

Book Reviews

The Ineffective Soldier. vol. 1, *The Lost Divisions*. Eli Ginzberg, James K. Anderson, Sol W. Ginsburg, and John L. Herma. xx + 225 pp. vol. 2, *Breakdown and Recovery*. Eli Ginzberg, John B. Miner, James K. Anderson, Sol W. Ginsburg, and John L. Herma. xvii + 284 pp. vol. 3, *Patterns of Performance*. Eli Ginzberg, James K. Anderson, Sol W. Ginsburg, John L. Herma, Douglas W. Bray, William Jordan, and Francis J. Ryan. xix + 340 pp. Columbia University Press, New York, 1959. \$6 per volume.

These three volumes present the results of a major investigation by the Conservation of Human Resources Project of Columbia University, begun in 1950 and carried out under the direction of Eli Ginzberg. The authors attempt to tell "what really happened during World War II in the screening and utilization of the several million men who had mental and emotional handicaps" and to find a relationship between the loss of millions of men to the services, either through the original screening procedure or through subsequent separation because of some failure in performance during service, and the manpower policies responsible for the situation. It is the expressed hope of the authors that such an assessment will prepare the ground for more sensible selection and utilization policies in the future. A secondary goal is the derivation of guide-lines which will be of assistance to industrial management in meeting the civilian problems of selection, utilization, and, presumably, separation of employees in American industry.

Use is made of the rough over-all figures on selection and rejection of recruits, as provided by the induction centers, and on over-all enrollment and subsequent separation, as provided by the military services. These mass data are supplemented by a more intensive (though admittedly still superficial) study of 3854 Army recruits enrolled

during the last four months of 1942 and subsequently separated from the Army because of poor performance. This sample represents approximately 5 percent of the 72,700 men subsequently discharged for reasons of performance from among the 1,764,900 men enrolled during this period. A more intensive study, utilizing data from the Veterans Administration and from a questionnaire sent to many of the men, is made of a smaller sample of 534 cases. Some of the authors' sweeping pronouncements concerning the military manpower situation during World War II, therefore, derive from a distinctly limited number of cases representing a relatively short period of time.

The three volumes are published as an integrated series, but each is written in such a way that it may be read separately with profit. As a result there is considerable overlap, and one gets the impression that a single, concisely edited, large volume would have been both adequate and more modest. Publication of three separate volumes seems somewhat pretentious. In listing the volumes in the order of their importance and contribution to the authors' goals, I would place the last volume first, the first volume second, and the second volume a poor third.

Volume 1, *The Lost Divisions*, gives a sympathetic account of the difficulties involved in the sudden creation of a mass army and the near chaos that resulted from manpower policies that were often unrealistic, always vacillating, and never fully explained to the men delegated to execute them. The description is accurate, the comment penetrating, but the conclusions, while sound, bear no tight logical relation to the statistics used to buttress them. The authors are talking wisely and to the point, but one feels that they are speaking from a broad background of personal experience rather than with authority based on their experimental findings. The impression constantly recurs, throughout the study, that the data were collected on a *post hoc* basis

to justify an a priori set of logical conclusions. As a result, the authors emerge as better publicists and humanitarians than scientists.

The volume also contains an analysis of the relation to performance of such background factors as age, marital status, educational level, and race. Nothing is added here to the classical picture already presented in many earlier studies by previous investigators. There is a basic conflict, damaging to the argument but apparently not disturbing to the authors, between the firmness of the conclusions and the frequent inadequacy of the data upon which the conclusions are based. If the examinations conducted at the induction centers were as crude and as productive of errors as the authors claim, it is difficult to see how any confidence can be placed in statistics derived from the examinations. Again, if Army manpower policies were as stupidly conceived and as carelessly executed as is implied here, what validity can we attribute to the data resulting from these procedures?

Volume 2, *Breakdown and Recovery*, consists of a collection of brief case histories selected to illustrate the various types of performance in such problem areas as personality, family pressure, military organization, cultural conflict, and situational stress. The histories average from 800 to 1000 words each and, admittedly, "cannot be used for an exhaustive clinical analysis." They are accompanied by simple summaries, in the nature of pleasant little homilies, which often overstate the facts and certainly are to be considered educational and missionary endeavors rather than scientific interpretations. Here again one feels that the authors are writing as publicists in a good cause rather than as investigators objectively analyzing research data.

Volume 3, *Patterns of Performance*, the most comprehensive and interesting of the three volumes, integrates the mass statistical data and the clinical materials and brings in some new and interesting approaches to readjustment by interpreting the follow-up data obtained through the Veterans Administration. This section is fresh and novel, but once more the interpretations range beyond the limits set by the somewhat superficial and inadequate data. Certainly the Veterans Administration procedures will neither stand nor fall on the basis of the statistical findings presented here.

There is also a chapter on the management of men, designed to spell out

the lessons applicable to civilian industry, but it bears no close relation to the data that precede it. Again one senses the touch of the publicist rather than the scientist.

