

CARNEGIE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
SCHENLEY PARK
PITTSBURGH 13, PENNSYLVANIA
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL ADMINISTRATION

December 22, 1958

Professor Ragnar Frisch
Socialokonomisk Institut
University of Norway
Oslo, Norway

My dear Frisch:

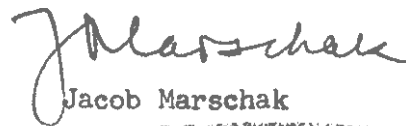
Your contribution to my birthday made me very happy. It also embarrassed me, as did this whole enterprise of my children. I kept putting off acknowledging those contributions, especially in the case of papers (like yours) which have to be read before being answered.

Now it's almost Christmas, a good time to send greetings and thanks to one's friends.

I was particularly touched by your choice of subject. You had many other chapters at your disposal but chose the one most closely related to our youth and to the beginning of our friendship. Even the winged omega (ω) is there which played such a great role in my development! And a rich harvest of implications of the "independence" case is presented, with perfect beauty and order. Probably without knowing it you have chosen a subject which is again close to my interests ("on revient toujours, etc."). Like you, I suspect that the independence condition has an operational meaning; and I have learned, mainly from reading the terribly confused (but at least experimental and therefore less confused than economics) literature in psychophysics and psychometrics. Especially the stochastic interpretation of human responses, going back to Fechner (1859) helps to define utilities measurable in a more strict sense than that of "ordinal utilities." A tentative paper, and an abstract, is enclosed.

With cordial thanks,

Yours ever,


Jacob Marschak

JM/hp

Enclosures

U. B. Oslo
Brevs. nr.

761A

COWLES COMMISSION
FOR RESEARCH IN ECONOMICS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS

October 10, 1945

Professor Ragnar Frisch
University of Norway
Oslo, Norway

My dear Frisch:

Both Cowles and Leavens have written to you in June. The letters were sent through T. Haavelmo via the Norwegian Embassy. We have been expecting your answer for some time and are somewhat puzzled by your silence.

We are naturally very anxious to get soon in touch with you and to learn about your life and your work. We heard of your arrest and release under the German occupation. But this was long ago.

I have been with the Cowles Commission since January 1943. Some work started here under T. Yntema had to be completed. Then gradually the work of Cowles Commission has been shifted back into its original field, i.e. econometrics. I am especially proud of having succeeded in bringing here Tjalling Koopmans and, a little later, Leo Hurwicz and Lawrence Klein. The annual report of the Commission for 1944 has, I hope, reached you. It mentions our work on inference in economics inspired in particular by the recent publications (Econometrica 1943 and 1944) of Haavelmo, Wald and Mann. This work has proceeded further especially at the hands of Hurwicz, Koopmans, and Rubin. In the meantime, Klein has developed tentative dynamic models for U. S. A. We hope to be able to send you some of the materials soon, and to have your reactions.

Leavens has written you on the affairs of the Econometric Society and Econometrica. Oscar Lange, who was acting editor ever since 1942 communications with you were interrupted, is at present in Poland where he has to take the final decision as to whether he will accept the position of the Polish Ambassador to the United States. The probability that he will accept is very large. It would be a great help to learn when you can assume again your activity as editor (you were re-elected as editor in 1944). In his letter of June, Leavens suggested that until the postal communications are completely restored you might take charge of the European Mss. only, while the American Mss. continue to be processed by Lange, except when an official decision is required. This arrangement will, we hope, soon give place to the status quo. Until then, I suppose, Leavens will continue to work on a makeshift basis, using the advice of various Fellows of the Society available in this country.

We are looking forward to hearing from you soon (by air mail I suppose).

