

are all described with exactitude and economy. Perhaps the most interesting feature of Nigerian peasant agriculture, and one which receives central attention in the study, is the dichotomy in genetic technology between domestic food crops and primary exports. The latter—palm produce, cocoa, groundnuts, cotton—are based on comparatively high-yielding varieties that have benefited from considerable external borrowing and internal research; the problem here has been the various forms of commodity taxation that have tended to repress Nigeria's comparative advantage and thereby aggregate export volume. On the other hand, the unimproved plant varieties of cassava, yam, millet, maize, and guinea corn result in very high-priced domestic proteins and starches. The authors' principal policy correctives for releasing these constraints on agricultural development include removal of export taxes, biological research, extension, and the discontinuance of unsuccessful public enterprises such as farm settlements and plantations.

As a policy document this report should exert a beneficial influence. Given the propensities of Nigerian policy makers, the case against export taxation cannot be made too often. The persuasive counsels for close regional cooperation in the design and administration of agriculture policy are very much to the point in the face of current trends of autonomy for the twelve states. The emphasis on biological research and extension as against glamorous, large-scale directly productive public enterprise is also a useful counter to the strong political attraction toward the latter. Finally, the report contains a fully worked out program which lends itself to direct implementation.

One can, however, question a few of the authors' specific conclusions. The recommendations to expand production of kenaf and sugar did not consider the much cheaper import alternative. The positive evaluation of latex rubber possibilities made no mention of the unsuccessful project in this area in the mid-1950's. The argument that "investment of land, labor, and capital has been pushed beyond privately profitable margins at prices now paid to farmers" (p. 4) is not completely clear. Marginal product is low but no lower than in the urban sector's unemployment-camouflaging activities of small industry, trade, and personal services. Similarly, with the exception of palm oil, it is difficult to show that substantial repression of any export commodity has actually occurred during the last decade; the danger, though, is a very real one.

The reviewer's major criticism of the consortium project is the comparatively little solid field research that was undertaken. This is perhaps not a gentlemanly issue to raise since it is true of a great many such enterprises in developing countries. Yet, in light of the resources available and the fact that the major obstacle to intelligent analysis of Nigerian agriculture is lack of basic data—number of producers, acres

cultivated, input patterns, etc.—I think it is a criticism that needs to be made. As an extreme example, the authors employ a 1963 figure of one million for oil palm producers, citing a "statement by Kilby" (p. 27); the reference was in fact to a casual estimate *en passant* for a quarter of a century earlier (1938)! There are many ways to produce new data—sample surveys, enumerations (the reviewer supervised a complete count of small industry establishments and employment in Eastern Nigeria in three months at a cost of \$2,000), analysis of aerial photos, interpolation from other types of data (tax rolls, electoral statistics)—but most of them involve old-fashioned footslogging. While a few of the studies did involve sample surveys of farmers, one almost gets the impression that the four frequently cited doctoral dissertations of Anshel, Thodey, Wells, and Welsch generated more new knowledge than the entire consortium effort. Given the much cheaper cost of doctoral candidates and their greater willingness to suffer the privations entailed in primary data collection, it may well be that such vehicles as the earlier MSU-directed Economic Development Institute, which can mobilize thesis researchers and send them into "the bush," are a more efficient solution than consortia to the problem of developing basic economic knowledge.

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Mueller, Willard F., *A Primer on Monopoly and Competition*, New York, Random House, 1970, xii + 203 pp. (\$5.95 cloth, \$2.50 paper)

This book by the former director of the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Economics surveys at an elementary level the current state of industrial organization knowledge and antitrust policy. It covers an impressive expanse of territory in generally lucid fashion, presumably for an audience of economics principles students and the general paperback-reading public. The presentation is largely descriptive, laced with numbers, case studies, and value judgments. Mathematics and diagrams are absent.

Despite his avowed goal of building a broad-based constituency for vigorous pro-competitive policies, Mueller avoids that shrillness which sometimes afflicts those who have spent eight years in the trust-busting halls on Constitution Avenue. Indeed, Mueller's overall prognosis on the current situation is surprisingly sanguine: he finds that "it is effective competition, not monopoly, that is the rule in American industry." Only when he deals with the F.T.C.'s *bête noire*, alleged predatory pricing, does he lose his analytic cool, making no effort to draw that fine line between merely vigorous and willfully destructive competition.

