to help the nation in its need.

Here, it is the nation's financial position which 'urges' action, but it is a virtuous citizenry, though constructed with particular reference to the less well off – such as pensioners and children – which responds. So 'the House of Commons will, I believe, accept these proposals, *the country will accept them* – [Interruption] – and in doing so they will show to the world an example of *the indomitable British spirit in the face of difficulty*'. Thus constructed, with its 'indomitable spirit', we have of course a citizenry that becomes integral to, but also responsible for, the solution of the 'country's' difficulties. By the same token a failure to endorse the financial strategy proposed by Parliament would signal a questioning of the virtues attributed to it.



And then, with a final rhetorical fanfare Algernon Swinburne (though interestingly not mentioned by name) is wheeled in to associate this citizenry with some of Britain's literary, and naval, heroes, thereby co-opting them too to the national task of balancing the budget: '*All our past proclaims our future: Shakespeare's voice and Nelson's hand, Milton's faith and Wordsworth's trust in this our chosen and chainless land. Bear us witness: come the world against her, England yet shall stand*'. A literary flourish that, amongst other interruptions, prompted the Red Clydesider, David Kirkwood, to suggest an addition to this list: 'What about Dick Turpin?' (Hansard, 1931, cols. 311–312, my emphasis). Although perhaps Robin Hood might have more ideologically appropriate.<sup>20</sup> Yet for all its overblown character we have once again the key discursive moral markers of 'faith' and 'trust' and 'freedom' and 'spirit', though this is also a decidedly chauvinistic rendering of the citizenry and its virtues, with its evocation of national heroes, national resilience and a glorious, if essentially English, past.

But in passing here we might note, in relation more generally to the language of nationalism, that while in this instance chauvinistic, the construction of an ideal citizenry in the perorations of twentieth-century budget speeches is one which gives a primary rhetorical place to a 'people' or 'nation' whose attributes are civic rather than aggressive, moral rather than predatory. In effect the collectivities are used to construct and engender a sense of inclusive civic nationalism, one viewed as a resource, a legitimiser and agent: a resource (of virtues) that can be drawn on in times of economic and political difficulty, a legitimiser of the fiscal strategy being articulated, and an agent that can give effect to a government's fiscal proposals.

Again, in 1932, with Britain still in the depths of depression, the primary fiscal objective was economy, with Neville Chamberlain, now Chancellor, acknowledging what this might provoke in the populace, before launching into a peroration which, if avoiding the Scylla of literary pretension, nonetheless threatened to founder on the Charybdis of metaphorical cliché. Thus he accepted that:

the whole country is crying out for relief from taxation, and many people believe that that relief will carry us a long way on the road to prosperity. To the people who have been cherishing expectations of anything of the kind the announcement that no relief shall be given to them is bound to cause disappointment, and at first perhaps even resentment.

But the prospect of such resentment was discounted, and the metaphor of roads and a collective journeying sustained, as Chamberlain conjured up the prospect of a prosperity for the people and the nation which, with the requisite effort, lay just over the horizon. For:

everyone who has ever scaled a mountain knows how the peak which seems so close as *he* approaches the base, vanishes from *his* sight the moment he begins his ascent. Again and again, as he continues to mount, *he* thinks *he*



sees the summit, only to find that there is another ridge behind. There comes a moment when *he* turns a corner, when *he* beholds at last the goal of *his* ambition before *him*, and with only a few steps more, *he* stands upon the final crest.

And then the third person singular becomes the first person plural. The striving and effort and resilience of the masculine individual are transposed to the ‘we’ of the collective, in this instance ‘the nation’. Individual endeavour is transposed into a common or collective endeavour.