Warm regards,

Cordially,

J. Marschak
Jacob Marschak

JW:hjw

U. E. Oslo
Brevs. nr.
761A

COWLES COMMISSION
FOR RESEARCH IN ECONOMICS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS

AIRMAIL

November 30, 1946

Dear Frisch:

I have just learned that you may be in this country in January, attending the meetings of the Economic and Employment Commission of the United Nations. This is very good news for us here. I wonder whether either or both of these possibilities could materialize:

(1) There will be meetings of the Econometric Society in Atlantic City on January 24 - 27. On the first day the meetings, jointly with the Institute of Mathematical Statistics, will deal with problems of statistical methods; among others, Haavelmo, Girshick, and Leonid Hurwicz will present papers. On subsequent days the meeting will be mostly devoted to problems in economic dynamics. Is there any chance that you may participate in some of these meetings?

(2) We should always be happy to welcome you here in Chicago for at least a couple of days, when our group could have extensive discussions with you. In addition, our students and colleagues in the Department of Economics would be eager to listen to you, in any form you like.

Please let me know as soon as you can, so that we can adjust our plans appropriately.

Very sincerely yours,

J. Marschak
Jacob Marschak

Professor Ragnar Frisch
Vinderen
Oslo, Norway

CC: T. Haavelmo

*Theoretical inequality of the inequality
Nob. function
- Time share analysis of
check - 1/10/46*

COWLES COMMISSION
FOR RESEARCH IN ECONOMICS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS

December 7, 1946

Professor Ragnar Frisch
Vinderen
Oslo, Norway

My dear Frisch:

I understand you will be in New York from January 20, through February 4th, and may visit Chicago either before or after that period. Naturally, ~~we~~ ~~w~~ ~~e~~ ~~w~~ ~~e~~ have great plans to utilize fully your stay here. We want long and continuous discussions within our staff, ~~on~~ all sorts of questions which we want to ask you. In addition, we want to arrange one or two lectures for students and faculty members. Finally, a group of economists and others interested in European problems will be eager to have you to dinner and to hear you speak on some problems of European or Norwegian reconstruction.

All this would call for a rather prolonged stay, and for scheduling considerable time ahead. I should be very grateful, therefore, if you would tell me of your own time schedule as far in advance as possible. Some of our staff members (Hurwicz and May) live a night's journey away from Chicago, and will have to arrange their plans before hand. Would you be so kind as to write me now, and again after your arrival in New York, regarding your plans.

Unfortunately, we do not have funds for compensating the *effort* ~~expense~~ involved in your activities here. However, the Cowles Commission will pay your cost of maintenance during the stay here. If your travel expenses are not provided for by another organization, we shall be glad to cover them as well.

Sincerely yours,

J. Marschak
Jacob Marschak

P.S. Some of our staff members, will not be present before ~~Jan. 20~~ Jan. 20 but will be after Feb 4. For this reason, the later date is somewhat preferable to us. *if you*

THE UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO

BUFFALO, NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

March 26, 1948

*This is my end of my
address till I shall return
when to Chicago.*

Mr. Ragnar Frisch
Norwegian Delegation
United Nations
Lake Success, New York

My dear Frisch:

Because of your interest in the correspondence with Tuttle, I enclose copies of a letter from Colin Clark on the same subject, and of my reply to him.

Your idea of publishing exchanges of this kind in Econometrica is very good. In this particular case, I should be reluctant to play alone, for the second time, the role of preacher and tamer; but if you are not too busy, and would join in the discussion, or (and) if some one else would - Trygve, perhaps? - and if Colin Clark agrees, the enclosed two letters may be used.

I am spending the months of April and May at Buffalo. How long will you stay in this country, and what are your plans for the next few weeks?

I am sending D. H. Leavens a copy of this and of the enclosures.

Cordially,

J. Marschak
Jacob Marschak

mk

Enclosures

I have just received copy of your letter to Coules about chairmanship. Fortunately, I shall see Schumpeter here to-day, and shall ask him for advice. R.G.D. Allen was a vice-presidential candidate in 1945 (with Tinbergen as the other candidate); and he had collected some votes of the ~~two~~ ^{united} members. But he is also very busy with governmental matters. ~~They~~ ^{They} are reluctant to become a president - although you!

have been a vice-president during 1948, and
there is not much difference between
the duties involved in the two
positions. would you reconsider?

