COLONY OF MAURITIUS

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE
FOR THE YEAR 1955
FUNCTIONS

In July 1945, a Statistical Bureau was created in consequence of a recommendation made by the Commission of Enquiry into the disturbances which occurred in the North of Mauritius in 1943.

The original functions assigned to this Bureau were to collect and compile accurate information as to wages of labour; the number and type of employment in various industries; the level of prices and computation of cost of living indices. The Bureau was also assigned the task of supervising and coordinating the statistical data collected in various Government Departments. These functions of the Bureau were gradually extended to involve the periodical statistical survey of every branch of economic activity in the island; agricultural, industrial, financial and commercial. The scope of its activities now is no longer so limited, however, for it also keeps under review the demographic, vital, health, educational and other social statistics of the life of the Colony. In July 1948, the original Statistical Bureau became the Central Statistical Office.

The whole mass of valuable information collected, tabulated and analysed by the Central Statistical Office is presented in an annual handbook, in such a form as it can be conveniently utilised by the Government, the general public and outside institutions. The preparation of such a handbook calls for general familiarity with statistical technique; it demands a discriminating appraisal of the data obtained in order to render them, in the way of presenting the information involved, of greater use. This Year Book of Statistics for Mauritius has been published annually since 1946.

The office draws up complete annual tables of the Balance of Payments of the Colony, of Capital Formation aggregates, of National Income and National Accounts.

In addition, the Central Statistical Office has also to prepare a large number of Statistical Reports for submission to the Colonial Office and to the various agencies of the United Nations Organisation. It has to reply to a great number of enquiries from abroad, in addition to those from local organisations, institutions and individuals. When time and opportunity offer, it also carries out research on the statistical material collected by the Department.

The Central Statistical Office is in constant contact with the Colonial Office Statistical Department, a separate organisation created towards the end of 1948.
LOCATION

Throughout the year, the Central Statistical Office was housed in a stone and concrete building at 5, Abbe de la Caille Street, Beau Bassin.

An extension to the existing building was erected in June 1952, to serve as Census Office and at the same time to accommodate the Hollerith equipment.

STAFF

The strength of the staff as at the end of the year consisted of:

The Director of Statistics
The Assistant Director
The Statistician
Two Assistant Statisticians
An Office Superintendent
Nine Compilers
A Hollerith Operator
A Typist-Stenographer

STAFF MOVEMENTS

Mr. F. EMPEIGNE, Assistant Statistician, who left the Colony in August 1954 for an eight weeks' Training Course in Sampling Theory and Practice at the Rothampsted Experimental Station in England, returned to his post on the 1st of September 1955. During his leave in England he also attended the Regent Street Polytechnic to read for the final examination of the Associateship of the Association of Incorporated Statisticians.

Mr. T. RAMDUTHSINGH, Assistant Statistician, who left on the 23rd December 1954 for India on vacation leave, returned on the 15th of June 1955.

Mr. M. T. PILLAY, Compiler, who acted as Assistant Statistician, was reverted to his substantive appointment on the return of Mr. EMPEIGNE.

Mr. L. Y. DESVIBAUX, Compiler, was confirmed in his appointment on the 19th January 1955.

Mr. M. BILLON, Statistician, was seconded to the Secretariat for duty as Schedule Officer on the 19th December 1955.

Mr. A. de CHAPUISET LE BAL, Hollerith Operator, resigned on the 27th of October 1955.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

Local examinations were again held this year by the Association of Incorporated Statisticians. At the Intermediate examination for the Associateship, Mr. F. L'AIGUILLE, Compiler, completed the examination and Mr. Y. TATYAN, Compiler, qualified in Part A.
Mr. I. EMPETUNE, Assistant Statistician, who sat for the Final examination of the Associateship in London qualified in Part A.

SURVEYS

A complete island survey was carried out in June, July and August of the small industries and of all the village productive activities, which do not furnish regular returns to the office. The purpose of this survey was to revise the census of small scale productivity in the Colony which had been effected in the course of the Population Census of 1952.

During the second half of the year was also carried out a new sample survey of household budgetary expenditure, the coverage extending to all income levels of the population.

YEAR BOOK OF STATISTICS

The Year Book of Statistics for 1954 was prepared as usual and was issued in October.

CONSUMER'S PRICES AND COST OF LIVING

Monthly surveys of the current retail prices of a large number of articles of common consumption were continued as heretofore. Indexes of these prices relative to prewar were worked out for 71 articles of food and beverages, 40 articles of clothing and textiles, 43 articles of household necessity, including fuel items.

