THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

Economic and Social Studies

XIV

BRITISH ECONOMIC STATISTICS
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

OFFICERS OF THE INSTITUTE

PRESIDENT
SIR JOHN WOODS, G.C.B., M.V.O.

COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

PROFESSOR G. C. ALLEN PROFESSOR J. R. HICKS
PROFESSOR R. G. D. ALLEN W. A. B. HOPKIN
PROFESSOR A. K. CAIRNCROSS SIR DONALD MACDOUGALL
S. P. CHAMBERS H. C. B. MYNORS
SIR HENRY CLAY SIR JEREMY RAISMAN
GEOFFREY CROWTHER PROFESSOR LIONEL ROBBINS
PROFESSOR E. DEVONS PROFESSOR E. A. G. ROBINSON
NOEL F. HALL RICHARD STONE
SIR ROBERT HALL SIR JOHN WOODS
BARBARA WOOTTON

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

PROFESSOR G. C. ALLEN H. C. B. MYNORS
PROFESSOR R. G. D. ALLEN SIR JEREMY RAISMAN
GEOFFREY CROWTHER PROFESSOR LIONEL ROBBINS
W. A. B. HOPKIN PROFESSOR E. A. G. ROBINSON
SIR DONALD MACDOUGALL SIR JOHN WOODS

DIRECTOR
W. A. B. HOPKIN

SECRETARY
FEODORA STONE

2 DEAN TRENCH STREET, SMITH SQUARE
LONDON, S.W. 1

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research is an independent, non-profit-making body founded in 1938. It always has had as its aim the promotion of realistic research, particularly in the field of economics. It conducts research by its own research staff and in co-operation with the Universities and other academic bodies. The results of the work done under the Institute's auspices are published in several series, and a list of its publications up to the present time will be found at the end of this book.
BRITISH ECONOMIC STATISTICS

A REPORT

BY

C. F. CARTER
AND
A. D. ROY

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
1954
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Tables</th>
<th>page vi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chap. I Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Statistics and economic policy</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III A summary of problems</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CASE-STUDIES IN THE RELATION OF STATISTICS TO POLICY**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THE PROBLEMS REVEALED**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bibliography**

164

**Reference table of principal British economic statistics and their sources**

171

**General index**

182

**Index of proposals and suggestions**

186
vi

LIST OF TABLES

1. Summer coal budget, 1947: 10 March 1947 \hspace{1cm} page 41
2. Winter coal budget, 1947–8: 14 October 1947 \hspace{1cm} 43
3. Annual fuel and power consumption in the United Kingdom, 1951 and 1959–63 (forecast) \hspace{1cm} 47
4. Forecasts of annual coal consumption in the United Kingdom \hspace{1cm} 48
5. Details of ‘Departmental’ forecast of agricultural net income for 1950–1 and 1951–2 \hspace{1cm} 67
6. Publication of representative statistical series \hspace{1cm} 136
7. Principal British economic statistics and their sources \hspace{1cm} 171
PREFACE

The origin of this report is explained in Chapter I. We wrote it, and its errors and shortcomings are ours; but the Committee of the National Institute which directed the project was a ‘working committee’ of experts with experience in the Government service, and they gave us not only general guidance but a great deal of detailed assistance. We were helped, too, by academic colleagues in many universities, and by statisticians in industry, in international agencies, and in the statistical services of the United States of America, Canada, and the Republic of Ireland. Above all, we are grateful to the many British Government statisticians who have borne patiently with our questionings, and who have given us all the information we required. We hope we may have been able in some small measure to repay their kindness by drawing attention to the difficulty and importance of their work.

C. F. CARTER
The Queen's University, Belfast

A. D. ROY
Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge

May 1953
References in square brackets, thus: [26], refer to the bibliography at the end.