The prose style is lively and interesting, and the books are pleasant to handle and easy to read. The busy executive who wishes an introduction to the problems of military manpower will find it here. The serious researcher in the field, however, will be disappointed. The story has all been told elsewhere, usually with more data and more sophisticated experimental designs. Without wishing to detract from the valuable work of the Conservation of Human Resources Project, I note with pleasure that current military research in the manpower field is well ahead of the civilian effort represented here.

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Hunger and Food. Special edition of *Science and Mankind*. Josué de Castro, Ed. World Federation of Scientific Workers, London, 1959. 123 pp. 10s.

A few years ago UNESCO sponsored a series of publications entitled *Food and People*. These six booklets, ranging in size from 24 to 64 pages, dealt with the problem of food supply and population and were written in a remarkably lucid, comprehensive, scientific, and forthright manner. The subjects covered are indicated by the titles: *Food and the Family*, by Margaret Mead; *UN Sets the Table*, by Peter Kihss; *Food and Social Progress*, by André Mayer; *Distribution of the World's Food*, by Stefan Krolkowski; *Are There Too Many People?*, by Alva Myrdal and Paul Vincent; and *Food, Soil, and People*, by Charles E. Kellogg. The authors tried to set the stage for thoughtful discussions, and they avoided pompous and partisan statements on insufficiently documented points. The keynote of the series was perhaps exemplified in this quotation by André Mayer: "The population problem is not a simple problem to be resolved . . . by a mere change in the agriculture technique. It is also an economic problem, an educational problem, and a social problem. It is a problem involving the whole organization of society."

An organization called the World Federation of Scientific Workers has just

published, under the editorship of Josué de Castro, a book entitled *Hunger and Food*, which is almost a parody of the UNESCO series on the same subject. The introductory chapter, by de Castro, is full of such vague notions as "biological possibilism," "antagonisms of nutrition principles," and "advance agents preparing the ground for tuberculosis, trachoma, leprosy, verminoses, and other gastrointestinal parasitoses." The keynote of the introduction is that the symposium will be "useful to all those who wish in some way to participate in this universal crusade which is inescapable in view of the circumstances presented—that is, in the universal crusade of struggle against hunger."

The second chapter, by Lord Boyd Orr, delivers an utterly confused political diatribe. In the first part Orr dispenses such pearls of wisdom as "they [the peoples of the European nations] were not prepared to die to make the world safe for either Communism or Capitalism," and he proclaims that freedom from war could be secured if a world police force were created to enforce the decision of an effective court of justice. No thought is given to the fact that, were the world ready to create such instruments, there would be very little reason to fear a world war anyway. After some generalities on technology and medicine, Orr poses the question: "What number of people can the earth support?" Most of the data he quotes—on the Bengal famine, the nutritional situation of the United States in the 1930's, the postwar recovery, and so forth—have little relevance to the world as it is today. However, they can be used to support both of the attitudes which Orr has struck in past years and which he attempts to reconcile here: that of a nutritional banshee claiming that the world is on the verge of starvation, and that of a prophet of abundance proclaiming that "the world is rich" and that, by following a few simple organizational rules, everything will be straightened out in short order.

The next chapter, by the late T. Roemer of Halle, Germany, is a surprisingly reasonable dissertation on Malthus, in which Roemer takes issue with Boyd Orr and points out that so far none of the dire predictions of Malthus have been confirmed and that they are not likely to be confirmed immediately, although it is difficult to foresee what may happen after the year 2000.

The rest of the book continues to be uneven, with some acceptable chapters, in particular that by Michel Cepede of

France and that by Cicely Williams of Great Britain. As an example of unacceptable "scientific" statements, one in the chapter on "Soil and man," by F. E. Bear of Rutgers, can be cited: "the Shetland pony turns into a horse when taken to a region where the forage is high in minerals and protein." As an example of questionable political "fact," the conclusion of R. Dumont of Paris will serve, among others: "Economy based on profits is becoming weaker and having difficulty in adapting itself to a situation of relative abundance (relative, that is to say, to an inadequate purchasing power), is tending towards a futile malthusianism, towards a reduction to destitution. This will shortly lead to its general condemnation, if we persist in exposing its defects."

The papers by scientists from the other side of the Iron Curtain are mediocre. Masek, of Prague, asserts that the protective influence of vitamin C with respect to atherosclerosis has been demonstrated. Yang En-Fu, president of the Agricultural Association of China, emphasizes the "astonishing labor enthusiasm of peasants in the cooperatives," a statement which is not in accordance with the comments of less biased observers.

The book ends with a chapter by Kursanov and Nichiporovich of the Timiryazev Institute of Plant Physiology, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, who believe that the problem of food supply will be solved by "raising the photosynthetic productivity of plants."

In summary, this book is in the main more a vague political manifesto than a scientific document; it is not likely to shed much light on the important problem of food and population.

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Translators and Translations. Services and sources. Francis E. Kaiser, Ed. Special Libraries Association, New York, 1959. iv + 60 pp. \$2.50.

This very timely and useful guide represents a further effort on the part of the Special Libraries Association to assist librarians, literature scientists, and particularly the scientific community as a whole by bringing together information on widespread translation activities.

Part 1, "Directory of translators," lists services, rates, languages, subject specialties, addresses, telephone numbers,