*So too we of this nation, though as yet prosperity is hidden from us, can feel assured that, so long as our faces are turned upwards and our hearts are strong, we are moving in the right direction. One day, perhaps almost before we know it, we shall find ourselves upon our mountain top.*

In this context, ‘hard work, strict economy, firm courage, unflinching patience’ were represented as the signal moral qualities of the British people, those necessary ‘if the summit was to be gained’. For:

nothing could be more harmful to the ultimate material recovery of *this country or to its present moral fibre* than that *we* should indulge ourselves with hopes, possibly ill-founded, certainly premature, which might tempt us to relax the efforts which have already produced a wonderful revival of public confidence (Hansard, 1932, cols. 1438–1439, my emphasis).

In this manner, the appeal to virtue is shifted from the personalised third person singular to the first person plural: the ‘we’ of an ideal citizenry or ‘nation’, with a discursive intimation of its latent character. And it is made clear too that any failure to realise such virtues would represent a decay of moral fibre, a damaging departure from the moral ideal necessary to attain the mountaintop of economic recovery.

It is true that, in an atypical rhetorical concession, Neville Chamberlain conceded in his 1934 budget speech that ‘the British people no doubt have their faults. They are slow to realise the danger and slower still to change their habits or their methods, even when the necessity for a change stares them in the face’. But nonetheless, ‘they have one *supreme virtue which you will find in every class of the community*. Let them once be convinced that the country is in danger, and there is no sacrifice whether of comfort, money, health, or even life itself which they will not make’ (Hansard, 1934, cols. 926–927, my emphasis). So despite the occasional fault of inertia, we have a citizenry capable of the ‘supreme virtue’ of self-abnegation, a willingness to sacrifice well-being and ‘even life’ and a cheerful acceptance of privation in the face of crisis.

As noted above, political rhetoric is a dynamic interaction with the audience being addressed. An ideal citizenry is constructed for a purpose, as a vehicle for explicating and legitimising the measures contained in the budget speech,



sanctioning them in terms of their economic expediency and moral defensibility but legitimising them too by invoking the imperatives and authority of that citizenry which thereby becomes a player, at least rhetorically, in the game of fiscal management. While, therefore, the Chancellor apportions virtue, those virtues are discursively deployed for his own political and prescriptive ends. One might also add that the more pressing the crisis and the greater the challenge, the more impressive become the virtues with which this ideal citizenry is credited.

As regards the austerity of the immediate post-war period and the challenges this represented, the virtues of ‘the people’ and ‘the nation’ were again delineated in such a way as to conceive the citizenry as an agent, not simply the object, of the government’s fiscal strategy. So, for Stafford Cripps,<sup>21</sup> in his 1948 budget:

no one would deny that *we as a people* are passing through a time of the greatest economic difficulty; but I am convinced that *we as a nation are tackling our problems with a sense of realism and with a determination* which hold out the promise of a victorious solution of our problems.

Further, ‘we have called upon every section of the community *to help in this all-out struggle*. I have tried, in the light of the review of our present economic situation, to frame Budget proposals which will back up *that effort of the nation* by Government action’ (Hansard, 1948, col. 78, my emphasis). With contextualising recourse to the bellicose language of ‘struggle’ and victory, we have the nation ‘tackling’ and the nation ‘helping’ in the economic struggle, such efforts being supported by the ‘we’ of the Labour government. In this discursive vein, the government and the Chancellor’s budget become the enablers; they play an ancillary role, but in the final analysis, as in war, it was the nation and the people that must deliver. Again this rhetorical device directly associated the citizenry, as ideally constructed, with the government’s fiscal strategy and responsibility for its successful implementation. But Cripps takes this further by emphasising the need to:

*make plain, both to our own people* and to that large part of the world which is watching anxiously to see how *we* are meeting the challenge of our difficulties, that *we* are building – it may be somewhat slowly and painfully – strong and stable foundations for our reconstruction, by the ordered use of *our* resources, by guarding the value of *our* currency, and by the way *we* are determined to tackle *our* job – *the way of free men, working together in a free democracy for the good of our nation and of all the free peoples of the world* (*ibid*, my emphasis).