Mueller's attempt to present a balanced picture of the U. S. industrial sector's structure and performance and the difficulties of addressing a lay audi-

ence interact counterproductively on occasion. After marshalling the evidence that production and research scale economies seldom compel high market concentration, Mueller acknowledges that promotional economies may persist even as consumer goods sellers achieve substantial market shares and absolute size. But he fails to bring out clearly the distinction between real and pecuniary economies, and he builds no solid argument that even real promotional economies might be socially dysfunctional. Likewise, he observes that profitability is a leading indicator of industry performance and summarizes the research showing profits to be positively correlated with market concentration. But he only *asserts* that supranormal profits imply resource misallocation, without ever showing how or why. If I were Mueller's typical lay reader who patronizes supermarkets and occasionally buys (or aspires to buy) a share of stock or two, I can see how I might be convinced from his analysis that mergers which reduce unit advertising costs, bolster power to secure discriminatory savings passed on in part to consumers through lower end-product prices, and raise profits are a good thing, to be encouraged—not discouraged—by public policy!

Mueller concludes his work with a set of policy recommendations, including more resources for anti-trust enforcement agencies, curbs on major new conglomerate mergers, fuller disclosure of corporate divisional operating results, unspecified solutions to the waxing international trade restriction problem, limitations on interlocking directorates and banks' intervention in nonfinancial corporation decision making, and a maddeningly vague proposal which may or may not call for more structural divestiture action against existing consolidations of market power.

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Roy, Ewell Paul, *Collective Bargaining in Agriculture*, Danville, Illinois, The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1970, 280 pp. (\$6.95)

The title and topic of this book continue to engender considerable interest among persons interested in U. S. agriculture. It is, therefore, logical that such a book describing past, present, and future attempts by agricultural producers and farm workers to improve their economic welfare through collective bargaining should be written. Roy treats four broad topics: the scope of bargaining in U. S. agriculture; economic and legal foundations of these activities; operational aspects of bargaining associations; and alternative means of strengthening the bargaining power of farmers and farm workers.

Unfortunately, the author makes several fundamental errors of fact or judgment that detract from the book's quality. Bargaining power is defined synonymously with *economic* power, whereas the former is actually a subset of the latter (along with

market power and political power) [1]. "The ability to influence the outcome of the price-making process" (p. 4) may be a result of several factors, without necessarily encompassing or including the bargaining process. The failure to draw this distinction creates confusion in the reader's mind as to the actual source of power under the various programs and types of legislation discussed.

The statement that "one manifestation of the farmers' lack of bargaining power is their declining share of the consumers' food dollar" (p. 1) is invalid. The farmers' share has not declined significantly during the past 15 years; neither is it a useful measure of bargaining power among participants in the food production-marketing system. A concluding remark that "collective bargaining in agriculture will increase in the years ahead . . ." (p. 225) is also a questionable assertion. Similar other omissions and commissions appear throughout the book. While advancing several ambitious legislative acts needed to stabilize the economic power of U. S. agricultural producers, the author ignores the most important determinant of the success of such programs: political acceptability. Marketing boards are discussed as a legislation-created tool for strengthening farmer bargaining; however, the problems recently encountered by marketing boards in Canada and Europe are not mentioned. These examples suggest that marketing boards (and indeed bargaining organizations) without stringent production control provisions are unable to cope with the basic problem facing U. S. agriculture: excess resources devoted to the production of farm products.

The discussions of farm worker bargaining, interspersed with considerations of bargaining over price and other terms of trade for agricultural products (the primary subject of the text), reduce the book's readability. While farm labor issues are cogent, they could have been treated more effectively in a separate section or in another publication. Nevertheless, the comparisons of farmer bargaining associations with labor unions (Table 4-1, pp. 64-70) are both interesting and useful.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the book does contain a substantial quantity of useful information on cooperative bargaining in agriculture. Chapter 5, "Organizing and Financing Bargaining Associations," is a valuable source of information for anyone contemplating the establishment of such an organization. The first two pages of Chapter 13, "Recommendations for Collective Bargaining in Agriculture," include some excellent observations on the economic limitations of farm bargaining in the absence of effective supply control. The book is better suited "as a handbook or reference for farmers, politicians, educators, journalists and others" (one of its two objectives) than "as a text for students of farm policy and collective bargaining" (Preface).

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