

Arthur F. Burns

## The Ongoing Revolution in American Banking

American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC, 1988, xvi + 94 pp., \$16.95 (hardcover), \$7.95 (paper).

Banking is traditionally thought of as a staid, conservative activity and the application of the term "revolution" may at first appear slightly misleading. Yet when one considers developments in the banking industry during the past three decades, and especially the "ongoing" changes of the present decade, revolution is an apposite term. In this lucid and balanced monograph—Arthur Burns' last published work—the author traces the changing character of banking from a largely domestic (often local) business, hemmed in by regulation, governed by cozy, traditional relations and the dictates of bank supervisors, to what can only be described as an international, highly competitive, sophisticated, and complex financial services industry. Although the focus of this book is the American banking industry, it has much relevance to banking in other countries, especially as banking is now an international activity. In the fourth chapter, Burns discusses bank regulation, explaining why some regulation is, and will be, necessary, and rightly noting that deregulation should not sweep away all regulations, irrespective of their validity and usefulness. In the final chapter, on monetary policy, he joins the ranks of those calling for greater international coordination of economic policies, while recognizing the difficulties involved. This monograph, which is a joy to read, is an appropriate conclusion to a highly distinguished career.

Theodore Geiger

## The Future of the International System

### The United States and the World Political Economy

Allen & Unwin, Inc., Winchester, MA, USA, 1988, xiv + 190 pp., \$12.95.

This slim volume paints two pictures—the evolving international system, and that system in the future—with a very broad brush; to quote the cover blurb, it is an "interdisciplinary overview of the major economic, political, and psychocultural changes both within and among nations." The book is a convenient, well written, and informative *tour d'horizon* of this vast subject. Geiger's picture of the future is fairly gloomy. It is one of seemingly unstoppable drift toward neomercantilism (i.e., economic nationalism). If allowed to emerge, this will lead to bilateralism and greater government control of economic relations. Alternatively, it can be checked with a more vigorous multilateral effort than has been evident to date. Better still, what is needed is a new way of thinking, one imbued by the recognition of the advantages of more responsible behavior. Whatever the prospects for Geiger's prescription, there is little doubt that the complexities of a multipolar world, one without an undisputed "hegemon," will be daunting. The question is, can such an "orphan" world maintain economic—to say nothing of political and military—stability and assure prosperity? No one knows for sure. All one can say is that the future is not what it used to be.

Michel Henri Bouchet

## The Political Economy of International Debt

Quorum Books, Westport, CT, USA, 1987, xix + 219 pp., \$37.95.

Yet another book on external debt! The dust jacket is not encouraging: the IMF is identified as a "multilateral development agency" and, after giving the author's previous affiliations, one is informed mysteriously that he "currently works with an international organization." But past the dust jacket, this is a sensible and useful book. It analyzes and categorizes the approaches and solutions to the debt problem in the broader context of the political economy framework. There are no grand panaceas or global solutions. The resolution of the debt problem has many aspects, chief among them the promotion of economic growth in the indebted countries. Clearly written and well researched.

Kerry Turner (editor)

## Sustainable Environmental Management

### Principles and Practice

Westview Press, Boulder, CO, USA, 1988, ix + 292 pp., \$49.

This volume is a timely contribution to the increasingly prominent debate on sustainability, a concept which attempts to strike a balance between conserving the environment and maintaining or achieving economic development. It is divided into two parts and covers a broad range of topics. The first half covers the economic and policy issues relevant to the sustainability debate: the politics of sustainability, a review of theory, resource contingency planning, the role of efficiency distortions in the use of natural resources, and the limitations of cost-benefit analysis in project appraisal. The second half of the book provides methods and examples to illustrate how the application and monitoring of theory takes place in practice, with a look at the role of bio-technology in agriculture, pollution control regulations and institutions, and the methods for the valuation of wildlife. While the subjects covered are informative, the result is a superficial consideration of many important questions. Conspicuous by their absence, for example, are the equity and population issues central to any analysis of sustainability. Nevertheless, and despite its shortcomings, the book is recommended for the quality of some of its articles, and the timeliness of its subject matter.

## Other Books Received

Listed below are some of the books we received in 1988 but were unable to review for lack of space.

Robert E. Baldwin, Carl B. Hamilton, André Sapir (editors), **Issues in US-EC Trade Relations**, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, USA, 1988, xii + 397 pp., \$49.

Richard Cooper, **The International Monetary System: Essays in World Economics**, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, USA, 1988, xvii + 286 pp., \$9.95 (paper).

Charles Goodhart, **The Evolution of Central Banking**, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, USA, 1988, viii + 205 pp., \$11.95 (paper).

Anthony Hilton, **City Within a State: A Portrait of Britain's Financial World**, L.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., London, 1987, x + 199 pp., \$29.95.

Stephan Feuchtwang, Athar Hussain, Thierry Pairault (editors), **Transforming China's Economy in the Eighties: The Rural Sector, Welfare and Employment**, (Volume I), Westview Press, Boulder, CO, USA, 1988, xii + 259 pp., \$40.

Stephan Feuchtwang, Athar Hussain, Thierry Pairault (editors), **Transforming China's Eco-**

**nomy in the Eighties: Management, Industry and the Urban Economy**, (Volume II), Westview Press, Boulder, CO, USA, 1988, xii + 168 pp., \$38.50

Richard Robinson, **The International Transfer of Technology: Theory, Issues, and Practice**, Ballinger Publishing Company, Cambridge, MA, USA, 1988, xvii + 225 pp.

Hans Singer, Neelamber Hatti, Rameshwar Tandon, (editors), **Technology Transfer by Multinationals**, Ashish Publishing House (New World Order Series), New Delhi, India, 1988, Volume I, xxviii + 519 pp. and Volume II, 924 pp., Rs. 600 for both volumes.

Yoshio Suzuki (editor), **The Japanese Financial System**, Oxford University Press, New York, NY, USA, 1987, xii + 358 pp., \$39.50.

Robert Wade, **Village Republics: Economic Conditions for Collective Action in South India**, Cambridge University Press, New York, NY, USA, 1988, 79 pp., \$45.95.

Met Zegers, **Management Training for Small Scale Entrepreneurs in the Context of Developing Countries**, Free University Press, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 1988, 275 pp., f. 50.

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