It has been customary — as you
know — for each of the two
officers to represent one
of the Hemispheres (!), and
for the Vice-President to become
automatically President. ~~after one~~
~~year.~~

Cordally

Mercedes

THE BUREAU OF INDUSTRY

Treasury Building
Brisbane, B 7

COPY

18th February, 1948
Queensland, Australia

Dear Jack,

Thank you for sending me copies of your correspondence with Mr. Tuttle.

I also am one of those disappointed with "Econometrica" but for a different, indeed an opposite, reason.

If his object was to study the motivation of economic actions, Mr. Tuttle should have sought among the philosophers and psychologists. The econometricians should have been the last people he should approach. (This last sentence is meant to be taken literally; a time may come in the distant future when we can attempt the numerical evaluation of the force of psychological motives, but not until the philosophers and psychologists have done their work properly.)

My complaint about "Econometrica" is the apparent aversion of contributors to dealing with ascertained facts and their indulgence in long chains of reasoning which seem to me - though I may of course be wrong - to have little connection with the problems which we are trying to solve.

I was very struck by one of Machlup's wisecracks in a recent review in "American Economic Journal". Replying to those who doubted whether the business man in fact had the mental ability to adjust marginal returns to marginal costs, he pointed out that the decision as to whether or not it was safe to overtake a car with a truck approaching in the opposite direction involved investigations and calculations which, to do exactly, would take a skilled engineer some hours. In fact the average driver has his own way of deciding in a second or two whether overtaking is safe or not, and in the majority of cases his decision is right. But a theoretical analysis of the problem would involve - and quite rightly - a careful mathematical analysis - though perhaps some psychological factor should be brought in as well.

Yours truly,

(signed) COLIN CLARK

Director.

Professor J. Marschak,
University of Chicago,
CHICAGO, 37,
ILLINOIS, U.S.A.

Ad. Bureau 2/3-1948 for J. Marsden et al.

761 A

COWLES COMMISSION
FOR RESEARCH IN ECONOMICS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS

March 26, 1948

Copy

Mr. Colin Clark, Director
The Bureau of Industry
Treasury Building
Brisbane, B. 7
Queensland, Australia

Dear Colin:

Thank you for your very interesting remarks on the correspondence with Mr. Tuttle.

I wish your points were illustrated with actual examples from econometric literature, including the article printed in Econometrica. You seem to make the following points:

- 1. Study of individual behavior should be left to psychologists.

May I ask what you think of cooperation of psychologists and economists such as has been recently practiced in "Surveys of Consumers Attitudes" of the Federal Reserve Board and are continued at the University of Michigan. Without the economists' cooperation, psychologists may not concentrate on just those questions which interest us. In a sense, family budget surveys, or samples of firms' balance sheets are also studies of individual behavior, though on a lower level of subtlety than the attitude surveys proper: the latter include "iffy" questions. I don't see why we should exclude such studies from our attention, and know you don't.

- 2. Contributions to Econometrica should deal with ascertained facts rather than indulge in long chains of reasoning.

I assume this sentence had to be completed by the words "(reasoning) from facts which have not ^{been} ascertained". You will certainly not object to deductions from facts that are ascertained even though the deductions should be long; either because of the large number of variables involved, or because of the complicated nature of relations between them. You will probably also allow to modify the sentence still further and say

"(reasoning) from assertions that have been proved to be a reasonable approximation to facts, for a reasonable proportion of observable cases". What we call "reasonable" would depend on the nature of practical uses to which economics has to be put.

If you agree with this formulation, then it is worth considering whether the following empirical assertions ~~in their economic activities~~ are reasonable approximations to facts:

- a) in the business of acquisition of material goods, people behave, on the whole, consistently, i.e. do not revise their preferences very often and by very large jumps;
- b) it is possible for the investigator to define his "civilization", i.e. a group of people whose behavior including their habits in forming their expectations from a given past experience, is "plausible" to him, i.e. similar to his own. Both assertions, if properly formulated as probability distributions, cover, I submit, "ascertained facts" in the above sense. Briefly, people are not too foolish, and, within our "civilization", not too dissimilar, to prevent us from making deductions which, if correctly made, enable governments, or firms etc., to decide upon useful action.