And here the final sub clause is critical. There were those who under the heading of socialism were also embarked on the business of reconstruction. For ideological and electoral reasons, it was necessary that Labour differentiated itself from them



and, specifically, Soviet Russia. It was also necessary ‘as determined democrats’ to ‘counter those elements in *our* country that are attempting to mislead *our* people and so bring about a breakdown of *our* economy to serve their own ends’. So the rhetoric of ‘our people’ is used to identify them with the struggle to protect ‘our country’ and ‘our economy’ from the enemy within.<sup>22</sup> An ideal citizenry is juxtaposed to its opposite, a subversive minority. And so in this peroration, the ‘nation’ and ‘the people’ were conceived not just as an active agent in the business of reconstruction but as meeting that challenge as ‘free men’, in a ‘free democracy’, of ‘free peoples’. The ideal citizenry, mediated discursively by ‘the nation’, ‘the people’ and ‘the country’ was therefore collocated and imbricated with the concepts of freedom and democracy in such a way as to become their guardian. Once more, in relation to the language of nationalism, the nation is conceived of in civic rather than predacious terms.

The proposals that I have put forward today are, I believe, one more proof that *we* can, by democratic methods, cope with the most difficult economic situations. *The political, economic, and spiritual freedom of our people is of a value beyond all price. We shall only preserve that freedom so long as we are prepared, in critical times like the present, to subordinate our personal interests to the greater good of our country as a whole* (Hansard, 1948, cols. 78–79, my emphasis).

Restraint, sacrifice and austerity were linked to the preservation of the freedoms for which the British people had already paid an enormous price and the willingness of the citizenry to embrace them represented a preparedness to think in terms of the national or collective good rather than that of narrow self-interest. Freedom had been hard won; its retention would be equally so. And this is not just an ‘economic’ but a ‘*spiritual* freedom of our people’, a collective freedom that transcended the merely material. For Stafford Cripps, this provided the legitimation for the policy of fiscal restraint which he was pursuing. And indeed this prioritisation of the public over the private was, for him, what democratic socialism was all about. Throughout, it is the ‘we’ and the ‘our’ of a government identified with the virtues of its citizenry, a free citizenry, which is the rhetorical pivot around which the peroration revolves.

In the mid-1960s, with economic difficulties mounting, and in particular balance of payments problems escalating, and with an enforced devaluation just around the corner, we have the Chancellor, James Callaghan,<sup>23</sup> again identifying the people as the critical agent in delivering key economic goals; ‘pin[n]ing... his faith on the willingness and understanding of the British people to make the policy of productivity, prices and incomes succeed and so secure our Triple Objective’ (Hansard, 1966, col. 1430).<sup>24</sup> And in 1969 too, Roy Jenkins<sup>25</sup> saw the efforts of the nation as central to surmounting the economic problems confronting the government. For ‘governments cannot and should not attempt to do everything.





They cannot solve the balance of payments problem on their own. *Only the nation as a whole can do that* (Hansard, 1969, col. 1042, my emphasis). Whether ‘the nation’ or ‘the people’, the citizenry was rhetorically constructed as a key agent in the resolution of the country’s difficulties. Indeed, the greater the difficulties, the greater the role and responsibilities which Chancellors tended to settle upon it. Viewed favourably this might be seen as a pragmatic recognition of the increasingly circumscribed nature of the government’s economic power, something articulated by many economic commentators in the final third of the twentieth century. Viewed less favourably, it might be seen as an abnegation of responsibility, or a confession of prescriptive impotence bordering on the sin of despair.

In times of turbulence, such as the 1970s, it was the authority and activism of the citizenry that were once again invoked as attempts were made to arrest accelerating inflation and to curb industrial unrest. This was particularly the case with the prices and incomes policy pursued by the Heath government of 1970–1974. And here that authority was rhetorically constructed to give popular sanction to legislation required for its implementation. But ‘the people’ and ‘the nation’ were also counterposed to what was portrayed as the self-interestedly sectional interests of the trade unions. So, in 1972, Tony Barber<sup>26</sup> evinced the belief ‘that *the British people* will now have no patience with any group whose actions endanger *our* hopes for prices and employment’. And further, in 1973:

the Government have for the time being laid down, in the interests of *the nation as a whole*, clear and definite limits on pay increases. In these circumstances it is inconceivable that any Government could agree to a dispute being settled by an offer outside the limits laid down.<sup>27</sup> And it follows that industrial action which sets out to achieve that will merely make *the nation poorer*, and no one richer. *As a people we can now show, for a welcome change, that militancy does not pay, and that responsibility, moderation and common sense* will prevail.

