

B o g a n m e l d e l s e r

Anmeldere i dette nummer: Lektor, cand. oeccon. *Torben Agersnap*, assistent, cand. oeccon. *Erik Johnsen* og professor *Edwin H. Spengler*, Ph. D.

H. B. Maynard, ed.: Engineering Handbook, New York 1956, £ 5.9s.

Redaktøren af dette omfattende samleværk vil være kendt som konstruktøren af MTM systemet til udregning af standardtider for arbejdsoperationer. Han er en af de førende skikkelser indenfor scientific managementbevægelsen i nutiden.

Som medarbejder har han haft 81 personer, fortrinsvis fra USA, men også enkelte fra Canada, Great Britain og Australien. Blandt de kendteste kan man nævne *Lillian M. Gilbreth*, *Allan H. Mogensen*, *G. J. Stegemerten* og *L. F. Urvik*. Man kunne frygte for at et samleværk med så mange medarbejder ville få en meget uensartet kvalitet i de forskellige kapitler, men det er kun tilfældet for bogens sidste del (section 8).

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kan man ikke på forhånd regne med her i landet.

Hvis man efter læsning af bogen vil forsøge at klargøre, hvad betegnelsen industrial engineering dækker over, kommer man i vanskeligheder. Men Maynard skriver selv, at man kan vælge imellem en snæver afgrænsning til tids- og bevægelsesstudier og lønsystemer eller en videre afgrænsning som man har anvendt i denne bog, der behandler teknikker til omkostningsbesparelser.

Torben Agersnap.

Bauer, P. T. and B. S. Yamey. The Economics of Under-developed Countries – Cambridge University Press, 1957, 271 pp.

The greater part of the world's population lives in underdeveloped countries, if by the latter we mean „regions with levels of real income and capital per head of population which are low by the standards of North America, Western Europe, and Australasia“. With world interest focussed on these areas, some major issues of economic policy and also of international politics at once arise.

The author have done a creditable piece of work in developing the subject. Written in simple, non technical language, the book can be followed by the general lay readers as well as the professional economist. The first half is descriptive and analytical and is concerned largely with the problems of economic resources and their measurement. The second part is an ap-

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praisal of the role of government and critically evaluates specific policy measures relating to such matters as capital formation, or the encouragement and assistance of agriculture or industry.

Attention is called to conceptual and practical difficulties of estimating and measuring such variable as income and capital and the composition of the labor force. Interesting illustrative data are drawn from underdeveloped countries to show how institutional and demographic patterns might result in impressions substantially different from those commonly associated with more advanced economics. The productivity of resources and the growth of capital are examined in terms of production methods of the more backward areas. In several instances, where policy recommendations are examined, the author has taken a clear stand on important controversial issues. It is a stimulating little volume and well worth the attention of the reader.

Edwin H. Spengler.

The American Economy – by Alvin H. Hansen. McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1957, New York. 199 pp.

This short treatise adds still another volume to Prof. Hansen's long list of publications relating to business cycles and economic instability. In this book, which is an outgrowth of a series of lectures given in 1956 at the University of Chicago, the author focuses attention upon the improved techniques of economic planning and the vastly enlarged role of democratic governments in attempting to maintain full employment. Against a background of American economic experiences during the last quarter-century, Prof. Hansen appraises the effectiveness of what he calls a „mixed public-private economy“ in which the powerful fiscal and monetary operations of an alert and informed government are playing a stabilizing and sustaining role. A large section of the book

is devoted to the Employment Act of 1946 and an examination of the roles of the Council of Economic Advisers and the Joint Committee on the Economic Report under the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. The central theme is that the role of the economist has profoundly changed. No longer able to rely on the assumptions of 19th century economics regarding the automatic market mechanism and selfadjusting character of laissez-faire capitalism, the modern professional economist must be prepared to make social-value judgements and to offer practical advice in developing policy decisions. In Hansen's view, the society is committed to the welfare state and to full employment. This position is consistent with Keynesian thinking and the reader is again reminded of the influence of Keynes upon current American policy in its shift to „high pressure, full-employment economics.“

Prof. Hansen points with satisfaction to the „fact“ that the American economy has operated since 1938 without any serious downturn and that „we have had virtually full employment and booming prosperity for sixteen years“. The implication is that this unparalleled period of economic growth and stability (except for the minor recessions of 1949 and 1954) is, at least in part, the result of business confidence bolstered by active government policy. No longer is private enterprise „left to shift as best it can in the storms of a fluctuating and inadequate market“. However, the author's recital of the role of monetary policy and the practical operation of the government machinery under the Employment Act of 1946 fails to reassure the reader. Throughout these chapters one is impressed with the economic indecision, the political conflict and the emergency nature of war needs which characterized these governmental controls. When good points were scored they were as much the result of happy