3. Individuals, including businessmen, never choose a decision by trying to achieve the most preferable end, but always through quick reflexes. Should this be the case, semi-psychological empirical studies like those mentioned under 1. would be almost indispensable. They should be combined, if possible, with the study of aggregates (time-series, inter-country comparisons). But the use of aggregative data only is often insufficient, as the same data are often in a large number of widely differing hypotheses (the "identification problem"). On the other hand, I am not sure that 3. is absolutely correct; it contradicts 2., and the choice between 2. and 3. must be based on observations. We may also consider the possibility that your "reflexes" are the result of a selection process - so that utility-maximizing ones have a better chance of survival: reflex-like, or traditional, behavior, may be a rational behavior with a time-lag. In this case, too, it would be unwise to discard the empirical assertion that people, on the whole, behave consistently and/or similarly. Of course, this must not remain our only empirical basis; but because of the absence of experiments in economics, we cannot afford to disregard any of the available empirical information.

I may conclude by mentioning that an important part of the "chains of reasoning" in economics does not involve any assertions about human behavior, but is entirely concerned with the use of given resources in such a manner as to obtain the best results, the ranking of "best" and

March 26, 1948

"less good" results being given. This is the problem of planning - by business, or government, or consumer - and some economists prefer to regard it as technology rather than economics. Again, (as in the above case of psychology) we need not worry about inter-departmental allocation, but rather seek cooperation. At the same time, problems of planning do occasionally require "long chains of reasoning" - I may remind you, for example, of Koopmans' paper (presented during our September meetings in Washington) on the optional utilization of transportation resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. Marschak', written in dark ink.

Jacob Marschak

mk

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1632 Wood Avenue
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THE ECONOMETRIC SOCIETY

An International Society for the Advancement
of Economic Theory in its Relation
to Statistics and Mathematics

8 June 1948

AB

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761A

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Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

JOSEPH A. SCHUMPFER
Harvard University

Handwritten signature

- To: Mr. Alfred Cowles
- ✓ Prof. Ragnar Frisch
- Mr. T.C. Koopmans
- Mr. D.H. Leavens
- Mr. W.B. Simpson

I enclose a copy of a letter received from O.C. Stine, Chief of the Division of Historical and Statistical Research of the Department of Agriculture. This position of Mr. Stine, and the fact that he has been for many years a friend of econometrics and the Cowles Commission (he participated in the Colorado Springs Conference of 1937) makes ~~me~~ give his letter considerable importance as a symptom.

Which course of action (possibly more than one) would you advise me to take? Please check:

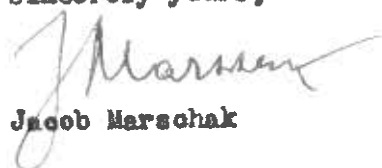
1. To write a personal letter to Stine;
2. To circulate Stine's letter to Council members and ask for their reactions;
3. To submit Stine's letter to Econometrica for possible insertion in "Criticism Invited" to invoke reaction from other members;
4. To have the letter of Stine answered in Econometrica (under "Criticism Invited") by one of you, or by another person whom you might suggest. I don't think my personal answer to Stine should be printed as it would duplicate my answer to Tuttle already published in a recent issue.
5. Any other action.

It is quite possible that similar letters will continue to arrive and it is therefore useful to develop some general strategy in treating them. Please return this letter with your check marks. I shall wait

8/6-1948

for your answer until July 10 (sending Stine a short personal acknowledgment in the meantime), to give Professor Frisch the opportunity to answer.

Sincerely yours,



Jacob Marschak

Mr. O. C. Stine,
United States Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Agricultural Economics
Washington 25, D.C.

Enc.