‘The central objective’ of the budget was therefore ‘to maintain the economic expansion which we have sought for so long, and which we are now at last achieving’ but ‘to succeed we must all – *Government and nation alike* – *be steadfast in our resolve to control inflation. Only in this way can we give the British people the opportunity to create a new wealth and a new strength for our country*’ (Hansard, 1973, col. 280, my emphasis). So the interests, virtues and behaviour of ‘the nation’, ‘the people’, ‘the people as a whole’ and ‘the British people’ are seen as critical to economic survival. The interests of the citizenry must trump, and were used rhetorically to trump, the sectional interests of those self-interested groups whose actions were portrayed as one of the primary causes of rapidly rising prices. This citizenry is therefore invested with a transformative capacity, their interests,



their endeavour and their restraint, distinguished from the meanness and rapacity of self-seeking sectional interests.

As for Labour in this period, faced as it was with escalating inflation, rapidly rising oil prices, growing industrial unrest, the miners' strike and its legacy of the 3-day week, we have Denis Healey,<sup>28</sup> in two separate budget speeches, expatiating on the people's predicament and resorting once again to a discourse of sacrifice and stoicism couched in terms of national survival. So:

in one way or another my Budget calls on *the majority of the British people* to make some sacrifice *for the survival of their way of life*. Few, I am confident, will reject that call. *We in Britain have always taken pride in our ability to face reality* when we are told the truth. Britain today is face to face with a crisis which is no less challenging because it has come on us slowly – almost imperceptibly – over the years. A fundamental change of course is long overdue. I believe that the action which the Government have taken in the past few weeks can mark the turning point in *our people's post-war history*. A new spirit of confidence and co-operation is already abroad. I ask the House to accept the proposals in this Budget as a further step along the road to realism and *a united nation*'.

So here too we have the common themes: the language of sacrifice coupled with additions to the ideal citizenry's canon of virtues – its 'ability to face reality', its 'spirit of confidence and co-operation'. And while the Chancellor's budget would help to set the nation on 'the road to realism', it was the people's sacrifice that was vital, it was they who must traverse that road of financial realism and it was their history – their past and their future – which was at issue. And, as in times of war, Healey played the rhetorical card of national unity. Indeed a unified citizenry was identified as a key strategic aim of the budget measures, the implication being that 4 years of Conservative government, leading as it had done to the catastrophe of the miners' strike and escalating social division, had done the opposite.

And as the economic situation worsened and what was to become the great IMF crisis of 1976 loomed on the horizon,<sup>29</sup> the onus was again placed on the 'British people' and 'the British people as a whole' to extricate the nation from the economic exigencies that it confronted. Here the metaphor of the journey is once more the rhetorical vehicle. So, for Healey, there was:

a better alternative to the stony road we have to follow at present. It requires only a *sustained act of will* to take it – *an act of will from which no section of the community, on the shop floor, in the board room or in the home, can stand aside*. If this Budget helps to convince the *British people* of this fact, it will have performed a long-term service to our nation even more important than the solution of the problems which are its immediate aim (Hansard, 1975, cols. 321–322, my emphasis).



And, consistent with this, there went a strong warning, in a later budget, as to the profound limitations of fiscal policy. Thus:

there are severe limits to what any British Government can do by budgetary measures to meet the objectives I have set. *The main responsibility must fall in this, as in all else, on the British people as a whole, and in particular on those who work in industry.* I have set out the problems which we must overcome if we are to reach our goal. I have explained how we can overcome them. *I believe the British people have proved over the last 12 months that they are capable of facing the facts* (Hansard, 1976, col. 282, my emphasis).

