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prices and the remainder at world-free market prices then sugar-cane quotas which would add up to the production of 160,000 tons of sugar could be given to each farmer; and for this a price should be paid for cane which is in keeping with the high price received for this amount of sugar. For cane production in excess of the quota, a price which reflects the low price received for the sugar could be paid. This would have the effect of curtailing sugar production to levels which are profitable in the national sense and would lead to a better pattern of land use in the island.

Quotas to farmers are usually objected to for the reason that the system tends to make the production structure rigid among farms by maintaining the inefficient and preventing the efficient from expanding. However, it is doubtful that there is much flexibility in the present narrow production structure and lack of scope for expansion of acreages on many farms. Moreover, allowing quotas to be transferable may be one way of remedying the problem.

Too much attention seems to have been directed at small farms for the encouragement of food crops, whereas estates have been virtually ignored. It seems, for example, that preparation lands on estates are not being fully utilized for food crop production. About 20 per cent of cane lands should come under this category every year. It is estimated that about 50,000 acres of lands on estates are under cane which means that about 10,000 acres per year are under preparation. However, Table 2 shows that only about 7,000 acres are now under food crops on estates.

Any diversification programme that is to succeed must encompass the estate sector. Estates are in a better position to stand the initial risks involved and their higher levels of management, larger capital and better quality lands could give them a greater chance of success. Moreover, since they control most of the farm land area of the country they could make a larger impact on the problem in a much shorter time.

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CARIBBEAN STUDIES

Volume 8

January, 1969

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Articles

H. Hoetink, *Materiales para el estudio de la República Dominicana en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX (cuarta parte).*

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Review Article

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Volume XXXV

No. 139

August, 1968

Input Demand Functions for the Profit-Constrained Sales-Maximizer: Income Effects in the Theory of the Firm

Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, and the Division of Labour

Second-Best Rules for Public Enterprise Pricing ..
An International Adjustment Mechanism with Fixed Exchange Rates

Phillips Curves, Expectations of Inflation and Optimal Unemployment Over Time: Comment

Phillips Curves, Expectations of Inflation and Optimal Unemployment Over Time: Reply

Changes in the Money Supply in the United Kingdom, 1954 to 1964: A Comment

Income, Productivity and Factor Allocation in Thailand: A Comment

International Factor Movement and the National Advantage

Book Reviews :

Books Received

R. D. Portes

Ronald Hamowy
R. Rees

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No. 310

June, 1968

Vol. LXXVIII

I. ARTICLES

Competitiveness: A Survey of Recent Literature	J. M. McGeehan
Trend and Business Cycles Reconsidered	M. Kalecki
Analysis of the Industrial Demand for Electricity	R. E. Baxter and R. Rees
Taxation and Income Stabilisation	J. A. Bristow
A General Equilibrium Theory of International Capital Flows	N. C. Miller
The Saving-Income Relation in Under-developed and Developed Countries	D. W. Johnson and J. S. Y. Chiu
The Less-developed Countries' Exports of Primary Products	B. I. Cohen
An Aspect of Project-Selection: Durability vs Construction- Period	A. Bhaduri
The Origins and Early Development of the Royal Economic Society	A. W. Coats J. E. Meade

II. REVIEWS

III. NOTES AND MEMORANDA

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de Sociologie
et d'Anthropologie

Volume 4, No. 4
November, 1967
Novembre 1967

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Parait à l'Université de
Calgary, Calgary, Alberta

Page	Title/Titre	Author/Auteur
201	The Conquest Revisited: Another Look at Canadian Dualism	Richard J. Ossenberg
219	Interaction Patterns and Felt Own Power in a Simulated Work Situation ..	V. V. Murray
242	Occupational Mobility Interests	Curt Tausky
250	Socio-Economic Background, Ability and the Allocation of Students	Ronald M. Pavalko
260	Books Received/Livres recus	
262	Index to Volume 4/Index du Volume 4	
Editor-in-Chief Rédactrice en chef Managing Editor Directeur	Jean Burnet Henry Zentner	University of Toronto University of Calgary