C O P Y

Ad. bill for Jacob Marschak fil. P. Frisk 5/2-1948

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 25, 1948

The Econometric Society
The University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois

Attention: Prof. Jacob Marschak

Gentlemen:

I had intended to cancel my subscription to Econometrica. However, since I have received two issues, I am enclosing a check in the amount of \$4.50 to cover payment of them. Subscription to this journal represents to me a marginal expenditure and raising the cost places it beyond the margin.

I belong to too many societies and find too many claims upon my income for the support of such societies and other institutions.

I find that many of the articles in Econometrica are rather difficult for me to read. It is like trying to read French which I can do but it requires too much effort. To cite an example, I turn to the article on "Relative Prices...." by Don Patinkin. Too much of it is Greek to me. I can read through some of the equations but it requires too much effort for what is in them. Describing function is really not the end of analysis. Even when I turn to the conclusion I find statements that are too difficult to follow through. I am too busy to concern myself with the necessary reference work and supplementary reading to understand many of the sentences in the statement of conclusions. I must conclude that such articles are primarily for graduate students who are specializing in the mathematical tools for economic analysis.

I turn to your "Criticism Invited" to read your note, Dr. Tuttle's letter, and your reply. I cannot accept the following part of your statement ".... any statistical work, to be properly done, requires the formulation of a mathematical model." Mathematics is not a substitute for economic analysis and lengthy mathematical formula are not necessary for most quantitative analyses of problems in the field of economics. I am convinced that for many mathematical formula becomes sign language which could be much more simply expressed and understood by the average reader. I am also convinced that many mathematicians who are applying formula in economic analysis have little understanding of the phenomena with which they deal. I am sure that it is not quite true but I think that in many cases it may be so that a mathematician assumes that he is exact and knows, whereas a real statistician knows that he does not know. The economist and the real statistician recognizes relativity, undertakes to approximate the truth, and hopes that he is close enough to it to provide a useful measurement and degree of understanding.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

(SIGNED)

O. C. Stine

Enclosure (check)

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ECONOMETRICA

RAGNAR FRISCH, Editor
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WILLIAM B. SIMPSON
Managing Editor
The University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois

VIA AIR MAIL

THE ECONOMETRIC SOCIETY

An International Society for the Advancement
of Economic Theory in its Relation
to Statistics and Mathematics

March 24, 1949

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Professor Ragnar Frisch
University of Norway
Oslo, Norway

Dear Frisch:

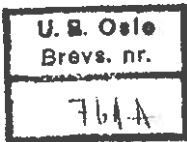
In reply to your letter of March 8 circulated to members of the Council, I express my approval of the proposed changes in the practices of the Journal, with the understanding that the Editor and Managing Editor will handle the matter in such a way as to disarm any possible misgivings of the Journal being "bribed" by a particular author into publishing an article. That is, it must be made clear in advance that no article is accepted unless it satisfies certain absolute standards, regardless of whether it does or does not inflict a marginal loss.

Sincerely,

J. Marschak
Jacob Marschak

JM/fs

cc: Mr. William B. Simpson



CARNEGIE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
SCHENLEY PARK
PITTSBURGH 13, PENNSYLVANIA
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL ADMINISTRATION

December 22, 1958

Professor Ragnar Frisch
Socialokonomisk Institut
University of Norway
Oslo, Norway

My dear Frisch:

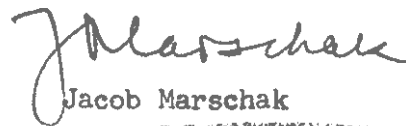
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With cordial thanks,

Yours ever,


Jacob Marschak

JM/hp

Enclosures

U. S. Oslo
761A

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

WESTERN MANAGEMENT SCIENCE INSTITUTE
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
LOS ANGELES 24, CALIFORNIA

October 2, 1970

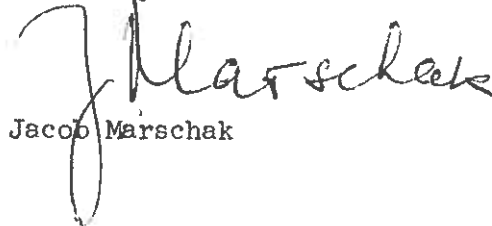
Professor Ragner Frisch
Department of Economics
University of Norway
Oslo, Norway

My dear Frisch:

I missed you very much at the Cambridge meetings. Lief Johanssen told me that you suffered an accident. Cordial wishes for your recovery. On this occasion, let me also tell you of the great pleasure (shared by many others, I am sure) about the allocation of the Nobel Prize last year.