So the moral qualities of ‘the British people’ were explicitly extended, or transmuted, to encompass a responsibility and a reasoned capacity for both engaging with and solving the macroeconomic problems which the nation confronted. As rhetorically constructed here, the ideal citizenry becomes the pivotal player in the unfolding economic drama of the 1970s.

In line with the seeming demise of the Phillips Curve, and an attendant loss of confidence in government-directed, Keynesian demand management as a means of trading inflation off against unemployment, the limits of fiscal policy were being admitted by both Labour and the Conservatives. And in this regard, it is significant that this peroration is from the 1976 budget, the year which saw a major crisis over IMF funding and the year which some commentators have seen as tolling the death knell of Keynesian social democracy.<sup>30</sup> And here such sentiments as to the limits of fiscal policy, and the consequent responsibilities of the British people, chimed with James Callaghan’s famous Labour Party Conference Speech at Blackpool in 1976: ‘the post-war world we were told would go on forever, where full employment could be guaranteed by a stroke of the Chancellor’s pen ... We used to think that you could just spend your way out of recession ... I tell you in all candour that that option no longer exists’ (Callaghan, 1987, pp. 425–426). But the prescriptive impotence of government was rendered in these budget speeches in terms of the ideal citizenry’s opportunity and responsibility.

## Economic progress

At c.24,000 words the corpus of perorations is relatively small and so one must be wary of any general observations about rhetorical trends over the course of the century. Nevertheless, in the perorations of the budget speeches of the Thatcher years in particular, we find an increasing emphasis on the state’s role as an enabler, with the ‘nation’ and the ‘people’, the citizenry, constructed as the real drivers of the British economy. Further, in these speeches, as the faith of politicians and theorists in Keynesian macroeconomic management declined, there was an increasing emphasis on the individual – individual effort, individual endeavour,



individual initiative, individual virtue – as the critical agent in the delivery of economic progress. The budget therefore comes to be conceived as an enabler rather than a driver of the nation's economic fortunes; putatively establishing the macroeconomic ambience which would ensure that economic actors behaved in a growth-generating the way.<sup>31</sup> So, in 1971, the:

budget alone will not solve all our economic problems; but it does herald a new approach, an approach based on the belief that lower taxation and simpler taxation will, over the years ahead, help *to create a new spirit – a new spirit of personal endeavour and achievement, which alone can provide our nation with growing prosperity* (Hansard, 1971a, col. 1398, my emphasis).

Similarly, Tony Barber's 1973 Budget was designed to '*give the British people the opportunity to create a new wealth and a new strength for our country*' (Hansard, 1973, col. 280, my emphasis). It was the British people, or at least those employed in the private sector, and not the government, who were the real creators of wealth. It was the private not the public sector which drove the economy. It was the active citizen with initiative and endeavour who made for economic progress. And it was therefore the responsibility of the Chancellor to create the conditions that enabled such an imagined citizenry to flourish and engender the prosperity and full employment that Keynesian demand management had signally failed to achieve. The inherent British virtues of creativity, entrepreneurialism and personal endeavour must therefore be fostered and given the freedom to deliver what was beyond the power of Chancellors and budgets to effect. So the British nation and the British people were less often constructed as entities by reference to which Chancellors could claim an imprimatur for the kind of interventionism which post-war governments in particular had regarded as integral to the conduct of the nation's economic affairs. Rather they became, or more precisely the individuals composing them became, the essential drivers of its economic progress.

And this message was spelt out with particular clarity by Geoffrey Howe<sup>32</sup> in 1979 in the first budget of the Thatcherite period: 'I have stressed', he stated, 'the urgent need for new policies to reverse the decline of the British economy. These policies start with our conviction that *it is people and not Governments who create prosperity*'. And in line with this the:

Budget seeks to *reduce the role of Government*. Government will spend less, Government will borrow less. The Budget is designed to *give the British people a greater opportunity* than they have had for years to win a higher standard of living – *for their country and for their families as well as for themselves*. I dare to believe they will respond to the *opportunity* that I have offered them today (Hansard, 1979, col. 263, my emphasis).



