

$$\sum q_{ht}P_{ht} : (\sum q_{ht}P_{ht} / \sum q_{ht}P_{hc}) = \sum q_{ht}P_{hc} , \quad (11)$$

where  $\sum q_{ht}P_{ht} / \sum q_{ht}P_{hc}$  is the inflation rate, and  $c$  is the deflation's base year. Understandably, it is not necessary that  $c$  be set to coincide with the parameters  $b$ ,  $a$ , and 0. Here, as always, the **general** case of parameters diverging from each other by value should be kept clearly in mind by the index number formulae designers. They commonly fail in this regard<sup>3</sup>.

By following CINT at the closest distance, the authors have so far generally failed to provide SNA with essential symbols like  $p_{ha}$  and  $p_{hc}$ . These symbols would have allowed to differentiate strictly: (i) between the monetary value  $\sum q_{ht}P_{ha}$  and the corresponding volume  $\sum q_{ht}P_{ha}$  consisting of utility units; or (ii) between the GDP monetary value in year 0,  $\sum q_{h0}P_{h0}$ , and  $\sum q_{h0}P_{hb=0}$ , which is the basic GDP value (when  $b$  coincides with 0); or again (iii) between the volume  $\sum q_{ht}P_{ha}$  called GDP at “constant” prices and the deflated monetary value  $\sum q_{ht}P_{hc=a}$  also sometimes described as GDP at “constant” prices. So, it should be retained that some constant prices are in fact quantities of utility dollars, while other “constant prices” are real prices but in terms of deflated monetary dollars. After all, it is a most unpleasant fact that the leading index number theoreticians and experts in national accounting have failed to work out even the conceptual base for a meaningful discussion, that is the concept of “utility unit” and especially of “elementary utility unit”, namely of the dollar's worth in  $a$ .

Finally, to grant justice to Fisher, let us recall that at least in the last pages of his *The Making of Index Numbers* he seemed to have foreseen the role of  $E_a$  type collectives in future, when he wrote about it in the following a little bit derogatory manner: “It perhaps does not greatly matter if the general public thinks of a “price level” as something that can be calculated for each year independently from other years, and to suit this concept, it is possible by thinking prices in “dollars' worth” of one year, instead of pounds, yards, etc., to expound the subject in such terms before an elementary class” (Fisher, 1923, Appendix III, p. 457).

Regrettably, some hundred years after the notable idea of the dollar's worth of utility was presented, we have still to wait till the authors in the field get aware of its relevance to economic theory and practice, and statistics as well. It is also one of the aims of this paper to expose the highly hypothetical way in which the dollar's worth is used, but, on the other hand, to indicate the considerable feasibility and workability which this idea is continuing to demonstrate. A duality obviously deserving attention!

<sup>3</sup> They also fail to recognize that whenever a current price appears in a formula, it can always be expressed as a product of the price in deflated dollars and the inflation rate.