Remember me to Mrs. Frisch, please!

Sincerely,


Jacob Marschak

JM:kf

Ad broadcast for J. Marschak til R. Fetsch. Ugegridscent

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LAKE SUCCESS, NEW YORK • FIELDSTONE 7-1100

REFERENCE: ~~506-1131~~ 36A 26/04

19 March 1948

The Secretary of the Statistical
Commission has the honour to inform the
President of the Econometric Society that
the Statistical Commission and its Commit-
tees will meet from April 21 to May 7, 1948.

Enclosures: 3 Agenda

Mr. Jacob Marschak, President
Econometric Society
c/o the University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois.

United Nations

Nations Unies

UNRESTRICTED

**ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**CONSEIL
ECONOMIQUE
ET SOCIAL**

E/CN.3/C.1/5
24 February 1948

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION

COMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL CLASSIFICATION*

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR SECOND SESSION

To be Held at Lake Success, New York, on 21 April 1948

1. Adoption of agenda.
2. Consideration of final draft of proposal international standard industrial classification.
3. Consideration of proposed revisions of Minimum List of Commodities for International Trade Statistics.
4. Consideration of classification of occupations.
5. Other statistical classifications.
6. Report of the Committee on Statistical Classification to the Statistical Commission.

* Previously known as Committee on Industrial Classification.

STATISTICAL COMMISSION

COMMITTEE ON FUTURE WORK

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR FIRST SESSION

To be Held at Lake Success, New York, on 22 April 1948

1. Adoption of agenda.
2. Consideration of proposals dealing with:
 - (a) National income and related subjects, including capital formation;
 - (b) Statistics of investment;
 - (c) Census of industrial production. Index numbers of the physical volume of production, including agricultural production;
 - (d) Index number of wholesale and retail prices, including price indexes of imports and exports;
 - (e) Statistics of external trade;
 - (f) Fishery statistics;
 - (g) Timber statistics;
 - (h) Mineral statistics;
 - (i) Housing statistics;
 - (j) Other problems of statistical comparability.
3. Report of the Committee on Future Work to the Statistical Commission.

STATISTICAL COMMISSION

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THIRD SESSION

To be held at Lake Success, New York, on 26 April 1948

1. Adoption of agenda.
2. Election of officers.
3. Co-ordination of plans for 1950 censuses of population and agriculture:
 - (a) National and international activities for population censuses in 1950;
 - (b) Report on work of committee on the 1950 Census of the Americas;
 - (c) Report on progress of plans for the 1950 World Census of Agriculture.
4. Report of Sub-Commission on Statistical Sampling.
5. Publication programme of the Statistical Office.
6. Development of work on national income estimates and related Subjects.
7. Co-ordination of statistical activities of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies; second report.
8. Regional organizations for the co-ordination of Statistics.
9. Further consideration of Provisional Questionnaire prepared by the Trusteeship Council.
10. Report of Committee on Statistical Classification.
11. Report of Committee on Future Work.
12. Consideration of proposals dealing with transport statistics.
13. Status of work of International Labour Office in the field of costs of living and family budgets.
14. Programme of statistical education.
15. Other business.
16. Report of the Statistical Commission to the Economic and Social Council.

April 2, 1948

United Nations
Lake Success, New York

Ref: FCA 26/04

The President of the Econometric Society
for the year 1948 is Dr. Charles Roos, Econometric
Institute, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Your
letter with enclosures has been forwarded to him.

Sincerely,

Jacob Marschak