Further, following on from this, the citizenry's virtues assumed a more individualistic or self-regarding form, an inevitable corollary of the mantra that there was no such thing as society. Specifically, these were the attributes or virtues of 'enterprise and risk-taking' (Hansard, 1981, col. 782), 'hard work' (Clarke, 1996) and 'ambition' (1998);<sup>33</sup> qualities associated more with getting on, material acquisition and possessive individualism and less with collective endeavour and achievement, with the 1995 Budget claiming in this context to 'put *Britain on course* to be *the enterprise centre of Europe*' (Clarke, 1995, my emphasis).

Moreover, with the ideal citizenry and its virtues coming to be conceived more in individualistic than collective terms, the frequency of usage of collectivist concepts would seem to have diminished (see Tables 1 and 2). For example, 'community' was used seventeen times in the peroration of twentieth-century budget speeches. Of those only *one* occurred after 1975 and then it was a technical reference to the 'community charge' in the budget speech of 1991. 'Social' and 'socially' were used thirty-one times but only four times after 1970, two of those in the November budget speech of 1974 where, in a crisis situation, Denis Healey invoked the value of 'social justice' and made reference to the 'social consequences' of an aggressive deflationary strategy. Further, if we take a very crude divide at half-century and compare the period 1900–1949 with 1950–2000 then 'country' and 'nation' are used less frequently in the latter than the former.<sup>34</sup>

Of course in the late-twentieth century the rhetoric of 'the people', 'the country' and 'the nation' was still used; indeed the usage of the first of these was a salient feature of the more general political rhetoric of New Labour.<sup>35</sup> But in the last two decades of the twentieth century it tended to be invested with qualities that were often less ethical and certainly less collective in nature. And, given this, it can be argued that these concepts became rhetorical vehicles that were less frequently used in the construction of an ideal citizenry.<sup>36</sup> In this respect that citizenry and its virtues came to be conceptualised in a distinctively more individualistic way; one minor discursive symptom, perhaps, of a more general crisis of collective or national identity that has surfaced in recent years.

## Conclusion

In classical rhetorical theory, the peroration is the summative and performative part of the speech. It is here, therefore, that one would expect examples of performative or figurative language: language appealing to emotion as well as reason; language that might be seen as flattering to deceive, and which must therefore engage with its audience in a manner that both resonated with its self-image, while at the same time shaping and constructing it. In this regard, the perorations of twentieth-century Budget speeches conform to that model, emotively imagining and portraying the



citizenry as it would wish to be seen, and as Chancellors believed it could be persuaded to see itself.

This article has therefore sought to tease from these perorations some sense of how collective concepts such as ‘the people’, ‘the country’, ‘the community’, ‘the nation’ and others rhetorically mediated the construction of an ideal citizenry. In terms of that construction, it has highlighted the qualities, virtues and attributes with which that citizenry was imbued and how that construction was deployed to legitimise budget proposals. Specifically, in times of difficulty and crisis, whether of a military or an economic nature, this imagined entity was used as a rhetorical vehicle to justify, exhort, legitimise, empathise, persuade, inspire and inculcate in relation to the Budget’s financial strategy. In this regard, revenue raising measures became a putative test and often a celebration of the citizenry’s will, steadfastness, courage, tenacity, zeal, persistence, fortitude, determination, resolution and willingness to confront the challenges which the Budget addressed.

