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ECONOMICS  
Principles  
and  
Problems

MOFFAT, CHRISTOPHER,  
AND ASSOCIATES

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# ECONOMICS

## Principles and Problems

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# Preface to the Fourth Edition



FIVE years have elapsed since the appearance of the Third Edition of *Economics: Principles and Problems*. These years have witnessed the final stages of a great war, the end of hostilities, and the undertaking of the inevitable postwar social, political, and economic adjustments and reconstruction. The return of peace has not solved our economic problems; it has had the effect of bringing them into clearer light.

Although these subsequent events have made obsolete much of the textual matter of the Third Edition, its general viewpoint and approach are as suitable today as when they were first set forth in the original book by Lionel D. Edie. These involve an integration of the main body of orthodox economic principles with modern economic developments in such a way as to present a unified introduction to the science. And they call for an omission of technical controversies over the many problems still in dispute among economists. In order to maintain this method of approach we have conscientiously attempted in this Fourth Edition to preserve the spirit and tradition of the preceding editions.

Present conditions and the combined suggestions from many users of the Third Edition have called for drastic textual revision in several respects. We should like to call attention to some of the more significant features:

1. Considerable change in the arrangement and in the length of the chapters. Some of the longer chapters have been condensed, and in several instances two chapters have been combined into one.
2. Reduction of the total material, in order to make the book more suitable for use in the customary two-semester course. The number of chapters has been reduced from forty to thirty-three.
3. Briefer and more objective treatment of money and banking and of business cycles.
4. Reorganization of the material and substantial rewriting of the chapters on labor, international economic relations, and the theory of interest.

5. A new chapter on the maintenance of full employment.
6. Restatement of many of the more difficult theoretical sections in simpler form.
7. Complete resetting of the book in a more attractive format and a more legible type.

In a treatise where current statistics play so important a part, their impermanence offers a peculiar problem. Data that are now up to date may be considered out of date five years hence. Moreover, recent data are usually more desirable and interesting than remote data. With this transient character of data in mind we have, in tracing economic developments by use of such materials, supplied in this new edition the latest figures available, except where those based on abnormal war or early postwar conditions would obscure the principle or mislead the reader. Similarly we have supplied current factual information wherever feasible.

However temporary some of the data may be, their significance, the method of using them for developing the science of economics, and the meaning they supply for the theories of economics have the qualities of permanence. In our presentation we have attempted further to improve the assembly and interpretation of the data in such a way as to insure a thorough grasp of these permanent values.

As the title still implies, this revision continues to deal with problems as well as with principles of economics. The problems are not merely "cases." Rather, they are actual economic issues of national or international concern. They are basic public problems of the present day.

In introducing this revision we wish to express our appreciation of the helpful criticisms and suggestions that have come to us from our students and colleagues, and from instructors in other colleges and universities. We also appreciate the generosity of the various publishers who have permitted the use of quoted passages. Finally, sincere thanks are due to Mrs. Helen Noel and her associates on the secretarial staff for loyal and effective assistance in speeding the material through the various stages of preparation.

THE AUTHORS

*June 30, 1947*

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