CONSUMER'S PRICE INDEX

This index (otherwise called "the cost of living index") was computed each month for each of six different categories of consumers. These monthly indexes were regularly published in the Government Gazette.

STATISTICAL RETURNS FOR THE COLONIAL OFFICE.

Some 10 Monthly and 11 Quarterly returns of demographic, vital, industrial production and trade statistics were regularly furnished to the Statistical Department of the Colonial Office.

Periodical revision is also effected of the sections on Mauritius in the Digest of Colonial Statistics which is published by the Colonial Office.

STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER AGENCIES

Extensive questionnaires from the United Nations Organisation and its agencies, dealing with demographic and vital data and statistics of cultivation, production, livestock, foodstuffs, external trade, etc., for Mauritius and its dependencies were replied to.

/Since............
Since January 1951, monthly statistical tables (covering various subjects) were in addition furnished for the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics of the United Nations Organisation.

**STATISTICS OF THE SUGAR INDUSTRY**

As in previous years, the Central Statistical Office undertook the compilation of complete data relating to cultivation, production and manufacture in the Sugar Industry. The tabular statements on the crop results were circulated to the Director of Agriculture, the Chamber of Agriculture, the Central Board and the Agricultural Bank. In addition, with the kind assistance of the Registrar of the Co-Operative Societies, a satisfactorily large sample of data relating to small plantations was analysed and published.

Bi-annual statements of employment and wages for artisans and skilled personnel in the Sugar Industry were collected, compiled and analysed.

**TRADE STATISTICS**

Complete statistics of Importation and Exportation by sea and air on the basis of the Standard International Trade Classification continued to be compiled in the office with the aid of the Hollerith Equipment in collaboration with the Customs Authorities. Since 1953, a new publication embodying complete trade accounts has been issued by the Customs Department.

In addition, the Year Book of Statistics gives a complementary analysis of the year's trade with relevant index numbers and other information.

**NATIONAL INCOME AND NATIONAL ACCOUNTS**

Further studies of the National Income of the Colony were carried out during the year, following on the Director's visit and discussions in London in 1954. A complete review and revision of previous calculations was effected and the calculations extended to modern National Accounting statements. A publication giving a full report on the National Income of the Colony from 1948 to 1954 and on National Accounts from 1950 to 1954 was issued in November.

**BALANCE OF PAYMENTS OF THE COLONY**

Tables of the Balance of Payments for the year 1954 were computed as in previous years and this work, which necessitated investigations into the records of the Treasury, of the Post Office and the compilation of returns from private banks and commercial agencies, was completed in August.

**CAPITAL FORMATION ESTIMATES**

Tabular statements of the Capital Formation and Consumption in the Colony during the year 1954 were compiled and issued.
and issued as previously at the request of the Secretary of State.

Provisional tables were forwarded to the Secretary of State by the middle of April and final tables in June.

COMMITTEE ON POPULATION

The Committee, which was constituted in June 1953 to study the rapidly increasing population of the Colony in relation to its economic resources completed its investigations.

The final Report of the Committee was drafted by the Director in his capacity of Chairman and submitted to the Committee in January. The reviewed Report was subsequently submitted to the Government in February; it was printed in July and released as a public document in August.

I again wish to thank the Staff of the Central Statistical Office for assistance with the clerical, typing and duplication work performed in connection with the Report.

VISITS

A number of visitors to the island, whose interests were concerned with the commercial and economic or social activities of the Colony, called on the Director for information.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES

The office had to reply during the year to a large number of enquiries of a private nature from individuals and institutions both local and abroad, in addition to the numerous enquiries of an official character.

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

A number of valuable books and publications were added to the Library during the year.

HOLLERITH Punched Card Equipment

In addition to the work of the Central Statistical Office, the Hollerith Equipment is at present used to compile and tabulate:

(i) the Trade Statistics of which monthly, quarterly and annual accounts are produced;

(ii) the statistics of the Health Department;

(iii) the statistics of the Income Tax Department;

(iv) ..............
(iv) complete monthly and annual statements of Vital Statistics for the Civil Status Office;

(v) certain statistics of the Postal Department and

(vi) the statistics of Crime.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have much pleasure in recording here my appreciation of the good work performed throughout the year by members of the staff.

February, 1956.

[Signature]

L. HERCHENRODER
Director of Statistics.