And, through the delineation of this set of characteristics and virtues, these perorations served to construct an affirmative and laudatory notion of what it was to be British, one with which the populace would wish to identify and thereby discursively imbricated it with what was being proposed. Moreover, Chancellors also constructed this citizenry in a manner that elided its socially variegated character. So we have references to ‘the *whole* nation’, ‘*all* members of the community’, ‘*all* of us’, ‘*all* classes’, ‘*all* parties’, ‘*all* age groups’ and ‘*all* of us’, to say nothing of the constant recourse to the first person plural. That said, and as noted, the invocation of this moral collective or moral citizenry was less apparent in budget speeches later in the century. Or perhaps more accurately, the citizenry was rhetorically imagined in a different way. For then what came to the fore were its individualistic characteristics and associated moral traits: a self-reliant, entrepreneurial and possessive individualism which it was the government’s responsibility to encourage and incentivise, and which was represented as integral to success in an increasingly competitive and turbulent economic world.

## Notes

- 1 I would like to express particular thanks to Professor Nuria Lorenzo-Dus, discussions with whom proved invaluable in clarifying my thinking on some of the key organising concepts of this piece.
- 2 See, for example, the budget of 1906 which is commended ‘to the House and the country’; that of 1982, ‘commend[ed] ... to the House and to the nation’; that of 1999 ‘not just to the House but to the country’ (Hansard, 1906, col. 307; Hansard, 1982, col. 756; Brown, 1999, p. 21). For an interesting recent study of the importance of public opinion in the construction of economic discourse, see Thompson (2013).
- 3 For a magisterial assessment of the conduct of fiscal policy in the period 1914–79, see Daunton (2002). For a highly critical discussion of post-1945 Chancellors and their management of the economy, see Dell (1996).



- 4 Of course as far as writers like Cicero and Quintilian were concerned what they had to write about rhetoric in general, and the peroration in particular, often related to the art of advocacy in a court of law.
- 5 Although it should be noted that Cicero, in *De Oratore*, was critical of a rule bound approach to oratory of the kind favoured by many rhetoricians and which he had embraced himself in his *De Inventione*, Cicero (2001, p. 3).
- 6 'Disposing the hearer favourably toward the speaker and unfavourably toward the opponent... show[ing] himself to be truthful and his opponent false, Aristotle (1991, pp. 280–281).
- 7 'The peroration is the most important part of the forensic pleading, and in the main consists of appeals to the emotions' (Quintilian, 1921, Vol. 2, p. 417).
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 383.
- 9 More generally, as Daunton (2002, p. 29) has it, 'debates over taxation offer a way into the larger question of the normative assumptions about society and human motivation'.
- 10 On this judgemental basis, it is the case that some perorations are long, some are short, some very short and, in one instance, namely Geoffery Howe's budget speech of 1980, it is impossible to identify anything which could legitimately be denominated a peroration at all.
- 11 Hicks Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1885–1886 and 1895–1902, 'raised income tax and taxes on beer, spirits, tea, tobacco sugar, coal and, controversially, corn, to help pay for the Boer War.' For further details of his life and political career, see Pugh (2010).
- 12 'His two budgets, of September 1915 and April 1916, attempted through judicious mixes of taxation and borrowing to pay for the war without crippling Great Britain's economic future. The 1915 budget included sharply increased income taxes, an unprecedented excess profits tax, and the 'McKenna duties' on luxury consumer goods', Cregier (2011).
- 13 Bonar Law was responsible for six war budgets in all. In an assessment of his role as Chancellor, Green (2011) has stated that he 'sustained Britain's record, unrivalled among the other belligerents, of funding 26 per cent of wartime expenditure from revenue. He was in this respect as orthodox a chancellor as circumstances permitted, and thereby helped sustain the government's credit-worthiness in the last two years of the war'.
- 14 Bonar Law spoke from profound personal experience, having lost two sons in the conflict.
- 15 That said, in his pre-war period as Chancellor this notion of 'the financial front' as 'the nation's fourth arm of defence in any future war' led him to be 'careful to limit expenditure on rearmament', Dutton (2011).
- 16 Kingsley Wood, a Conservative, was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the wartime coalition government from 1940 until his death in 1943. Influenced by Keynes he was the first Chancellor to use national income analysis. In terms of his conduct of fiscal policy during the war, 'overall he raised a significantly higher proportion of war finance through taxation rather than borrowing than his predecessors had done in the First World War', Peden (2011).
- 17 Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1932–1937.
- 18 Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1950–1951.
- 19 There had also been a budget in April of that year.
- 20 For a general discussion of Labour's conduct of economic policy, and its ideological underpinning, in the 1929–1931 period, see Thompson (2006, pp. 85–91) and for a sympathetic treatment of this conduct, McKibben (1975, p. 85–123).
- 21 Cripps, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1947–1950, was the Chancellor most notably associated with the period of post-war austerity. For a fuller account of his life, thought and political career see Clarke and Toye (2011).
- 22 Cripps would have had specifically in mind communist influence within the British trade union movement.
- 23 Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1964–1967. For a fuller account of his period as Chancellor and the particular difficulties with which he wrestled see, Hattersley (2013) and Morgan (1997).