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July, 1968

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CONTENTS

The Gains from Trade Once Again	Jagdish Bhagwati
Some Issues in the Analysis of Trade Gains	Murray C. Kemp
Technical Progress, Profits, and Growth	W. A. Eldis
Restraints and the Allocation of Resources	Charles Kennedy
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International Comparisons of Rates of Change in Earnings	V. Argy
Rural-Urban Migration, Agricultural Output, and the Supply Price of Labour in a Labour-Surplus Economy	R. Albert Berry and Ronald Soligo
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VOLUME 33

SEPTEMBER, 1968

NUMBER 3

CONTENTS

Aspects of Deprivation in a Rural Poverty Class	William A. Rushing
Orientation to Change and Modernization in Israel	Dov Weintraub and Tikvah Parness
Health Care "Styles" in Rural and Urban Areas	Bert L. Ellenbogen and George D. Lowe
Analysis of Factors Associated with School Bond Elections	George M. Beal, John J. Hartman and Virgil Lagomarcino
Community Size, Population Composition, and Cultural Activity	Irving L. Allen
Measurement of Innovativeness Among Primitive Agriculturalists	J. Gerald Feaster

BOOK REVIEWS

NEWS NOTES

BULLETIN INDEX

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THE AMERICAN ECONOMIC REVIEW

Volume LVIII

June, 1968

Number 3, Part 1

ARTICLES

Planning is a Surplus Labor Economy	Louis Lefebvre
Time in Bargaining Negotiations	Bruno Contini
Tariffs and Trade in General Equilibrium	Bo Södersten and Karl Vind
Economics of Production from Natural Resources ..	V. L. Smith
Ownership and Control and Profit Rates	D. R. Kamerschen
Population and Industrial Development	D. B. Keesing
Union Strength and the U.S. "Phillips Curve"	Gail Pierson

COMMUNICATIONS

Consumption and Changing OASDHI Seasonality ..	J. M. Bonin
Chicago Economists and the Early 1930s	J. R. Davis
MPP Curves for CES and VES Functions	J. B. Ramsey
Linear Programming Model of the Firm	G. E. Thompson
Schooling and Intra-Regional Income Inequality ..	B. R. Chiswick
The Degree of Moneyness of Savings Deposits ..	G. S. Laumas
On the Economics of Wired City Television	H. J. Barnett and E. Greenberg
Education and the Quality of Labor 1929—1963 ..	David Schwartzman

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Vol. XXIII

JANUARY-MARCH, 1968

No. 1

CONTENTS

SUPPLEMENT TO THE CONFERENCE NUMBER — OCTOBER-DECEMBER, 1967

Presidential Address — Agricultural Growth and Economic Research	S. C. Chaudhri
Summaries of Group Discussions —	
Subject I — Agricultural Development in Developing Countries —	
A Comparative Study	C. H. Shah
Subject II — Theory of Economic Growth in Over-Populated	
Countries	A. S. Kahlon
Subject III — Forestry Development in India	K. K. Nair

ARTICLES

The Functions of Agricultural Prices in Economic Development	John W. Mellor
Changes in Land Holdings Consequent to the Abolition of the Intermediaries	P. T. George
Marketing Boards and Post-War Economic Development Policy in Uganda 1945-1962,	J. J. Oloya

NOTES

An Investigation on the Errors in the Estimates of Yardsticks of Production from Fertilizers Use	T. P. Abraham and C. R. Leelavati
Measurement of Size of Farm and Efficiency — Some Alternative Approaches	D. Ramesh
The Bhal Tract (Gujarat State)	R. L. Shah and G. A. Patel
Differences in the Form and Intensity of Input-Mix and Yield Levels on Small and Large Farm Organizations in the I.A.D.P. District Ludhiana (Punjab) (A Case Study)	A. S. Kahlon and Tilak Raj Kapur
Economics of Tractor Cultivation — A Case Study	Bhagat Singh

BOOK REVIEWS

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