

Monetary Policy and the Great Inflation in the United States: The Federal Reserve and the Failure of Macroeconomic Policy, 1965-1979

Thomas Mayer

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This unique book deals with the most serious macroeconomic failure experienced in the US in the post-war period and the great inflation of the late 1960s and 1970s. It is the first detailed analysis, using Federal Reserve documents, of the thinking behind the inflationary monetary policy during this period. The book examines documentary evidence, including minutes, memos and reports and interviews with people who were closely involved in making policy decisions, to explain the monetary policy that led to this inflation. Thomas Mayer considers forecasting errors and wage and price controls in his attempt to explain why the inflation occurred and places some of the blame on ineffective operating procedures, institutional inefficiencies, and political pressures on the Federal Reserve. The author concludes that much of the responsibility for the mistaken policies lies with academic economists who underestimated the dangers of inflation and encouraged the Federal Reserve to focus on an unattainable employment goal. Monetary Policy and the Great Inflation in the United States will be welcomed by economists, political scientists and economic historians interested in monetary policy.



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