- 24 The 'triple objective' was steady growth, low inflation and full employment.
- 25 Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1967–1970 in the second Wilson government and the author of tough, austerity budgets in 1968 and 1969. For a fuller account of his time as Chancellor and his political career more generally, see Jenkins (1991).
- 26 Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Heath government, 1970–1974, was one of the first Chancellors to wrestle with the difficulty of the contemporary failure to trade inflation off against unemployment. His solution of a dash for growth exacerbated the former. For a short discussion see Porter (1996).
- 27 The limits of the incomes policy.
- 28 Chancellor of the Exchequer during the Wilson and Callaghan governments, 1974–1979: for a fuller and entertaining account of Healey's period as Chancellor, Healey (1989).
- 29 For one account of this, Dell (1991).
- 30 For a discussion of the connection between economics ideas and policy in the 1970s, Thompson (1996).
- 31 As Daunton has put it, from the 1970s 'social equity and fiscal balance were replaced by a concern for incentives', Daunton (2002, p. 327).
- 32 Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1979–1983: as Chancellor, Howe confirmed the death of Keynesian demand management and initiated what were to be the hallmarks of Thatcherite economics, prioritising the tackling of inflation over unemployment and beginning the move towards the privatisation of areas of the public sector. For a short account of the conduct of economic policy in this period, see Smith (1987, pp. 86–104).
- 33 'The *ambitions* of the British people are once again the *ambitions* of the British Government. So this is a Budget that by its measures, advances both *enterprise* and fairness. A Budget that has set new *ambitions* for Britain', Brown (1998, p. 1, my emphasis).
- 34 1900–1949, 'Country' is used 53 times or 1 per 248 words, as against 1950–2000, 18 times or 1 per 602 words; 1900–1949, 'Nation' is used 21 times or 1 per 626 words as against 1950–2000, 12 times and 1 per 904 words. For a more detailed breakdown per decade and for the Chancellors of different political parties see Tables 1 and 2.
- 35 See, for example, the discussion of New Labour's use of the rhetoric of 'national community' and 'one-nation politics', Fairclough (2000, pp. 34–35).
- 36 As to frequency of usage, more generally, a number of tentative observations can be made (see Tables 1, 2). First, the most popular collectivities by some considerable margin were 'country' and 'people', with 'nation', 'national' and in particular 'community' a long way behind. Second, the usage of these collectivities, with the exception of 'people', was greater in the first than the second half of the century and by some considerable margin. Further that exception is largely as a result of a spike in usage in the troubled decade of the 1970s. Third, as regards particularly troubled decades, the use of all collectivities was greater in the 1930s than any other in the first half of the century. Given the fraught nature of these decades in economic and social terms, there is some evidence to suggest that the frequency of their deployment was influenced by historical context. Fourth, as to frequency of usage per 1000 words by Chancellors of different political persuasions, some indication of this is given in Table 2. But again, because each case deals with a relatively small corpus, any conclusions must be tentative. However, what this Table shows is that 'country' and 'nation' were most frequently used by the Liberals (but with a corpus of only 2279 words). Perhaps more notably 'people' was most frequently used by the Labour Party and there is a considerable difference here with the other political parties.





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